

Expand your Ministry to Men



***A compendium of articles to help
United Methodists enrich their
ministry to and with men***



Edited by Rev. Rich Peck
Third Edition



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Preface

The average Protestant church has 39 percent men and 61 percent women. Those estimates are based on the U. S. Congregational Life Survey of 300,000 worshippers in more than 2,000 congregations across the United States (<http://www.uscongregations.org/>).

The absence of men helps explain the membership decline of most mainline churches.

A study by Horner, Ralston and Sunde found that when a child becomes a participant in a Sunday school class or youth group, the family will follow about 3.5 percent of the time. If the mother begins attending a church, the rest of the family follows 17 percent of the time. But when a father comes to faith in Christ, the rest of the family follows 93 percent of the time.

If you reach the men, you reach their families.

Of about 94 million men in the United States, 68 million don't attend any church.

Some 85 percent of those who stay home or go to the golf links on Sunday say they grew up with some sort of church background. It's not that they don't know what goes on in the building; it's that they don't find anything of particular value in the services.

Most churches have Sunday school classes and choral groups for children, youth classes and evening fellowships for young people, active women's groups, but efforts to reach men are frequently confined to once-a-month dinners and a program, which, too frequently, appeal only to a handful of retired men.

To help churches reach men in and beyond the church, the General Commission on United Methodist Men is training "men's ministry specialists" and "scouting ministries specialists." This effort is supported by "teaching churches" that provide training and resources for churches who want to enrich their ministries to men.

The real purpose of United Methodist Men is not about just getting more men into a church, it's to get Christians out of a church. The real test of a United Methodist Men's organization is whether we are helping men mature in the faith.

Dan Schaeffer, founder and president of Building Brothers, says our goal should be to create "spiritual fathers" who help others grow in the faith.

The General Commission on United Methodist Men

Authorized by the 1996 General Conference, the General Commission on United Methodist Men is a program agency of the denomination. It is governed by a 20-member board of directors from around the globe and a seven-member staff based in Nashville. The commission establishes vision and goals that promote the ministry of Jesus Christ through men. The staff oversees development of men's ministry leaders who can help congregations become vital and effective with men. They recommend suitable and effective men's ministry tools and resources for United Methodist congregations, and serve as a men's ministry connector between organizations and persons within the denominational structure.

The commission provides 75 percent of its annual budgets with only 25 percent from World Service funds (a percentage of funds raised through United Methodist Church offerings).

Affiliate organizations of the General Commission on United Methodist Men

The National Association of Conference Presidents
The United Methodist Men Foundation
The National Association of United Methodist Scouters
The World Fellowship of Methodist and Uniting Church Men
The National Coalition of Men's Ministries
The Denominational Men's Ministry Network of North America
Boy Scouts of America
Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.
Camp Fire U.S.A.
4-H
Big Brothers/Big Sisters

Men's Ministry

Why we need a ministry to men

By Dale Tedder

I once served a church that had the sweetest group of widows who would sit in the same section of the sanctuary during worship. These women were a source of encouragement and fellowship to one another. Very often, after worship, they would have lunch together. They were inseparable. I was profoundly grateful that they had one another.

I was, however, shocked when I eventually learned that each one of these women was married. They weren't widows at all. The truth was that their husbands would have nothing at all to do with the church.

Over the last 18 years of ministry I have seen the need for the church's ministry to men. And I've seen a lot of versions of what's called, "men's ministry" as an effort to meet those needs. Among these efforts are activities such as...

- A once-a-month Saturday morning pancake breakfast
- A once-a-month Monday evening spaghetti dinner
- Occasional service projects on the church property

To be sure, there is a place for pancakes, spaghetti, service projects, campouts, singing Kumbaya, going to sporting events, and the rest. But none of those can or should take the place of gathering together each week for the intentional discipling purpose of growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Iron John

Some of you will remember a secular men's movement in the late 1980s called Iron John. It was all about men finding their "inner warrior" and letting him out. Men would go into the woods, beat drums, get in touch with their inner something-or-other, and cry around a campfire.

Well, there are a lot of men's ministries today doing a baptized version of that. It's sexy. It's edgy. It's probably fun. I mean, after all, most men love Braveheart, Band of Brothers, Lord of the Rings, and Narnia. I know I really love that stuff!

But every time I read about another Christianized version of Iron John, I can't help but think of the words of Saint Paul:

When I was a child, I talked like a child; I thought like a child; I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.

1 Corinthians 13:11

Gimmicks, fads and entertainment in men's ministry appeal to some men's desire to remain in adolescence, but they will not produce disciples of Jesus Christ.

Hard work

The process of becoming a genuine and faithful disciple of Jesus Christ is tough. It takes hard work. It doesn't happen over night. You can't manipulate it. It doesn't happen (usually) from a neatly wrapped program. It's a day-in and day-out pursuit of Christ, through his Word and prayer, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in a relational context.

While I am all for Bible studies and small groups for both genders, I think there must be a place for men to gather with other men, to study God's Word and pray, in a context of accountability and encouragement.

Let's face it: How many men do you know who would be excited talking about lusting after another woman in the presence of their wives or other women? Or how many men would want to share how they struggle with pornography with other women in the room?

Men are the problem . . . and the solution

We need a ministry aimed at men because, very often, men are the problem. But they are also the solution.

Many, if not most, of our cultural problems — divorce, abortion, juvenile crime, and fatherlessness — can be traced back to the failure of men.

According to Pat Morley, chief executive of Man in the Mirror ministries, every third child is born out of wedlock; 24 million kids don't live with their biological fathers; and half of all marriages end in divorce. Only a third of all children in America will live with both of their biological parents through the age of eighteen. Half of all children in broken homes have not seen their father in over a year. Children who come from fatherless homes are five times more likely to live in poverty, have emotional problems, and repeat a grade.

We can blow by these statistics or we can consider what they mean for our country and our churches. There must be something systemically wrong with a culture that allows these things to happen.

These symptoms are the result of deep systemic issues. Treating symptoms is necessary and good, but you can't cure a disease by treating the symptoms.

The only way to solve systemic problems is with systemic solutions.

The final goal

The goal of ministry to men is not primarily about producing morally improved men. It's not primarily about warm-fuzzy experiences; it's not about emotional or psychological cathartic breakthroughs drenched in tears.

Each of those things may happen, but that's not why men should gather. Instead, the purpose of ministry to men is about the Gospel of Jesus Christ transforming sinful men into redeemed children of their heavenly Father who want to become like Christ. They will want to know him better, love him more, and follow him more closely.

UM Men will still battle sin, but they will do so through a fellowship of like-minded men, who love, care for, encourage, pray for, and study God's Word with one another.

How to create movement in a UM Men organization

By Gil Hanke

My oldest brother, a skilled physics teacher, could do a better job of describing this, but I will give it a shot. Newton developed three laws of motion. His first and third have some meaning for us as we explore moving this men's ministry from a stationary fixture into a dynamic movement. Newton's rules:

- 1) Every object in a state of uniform motion tends to remain in that state of motion unless an external force is applied to it.
- 2) For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.

The first law describes inertia, objects in motion tend to stay in motion; objects at rest tend to stay at rest. "At rest" seems to describe many of the men's ministry groups and many congregations in our great church.

While some churches are booming, growing, seeking ways to intentionally serve their community, others are at rest.

Resting is good; we need rest every night; we need time off from work to rest and reset our goals and get charged up. But there comes a time for action; there comes a time for doing. We don't act so we can rest; we rest so we can act.

If your church has a UM Men unit that meets, has fellowship and does some great work within the church that is wonderful. If that unit touches 25 percent of the men that attend your church, then most would say that it is successful. If we want to reach the other 75 percent of the men in the church, as well as a percentage of the men that are outside the church, what do we do? First, don't throw away what is working for the 25 percent of the guys that are involved. Yes, that UM Men unit may want to change some, add some new areas of focus, but don't abandon them.

A study of men in leadership in the UMC found that most are lonely and need some other males with whom they can relate. So, what do we do to widen our view of men's ministry to every man in your church and community? It takes action; in fact it takes repeated action to get us going in the right direction (Newton's third law). So what are some steps to start this action?

1. Don't do it alone, get assistance from the pastor and have two or three other guys helping you. I would begin this process by asking the pastor for his or her vision for the men of your church and community. Then talk to the other guys on this team and pray daily.

2. Ask guys that come to church monthly, what they would want to see in an experience that would help them with their daily walk. Ask women whose husbands and or sons do not attend church, what would bring the rest of the family into a relationship with this church and with Jesus Christ. Ask the men that live in the 5 blocks around the church how the church could minister to them.
3. Do it. Nike is right, you can plan, study, research, ask, reformulate, write vision statements and mottos, or design a logo. Or you can just do it. That planning-and-preparation mode can easily turn into an at-rest mode. Action and reaction gets us moving.
4. What about the opposite nature of Newton's law? That is good too. Let's say you decide to begin a Bible study every week. There is action for those guys who want that and there is a reaction from the guys who do want something, but not a Bible study. If embraced, the reaction could start participation in a Habitat house, or a garden that grows fresh vegetables for a homeless shelter, or the adoption of the Scout troop, or forming a group of guys that fly fish or getting involved in prison ministry.
5. Doing something allows you to offer to the 75% of the guys in the church and the community a place to fit in. Some will say, "Yes, that is what I want" while other will say, "I don't want that, but I do want..." It is a win/win. But we have to act. Action is a movement, and I want in all our churches a movement of men actively following Christ.

What is your action plan for the men's ministry at your church? How can I help?

Gil Hanke is the general secretary of the General Commission on UM Men

How to lead men's ministry

By Greg Arnold

It shouldn't surprise anyone that most men who are elected to lead men's ministry within a church usually find out about their new prestigious position with a phone call like this:

"Hey Jim! Guess what? You were just selected to be the head nacho of our men's ministry, congratulations!"

To which Jim replies: "Who is this?"

The exceptions to the rule are those communities of faith who have a dedicated men's pastor or an upstart that doesn't have to wade through the "that's-not-how-we-to-do-things-here" crowd.

Many well-established churches struggle with men's ministry because of the recitation of long lists of failures that a faithful few offer as excuses. Few success stories are shared. On the other hand, upstart communities and church plants tend to have vital men's ministries because they don't bring any baggage to the tables.

Guard against only reporting failures.

Dare to challenge the status quo and always question whether or not your intentions are rightly placed.

Let's look at how Jesus Christ led ministry.

- He began his ministry by building relationships—not programs
- He lived as an example by practicing what he preached
- He challenged the "this-is-how-we've-always-done-it" crowd
- He never backed down from defending God's word and intention
- He invested in those around him with teaching
- He ministered to the hurting, the widows, the orphans, and the outcast
- He empowered those around him to lead

Did you notice that I left off his miracles and his divine attributes? This is to encourage you to see what a men's ministry leader can do.

In addition, consider how many disciples were on his leadership team? Were the few men successful? Uh... yes. Quite successful.

Men tend to measure success by numbers. And men in western culture quantify success by numbers “right now.”

Disappointment is the only result that follows head counts at meetings.

Instead, count how many:

- ✓ Children and hungry you fed
- ✓ Homeless you sheltered
- ✓ Families that have re-engaged in the church
- ✓ People you’ve served
- ✓ People who have committed to follow Christ

There are thousands of men’s ministry groups within the church that have a good attendance—but zero outreach. And there are just as many groups that are transforming their communities with just a few dudes who have a passion for serving others.

Greg Arnold is a deployed staff member of the General Commission on U.M. Men, based in Vancleave, Miss.

Ways to reach men and youth for Christ

By Gil Hanke

Pray daily for your pastor, for the leaders of your church, and for the folks in your community that don't know Christ.

Pray that God will make the path clear to you as to how to reach those outside a faith community.

With the help, blessing and guidance of your pastor, add at least one new way for men to grow in Christ. That could be a men's study, a video series, older men teaching younger men how to fly fish, help with a local mission project, a 4-week men's Bible study or other small group experience.

Organize men inside and outside your church to help build a Habitat House or set up a work day at your church camp or Scout camp.

Provide lunch for a work team at a Habitat House or other local mission project.

Partner with the youth of your area to glean a field and get that produce to the hungry.

Persuade men of your church to assume some of the responsibilities for Vacation Bible School.

Encourage men to sponsor an adult program during VBS and invite parents of VBS children to participate. Establish teams to visit neighborhoods around your church. Don't ask to come inside, just introduce yourself and tell them you're from the UMC up the street. Ask if you could pray for them; if they agree; pray and offer them a card with name and address of the church, worship times and any special event such as a VBS.

