



From the Four Winds

From Crystal River to Braden River

**Gulf Central District United Methodist Men
1498 Rosary Rd. Largo, 33770**

May 2009 Edition

Celebrating 101 Years of Methodist Men

In the days we were growing up, a lifebuoy was a donut shaped ring with a long tether-line hanging on the railing of boat or ship or on a seaside shack near a dock. It is a popular symbol to add to any nautical décor. A candy company using this ring symbol markets their product as Lifesavers. Even a soap company, Unilever, manufactured a brand of soap called Lifebuoy to save others from our B.O. - “bad odor”. This soap is no longer produced in the United States.

Nowadays, a lifebuoy can be anything from a plastic covered foam ring to an auto-inflatable horseshoe to an auto-inflatable life jacket.



To those who had ever to use a lifebuoy and to those whose lives were saved with one from drowning at sea, the lifebuoy represents a sign of a miracle.

God has chosen us to be the lifebuoys for those who need saving. In James 5:13 – 20, “Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is any one of you happy? Let him sing songs of praise. Call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. Confess your sins to each other. Pray for each other so that you may be healed. If one wanders from the truth, bring him back. Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover a multitude of sins.”

At our District United Methodist Men's Gathering this month, Rodney Akers, president of the Fl-Conference UMMen, shared an experience he had discussing with a co-worker their walk or lack thereof with Jesus Christ. This person's heart was troubled. After praying with this person, she gave her heart to Christ. A very short time later, she died. And all Rodney could do is praise the Lord He had the courage to help her find her way back to Jesus. In the words of Rodney for being in the right place at the right time, ***“It is important to build relationships by our actions so that we have earned the right to share the Gospel when the opportunity presents itself. If they know we are walking the Walk they are more inclined to receive and respond.”***

Have you had this experience? Many of us will never know

whose lives we helped save by our actions, words, or prayers. As Methodist Men, we are on a mission to helping save people from drowning in the seas of sin and despair.

Haul, anchor. Set the sails. Keep the lifebuoys ready. Let's get moving.

From the North

***From First United Methodist Church of Spring Hill - Bill Clark
Discipleship Ministry***

REACHING OUT – WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Recently, our church celebrated Men's Ministry Sunday. The theme was "Reaching Out." It was a celebration of the men of the congregation – both young and old – who are reaching out in ministry and mission within the church, the community and beyond. It was a celebration of those who have experienced spiritual growth through servanthood and an encouragement to others to rise up as men of God and reach out for opportunities to serve God as men growing in Christ, so others can know Christ.

It was a celebration of the strengthening which enables men to engage in Christian service and to model the servant leadership of Jesus Christ with humility and boldness. Throughout the Bible, men have been called to serve and we are reminded in Matthew 23:11, that greatness comes from serving – from giving oneself to help God and others. Such service keeps us aware of others' needs and it stops us from focusing only on ourselves.

Jesus' call to servanthood was clear by word and by action. Matthew 20:28, states that Jesus did not come to be served, but to serve. This is the example we are called to follow. Peter calls on us in 1 Peter 4:10, to use whatever gifts we have received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. Peter continues, saying, if anyone does serve, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory.

All of us have some gifts. We can find them by taking the Spiritual Gifts test that is accessible through The United Methodist Church's web site at www.umc.org. And all of us should reach out for opportunities to use those gifts. All of our abilities should be used in serving others; none are for our exclusive enjoyment.

Opportunities to serve are many and varied – within the church, within the community and beyond. Let us seek out those opportunities and reach out - for reaching out is what it is all about. Amen?

From our West Central Area -

"While getting fat [in our materialism] and happy [in our prosperity and

debt], did we get sloppy? In an economy where any idiot could make it, are we now finding our stupidity being stressed tested? Are our ideas about money being tested? Is this crisis mode being caused by Wall Street, Washington, DC, the media or ourselves? "

"Why are we in this complete freak-out mode? How much fear is needed for the entire economy to implode?"

"If fear is what is needed to drive humanity, how come fear is not one of the fruits of the Spirit? Isn't fear the antithesis of hope? Should fear drive us to bail out stupidity? How much longer should we be stimulating stupidity? Whenever King David talked to God, fear left him."

"Was capitalism or government mismanagement the cause of the Great Depression?"

"Is a little desperation good for the soul? If we can't afford something, can we say NO?"

