

The Arbor Vine

A newsletter for the Ann Arbor District of the United Methodist Church

To have "The Arbor Vine" delivered by email, contact the District Office (page 2).

Dear Friends,

My favorite journal, The Christian Century, to which I was introduced as a student at Iliff in 1972 by the pastor who was my supervisor for my Field Education piece, continues to provide me with food for thought, material that touches my spirit and deepens my faith in the God we know in Christ. I refer you to the "Century Marks", p. 8, "What Abe Might Say" article in the February 24th issue.

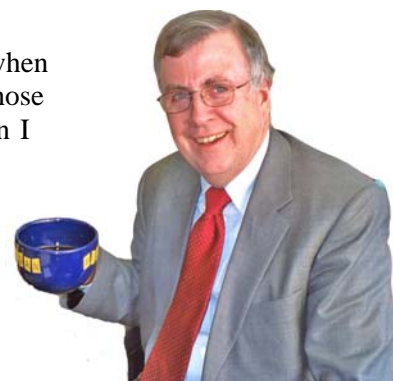
This feature notes what a Lincoln biographer thinks President Lincoln might say to the current occupant of the Oval Office. "... Take time for contemplation and reflection amidst the pressures of the office. Don't rush into solutions for the formidable problems. Value ambiguity, the ability to see reality in its complexity- that is a sign of humility, not weakness...." Sounds like equally valid counsel for we who seek to serve in the Church today in 2009, as well.

Is there any among us today who minister in the Body of Christ who do not wish we had a few more moments each day to reflect... plan... act with more intentionality to the ever-increasingly frenetic demands for our attention today? When we simply respond to the cacophony of noises, we are more reactive than thoughtful, more seeking to respond to the loudest noise instead of reflecting well-thought out responses to the issues that impinge upon us and those whom we serve.

In our increasingly complex and inter-dependent world, when we simply react with little more than a fleeting thought, we run a greater risk of having the problems we're dealing with become more difficult to resolve and more painful to deal with... before the next crisis de jour manages to distract us. While it is rare that we know all the facts before we need to make a response, we should not react too instinctively, either, for we can often find ourselves needlessly making a difficult choice that much tougher.

We clergy... and other religious leaders... often find it difficult to embrace ambiguity... for a variety of reasons. One is the notion that our faith gives us certainty. Another is that we tell ourselves that good leaders must be decisive and not hesitate in making strong and clear-cut decisions. However, the older I become and the longer I serve, the more comfortable I become with the notion of "ambiguity" and "mystery".

I'm also persuaded that our better decisions often come about when we take time to listen: to God, each other... and especially those who see the world... or the situation at hand... differently than I do. If I can set aside my need for certainty, my idolatry of self and the ill-advised need for certainty, I have found that the decisions are better, there is more "ownership" by all people involved and there often is something closer to "justice" as an end result of our deliberations.



- continued -

Macaulay's Musings

So what do you think? How might your ministry be different, maybe better, if...

- * You spent more time in contemplation and reflection?
- * You could see reflection and contemplation not as an interruption to your decision-making, but an integral part of it?
- * You could see that complex issues have always been with us... and we do little good for God's reign by prematurely pushing simple answers on very complex issues?
- * You could see ambiguity as a gift from God... and not as one more thing we need to wrestle into submission?

As always, I invite your questions or comments. How can we help each other to better embrace these truths for our season of service? May Christ's spirit bless you and all you serve in this Lenten Season.

Shalom,



Tom Macaulay
District Superintendent

The Arbor Vine

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Articles are due on the 10th of the month.
Comments and suggestions are welcomed.



The March Meeting Schedule for the District Superintendent

Mar 7	8:30 a.m.	Lay Speakers School
Mar 10-12		Cabinet Meetings
Mar 18	8:30 a.m.	District Committee on Ordained Ministry
Mar 21	8:30 a.m.	Lay Speakers School
Mar 23	9:00 a.m.	Conference Meeting for Deacons & Extension Ministries
Mar 25	8:30 a.m.	Dementia Awareness Training
Mar 26	9:30 a.m.	District Board of Missions and Church Extension Exec Board
Mar 30	9:30 a.m.	Area Ministry Team
Mar 31	10:00 a.m.	Cabinet Meetings

Tom's personal day is Friday.

