

Oregon-Idaho United Methodist

The Voice of United Methodism in Oregon and Idaho

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Youth and young adults: transforming the church

Exciting ministries and growth are hallmarks of the church's work with youth and young adults at the local, district, jurisdictional, and national levels

A standing ovation and applause ushered in the denomination's new Division on Ministries with Young People at its first meeting last September. The division aims to "empower young people as world-changing disciples of Christ," to nurture faith development, and to equip young people for leadership by giving them a greater voice in The United Methodist Church. The 2004 General Conference approved the creation of the new division along with funding of \$6.6 million.

Following the lead of General Conference, a design team comprised of **Chris Kester** and **Marcey Balcomb**, Conference Youth Ministries Team; **Amy Edwards**, the Oregon-Idaho Young Adult Ministries coordinator; **Amber Samuel**, leader of the Campus Ministries Team, and **the Rev. Scott Harkness**, Conference director of Connectional Ministries, developed a proposal to establish a Conference Council on Ministries with Young People.

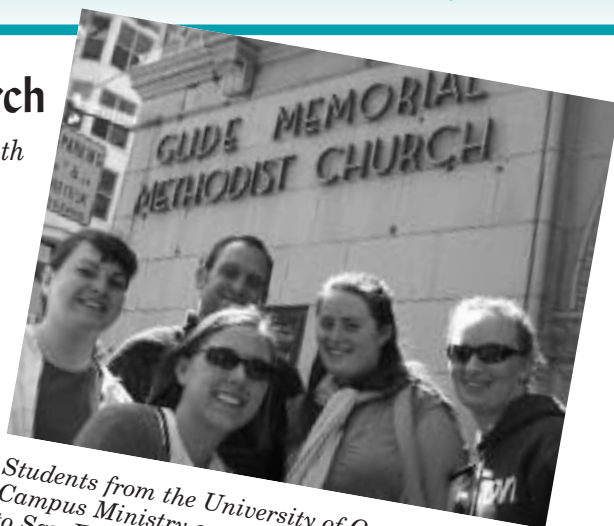
Dreaming of a church that would look at all people as God does, where young people across the globe are celebrated as partners in service to Christ, where young adults are welcome not just in words but in action, "the emerging vision," says Harkness, "pictured a Conference-wide council dedicated to coordinating, developing and advocating for ministries to, with and for young people from birth to age thirty."

Harkness explains, "The proposal was presented to the Conference Leadership Team at its Sept. 30, 2004 meeting. The CLT approved the creation of the council." He goes on, "The CYMP will bring together representatives of youth ministries, young adult ministries and campus ministries to coordinate efforts and to encourage ministries that relate to young people as they grow from newborns to young adults."

"As a council," says Harkness, "representatives from the age-level ministries will share information and resources, work together in recruiting and training leadership, and discern with each other how ministries aimed at one stage of life complement, build upon, and deepen the ministries aimed at the other stages of life." The council is in the process of organizing.

There are many exciting youth and young adult programs that already exist within the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference. Read about some of them beginning on page 3.

— **Linda L. Sullivan**



Students from the University of Oregon Campus Ministry on mission trip to San Francisco.



Young adults on a weekend retreat.



Craft master Nick Voorhees, Eugene First UMC, teaches crafts to his new friend Daniel.



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**"Boldly Making Disciples"
Annual Conference
June 8-11, 2005
Salem, Oregon**



Bishop Robert T. Hoshibata

Bishop Hoshibata would like to hear from you. He invites you to send comments and feedback about this article or other subjects of interest. Send your comments to Bishop Robert T. Hoshibata Conference Center 1505 SW 18th Avenue Portland OR 97201 or bishop@umoi.org.

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'Boldly Making Disciples'

The theme is set for Annual Conference and for the next four years

Dear Friends,

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

As the winter months melt into the warm revitalization of the spring, we prepare our lives for the coming celebration of our Easter resurrection faith! In many ways, we will celebrate newness in our lives. One of these ways is through the yearly gathering of the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference. This year, we will meet at Willamette University, Salem, June 8-11, 2005.

I look forward with great anticipation to our first annual conference together. I am pleased to share with you the theme for this, the 37th session of our Annual Conference. Calling us to a new emphasis on our purpose for being the church is the theme: **"Boldly Making Disciples."**

Although this is the theme for the annual gathering of lay and clergy members of the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference, I hope that the invitation to engage in disciple-making is received and accepted by all of us. You will be hearing about the theme as it sets the tone for our next four years. There is a sense of urgency about this call. We have long endured prophets of doom who declare that the days of the mainline denominations are over. Some have predicted that The United Methodist Church will no longer exist as worship attendance and membership continue to decline.

I have declared myself to be an eternal optimist. That means that I have not given up on the church that I grew up in and love.

The United Methodist Church offers an opportunity to know Jesus Christ in a distinctly Wesleyan way. Faith and works are joined together. The church preaches and teaches Good News and Good Deeds. Ministry and mission are tied to the mandate

to work for the common good. God's Holy Spirit is alive and moving among us as we engage in exciting ministries. In a world torn by war and disaster and hardship and loss, more than ever The United Methodist Church has a message of hope and love that needs to be spoken and lived.

And that is where you and I come in. We can hide behind the shrubbery somewhere, hoping we will not be seen so that we might not be held accountable for our actions. Or we can step boldly into the spotlight of our faith, demonstrating what it means to know Jesus Christ and to follow him.

You and I are called to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

There are many creative ways in which we do so as individuals and as communities of faith. I believe that we learn and grow in our disciple-making by sharing our stories and celebrating the exciting ministries that are taking place in our annual conference.

But let's not leave the task of disciple-making to a few in our churches. We are all called to be makers of disciples.

The theme **"Boldly Making Disciples"** will serve as a springboard to our ministry for these next four years. I anticipate that we will discover what it means to make disciples, boldly, with excitement and energy to spread our faith and to bring vitality to our churches for the transformation of the world.

I ask that you pray with me as we faithfully engage in ministry in the strong name of Jesus Christ! I am anxiously anticipating being with you as we work together, **"Boldly Making Disciples!"**

*In Christ's shalom,
Robert T. Hoshibata*

Youth and young adults: transforming the church

What you will find on the following pages is just a sample of some of the creative, exciting and innovative things happening in local ministry settings all over the Conference. This is by no means a comprehensive listing, but is representative of ministry with youth and young adults being carried out in Oregon and Idaho.

