

Conference learns about life-changing worship

With shouts of "God is good all the time and all the time God is good," Dr. Marcia McFee kicked off a teaching moment during Thursday morning's morning worship.

Speaking on "Life-Changing Worship" McFee mixed music, media, stories and words during her presentation. "Worship is an honor and privilege to remember that we are not alone."

Worship needs to be transforming, in the aspect that we ought to be different than when we came in, and we should expect something should happen. "Worship is powerful. Worship is an invitation to soar," said McFee. "The more prepared we are the more able we are to let go. Worship is our invitation to simply be."

Worship should be meaningful and memorable. It is where our life story and faith story intersect. We should be capturing stories as a way to evaluate. "Worship is not about what we like and about what we don't like."

Worship allows for three needs: the need for ritual, the need to engage and the need for symbol. "We have an innate need to be a part of something bigger than ourselves," said McFee. "A good symbol will help us deal with difficult things."

McFee provided the conference with five nitty gritty aspects to having life-changing worship. They include:

Authentic spiritual leadership: Transitioning from story tellers to story dwellers; move from presiders to residers; and providing a safe place where people can share.

Attention to the journey of worship: Moving from checking-off the to-do list to worship as an experience and encounter with the holy. Vitality killers including forgetting it's all about the people's "work" of worshipping; too much of a single medium (words, singing, etc.) back to back; the length of a single style of medium; the attention to transition; unclear/confusing/too many or too few instructions; no intervention if a liturgical disaster; long sermons, long verbal transitions, short silence,

long silence, dead silence, preachy prayers and inappropriate tempos.

Making ritual "rich-ual": Going from guardians of religious practice to midwives of sacramental moments. "Every Sunday someone is going through a scary passage," said McFee.

Making it sensory rich: Transitioning from "looking at it" to "steeping in it." "The diversity pie is sliced in many ways," said McFee. We are surrounded by music, symbols, sequence, words, environments, all of which can enhance the experience of the story. "It's about doing more with what you have. People are yearning to go deep."

Thematic/seasonal planning: Moving from "plug and play" to intentional design. We need help in becoming ritual artists and need to allocate time to study, plan and implement worship at least twice a year. Basing the planning on the percentage factor, meaning we need to ask ourselves what percent of people in the pews is this the one connection to the church, the Bible and other forms of worship they will have this week? "It's everyone's responsibility."

Election of delegates to 2012 General, Jurisdictional conferences

These nine laity were elected to General Conference in order of election: Ed Fenstermacher, Kayc Mykrantz, James Ottjes, Patricia Miller, Ike Williams, Rita Gaither-Gant, Carolyn Johnson, Douglas Worthington and Ken Adams.

Elected to Jurisdictional Conference in order of election: Doris Clark, Anne Bunch, Jeananne Park, Melissa Zimmerman, Manet Shettle, Ruth Ellen Stone, Ashley Moreland and Megan Manning. One more needs to be elected.

These nine clergy were elected to General Conference in order of election: Frank Beard, Kimberly Reisman, Russ Abel, Gregory McGarvey, Beth Ann Cook, Michael Dominick, Mark Dicken, Cindy Reynolds and Chris Nunley. No Jurisdictional Conference delegates have been elected.



Thursday morning reports

Nominations gave first report

The nominating committee submitted its report of all those elected to positions on the conference teams. A second report will come for vote on Friday.

Review the nominations report in separate report distributed with conference materials.

CF&A reported financial strength

Kent Millard, chairperson of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, reported (page 24 of Conference Reports) the conference is strong financially during the first report of CF&A. He said in 2010, the conference received more than \$15 million of support through the conference tithes. It also received \$3 million in Advance Special mission giving.

The conference paid 84 percent of its General Church apportionments. This is up from 59 percent in 2009 giving. In 2010 the conference had a surplus of \$500,000.

Highlights of the report also included:

- In 2010, 629 churches gave 100 percent of their tithes. The conference received \$13.5 million. CF&A anticipates we will receive \$13.7 million in 2012.
- In 2012, the total conference budget (including districts) proposed is \$15.6 million.
- In 2012, we are committed to paying 100 percent of our General Church apportionments.
- We are injecting \$200,000 of the 2010 Conference budget surplus back into the 2012 budget.
- The Conference Board of Pensions &

Health Benefits will be subsidizing our retiree insurance subsidy in 2012 by \$500,000.