Don't forget Lay Speaker Training

Saturday, March 7 and Saturday, March 21

Fowlerville First UMC, 201 S. Second, Fowlerville MI

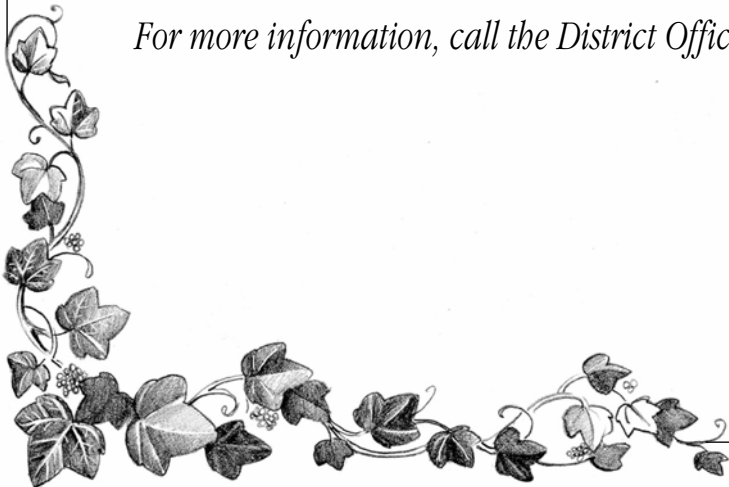
Basic Class

Refresher Class

“Lay Speakers Discover Spiritual Gifts”

“Justice in Everyday Life”

For more information, call the District Office 734-663-3939



2009 Detroit Annual Conference

Thursday, May 14 to Sunday, May 17

Please note: the original plan was to have the opening worship service on Wed, May 13. In order to save resources, that service has been moved to 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, followed by the first plenary session. The Service of Ordination and Commissioning (the final event) will begin at 4:00 pm on Sunday, May 17.

CONFERENCE MATERIALS: The full schedule and all registration materials are posted on the Conference website: www.umc-detconf.org

In order to reduce expenses, everyone must print out their Conference materials from the website. Packets will not be mailed to lay members, clergy, at-large members, etc. If you have difficulty printing the forms, please contact your church or the District Office.

Harry Denman Award

Nominations are being accepted now for clergy and laity for the 2009 Harry Denman Award. Forms are available at

www.foundationforevangelism.org

Please send completed forms by April 15 to Rev. Ray Wightman, 420 W. Main St., Hudson MI 49247.

Youth Awards

If you know an outstanding youth leader, nominate her or him for the District Youth Leadership Award from CCYM (Conference Council on Youth Ministry). See their website for all the youth news: www.daccym.org.

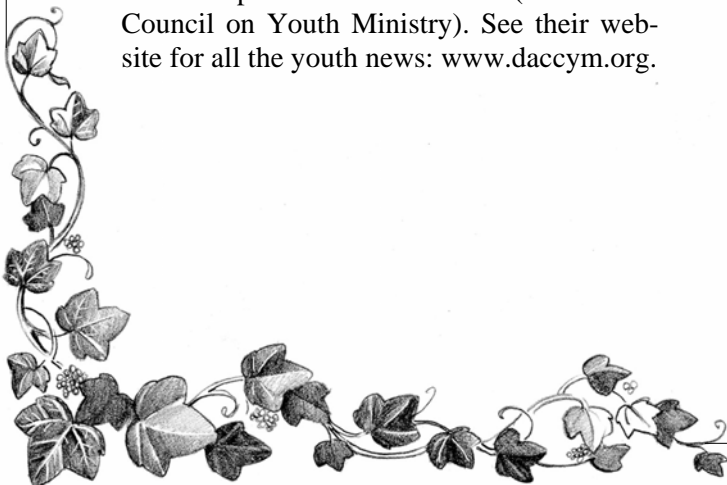
Rev. Tracy Huffman is new Conference Secretary

Tracy Huffman, Senior Minister at West Side United Methodist Church in Ann Arbor, will become the new Conference Secretary at this Annual Conference at Adrian College.

