

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH UNION MISSION MEMO

Spring 2008

Volume 10, Issue 1

New Mission Statement Adopted

After a year of discussion and planning, the UM Church Union Board of Directors agreed to a new Mission Statement at its January 2008 meeting. Since 1894, the purpose of the UMCU has been "to promote evangelization, to conduct missionary and social service, to aid churches, to assist in establishing new churches, to further the connectional life of Methodism, and to cooperate with other Evangelical Churches."

This is the new statement:

Our mission is to serve as a catalyst to build strong, vibrant congregations and agencies in the Pittsburgh region, seeking the transformation of lives and communities.

The new mission intends to encompass dynamic change. The Board also adopted a Vision statement: ***By 2011, the Church Union will serve as a catalyst for six (6) transforming ventures.***

Next steps in the planning process begun early in 2007 will be consideration of communicating to the Church Union constituency the name and mission of this ministry. Watch for continuing developments.

METOWERS NEW LEADER

Kathryn E .Williams has been named Community Manager of Metowers in Avalon. She has 12 years of service with the agency prior to this new job. Kathy is a member of St. Paul UM Church, Allison Park.

HOMITSKY APPOINTED New Ministries Planned

Bishop Thomas Bickerton has appointed the Rev. Larry P. Homitsky as President of the UM Church Union and as Pastor of the Calvary UM Church, Pittsburgh, effective July 1. In this new position, Larry will lead in the development of ministries on Pittsburgh's Northside. A partnership will be formed that encompasses the congregations and agencies of the Northside and center city. The UMCU mission and ministry for metropolitan Pittsburgh and Allegheny County will continue to build capacity.

Rev. Homitsky was ordained an Elder in the W. PA Annual Conference in 1980. Following graduation from Thiel College and Drew Theological School, Larry has served appointments in Mt. Pleasant, Wesley; Wilksburg, South Ave.; Kittanning, First; Harrison City, Community; Dutilh; and for the last 11 years as Conference Council Steward.

"I look forward to Larry's leadership," said Terry Lyon, chair of UMCU Board. "As we move along our envisioned path by serving as a catalyst for transforming change, I am sure we will sense God working in our midst. Come and See!"

The city will receive renewed attention with the emphasis on assisting congregations and agencies to serve the people of the communities in which they are located. It is expected that United Methodist presence in the city will be asserted in a new way with the appointment of Rev. Homitsky.

MEMBER AGENCIES

**Bethany House
Ministry**
Northview Heights

**Bethany House
Ministry**
St. Clair Village

Methouse
Munhall

**Methousing
North**
Northside
Pittsburgh

Metowers
Avalon

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Pre-School Children Served

Grants totaling \$40,160 have been given to 86 low income children enrolled in eligible pre-schools in the Allegheny County and Western PA. As a certified Pre-K Scholarship organization, the UM Church Union provides these scholarships that have come through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit program administered by the PA Department of Economic and Community Development. Businesses can off-set taxes owed to the state with donations to certified organizations such as the Church Union. For the 2007-2008 academic year, the Church Union received funds from the UPMC Health Care Network (\$20,000), Equitable Resources (\$20,000), WV Financial Bank Corp (\$5,000) and the West View Savings Bank (\$4,500)

In addition to 14 Bethany House grants, funds were distributed to the following United Methodist pre-schools:

| | |
|---|----|
| Ark, Community Church, Harrison City | 2 |
| MUSA, Homestead | 8 |
| First Bethel Church, Bethel Park | 1 |
| Mother's Day Out, Lakeside Church, DuBois | 1 |
| Creative, Warren, PA First Church | 1 |
| Happy Time-Blairsville First Church | 10 |
| Baldwin Community Church Pre School | 3 |
| Clairton First Church Pre School | 5 |
| Port Vue Church Christian Pre School | 29 |
| Ingomar Child Enrichment Center | 3 |
| Grace Promise Grace Church, Warren, PA | 6 |
| Salem UM Church, Wexford | 3 |

This program is directed especially to children and their families whose incomes make enrollment in pre-school education very difficult.

When Did We See You Hungry?

Under the leadership of Clara Baehr, and with 30 volunteer congregations, the Northside Congregate Feeding program served 11,325 meals in 2007. In '08, the program continues 3 days each week.

TRUST FUNDS DISTRIBUTED

Board Sets Amounts for 2008

At its March meeting, the Church Union Board of Directors set the 2008 Trust Fund budget. An amount of \$71,334 is available for distribution from the Jolly Farm Trust and the Niebaum Fund. This is the breakdown of funds:

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Bethany House Ministries | \$28,000 |
| MUSA | \$13,000 |
| NS Feeding Program | \$ 200 |
| Ward Home | \$ 2,500 |
| New Programs | \$20,500 |
| Contingency Funds | \$ 2,854 |
| Administration | \$ 4,280 |
| TOTAL | \$71,334 |

NEW PROGRAM INITIATIVES

The Trust Funds Budget will provide about half of the amount needed to fund the programs the Church Union is supporting in 2008. The 2008 Program Budget totals \$43,100. This includes \$16,400 for support of Church of Our Saviour, and \$9,500 for "Transforming Ventures" (see Vision Statement). UMCU supports the Etiquette and Manners program, "A Winner in You" conducted by the New Dawn Outreach Ministries. Sixty students are enrolled in the program that is held at New Hope UM Church. Rev. Diana Marshall, executive of New Dawn Outreach, leads the program. The Programs Budget also supports Eighth Avenue Place, the ministry of reconciliation located in Homestead. An allocation of \$7,500 provides the rent, utilities and insurance for this effort.

IT TAKES MONEY!

The Program Initiatives needs financial support. Everyone is invited to help out with gifts small and large. The resources of the Church Union are stretched but still doing important ministry. Please use the enclosed envelop.