Young Adult Ministry takes off in Oregon, Idaho

A sometimes-ignored group finds more and more ministries tailored just for them

“Oftentimes,” says **Amy Edwards**, Conference coordinator for Young Adult Ministries, local churches don’t know how to attract young adults to their congregations, or if they have young adults, they are unable to keep them active and involved.” There is youth ministry for those in high school, and there is campus ministry for those going on with formal education, but there are often no programs at all to meet the needs of young adults ages 18-30.

Edwards has high hopes that our Conference can establish ministries to serve community college students, singles, young marrieds, working young adults and those who are unemployed. She sees part of her job as increasing awareness of this important and energetic segment of our population, a group that wants and needs to be considered and embraced by the church.

— **Amy Edwards**, Conference Young Adult Ministry coordinator



Amy Edwards (left) and Shannel Frazier work on publicity for young adult events.

What on earth is ‘Tluda Gnuoy’?

Literally it is “Young Adult” spelled backward, but that’s just the beginning!

Worship and fellowship designed for and by young adults ages 18-25 is what “Tluda Gnuoy” is all about. A team meets every Sunday evening to plan, practice and prepare for the worship and fellowship gathering on the third Sunday of each month at **Tualatin UMC**. The new ministry has been in business for five months. The number of participants has doubled since last September.

The idea of worship exclusively for young adults arose from **Melinda Beyers’** experiences at Camp Magruder. She was involved for six years with MADD (Music, Art, Dance and Drama) Camp, a camp for senior high school students. Since many who attended MADD Camp were not involved in a local church, she began to think about the lack of faith-building and fellowship opportunities for young people when they graduated from high school. Added to that was a concern for those who were involved in local churches where there were no other young adults.

“In both cases,” says Beyers, “these precious people are yearning for meaningful involvement with their peers. The lack of opportunities for them to meet in Christian fellowship became more and more unacceptable to me.”

A group started meeting last August. With help from Tualatin UMC’s pastor, **the Rev. Wes Taylor**, the group received permission to hold services at the church. They explored their own gifts and skills, brainstormed, researched program ideas, recruited others for music and technical assistance, and publicized the first service.

The planning team is brimming with ideas for reaching young adults. They are letting their lights shine for God and for the church.

To read more about “Tluda Gnuoy,” go to www.umoi.net; click on “Young Adults.”

— **Melinda Beyers**, facilitator, Tluda Gnuoy Young Adult Ministry
Tualatin UMC, Oregon

“They are letting their lights shine for God and for the church.”

Youth, Young Adult Ministries

The 'Underground' gains ground in Salem

The "Underground" is a place where young adults can feel safe and free to be themselves

At a time in their lives when many young adults are turning away from the church, perhaps from organized religion altogether, **Salem First UMC** is offering them worship where they can experience God.

Founder of the post-modern ministry called the "Underground," **Kirk Hurd**, who is also director for youth and young adult ministries at the church, says, "The 'Underground' is not a place, but an experience. It is an authentic experience of the God who not only creates, but recreates each and every day." The "Underground" has been open since January 2004 and has grown to include about 100 members.

The 'Underground' meets Sundays for 90 minutes starting at 6:04 p.m. in the basement of the Micah Building next door to Salem First. When you walk down the stairs into the "Underground" you will not find pews and stained glass windows. You will find funky carpeting, big pillows, flashy computer graphics and loud music—

and people from many different denominations. This experience is open to everyone.

The "Underground" also operates a website that reflects its unique character. Check it out: www.theundergroundexperience.org.

The Rev. Sue Owen, pastor at Salem First, says the church has a lot invested in the new program. Approximately \$15,000 was invested in transforming the basement into the "Underground."

She goes on to say, "The 'Underground' looks different, but the message is the same and the challenge of the church is to get the message to the people."

"What motivates the 'Underground' team," says Hurd, "is not when someone tells us that the music was great or that something looked clever or professional, but when real people experience the real God in a very real and moving way."

— **Linda Sullivan**



Kirk Hurd and the band at an "Underground" service.

BSU Campus Ministry joins Boise First in cooperative ministry

Pastor Claire McNulty-Drewes establishes cooperative ministry by going "back to school"



Claire McNulty-Drewes

The Boise State University Wesleyan Ministry has become a cooperative ministry with **Boise First UMC**.

Pastor Claire McNulty-Drewes has been appointed to oversee the ministry and so will be going "back to school!"

"Being a 'connecting' church," says McNulty-Drewes, "means that we share in providing ministries that are beneficial to all area United Methodist churches."

It would be difficult for every church to have a college-age ministry, but through the support and advisory leadership provided by all the Boise-area churches, a high quality ministry can be provided for our young people as well as extended to those on the campus who have no prior church affiliation.

McNulty-Drewes will serve both Boise First as associate and BSU as campus minister. Her pastoral gifts

enable her to fill a variety of roles. At Boise First, she will continue to teach, lead worship, preach, provide counseling and oversee children's and adult education.

Plans for activities at BSU include building a Habitat for Humanity house, offering weekly Bible study, inviting speakers to make presentations on local issues, and interfacing with other established groups on campus.

The Wesley Foundation is the only Protestant voice on campus which gives support to United Methodist youth.

"This is an exciting way to be in ministry with young adults and to spread the love of God in a safe way," says McNulty-Drewes.

If you know of a student attending BSU, please call Claire McNulty-Drewes at 208-336-9091 or 208-869-4684.

— **The Rev. Claire McNulty-Drewes**

Reflections on campus ministry

Campus ministry is the best hope for bringing students into to the church

Campus ministry is a vital outreach of The United Methodist Church. With the average age of United Methodists in North America at 65, campus ministry is an important way in which the church reaches out to young adults with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

The average age of United Methodist clergy in North America is about 54. Campus ministry is a vital way adults stay engaged with the church and have the opportunity of considering how God might be calling them into ordained ministry. These fresh, younger voices will help revitalize our denomination as they begin to exercise leadership.