Host a 4th of July community hot dog lunch at your church.

If your church or a church in your district has a youth or adult mission team going somewhere this summer, help transport them to and from the airport. After their return, invite them to share their experiences at a community meal.

Adam Hamilton has books and videos with great ideas about reaching un-churched or de-churched folks. Those resources could be a starting point for men to lead churches back into their communities. Check with your district or conference libraries as they may have those materials.

Are you moving toward spiritual maturity?

By Dan Schaffer

The Rev. Bill Hybels, pastor of Willow Creek Church, recently admitted that the seeker model championed by Willow Creek is a failed model. It serves seekers and new believers, but it does not provide a pathway toward spiritual maturity.

The fate of any species rests on its ability to mature and reproduce.

Reproduction linked with maturity

Statistics predict less than 5 percent of the youngest among us will become followers of Christ. Since reproduction is always linked with maturity, we must conclude that most of us are not spiritually maturing, and, therefore, our faith is not being reproduced in others.

Evangelism has many forms. It is often used by well-meaning Christians to “tell others about Jesus,” and back that up with scriptural references. This evangelism is compromised when it is practiced by people whose lives do not reflect God’s love and grace.

Spiritual reproduction is foundational to the health and vitality of the church. Spiritual reproduction happens when men and women mature spiritually through a transformation process—becoming spiritual mothers and fathers.

The Western Christian church is in crisis. The lack of involvement of men is one of the major causes. The church cannot become all it is called to be without more committed, spiritually mature men. Effective ministry to men must, therefore, be about spiritual growth in men, to the point where their faith is reproduced in others. When this happens, a man touches his high spiritual calling as a spiritual father.

Discipleship is too often presented as knowing more about God, yet not knowing God intimately.

When Christ laid the foundation for the Church, He chose twelve men and reproduced His passion and heart in them. They carried this reproduction model into the first century Church and turned the world upside down. It is time for us to apply this same model to today’s Church. This is Building Brothers desire. To call the male leaders, in partnership with the pastor, to come together in the

pursuit of God, grow to spiritual maturity and then reproduce that same process in others.

Three levels of spiritual maturity

I John: 2 presents three levels of spiritual maturity:

- The child knows his sins are forgiven and he is beginning to know God.
- The young man knows the Word of God and he is able to fight evil.
- The father is one who knows God intimately and is able to reproduce that pursuit of God in others.

We must mature from children who have experienced salvation, to young men who know the Word of God and can wage the spiritual battle, to fathers who have also walked with God over a significant period of time and reproduce the next generation of spiritual fathers and mothers. The reproduction completes the spiritual life-cycle, bringing spiritual renewal to the church.

The Building Brothers process enables men to break down the barriers that keep men from pursuing God and to accept the challenge to reproduce their passion and heart in others. These are the leaders that God will use as the catalyst for church renewal. The Building Brothers process is ministry to men, but it is much more about the revival and renewal of the church.

Are you a spiritual father? Do you have spiritual children? Wherever you are in the process—a spiritual child, a spiritual young man, or a spiritual father—will you allow God to mature and use you to reproduce spiritual children and leave a legacy?

God calls each of us to be in the business of creating new spiritual life in others, as instruments of God, and carriers of God's DNA.

Finding Your Center

By Bishop James King

Have you ever felt as if you do not know what to do next, and have you asked yourself questions such as, “Why am I here?” “What is my purpose?” “How long can I continue to go on not being me?” “Who can I believe?”

Sometimes when everything seems to be topsy turvy, do you ask yourself, what do I believe?

I have.

Not long ago, I just wanted to get a cup of coffee. In matter of minutes, I found myself standing beside someone who was full of similar questions. The person was single and trying to raise two boys. Although the person appeared very pleasant, I could detect anger and hurt. As our chatting continued after paying for our coffee, it became painfully clear that this person was going in several directions trying to find his center and purpose.

Where is your center? How do you maintain balance in your life? How do you keep a sense of perspective when you are standing in the middle of what feels like a storm?

Here are some suggestions I have found to be helpful:

- Call time out! Just stop and exhale. Find a place for solitude. You may still hear several voices, but they are more internal than external as you sort things out.
- Talk with a friend. You may be blessed to have someone in your life with whom you can talk things over without having to rehearse words or emotions.
- Exercise — stress has got to go somewhere. Why not put it under your feet as they hit pavement for a good walk or run.
- Go back to the beginning. During your childhood, you probably received a picture, an image or an experience that framed your passion.
- Get in touch with what you really like to do that is fun and exciting. Go back there and you will probably find some wonderful clues to help you get back on track.

- Check your diet. Drink plenty of water and eat foods that help you settle down rather than foods that are high in sugar that set you up for a big letdown. Are you getting the proper nutrients to help your brain do its work?
- See a professional. If you find that your history is an unending saga and you have tried everything and everyone you know with no success, you may want to see a counselor who can help you see different perspectives and possibilities.
- Pray. A life of prayer should be your first action to staying grounded. In the midst of an emotional whirlwind, we can forget the obvious. Talk to God about your problems. God is available 24/7 and comes with a miraculous supply of love and patience. Stress goes away, worry goes out of your mind; peace fills your heart like fuel flowing into an empty tank, and you know that somehow, some way, everything is going to be all right if you just keep faith in the one who can provide for all your needs.

If you find yourself off center and experience difficulty, you may try Dorothy's method of clicking your heels. If that does not work I hope you will consider some of the suggestions that I listed to help you find your way back to the center.

Well, until next time remember, God's will for us is good. We must do the rest.

Wesleyan Building Brothers spur men to Christian maturity

By Robin Russell

Men's ministry expert Dan Schaffer says that when guys get together by themselves, they talk differently. Their conversation is more to the point, a bit more authentic.

And if they get honest enough about shared struggles, it will spur them toward spiritual growth and maturity.

That's the basis of a new men's ministry that Schaffer has adapted for the UMC.

Wesleyan Building Brothers, a step-child of Schaffer's Colorado-based Building Brothers men's ministry, will help men mature in the faith so that they can, in turn, become "spiritual fathers." Not in an authoritarian way, but by being able to reproduce their faith in the lives of other men.

It's based on small-group accountability, something that every good Methodist knows is Wesleyan to the core.

Larry Malone, former director of men's ministries for the General Commission on UM Men, says small groups, when done right, are very appealing to men. For one thing, men like the idea of being part of a "band of brothers," the kind of close relationship that's rare for men in our culture today.

"There's a part of every man that would like to have a man he would give his life for," Malone says. "Wesleyan Building Brothers brings men to a place where this need in them begins to get met."

In Wesleyan Building Brothers, men find a safe, "guys-only" environment where they can be honest about where they're at spiritually-and where they'd like to be. "I need a group of men who will not take my sin lightly, but also who will not reject me," is how one member described it to Schaffer. And that frees up a man to say the things he really thinks or fears.

"What Sunday school class is a man going to come into and tell a mixed gender group that he's really messed up with his secretary right now?" Schaffer asks. "You get men who get down to the very issues that they've never told anyone. You're creating a place that's safe enough and focused on the right issues where the Spirit can transform men."

Local church context

The point of such transformation is to have a lasting impact on an entire congregation. That's why Building Brothers organizers only work through the local church.

Kevin Condon, who has started men's groups in the Baltimore-Washington Conference and in Denver, Colo., said the UMC is smart to use something that's tailor-made for the church. "If you do something that's great for the men but it isn't good for the local church, what did you just do?"

It's not about "taking the church back from women." It's about bringing men up to speed in a church setting where many have not always felt at home. Through the Wesleyan Building Brothers four-phase process, UM men become "servant leaders" who work with their pastor in building a vision for their church that includes reaching more men.

It's a new way of doing men's ministry, says George Houle, a layman who organized the first Wesleyan Building Brothers training back in January for churches in Wichita, Kan.

"Men's ministry is not just biscuits-and-gravy anymore," Houle says. "We want men to be challenged to be closer to men and closer to God so that we minister out of the overflow, not out of obligation."

Representatives from about 10 churches were trained in Wichita, including clergy and laypersons from African-American and Hispanic congregations. Six of the churches now have groups of 5-12 men meeting weekly.

"This really, to me, fills the gap between Walk to Emmaus and DISCIPLE Bible Study that we didn't have before," Houle says.

In the Memphis Conference, lay leader David Reed was awarded a \$13,000 grant to organize Wesleyan Building Brothers. The conference hopes to launch the process in 50 or more churches by early 2008.

Having the support of the pastor—male or female—is key. A one-day overview of Wesleyan Building Brothers for male and female clergy was pioneered last summer in three Memphis Conference locations. Regular men's leadership training will be in November.

Not reproducing

Schaffer knows first-hand why men's ministry has to happen in the local church. One of the founders of the Promise Keepers men's movement, Schaffer says huge stadiums full of "excited men" won't bring lasting change unless those men can take what they've learned and use it in their local church.

But despite the impact of Promise Keepers, research by the Barna Group shows that American men's church attendance has actually dropped, from 42 percent in 1992 to 28 percent by 1996.

By contrast, Wesleyan Building Brothers focuses on training small groups of spiritually growing men who are committed to reproducing their faith and building disciples within their congregation.

That's key, because many churches are full of people who have not grown up spiritually, Schaffer says.

"We're not even challenging people that that's God's plan for them," he says. "When we cease to do that, we have this church that's full of 200-pound babies. And we're judging our success at how well we deliver warm milk and clean up [expletive]. But babies never reproduce. No wonder we're in a crisis."

The WBB process

Wesleyan Building Brothers begins with an intensive three-day seminar, followed up with groups of four to six men who process the material together for months.

The training has four phases: to help restore a healthy view of God for men, provide a safe environment for them to share confidentially, help them understand what it means to be a servant leader, and call them to actively pursue God.

When they're through, they will be prepared to lead other men in their church in the same process.

The Wesleyan Building Brothers process counteracts the most common barriers to spiritual growth that men experience: a distorted view of God stemming from a "father wound"; a lack of a masculine environment; seeing leaders they don't trust; and the sense they are obligated to be good enough to please God, rather than being free enough to pursue God.

The fact that it takes place in small groups is key, says Houle.

"I have known some of the guys in my group for 20 years, and even have been in Sunday school classes with them. We've asked ourselves why couldn't we share where we're hurting? We never did. We just passed one another in the hallway or played on the same softball team."

But after six months together, the men in Houle's small group are sharing everything from relationship to work struggles.

"We always get into work, how we act and behave when the work situation makes it hard for us to be Christian. And lust will sneak in there—that's an issue most men struggle with. We're sharing things that needed to be shared with somebody because of the covenant commitment we've made."

The starting point is to examine the father wound carried by many men and women.

"It's as if our experience with our father is a lens that stands between us and God. It can either distort our relationship with God or it can magnify it," Schaffer says.

Father wounds

If you want men to get emotionally intimate quickly, ask them to tell another man about their father, says Condon, the Denver men's group leader. For many, it was "never someone who he was able to have a complete relationship with. And it will come up just in a flash."

Painful memories of a father or father-figure can leave wounds.

"It's no accident that so many well-meaning, good-hearted people can go to church for so long and stay pretty much where they are," Malone says.

"Everybody understands on an intellectual level that man is not God and God is not man. But when there is an unhealed wound in a man or a woman, there's a little voice that you cannot turn off—no matter how much Bible study you do—that says, 'You can't trust him. He's just like Dad.'

"What's the reason those very same people have not been able to crawl up into the loving arms of God and trust? Dan [Schaffer] has nailed the biggest one of all—the father vacuum.

"We're not looking for a big therapy group where we can all cry. We want to be men enough to examine our paths and ask God to reveal to us if we have some unfinished business where we've not allowed God to begin the healing process."

Wesleyan Building Brothers men also learn not to leave a gaping father vacuum in their own children's lives. The idea, says Schaffer, is to "leave our kids with a very small gap that makes it very easy for them to reach for God."

Growing gap

On the whole, the church hasn't done so well with that, says author Thom Rainer. His 2006 book, *The Bridger Generation*, shows that there have been a decreasing number of professions of faith in each successive generation in the 20th century, from 65 percent during the World War II generation, to 35 percent among Baby Boomers, to 15 percent in Gen-X and to less than 5 percent in the generation born after 1977.

Men's ministries in the Methodist Church have also had ups and downs throughout its 100-year history. In 1962, the number of chartered UM Men units reached an all-time high of 18,000. By 1969, the number had dropped to 4,861. Charters climbed steadily over the next two decades, reaching 11,505 in 1990. But another downturn is apparently in progress. By 2005, the number of charters had dropped to 5,330.

