

Conference Chronicles



Our Vision is

to bring wholeness to the world
through healthy, biblical communities of
holy people multiplying disciples,
leaders, groups and churches.

Therefore, we will...

†Recruit and develop catalytic leaders
for the transformation of churches and
communities

†Launch and sustain new apostolic
initiatives and church plants

†Network and strengthen partnerships
with affiliate FM institutions

†Resource and build upon our historic
commitment to worldwide mission

Together...transforming our world!

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E-Connect with Superintendent Bruce Rhodes

Southern Michigan Conference

Free Methodist Church USA

Wednesday, January 18, 2017 – Vol. 4; #8

New Year's Resolutions for Pastoral Leaders – Part II

(Reflections of the Superintendent for the pastors and churches of the
Southern Michigan Conference)



This is the second installment of my recommended New Year's resolutions that I believe are worthy of our consideration. I encourage you to choose one or two and begin building them into your life and ministry in the days ahead.

I offer these recommendations based on my observations as I have visited our Lead Pastors and Conference churches in the past 3 ½ years. Some of these are

specific to our pastoral team and others to leadership teams as a whole. It is my hope that these thoughts will generate important discussion and missional fruit in the days ahead.

Yours in our common mission,

Bruce D. Rhodes

Conference Superintendent

Here is my short list of suggestions for the New Year.

- Do Less & Focus More

Many people mistakenly believe that effectiveness and fruitfulness are found in doing more. However, the opposite is true. We actually become more effective in the pursuit of fewer things. That's why the allusive results and transformation we long to see in our churches are rooted in the fact that we are always *adding* to our list and never *subtracting*. I am convinced that many pastors have bought into the multi-tasking myth and have therefore lost their ability to focus on what really matters. Busyness does not matter, effectiveness does. *Extraordinary results are directly determined by how narrow you make your focus.* Gary Keller, *The One Thing*.

- Strive for Excellence

If churches were fundamentally committed to excellence in everything they do it would force them to do fewer things. What if you were committed to truly striving for excellence? What would that look like in your setting? What would need to change? What would need to be discarded? What courageous decisions need to be made? *Excellence honors God.* Bill Hybels

- Take Courage & Build Culture

Leaders who lack courage are unable to lead because they are held hostage to people and their desires and preferences. Pastors whose focus is on nurturing people will not risk the pain of leading them because change brings pain. We need to remember that all of our appointments are dual appointments. Pastors minister to their congregations and in their communities. If we are not careful, the needs and preferences of the church can take us off mission to our communities. Let us take courage and build the culture that we long to see. John Kotter's book: *Leading Change* can be a transformational read upon prayerful, thoughtful and courageous implementation.

- Transition Well & Make Change

I believe it was Gordie Howe who once quipped that some hockey players skate to where the puck *is* but that he skated to where the puck was *going to be*. Pastors and local churches need to be anticipating and thinking about the future. Where is the culture moving, what new technology needs to be harnessed and wed to the mission, how do we communicate the gospel effectively to this new generation, how do we contextualize our ministry for greatest effectiveness, etc. In other words, we need to be skating to where the puck is going, not where it is! This leadership approach distinguishes churches that are thriving from churches that are surviving.

Create and Deliver Messages that **WOW!** – *In invitation from Supt. Rhodes*

I have made a commitment to improving my communication skills this year by participating in the *Next Level Speaking* workshop. This training event sponsored by *Group Ministries* will be held March 27-29 in Loveland Colorado.

Here's what you'll learn and experience:

- Personal Coaching from gifted communicators
- Discover the keys to a memorable message
- Interactive workshops to improve your craft
- You'll prepare and present a 20 minute message before a panel of peers and your coach.
- You very own customized one on one session with your coach reviewing your recorded presentation.

