

UMconnect — 02/04/10

Nebraska United Methodists respond to need in Haiti through giving

As of the end of January, the Nebraska United Methodist Conference has collected \$90,045 for Haiti relief.

Upon learning of the new totals, Robin Kilgore, director of administrative services/conference treasurer, said, "I wish to thank local churches for their support of Haiti relief efforts. Because of local church support of Mission Shares, the Nebraska Conference can remit 100 percent of these contributions to those in need in an efficient and timely manner. We deeply appreciate the generosity of all those who have contributed."

Reminder: Health kits being collected through Monday, Feb. 8

All health kits for Haiti earthquake relief must be delivered to a designated drop-off location by the end of the day Monday, Feb. 8.

To view the list of drop-off locations, visit the link below. The contents of a health kit are attached below as a PDF.

- [Health kit drop-off locations](#)
- [Health kit contents \(PDF\)](#)

Updated Haiti Volunteers in Mission information

Volunteers in Mission (VIM) is asking individuals who are interested in helping in Haiti to register in the national United Methodist database, linked below. This will readily identify the experience and skills needed when forming future VIM medical, clean-up and repair/construction teams to go to Haiti.

At this time the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) has advised that it is not safe or possible for volunteers to go to Haiti. The city of Port-au-Prince and the entire country are in a crisis, with severe lack of food, water and fuel, and there are significant transportation and security challenges. Bishop Joel Martinez, GBGM's interim general secretary, has alerted United Methodist bishops of the inadvisability of sending volunteers at this point. As with all natural disaster situations, no teams will be dispatched until government and military personnel have assessed that areas are deemed safe and secure. Global Ministries will advise the jurisdictional and conference coordinators when our volunteers have permission to go.

An estimated 150 to 200,000 lives have been lost in Haiti. One million people, including orphans, are now homeless. The already fragile infrastructure within the country has been severely damaged. Clearly, the recovery in Haiti will take the helping hands of many, many people. Many VIM teams will be needed to help rebuild, and the effort is expected to continue for years.

VIM's expectation is that those who will be needed first are those with specialty medical skills, etc. Therefore, please be patient if you are not contacted until a later date. Every effort to assist the country of Haiti is greatly appreciated.

For more information on Haiti or other VIM mission experiences, or to register your VIM team, contact Lisa Maupin, Nebraska VIM coordinator, at 402-898-9862 or lmaupin@bigmuddyumc.org. You can also find the Nebraska VIM group on Facebook.

- [Database form/application](#)

Alliance and Lakeside UMCs make health kit collection an ecumenical, communitywide effort

The Friday after the earthquake in Haiti, the Rev. Dr. Doug Griger, pastor of Alliance-Lakeside United Methodist Churches, received word about the need for health kits. He forwarded the information to the local ministerial association as an option for a more tangible way that their churches might participate in helping the victims and also submitted the details of the health kit drive to the local newspaper.

Over the next two weeks, more than 300 health kits poured in; they were made by residents of Good Samaritan Village, the Panhandle Women's Club, the Girl Scouts and United Methodist Women, as well as members of First Christian Church, Holy Rosary Parish, First Presbyterian Church, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, and his own two churches, Alliance and Lakeside UMCs.

"The communities of Alliance and Hemingford can be very proud of themselves," said Griger. "We challenged our congregation, and the kids especially to do what they could to bring some relief to Haiti, and it turned out to be a tremendous community and ecumenical effort."

In addition to the health kits, which have been delivered to the drop-off location in Scottsbluff, he said they also received more than \$800 in contributions for the relief effort.

Mission agency to remember Dixon and Rabb

The United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries will hold a memorial service for the Rev. Sam Dixon and the Rev. Clinton Rabb, on Feb. 11, at 3 p.m., at Riverside Church in New York, NY. Dixon was head of the United Methodist Committee on Relief, a division of Global Ministries, and Rabb was in charge of the Office of Mission Volunteers. The two clergymen died of injuries received in the earthquake that struck Haiti on Jan. 12.

A letter of gratitude from the president of the Haiti Methodist Church

The Rev. Gesner Paul, president of the Methodist Church of Haiti, sent the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) a letter, which is provided below, expressing gratitude from the Church in Haiti for the response from UMCOR after the devastation of the earthquake.