It's important to turn that around, because men are critical to the health of a congregation, says Schaffer. He cites a Swiss government study that showed that the father is the primary determiner of the value children place on spiritual things. As the father goes, so go the children, as far as whether they continue participating in church as adults, the study showed.

"I believe if I wanted to defeat the church, all I would have to do is pull men out of their appropriate role, either through physical or emotional absence; in two generations, you'll see the church primarily dying," Schaffer says. "There has to be a unique emphasis that raises men to the level that they can be partners in this process."

WesleyMan

Building Brothers can have dramatic results. At an Episcopal church, Schaffer trained seven men, ages 35-79, who then met for two years before developing a heartfelt vision for their church. Their congregation, which had been struggling, has nearly doubled its membership and has become financially sound. A second generation of 15 men is now meeting.

"It isn't because the men stepped in and demanded that the church become masculine," Schaffer said. "What happened is they began to be the first fruits of being passionate pursuers of God in that church."

Condon says Building Brothers gives men a greater confidence in what they believe and how they share it.

"It doesn't come across as something they've remembered from Sunday school as a kid," he said. "It's how a mature man interacts with his faith and his Lord—the real deal. When people hear that kind of authority, it knocks them back on their heels."

Russell is the former editor of the United Methodist Reporter. Reprinted with permission of the United Methodist Reporter (www.umportal.org), where this article first appeared.

Men's ministry is similar to roller coaster rides

For many guys, men's ministry is like a roller coaster ride," says Brett Clemmer, vice president of leadership development with Man in the Mirror, an Orlando, Fla.-based organization that helps churches reach men effectively.

Clemmer tells about the first time he rode "The Hulk" roller coaster at a local theme park.

"I kept getting more nervous as I got closer to the front of the line," said Clemmer. "Once I was on the ride, I enjoyed it, and I was soon saying, 'Is this all you've got?' But when the ride ended I realized *I was right back where I had started*. I hadn't really gone anywhere! And now that I knew what to expect, the next ride would not be nearly as exhilarating."

Too often, this is the way men experience spiritual activities in the church. They go to an event like a retreat and leave on a spiritual high, only to crash a few days or weeks later because there is no follow-up opportunity, no way to sustain the momentum. Over time, men just quit trying.

"Your system is perfectly designed to produce the results you are getting," he said. "If you do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always gotten." He suggests that local churches should provide a number of entry points. Different types of men will be drawn to different types of activities. "Men are not going to immediately sign up for a 34-week DISCIPLE Bible study," he said. "We need to cast our nets wide and create an environment where men are comfortable."

The No Man Left Behind model provides a system that every UM church can use to make sure that their efforts to disciple men don't lose their momentum. "Always make sure you are telling men what the 'right next step' is," urged Clemmer. "Make sure you use your activities to channel men into the activities in your church that work best for men."

"We're the leaders," Clemmer concluded. "Our heart is for discipling men and helping them grow in Christ. But we have to remember that all men aren't 'there' yet in their spiritual hunger. Remember—don't be mad at a man because you want him to grow more than he does. Just pray that the Holy Spirit would move on his heart and make him hungry for the gospel."

Principles taught by Man in the Mirror

- The senior pastor must be supportive.
- Leaders must have the right strategy and be passionate about reaching men.
- The ministry must be purpose-driven rather than event-driven.
- Make certain that every event serves a larger purpose. Men want to be a part of something larger than themselves.
- Be relationship-based rather than task-oriented. Events attract men, relationships make them stick.
- Make disciples and pray for workers. The Bible tells us, “Go and make disciples...baptizing them.” Often we get this confused with, “Go and make workers... browbeating them.” Make disciples and then pray that God leads them to a place of service.

Seven ways to create a male friendly church

By David Murrow

Cultivate a healthy masculine spirit in your church. A man must sense, from the moment he walks in, that church is not just for Grandma, it's something for him. It can't feel like a ladies' club. The quilted banners, fresh flowers, and boxes of Kleenex in our sanctuaries make a statement, so do practices such as holding hands with your neighbor, "prayer and share" times, or highly emotional displays. Our goal is not to get men to cry; it's to get them to walk with God.

Make men feel needed and wanted. Encourage men to use their gifts, even if they don't fit traditional models of Christian service. Encourage them to serve the poor by working on cars or fixing up houses. Let men plan adventures and do "guy things" together.

Present Christ's masculine side. Pastors often focus on Jesus' tenderness and empathy. This is a good thing, but presenting soft Jesus week after week runs the risk of turning men off. What man wants to follow Mr. Rogers? Even more bewildering are today's praise songs—many of which feature lovey-dovey lyrics set to a romantic tune. Guys may feel unnatural singing romantic words to another man. Men want a leader, not a love object.

Avoid feminine terminology. Christian men use terms such as precious, share, and relationship—words you'd never hear on the lips of a typical man. We talk a lot about the saved and the lost; men don't want to be either. The concept of a "personal relationship with Jesus Christ" puzzles a lot of guys. Men understand Christ's masculine command, "Follow me!"

Preach shorter sermons. I know pastors will hate this principle, but men say that "long, boring sermons" are the #1 reason they avoid church. Thanks to TV, today's men have an attention span of six to eight minutes. Why not use this to your advantage? Break your sermon into six- to eight-minute segments with a song, drama, video clip, or object lesson in between. Remember, Jesus' most beloved lessons were his parables, none of which takes more than two minutes to teach. His parables survive today because men remembered them.

Become students of men. Although most pastors are male, women keep the ministry machine going, so pastors focus on keeping females happy and volunteering. This must change. I challenge every pastor in America to study men. A good place to start: read John Eldredge's bestseller, *Wild at Heart*.

Create a culture of person-to-person challenge. In many a church, the pastor challenges from the pulpit, but the people don't challenge each other. Person-to-person discipleship, in small teams, is the only way to bring men to maturity in Christ. Where do you start? Choose a handful of men and personally disciple them, with the understanding that each man will recruit his own small group after one year. Continue to disciple these men as they become disciplers of others. This is the model Jesus left us, and it is awakening men in churches across the nation.

This article is adapted from Why Men Hate Going to Church by David Murrow

Ten secrets to attract and retain men

By Pat Morley and David Delk

I. Create Momentum

Pastor Prayer Group: Organize a group of men to pray for your pastor every Sunday morning before the services begin. If 12 men gather on Sunday morning to pray for their pastor, what would you call that? The beginnings of a men's ministry. Principle: The senior pastor ultimately determines the priorities of the church. Support your pastor as you encourage him or her to support your men's ministry.

The Bill Gates Idea: Come up with a purpose statement that gets men excited about getting involved. What do your men want? Friendships, growth, better marriages, godly kids, worship, or service? Principle: Stating your purpose keeps your group focused.

A "Care Call" Team: Triple your attendance at events. Form a "call team" of trained men responsible for ten guys each. Have them establish a regular phone or email relationship that communicates, "I care." Principle: Most men don't feel like anyone really cares about them personally.

Word of Wife: Use a "Word-of-Wife" campaign to have her get him interested in your ministry. Have a woman promote the event during a meeting of United Methodist Women with a sign up table. Send emails to wives. Principle: Send the person to ask who is most likely to get a yes.

II. Capture Momentum

The World's Biggest Small Group: Help your senior pastor facilitate a kick off gathering at the beginning of each semester for four weeks. Then, funnel these guys into small groups (one church gets over 100 guys out for the four weeks and then funnels them into their 47 small groups). The larger setting is a safe first step for guys and allows them a chance to develop relationships before entering a group. Principle: Give men the opportunity to come along at their own speed and find their own level of involvement.

Work Teams: Increase ownership and involvement. When a guy comes up with a ministry idea, put him in charge of a "work team" and turn him loose to make

something happen. Principle: Men who love God can't be happy until they find a way to serve Him.

A Great Bible Teacher: Don't overlook the obvious. Men will get up early to hear good male-context, application-oriented Bible study. Principle: The Bible changes lives

III. Sustain Momentum

Mom's Night Out: Get men involved in your ministry by offering childcare and children's programs concurrent with your men's activities. Remember, if she's happy, he's happy. "You get over there, now, and take the kids." Principle: Don't call men away from their families just to tell them they need to spend more time with their families.

The Prayer Chair: Change a man's life by putting a chair in the middle of a circle, have him share his need or struggle, then pray for him. Principle: A man needs a good cry every now and then, and not necessarily the guy in the chair.

Leadership Teams: Recruit new leaders by constantly "evangelizing" men about your purpose. Train leaders for vacancies in the church by getting cultural Christians in small groups where they come to authentic faith and get turned on. Principle: Everything boils down to leadership.

Morley is chairman and CEO of Man in the Mirror and Delk is president. This article is adapted with permission from Man in the Mirror, Casselberry, Fla.

Rules for reaching men in your community

DO

- Have activities focused on felt needs: finances, marriage, career, recreation
- Incorporate recreation or hobbies: sports, cars, movies
- Advertise honestly: Yes, it's at a church. Yes, we will talk about God at some point. Yes, we will make it fun and engaging.
- Have fun.
- Make it easy and natural for men to begin to develop relationships.
- Give them the "right next step" - invite them to another opportunity.
- Make men want to come back.
- Think long-term, low pressure.

DON'T

- Advertise activities as being focused on purely spiritual needs: prayer, fasting, quiet time
- Incorporate activities that will make these men uncomfortable over anything but Christ: long prayers, singing 10 worship songs in a row, "hellfire & brimstone" speakers, and holding hands.
- Bait and switch: "Before we play basketball, we have a short, 35-minute evangelistic film we'd like to show you."
- Make men feel guilty about behavior.
- Ignore the new guy or create contrived exercises to make men talk.
- Make them have to figure out what they should do next if they are interested.
- Drive them away.
- Forget it takes a long time to make a disciple.

These rules are from Disciplemen.com, hosted for the National Coalition of Men's Ministries by Man in the Mirror. "How To Reach Men Who Need Christ."

How to create a safe environment for men's ministry

It's important to develop an environment within the church that is both safe and masculine, says Dan Schaffer, president of Building Brothers and a trainer of men's ministry specialists. In order to do so, it is important for church leaders to understand the differences between safe environments for men and women

Masculine Characteristics

Feminine Characteristics

Space is safety

Closeness is safety

Communicates through questions

Communicates by relating

Goal or challenge oriented

Security oriented

Focuses on facts or emotions

Focuses on facts and Emotions

Rules over relationships

Relationships over rules

Emotion expressed through anger

A broad range of emotions

This is how we 're-thunk' our men's ministry

By Greg Arnold

Recently, I received an e-mail from a UMM president with a list of questions.

Here are the questions. My answers follow.

1. What is working well

My church recently wrapped up a five-year test project. Our revised model of UM Men helped increase our church-wide male attendance from 30% to 44%. In addition, we experienced a drop in average age of active men from 68 years of age to about 45 years of age. The church is growing in all sectors. As more fathers and husbands come, more families come.

2. What do you think should work well

We eliminated large groups, or the general assembly. We fostered existing medium-size groups like the monthly men's breakfast, work days, and events focused on fellowship and mission work. Our focus shifted toward cultivating small groups outside of traditional church settings. We seeded coffee-shop groups, lunch groups, short-term study groups, golfing groups, etc. This has been the foundation of our growth. Leaders spend more time with other leaders and do not try to corral every man in the church into a central meeting - which isn't effective.

3. What percentage of men at your church actively participate in your meetings?

After we eliminated large meetings, we found stronger inclusion from younger men. We still have a "meeting atmosphere" at our monthly men's breakfast where we share news and projects. The breakfast was left intact as a way to form a small group around our declining UMM structure. It is attended primarily by our traditional-minded UMM guys and some who are interested in the leadership portion of our work. They've spawned their own mission projects as well. We ceased taking attendance and stopped counting heads. We focus on counting small groups that serve as entry points to the church. We find that discipleship happens more readily in the small groups.

Our core leadership team meets mostly by e-mail, or in hallways on Sundays. We get more business accomplished in three minutes several times a month than

meeting for a single hour. Many of our small groups are comprised of these core leaders.

4. How does your group powerfully impact your church?

Our men are showing up and bringing their families. In addition, men are sitting down together and sharing struggles, victories, and laughter. Our next phase is to set up a robust prayer ministry. It's important for church families to see our men at the altar - demonstrating our disciplines. Our prayer team will rotate Sundays - praying for the church and the pastors.

5. What does your group do to powerfully impact it's members?

It's about discipleship and not about meetings. Our men are responding to the call and finding ways to make entry points into the congregation for men who visit our small groups but do not attend worship and are not members of the church.

