



O C T O B E R

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Dearhearts,

Let me begin by thanking all of you for helping me to enjoy my renewal leave by tending to things here in the District. I am especially thankful to Dave Brazelton, who quietly stepped in to help on several occasions requiring the experience of someone who has “served on the district,” but a great many others stepped forward to help, in particular Debbie Moore, Kathy Macaulay, and Gentry Moore on the staff of the District office, and allowed me some time for much needed rest and reflection. Again, my thanks to all of you!

Now let me turn to the question of what I studied or experienced that I can share with you. Certainly my leave involved too much to summarize in one newsletter article. So, you may be assured I will be sharing an abundance of Celtic stories and other anecdotes from Scotland, Ireland, and the north of England in the days to come. But I can't resist starting with a 12th century chess piece from the Isle of

Lewis (in Scotland, of course) that I saw in the British Museum in London:

I have known about this collection of figures from four or five chess sets for a long time. In fact, I have a replica set of my own, and specifically went to the museum to see the originals. But I was surprised by one of the pieces that was not copied in my duplicate set or shown in any photograph I had ever seen. One of the rooks was different from the others. Most were stout hearted warriors, but one of them was this “wild and crazy” looking fellow who was actually chewing on the top of his shield!

According to the museum, this odd looking warrior was a “berserker.” The berserkers were the fiercest of the Viking warriors; they were “the first ones out of the boat,” on a raid. Even the other Vikings stood in awe of these brash and daring fighters.

Now, I must confess a certain admiration for this little berserker, and even a desire to share a bit of his total commitment to the cause. Of course, I have no interest in burning and pillaging. Heavens forbid! But I do remember that one of Jesus' followers was a bit of a berserker too. Simon Peter was always the first one out of the boat. And we live in a time when we need to raise the level of energy a bit and do some brave and heedless acts of discipleship. Let us outdo ourselves in loving obedience!

So, as we come to the season for laying plans and setting goals for ourselves, let us look for some opportunities to be the first one out of the boat and lead the way for the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ. I hope that some of the joy reports we hear at our Fall Church Conferences will be presented by berserkers.

Grace and peace,

Rich

P.S. I hope the berserkers from Cluster Number One, who were scheduled to meet at Southside UMC on November 8, at 7:00 PM, will not be so overcome with their fierce enthusiasm that they will overlook the change of dates to the following Thursday, November 15.



Registration opens for first conference on the “The Methodist Way”

Hundreds of people learned about the five practices of The Methodist Way at the 2007 Florida Conference Event. Coming next spring will be the first of five, two-day conferences to take you deeper in understanding about each of the five elements and how each is related to the other.

The first conference, “Passionate Worship: Divine Inbreaking,” will be held at Trinity United Methodist Church in Gainesville, April 11-12, 2008, and repeated at Church of the Palm Beaches in West Palm Beach, April 14-15.

Both locations will feature four presentations based on the different movements of worship plus 21 breakout groups featuring topics such as basic worship planning, worship as spiritual formation, worship in the emerging culture, care and feeding of a praise team, and connecting worship to the outside community. There will also be opportunities for you to meet with other worship leaders and pastors to have a time to network and share resources.

We are encouraging pastors, worship leaders, worship teams and anyone else who is involved in making worship happen at their local church to attend this conference. Registration is online: [Passionate Worship registration](#).

If you have questions, please contact the Office of Connectional Ministries at 800-282-8011, Ext. 183. For more information on The Methodist Way, visit [Connectional Ministries](#).

School of Ministry on hiatus; joins The Methodist Way

For decades, an important event in the lives of many pastors in the Florida Conference has been the annual School of Ministry. This year, however, the school will take a break and not take place. Instead, leaders are encouraging pastors to gather next April at the first of five conferences on The Methodist Way (see story above), “Passionate Worship: Divine Inbreaking.”

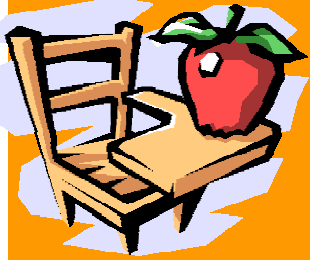
“We wanted to expand our focus away from just clergy learning experiences to one where clergy, along with church lay leadership, could come together as a team,” said the Rev. David Dodge, executive director of the Florida Conference Center for Clergy Excellence. “The Methodist Way fit that perfectly.”

Right now, Dodge says conference leadership won’t be developing the old School of Ministry model, where clergy gathered at the Life Enrichment Center to hear somebody speak, go to worship, participate in workshops, and play golf.

“We’re not saying that we’ll never go back to the School of Ministry format or model,” he said. “But for now, we’re encouraging clergy to participate in The Methodist Way trainings.”

Those trainings--one on each element--will be help over a 30-month time frame, starting with the first conference next April. The next element--Radical Hospitality--is scheduled for October 2008.

Education Summit to be hosted by United Methodist Women.



The North East District United Methodist Women will hold an Education Summit on October 27, 2007 from 9:30am-12:30pm. This summit is being held to inform parents and concerned citizens of the needs of our children in the public schools and the legal ramifications regarding our children receiving a quality education. We will explore ways to support our schools and enhance our students' academic achievement.

Each county in our district is asked to have someone present. An invitation is being sent to each chairperson of the eight school boards representing the North East District to participate on the panel to answer specific concerns of each school district.

Due to a previous engagement, Reverend Neal can not attend this event, but encourages all who are able to please attend. It is important for us to support our schools. Each unit president is asked to sign in by your church or your county.