In the past, young adults drifted away from church participation during their college years, but would find their way back as they started their own families. That return of young adults to the church has been declining for years. There is a whole generation of young adults who have no experience of Christianity or the church. Campus ministry reaches out to these young adults as much as it reaches out to students who have grown up in the church.

Generally speaking, young adults have a deep desire to have authentic experiences of God. They can sniff out hypocrisy and shallowness easily. They are drawn to people for whom Christianity is real and makes a difference in their daily lives. They would rather “do” Christianity than “be” Christian.

Campus ministers provide a place of Christian community and transformation for students. We study the Bible, pray, worship, volunteer, and laugh together. Through campus ministries, young adults are challenged to claim their faith as their own—not something pawned off on them by their parents or anyone else. We critically examine our faith to come to newer, deeper understandings of what it means to be a Christian today.

— *The Rev. Jeremy Hajdu-Paulen*
University of Oregon Campus Ministry, Eugene, Oregon

Read an article about the recent fundraiser for the Eugene campus ministry called “Choral Extravaganza” by going to the Conference website at www.umo.org; click on “Campus Ministry” under “Witness” in the left column of the homepage.



Jeremy Hajdu-Paulen

Oregon-Idaho Campus Ministries:

Jeremy Hajdu-Paulen
Wesley Foundation
University of Oregon

Richard Lang
Campus Minister
Southern Oregon
University

Claire McNulty-Drewes
Campus Minister
Boise State University

Elizabeth Winslea
Covenant Five
Campus Pastor
Portland State University

Gnirps...the re-miX, vol. 1 is on the way!

April 8-10 will find several hundred junior and senior high youth at **Lake Oswego UMC!** The brand new Leadership Team is putting a fresh face on “Gnirps,” which has been our annual Conference-wide youth event for the last 18 springs. This 19th year finds Conference youth ministries doing a “re-miX” of what has been most popular about previous gatherings plus a new format with more hands-on activities.

Participants will join others “On a Journey” as they travel to various “destinations” (six additional nearby locations) for activities such as performing arts, random arbitrary discussions (RADs) and Bible study, rock wall climbing, swimming, arts and crafts and more.

To concentrate the energy of new youth leadership, options will be included for two more sessions of “neXt” and a 21-hour “Expressions of Faith” Retreat for youth and young adults ages 16-23. Their boarding passes will give them entry to the cruise “carnival” Saturday night as they arrive in costumes from various cultural destinations and enjoy music, hang time and snacks. They will wind down later that night with a focused “celebration” of Christian community and local youth group time before heading for some much needed sleep. Sunday will bring worship with the Lake Oswego congregation.

For more information, contact **Marcey Balcomb** at marceyb@easystreet.com or 503-288-8906 or leave a message for the Leadership Executive Team at gnirpsremix2005@hotmail.com.

Youth growing as leaders and as disciples

The annual Senior High Leadership Workshop helps teens grow in skill, faith

Small youth group? Take heart!

Many UM churches are small or have only a few youth in the congregation. This is not unusual. The good news is that if you have even one youth and an adult who cares, your church can provide youth ministry with the help of a new book by **Marcey Balcomb**, Oregon-Idaho youth specialist. The book, *Single Digit Youth Groups: Working with Fewer than 10 Teens*, can be ordered at Cokesbury.

Other resources available for small groups are:

Flip the Switch (part of the *Faith in Motion* series) for mid-high youth.

Cardversations, *Spiritual Talks*, *Combos* and *Marking Milestones and Making Memories for Youth* are four other resources now available.

The UM Publishing House is making great strides in providing new, fresh, interesting and fun materials for you. Check with your church office for a catalog, or go to www.cokesbury.com.



Future leaders of the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference attend Senior High Leadership Workshop

Sarong: A garment consisting of a length of printed cloth wrapped about the waist that is worn by men and women in the South Pacific islands.”

One day during our Conference’s Senior High Leadership Workshop week each summer, you will likely find many campers and leaders alike sporting sarongs. And if anybody doesn’t have one to bring, don’t worry—several people bring extras. While having “sarong day” isn’t unique to just this week, it’s one of several things that make Workshop a unique experience each year.

Sponsored by the Conference Youth Ministry Team and hosted by our Oregon-Idaho Camp & Retreat Ministry at beautiful Suttle Lake in Central Oregon, youth spend an entire week participating in (and often leading) workshops that help them grow in both leadership skills and in deeper relationship to God.

When you place these experiences within the natural outdoor camp setting, this group of young, active and excited Christians shares an amazing week of learning, growing friendships, practicing leadership skills, singing, sharing life experiences and mysteries, worshiping, playing and renewing their whole beings. And, as if that isn’t enough, these shared adventures are often the seeds of life-long friendships which truly enrich their lives.

Watch for our young people as leaders in our churches, districts, and Conference activities. And be assured that the time, funding, and efforts poured into youth ministry are developing and nurturing some awesome, “faith-full,” and effective leaders to guide us into the future of our spiritual lives together as the church.

— **Marcey Balcomb**
Conference Youth Ministries Team

Read more about youth ministries on the Conference website at www.umi.net; click on “Youth” under “Leadership” in the left column of the homepage.

Youth from Eugene First connect with New Meadows UMC

What started out as a youth mission trip ended up in a special relationship

The youth of **Eugene First UMC** have formed a special relationship with **New Meadows UMC**. Last summer, as part of their youth mission trip, they spent three days in New Meadows during which they conducted a Vacation Bible School for community children, as well as worked on some landscaping projects for the church.

Then last Christmas and on their own accord, they collected gifts for the needy in New Meadows and sent them to us. They collected over 300 items!

This summer, the group will be back at New Meadows to deepen the relationships they have formed and will again host a VBS. The youth group at Eugene First is a remarkable group of youth and they are teaching us adults what it means to be connectional!

— **The Rev. Richard Fuss**, pastor
New Meadows UMC, Idaho

To read more, go to www.umi.org; click on "Youth Ministry" under "Leadership."



HEATHER PETERSON PHOTOS

(Above left, then clockwise) Andrew Mory plays a donkey in the Bethlehem story; Melissa Balding clowns around with her friend Chaira during crafts; Grant Jenkins helps enact the Christmas story using available props; Nick Voorhees teaches a craft to his new friend Daniel.