I hope this helps. It isn't a one-size-fits-all answer, but there are some core concepts in here that have been tried, tested, and proven. The good news is the men of our greater UMC are hungry for more—you've told me as much.

We aren't a traditional UMM organization. However, we are looking more and more Wesleyan every year. We devote ourselves to creating and nurturing disciples and representing our Savior at work and at home.

Twenty-four principles to follow when building a ministry to men

By Patrick Morley

1. What your ministry to men will look like 10 years from now will mostly be decided by your vision or dream today.
2. Set an appointment to begin implementing your dream.
3. Think about how to make your ministry to men inclusive and intergenerational.
4. Minister out of the overflow of your own expanding relationship with Jesus.
5. Do fewer things better.
6. Don't try to bring about a particular outcome, be faithful to your call.
7. Repetition is reputation. Repeat your vision, dream, and purpose during every meeting.
8. Men can see your strengths, so reveal your weaknesses. God uses the weak things of this world for His glory.
9. Make yourself dispensable. The architect does not have to occupy the building for the building to stand.
10. Appeal to the men you have and the men you want to have.
11. Build around relationships, not programs. If it's not going as well as you had hoped with your men, don't get angry. Love them more.
12. Plodders win after the hare has quit.
13. Manage expectations: All disappointment is the result of unmet expectations. It takes a long time to make a disciple. Richard Foster said, "Our tendency is to over estimate what we can accomplish in one year, and under estimate what we can accomplish in ten years." Think in terms of what you want to do over the next ten years.
14. Evangelism must be central. The best method of evangelism is the one you will use.
15. As the leader you will receive more credit and more blame than you deserve.
16. Do not teach men to be better. Call them to join the cause of the gospel of Jesus Christ and to live in the shadow of that call.
17. What do you see? If you see the present you are operational. If you see the future you are visionary. Both are needed.

18. What kind of men are we trying to produce: Disciples—not workers. Most men don't have enough Jesus for themselves, much less to give away. Help men fill up to the overflow in their relationship with Jesus. At a point, they will feel compelled to serve Him.

19. Focus: If we know that we will only have a man and his family for five years, what lessons are so important that if he were to leave without them, we would have failed that man? This, then, becomes the discipleship curriculum.

20. Chinese proverb: "The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now."

21. Zechariah 4:10 says, "Do not despise the small beginning"

22. Hudson Taylor said, "All God's giants have been weak men who did great things for God because they reckoned on His power and presence to be with them."

23. Planning without prayer is presumption. Prayer without planning is presumption.

24. "Go and make disciples." If the Great Commission is true, our plans are not too big; they are too small.

Dr. Patrick Morley is founder of Man in the Mirror ministries. Reprinted with permission

Checklist of things to do

List (with the help of your pastor) the men in your church who may have an interest in reaching other men and who have good relational skills.

Contact your district UM Men's president to help you in the organization and programming of your local unit. Call or e-mail GCUMM office for contact information.

Call the men you identify to help you with the organization. Ask them to join you in praying and discerning the direction of the men's ministry.

Meet with your leadership team and begin by developing a clear understanding of your purpose. The purpose of your men's ministry should support the overarching purpose and mission of your church. A written purpose statement is recommended, such as: "To reach men in our community with a credible offer of the gospel and equip them as servant leaders for their families, church, work, and community."

Survey the men in your church to determine their interests and needs. It is important to assess the kinds of ministries that appeal to your men. visit www.gcumm.org for survey information.

Base your men's ministry on relationships rather than on elaborate programs or tasks. The foundation of a successful men's ministry is building relationships. Events attract men, but relationships make them stick.

Emphasize spiritual growth. Men's groups often make the mistake of emphasizing the fellowship among men over the need for men to grow spiritually. Fellowship happens; spiritual growth must be intentional. Offer opportunities for men to grow in Christ, and expect them to participate.

Choose a date for your first organizational meeting. This meeting should be the only business meeting held with the entire membership. Normally, the executive committee should handle business with annual reports to the membership. It is important to develop a calendar, listing all UM Men's Ministry activities for the year. Coordinate the calendar with the total church programs to avoid conflicts.

Complete and submit a charter application (If you have questions about the application, call the GCUMM office).

Prepare a budget that reflects the purpose and mission of your local UM Men unit.

Recruit Legacy Builders / EMS (Every Man Shares in Evangelism, Mission, and Spiritual Life) members. It is important that every man in your church become an investor in the future of men's ministry, so that men can be impacted by the ministry of UM Men locally, conference-wide, and nationally. Application forms are available at www.gcumm.org.

Questions and answers about Legacy and EMS

The true meaning of legacy is to plant trees under whose shade you don't expect to sit.

What is EMS?

Every Man Shares in Evangelism Mission and Spiritual Life was introduced at the 1981 National Congress of UM Men at Purdue University. Every UM man is encouraged to annually enroll as an EMS member.

What does it cost?

\$45

What is a Legacy Builder?

Legacy was introduced at the 2005 National Gathering of UM Men at Purdue University. It is a way for you to support ministries long after you have gone. The first \$45 of your annual legacy pledge pays for your EMS membership. As you move from EMS member to legacy builder, your financial gift provides not only for existing ministries but enables us to fund new initiatives.

If I am a Legacy Builder am I automatically an EMS member?

Yes. You will receive confirmation letters for both.

What projects does the Legacy/EMS fund?

Leader Training

United Methodist Men conducts training for conference and district leaders. It also develops curriculum and training for Men's Ministry Specialists. These men assist local congregations become more effective in reaching men and growing men spiritually.

Retreats and Events

Spiritually enriching growth experiences are offered to men through retreats and events held nationwide.

Scouting

The United Methodist Church is the second largest charter organization in number of youth with 376,472 Boy Scouts meeting in 12,000 units in 8,000 churches. The foundation annually provides 10,000 New Testaments to a national Scout camp. Other youth ministries supported

as outreach ministries include Camp Fire USA, Girl Scouts of America, Big Brothers and Big Sisters and 4-H.

The Society of Saint Andrew

The society annually leads 9,000 volunteers into farmers' fields to pick up more than 3.7 million pounds of food for America's hungry. At the same time, through their Meals for Millions contributions, the men provided another 5.7 million pounds of fresh produce. The salvaged food resulted in 28.2 million servings of food for the hungry.

The Upper Room Prayer Line

A toll-free line receives some 36,000 calls a month. A network of over 1,000 people answer prayer requests in more than 300 covenant prayer groups around the world. "I thank God for the faithfulness of men of God like those in our UM Men connection," said Migdiel Pérez, manager of the prayer center.

Ministries to Children of Incarcerated Parents

A new partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America matches United Methodist men with youth whose parents are incarcerated. The organization is located in 5,000 communities around the country. The commission has begun pilot projects in several annual conferences.

Strength for Service to God and Country

The commission sends copies of an updated World War II book of daily devotions to troops deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. Over 340,000 copies of the pocket-sized book have been sent to members of our armed forces.

Ministry in Other Nations

Since its birth as an agency in 1996, the Commission on United Methodist Men has strived to become financially self-sufficient. Our goal is to use funds provided by the denomination to reach thousands of men outside U.S. borders.

How do I become an EMS member or a Legacy Builder?

Call (615) 340-7145 or e-mail gcumm@gcumm.org.
Visit our website: www.gcumm.org.

The Charter

Since local churches provide numerous opportunities for men to grow in Christ, the General Commission on United Methodist Men suggests that the local church hold the charter for all ministries to men.

The commission provides services for local units, sub-districts, districts, conferences, and jurisdictional organizations of UM Men.

Chartered men's units receive:

- *UMMen* magazine, the official publication for men's ministry, contains informational and inspirational articles designed to help men become servant leaders. This magazine includes news, ideas, announcements, and recognition of what is happening among men's ministry around the world. Also contained in the quarterly publication is information about scouting ministry, the UM Men Foundation, and missions.
- UM Men's membership cards for every man in your church. A quadrennial frame-able certificate with yearly renewal stickers.
- Important information critical to conducting effective men's ministry. Charters renewals come with a packet full of vital information important to successful UM Men units.
- *Program Book*, a ministry idea book designed to help you with ideas for programs and ministries for your local men's ministry.
- Information about the Upper Room Prayer Line sponsored by UM Men.
- Information about the nationally sponsored UM Men mission opportunities.
- Assistance with program planning.
- Information about the official UM Men's Web site (www.gcumm.org)

Building Interest for Chartering

There is no secret formula for organizing a successful men's ministry. It does not happen overnight. First, get the support of your pastor. Success is dependent upon his or her enthusiastic support. Arrange a time for a meeting, and include your pastor and several men from your congregation. Invite your district or conference UM Men's president. At this meeting, make plans for the steps you will follow to form an effective men's ministry,

Your Plans Should Include These Steps:

- Discuss the purpose of men’s ministry as stated in the *Book of Discipline*.
- Read the information in *Men’s Ministries, Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation 2013-2016* (obtain from Cokesbury Book Stores).
- Develop a plan for publicity and set ways to involve members. Set a date for the organizational meeting.
- At the organizational meeting select the leadership team. Set the date for monthly meetings. Prepare an action plan to carry out your ministry.
- Use some of the many aids available to help get off to a good start. They include *Men’s Ministries, Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation 2013-2016* and *Program Book*. The *UMMen Magazine* is a publication for presidents, treasurers, and other men who subscribe through the Every Man Shares through Evangelism, Mission & Spiritual Life (EMS) program. Write the General Commission on UM Men, 1000 17th Ave S, Nashville, TN 37212, for brochures and additional information. Information and charter applications are also available at www.gcumm.org.

Important Functions of the Annual Charter and Annual Recertification:

- update and correct the mailing addresses of current officers so that the proper leaders receive the current information;
- link men’s units around the world for common mission and ministry support;
- provide support for developing resources specially designed for men; UM Men-sponsored mission opportunities; and evangelism emphasis of men, youth, and scouting ministries sponsored by UM Men.

How to Charter:

1. -List the church name, address, city, state, and zip (plus four if known).
2. -Give your pastor’s name and phone number, UMC national code if known, district and conference name.
3. -Give the president’s name, address, city, state, zip (plus four if known), and phone number.
4. -Give the treasurer’s name, address, city, state, zip (plus four if known), and phone number.
5. -Have the treasurer prepare a check for charter fee (\$85)
6. -Mail the check and the above information to UM Men, P.O. Box 440515, Nashville, TN 37244-0515.

For annual recertification, churches and presidents are mailed notices with a return envelope and the certification information in the fall of each year.

Why Charter?

The Charter has been the uniting instrument of United Methodist Men units for over 50 years. The concept to unite Methodist Men through a national office was a grassroots idea at the beginning of men's work.

Men gladly join and support many diverse civic and service clubs and support these organizations with dues as well as many hours of volunteer service in their communities. They do this willingly year after year, reaping the spiritual reward of contributing to the welfare of humankind. They enjoy the association with others and often cultivate their own welfare in the business world.

All the familiar civic service and para-church religious organizations are chartered through a national or international organization. All such national or international organizations are supported from dues of member organizations. These members never question the fact that each local unit must be chartered. Yet, when it comes to supporting a national service organization that is a part of the church, some ask, "Why charter?"

Why should a local United Methodist Men unit charter and make annual contributions to the General Commission on United Methodist Men?"

United Methodist Men's units are chartered for all the same reasons that a local church is chartered as a United Methodist church, making its annual contributions to the general church through World Service and Conference Benevolences. Our church is a connectional community of true believers under the Lordship of Christ offering a covenant relationship between persons. It offers a unique and favorable mission and ministry in the world.

Because of the uniqueness of ministry for and to men, the limited amount of general church funds is not adequate for direction, oversight, administration and maintenance of this specialized mission and ministry of United Methodist Men.

The national office and staff of the General Commission on United Methodist Men provide many services for local units, subdistricts, districts, conferences, and jurisdictional organizations, the U.S. National Association of Conference Presidents, and the International Christian Fellowship of Methodist Men. Each of these important structures exists to support men as they grow and to provide opportunities for men to be in mission and ministry together. Our goal is to increase the local unit's effectiveness in mission and ministry through opportunities not available through any other source.

The charter benefits from the General Commission on United Methodist Men to a local unit include: free membership cards, program book and other resources provided in the annual President's Packet, a service office, available staff to

answer phone calls and letters, staff-led training events in every part of the nation for conference, district and local leaders, local church resources to assist in program planning and enabling officers in their duties and responsibilities, representation through national staff in a wide variety of interests in which other United Methodist Church agencies and ecumenical organizations are involved.

