

'Sanctuary,' 'Faith Trails' no longer UM ministries



Bishop Bob Hoshibata would like to communicate directly with Conference leaders. To do that he has established this email newsletter.

He encourages your feedback, comments, thoughts and ideas. Email him at Bishop@umoi.org.

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Dear Members and Friends of the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ!

A matter of importance causes me to communicate with you through this letter. I want to share some recent developments in the relationship between The United Methodist Church and the work of Chris Buller, who has been working with Native Americans on the Warm Springs Reservation, a ministry that has been supported by the Annual Conference.

Chris has shared with me his decision that he no longer desires to conduct his work under the auspices of The United Methodist Church. While he acknowledges the importance of the support he received from local congregations and the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference, Chris believes at this time that separating his work from the Church offers him the best opportunity for success.

This decision means that Chris should not assume that he can depend on United Methodist sources (churches or individuals) for any future efforts to raise funds for "Sanctuary" or "Faith Trails." Any request for consideration for funding from United Methodist sources must be routed through the senior pastor of the churches or through appropriate channels in the churches before any contact is made with any individual members. He will no longer identify "Faith Trails" or "Sanctuary" as operating under the auspices of The United Methodist Church.

Chris has also decided without hesitation or reserve that he no longer desires to be a candidate for ministry in The United Methodist Church. Additionally, he has no interest in pursuing licensing as a local pastor. The candidacy process and the local pastor licensing may have eventually led him into ordained or licensed ministry as a pastor of The United Methodist Church. This means that Chris remains a lay member of The United Methodist Church, but that he has no status as an ordained clergy person of our denomination.

I am deeply disappointed and sorry that Chris has come to the decision to move "Sanctuary" and "Faith Trails" away from The United Methodist Church and that he has chosen to withdraw from the candidacy process. The United Methodist Church both as an Annual Conference and through individual churches and congregations has invested a considerable amount of financial support and has offered other kinds of moral and spiritual support.

At the same time, I hold Chris and his family and his work in prayer and invite you to do the same.

In Christ's shalom,
Robert T. Hoshibata