If you have documents to be mailed to her, please send them to:

Rev. Tracy Huffman
West Side UMC
900 S Seventh
Ann Arbor MI 48103

Linda Schramm, the previous Conference Secretary, has been elected the new Conference UMW President.



Update Your “Interpreter” Subscription List

Have you submitted your list of church leaders to receive Interpreter magazine in 2009? If not, it's not too late. If you're not certain, please check.

Be certain that your congregation has updated its list of leaders to receive World Service Fund-paid subscriptions to *Interpreter* magazine in 2009. *If there is any question as to whether or not you have updated your list or if it has been received at United Methodist Communications, please call our Customer Service team, 888-346-3862, or drop a note to: interpreter@umcom.org.*

Kathy Noble, Editor, Interpreter Magazine

Christian Education Position at Belleville

CHILDREN, ADULT, and FAMILIES MINISTRY COORDINATOR (part-time): Responsibilities include: planning and supervision of the church's children, adult, and family ministries while working with the Christian Education and other ministry teams. This includes coordination and supervision of a weekly Sunday school (K-12, Adult CE), a weekly Wednesday evening program, recruitment of teachers, selection, recommendation and purchase of suitable curricula, nurturing and supporting CE leaders and teachers, teacher training, preparation of annual budget, oversight and direction of a Wednesday evening Children's program.

Contact David Brownlee at
DavidBrownlee@sbcglobal.net

Prepare/Enrich

Life Innovations has developed a new customized version of Prepare/Enrich. You are not required to use the new version. It has an online format that is more flexible.

Learn about it at www.prepare-enrich.com.

Samaritan Counseling Center of SE Michigan

Remember that Samaritan Counseling Center presents a rich series of workshops that are well worth your attention. They include marriage preparation (using the new Prepare/Enrich process), lay caregivers, grief, and alcohol awareness. Find the details at www.samaritancounselingmichigan.com.

Church Secretaries Meet in Hale

The Fall meeting of the Detroit Conference United Methodist Church Secretaries will be held on March 17 at the Hale UMC. The topic is “Fire Safety and Emergency Situations, Do You Know What to Do?”

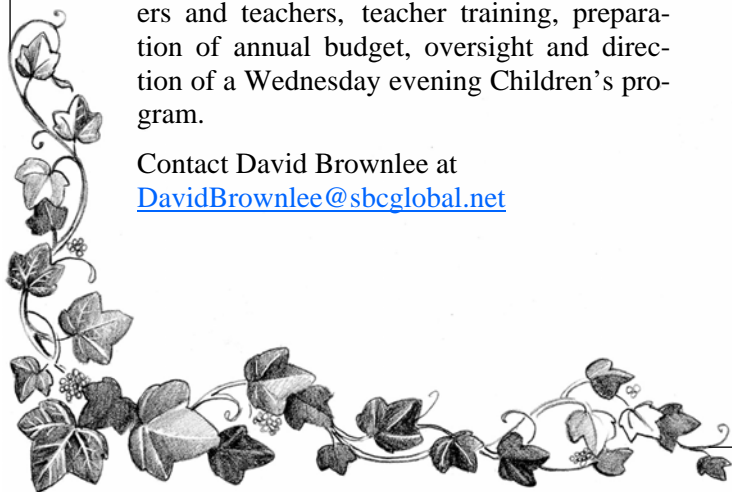
Learn more at www.dcumcs.org.

Confirmands' Rally

Saturday, April 4, 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

A time for youth to come together for fellowship and worship with others who are preparing for confirmation. Bishop Keaton will also attend. There is more information at the Conference website:

www.umc-detconf.org



Dementia Awareness Training

Free Wednesday, March 25, 8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Chelsea Retirement Community, 805 W. Middle St., Chelsea MI

The Heritage Foundation of United Methodist Retirement Communities invites UM pastors from the Ann Arbor District to attend a special half-day workshop on Dementia Awareness. Dr. Bruno Giordani, Clinical Core Director of the University of Michigan Alzheimer's Research Center, will present the basic fundamentals of this disease and provide insight about early warning signs. He will also share the latest exciting developments in Alzheimer's research.

8:30 a.m. - Continental Breakfast

9:00 a.m. - Training Session

11:15 a.m. - Keynote Address

12:15 p.m. - Lunch

Please RSVP by March 16.