The General Commission on United Methodist Men staff oversees and manages the mission and ministries that are funded by United Methodist Men. With the cooperation and help of the National Association of Conference Presidents, the United Methodist Men Foundation and the National Association of United Methodist Scouters, staff relates to, promotes and seeks funds to maintain the United Methodist Men missions.

Also, the general commission staff manages the National Gathering of United Methodist Men held every four years.

Three important functions of the annual charter recertification are:

1. The annual charter renewal updates the name and address of current officers. To ensure that current mailings reach the proper hands, the new officer information must be received annually.
2. The charter and annual renewal as stated in *The Book of Discipline* (§2302) is the key that links men's units around the world. Witness and strength are measured by annual growth of current chartered units.
3. Financial contributions provide the support for the General Commission on United Methodist Men's administrative, mission, program and resource budgets. These annual contributions are vital to strengthen and enhance the unique connection of one men's unit with other men's units around the world.

Become a Men's Ministry Specialist

If you desire to serve God and the UMC in the ministry of Jesus Christ through men, you might consider certification as a Men's Ministry Specialist (MMS), operating under the General Commission on UM Men.

A MMS is a man committed to lifelong spiritual growth. He is an active member of the UMC; a ready learner who is teachable and can teach others. He communicates and listens well, using these skills to work closely with a team of congregation lay and clergy leaders. Together they help the entire congregation increase effectiveness in reaching men, and the spiritual growth of men. The MMS does not displace existing leaders—rather he serves alongside them helping congregations reach their vision by more effectively engaging and growing men as followers of Jesus Christ. The MMS connects congregations with effective and appropriate training and resources for ministry to and through men.

Basic MMS Requirements

- ✓ Be recommended by your pastor, and if married, have the support of your wife.
- ✓ Grow spiritually under the counsel of a spiritually mature person.
- ✓ Meet and work with your district superintendent and conference and district leaders of UM Men.
- ✓ Participate in a small-group such as DISCIPLE Bible Study, “Companions in Christ,” or Wesleyan Building Brothers or engage in other spiritual formation work that moves you toward spiritual maturity.
- ✓ Complete free on-line spiritual and personality assessment inventories that help you know yourself and communicate well with others.
- ✓ Participate in a 2 ½ day “No Man Left Behind” men’s leadership training experience offered through Man in the Mirror ministries.
- ✓ Read *Spiritual Fathers* by Dan Schaffer and *No Man Left Behind* by Patrick Morley, David Delk and Brett Clemmer.
- ✓ Complete a free on-line course on UMC/UM Men history and polity.
- ✓ Participate in UMC Safe Sanctuary and Sexual Ethics courses offered by your district or annual conference.
- ✓ Attend a basic Lay Speaker course; advanced courses are encouraged.

When all MMS requirements are completed, you will be interviewed, reviewed, and recommended for MMS certification by a panel under the authority of the commission. The panel will recommend you for certification by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry for service within the UMC as a Men's Ministry Specialist.

Honor your pastor

1. Be present at worship services.
2. Do more than say “nice sermon” on your way out the sanctuary. Send your pastor an e-mail or note detailing how helpful a specific part of the sermon was to you. Do this only when it is true.
3. Pray for your pastor daily. Organize a prayer team that will pray for and with him or her.
4. Congratulate him or her upon being elected to a conference, jurisdiction or general church position. Write an item about the honor in the church newsletter or bulletin.
5. Help around the church office or volunteer to make church repairs.
6. Take him or her to lunch for no particular reason.
7. Write a note of appreciation to your pastor’s district superintendent and bishop.
8. Be present at the charge conference and other important church meetings.
9. Volunteer to lead a mission team or work group.
10. Remember his or her birthday and anniversary. Send cards or organize celebrations for these occasions.
11. Organize a “Pastor’s Appreciation Dinner.”
12. Raise funds to make your pastor a member of the John Wesley Society. Present the plaque and pin at an appreciation dinner or worship service.

Letters from Dad

After Greg Vaughn's father died in 2000, he found himself staring at old fishing equipment. Greg was overcome with anger and hurt. "Why couldn't my father tell me he loved me? Why couldn't we have been closer?"

Greg didn't even have a signature from his father. But he then asked himself. "Greg, if you were to die today, what would your kids hold in their hands tomorrow that would let them know that they were the treasures of your life?" His answer: "Nothing."

Vaughn asked twelve of his closest friends to go with him on a journey he called "Letters from Dad" where the men would write letters to their loved ones and leave a letter to be opened upon their deaths.

The men were excited about what had happened in their families; they invited their friends to a dinner and asked Greg to lead them in the Letters from Dad process. One hundred and twenty men participated. After that experience the men again held a big dinner but this time over 250 men showed up. At the third dinner in the spring of 2004, they had over 750 men present.

After the third experience, Vaughn began a national program. In that program, he invites men to a barbecue where he outlines the process. Men who agree to participate are divided into "legacy groups" that meet once a month for at least four months to write four letters; one each to their wife, their children and grandchildren, their parents and a letter to be opened after their death.

**Scouting
and
Civic Youth-Serving
Ministry**

Scouting and civic youth-serving ministry

The mission of the church is to reach out to those within the community, receive them as they are, relate them to God, nurture and equip them, and send them back into the community in order to make the community a more loving and just place in which to live. Therefore, United Methodist congregations should regard all their members, whatever their age, as important and deserving of their concern. As a result, children and teenagers should be nurtured and equipped along with all other members of the congregation.

In 1532, Martin Luther preached about how difficult it was to make other people good for a life of service to God. Luther's remarks are appropriate in considering our ministry to young people and the goal of our church to help young people become committed Christians and responsible citizens.

Since its 1996 inception, the message of the General Commission on United Methodist Men (GCUMM) has been compelling and focused. As United Methodist Men, we have an assignment to reach men of all ages for the Lord Jesus Christ. Our primary purpose is the spiritual development of men and of the youth involved in civic youth-serving agencies through The United Methodist Church. God is honoring that purpose by empowering and blessing men's and scouting ministries.

The United Methodist Men Foundation established an Office of Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting Ministries and staffed it with a full-time director. The office resides within the GCUMM. The purpose of this office is to promote the use of these programs across the church and to help local congregations understand how they might use civic youth-serving agencies as an outreach ministry within their community.

The church has chosen to use five youth agency programs: Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Camp Fire USA and 4-H. These agencies offer a unique opportunity to minister to young people. These five were chosen for three reasons:

1. Their programs are consistent with Christian teachings.
2. They are currently in place in many local congregations.
3. They recognize the God and Country program offered through The United Methodist Church and administered through Programs of Religious

Activities with Youth (P.R.A.Y.). See the resources at the back of this Guideline for contact information.

We, the Church, are endowed with certain responsibilities that allow scouting and civic youth serving programs to become a ministry. This is what differentiates us from a civic or community-based club.

While the term scouting ministries is used extensively to refer to all civic youth-serving agency programs, it is important to note that each of these agency programs offers distinct and unique program and organizational features. They do not consider scouting as a generic term. Please use care when using this term and be sensitive to the individual youth agency terminology.

Your job as coordinator for civic youth-serving agencies/scouting

First, take the quick view of both the marks of an effective coordinator and of the general duties, then, explore in further detail the essentials of healthy servant leadership.

Duties of the Local Church Coordinator

The local church scouting coordinator has the following responsibilities:

1. Interpret scouting ministry as an intentional ministry of the church, providing nurture, service, mission, and outreach.
2. Coordinate scouting ministries with other programs in the church and publicize those programs.
3. Encourage dialogue and understanding between pastor or church leaders and adult leaders in the scouting ministry.
4. Be a member of the church council and report monthly.
5. See that there is a signed charter or partnership agreement with the agencies.
6. Promote the God and Country religious education program for all youth in the church and provide information about the programs available for those of other faiths who are in our United Methodist Church youth agencies.
7. Work with the pastor in planning and observing Scouting Ministries Sunday or separate special Sundays for each of the agencies that are represented in the churches.
8. See that leaders become fully trained for their position in the agencies and by the church for youth protection.
9. Ensure that recognitions are awarded as appropriate, including the Bishop's Award of Excellence for units, the Cross and Flame and God and Service for leadership, the Good Samaritan for youth who have provided service to the church or community, and other recognitions as needed, including public gratitude and agency awards.
10. Cultivate resources to support the organization's programs, recruit Boy Scout leaders and assist in recruiting leaders for other agencies, and assist in recruiting young people.
11. Assist the pastor with a report of unit designation numbers, the number of young people registered, and the name and contact information for the leadership.
12. Represent the church on the District Scouting Committee.

Faith Modeling and Servant Leadership

There is a difference between faith modeling and faith teaching. Faith teaching is instruction about a particular faith (for example, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and so forth) or a specific doctrinal stance (such as one's beliefs about God or Holy Scriptures). The Office of Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting emphasizes faith modeling, while clearly stating that faith teaching is the responsibility of the home or the religious institution or organization.

Jesus constantly provided a faith model for his followers. When the disciples asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus, the ultimate servant leader, called a child into their midst and talked about becoming like children. Then he said, "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:1-6). This passage conveys the high calling of those who inspire youth by modeling their faith.

As a servant leader and scouting leader you are entrusted with the precious gift of young lives. Parents, who have experienced the miracle of a new life, are sharing that miracle with you. They are expecting you to model your faith and to help their child grow. Civic youth-serving agency programs stress citizenship, character development, and physical fitness. These programs encourage you as a servant leader and are designed to promote these values.

Young people learn a great deal about their lifestyle by observing others and by practicing the behaviors they witness. Every parent can tell stories of how and when their children imitated them. Just as you have learned that personal skills are better taught by demonstration and followed by a chance to practice the skills, so faith development is encouraged by demonstration with encouragement and opportunities to practice faith skills. As a servant leader, you are expected to abide by the policy that specific religious instruction is the responsibility of the home or the religious institution. However, you can let young people know that God is important in your life by the way you live in their midst. You can live a faith-oriented lifestyle.

If you are a scouting leader in The United Methodist Church, you have committed yourself to holding a belief in God. You have committed yourself to a principle that says, "No person can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing his or her obligation to God." You have committed yourself to teaching young people both the words and meaning of the Girl Scout Promise, the Boy Scout Oath, the Camp Fire Code, or the 4-H Pledge. The best way to teach the words and meaning is to make them real in your life! If you are a member of and representative from the church to the troop or club, you have

also declared in your membership vows to uphold your beliefs through prayer, practice, gifts, and service.

What is faith modeling? It is doing, thinking, and talking out of a faith-strengthened stance. It is letting faith determine your lifestyle.

One aspect of faith modeling is respect for one's physical body. Inasmuch as civic youth-serving agencies do not allow alcoholic beverages on outdoor trips (teenage alcohol abuse is on the increase), a good leader will observe the practice of no alcoholic beverages, without exception. The same is true regarding other drugs and other health-damaging substances. Listed below are several other characteristics of a good leader.

A Good Leader

A good leader will demonstrate love and concern for the young people in the unit, troop, or club. You will find opportunities to listen to them as individuals. You will learn to share their excitement, their joy, their sorrow, and their concerns. You will recognize that they have one foot in childhood and the other in adulthood, hopping back and forth; and you will accept them for who they are.

A good leader will demonstrate the importance of his or her faith by being an active participant in the church, and that involves personal study and devotions. You may be the best model many young people will ever observe. Your faith life may well serve to encourage them to live their own faith commitments.

A good leader will foster spiritual growth by encouraging young people to plan and participate in religious observances in meetings, campouts, and more. You will want to plan activities to allow youth to participate in their own communities of faith and to schedule programs and travel that do not conflict with such participation.

A good leader will encourage faith development by urging young people to enroll in appropriate religious study programs. Just as young people need encouragement to work on advancement, so they need encouragement to grow spiritually.

A good leader knows that cursing is not a sign of maturity but is an attempt to disguise immaturity. Off-color stories or prejudice-loaded words will be avoided because they demonstrate a lack of value for persons (see James 3:5-12).

You Are the Salt of the Earth!

Consider salt for a moment. Salt is inconspicuous and ordinary. Salt does not deteriorate, though it can lose its saltiness through adulteration. Salt is a preservative—remember that salted ham! Salt is an astringent that stings. Salt will stop bleeding! Salt gives zest to food and makes you thirsty! Remember that a pinch of salt has a great effect on its surroundings. When Jesus said, “You are the salt of the earth,” (Matthew 5:13) he was saying that you are important. As a leader, you can live a faith-oriented lifestyle that encourages faith development in the young people with whom you work.