This letter is a helpful tool in clarifying both the need for volunteers in the future and the wisdom of responding at the most appropriate time. Therefore, please take advantage of the Rev. Paul's letter and share it with local churches and volunteer networks.

UMCOR requests that everyone continue praying for the people of Haiti during this time of recovery, while they plan the most effective response by The United Methodist Church.

- [The Rev. Gesner Paul's letter](#)

Mailing reminders: Conference Office West has closed, Conference Center no longer has P.O. Box

A reminder that the Conference Office West in North Platte has closed, please do not send items to that address. If you have Safe Sanctuaries or Lay Speaking Ministries items to submit, send them to the Conference Center. Safe Sanctuaries items should be addressed "Attn: Sheree Brown." The address is:

3333 Landmark Circle
Lincoln, NE 68504-4760

Also, a reminder that the Conference Center no longer as a P.O. Box, please address all mail to its physical address, listed above.

Updated contact information for Conference Center staff

There have been a number of changes in staff at the Conference Center since the start of the new year, attached below is the updated list of employees and their extension numbers.

- [Phone list](#)

UNK's United Campus Ministry hosting Winter Dinner Theater on Feb. 6 and 13

United Campus Ministry (UCM) of the University of Nebraska-Kearney will host two Winter Dinner Theaters.

The first performance will be Saturday, Feb. 6, at First Christian Church in Kearney, 3311 Ave I, at 6 p.m. The second will be Saturday, Feb. 13, at First UMC in Kearney, 4500 Linden Drive, at 6 p.m.

The cost is \$10 per person, which includes a roast beef dinner. All proceeds go to UCM and "The IMPACT," which is Intentional Mission for Poverty According to Christ's Teaching.

Reservations are required. Please contact Laura Stubblefield at 308-627-6225 or laura@ucmunk.org to make a reservation.

The event is sponsored by First Christian, First Presbyterian, Faith United Methodist and First United Methodist Churches of Kearney.

Omaha First UMC hosting healing arts ministry event on Feb. 7

Omaha First UMC will host a "Celebration of Soulful Healing" on Sunday, Feb. 7. This healing arts event offers a unique environment where one can participate in a variety of activities designed for spiritual growth and relaxation. There will also be free workshops for children ages 5-11 and free child care will be available during the entire event.

Registration begins at 1 p.m., and workshops run from 1:30-5:30 p.m., with a Taize Service beginning at 5:30. The cost to attend is \$5.

Healing arts ministry is an Omaha First UMC committee that designs programming intended to help people grow spiritually and incorporate spirituality into more expressions in their lives, fostering a body, mind and spirit connection.

For more information, contact Sue Rood, director of educational ministries, at 402-556-6262, or view the flyer attached below. First United Methodist Church is located at 7020 Cass St. in Omaha. Visit their Web site at www.fumcomaha.org.

- ["Celebration of Soulful Healing" flyer](#)

Hanscom Park UMC sponsoring Habitat for Humanity fund-raiser on Feb. 14

Join Hanscom Park UMC for their Spiritual Mardi Gras fund-raiser benefiting Habitat for Humanity on Sunday, Feb. 14, at 3 p.m.. This celebration will feature music, drama and a chili supper. The church is located at 4444 Frances St., in Omaha.

All proceeds from the free-will offering will go to Habitat for Humanity. Please bring family and friends. For further questions, visit the Web site below, call 402-553-33312 or e-mail tara@hanscomparkchurch.org.

- [Hanscom Park Web site](#)

Kearney First UMC offering Basic Safe Sanctuaries trainings on Feb. 15 and March 23

Kearney First United Methodist Church is offering two upcoming Basic Safe Sanctuaries trainings. The first will be on Monday, Feb. 15, at 6:30 p.m. The second will be on Tuesday, March 23, at 6:30 p.m.

The cost to participate is \$20, which covers course materials. Make checks payable to Conference Treasurer (payment not due until day of course). Please fill out the packet of forms below and bring them with you to the training. To pre-register, please contact Mike Evans at 308-237-3158, ext. 28, or via e-mail at mikee@kearneyfirstumc.org. Kearney First UMC is located at 4500 Linden Drive.