Keep Making Peace

Israelis, Palestinians, and United Methodist

Saturday, March 21, 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Central UMC, Lansing

A workshop jointly sponsored by the Boards of church and Society in the Detroit and West Michigan Conferences

Keynote speaker is Anna Baltzer, who will present "Life in Occupied Palestine: Eyewitness Stories and Photos."

Additional speakers include Imam Mohammed Mardini, Lydia Wylie Kellermann, Rev. John Boley

\$30 for family, \$20 for individual,
free for students

Contact John Boley for more information:
989-773-6934 or jboley@mtpfumc.org

Encouraging the Joy of Generous Giving

This stewardship event is presented by the United Methodist Foundation of Michigan

Saturday, March 21, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm

Highland UMC, 680 Livingston Rd.
Highland MI

with Dr. Wayne C. Barrett and David S. Bell
from the UM Foundation and

Craig Sharp, Vice President, Merrill Lynch

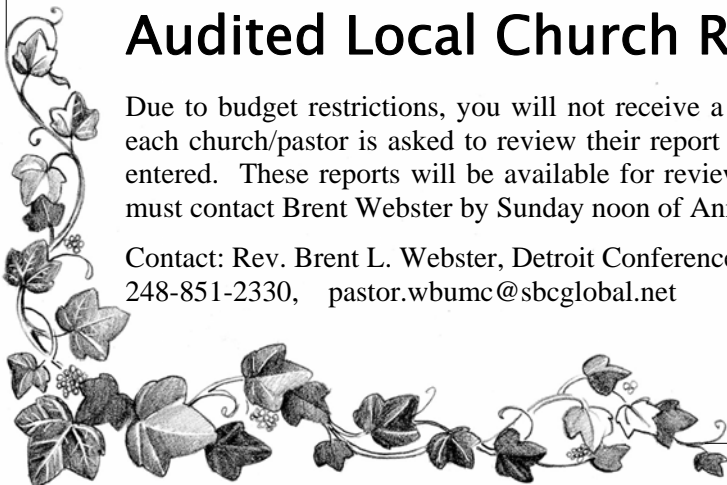
RSVP to info@umfmichigan.org

\$10 per person, payable at the door

Audited Local Church Reports for 2008

Due to budget restrictions, you will not receive a copy of the audited report by mail. Instead, each church/pastor is asked to review their report online at the same website that the data was entered. These reports will be available for review by April 1st. If you have a correction, you must contact Brent Webster by Sunday noon of Annual Conference week end.

Contact: Rev. Brent L. Webster, Detroit Conference Statistician
248-851-2330, pastor.wbumc@sbcglobal.net



The Haiti Container Project

The Annual Conference is again accepting donations for Haiti. The Haiti Container contributions are limited to basic UMCOR kits. We also collect choir and pastor robes, and used eye glasses in a case. These all must be in new or good condition. Your church may also purchase medicine boxes.

See the front page of the Conference website for specific information:
www.umc-detconf.org

With joy and thanksgiving we share God's Bounty.

DAC Hunger/UMCOR
Rev. Dr. Margie R. Crawford

Questions: crawford_margier@hotmail.com

Haiti Needs You

Teacher Salary Support needed at Haitian Methodist Schools

Teachers in Methodist run schools in Haiti are way behind on salary compensation for the year 2008.

- In some circuits, teachers have not been paid anything for the 2008 school year.
- Others have been given only half their compensation.
- They continue to work because of their dedication to the children and their faith in God.

If you wish to contribute to this support of teacher salary, send funds to:

UMCOR Advance 3019695
"Haiti-Teacher Salary Priority" in the memo area of your check

This information comes from the Michigan Area Task Force.

Curtis Bartz

You're invited...

to the Spring VIM trip with the Haiti School Project April 15-22, 2009

The team will visit the Jeremie Circuit in Haiti and work on projects at the John Wesley School. They will also tour local mission sites and meet people in various settings. The team will be led by Pat Grainger. If you would like to join the Haiti School Project team as they work and worship with our Haitian partners in mission, contact Curtis Bartz for information and an application. Call (313) 278-4849 or email jbartz@mich.com. Leader Pat Grainger may be contacted at PPGTIPS@aol.com.

to be part of Operation Classroom in Liberia this summer

This teacher training seminar will spend two weeks in Liberia. Contents and place will depend on those who want to participate. The projected cost per person is between \$3000 and \$3200, depending on the airfare. Contact Carolyn Wagner at the Operation Classroom Office.