- CF&A identified three funds held by the Conference that were earmarked for Pensions and will be paying off a loan in full in 2011 that was costing us \$350,000 in interest per year.

CF&A also reported that tithes income is down compared to last year at this time. This year the conference has received \$4.3 million. Last year at this time, the conference had received \$4.6 million. We are down around \$300,000 in income.

Under the issue of conference policy, CF&A recommends a DS-Director salary increase in 2012 of .7 percent or a \$575 increase more than 2011. These salaries are now based on a percentage of the annual conference average salary.

Bishop centers teaching on conference theme



Taking the theme text of Micah 6:6-8, Bishop Mike Coyner said prophets, like Micah, spoke out when the nation of Israel was on the wrong course. That's the role of the prophet in the Hebrew Scriptures – correcting course.

Coyner said the text reminded him of the movie *Apollo 13*, where actor Tom Hanks radios back to Earth, "Houston we have a problem." Houston in return gave the stranded astronauts the information they needed to correct their course.

Likewise, we, as a people, need to get back into God's way of living. Coyner said what's common in the news is corruption, sexual misconduct, even corruption among religious leaders.

"We seemed to be more concerned about the form of religion than the substance of religion," he said.

It was similar in (John) Wesley's day. Wesley (the founder of the Methodist movement) coined the phrase: "Do no harm; do good; stay in love with God." His words echoed Micah's words.

Coyner then reminded members, we can't let the elections be a barrier to our new conference. We are no longer North and South. We need to "do to the best of our ability to elect our leaders in the best interest of the church."

We need to ask ourselves to work more and to "do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God."

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Thursday afternoon reports

Congregational Development

The task of the Congregation Development Team is to start new congregations and revitalize existing congregations. The team of five includes: Director Mark Gough and associate directors Sharon Washington, Steve Clouse, Ed Fenstermacher and David Neckers. The Indiana Conference is focused on the ministry that takes place in the congregations.

First Focus

- Revitalizing existing congregations through new worship services, relocating and working with vital mergers of congregations.
- In the Fruitful Congregations conference program, 49 lay teams and pastors shared learning – leadership development.
- CD's Journey program Step 1 will be offered to 50 additional churches in September.
- In 2012 a Journey Small Church Initiative will be offered.

Second Focus

- New worship communities,
- Stand alone plants and
- Second or multi-site plants

The Congregational Development team asked conference members to pray for each other's congregations. Gough con-

cluded the report by asking members to turn to another person and tell that person what you are going to do when you go home to improve your congregation's outreach. For more information, visit inumc.org/churchdevelopment.

Pastor Tony Johnson has launched a new church in Johnson County just south of Indianapolis named The Grove UMC.

UM Foundation of Indiana reported for the first time

Manet Shettle, president of the new United Methodist Foundation of Indiana, announced that the new UMFI was founded Jan. 1, 2011. Former foundation offices were closed at the direction of the previous annual conference session.

Seven of ten personnel positions have been filled. The goal of the foundation is providing financial resources for the church. Shettle said that the foundation was "blessed with transitional employees that stayed through the transition."

The conference confirmed the members of the UMFI board.

Loan and Savings Ministry is part of the UMFI and focuses on low-cost loans for our churches and agencies. Deposits come from church members, churches and agencies. They have loaned more than \$30 million dollars without a loan lost from small loans to make im-

provements to mortgage-sized loans. Buildings don't make new member; member make new members, she said.

The foundation is developing partnerships with the conference ministries of camping, Operation Classroom and the Rejuvenate project. The foundation also offers workshops on stewardships.

The foundation through the Retired Ministers Fund established in 1854 made a contribution to the annual conference of more than \$247,000.

Rejuvenate process outline to members

Michelle Cobb, Rejuvenate project director, reported the Rejuvenate project, now two years old, has a goal to provide for improvements in pastoral leadership in Indiana. The project offers educational resources on stewardship and financial management. It also offers grants to pastors to assist them with their debt, especially educational debt. Rejuvenate is a partnership with the Lilly Endowment.

For more information, visit www.rejuvenateindiana.org and click on Rejuvenate.