United Methodists, Presbyterians join forces to minister to teens

Two rural churches join together to help teens by providing full-time, meaningful community work

Richland, Oregon has a median age of 66—one of the oldest in the state. Halfway is one of the poorest towns in the state in per capita income. In order to serve this area, two small churches, the United Methodists in Richland and the Presbyterian Church USA in Halfway have joined together in ministry. They have one pastor—and one remarkable ministry to youth and young adults.

During 1991-98, the two small churches with a joint membership of less than 100, gave much prayer and over \$10,000 a year to provide summer recreation for teens that included wilderness activities and weekly Bible study classes. At times 60 of the high school's 130 students participated in Christian fellowship. Many teens found Christ during those summers.

One summer, the congregations received permission from the county court to provide work assignments for troubled teens sentenced to community service. Those teens were embraced by the youth enjoying summer activities and both groups worked together to help elderly people with home repairs. By summer's end, five of the court-assigned youth had received Christ and been baptized.

That program had all the hallmarks of success, yet something was missing. Once the teens were older and no longer participated in the summer programs, they drifted away. As some of these youth returned, broken and troubled, church leaders thought about a new approach to working with the teens. Instead of summer recreation and volunteer work, the leaders wondered about the possibility of providing youth with paid work.

In 1999, the churches added a summer work crew to the program. They hired four young women. The churches were committed to paying the girls a full-time salary, and workers' compensation, liability insurance and providing supervision. They advertised for work for donations. The first summer they landscaped one property and painted houses. They have been painting ever since. The work program made such an impact on youth that the churches eventually abandoned the summer recreation program for the work program.

Read more about this amazing youth ministry on the Conference website at www.umi.net; click on "Youth."

— **The Rev. Bill Shields**, pastor
Richland UMC, Oregon



Bishop Robert T. Hoshibata

“Young people are essential to our present as we seek ways to be the church of Jesus Christ.”

Young people are the church’s present and future

Bishop Hoshibata shares his ideas about a “young-people friendly” church

A frequently heard comment in church settings: “The youth are the future of the church!” More often than not, these words signal deep concerns and fears for the survival of the church. We assume that without more youth and young adults active in the church, the church will not survive. Might I suggest a change in our thinking: Young people are the church’s present as well as its future.

A number of factors are often present in a church that is “young-people friendly.” Essentials include:

- ◆ Leaders, both lay and clergy, who understand and appreciate young people
- ◆ Church facilities that offer a place of safety and comfort
- ◆ Worship opportunities that inspire and involve
- ◆ A congregation and church staff willing to be flexible about worship settings and styles
- ◆ Persons who see a ministry in reaching out to young people

And the factor that challenges most of us today: **critical mass**.

While in the golden days of our memories there may have been many young people pouring into Sunday school and youth classes, today there are fewer in church. It is not difficult to see why churches feel despondent about the situation. And while I have visited churches where there are dozens of young people present, I have also experienced churches where there is no one below the age of 50 present.

Each church is unique. There is no one solution that will work at all ministry settings. But let me offer these possibilities to ponder as we seek ways to become more “young-people friendly.”

PREPARE for it to happen: Consider your attitude toward youth and young adults. If your church considers them the “future” of the church, perhaps we need to shift our thinking so that young people are considered the “present.” If a young person were to walk into the church, what would she or he experience? Would there be worship to attract? Facilities to offer childcare? A willing congregation that seeks to understand the needs of a different culture? Openness?

PLANT the seeds. Who are the possible participants in a ministry for and by young people? Are there any young people who can be consulted? What are their views or opinions about ministry at your local church for young people? What would they want to see happen? Who might they invite? Plant the seeds for a new emphasis on youth and young people themselves. Might there be a possibility of a community-wide coalition of churches working together to offer a youth-friendly program? Several models exist. Have others been consulted? What information or advice is available to inform you and your church? I have seen situations in which one young person has made a tremendous difference in the way a church views itself and understands its mission and ministry. Just one person can make a positive impact on the way in which a church becomes “young-people friendly.” Is there such a person already in your midst?

PRAY for it to happen. While I mention this last, I also believe this is the most critical. Our prayers should be more than, “Lord, send us some young folk.” We need to ask God for wisdom and guidance as we discern ways in which we can be in ministry to those who are seeking meaning and purpose in life, who are struggling financially and socially, and who desire to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Young people are essential to our **PRESENT** as we seek ways to be the church of Jesus Christ. I continue to pray for all churches as we reach out in love to all persons in our communities of care. And I hope your ministries will reflect our desire to embrace our young people today even as we look forward with hope to ministry in future years to come.

*In Christ’s shalom,
Robert T. Hoshibata*

Conference leaders focus on building healthy churches

Oregon-Idaho UMs join 1,300 others from across the U.S. Jan. 27-30 to learn about creating and maintaining healthy churches

Faith formation, disciple-making and social witness are the foundations of healthy congregations, Conference leaders learned at a conference in Houston, Texas on building strong churches. Eighteen Oregon and Idaho UMs, believing that to be good leaders they must be spiritually grounded, wanted to learn how to change our “unhealthy” churches into vital and relevant churches that are truly making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Conference members attended several of the 84 workshops offering resources, techniques and tools for strengthening the health of their local congregations and the Conference.

One of the unplanned highlights of the conference took place at the suggestion of **the Rev. We Hyun Chang**, pastor of **Wesley UMC** in Concord, New Hampshire. He had gone to a nearby McDonalds for breakfast and was surprised to see a homeless camp under a nearby bridge. He challenged the gathered Methodists sitting in the posh new Hilton of the Americas to walk to the downtown McDonalds with him for lunch, buy two burgers and share one with a homeless person—not just hand one out, but have lunch with a homeless person.

He was spurred to action when he heard **Dr. Leslie Griffiths**, opening night speaker, encouraging UMs to continue **John Wesley’s** work on social justice issues. Griffiths, the dean of **Wesley’s Chapel**, London, was speaker at the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference Session in 2003.

Anne Kayser, a member at **Portland First UMC**, was one of those who took up the challenge. She sensed the Spirit’s reassurance that this was the right thing to do. As the group of about 200 walked to lunch, Chang made the suggestion that they invite the homeless people they met to come to dinner with them that night in the Hilton banquet hall! And that’s just what they did!