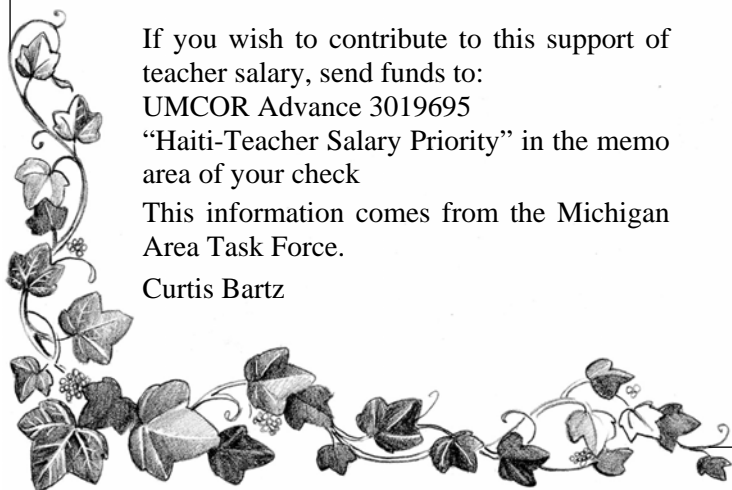
765-436-2805 or ccwagner@hotmail.com

to become a pilgrim on the 2009 Walk to Emmaus

Emmaus is a three-day experience of New Testament Christianity. Emmaus lifts up a way for our grace-filled lives to be lived and shared with others.

The Flushing UMC will be hosting a walk for men on March 12-15. The women's walk will be on March 26-29. The Port Huron UMC will have walks in October.

For more information see their website:
www.emmausseem.org.



Michigan Area Resource Center News

The Michigan Area Resource Center newsletter is available online at: www.marc-web.org. MARC is a music and audiovisual lending library. They have new and useful offerings with each newsletter, and have 3300 video titles overall, plus sheet music and other resources.

MARC is offering half price on memberships if your church has not had a membership in the last five years. Contact them at marc@wmcumc.org or on their website for more information.

March Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 2 Laura Hice
- 2 Susan & Jim Walker
- 4 Doris Kraushaar
- 5 Jinah Choi Chun
- 8 John Grenfell III
- 8 Susan Sharai
- 12 Bob Dister
- 14 Joanne Bartelt
- 14 David McKinstry
- 15 Mary Lou Jury
- 15 Carol Abbott-Ness
- 16 Maria Kesson
- 17 Matthew Hook
- 17 Erin Khang
- 18 Carolyn Harris
- 18 Joyce Weiss
- 24 George Tannery
- 24 Barbara Bowen
- 24 Sue Rice
- 26 Beverly Forsyth

Talk Given by Shane Clairborne

Wednesday, March 25 at 7:30 p.m.

Ann Arbor First UMC - 120 S. State Street.

Speaker and prominent Christian activist Shane Claiborne is a founding partner of The Simple Way Community, Board member of the Christian Community Development Association, and author of thoughtful, provoking books including *The Irresistible Revolution* and *Jesus for President*.

With a deft mix of humor and pathos, Shane both shines a light on the tragic messes we've made of our world and presents the tangible hope that a better world is possible.

Contact Rev. Eric Stone

eastone@umich.edu; 734-668-6881

"Y Gathering"

All District Youth Groups are invited to join in a worship service with communion, fellowship time, and a performance by the Strangely Warmed Players at Ann Arbor First United Methodist Church on **Sunday, March 8 at 5:45 p.m.** The theme is "Forgiveness." Pancake supper included for \$1 per person.

Contact Jesse Steed at:

jsteed@westside-umc.org.