The Education Summit will be held at New Life Community UMC at 11100 Wingate Road, Jacksonville, FL 32219, 904-768-7779. For more information on the summit please contact District United Methodist Women President Ms. Barbara Green at 904-764-7847



Needed - one LCD projector in useable condition for one of our Haitian missions. Contact the Office of New Church Development - 863-688-5563 x 146.

For sale a 1997 Ford, 15 passenger bus.

\$15,000 or best offer. Please contact Glynlea Grace United Methodist Church at 904-724-6272



Nursery Worker Wanted

Garden City United Methodist Church would like to hire a nursery worker. The job involves two shifts, Sunday 10am-12pm and Wednesday 6:30pm- 8:30pm totaling four hours a week. The pay is \$10 an hour. If you are interested contact either the church office at 904-764-4627 or Pat Allred at 904-764-5366



Join us for dinner and a chance to fly away!!

Join us in celebrating our **Eleventh Annual "Pastor Appreciation Dinner" October 18, 2007** at the Ramona Pavilion, 7166 Ramona Blvd, Jacksonville, FL. Arrival is at 6pm with dinner starting at 7pm.

Come and be blessed with special music, dinner and guest speaker John Riley.

John has been speaking for the Florida Conference couples and UMM retreats for many years and is always a pleasure to hear.

This event is open to every member of your church. To help strongly make a statement of your appreciation, we encourage the attendance of your UMM President, Lay Leader, Church Council Chair and Staff Parish Relations Chair.

Never before... All attending clergy will be placed in a drawing for two round trip airline tickets to anywhere in the lower 48 states on Southwest Airlines.

Make your reservations as soon as possible.

The cost is \$25.00 per person.

Register online at www.neflumm.org or

Mail check to

11th PAD 2007

2954 Oak Creek Lane

For more information contact

Joe Solomons- 904-786-3000 or 904-499-9807

Calendar

October

- 1 All Charge Conference Forms were Due.**
- 6** District United Methodist Women Annual Meeting
Highlands UMC– 10am
- 8** Columbus Day– Office Closed
- 9** District United Methodist Men Meeting
Inman Memorial UMC– 6:30pm
- 16** Clergy Team Meeting– 7pm-8:30pm
Garden City UMC, Jacksonville
- 17** Clergy Team Meeting– 10am-11:30am
Christ UMC, Hastings
- 18** Pastor Appreciation Dinner—Ramona Pavilion
6pm Gathering & 7pm Dinner
- 19 & 20** Lay Speaker Training– St. James, Palatka
- 25** New Church Development 10am-noon
- 29** Webcast for Health Insurance
- 31** Clergy Assessment and Continuing Education Forms are Due.

November

- 22 & 23** District Office closed for Thanksgiving



Please note Cluster 1 has a new date it is now November 15.

Charge Conference Schedule 2007

Cluster 1

Held at Southside UMC on Thursday, November 15 at 7pm

First Jax, Franklinton, Memorial, Mt. Moriah, Riverside Park, Southside, Trinity, Fernandina

Cluster 2

Held at Yulee UMC on Sunday, October 14 at 7pm

Ebenezer, First-Callahan, Garden City, Highlands, New Life, Wesley Fellowship, Yulee

Cluster 3

Held at Faith UMC on Sunday, November 4 at 7pm

Faith, Glynlea Grace, Spring Glen, Swaim

Cluster 4

Held at First UMC-Starke on Sunday, October 28 at 2:30pm

Baldwin/Bryceville, First-Macclenny, First-Starke, Grace-Lawtey, Pleasant Grove

Cluster 5

Held at Ortega UMC on Sunday, October 21 at 7pm

Asbury-Orange Park, Avondale, First-Green Cove Springs, Fleming Island, Orange Park, Ortega, Middleburg

Cluster 6

Held at Isle of Faith UMC on Sunday, October 7 at 7pm

Beach, Christ-Neptune Beach, CrossRoad, Isle of Faith, Lakewood, Mandarin

Cluster 7

Held at Good Shepherd UMC on Tuesday, November 13 at 7pm

Christ-St. Augustine, Dinsmore, Good Shepherd, Harmony, Oak Leaf, Ponte Vedra, River of Life

Cluster 8

Held at Lake Shore UMC on Tuesday, October 30 at 7pm

Asbury-Jax, Calvary, Lake Shore, Murray Hill, Oak Crest, Wesconnett, Woodstock Park

Cluster 9

Held at Arlington UMC on Sunday, October 28 at 7pm

Alexander Memorial, Arlington, Ft. Caroline, Mt. Zion, St. Joseph, St. Paul

Cluster 10

Held at Simpson Memorial UMC on Sunday, November 4 at 2:30pm

Bowden, Inman Memorial, Simpson Memorial, Trinity

Cluster 11

Held at Grace UMC, St. Augustine on Sunday, October 14 at 2:30pm

First-St. Augustine, Grace-St. Augustine, Shores, Trinity-St. Augustine

Cluster 12

Held at First, Lake Butler on Sunday, October 21 at 2:30pm

First-Lake Butler, Florahome, Greater Bell, Keystone, Worthington Springs

Cluster 13

Held at First-Interlachen on Tuesday, October 23 at 7pm

Christ-Riverdale, Emmanuel, First-Interlachen, St. James, St. Stephens, Trinity, Palatka

Cluster 14

Held at Georgetown UMC on Sunday, October 7 at 2:30pm.

Welaka, Georgetown, Howe Memorial, Community