Although we all long to become more effective in our preaching and teaching the opportunities to hone our craft are not always readily available. That's why I am pretty excited about this opportunity. I believe that effective communication is critical to reaching the church and the unchurched with the gospel. Toward that end, I would like you to consider joining me at this great event. **I feel so strongly about it that the Southern Michigan Conference will reimburse \$100 of the registration cost for the first ten appointed pastors who sign up. When you register send me an email to let me know. I have heard from three pastors so far!**

Finally, I would like to ask the good people across our Conference to both encourage and financially invest in your pastor(s) by underwriting their costs in order for them to participate. This investment in your Pastor is an investment in your church's mission. Go to the link below for more information and to register.

<http://ww2.group.com/training/equipping-institute/courses/professional-development#next-level-speaker>

Leadership Development Cohort (LDC) – With Teams

East side Cohort – **Friday, February 3, 2017 - 9a-3p at 1208 Greenwood FMC in Jackson**

West side Cohort – **Saturday, February 4, 2017 - 9a-3p at Kalamazoo FMC.**

Topic at both locations: "Governance/How Decisions Get Made"

Lunch is provided so please RSVP. Lead Pastors please email Betty by Monday, January 30th with a list of who, or how many will be attending from your church.

A Word of Clarification to Pastors

The LDC “with Teams” on Feb. 3-4 is for the key people that you consider part of your "leadership team". These teams are called something different in every church. Some churches have staff; some have volunteer staff and some volunteers or any combination of the above. So, what we envision is for you, the pastor, to determine who the key people are to invite to this particular training event. However, all Conference Lead pastors should automatically take part in this training.

The Ignite Intensives are for a larger group including those who might not be able to participate earlier that month. These intensives offer you, the pastor, an opportunity to bring more people, key influencers - official or unofficial - in order to help you build a guiding coalition for change in your ministry setting.

Our deep desire is to help you and your church "win." These events are designed to SERVE YOU - not the other way around. So, in whatever way these can help you and your leaders eliminate confusion and conflict and develop greater clarity and unity by helping to form a guiding coalition, please take full advantage of them.

About Ignite Intensives – It’s Good to Belong!

One of the benefits of belonging to the Southern Michigan Conference is the learning opportunities and resources that our appointed pastors and churches receive throughout the year. In the past two years, we have been investing heavily and working diligently at developing a learning culture in our Conference. We believe that all of our leaders and churches want to experience greater health and fruitfulness. In our ongoing mission to bless and strengthen our Conference churches, we have created Conference-wide learning opportunities called, “Ignite Intensives”.

In order to give as many people an opportunity as possible to participate and learn and grow, we have scheduled four events this year. Two of the Ignite Intensives will be two-hour evening events hosted regionally, and the other two will be all-day intensives held at a central location.

The First *Regional Ignite Intensives* will be held simultaneously at our Kalamazoo & Dearborn Churches on Monday, February 27th from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The topic is “Governance – Bylaws.” Churches will have an opportunity to engage in a variety of exercises and do real work together. We are going to maximize this learning experience for real take home value.

What will you learn?

- How to create an organizational structure in your church that serves the mission.
- How to eliminate *confusion* and *conflict* over governance issues.
- How to develop a proper understanding regarding Governance, Oversight and Operations in order to increase your church’s ability to move forward.
- How to mitigate the risk of lawsuits for your church through updated Articles of Incorporation and Church By-laws.
- How to right size your Leadership Board to fit the context of your local church.
- And much more!

Who is invited?

- All ordained elders of our Conference
- All Conference Ministerial Candidates
- All church board leaders
- All Annual Conference lay delegates
- Local church leadership teams
- Anyone who is interested in learning more and connecting with our Conference leaders and churches.

Please **RSVP** to office@smcfmc.org by Feb. 20th – Pastors please indicate the number coming from your church.

SMC Pastor/Spouse Retreat is Just over Two Weeks Away!

About 120 people have registered to attend the Pastor & Spouse Retreat in Frankenmuth, MI, February 6th through the 8th. We are planning and praying for this to be a time of inspiration with our guest speakers, the Metteers; fellowship and fun with others from the Conference; and relaxation for individuals and couples as you enjoy the amenities offered by the Bavarian Inn, the city of Frankenmuth and the surrounding area. Start packing your bags! See you soon!