One of our bishops stated that he is a United Methodist today largely because of the efforts of his scoutmaster. When he was a young boy, his family was not active in the church. He attended one of two different Sunday schools, depending upon which of his friends came by for him on Sunday morning. One Sunday, the class teacher announced that he was starting a new program on the

following Monday night and invited all of the boys to come back to the church. The new program was a Boy Scout troop. In a few short months this young man had advanced through the ranks of the Boy Scouts and had also become a member of The Methodist Church. In the bishop's words, "I joined that church because it provided me the opportunity to do the things I enjoyed doing." The scoutmaster provided the "salt" necessary to season the life of a future bishop!

A number of United Methodist pastors report that they have reached many families through the "salty" scouting ministry of their churches. One diaconal minister related the story of how a whole family was reunited with the church because of their son's participation in a God and Country class offered by the church. The family had become inactive to the point that their name had been removed from the church rolls by action of the charge conference. The young scout became so involved in the God and Country program that he professed his faith and expressed his desire to unite with the church. As a result, his entire family was reunited with the church. Remember the words of our Lord, "You are the salt of the earth."

Positive Peer Pressure

Traditional youth organizations bring young people together for regularly scheduled meetings and activities that help to develop a sense of identity and a feeling of belonging. Scouting programs offer the opportunity for youth to learn and grow by planning their own program of activity, electing officers, and practicing leadership. Leadership development happens unobtrusively and naturally.

While youth members of civic youth-serving agency ministries learn by doing in small groups, they are also exposed to the virtues of peer leadership and constructive fellowship. Young people feel the effects of peer pressure today more than ever before; consequently, it is the duty of the church to provide an atmosphere in which that pressure can become a positive force. Civic youth-serving agency ministries can provide such an atmosphere.

Ten reasons to consider scouting and civic youth-serving agencies as a ministry of your local church

1. Outreach

The ministry of Christ revolved around the profound concept of reaching out to others. Modeling Christ's example, scouting and civic youth-serving agencies seek to touch lives with the compassion of Christ. We have found that when we reach out to others, the blessings of God are returned to us.

2. Evangelism

Statistics indicate that of all the youth who join scouting through the church, 25 percent are United Methodists, 25 percent are members of other denominations or faiths, and 50 percent come from unchurched families. Reaching out to families that do not have a church home is not a new concept. Scouting is one potential entry point for persons to join the church, which then has the opportunity to introduce, nurture, and strengthen a relationship with Jesus Christ. Scouting provides a great way for the local church to serve its local community and in the process offer new and exciting programs that the church may transform into ministry to, with, and through youth.

3. Intergenerational

Scouting and civic youth ministry offers opportunities for older adults as well as youth. Often congregational members become isolated from one another because we tend to spend time with people of similar age groups. Scouting offers older adults a chance to become merit-badge counselors, mentors, or committee members who plan activities with and for youth. In these ways, and more, older adults can become an integral part of a youth's life. The experiences are ones that will be cherished for a lifetime.

4. Coeducational

Some scouting programs exist for both girls and boys alike. Camp Fire USA (CFUSA) is coeducational for ages 1 to 21, while Boy Scouts of America's (BSA) Venturing division is for boys and girls ages 14 to 20. These programs are a great complement to any church's United Methodist youth ministry and also serve to encourage older Boy Scouts to participate in scouting for a longer period of time. Conversely, girls may participate in many of the high adventure activities that boys do.

BSA Venturing crews offer a high degree of flexibility for their members. Some crews elect to focus on helping others through activities like building homes for Habitat for Humanity, while other crews enjoy the benefits of camping, hiking, and high adventure. Local BSA councils offer the use of their youth protection

training and leadership training in addition to low-cost liability and accident insurance for their members.

5. United Methodist Men

United Methodist Men's groups have traditionally been the "standard bearers" of scouting and civic youth ministry. United Methodist Men's units have been a source of manpower and volunteer leadership as well as a link between the church congregation and the youth agency. United Methodist Men have assisted in fundraising events, work days, special events, and a variety of mentoring opportunities.

6. Mission

A variety of mission opportunities are made available through the five youth agencies. Camp Fire USA, through Gift of Giving, Teens in Action, and Extending Our Reach educate and nurture children in projects that encourage their participation and commitment to volunteerism in a uniquely spiritual atmosphere. Similar opportunities exist within the various programs of the BSA, GSUSA, 4-H and our newest youth agency partner, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBS).

7. God and Country Program

The God and Country Series is an age-appropriate study series that focuses on discipleship, family, and service. Young people are drawn closer to Christ and are invited to become better acquainted with their church and pastor. The God and Country series is a Bible-based resource, which emphasizes service to others and brings recognition and increased self-esteem to the youth and teenagers who work closely with adult counselors and/or mentors. God and Country also serves as an effective outreach tool to youth agency members in the community.

8. Develop Servant Leaders (Friends, Followers, Fishermen)

Each youth organization that we work with has inherent "building blocks" that the local church can transform into effective ministry. For example, they require service projects that offer opportunities to begin to cultivate effective servant leaders. By starting as "friends" (members of a troop or club), progressing to "followers" of Christ (older youth who are setting the example), and culminating in "fishermen" (youth who do service projects to meet requirements), we can envision how this is a true beginning for servant leadership in the church, community, state, and nation.

9. Intentionality

The scouting program can be an effective, intentional outreach ministry of the local church. Through intentional planning, the church has the ability to transform these scouting programs into important youth ministries similar to other important ministries and initiatives. As a result, scouting always should be

on a level with other church ministries. It has the potential to be a far-reaching, positive outreach youth ministry for the immediate community.

10. Make Disciples

By considering one or a combination of the previous reasons, a local church may develop a consistent list of prospects for the Lord. Nurturing children, teens, and families through outreach and evangelism and incorporating them into the life of the church may have tremendous, eternal results for the youth, their family, and the church.

The importance of scouting

By Bishop Lindsey Davis

Young people face tremendous pressures in our culture today. In many ways they have had a premature adulthood thrust upon them.

They are expected to confront life and its challenges with the maturity once expected only of adults. And some parents today are so involved with reordering their own lives that they spend very little time with their children.

Middle schools and high schools, which were once protected environments for our young people, now seem more like the general adult community; theft, violence, sexual contact, and substance abuse are common.

Our young people are constantly bombarded with adult themes and images through television, movies, the Internet, and advertising. In our culture there are few places where a young person can be given the gift of a measured and careful introduction to successful adulthood, but scouting is such a place.

During early and late adolescence young people construct their own personal identity—an abiding sense of self—who we really are—so, what happens during these years is vital to how a person develops the competency to cope with the inevitable challenges of life.

What other things can scouting offer to our young people?

- Pressure-free time.
- A clearly defined value system, against which they test all other values. Scouting teaches virtues and gives young people—a safe place to practice those life skills—a place to fail and recover—a place to learn that hard work is needed to make goals come true.
- Scouting allows a young person time to think as an adult. We are all aware of the tremendous physical changes that take place during our youth. But even more dramatic are the mental changes which occur. It is during these years that young people learn to use puns, metaphors, and similes, and also to their parent's dismay—they learn to use sarcasm, criticism, and to recognize hypocrisy. Scouting gives to our young people extra adults who can mentor them through this difficult transition.
- Scouting is a place where some young people learn that their religious faith is more than going to church. It is personal—it is a key part of who they are. Scouting can offer a safe place for young people to explore the

issues of faith and where they can develop a personal faith—tested and true. It is through scouting that many young people will develop a personal faith which will make them invulnerable to the cults and new age sects which prey upon the young.

- Scouting is a place of encouragement—a place where young people receive praise, instead of criticism. Scouting is a place that uses words like: “wow, way to go, super, you’re special, outstanding, excellent, great, good, well done, remarkable, I knew you could do it, I’m proud of you, you’re catching on, now you’ve got it, you’re incredible, you’re fantastic, you’re on target, you’re on the way, good job, nothing can stop you now, you’re a winner.” All of us need more encouragement in our lives, but especially our young people are in need of these words.

Bishop Lindsey leads the Louisville Episcopal Area. This article is based on an address delivered at a Bishop’s Scout Dinner in Marietta, Ga.

A case for scouting evangelism

By Bill Payne

Unchurched people permeate our schools, our neighborhoods, and our places of employment. These post-modern secularists dominate the landscape of unchurched America, but as a whole, United Methodism is not reaching them. To make matters worse, the “old guard” is dying at a quickening pace and many young people are leaving the church before they become committed members. Anyone who visits a typical United Methodist church can attest to the graying of our congregations and the thinning of our pews. For United Methodism to rebound, it must find ways to evangelize secular people and retain a larger percentage of its youth.

One way to reverse declining numbers of church members is to use scouting programs to evangelize non-members and to incorporate them into the congregation, and disciple them into Christian maturity.

When the gospel is communicated in the context of a shared community in which there is true reciprocity, many of the barriers that inhibit a faith response are pulled down. Any ministry can serve as a bridge to faith. In most cases, assimilation precedes salvation. However, before scouting ministries can bear the fruit of evangelism, they must be owned as a ministry of the local church.

In 1986, I became the pastor of a church with an attendance that lingered around 90. Before my tenure, the church had a passive relationship with a pack and a troop that it chartered. I gave direct leadership to the scouting programs. When vacancies occurred, I recruited a scoutmaster and cubmaster who were committed church members with a credible Christian witness. They served as excellent role models and became a conduit between the units and the church. Additionally, I encouraged other church members to volunteer as leaders in the scouting units. I served as the chaplain. Within three years, adults who entered the church through scouting ministries filled half the positions on the administrative council and Sunday morning attendance grew to 210. Additionally, Scouts became an integrated part of the church. Scout leaders taught Sunday school classes and invited their Scouts to attend. On a regular basis, we taught the religious awards programs for all the Scouts and their siblings to include our Daisy Scouts and Brownies. We invited unchurched Boy Scouts to attend confirmation classes. If they completed the classes, they earned the God and Church award and could join the church provided they made a confession of faith.

We offered vesper services at monthly campouts. Annually, we paid for the Scouts to attend the Scout Convocation at our conference youth camp. The

Scouts and their leaders prepared and conducted the services on Scout Sunday. Because they represented the extended community, Scout parents expanded the reach of our Vacation Bible Schools. The scouting units also grew because of their involvement with our VBS. A Scout parent became my administrative assistant. Another became the church treasurer. Since the parents of the Scouts knew me, if any had a personal crisis or felt the pulling of God in their lives, they came to me for spiritual guidance. That gave me many opportunities to do direct evangelism. Because of our association with scouting, other families with young children came to participate in the church. In short, scouting ministries energized the church and transformed its corporate culture. Furthermore, the families who entered the church through the scouting programs brought energy and excitement with them. They became the human force behind the church's transformation.

While serving a pastorate in a traditional southern hamlet, the church chartered a troop and a pack with a vision to reach unchurched youth. Shortly after this, a group of black youth caught my eyes. I wanted to involve them in the troop but knew that they would not cross the social boundaries that existed in our community in order to participate in our troop unless those boundaries were diminished. In order to make contact with the youth, I began to jog through their neighborhood on a routine basis right after the school bus dropped them off. To my surprise, the youth began to ride their bikes beside me as I jogged. Soon afterward, they began to come to the parsonage to play basketball with my son and me. "Can Pastor Bill come out and play" became a familiar chorus at my house and church office. In time, some of the neighborhood Scouts joined in the pick-up games. After a few weeks, I went to the homes of the black youth and asked their parents or grandparents if the youth could join our scouting program. During my home visits, I listened to their stories and prayed with them. After I gained their trust, the church had a stream of boys who wanted to join Scouts. In time, the black youth became active participants in our youth group, Wednesday night programs, and Sunday school. Ultimately, they formed a bridge between the church and the black community. Without the aid of scouting ministries, the church would not have had access to these boys and their families.

While serving as a Navy chaplain in Japan, I offered all four of the God and Country programs on a rotating basis in one of the base chapels to any child who wanted to earn the award. A scout did not have to be a Christian to participate in the programs. However, the Scout had to attend chapel during the time he or she was earning the award. The training sessions allowed me to share the Gospel with hundreds of unchurched families and connect many of them to a faith community.

Payne is a clergy member of Florida Annual Conference and teaches evangelism and world missions at Ashland Theological Seminary in Ohio. He is an Eagle Scout, and former chaplain at Philmont Boy Scout Ranch.

God and Country programs

Children who participate in scouting programs have a high interest in earning the God and Country award. Only 25 percent of the Scouts in United Methodist units are United Methodists. Fifty percent are unchurched. If United Methodist churches owned their scouting programs and used them as a means to reach unchurched people in accordance with the goals of scouting evangelism, they would reap a substantial harvest. That harvest could increase if churches began new units and recruiting more people into existing ones.