Imagine the surprise of people in the dreary homeless camp under a bridge near the fancy, new Hilton when they were asked if they’d share a McDonald’s lunch. Then imagine their

total incredulity at being invited to the Hilton for dinner! But about 100 showed up that night. They mingled with the UMs as they enjoyed their unexpected treat. Most stayed for worship.

Kayser was particularly moved by this experience. Read her entire, compelling first-hand account, and the observations of others who attended the conference, on the Conference website at www.umoi.org; click on “Leadership.”

The Rev. Scott Harkness, director of connectional ministries, and his assistant **Turella Woods**, were responsible for organizing the Conference delegation to the denominational convention. Other attendees were: **Joan Collison**, **Amy Edwards**, **Jonathan Enz**, **Janet Farrell**, **Sarah Harkness**, **Scott Harkness**, **Bill Gates**, **Annie Heart**, **Dean Hollomon**, **Anne Kayser**, **Thom Larson**, **Bonnie McOmber**, **Lyda Pierce**, **Wes Taylor**, **Al Trachsel**, **Regina Wheeler**, and **Tom Wogaman**.

— Linda Sullivan



The Rev. Dr. Leslie Griffiths greets a convention visitor.



Two men from a nearby homeless camp joined in the Friday evening dinner.



Sarah Harkness, Tom Wogaman, and Anne Kayser at Friday evening banquet.



Thomas Larson and Bonnie McOmber share a laugh.



Dean Hollomon, Wes Taylor, Al Trachsel and Janet Farrell prepare for dinner.

Nampa First creates new, simple worship

Nampa church ministers to developmentally disabled persons

On Nov. 28, 2004 a new worship service began at **Nampa First UMC** for persons with developmental disabilities. The gathering, called “Simple Worship,” is a free-flowing, Christian worship gathering bringing the special community of individuals, their families and friends back to the heart of worship.

Throughout Advent, weekly services were held on Sunday evenings at 6 p.m. Services included lots of singing, retelling of a part of the Christmas story each week, and an activity. Crafts were the favorite. Often participants in wheelchairs acted out the parts of the shepherds, angels or wise men. A time for fellowship ended the evening.

“Simple Worship” is a big hit with the eight regulars. Some were afraid the gathering would end after Christmas, but were delighted when they learned they could still attend “my church” after the holidays. During a discussion of new beginnings and resolutions, many worshippers made “coming to church each week” a goal for 2005.

If you live close enough to Nampa to attend, you are invited to drop by any Sunday evening at 6 p.m. Everyone in the Boise Valley, disabled or not, is welcome.

For more information, or to contribute through the sharing of talents, please contact **Jennifer Mercer** at hinote@att.net or **Rochelle Killett** at rochellekillett@msn.com.

— **Rochelle Killett**
Nampa First UMC, Idaho

Baker UM returns from Global Justice stint

Thinking she was going to work with a medical team in the jungle, Melissa Wheeler, ends up in China, most populated country in world

Melissa Wheeler, a member of **Baker UMC** in Northeast Oregon has recently returned from three months in Hong Kong working with female migrant workers from Indonesia and the Philippines. She also worked at Bethune House, one of seven shelters in Hong Kong for women in crisis situations.

Wheeler was part of a program called Global Justice Volunteers of the Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church.

Aimed at 18- to 25-year-olds from any country, the program offers short-term mission experiences of cross-cultural exposure, learning and service, with an emphasis on justice-related issues. Volunteers work in solidarity with members of the community and grass-roots organizations.

“I liked the goals of the program,” says Wheeler. “They send in groups of two or three to somewhere else in the world and partner with a grassroots organization that’s doing global justice work.”

Wheeler graduated from Baker High School in 2000 and earned a degree in anthropology with minors in religious studies and Spanish from **Willamette University**.

To read more about her experiences, check the Conference website at www.umoi.net; click on “Outreach.”

Church offers haven for parents of ADD/ADHD kids

Lake Oswego UMC offers once-a-month gatherings for support of parents

Two moms who both have 16-year-old sons named Alex with attention deficit disorder, met at an educational event for parents, relatives and teachers dealing with problems associated with the disease.

When the classes were over, **Suzanne Fagan** of Lake Oswego and **Stacey Bernal** of West Linn realized there was much more to learn and do, so they organized a monthly support group for parents of children with ADD and attention hyperactivity disorder. The group meets at **Lake Oswego UMC**, where Bernal works as Christian education coordinator.

The group provides a place for parents to discuss challenges, listen to others, learn and be supported.

To learn more, contact Bernal at education@teleport.com.

Drain, Yoncalla ‘sing up’ funds

Two Southern Oregon churches combine their love of singing with fundraising

The **Drain** and **Yoncalla UMCs** combined their great generosity with their love of singing to raise \$369 for tsunami relief. At each church the pre-service singing time was turned into a “song sale.” As usual, folks sang whatever song or hymn was requested, but each request was accompanied by a donation for UMCOR.

“I wasn’t too sure how it would go over,” said **the Rev. Dann Houghton**, pastor of the two-point charge. “I knew these two churches were generous, but I am thrilled with the response.”

The two churches continued the “song sale” through Jan. 9, when the first hymn of the service was auctioned off.

— **The Rev. Dann Houghton**, pastor
Drain, Yoncalla UMCs, Oregon

2005 Jason Lee Award nominations open

The Oregon-Idaho Communications Committee is soliciting nominations for the Jason Lee Award. The award is given annually to a person or group that has demonstrated excellence through work in or use of media that reaches beyond the local church; e.g., billboards, leafletting, radio, television, Internet, newspapers. Primary consideration will be given to accuracy, depth, and effectiveness of work in communicating the action of God through the church.

To submit a nominee, please complete the form that can be downloaded from the Conference website at www.umi.net; click on "Annual Conference" on the homepage. Send the form and a letter describing the contribution of the person or group to the life of the Church.

Nominations must be received by April 15.

The award will be presented during Annual Conference Session at Willamette University, Salem, in June.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact **Linda Sullivan**, Conference director of communications, at Linda@umi.org or 503-226-7931, ext. 27.



