

together

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Highlights from the October 2009 issue of Together

United Methodists break ground on first of many buildings at Epworth Forest Conference Center

NORTH WEBSTER, Ind. - Under the threat of rain, more than 200 United Methodists and their guests broke ground Sunday, Sept. 20 at Epworth Forest Conference Center in North Webster at the first of several cottages and other building sites on Webster Lake's shore. The ground breaking began a \$22 million renovation project at the United Methodist-owned center established in 1924. It has been 45 years since the center has built a new facility.



Photo courtesy of Epworth Forest Campaign

Bishop Mike Coyner leads in turning the first soil of one of four new waterfront cottages planned for Epworth Forest.

Taking the lead in the groundbreaking, Indiana Bishop Mike Coyner shared the importance of Epworth Forest in his life. He called it a "holy place" where he said, as a seventh grader, "I stepped forward and gave my life to Jesus. Epworth Forest is where I claimed my faith."

During his third year of what was know as Senior High Institute, Coyner said, "This is where I responded to God's call to ministry. It's already a holy place. We need to help that process along. Our vision is about changed lives, not new buildings."

He concluded his remarks, saying, "I am grateful for today. It reminds us God has blessed this place."

After a short prayer of gratitude, Coyner and a dozen other participants turned the first soil of the first of four new waterfront cottages. Others present were invited to write prayers on thin foot-long stakes and place them in the ground.

The Rev. Chris Nunley of Hebron, Ind., and Epworth Forest Board of Directors chairperson, welcomed participants to the ceremony and said more than \$2 million has been raised so construction can begin. Part of these funds includes an insurance settlement of the Redwing Lodge destroyed by fire in January 2009.

Area office to move to new conference center Oct 24

The new Indiana Conference of The United Methodist Church will begin its move into the Meridian Corporate Plaza 2 building at 301 Pennsylvania Parkway on the north side of Indianapolis three blocks east of the 103rd and North Meridian Streets intersection. The new Indiana Conference Center will reside on the third floor of the three-year-old office building. The address of the new conference center is:

Indiana Conference of The United Methodist Church
301 Pennsylvania Parkway, Suite 30
Indianapolis, Indiana 46280.
Phone numbers have not yet been assigned.

The first phase will be moving the Indiana Area Office from its location since 1968 in the Indiana Interchurch Center at 1100 West 42nd Street at Michigan Road just north of Crown Hill Cemetery. The United Methodist Church is one of five denominational offices in the building that own the building as partners.

The Indiana Area Office will move on Saturday, Oct. 24. The office staff is currently packing in preparation for the move. The Area Office plans to be closed to visitors from Wednesday, Oct. 21 until it opens in the new location on Wednesday, Oct. 28. Telephones will continue to function at the current location through Oct. 24. E-mail will continue.

A second wave will follow with the current South Indiana Conference Center moving from its current location in Bloomington into the new conference center. No dates have been set for this more.

The third and final wave will come closer to the end of the year with the current North Indiana Conference Center moving from its current location in Marion to the new conference center.

Conference foundations move closer to union in 2011

INDIANAPOLIS - The three United Methodist foundations of Indiana moved closer to union as their merger task force continued to work out the details of their merger into one foundation in 2011.

Gene Robbins, a Frankfort attorney and president of the Indiana Area Foundation board of directors, led a day-long task force discussion of the foundations Sept. 17 at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Indianapolis.

More than 50 board members and other interested people of the existing North Indiana United Methodist Foundation and Lead Fund, South Indiana United Methodist Foundation and Indiana Area United Methodist Foundation discussed the mission and services they want to offer in the new Indiana Conference Foundation as well as what they needed to do to assure a smooth transition.

The new foundation plans to continue to support investment service funds, planned giving



assistance, congregational seminars, gift annuities and the loan fund.

Task force members began planning for new services which could include grant writing assistance, clergy stewardship and financial planning, a Christian investment fund open to non-denominational churches, capital and stewardship campaign assistance for congregations, plus church and business connections for employment assistance.

Comments and questions about the new Indiana United Methodist Foundation can be directed to Gene Robbins at grobbins@geetel.net.

Valpo First creates 'Nexus' to help students

VALPARAISO, Ind. - "Nexus Apprenticeship" a new program through Valparaiso's First United Methodist Church, offers high school students the chance to explore careers under the supervision of a mentor.

Students in grades eight to 12 from single parent or limited income families, and those from the city's Hilltop neighborhood or public housing are eligible to enroll in the program.