The God and Country Program is a discipleship and outreach resource. It is also the religious recognition program designed for use by the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA and Camp Fire USA. (Church and state issues may affect participation through 4-H since it is administered through the Department of Agriculture.) Congregations have used the God and Country curriculum in their Sunday school classes, vacation Bible schools, confirmation classes, and other small group settings in addition to using it as an outreach program to scouting groups in the community. To earn this award, youth need to complete the requirements in the student workbook under the supervision of a counselor (either the pastor or someone appointed by the pastor). There are four programs. Each program has its own Student Workbook, Counselor Manual, and Adult Mentor Workbook.

God and Me (Grades 1, 2, 3)

The God and Me curriculum is designed to help children become best friends with Jesus and tell their story of “God and Me” together. Children will make a game in each lesson and keep their games in a GAMEBox (God And Me Exploring BOX). These games will reinforce the Bible lessons and provide opportunities for families to explore God's love together. There are four lessons:

- 1: God Created Me
- 2: Jesus Is God's Gift to Me
- 3: I Can Talk with God
- 4: Because God Cares for Me, I Can Care for Others

God and Family (Grades 4 & 5)

The God and Family curriculum is designed to help youth understand the importance of family and God's role in a healthy family. Families may be compared to pizza; the layers of a pizza illustrate God's plan for strengthening families. Students will make a pizza as they study how families can grow together in God's love, and they will choose “family projects” to be done with their family at home.

1. Crust-Foundation – We are God’s Family
2. Sauce – Family Heritage, Spiritual Heritage
3. Toppings – Our Talents and Gifts Strengthen Our Families
4. Cheese – In God’s Family We’re Loved No Matter What! Because We’re Loved, We Follow Rules
5. Bake – Being in God’s Family Helps Us When Things Are Tough
6. Eat, Share, Enjoy! – In God’s Family, We Share as a Response to God’s Love

God and Church (Grades 6-8)

The God and Church program will lead young people on a journey. It will be a faith journey with three parts: meeting Jesus, worshiping God, and witnessing and ministering for Christ. Participants will create either a video or a photo album to share what they have learned on their faith journeys. Young people will have the opportunity to work with their pastor or other Christian adult as they study the church's structures and objectives and participate in service projects that will give them a better understanding of the mission of the church.

My Journey: Meeting Christ

1. Meeting Jesus, the Person
2. Meeting Jesus, the Son of God
3. Meeting Jesus, the Head of the Church

Project: Daily Bible Reading

My Journey: Worshiping God

4. Learning How Christ Worshiped God
5. Exploring How My Congregation Worships God

Project: Discovering How I Can Worship God

My Journey: Witnessing and Ministering for Christ

6. Learning How Christ Witnessed and Ministered to Others
7. Exploring How My Congregation Witnesses and Ministers to Others

Project: Discovering How I Can Witness and Minister to Others

God and Life (Grades 9-12)

The God and Life program will help students understand their call to discipleship. The curriculum focuses on the life of the Apostle Paul as recorded in Acts 9:1-31. This brief account describes how Paul encountered Christ and was changed forever. Five chronological "events" out of this story will be highlighted and used as the focus for the five different sections in this program. Each section will illustrate a key element in learning how to live one's life for Christ:

1. God calls all kinds of people.
2. God doesn't expect us to do it on our own.
3. Each of us must make a personal response to the call of God.
4. God gives strength to face adversities.
5. God can accomplish great things through those who are willing to do God's will.

God and Country Mentor Program

The God and Country Mentor Program for adults is designed for parents to work side-by-side with their children sharing in the work of the God and Country Program. As the child examines his or her faith, the parent will be there, learning about God's love, sharing new experiences, and making discoveries with the child. To participate in this program, parents need a copy of the Mentor Workbook, and they need to work under the supervision of the pastor (or someone appointed by the pastor). Please note that the adult mentor does not take the place of the counselor.

Visit the P.R.A.Y. website at www.praypub.org to view the God and Country Start-up Kit, PowerPoint presentations, sample lessons, and other important resources. You can also sign up to receive the God and Country News Bulletin.

Recognitions and Awards

It is important that we recognize those who make the civic youth-serving agency ministry possible. Volunteer leadership is vital just as in any other branch of the church's ministry. Several awards and recognition programs have been developed to recognize levels of performance that surpass the ordinary. Applications and reference materials can be found at www.United Methodist Churchscouting.org.

Complete information relating to all of these awards is available through the Office of Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting at the General Commission on United Methodist Men in Nashville, Tennessee. (The brochures can be downloaded from www.United Methodist Churchscouting.org.)

The Bishop's Award of Excellence

The Bishop's Award of Excellence (BAE) recognizes congregations and units within the United Methodist Church that extend their ministry to children and youth by creating a faith-based environment for children, youth, their families and their leaders to participate in the following civic youth-serving agencies: Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA, Camp Fire USA and 4-H.

Upon nomination by the local scouting coordinator and approved by a proper committee or representative of the annual conference, the Bishop's Award of Excellence is presented by the presiding bishop to the pastor, the unit leader, and at least one member of the unit at the next regular session of the annual conference. The BAE application should be forwarded from the local congregation at least six to eight weeks before the annual conference session. The award recognizes activity of one year and may be earned again.

The Cross and Flame Award

The Cross and Flame Award gives recognition to adult leaders who have given exceptional service in the use and promotion of scouting ministries for young people.

The Cross and Flame Award is awarded by the local congregation. The award is authorized for recognizing leaders with outstanding service to youth at the local church level. In order to qualify, a person must have been an active adult leader in a youth-serving agency for at least five years (that is, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, BBBS, Camp Fire or 4-H). The candidate must also be an active member of a recognized Christian church.

The Torch Award

The Torch Award recognizes adult leaders who have given exceptional service in the use and promotion of scouting ministries beyond the local church. Presented by the annual conference, the award recognizes adult leaders with outstanding service to youth at the annual conference level. In order to qualify, a person must be an active member of The United Methodist Church who has given ten years of outstanding leadership to children and youth through one of the five youth-serving agency programs (Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, BBBS, Camp Fire, or 4-H) and be nominated for the award.

God and Service Award

The God and Service Award is a national recognition awarded by churches and youth agencies cooperating in Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (P.R.A.Y.). It is given for distinguished service by adults in ministry to young people through service to the church and one or more of the national youth agencies (BSA, GSUSA, CFUSA). A minimum of five years of service is required. This award is by nomination only and requires an application form, which may be downloaded from the Web site: www.praypub.org.

The Good Samaritan Award

The Good Samaritan Award is based on the attributes of the parable of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:25-37, and our responsibility as Christians to reach out to people in need of a “helping hand” as exemplified by the Good Samaritan and related to us in various passages in the Gospels.

The purpose of this award is to recognize individual youth who demonstrate the attributes of servant leadership to others through outreach, humanitarian assistance, or advocacy.

The youth candidate must be a registered member of a civic youth-serving agency unit (Boy Scout troop, Girl Scout troop, Venture crew, Camp Fire club, 4-H club, etc.) meeting in or chartered/sponsored by a United Methodist Church; or an active member of a United Methodist Youth Fellowship; or an active youth member of a United Methodist congregation. Candidates must be over 12 years of age and under 21. Recipients may be participants in an outreach ministry of a local United Methodist Church giving the award. It is not necessary for them to be members of the denomination.

The Shepherd Church Award

The Shepherd Church Award honors churches that provide outstanding ministry to their communities through Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Camp Fire USA, and/or 4-H. These churches welcome all youth and children, nurture them as they grow to become good citizens with a deeper relationship with God, and work with them in service to others. Requirements are on the application, which is available at www.UnitedMethodistChurchscouting.org.

Complete information relating to all of these awards is available through the Office of Civic Youth-Serving Agencies/Scouting at the General Commission on United Methodist Men in Nashville, Tennessee. (The brochures can be downloaded from umscouting.org)

California woman presents 31 God and Country awards

Joann Quinley, God and Country counselor for First UMC in Turlock, Calif., presented awards to a record 31 Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Brownies and Girl Scouts. Following the presentation church leaders surprised her with an award of her own to express their appreciation for six years of training young people,

After Quinley presented 31 awards earned in God and Me, God and Family, and God and Church programs, First UMC Pastor Dave Thompson asked her to remain in the front of the sanctuary. Gary Mallory then announced that she had been nominated by the church's UM Men organization to receive a Cross and Flame Award.

"I don't know when I've been more surprised or honored than when I received the Cross and Flame Award," said Quinley, who has now trained a total of 81 young people in the program sponsored by Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (P.R.A.Y.).

The Cross and Flame Award honors adult leaders who have given at least five years of exceptional service to programs for young people. Nominations must be approved by the pastor and the administrative board.

The God and Country program helps young people develop a deeper relationship with God, and the program helps them to understand how God is active in their lives and in the world around them. It is a Christian education resource that uses Bible lessons paired with service projects to help young people not only to grow in Christian faith but to also express their faith by reaching out in love and in service to others. P.R.A.Y. is based in St. Louis.

Quinley is a 45-year member of First UMC, and she served as the church's youth director for five years, beginning in 1974. During that time the number of young people attending weekly increased from 10 members to over 50. She has also served on numerous committees and held offices in UM Women. She worked with Heifer International from 1979 to 2005.

Big Brothers Big Sisters Amachi Partnership

America faces the growing crisis of multigenerational incarceration creating a culture of imprisonment. We have already witnessed grandfathers, fathers, and sons waiting together in prison for the arrival of the great-grandson. There is a specific way that we as a people and United Methodist Men in particular can do to break this intergenerational cycle of incarceration. Research confirms the common-sense notion that the more caring adults are engaged in child's life the more likely that child is to succeed.

Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) is the youth-serving agency partnering with UMM to increase the number of men mentoring children with an incarcerated parent.

Participation in the United Methodist Men/ Big Brothers Big Sisters Amachi partnership requires the following:

1. Commitment from the United Methodist Men conference president
2. Support and commitment from the bishop and the district superintendent
3. Orientation to Big Brothers Big Sisters and Amachi
4. Partnership agreement with local BBBS agency
5. Selection and development of United Methodist congregations to participate in the partnership.
6. Setting, meeting, reporting progress toward, and reevaluating goal of number of children matched to a member of the partnering congregations.
7. Sharing successful practices and lessons learned with other congregations, conferences, and BBBS agencies.

Why you should consider becoming a big brother

By Terry Dougherty

Who will stand in the riverbed?" That's a question posed by the Rev. Dr. W. Wilson Goode, former Philadelphia mayor and founder of a Big Brothers Big Sisters program for children of incarcerated adults.

In the African American Churches the river is a symbol of freedom from captivity as a "way where there is no way." The river offers the weary traveler peace and refreshment, and theologically, the river is the promise of new life in Christ through baptism.

You are needed to stand in the life-saving water with a boy whose mother or father is incarcerated and whose future is seemingly pre-determined by the ways of his parents.

There are more than 2.5 million American children who have a parent who is incarcerated. Without some form of intervention, 70 percent of these children will follow their parent(s) to prison.

UM Men has joined with Big Brothers Big Sisters to transform lives and give hope for a better future for these children who live right around the corner from your home or church. As United Methodists we are called to "make disciples for the transformation of the world." This societal transformation usually is done most effectively through one-to-one relationships.

As a big brother, you will make a commitment to a boy that will later turn into love. Your little brother may have some initial difficulty accepting the fact that a stranger would volunteer to spend time with him. He may test you to see if you will stick around or leave at the first sign of difficulty.

With resources and support from the Big Brothers Big Sisters organization, you will weather the challenging initial weeks of this new relationship.

While you only commit to serve as a big brother for one year, the average length of matches is much longer. Stories of a big brother asked to be the best man at his little brother's wedding or godfather to a his little brother's child are not uncommon. Many of these relationships develop into lifelong friendships. All of them began with an adult saying "yes" to the call to make a positive difference in the life of one child. Imagine if every male associated with United Methodist Men made this commitment to just one child, this entire generation of children

whose parents are in prison would be able to live into the future that God desires for each and every one of them.

In the Texas Conference, Bishop Janice Riggle Huie urges every United Methodist to practice “radical hospitality” and enter into “faith-forming relationships.” I can think of no better way to do both than to become a big brother.