'Boldly Making Disciples' is the theme for the 2005 Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference Session

Bishop Robert T. Hoshibata will lead his first Annual Conference June 8-11 at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon

The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference will hold its 37th session June 8-11 in Sparks Center, Willamette University, Salem, Oregon. This will be the first time **Bishop Robert T. Hoshibata** will have presided over an annual conference session. Hoshibata was elected bishop in July 2005.

Annual Conference is the annual meeting of the Oregon-Idaho Conference. It is the place where lay members chosen by local congregations and clergy members in equal numbers set direction for the coming year, pass legislation that forms the business and mission of the Conference, and accept the 2006 budget. It is also a special time for fellowship, inspiration, reports, awards, celebrations. The theme this year is "**Boldly Making Disciples.**" (See *Bishop Hoshibata's column on page 2.*)

— Linda Sullivan

We are a "Can Do" people!

And here's one more way we "Can Do" mission together.

Bring a can or a buck for Salem hunger ministries when you come to Annual Conference this year. (Some churches may even want to collect a can or a dollar for each member!) Cans and money will be collected and taken to several hunger ministries in Salem as a way of saying, "thanks for your hospitality" to the city of Salem and its people.

Be a "Can Do" member. Together we are a "Can Do" church!

Mission Depot 2005 will help Liberians

The Annual Conference Mission Depot project this year will provide basic education supplies for rural schools in Liberia, West Africa

This year's Annual Conference mission project will be a partnership with LSP-West, a corporation founded by **Don Rogers**, a member of **Lake Oswego UMC**, which provides educational supplies for village schools and disburses them in Liberia through UMs and community channels.

Here's what Liberia schools need:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> pencils & pencil sharpeners* | <input type="checkbox"/> rulers, scissors, erasers* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> colored pencils, crayons* | <input type="checkbox"/> chalk, chalkboard erasers* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> slateboards* | <input type="checkbox"/> pens* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> paper (lined & unlined)** | <input type="checkbox"/> 70-page theme books** |

Also accepted:

- | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> binders | <input type="checkbox"/> solar calculators | <input type="checkbox"/> flashcards | <input type="checkbox"/> art supplies & books |
| <input type="checkbox"/> money to help pay for shipment and port fees | | | |

All items need to be appropriate for K-4 and for sites without electricity. Bring all items to Annual Conference, sorted by item, in see-through plastic bags, boxed in easy-to-handle cartons.

*new or used, **new only



(Above) The Media Center webpage. (Below) The Media Center staff: Volunteer Sue Chambers (sitting) and Connecting Ministries Administrative Assistant Turella Woods.



LINDA SULLIVAN PHOTO

You're invited to the grand opening of our new and improved Conference Media Center

This isn't your grandmother's media center anymore!

You've been patiently waiting for this...and now it's almost ready! The first phase of our new Media Center is going online. As this issue of *The United Methodist* goes to press, folks are feverishly at work customizing website pages, installing the database of over 1,800 titles, and figuring out how to use extra features to dramatically improve media service for churches and members. This new offering of the Conference website should be online during the early part of March.

You will be able to make requests online and receive email confirmation when orders are received and processed. You can maintain a "rental queue" so we know what you want and when, months in advance. It will also be easier to search and browse the library of kits, audios, videos and DVDs. We invite you to rate and review any item in the library and to read reviews by others. We look forward to your comments as we continue to improve media services for you.

Church members, committee leaders, teachers and small groups all benefit from access to the Media Center. Rediscover this "hidden" treasure, thanks to volunteer **Sue Chambers** and Conference staff member **Turella Woods**. Just go to www.umoi.org and click on the Media Center graphic. Contributions to help increase media center offerings can be sent to the Conference Center.

— Linda Sullivan

'Hands of Jesus' replaces 'Rejoice the Church at Work'

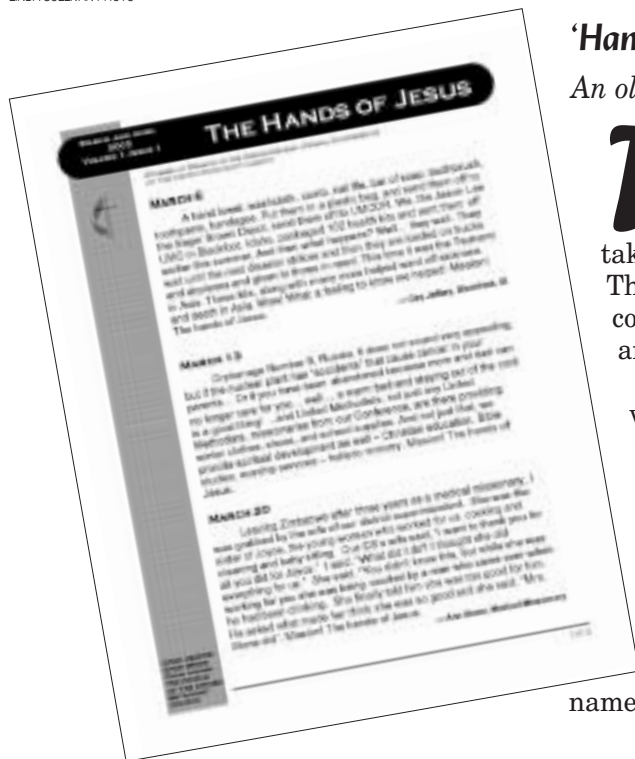
An old favorite retires, a new inspirational newsletter is born

The Rev. Kirk Jeffery, pastor at **Emmett and Sweet UMCs** in Idaho, will be collecting and telling the stories of Conference and local mission work in a publication that will take the place of the very popular "Rejoice—The Church at Work." The new bi-monthly publication called "The Hands of Jesus," will continue the story of how our church dollars are at work, but with an emphasis on local missions.

The Rev. Jim Monroe, now pastor at **Woodburn UMC**, who wrote "Rejoice" and its forerunners for about 30 years, retired from his author's duties at the end of last year.

Jeffery is asking for your help in sharing stories about local missions. Please submit stories, about 75-100 words in length, to Kirk Jeffery, kirk@emmettumc.org or mail to 1500 E. Locust Street, Emmett ID 83617. The new newsletter will be distributed through email and posted on the Conference website under "Nurture" every other month, but will not be mailed out on paper. To get on the mailing list send your name and email address to Linda@umoi.org.

