

TEAMMATES

Greater Ohio District Ministry Bulletin
February, 2007

Of this you can be sure: if you pastor in Greater Ohio, cold temperatures and snow/ice covered roads will have an impact on your church attendance sometime every winter. And when it does I have this advice for you, don't lose any sleep over it. There is no use sweating the stuff you can not control. Winter in Greater Ohio often brings less than ideal weather and it often arrives around 8am on Sunday. If you can not view Sunday forecasts without getting an ulcer you might want to consider moving further south for your health's sake.

It is far better to focus your attention on those areas where you have an influence on church attendance; areas like quality children's programming, dynamic preaching, inspiring worship and an inviting atmosphere. You can't keep people away from places with tremendous appeal!

Speaking of which, on a scale of 1-10 (10 being excellent) how would you rate the appeal factor of your Sunday morning church experience? Does the sermon capture the attention of the listener? Do people sing enthusiastically? Is there a healthy buzz among the people as they meet and greet? Do people seem to WANT to be present or is it more like an obligation? It is probable that there is at least one area associated with your Sunday morning experience that could use some improvement, maybe more. An improvement in that area(s) could contribute to the appeal factor and increased attendance (even on lousy Sundays, weather-wise).

Consider beginning an intentional effort to bring excellence to every area of your church's ministry. However, no matter how good or not so good your situation is, limit your improvements to no more than two areas at any given time. Gather together the workers from that area and get their input. Talk through what is working and not working. Decide together on a plan for improvement and then work the plan, stopping periodically to evaluate the plan and make mid-course adjustments.

The ministry of the church is a direct reflection on our view of God. Let's give it our very best!

RESIDENCY ONE COMPLETE

I arrived home from school at 5:50am Saturday morning the 27th. The first set of classes for my D.Min. program were nothing short of awesome! Dr. Gary McIntosh and Dr. George Hunter served as the professors. They are veritable walking encyclopedias of church growth knowledge and history. By my estimate they are probably among the top ten church growth experts in the country. I consider it a privilege to be able to study under men of this stature. Next year the teaching combo will be Gary McIntosh and Ed Stetzer. (If you were at the Gathering you will remember him as the Thursday morning rally speaker.) Next year's residency will focus on Church Multiplication.

Between now and then (January 14, 2008) I have to read 6,000 pages of text (2,000 to finish for this residency plus 4,000 for the next), write a critical book review, and complete a project that will involve conducting a local church consultation on a cluster of district churches. I will also need to complete two graduate level classes through Indiana Wesleyan University. It is a lot but it is all practical material and extremely relevant to my service as your superintendent.

PASTORS' GATHERING '07

The Gathering is now history, but WOW, what a memory! The Gathering exceeded all of our expectations in terms of participation (more than 2000 in attendance), quality of programming and fun factor. The General Church pulled out all of the stops and provided a first class experience for all present.

In an evaluation meeting with district superintendents and general superintendents following the Gathering the overwhelming opinion was that another Gathering should be planned. The general consensus was to give thought to an event about four years from now in the Orlando area. Investigation will be conducted regarding this possibility.

GOLD INSTITUTE

GOLD Institute will feature “Pentateuch” in March, “Pastoral Counseling” in April, and “General Epistles” in May.

Classes cost \$100 plus books. They are taught by excellent teachers and provide a great vehicle for ministerial training, Christian worker enhancement or a time of refreshment. You may register on-line or by calling the district office.

LEADERSHIP RALLY

Dr. George Hunter will be the featured speaker for the next Leadership Rally. It will be held at the District Ministry Center on Sunday evening, March 4th beginning at 5pm. The rally will continue the theme of evangelism that has been stressed throughout this year. This is an event that you will not want to miss. I had a chance to hear a preview of the material that Dr. Hunter will present at the Rally. It is important that you, as well as your laymen, hear what he has to say. All churches are invited to participate. Please email me by February 26th to let me know your plans to attend and how many laypersons will be joining you.

LIMA ZONE RALLY

The churches of the Lima Zone will meet March 11th at the Lima Trinity Wesleyan Church for a concert featuring the Kentucky Mountain Bible College Choir. An invitation is extended to all churches outside the zone to join them. The service will begin at 5pm.

PASTORAL VOTE SUNDAY

If your pastoral appointment expires this year you should be planning for a pastoral vote. The district date for all votes is Sunday, March 25th. A packet of information to facilitate the vote is available through the office. Please notify the office and one will be sent to you. The Pastoral Vote is to be conducted by the Vice-Chairman of the Local Board of Administration unless there is a request for a district representative to be present.

INFLATABLES

If you are looking for something exciting to add to that VBS carnival or church picnic, consider renting the district's inflatable games. A two-tier pricing structure makes them affordable for churches of all sizes. Four games are available: slide, obstacle course, moon walk and joust. Contact the district office regarding pricing and available dates.

CHURCHES LOOKING FOR PASTORS

The following churches will be searching for a pastor this spring: Akron Summit; Milford Mulberry; Rittman; and Sunbury. If you have an interest in being considered at one of these churches please contact me. I will need a current resume for presentation to the church.

PRAYER AND FAST RETREAT

Our second annual Ministers' Prayer & Fast Retreat will be held Monday and Tuesday, February 26

& 27. It will be held at St. Therese's Retreat Center in east Columbus. This was a very special time last year as ministers joined together in times of corporate and private seasons of prayer. I want to personally invite you to include it on your calendar as a time of personal spiritual formation at the onset of the Lenten Season. Remember, we can only give as we regularly take in. This is one of those rich opportunities to place yourself in a position to be a receiver. The cost is \$25. Register through the District office by February 20th.

SPRINGLIFE

Every pastor should be receiving important information from the General Departments of Evangelism & Church Growth and Spiritual Formation regarding an evangelistic thrust for this spring. Called "SpringLife" it is an intentional effort to use the Lenten Season as a period to prepare people to act on an invitation to receive salvation. SpringLife ties beautifully into the district's emphasis on conversion growth this year. Every church is challenged to report the name of at least one person that has been saved through the ministries of the local church by District Conference. SpringLife could be that catalyst to see that goal met in your church.

Please give the packet your complete attention when it arrives.

LADIES RETREAT

Churches should have received promotional materials for the Wesleyan Womens' Ladies Retreat. The date is March 23rd and 24th. Please encourage your ladies to participate in this great event. It is always a wonderful time of inspiration and connecting with other fine ladies from across the district.

NEXT DISTRICT BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION meeting will be March 3rd.

INSURANCE & CORP. REVIEW

The first of the year is a good time for your trustees to review the church's insurance policy. Make sure your coverage limits will replace your existing structures and furnishings should you sustain a major loss. Check limits of liabilities and make certain that you have professional liability coverage. This may also be a time to ask for a comparative quote from another reputable company.

Be certain to also check the status of your incorporation status with the State of Ohio. The State requires some kind of contact from every corporation at least once every five years to keep the corporate status. Call the office if you need help with this item.