- [Safe Sanctuaries packet](#)

Missouri River District to offer both Basic and Advanced Lay Speaking courses and Basic Course in Spanish in February

The Missouri River District is offering both a Basic Lay Speaking course and an Advanced Lay Speaking course, "Leading in Prayer," on Feb. 26 and 27, at Omaha St. Paul UMC, 5410 Corby St. The cost to participate in either course is \$35, which covers textbooks. The registration deadline for both courses is Feb. 16; see the registration forms attached below.

The Missouri District will also be offering a Basic Lay Speaking course in Spanish for the very first time, on Feb. 26 and 27, at Omaha St. Paul UMC. Pastor Patty Gandarilla will be conducting the class in Spanish and all materials will be in Spanish. The cost to participate is also \$35, which covers textbooks. The registration deadline is Feb. 16. The registration form is attached below, in both English and Spanish.

For more information, contact Catherine McGowan at the Missouri River District office, at 402-898-9862, or via e-mail at missouririver@umneb.org.

- [Basic Lay Speaking course registration form](#)
- [Advanced Lay Speaking course registration form](#)
- [Basic course in Spanish \(English version\)](#)
- [Basic course in Spanish \(Spanish version\)](#)

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Blue River District hosting two-part Advanced Lay Speaking course at Beatrice Centenary UMC, Feb. 20 and 27

"Lay Speakers Create Disciple-Making Faith Communities" is an advanced course that will be taught at Beatrice Centenary United Methodist Church in two parts on consecutive Saturdays, Feb. 20 and 27, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on both days.

The goal of this course is to provide church leaders with key tools and principles that can be used to create disciple-making faith communities. Course instructors are the Rev. Lyn Seiser

and Certified Lay Speaker Connie Hartman.

The cost to participate is \$40, which covers the cost of the course textbooks, "Lay Speakers Create Disciple-Making Faith Communities" and "NextChurch.Now" (includes a DVD). Lunch will be provided; a free-will offering will be collected.

Register by Feb. 15, so that textbooks may be mailed and previewed prior to the class. Send the completed registration with a check made payable to Blue River District to:

Lay Speaker Training
c/o Blue River District
100 W. Fletcher Ave., #100
Lincoln, NE 68521-3848

For more information, contact Connie Hartman at 402-799-3595 or ch64854@windstream.net.

- [Registration form](#)

Have lunch with Tom Osborne on Feb. 25, all proceeds benefit the Wesley House Leadership Academy

The Wesley House Leadership Academy is hosting a fund-raiser luncheon with Tom Osborne, former Nebraska football coach, congressman, and current athletic director for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, on Feb. 25, at the Omaha Country Club, at 11:30 a.m. Osborne will speak about leadership during the luncheon.

Tickets are \$100, seats are limited. To order tickets, or for more information, call the Wesley House at 402-451-2228. See attached flyer for further details.

- [Wesley House flyer](#)

United Methodist Men's winter retreat will be Feb. 19-21, at Camp Fontanelle

The theme for this year's United Methodist Men's winter retreat is "Rethinking Men's Ministry: New Practices, New Results." The keynote speaker will be the Rev. Craig Finnestad, who is the pastor of The Water's Edge, an extension of Faith-Westwood UMC in west Omaha. The retreat will take place at Camp Fontanelle, near Nickerson, Neb.

The retreat will also include a service project for Camp Fontanelle. Calvin Philips will play the piano on Friday evening. The Saturday night program will be presented by the 7th Avenue Revue singers. Sunday worship will be followed by a special presentation by Glen Stinn of Bellevue. Glen spent six months in Kabul, Afghanistan, as part of the Corps of Engineers' assignment to help with rebuilding. This is a chance to learn directly from someone who has

been in the thick of things. Glen has also done considerable mission work for Habitat for Humanity. The registration form is attached below.

- [Registration form](#)



A group of some of the children from the orphanage in Jalingo, Nigeria. Through the Nigeria/Nebraska Partnership, these orphans are receiving the opportunity to get an education, along with daily life skills and simply a place to call home.

other tasks to encourage giving to the Nigeria/Nebraska Partnership (General Advance #3021070, Nebraska Advance 851).

Nigeria/Nebraska Partnership—a call for committee members

The Nigeria/Nebraska Partnership is looking to expand its membership. Anyone with a heart for mission and justice work, and in applying that work toward Nigeria in particular, please contact Dottie Halvorsen, committee chair, at halvorsen312@yahoo.com. A meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 16, at 7 p.m., at the Conference Center, located at 3333 Landmark Cir., in Lincoln.