— Linda Sullivan



A Van for Liberia

The Oregon-Idaho Conference is working hard to renew its special relationship with Liberians

As a token of our commitment to our United Methodist brothers and sisters in the war-torn country of Liberia, West Africa, we set out to purchase a van to be used at Camphor Mission, a church center deep in the forests. It will provide needed transportation to take people to the hospital, to bring children to school, and to provide a way for the pastor to visit remote villages in the area.

The goal of this project was to raise \$8,000 with which **Bishop John Innis** would be able to purchase a used van in Monrovia. Each of our Oregon-Idaho congregations received a suggested amount to contribute based on membership. We have almost reached that goal! Eighty-five of our 213 congregations have contributed a total of \$6,142.69. A gift of \$500 was also given by a trust and several other individual gifts have brought the total to near \$7,000. Gifts are still coming in and there is every assurance we will reach our goal.

There are 30 contributing churches that gave precisely 100% of the amount asked. Another 26 gave between 101% and 200%. Still another 10% gave gifts ranging from 201% to 300%.

Then there are the heavy hitters! Big in heart if not in size, these churches witnessed to their concern that we begin this renewed relationship with Liberia with a gift that expressed our dedication to a church that has not only survived the years of war and difficulty, but has grown. Their gifts ranged from 312% to **Yoncalla UMC** that gave 1,857% of its suggested goal!

In addition to Yoncalla, the big givers were **Mountain Home, Amity, Portland Wilshire, Eugene Wesley, Boise Amity, Portland Lincoln Street, Fossil, Clatskanie, Tenmile, Carus, Portland Bennett Chapel, Glenns Ferry, Haines, Harrisburg, Wasco and Portland Metzger.**

It isn't too late to be part of this love gift to Liberia. Funds for gasoline, oil and repairs will also be needed. Send your gifts to the Conference Treasurer marked, "Liberia Van" and be an active part of this renewal of our close fellowship with the church in Liberia.

— *Beverly Walker, chair
Bishop's Task Force on Liberia*

Reflections on Guatemala Mission Trips

The Rev. Larry and Linda Monk have spent a great deal of time in Guatemala. Here Linda tells why they keep going back

People wonder why Larry and I return to Guatemala year after year. On this past trip, I discovered why. On a cold, drizzly December day, observing four indigenous women at the Chamanchaj Salud y Pax Medical Clinic, sitting on a cold cement floor with a three-month-old baby and a year-old baby, I was reminded of what I see when I volunteer at the clinic. The women were speaking in Xiche, one of the 22 languages in Guatemala, so I had no idea what they were talking about. They were comparing the small plastic sacks of medicine, which had been prescribed either for them or their babies.

Later, I saw them outside sitting on the ground on a large, colorful piece of cloth. The weather was cold—very cold—because the clinic is at 7,500 feet. The women were all dressed in traditional *traje* (clothing): a large piece of woven material wrapped tightly around their waists, a colorful belt tied at the top, with the skirt reaching mid-calf. They each wore a colorful *huiple* top, covered with a sweater. They wore no socks and flimsy flat-heeled shoes.

I was wearing a long skirt, long underwear, a long-sleeved sweater, wool socks, shoes, a fleece jacket and my hat.

Two of the women were changing the older baby's diaper, which was a long, long rag that they wrapped around her waist and between her legs. They took a long time getting the diaper fixed just right. When they finished, all four women started wrapping their bundles in colorful cloth. The two younger women wrapped babies onto their backs.

Before they left, one of the women came over and gave me a *huisquil* (squash). They walked off. Perhaps it would take them an hour or two or three to get home.

This was a common scene I saw during my time in Guatemala. Watching those women reminded me of the abundance in the United States. The medical care, medicine, clothing, central heating, hot water, and transportation I take for granted.

I go to Guatemala each year so I can remember the faces of the people so I do not lose sight of them as I live my daily life in Oregon. I go because going makes me a less materialistic consumer. I go for the sake of my soul. I go because I need to connect with the people of the world who provide me with cheap bananas, chocolate, pineapple and other out-of-season fruit, and who wear inexpensive clothing and shoes.

Don't think I make sacrifices by going to Guatemala. I cannot fix the world, but I can help the Guatemalans with my time, money and presence. If by going I relieve the suffering of another human being, I have made a contribution to all of mankind.

There will be another UMVIM trip to Guatemala for two weeks in November. Join us!

— *Linda Monk
UMVIM volunteer to Guatemala*



LINDA SULLIVAN PHOTO

The Rev. Scott Harkness

“In order to be truly alive, we embrace Jesus’ mandate to make disciples of all peoples.”

Summoned to Serve

This article brings to a close my short series about our Conference mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ. It began with John Wesley’s own strong conviction that God had raised up the people called Methodist for a purpose and that God had a job for us to do. But along with that conviction was Wesley’s concern that as a spiritual movement we might lose our power and passion. In his own words, “I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid, lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion, without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case, unless they hold fast...the doctrine, spirit and discipline with which they first set out.”

In my first article I shared my understanding that we United Methodists are entrusted with a story. In the second, I wrote about my experience that we United Methodists have been gifted with the Spirit. In this last contribution, the claims made that as United Methodists, whose mission is to make disciples, we are summoned to serve.

The Summons

[God’s grace] is fully embodied in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is experienced in the ongoing creation of a new people by the Holy Spirit. John Wesley, Phillip Otterbein, Jacob Albright, and our other spiritual forebears understood this mission in this way. Whenever United Methodism has a clear sense of mission, God has used our Church to save persons, heal relationships, transform social structures, and spread scriptural holiness, thereby changing the world. In order to be truly alive, we embrace Jesus’ mandate to make disciples of all peoples. (The 2004 Book of Discipline, ¶121)

We people called Methodist have been entrusted with the story and gifted with the Spirit. One more thing: We have been summoned to serve. How do we keep from becoming a dead sect, of having the form of religion without the power? We serve. We do what we do best. We put the love of God into action. We move out with the pulse of the Spirit. We run the race, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. This is what we United Methodists are rediscovering today. We are at our best when we are serving.