Rules and Structure reports on the conference leadership table

The conference approved in full without amendments the report of the Rules and Structure Committee found on pages 59-61. These items affect these areas of conference life: the Conference Leadership, Social Advocacy and Justice and Ethnic Ministries, and a major change to campus ministry.



Conference attendees purchase items at Cokesbury. Cokesbury is located in the lower level of Emens Auditorium.

The Indiana Conference Daily HUM News is a special service provided by Indiana United Methodist Communications. The newsroom for the Annual Conference is located on the basement level of the auditorium under the stage.

Your Daily News staff: Rev. Dr. Daniel R. Gangler, Enid Gangler, Erma Metzler, Matthew Oates and Linda Hoopes.

Thursday evening reports

New conference formed as legal entity

During the Thursday-evening session of conference, these actions were taken and reported by conference trustees and board of pension and insurance.

Trustees

Both the former South Indiana Conference and the former North Indiana Conference as legal entities and voting separately approved and adopted the Plan and Agreement of Merger to create a new legal entity known as the Indiana Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, Inc. (See pages 69-73 of the Conference Report book).

Following this action, Mark Dicken, president of the new Indiana Annual Con-

ference as a legal corporation, led the conference into a vote of the Plan and Agreement of Merger. The Indiana Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, Inc. is now a new legal entity. Papers have been filed with the Indiana Secretary of State.

Pension and Insurance

Greg Rittenhouse, chairperson of the Conference Board of Pension and Insurance, reported that 2012 will be the final year of the three-year Comprehensive Pension Plan holiday for the Annual Conference to meet pension obligations. He said, "This window was necessary for all conferences, including us, to meet pension obligations that, otherwise, would not have been met without major difficulty

due to the economic pressures of the recession." The report (on pages 51-58) was adopted by the conference.

Rittenhouse requested active clergy and other employees of the conference to complete their Quest Diagnostic health screening before Aug. 31 (now at annual conference) and complete the online Health Quotient from Aug. 1 to Sept. 30 at www.gbophb.org.

New Generation/New Leader task force

Adriane Curtis and Brian Durand presented the report and proposals from the New Generation/New Leader task force. The five recommendations include development of a database system for tracking of qualified and called individuals; a training session for all levels of leadership on how to empower and encourage new leaders; establishment of a full-time conference position; establishment of a team to carry this out; adoption of a 20% initiative in 2014 with a goal of 20% representation on leadership teams throughout the conference. The report was received and confirmed.

Reaching outside the walls

The Indiana Conference highlighted local church missions with a Mission Outreach Celebration on Thursday evening. A video showing churches in action and reaching outside the walls with trash clean up, building houses with Habitat for Humanity, neighborhood clean up events, community outreach, food drives, health fairs, recycling drives and general cleaning.

"We need to celebrate what God has

done," said David Neckers. "Keep on making a difference."

The annual conference is not doing a day of service this year. Instead it gave every registered attendee a bag that held a glove, a bag of candy and a piece of paper. Members are to pick up trash, share the candy with a note to people they come in contact with and use the paper for a prayer walk.

Rejuvenate project gifts two conference members

The Rejuvenate project announces that Don Whicker and Pat Lancet have been given gift bags by Rejuvenate for asking Director Michelle Cobb to talk with their cluster of churches.

Reminders

Don Lacy, author and retired pastor of the Indiana Conference, will be signing his books in the Cokesbury display Friday.

Watch where you park to avoid ticketing and/or towing.

What's happening Friday?

Welcome to the third day of the third session. We will begin Friday with Marcia McFee and the Conference Praise Team in worship starting at 9 a.m. Worship will be followed by reports. At 10, the conference will recognize the 50 newest retirees whose collective service to the church totals 1,161 years. Following lunch, Bishop Coyner will continue with his second Bible study at 2 followed by the Cabinet and Laity address and other reports. The sessions committee also will announce the date and place of the fourth annual conference session.

The evening hours will be spent in a Service of Remembrance and Celebration of Resurrection. Southeast District Superintendent Brain White will be preaching. The White family just a year ago lived through the death of their son, Ian. Throughout the entire day, ballots will continue to be taken until the delegates of the General and Jurisdictional conferences will be elected. Let us continue to pray for each other during this important time we spend together representative of The United Methodist Church in Indiana.