During the eight-week programs offered this past summer, students had two-hour sessions with a mentor everyday to explore various career fields including medicine and public works. There was an educational aspect, including SAT test preparation and American history lectures.

The program concluded with a week-long trip on the East Coast to see Gettysburg, Independence Hall, Washington, D.C. and the World Trade Center site in New York City.

This story was taken in part from the Northwest Indiana Times.

Youth, young adult, campus ministries director wants to get acquainted with Hoosiers

Hello! For Hoosier United Methodists who I haven't met (which is most of you, at this point), I'm the Rev. Brian Durand, new Associate Director of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministries. I'm honored and delighted to serve the Indiana Conference and excited about the ministry that lies ahead. In the past several weeks I've found myself all over the state, beginning to connect with local and campus ministries. As I've been making the rounds, I've encountered the same questions about me and my new position, so here are some quick answers:

Where are you from?

I grew up in a small town called Palmyra in the northeast corner of Missouri, where my family attended Palmyra UMC, a small county seat church. My first job out of college brought me to Indianapolis in 1995, and five years later, I began seminary at Christian Theological Seminary, where I earned a Master of Divinity degree. I served as Pastor for Youth Ministries at St. Luke's UMC in Indianapolis for nine years prior to my current position.

Do you have a family?

I'm married to the love of my life, Cheryl, whom I met while we both served as youth ministry volunteers in the church. We have two children: Noah, 4, and Ella, 8 months.

What do you do?

My personal mission is to support our congregations and campus ministries in recruiting, equipping, connecting and inspiring young, Spirit-filled church leaders who will revitalize our congregations. My role is to build ministry connections, helping congregation and campus ministry leaders to know they are not alone in trying to minister to young people, and to share resources to improve our ministry with youth, young adults and college-university students throughout the state.

Contact information

You can contact Brian at bldurand@gmail.com, or by phone at 317-331-3404,

Check out Brian's blog for youth workers and pastors at www.youthministryconnection.wordpress.com.

The Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministry pages are located on the new conference Web site at www.inumc.org under Connectional Ministries. As we seek to share resources and connect with each other, let us know how we can help you and best serve your needs in ministry.

Indiana Conference Cabinet announces location of ten district centers

The Indiana Conference Cabinet has announced in what cities the ten District Resource Centers will be located across the state. A few of these locations are subject to change as are locations of current district offices within a city in the new conference. The locations included by District and District Superintendent (DS) are:

1. North District with DS Cindy Reynolds in LaPorte
2. Northeast District with DS David Michel in Fort Wayne*
3. Northwest District with DS Craig LaSuer in Lafayette*
4. West District with DS Judi Purvis in Greencastle
5. North Central with DS Frank Beard in Kokomo*
6. Central District with DS Bert Kite in Indianapolis*
7. East District with DS Dale Mendenhall in Muncie*
8. Southeast District with DS Brian White in Columbus*
9. Southwest District with DS Glenn Howell in Evansville*
10. South District with DS Charles Wilfong in Georgetown



The new District Resource Centers will begin to open in January 2010. This map of the 10 new Indiana Conference districts can be found at www.inumc.org, click on Districts.

* Same city as current city with district office.

Conference youth leaders selected by NCJ

At the recent North Central Jurisdiction Division on Ministries with Young People Convocation and Legislative Assembly at the Wisconsin Dells, several young Indiana leaders were selected to lead the jurisdiction in empowering young people as world-changing disciples of Jesus Christ, nurturing faith development and equipping young leaders.

Casey Madsen, a student at University of Indianapolis, was selected as vice-chair of the steering committee. **Ben Boruff**, a student at Indiana University, was selected as treasurer. **Kaylee Stoops** of Monroe was selected as an at-large youth representative on the committee, and **Dawn Barnes**, a lay leader of Greensburg, was selected as an adult focused on young adult ministries.

Boruff, Stoops, Barnes and **Breanna Coppes** were selected as representatives of the North Central Jurisdiction to the 2010 Global Young People's Convocation and Legislative Assembly in Berlin, Germany. Melissa Zimmerman was selected as an alternate.

For more information about youth ministries in Indiana, visit www.inumc.org and click on Connectional Ministries.

Sisterhood Christian Drama Ministry travels in mission to Kenya

NAKURU, Kenya - After months of planning, fundraising and prayer, the Sisterhood Christian Drama Ministry of Indiana and Kentucky embarked on its largest ministry outreach this past August, this time halfway around the world to Kenya.

Sisterhood has been featured in Together stories the past few years highlighting their successes with local programs for "at risk" youth at Brightwood Center in Indianapolis; women and girls in prison; conference, district and state meetings of United Methodist Women; local church performances; and outreach events in Indiana, Kentucky and Tennessee.

