



*"Called to be God's people so that all may come to know the Grace of God in word and action through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit."*

Lay address, reports

## Lay Leader compares connectionalism of church to a basketball

Emphasizing the importance of the connectional nature of The United Methodist Church during his Saturday morning address



Williams

to the conference, South Indiana Conference Lay Leader Ike Williams of Carmel, compared our connectionalism to a basketball.

Using his experience as an engineer, he said the basketball is a hollow sphere.

The most basic characteristic is its roundness. This roundness is the strength for the sphere. It can take internal and external pressure...yet remains round. This doesn't happen to most hollow structures."

Continuing to share characteristics, he said, "Everything is connected to each other without interruption. No single part is strong on its own. The strength comes from all parts working together."

He said, the church (clergy, members, youth and more) is like the basketball. It's all the parts of the local church working together. "The strength comes from all," said Williams, also likening the general church and annual conferences to the basketball as well.

Williams said connectionalism is spoken about in I Corinthians 12:4-24 where the Apostle Paul talks about the gifts of services and activities of the early Christian community.

"Paul is telling us we all bring strength to our local church. Not one of us can do all the work of Christ by ourselves. We are all working together and that gives us strength," he said.

Williams also shared several observations on his recent participation in General Conference, that showed connectionalism in ministries and languages used.

He encouraged the laity to read the *Five Practices of Faithful Congregations*, as well as *Three Simple Rules*. "Using what you find in these books, find ways your local congre-

gations can bring people to Christ," he said.

"Change is not easy. Change is risky. Change is scary. Change is going into the unknown."

### Actions of Saturday morning

- ◆ The **inclusive monitoring** report will be placed in the SIC Conference Journal.
- ◆ \$1,823.86 was received from a Friday offering for the **Gambling Recovery Ministries**.
- ◆ \$261 raised from breakfast will be used to buy Bibles for a national Boy Scouts jamboree.
- ◆ **The Bishop's Scouting Award of Excellence** was awarded to Pack and Troop 301 of Evansville Methodist Temple and Pack 129 and Troop 119 of Ellettsville UMC.
- ◆ **Connectional Ministries** Director Jim Bushfield reported the new South Indiana Conference structure will be better equipped and more flexible than the current structure and will be similar to the Imagine Indiana structure with several minor differences. He said, this new structure would help in the transition during the coming months. Several changes were proposed from the floor, ranging from including evangelism to language changes, to additional involvement of various groups.
- ◆ Jim Gentry, director of the **Indiana Area Foundation**, reported that several projects are being funded across the state and around the world.
- ◆ Marie Lang, director of the **South Indiana Conference Foundation**, shared that the annual report was sent to all members and their home churches. The foundation looks forward to working with the North Indiana and Indiana Area foundations. There will be a special meeting of the founda-

tion on Oct. 4 regarding articles of incorporation and membership.

- ◆ Lloyd Tucker of the **Council on Finance and Administration** asked that the conference adopt the budget as seen on pages 67-69. There are a few changes. A surplus of \$353,000 in 2007 income will be go to the conference's World Services Fund asking. The conference has already given \$1.2 million to WSF. A referral from Higher Education and Campus Ministry will be presented to CF&A. Darren Cushman-Wood from Speedway UMC asked for \$12,000 to be allocated towards Gambling Recovery Ministries. It was referred to CF&A. The budget was adopted. The conference income and expense budgets for 2009 are \$21.2 million each which includes \$7.1 Insurance Premium income and \$3.3 in Pension income, not previously listed in the total SIC income budget.
- ◆ Karen Devaisher, chair of **Annual Conference Session Committee**, helped wrap up the 40<sup>th</sup> annual conference session. She said, "We have been writing God's story. We will continue to write God's story in a different way." The next session will be a special session on Oct. 4 in Indianapolis. The Indiana Conference annual sessions will be June 24-29 (tentative dates) will be at Ball State University in Muncie.
- ◆ Wade Compton presented the **Nominations Committee** report on pages 150-167. All changes will be provided to the Journal.



The Boy Scouts reported their activities on Saturday morning.

## Hoosier United Methodists approve unity plan

With joy and prayers of thanksgiving, members of both the South Indiana and North Indiana United Methodist Annual Conferences approved a plan to physically unite the two conferences into one new Indiana Annual Conference. Bishop Mike Coyner announced the results on Saturday morning.

The South Indiana Conference members voted affirmatively on Friday, June 6, 616 to 185 (or 77 to 23 percent) to unite with the North Indiana Conference. The North Indiana Conference members voted affirmatively on Friday, May 30, in West Lafayette 730 to 192 (or 79 to 21 percent) to unite with the South Indiana Conference.

Indiana United Methodist Bishop Mike Coyner of Indianapolis announced the vote results in the closing session of the South Indiana Conference this morning, Saturday, June 7, at the Indiana University Auditorium in Bloomington.

Coyner has called North and South Indiana Conferences to attend a special session scheduled to be held at the Indiana State Fairgrounds on Saturday, Oct. 4. This session will finalize amendments, elect committees and

begin plans for the first combined Indiana Annual Conference session scheduled to be held at Ball State University in Muncie tentatively June 25-28, 2009.

This concludes 62 years of Methodist annual conference sessions at Indiana University in Bloomington and more than 50 years of Methodist annual conference of the former Northwest Conference sessions at Purdue University in West Lafayette. The NW Conference first met in Elliott Hall in 1963.

Coyner also will appoint a transition team to implement the design plans for the new Indiana Conference.

Features of the new annual conference, which was two-years in design, will include:

- ◆ Forming clergy into covenant groups and all 1,200 congregations into ministry clusters for the support and accountability to the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world;
- ◆ Dissolving the current 18 districts across Indiana and establishing five resource centers to support the work of 10 districts; and
- ◆ Creating a new conference structure and establishing a new conference center in Indianapolis.

Currently, the North Indiana Conference is based in Marion. The South Indiana Conference is based here in Bloomington.

The only major amendments to the 50-page unity document, added youth and young adults to the decision making process of the state-wide church and added more staff in youth and young adult ministries staff to the five resource centers across the state.

The last such structural change of this magnitude to The United Methodist Church in Indiana came in 1968, when the former Methodist Church and former Evangelical United Brethren Church decided nationally to become The United Methodist Church.

The United Methodist Church is the largest Protestant denomination in Indiana with 1,200 congregations and placed throughout the state's 92 counties. Methodists first established churches in Indiana in 1801. There are 225,000 United Methodists in Indiana.

In Indiana the denominations also is related to 3 hospitals, 3 universities, 3 children's homes, 6 residence facilities for seniors, 1 half-way house and 7 retreat/camps. All of these will be part of the new Indiana Conference.

Being confined inside due to rain following the ordination-commissioning service on Friday night, members congratulated newly ordained and commissioned pastors in the lobby of the IU Auditorium.



The Naptown Quintet provided live music.



### Group photos available

Retirees, Ordinands, download print-quality (up to 8 x 10) digital images of your group from the Indiana Area Web site, [www.inareaumc.org](http://www.inareaumc.org), and visit the Annual Conference page to find the link to download the photos.

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