

Hoosier United Methodist NEWS is designed for use with church newsletters or worship bulletins, bringing news of the United Methodist state and world "connection" home to congregations. It is a free service of Indiana United Methodist Communications, www.inumc.org. We welcome your comments and questions via e-mail: editor@inumc.org. Daniel R. Gangler, editor

From the Bishop Working the plan for the new Indiana Conference

The plan is working and the new Indiana Conference is becoming more and more of a reality. The new Conference Center is up and running with several new staff and several staff from the previous offices in Marion, Bloomington and Indianapolis.

The new combined 2010 budget has begun based upon a "tithing" of local church operating income. The new officers and committees elected at the first Annual Conference Session last June have been working and are moving into their first year of implementation.

The medical insurance program for active clergy is merged into a state-wide plan, and the new medical insurance plan for retired clergy and their spouses has begun (actually they have had a choice between two different plans).

The 10 new Districts have been launched in their District Centers with new district staffing. Sadly, already we have had a tragic fire in the former Columbus District office, which was being transformed into the new Southeast District Center. The new Cabinet with 10 District Superintendents recently began its work.



Saying thanks

I have a sense that this is an important time to pause and say "thanks" for all those who have faithfully served in the former 18 districts and in

the former South Indiana and North Indiana and Indiana Area offices. Some of those are continuing, some have retired, and some have chosen to move to other jobs. They all deserve our thanks for their faithful work.

I also have a sense that now is the time to move powerfully into the new Indiana Conference and to "work the plan." I have read somewhere that "when we fail to plan, we plan to fail." I believe that other danger is to have a plan and to fail to work that plan. We planned for a new Indiana Conference, and it is taking shape. Now, we all need to "work the plan" in 2010.

Special offering

The new special offering for our campus ministries is a good example. We hope that all of our congregations will give generously to that special offering, which will help those ministries in 2010.

Another example is the Compassion Fund to help those retired clergy and spouses who have been adversely affected by the costs of their new medical insurance plan. Marsha and I were pleased to give the first \$500 to that Compassion Fund last summer and many have followed our lead. Further there will be a special offering for the Compassion Fund in June. I hope that everyone will give generously to that special offering. If you want to make an advance donation to that fund, just send it to the Indiana Conference Center and mark it Compassion Fund.

Focus

In a similar way, now is the time to move forward with our focus upon Ministry Clusters, Clergy Covenant Groups, the Five Practices which help congregations be fruitful, and the Three Simple Rules that we all need to model as disciples of Jesus. Information about those points of focus can be found on our Indiana Conference Web site (www.inumc.org) in the posted Power Points of my presentations.

Most importantly, now is the time to keep our focus upon our mission of "making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." All of the focal points listed above and all of the structure changes involved in forming the new Indiana Conference are merely a means toward accomplishing that mission.

That's the plan. The plan's working if we all keep working the plan.

Bishop Michael J. Coyner

Indiana Conference of

The United Methodist Church

*"Making a Difference in Indiana
and around the world"*

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