

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

Rejuvenating our clergy, our congregations

Perhaps you have heard the name “Rejuvenate” and have wondered, “What is that?” It is the name of our new special project to help Indiana clergy with their economic stress, so that they can be empowered to lead their congregations into a healthy new day of stewardship and generosity.

This project is a part of a dream to change the culture of our United Methodist Church here in Indiana. We have allowed ourselves to live on a “scarcity” model far too long, denying ourselves access to the generosity of God and ignoring the call to Christian stewardship. We have wallowed in self-pity, cut our budgets, failed to respond to new opportunities for ministry and acted like people who have no vision for the Kingdom of God.

All of that is changing. We are being reminded we are a people who have been abundantly blessed, with most of us Americans being among the top five percent of wealthy people in the world. Anyone who has served on a Volunteer in Mission team, traveled to a developing country or helped with disaster response can testify that we are a blessed people. Now we are starting to live like it. We are being Rejuvenated.

Thanks to a generous grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., we have been able to “jump-start” this dream of helping our clergy with their



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education debts, teaching both our clergy and laity to lead their churches into healthy giving patterns and developing a whole new culture of generosity. The Rejuvenate Project, led by the Rev. Michelle Cobb with a wonderful team of advisors, has begun inviting us to think differently about money – to think about money as a tool provided by God to accomplish “abundantly, far more than all we can ask or imagine” (Ephesians 3:20).

Dr. David Bell, who led wonderful Bible studies on stewardship during our first Annual Conference, is leading a series of workshops across Indiana to teach our people about generosity. Other training events will follow, and our clergy will be given access to helpful financial planning and the opportunity to apply for grants to help with specific financial needs.

In addition, the Rejuvenate Project will seek donors (some have already begun to give) to match this generous Lilly grant, so we can make this an on-going emphasis of our Indiana Conference. The dream is large:

Freeing our clergy from the financial constraints which hamper their ministry,

Teaching clergy and laity the sound principles of good stewardship and

Leading our congregations to better financial health.

As we move toward that dream, we will indeed be Rejuvenated.

*Bishop Michael J. Coyner
Indiana Conference of The
United Methodist Church
“Making a Difference in
Indiana and around the
world”*

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