Personal News from our Churches

Thank you from the Mulwees – Detroit FMC

To All Our Wonderful SMC Family,

We are so very thankful for your outpouring of love and support in the loss of our daughter Lisa. Many of you traveled in bad weather to attend her memorial service. We so appreciate that. Many sent cards, money or words of comfort. What a blessing. And many have prayed and are still praying for us. Words cannot express how thankful we are for all the support we have received from you. May God continue to strengthen, guide and provide for each of you! - Bill and Liz Mulwee and family

Please Pray:

Jessie Crockett – wife of Pastor Bruce Crockett from Grand River Community Church in Leslie – recovering from surgery

Angela Peterson – wife of Pastor Troy Peterson of our Pulaski Church – serious ongoing health concerns

Milan Dedication

The Pastoral staff and people of the Milan Free Methodist Church cordially invite you to attend the dedication service of their new sanctuary which will be held on Sunday January 22nd at 3 pm. This new sanctuary addition will provide increased capacity for the church to impact its community in the mission of making disciples. Come and celebrate the good things God is doing.

Important Church Deadline Reminders

Register Now – for E3 (Equipping for Excellence and Expansion) – This important gathering with our Bishops is happening Friday, March 24th and Saturday, March 25th but our FMCUSA Ministry Center would appreciate your registration NOW to help them in their planning. The cost is only \$49.00 per person. **It is expected that all of our Lead Pastors will attend with their Ministry Staff, but the event is open to everyone.** Register at the link that follows. Call Theresa Portwood at our FMCUSA Ministry Center (1-800-342-5531) if you have questions or difficulties with the registration process.

<https://give.fmcusa.org/events/e3>

January 31 – Re: Reporting 2016 “Pass Through” amounts – Treasurers/Finance Persons - Use the form provided at the following link to submit your church’s 2016 “Pass Through” amounts to the Conference Office by January 31. This can be very helpful in reducing your Conference Ministry Share for 2018.

<http://fmcusa.org/files/2016/11/equal-participation-plan-multi-lines.pdf>

January 31 – Re: the Local Church Evaluation - Pastors, it is your responsibility to see that this form is distributed to your leadership team. One person should be assigned to collect the forms and send them back in one envelope to the Conference Office by the required deadline.

January 31 – Payment due for the Pastor/Spouse Retreat – Thanks to those churches & individuals that have already taken care of this.

February 10 – On-line Reporting for FMCUSA – LAST DAY! (The site will close after this date) – Be sure to send any updated contact information pertaining to church pastors or lay delegates to Betty at the SMC Office. Email: office@smcfmc.org or phone: 517-750-9211.

For questions about the on-line process contact Jamie Hamilton. Email: yearbook.editor@fmcusa.org or Phone: 1-800-342-5531. She is available M-F, 8:00-5:00.

February 15 – Dashboard Report Due for 2016 Fourth Quarter.

Introduction of New Missionaries



David and Jill Sweet have been a part of our Jackson church and have been appointed as missionaries to Bulgaria as of last January, 2016. David will assist at the Petrich Community Center in organizing a sport / recreational league and in the discipleship of league leaders. Jill will manage accounts for mission projects, micro-enterprise and new livelihood groups. Both David and Jill will assist, if needed, with St. John's Home as teachers, trainers or house parents, as well as host and cover logistics for teams coming to serve in Bulgaria.

David will graduate from Spring Arbor University (Spring Arbor, MI) in the spring of 2017 with a Bachelor's of Arts degree in Recreation Leisure Management. Jill is an accounting professional with experience in public, non-profit, private and international accounting. The Sweets' projected departure for the field is in the summer of 2017, dependent on raising adequate funds.

The Southern Michigan Conference has a rich tradition of raising up, sending and supporting local VISA teams, Long-term VISA missionaries and career missionaries. We encourage our Conference churches to get acquainted by inviting them to come and share with a group or with the entire church in order to hear their story. David's email address is david.sweet@hotmail.com. You can contact Jill at thejillstermi@yahoo.com.

Conference Calendar (See Next Page)

Conference Calendar

(Deadlines are underlined)

January 18 – MissionInsite Webinar – 1:00 p.m.