Parents and guardians of the children enrolled in Big Brothers Big Sisters seek ways to give their children hope for the future. Incarcerated parents are well aware of the limits of their ability to care and nurture their children; they demonstrate their love for their children by supporting mentoring relationships, and they trust the organization to find caring adults who will be positive role models for their children

Big brothers must be at least 18 years old, but they can never be too old. No special training is required. All you need is the willingness to be a faithful friend who will visit your little brother at least three times a month. The activities chosen by you and your little brother are not as important as the relationship built by spending time together.

The program matching adults with children of incarcerated parents is called “Amachi,” a Nigerian Ibo word that means “who knows but what God has brought us through this child.” As a big brother, you will help a child discover God’s presence within him as you introduce him to a future of possibilities. At the same time, you will experience that same presence in your own life by your commitment to serve and love a child of God.

Your neighbor lives right around the corner from your church—will you stand in the riverbed with him?

To volunteer, call 1-888-412-BIGS or contact your local BBBS agency. You may also find more information at www.bbbsa.org.

Dallas leader of United Methodist Men has served as big brother to six youngsters

DALLAS, Texas—Dale Long, a victim of the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church where four of his friends were killed has served as a volunteer big brother for over 30 years and he is now matched with his sixth little brother, 16-year-old LaDaruss Douglas.

For the past five years, the pair has attended movies, visited museums, and watched the Dallas Mavericks, Cowboys, and Texas Rangers. They also participate in youth activities and church services at Hamilton Park UMC where Long is a member. “Each year we attend my fraternity’s annual picnic and I attend his school choir concerts,” Long told United Methodist Men. “Sometimes we just go out to eat after shopping for books or music.”

In 1990, Long petitioned the national body of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity to include Big Brothers and Big Sisters as one of its national programs. He now serves as national coordinator of the fraternity’s Big Brother program and hundreds of his fraternity brothers throughout the country serve as big brother mentors.

A graduate of Texas Southern University, Long has worked in the technical field for McDonnell Douglas in the NASA Space Shuttle Program, Texas Instruments, and the Dallas Area Rapid Transit Light Rail project. He now serves as the Dallas senior public information officer. In this capacity he provides media relations and community outreach for the city.

He is still in contact with all six of his “little brothers.” One is now a university student and Long is looking forward to his becoming a member of his fraternity and serving as a big brother to another child. “I’m looking forward to this experience coming full circle and celebrating with him,” he says.

Long says he became involved with the program because of his good fortune of growing up with a mother and a father. “I thought it was a shame that some people had to grow up without that experience and this was my way of giving something back.” As the United Methodist leader travels about the country recruiting people to become involved in Big Brothers Big Sisters, he says the number one excuse is they don’t have time. “I’m here to say ‘yes you do,’” says Long. “Once you become involved you will make this a priority in your life and you will come back and thank me for getting you involved.”

Long and his wife, Ellen, are parents of Kendra Dale, a student at the University of Texas at Arlington and Amber Nicole, a student at Texas Southern University.

Other ministries

Upper Room Prayer Line

With support from United Methodist Men, the Nashville-based Upper Room Living Prayer Center prays with 30,000 people each month. That does not include the 6,000 visits to the website www.upperroom.org, over 200 letters each week, and 6,000 monthly e-mails.

The United Methodist Men Foundation pays the cost of the toll-free prayer line and United Methodist men staff the lines through the year. For the past 24 years, the foundation has annually given over \$20,000.

Prayer center phone lines are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There is a network of over 1,000 people who answer the phone lines and over 2,400 people in more than 300 covenant prayer groups around the globe.

Not only do the callers say they are blessed, the ones who answer the phone lines and/or are in covenant prayer groups tell of the blessings they receive from sharing these life-changing times.

United Methodist Prayer Advocates recruit volunteers for remotes and covenant prayer groups. They also help raise funds to cover the cost of the prayer line.

For information call 1-877-899-2780 ext. 715

Hunger relief efforts

By Kenneth C. Horne

Enough is enough. Now that's a phrase you've heard many times. When your mother said it to you it meant "I've had all I can take, stop it NOW." To me it still means that and much, much more as I reflect on 28 years in the anti-hunger movement.

Hunger exists in our world for two reasons.

In the less developed world people go hungry and sometimes starve for lack of food. Famine caused by drought, war and pestilence is endemic in many places in our world.

For the first time in the history of the human race elimination of this kind of hunger is clearly possible. This will take time, energy and lots of aid to poor countries. But with help in the form of food, infrastructure, agricultural help and education, famine can and must be eliminated from the human experience.

In the more developed world people go hungry in the midst of plenty. To our enduring shame, this phenomenon is most blatantly visible in our own country. We Americans are rich beyond imagining in most things.

▶ There is enough food thrown away every year in our country to feed every man, woman, and child that ever goes hungry. According to studies conducted by the USDA, we throw away well over 90 billion pounds of food each year in our country. Most of that food is edible but unmarketable for cosmetic, size, or other reasons. We have over 35 million hungry people in our country, one third of them children. No self-respecting people should ever allow that to happen while food is going to waste.

▶ There is enough surplus wealth in our country to deliver that food to those who hunger. We are the richest nation in the history of humankind. We can afford to fight wars in several countries simultaneously. We can afford disposable diapers for our children, disposable cameras to take pictures of our children, and disposable packaging for virtually everything we use. A country as rich as this lets its children go hungry because it wants to, not because it has to.

▶ There is enough know-how in our country to devise ways to distribute that food to those in need. It should be obvious to even the dimmest among us that a nation that can put a man on the moon, invent the internet and manipulate human genetics can find a way to put three square meals a day on the plates of all its children.

► There is enough compassion in our people to want all of our hungry neighbors fed adequately. As so often happens in our democracy, the people are way out in front of the leaders on the whole question of hunger. A poll taken for the Alliance to End Hunger shows that the vast majority of people—Republican, Democrat, liberal and conservative alike—all place elimination of hunger in the USA among their highest priorities. Then why do we still have more than 35 million hungry people in our country? Of what is there not enough?

1. There's not enough leadership. Our priorities at the national level simply do not include eliminating hunger. Our tax dollars are not spent in a way that reflects the people's wishes where the hungry are concerned. Unless and until we insist that our elected representatives act so as to insure that all hungry children are fed, they won't be. Elected leaders who don't lead in this area should be unelected as soon as possible.
2. There's not enough vision. Far too many of our religious institutions spend far too much time squabbling about the hot button issues of the day and neglect the fundamental command: "When you see your neighbor hungry, feed him." Instead of allowing issues of theology and philosophy to divide us, America's religious bodies should band together and show our leaders and our people a vision of what "one nation under God" could look like if we let that God guide our priorities. Religious institutions that can't muster that level of commitment should be abandoned.
3. There's not enough outrage. Hunger has been with us for so long we have grown numb. The temptation, even in the anti-hunger community, is to go about our tasks as if hunger will always be with us. We need to step back a little until we can see clearly again. To see a child go hungry is a shame and a pity when the hunger is caused by lack of food. It is a sin and a crime when food is plentiful and the people around that child will not trouble themselves to feed him.

Because of our position as the world's richest nation it falls to us here in the United States to provide leadership in the global fight against hunger. If we refuse to feed our own hungry children, we have no chance to provide the necessary leadership on the global stage. This failure is simply unacceptable to any committed disciple of Jesus.

It's time for us to declare "enough's enough."

Horne is the former executive director of the Society of St. Andrew

Feed the hungry through Meals for Millions

United Methodist Men are helping to bridge the hunger gap in this country. Their financial, prayer and hands-on support of the Society of St. Andrew (SoSA) is making it possible to save millions of pounds of fresh, nutritious produce that otherwise would go to waste so it can be used to feed the poor, the homeless, single mothers with small children, the elderly living on low, fixed incomes—those who daily live with the threat of hunger.

The national nonprofit hunger-relief ministry of the Society of St. Andrew (Advance #801600) and United Methodist Men work together through their Hunger Relief Advocate Initiative to help bridge the gap in America between some 96 billion pounds of food wasted every year and more than 36 million Americans at risk of hunger.

UM Men fellowships can become “Challenge Fellowships” or “HRA Sponsor Fellowships” by contributing, respectively, \$200 or \$500 annually. Individuals can be recognized as “Challenge Disciples” or “HRA Sponsors” by responding to twice-a-year call letters with, respectively, a \$25 or \$50 donation. Individual donations count toward a United Methodist Men fellowship’s recognition level.

For more information about the “Meals for Millions” program contact Wade Mays at the Society of St. Andrew: 800-333-4597 or Development@EndHunger.org. To sign up online to become a “Challenge Fellowship” or “HRA Sponsor” go to www.endhunger.org/UMM/groups.htm.

Participate in prison ministries

The General Commission on UM Men has forged a partnership with DISCIPLE Bible Outreach Ministries of North Carolina in order to bring DISCIPLE Bible study to prisons across the U.S.

The 21-member commission approved an agreement with the Rev. Mark Hicks, executive director of North Carolina's DISCIPLE Bible Outreach Ministries.

The mission of the ministry is "Making disciples through Bible study to bring God's grace to a hurting world," said Hicks. He has been leading DISCIPLE program in correctional settings since 1999, and he says the studies are transformational for both volunteers and prison participants.

"I was always excited by the possibility of transformation among the inmates," Hicks said, "but I'm equally excited by the transformation occurring in our volunteers, and as a result, our churches."

"I was involved in a prison ministry weekend at a maximum security prison in Texas," said Gil Hanke, top staff executive of the commission. "That experience changed my whole perspective and perception of prisons and the need for our engagement in this vital ministry.

I believe that Jesus' list of places of service (Matthew 25:31-46), is all inclusive and ongoing. If I give to a food pantry or clothes closet once, I don't think that fulfills Jesus' request; I'm not off the hook. I don't think we can pick one from that list that is the easiest or most comfortable for us. Jesus directs us to where the need is greatest and we should be obedient."

Inmates respond

"My DISCIPLE Bible study class represented love to me," said a North Carolina prison inmate. "It is a blessing for me to know that God loves me. In the group there was no "inmate feeling." When we studied the word everybody had value. When you're sitting on the other side of the wall, you need all the encouragement you can get."

"For the last five months I have been involved in the DISCIPLE program," said another inmate. "My time could not have been spent any better doing anything else. This class has enabled me to deal with my circumstances better and find answers to live my life with peace and love.

A third inmate said, “I have come to know the Lord better, and am convinced that He is greater now than ever before. It is my prayer that the DISCIPLE course will continue to grow throughout the prison system.”

Guidelines

- DISCIPLE prison ministry requires approval from the local church and the agency sponsoring the ministry as well as the prison authorities where the studies will take place.
- Prisons require volunteers to submit to a criminal background check prior to approval as a volunteer.
- The scheduling of a time and place for the study, the recruitment of inmates for classes, and the ongoing supervision of prisoners will require the help and cooperation of correctional staff.
- In prisons where there is a chaplain on staff, you’ll want to coordinate your activities through this person. It is important to develop a relationship with the prison chaplain and to respect his or her authority as the person responsible for the spiritual needs of the inmate population.
- In prison, the DISCIPLE program operates much as it does in the local church. However, be aware that you are in a controlled environment. Respect those responsible for your safety. There are times when your class will be interrupted for security reasons or the class will be affected by other issues unique to correctional settings.
- To be involved in prison ministry, you must agree to follow all training procedures, rules, and regulations mandated by the prison or the sponsoring church or agency.

Beyond these specific issues and suggestions, be aware that a DISCIPLE prison ministry will only be effective if you and your group have planned for the long term. Prison authorities—especially the chaplain—need to trust that your church or conference is making a continuing commitment. Your initial plan should include which units of DISCIPLE you’re going to lead and how soon after you’ve finished the first unit do you plan to start a second. Find someone who is committed to teaching all the units.

Recruiting the initial group of participants from the prison population will require laying some groundwork. If a church is already engaged in a mentoring or pen-pal ministry at the prison, then participants in those programs can become part of the core group. Barring that, look for a pastor in your area who regularly visits the prison, and ask his or her help in recruiting participants.

Study materials

DISCIPLE Bible materials are available at Cokesbury bookstores (www.Cokesbury.com). In addition, Bishop Richard Wilke has provided a booklet of questions and activities for men based on DISCIPLE II; that study is available in the resource section of www.GCUMM.org (UM Men DISCIPLE Bible Supplement).

For more information contact Hanke (ghanke@gcumm.org) or Hicks (MCHicks@northstate.net).

If your church has more women than men in the pews . . .

If your concept of men's ministry is a group of retired men who meet monthly for dinner and a program . . .

If the number of members in your congregation is not increasing every year . . .

If the men in your congregation are not growing spiritually . . .

If the men in your congregation are not reaching out to other men in your community . . .

Read this book



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