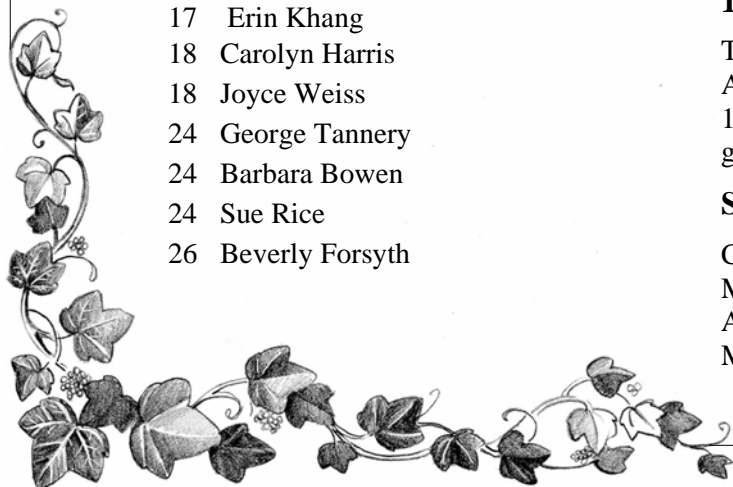
Fun at a Church Near You

133rd Annual Egg Supper

Try the omelets at North Lake UMC on Friday, April 3 from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. Located at 14111 N. Territorial Rd in Chelsea. Donations go to camp and mission scholarships.

St. Patty's Day at Dixboro

Corned beef and Cabbage Dinner on Saturday, March 14 at Dixboro UMC, 5221 Church Rd, Ann Arbor at 5:30 p.m. For reservations call May at 734-663-5269.



Upcoming Workshops, Seminars, & Trips *that are not mentioned elsewhere in The Vine*

March 5-7

Bridging the Gap: Connecting Church and Academy

from GBHEM in Naperville IL

Information: events@gbhem.org

April 20-25

A River Deep and Wide: Christian Spiritual Practices

Scarritt-Bennett Center, Nashville

“In a world of increasing multicultural diversity, how shall the Church respond?”

Information: www.upperroom.org/river

April 30

Burning Bush peer learning group for large membership churches

Gaylord Opryland Hotel, Nashville TN

From GBOD, revitalizing congregations

Registration: www.gbod.org/du Information: mmcdonald@gbod.org

May 4-8

Mediation Skills Training for Church Leaders

in Maumee, Ohio by the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center

Later: “Family Emotional Process” and “Leading Change through Self-Differentiation”

Information: www.LMPeaceCenter.org

May 8

Maximum Impact Simulcast

Motivational speakers include Jack Nicklaus, Tony Blair

Contact: Matt Hook, matt@dexterumc.org Video clip on www.injoy.com/mis

June 21-27 and July 12-18

Young Leaders Initiative: It's Time for Motown!

Youth mission work in the City of Detroit

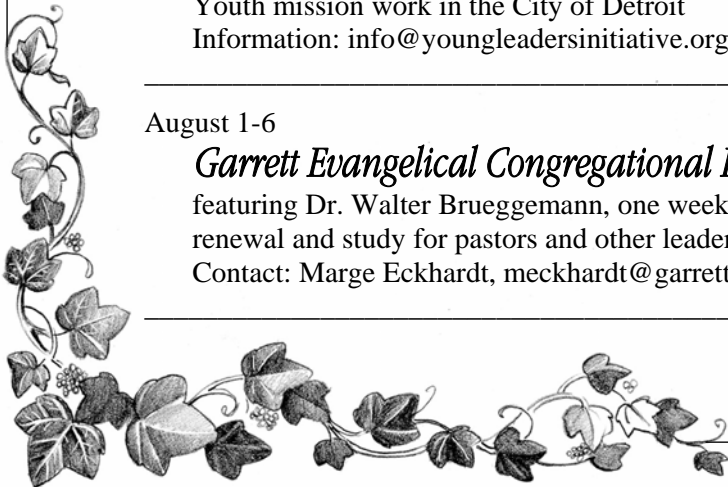
Information: info@youngleadersinitiative.org

August 1-6

Garrett Evangelical Congregational Leaders Institute

featuring Dr. Walter Brueggemann, one week on Michigan's Little Traverse Bay for \$275 renewal and study for pastors and other leaders, especially for Local Pastors

Contact: Marge Eckhardt, meckhardt@garrett.edu



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