



Risk-Taking Mission and Service

One of the Five Practices that help make fruitful congregations is "Risk-Taking Mission and Service." Those Five Practices will be emphasized again at our 2010 Annual Conference Session when we have Bishop Robert Schnase present as our Conference Teacher. He is the author of the book on this topic, and he will help us to think further about these Practices.

I was curious to know what kinds of such "Risk-Taking Mission and Service" ministries our local churches are doing, so I asked for questions about those ministries to be included in the year-end reports that all of our churches complete. Unfortunately there was a technical glitch, so those questions were only added to former North Conference churches for their 2009 reports (the reporting forms were separate for 2009 for former South and North), so the following figures only represent less than one-half of our churches. Even so, the numbers are impressive. Here is what I learned from those year-end reports:

Number of churches which have food pantry ministries = 119

Number of persons served monthly by those food pantry ministries = 29,684

Number of churches offering feeding programs at least once per week = 81

Number of churches offering a clothing ministry = 32

Number of churches offering a free medical clinic = 12

That is an awesome list, and I am sure it is an "under-reporting" since not every church completed their year-end reports and not every church completed every question on the list.