The Kenya volunteer mission team included Nora and Alan Pritchett of Sellersburg UMC, Peggy and George Young, Sandra and Ron Hartlieb; and some talented friends including Cindy Holloway, Robin Knowles of Old Bethel UMC in Indianapolis, plus Jackie Duerr and Joe Jones from the Indianapolis and Louisville areas.

The team traveled to Nakuru, Kenya, north of Nairobi, to spread God's Word, train adults in drama and music, host a vacation Bible school children's program and feed hundreds of adults and children

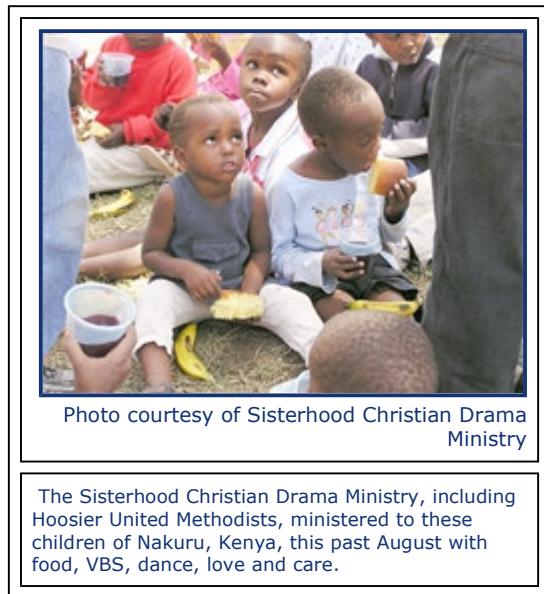


Photo courtesy of Sisterhood Christian Drama Ministry

The Sisterhood Christian Drama Ministry, including Hoosier United Methodists, ministered to these children of Nakuru, Kenya, this past August with food, VBS, dance, love and care.

during their two week stay. From the first worship service in the small church and with only a few hours of sleep, the mission team said they knew this trip was a "mission from God." During the next nine days their tasks continued to grow.

The church floor, pitted with holes and loose gravel that it unsafe for children and adults, was patched and sealed. The men's team used primitive tools to clean, fill and smooth the concrete. Walls were swept and doorways repaired.

Adults invited from the community and area churches attended drama and music workshops. Children laughed and danced at a high energy VBS telling the stories of Moses, the Prodigal Son and the Feeding of the 5,000. The children performed for their families at Sunday worship and filled the surrounding neighborhood with dancing, billowing cloths, ribbons and drums to "Rains in Africa."

Seven churches instructed on establishing health ministries for their congregations

UMCOR and the Community Health Network sponsored a two-day workshop at Westfield UMC in Westfield on Sept. 2 and 16. Sandy Reilly, Parish Nurse at Westfield UMC hosted and assisted with the event.

Seven churches from the new Central and North Central Districts of the Indiana Conference completed the workshops. They were: Cumberland UMC, Epworth UMC, First UMC of Sheridan, Grace UMC-Franklin, Mohawk UMC-Greenfield, Honey Creek UMC-Greenwood and the Windfall UMC.

Sherry McIntyre, coordinator of the Health Ministries and Parish Nursing, Community Health Network and parish nurse at Amity UMC; Cheryl Larson, parish nurse facilitator of Community Health Network; and Marge Ohl, parish nurse at Old Bethel UMC instructed the six teams. The workshops were structured to assist the churches in establishing Health Ministry in their own congregations.

For more information, contact Sherry McIntyre at smcintyre@ecommunity.com.

Methodists, Catholics, Lutherans celebrate milestone

CHICAGO (UMNS) - Justification by faith. Those three words divided Western Christianity for centuries, splitting apart families and nations. Wars were fought over their meaning.

So it is with a sense of awe and wonder that representatives of three major Christian traditions - Methodist, Lutheran and Catholic - gathered Oct. 1 at Old St. Patrick's Church in Chicago to celebrate their fundamental agreement on how sinful human beings are forgiven and brought into a right relationship with God.



A UMNS photo by John Brooks, ELCA News Service

Methodist, Catholic and Lutheran leaders recess

Side by side, speaking in an age when some would dismiss religion as a source of violence and division, Bishop Gregory Palmer, president of the United Methodist Council of Bishops, Cardinal Francis George, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Bishop Mark Hanson, president of the Lutheran World Federation, joined other international dignitaries and faithful in a service of thanksgiving celebrating their common Christianity. Bishop Sharon Zimmerman Rader, ecumenical officer for the United Methodist bishops, also was there.

following the celebration of an historic agreement on justification by faith at Old St. Patrick Church in Chicago.