January 22 – Milan FMC Sanctuary Dedication – 3:00 p.m.

January 24-27 – Assist. Supt. released time away

January 30 – MAC meeting – 6:30 p.m. at Westland FMC

January 31 – Local Church Evaluations Due

January 31 – Payment for Pastor/Spouse Retreat Due

January 31 – “Pass Through Funds” Request for Consideration Due

February 3 – East side LDC with Teams – 9:00-3:00 – 1208 Greenwood FMC, Jackson

February 4 – West side LDC with Teams – 9:00-3:00 – Kalamazoo FMC

February 6-8 – Pastor/Spouse Retreat in Frankenmuth

February 10 – Last day to enter 2016 church data on-line for FMCUSA

February 12 – Discovery Fellowship Grand Opening – Charlotte

February 13 – CLB meeting – 6:00 p.m.

February 14 – Happy Valentine’s Day

February 15 – Dashboard Report for 4th Quarter, 2016 Due

February 16-17 – African Heritage Network, Orlando, FL – Assist. Supt. Michael attending

February 23-24 – Supt. & Assist. Supt. to Denominational Coaching Training – TX

February 27 – IGNITE Intensive – For Pastors & Church Leaders - 6:30-8:30 p.m. – Dearborn & Kalamazoo

March 3 – East side LDC – Lead Pastors & Spouses – 9-3 – 1208 Greenwood FMC, Jackson

Topic: Discipleship Dynamics

March 6 – MEG Board – 6:00 p.m.

March 7 – West side LDC – Lead Pastors & Spouses – 9-3 – Kalamazoo FMC – (First TUESDAY meeting)

Topic: Discipleship Dynamics

March 19 – Installation of Pastor April Barrett – New Hope FMC, Canton

March 24-25 – Bishops’ E3 Event at Spring Arbor

March 29-30 – Denominational Church Planter Training - Indianapolis

Job Postings (See Next Page)

Position Opening - Worship/Arts Pastor

Spring Arbor Free Methodist Church, a congregation in a Christian University setting, with 1,200 in average attendance, is seeking a full time Director of Worship Arts. This person would join a multi-staff ministry team with a vision to lead our congregation in Kingdom mission to make disciples of Jesus.

Responsibilities

Oversee all worship arts ministries of the church

- Lead the church in an understanding and experience of worship.
- Recruit and develop teams and leaders with a passion for God, an eye and ear for artistic and musical excellence, and a heart for people.
- In collaboration with the lead Pastor and the worship design team - format the worship services, select music and other artistic and liturgical elements, and oversee the rehearsal of various teams and ensembles.
- Oversee special worship arts events throughout the year – Christmas Eve, church musical productions, etc.

General Qualifications

The candidate must . . .

- Be a devout follower of Jesus, a person of prayer, and a true worshiper in private as well as public life.
- Possess a love for the local church and its mission to the world.
- Have a developed biblical theology that informs a philosophy of worship.
- Be able to attract and develop godly leaders in worship ministry.
- Be effective in mentoring undergrad Worship Arts interns from the University.
- Have leadership experience in Worship/Arts in a local church setting. Experience in a larger church setting is preferred.
- Have a knowledge of and appreciation for a variety of music, art and worship forms. Our first need is someone whose strength is in contemporary worship formats, but also can navigate ancient/modern, hymnody, classic, gospel, etc.
- Be musically proficient in order to build vocal and instrumental praise bands towards a high level of spiritual preparation and artistic excellence.
- Be creative and original. Attract and build a community of artists who can express praise and devotion through music, but also through drama, literary, and visual arts.
- Demonstrate solid administrative and people skills.
- An advanced degree in music, worship, or theology is preferred.

Starting Date: Depending on the candidate, as early as possible.

Write to info@springarborfm.org for an application.

Send resume, 3 references, video sample or link **by January 31, 2017** to:

Spring Arbor Free Methodist Church
120 E. Main
Spring Arbor, MI 49283
Attn: Worship Arts Search Team