Help is needed to plan a Volunteers in Mission trip, to promote the Nebraska Conference special offering scheduled for Mother's Day (May 9) and

United Methodist Ministries accepting applications for Big Garden summer internship program

The Big Garden, a program of United Methodist Ministries in Omaha, is currently accepting applications for its summer internship program. This is a paid internship for college students, designed to engage them in community building, gardening and examining Omaha's food system.

Please see the attached application form; the deadline to apply is March 1. Please also feel free to post and pass the opportunity on to others who may be interested.

For more information, contact Jessica at jmews@bigmuddyumc.org or 402-898-9862.

United Methodist Ministries in Omaha has three job openings

United Methodist Ministries in Omaha currently has three job openings. See each of the attachments below for more information.

- [Communications and Volunteer Coordinator](#)
- [Big Garden Plant Expert](#)

- [Big Garden Program Manager](#)

Camp Comeca seeking new director

Camp Comeca and Retreat Center, a United Methodist Camp located in Cozad, is seeking a camp director for ACA site approved ministry. Applicants should have experience running a camp, maintaining ACA accreditation, strong administrative and financial abilities, fund-raising and public relations experience and be spiritually grounded with a mature Christian faith. Complete job description attached below.

Submit cover letter and resume to NUMCC, attn: Jody Henderson, 3333 Landmark Circle, Lincoln 68504, or e-mail jhenderson@umcneb.org. The application deadline is Feb. 26.

- [Job description](#)

ROCKbrook UMC seeking director of contemporary worship

ROCKbrook United Methodist Church in Omaha is a vibrant, growing church that is looking to add an additional worship service primarily designed for young adults and young families. They are seeking a director of contemporary worship to help establish and implement this contemporary worship service.

This paid position will be part-time and will require a time commitment of approximately 15 hours a week. The qualified candidate will have experience in planning and leading contemporary worship and must be a committed team player. The director will plan the contemporary service in conjunction with the pastor.

Primary duties:

- Recruit, train, lead and give spiritual leadership to worship teams.
- Plan worship in conjunction with pastor.
- Coordinate and lead contemporary worship music for contemporary services.
- Lead worship for other churchwide events as needed.
- Provide weekly progress reports to the senior pastor.
- Perform other duties as necessary.

For more information, or to submit a resume, contact the Rev. William Williams at wwilliams@rockbrookumc.com.

To find out more about ROCKbrook UMC, visit their Web site, www.rockbrookumc.com.

Save the dates—Rethink Church event, March 19 and 20, at Springfield UMC

Rethink Church, a conference on welcoming and evangelism, will be held on March 19 and 20, at the Springfield United Methodist Church in Springfield, Neb. Workshop leaders Kathryn Witte and Lisa Maupin will bring fresh material they acquired from recent trainings with United Methodist Communications in Nashville.

Friday, March 19, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., will be a training day for individuals who plan to commit to presenting the Rethink Church program to congregations in their district. Each participant will be asked to sign a covenant agreeing to teach Rethink Church at least twice in 2010.

On Friday evening, at 5 p.m., registration will begin for Rethink Church for congregations. Dinner will be served at 6 p.m., followed by a panel discussion and entertainment.

Saturday will begin with worship at 9 a.m., and include a full day of topics, such as Welcoming as a Lifestyle; Identity; Unique Characteristics of Seekers Ages 18-34; Discover/Design/Do; Children and Young People's Ministry, and more. The afternoon will include breakout sessions.

Registration is \$40 for an individual, \$125 for groups of four to seven attending from the same congregation and \$200 for eight or more attending from the same congregation (there is no maximum number of people that can attend from one congregation, however if you plan to bring 20 or more, please contact Kathryn Witte at kwitte@umcneb.org). Registration is coming soon, view the attached PDF for more information.

- [For more information](#)

VIM team from Elkhorn Valley District going to New Mexico—follow their trip and provide spiritual support

The Elkhorn Valley District is sending a Volunteers in Mission team to the Four Corners Native American Ministry at Shiprock, N.M., on Feb. 6-14. Pastors Nora Mendyk and Phil Sloat-Delley are providing the leadership for this endeavor. The group is making arrangements to blog and post photos of their experience so that those at home can follow along and also offer spiritual support. The pertinent Web sites and documents are linked below. For more information, or to offer up words of encouragement, contact Mendyk at nmendyk@umcneb.org or Sloat-Delley at psloat@umcneb.org.