Kennon L. Callahan rattles the Church from our insomnia and wakes us up to our mission. In his book, *Effective Church Leadership*, he writes:

“The day of the local church is over. The day of the mission outpost has come. More precisely, the day of the *churched culture* is over. I do not mean to suggest, obviously, that there will no longer be local churches...we will discover a hundred years hence that there are many, many local churches continuing in existence...What I am suggesting is that the way in which local churches have done business, conducted leadership, and developed administration is no longer functional for our time...

“As a way of illustrating this, think of yourself right now as [part] of a mission outpost. Imagine you are in mission work somewhere—China, central India, northern Africa or somewhere in Central or South America. Consider the radically different setting in which you find yourself. Consider how many of the practices and principles that used to work in local churches during the 1940s and 1950s in the United States would not work on that foreign mission field.

“Now see your present community as your mission field. Do well here the same mission work you would do somewhere else on the planet... Mission outposts may be of any size—small, medium, or large. What counts is not their size but their spirit. The spirit of a mission outpost is one of mission, whereas the spirit of a *churched culture* local church is one of maintenance.

“I am convinced the church is at its best on a mission field. Do not long for the return of a *churched culture*. The peace and tranquility, the pleasant programs and

endless committee meetings of a *churched culture* church is not where the church is at its best.

“On a mission field the church is lean and strong and focused, has courage and vision. In a *churched culture* the church becomes lazy and weak, timid and cautious, bloated and bureaucratic. The understanding of the nature of leadership is reduced to the principle of coordination. And coordination becomes the front—the code word—for caution.

“On a mission field the church is at its blazing best. God has blessed us greatly by planting us on a mission field.” (pp. 22ff)

Conclusion

We make disciples as we proclaim the gospel, seek, welcome and gather persons into the body of Christ; lead persons to commit their lives to God through baptism and profession of faith in Jesus Christ; nurture persons in Christian living through worship, the sacraments, spiritual disciplines, and other means of grace, such as Wesley’s Christian conferencing; send persons into the world to live lovingly and justly as servants of Christ by healing the sick, feeding the hungry, caring for the stranger, freeing the oppressed, and working to develop social structures that are consistent with the gospel; and continue the mission of seeking, welcoming, gathering persons into the community of Christ. (§122)

“...let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Hebrews 12:1,2)

I picture United Methodists a hundred years from now. Both Wesley and Callahan expressed their strong opinion that United Methodism will not disappear from the earth. But what is it like? What does The United Methodist Church in Oregon and Southern Idaho look like?

I choose to believe that as United Methodist disciples of Jesus Christ we remembered the story, “our” story, of faith entrusted to us; that the Spirit became strong in us, producing the fruit of love, happiness, justice and hope; and that the power of the Spirit was not smothered by institutional connection that figured out we are mission outposts in our communities and were able to adapt, to let go of our old familiar (but ineffective) practices and habits.

But you and I stand in between what is and what will be. As disciples of Jesus Christ, may we United Methodists run with perseverance the race set before us, looking always to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. May John Wesley’s worst fears about his movement not come to pass in us and in our congregations; namely, that we will exist only as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power. It certainly won’t if we will hold fast the story, live in the Spirit, and take to heart our summons to serve as we did when we first set out.

It’s time we be who are are. Brothers and sisters in Christ, there’s a race to be run!

—*The Rev. Scott Harkness*
Director of Connectional Ministries

“Now see your present community as your mission field. Do well here the same mission work you would do somewhere else on the planet.”

**2005 Annual Conference – June 8-11
Willamette University, Salem, Oregon**

An open letter

With a heavy heart I share my decision to leave The United Methodist Church. The church which baptized me, nurtured me, taught me to respect human life and all of God's creation has rejected me because I dare to be the person God created in me—an openly gay man.

When I began a journey toward ordained ministry more than two years ago, I thought the UMC was on the road to becoming inclusive.

The promotional theme, "Open hearts, Open minds, Open doors," seemed to indicate movement to validate all God's children, not just the ones who fit the mold of so-called church doctrine. I felt, if the doors weren't completely open by the time I was at the threshold of ordination, I could manage to avoid "The Question" and receive ordination in the church of my life.

I was sadly mistaken.

The year 2004 brought several events which turned the UMC around to a course more accurately described as "Closed hearts, Closed minds, Closed doors." As I struggled to understand the cumulative effects of the response to the Karen Dammann trial, General Conference, the November elections, and the Beth Stroud trial, I knew I was not likely to survive the ordination process—even in the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference which has been so very supportive. Through an intense period of discernment and discussion, I faced the fact: The United Methodist Church will not ordain an openly gay man.

As I make preparations to join The United Church of Christ, I want to thank the UMC for instilling in me a profound understanding that God loves me as part of an amazing creation.

The pastors, Sunday school teachers, youth group counselors—all did a wonderful job of nurturing in me a respect for others and a desire to serve.

I have been blessed with bishops who are indeed pastors, and they have been pastor to me on many occasions.

I know many in the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference support my call to ministry, but their hands are tied by *The Discipline*.

I have so much to be grateful for—and yet I leave with sadness for a church which hasn't followed its own teaching.

My prayer for United Methodists is heartfelt: May you see beyond "doctrine" to the amazing diversity in God's creation, may you affirm life and foster self-worth in the children of the church, may you reach out to include all those you have marginalized, may you truly believe in a church with "Open hearts, Open minds, Open doors."

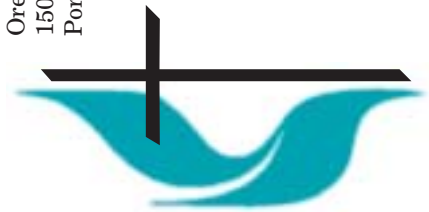
In God's radically inclusive love,
Don Frueh, Portland, Oregon



Don Frueh

Periodicals

Oregon-Idaho United Methodist
1505 SW 18th Avenue
Portland OR 97201-2599



The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference

*"Being an Invitational Church with
Open hearts, Open minds and Open doors"*

Editor's Note: *It is with great sadness that I watch Don Frueh leave the church he has served so generously for so long. I am sad for a church that cannot embrace everyone as God made them. And I am sad that I am required by The 2004 Book of Discipline to run the following statement (§1304.3): While persons set apart by the Church for ordained ministry are subject to all the frailties of the human condition and the pressures of society, they are required to maintain the highest standards of holy living in the world. The practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. Therefore self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.*

— Linda L. Sullivan