How big a deal is this in the grand sweep of Christian history?

"For hundreds of years, the issue of justification by faith divided Catholics and Protestants," said Palmer. "This agreement celebrates consensus on the basic truths of the doctrine of justification."

"It's of enormous importance because it is the first point of conflict of the unfolding of the breakup of the Western church," says the Rev. James Massa, executive director of the Secretariat of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the Catholic conference. "It's of enormous importance for all of the traditions within Christianity that have their roots in the Western church."

Central Conference Pension Initiative nears goal

NASHVILLE, Tenn. - The Central Conference Pension Initiative (CCPI) is 90 percent of the way to its fundraising goal, but still \$2 million short of the minimum amount needed to establish pension funds in every central conference.

The initiative was created to provide long-term financial support for clergy and their spouses who serve the church outside the United States, only to be left with little or no financial support for food and basic necessities once they retire.

Barbara Boigegrain, top executive of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, says clergy who serve all their lives providing mission and ministry in developing countries live out their later years in abject poverty, retiring with literally nothing.

The goal of the CCPI is to raise \$20 million, with more than \$18 million contributed so far. However, Boigegrain says that a total of \$25 million is really needed in order to provide benefits that will enable retirees to live at a level above mere subsistence.

UMCOR responds to three natural disasters

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) is responding to people affected in the Philippines, Samoa and Indonesia following three recent disasters. UMCOR's top executive, Sam Dixon, says, "Our prayers are with the people who are hurting as a result of this devastation. UMCOR is committed to addressing their needs and especially reaching out to those who are most vulnerable."

Philippines typhoon

UMCOR Philippines is working with its local partners including Action by Churches Together (ACT) and the National Council of Churches to provide relief to those affected by Typhoon Ketsana, also called Ondoy, in the Philippines.

Support for UMCOR's relief work in the Philippines can be made through Philippines Emergency, UMCOR Advance #240235.

South Pacific earthquake and tsunamis

Four powerful tsunamis generated by a huge undersea quake crashed into Tonga, Samoa and American Samoa on Sept. 30, UMCOR's Domestic Disaster Response unit has been in touch with FEMA and with the California Pacific Annual Conference of which American Samoa is a member. More than 32,000 people are displaced and 147 people are confirmed dead.

To help people affected by the tsunamis, support may be offered through UMCOR's International Disaster Response: UMCOR Advance #982450.

West Sumatra earthquake

A major earthquake struck West Sumatra on Sept. 30 causing major damage to the provincial capital of Padang and Pariaman District.

To support the relief efforts, please give generously to Indonesia Emergency, UMCOR Advance #217400. - UMCOR

Africa University mission team leaves Oct. 23

Team members will be working with development workers and government employees.

Another Indiana Volunteers in Mission (VIM) team will be leaving Oct. 23 for United Methodist-related Africa University in Zimbabwe. The trip was initiated by an invitation from the AU for Martin Price, the founding director of ECHO (Educational Concerns for Hunger) located in North Fort Myers, Fla. ECHO works with the AU faculty in furthering the development of an agricultural-nutrition outreach program to small farmers and their families in Africa.

The effort is sometimes referred to as the Dream Farm or the Small Farm Resource Development Program. The focus will be in developing and discriminating information and educational programs to help subsistence farmers increase production of traditional crops and to introduce new crops that, when added to the traditional foods, can add to the nutritional value of their diets.

UMW of Indiana select Anderson University for School of Christian Mission next July 13-16

Indiana United Methodist Women has selected Anderson University as the site of its united first School of Christian Mission. The weekday mission education event is scheduled for July 13-16, 2010 with a one-day sampler scheduled for Saturday, July 17.

The "Sampler" is new name given for what was formerly Drive-in-Day for the former North Conference school and Super Saturday for the former South Conference school.

Two major themes will define the 2010 school: "This is God's School" and "For the Love of God."

Each year participants choose two from the three studies offered by the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries. The 2010 spiritual growth study is titled, "For the Love of God: John's Letters."

The social issue study is "Joy to the World: Mission in the Age of Global Christianity" and "The Beauty and Courage of Sudan" will be studied again, as the geographic study offered two consecutive years. Study leaders are yet to be announced.

For more information about United Methodist Women of Indiana, visit www.gb-gm-umc.org/indumw.

Full PDF version of the paper is available here.

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