A small break-out group discusses what they learned at the Rethink Church training that took place in Lexington, Neb., last November.

- [Team Web Site](#)
Learn more about the team's mission and how you can help support their project financially.
- [Daily prayer calendar](#)
Pray for specific needs for the team each day of their trip.
- [Team blog](#)
Read updates from team members while they are on the trip.
- [Photos](#)
Team members will be posting photos throughout their trip.

Rev. Charles Kathurima Murithi to become U.S. citizen

The Rev. Charles Kathurima Murithi will become a U.S. Citizen in a naturalization ceremony on Friday, Feb. 12, at 1 p.m., in the Ceremonial Courtroom on the fourth floor of the Roman L. Hruska Federal Building, 111 South 18th St., in Omaha. Murithi currently serves the Norfolk Parish in the Elkhorn Valley District.

His wife Lydia and daughter Glory are also in the process of becoming naturalized citizens. Their daughter Joy will become a citizen at the same time her father does, since she is under the age of 18. By law, if a child is unmarried, under 18 and a permanent resident, when one of their parents is naturalized, the child automatically becomes a citizen.

Nigerian United Methodist Conference orphanage announces leadership changes

The Rev. Simon Benjamin, known by many in Nebraska as simply "Benji," is the new orphanage coordinator. The Rev. Salamatu, the former coordinator, has been appointed as a district superintendent. The Rev. Abainitus Hammon, known to many as "Akila," is the new director of youth and young adult ministries for the Nigeria Conference. The Rev. Hannatu Robinson continues as the Nigeria partnership coordinator. Please keep these leaders and the orphanage in your prayers.



UMCOR using music video to inspire hope, donations for Haiti

Stefan Youngblood wanted to give hope to Haiti. First, he donated money, and then a song. He composed "We Will Rise" in 1995 after Hurricane Marilyn slammed into the Virgin Islands; it is now being used in a music video to raise funds for Haiti through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR).

Youngblood, director of contemporary worship at Edenton Street UMC in Raleigh, N.C., said, "It's a song that's meant to inspire people in the midst of all the hopelessness and despair."

UMCOR hopes video watchers will be inspired to donate to its Haitian relief effort. The video

includes UMCOR Advance donation information at the end. Watch the video by clicking on the link below.

- ["Haiti, We Will Rise" music video](#)

Haiti relief resources from the General Board of Global Ministries

The General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) has put together a digital packet of materials for conferences, churches and groups to help interpret and promote mission and ministry in Haiti.

The digital packet includes:

- United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) Haiti multimedia presentation, incorporating new images and music. To be used in worship, on the Web, in small groups and a variety of other settings (available in MV4 and WMV formats).
- Three UMCOR Haiti ads to be printed. Various uses: bulletin inserts, flyers, posters, conference newspapers and church newsletters.
- An MP3 music download of "Beje Mouin, Se You Rosua Damou," which is an audio recording of hymns from Haiti. It can be used in worship settings to celebrate the gifts from the Church in Haiti.
- Music scores for the following songs: "Beje Mouin," "Jeze de Nazaret," "My Family," "Agneau de Dieu," "Feuille-O (Kyrie)," "Lord Have Mercy." These scores can be used in worship settings during prayer time for Haiti.
- Three articles from "Global Praise" featuring worship ideas, including ways to use the contents of the Haiti Resource Packet.

Please use any or all of these resources from the Web site and make them accessible to congregations and individuals. Click on the link below to view and download the contents individually or all together. For more information, contact the Rev. Christopher Heckert at 212-870-3770 or checker@gbgm-umc.org.

- [Download digital packet](#)

Find out what's new on the GBOD's Worship Web site

The General Board of Discipleship's "Equipping World-Changing Disciples" Web site has a Worship page designed to assist music planners, leaders and participants by providing hymn text ideas and resources on various topics. To see the most recently posted resources, follow the link below.

- [GBOD-Worship Web site](#)

Need business cards?

If you would like to order Nebraska United Methodist-branded business cards, please provide all of the information you would like on the card and e-mail it to rdelisi@umcneb.org. The cost per 500 cards is approximately \$30-\$35. Typically, multiple orders are combined to reach 500 cards.

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