

## Pensacola District Report

**CORE Team** (by Allison Posell, District Chairperson)

**In 2009 the Pensacola District CORE Team emphasis included the following:**

- **evaluating the role of the CORE team in developing “bridging” opportunities that would enhance and maximize ministry within individual churches.** This stemmed from Bishop Leeland’s vision of “bridging” or “partnering,” for a period of time, between pastors, within the district. CORE team members were encouraged to think into the needs of the church and communities served and not rely on the “old” way of doing ministry in isolation without ongoing evaluation for effectiveness or opportunities of enhancement.
- **increasing the awareness of missional opportunities, for clergy and laity, within the district.** CORE team members contacted churches in the district regarding clergy participation in any mission trip (current or past) and to collect information regarding trips scheduled via their churches/organizations. Information included cost, available slots, nature of the trip, and the location, length, and cost of the trip. District Superintendent Mike Roberts shared his desires of the CORE Team sponsoring a trip specifically for clergy and local church mission coordinators and to have the mission-related information for the district kept updated and available via an e-mail distribution list or the district website.
- **offering identical Renew & Revive events at two ends of the district.** This year’s Celebration and Worship featured Bert Jones, president of Go InterNational. Bert challenged us to serve on short-term missions and spoke January 11<sup>th</sup> at St. Luke UMC in Pensacola (concurrent with the district conference) and January 12<sup>th</sup> at Trinity UMC in Fort Walton Beach. The district’s annual training events were held January 20<sup>th</sup> at Gulf Breeze (Soundside) and January 22<sup>nd</sup> at Crestview First UMC. Prior to dispersing to specific areas of training, those in attendance shared in a brief period for encouragement and prayer together. Areas of training included organizing or joining another church for foreign missions; ongoing development of lay leadership; making the church relevant in outreach, discipleship, and spiritual formation; uniting women in the church and in missions; uniting men in the church; developing/improving a church’s disaster plan; and staff-parish relations. Feedback from the Renew & Revive events included offering worship and training on the same day and in the same location, as well as considering alternative topics for classes/training.

Together, the members of the district CORE team celebrate what God has done in our midst and covenant together to seek the Spirit’s guidance in our next year of service.

**United Methodist Women** (by Nancy Shealy, District President)

The United Methodist Women of our district watch the calendar, the world map, the dollars, and the membership figures. As we watch, we remember that each item represents a person, a group, or one of the mission ministries of The United Methodist Church. The calendar reminds of the five district-wide opportunities we have to learn about missions and to take additional steps on our spiritual journeys. This year 444 members participated in these opportunities.

The world map and the dollars remind us of mission projects in our own area and around the world. In 2009, the local units in our district contributed \$43,246 to missions. This amount includes our pledge and additional gifts to mission agencies around the world. We are thankful that we exceeded our \$20,000 district mission pledge by \$5,027.

Membership figures remind us of the 949 women and each of their local units. In their own communities they come together to study worship and serve. In the district they come together “to become more deeply rooted in Christ and to put faith into action.” Together we watch, remember, give thanks and make plans as we seek to “turn faith, hope, and love into action of behalf of women, children and youth around the world” (Quotes from *United Methodist Women, Vision Statement, 2010-2020*).

**Hispanic Ministries Report** (by Nancy Watson, District Committee Chairperson)

This has been an exciting and productive year in district Hispanic Ministries activities. In January Rev. Francisco Castillo and his wife, Cecilia, moved to Pensacola and hit the ground running. They have established a variety of worship and learning experiences across our district. A weekly Bible study for employees takes place at the site of a local hotel/resort in Perdido Bay, and another weekly study occurs in Ft. Walton Beach. There are two worship services and one Sunday School at different sites across the district, as well as guitar lessons, English classes, visitation and fellowship. Their untiring efforts have blessed the entire community of faith in the Pensacola District and are bearing fruit as they raise up teachers and leaders from within, people who in turn can extend the outreach even further.

**Hispanic Ministries Report** (continued, by Francisco Castillo, District Hispanic Pastor)

Even though we are facing difficult times and an economy crisis as it is happening everywhere, I believe God has been with us and everything is working out as planned. We hope that in two more years we will be able to accomplish the vision of two Hispanic chartered ministries in the Pensacola District. Thank you to all the churches and individuals who have shared the district’s and our vision and have supported us. Special thanks to Cokesbury UMC, Trinity UMC, First UMC-Pensacola, St. Luke UMC and St. Andrew.

**Lay Speaking Ministries** (by Kurt Burgess, District Director)

More than 64% of our lay speakers are directly involved in leading worship, preaching, giving devotionals, singing in the choir, being on the praise team, etc. You’ll find lay speakers serving in traditional teaching positions within the church: leading Bible studies, teaching Sunday school, and working with the children and youth. Lay speakers also serve on various committees and staff positions within their local church, and it doesn’t just happen at the local church! Lay speakers are serving at the Haven Nursing Home, the Council on Aging, and Kairos Prison Ministry. Lay speakers are commissioned Stephen Ministers, serving those facing the challenges of life. Lay speakers are active in Gideon’s International and Bikers for Christ motorcycle ministries. This dynamic ministry is growing in leaps and bounds because God’s people are answering God’s call, using the incredible gifts and talents He has given them.

**Community Ministries** (by Joe Mullen, Director)

Pensacola United Methodist Community Ministries has continued to meet the needs of the poor and homeless in the Pensacola District. With more than 26,000 client visits in 2009, the programs and ministries continue to be a main source of physical, emotional, and spiritual haven for many families in our community. With food pantries, large clothing ministry, drug and alcohol counseling programs, GED, literacy and computer classes, and reentry transition counseling for newly released inmates, we help in many areas of personal and family needs. Our resource staff assist many with transportation, housing, and health concerns as well as employment opportunities. The continued prayers and support for this vital mission is only possible by the generosity and faithfulness of those in the Alabama-West Florida Conference.