

Board of Lay Ministry  
Tom Wogaman, Conference Lay Leader

It has been said that years are like people. . . they each have a personality. Although there are similarities in structure and calendar from year to year, there differences in basic themes and specific challenges being addressed. Last year at this time, in my first annual report to you as Conference Lay Leader, I described the 2004-5 conference year as a year of transition, with a new Bishop and many new people in key positions. That transition was successful. The current year, 2005-6, was not so marked by transition. There were relatively few changes in conference or district leadership positions, either clergy or laity. We are in the second year of an exciting new bishopric. We are now moving on to confront broad issues. Examples include the Bishop's taskforces on hunger and on excellence in leadership. We are making a serious review of our situation, structure, challenges, resources, and practices. Under the Bishop's leadership both clergy and laity are actively involved in these activities. These efforts will be ongoing.

The Board of Lay Ministry has met twice since last Conference. We have spent a large part of our time and effort in planning for the laity events at the upcoming conference session in Nampa, Idaho. We will be offering a rich menu of some fifteen workshops, of which each lay person will be able to select and attend two. Our emphasis in scheduling workshops was on personal growth and increased understandings rather than on "how-to" training for specific jobs. We have been and will be addressing the latter on other occasions in other places. The laity dinner on Thursday night will feature a short talk on how the hunger problem is being approached in Idaho. All laity present at Conference are invited to these laity events whether or not they are official members of Conference. The Board will be meeting again the day before Conference opens to see that all bases are covered for these laity events and to begin planning for the upcoming year.

During the current year the laity has been actively involved in helping to plan and put on a major district event in most of the districts. These events have become annual one-day occurrences and typically have featured elements of both training and personal growth. I was privileged to attend the Metro and Southern District events and helped lead a group session in each of them.

This is my second year as your Conference Lay Leader. I continue to appreciate election to this office by the Laity. I meet regularly with the Cabinet when that body is not dealing with appointments or sensitive personnel issues. I also serve ex-officio on a variety of committees and other Conference bodies. Through these experiences I've gained a greater understanding of the scope of the challenges we face in our two-state area. Fortunately we have a lot of able and dedicated people, both laity and clergy, to confront those challenges.

We have a supremely significant mission. . . to **boldly** make disciples for Jesus Christ. This will take our best efforts, individually and cooperatively. It behooves us to seek our own growth and to support each other's efforts so that together we may accomplish our mission. God deserves our best. **We are all in this together.**