"Is whining a form of prayer? We can't get lemonade as long as we hang onto our lemons. "

"Are we as bad off as the media wants us to believe? This is not nearly the worse depression we ever experienced. With our government helping, it could be. We need to stop the hysteria. Fear does not represent reality. The world is not coming to an end - yet. Remember the tortoise and the hare story? The tortoise won. "

Over 1 million people at 6,000 sites around the world heard all this and more at the televised Dave Ramsey's Town Hall for Hope in April. There were approximately 70 in attendance at the First United Methodist Church at Gulfport. The event was free and everyone who attended learned something about how to cope with the current and coming financial challenges with humor and faith and a little of this and a little of that in handling their portfolios. For those who attended and for those who missed it, a university course of study is being offered by the Dave Ramsey organization to help discover financial peace.

The church at Gulfport is offering up such a study course. Other churches can tap into this faith-based approach to better personal money management. To learn more, go to <http://www.daveramsey.com/fpu/home/>

Thank you, Pastor Robert Roseberry for reaching out to our community with this. We are sure some of those who attended from the web advertisement will come to know you and your church better because of your outreach.

From UMM St Paul -

The Men of St Paul are having a church wide outing to the Clearwater Threshers" baseball game Friday May 29th at 6:30 pm. The \$12.00 ticket includes all you can eat "baseball" food: hot dogs, hamburgers, popcorn, peanuts, ice cream bars, sodas & water. There will be fireworks at the end of the game. a LIMITED NUMBER OF TICKETS are available at the St Paul office for \$12.00 or are available at the game ticket office for \$1 more.

Call 727-584-8165 or Bill Elliott (see below)

From the East Central area -

Marriage Encounter United Methodist - Next - September 18-20 - a program for strengthening Christian marriages.

For more information, contact Jim or Carol Reese at 727-799-0927. Or e-mail eseercm@aol.com

From the Gulf Central District -

36 men from 16 churches were represented at the Annual Gathering and Elections of the Gulf Central District United Methodist Men earlier this month. Add to this another 18 guys who formed the Anona Gospel Chordsmen, we had over 50 men who came together in the name of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ to lift up our praises, hear His commission in our songs and the sharing messages of our pastors, leaders and our area Vice-Presidents.

To watch and listen to the Chordsmen singing at this event, connect to www.anonagospelchordsmen.com/perform.htm

Link to the May 2 links.

The GCDUMM added four new officers to this year's Board of Officers.

*New to us are **Gary Reid**, from Palm Harbor United Methodist Church, who was elected as area vice-president covering men's ministries at churches located from Palm Harbor west of US 19 south to Dunedin, Clearwater, and east to Safety Harbor.*

***Jim Feirebacher** from East Lake UMC is our new area Vice-President covering men's ministries at churches from Palm Harbor east of US 19 including Oldsmar, Odessa and north to Tarpon Springs and the southern half Pasco County.*

***Charles Lefebvre** of Braden River UMC was nominated from the floor and elected to pick up half the churches **Keith Cook** inherited in Manatee County since Keith was elected in 2008.*

***Herb James** from Anona UMC was elected Secretary of the GCDUMM, leaving the Treasurer role in the hands of **Bill Elliott** from St Paul UMC.*

*The remaining officers, **Gene Winland**, **Lou Amandola**, **Steve Weisenbaker**, and **Chet Klinger** were re-elected.*

***Pastor Jack Stephenson's** presentation enlightened the men on a project that is bringing growing churches together with non-growing churches to study the changing demographics within the District - particularly Pinellas County at this time - and to determine opportunities for sharing time, talent, and resources.*

***Chet Klinger's** presentation focused more on what level of ministries are men at District churches engaged - or what churches do to promote men being involved in prayer, Bible study, in-church service, outreach beyond the*

church campus, and men's fellowships. A list of what is working and a list of what might or might not be effective were reviewed by all and a list of initiatives the GCDUMMen will be initiating was presented.

Anyone who would like to view and use the slides and these lists presented in these slides can contact Chet Klinger (see telephone number and e-mail address below).

*The Methodist Men got to meet and hear its guest visitor, **Mike Smith** from Tarpon Springs. Mike works as maintenance manager at Gulf Coast Community Services. Mike has had two major medical crises in his lifetime, and during both he never lost faith in God, He talked about how important friends and prayer were to him and what churches might need to do look at to connect with guys like him who are looking for reasons to want to go to church. Mike's expressions are what our men's ministries need to hear. We all need to meet the Mikes in our neighborhood, at work, and in and around our church to talk to and listen to and learn from so we can decide what kind of men's ministry we should be building.*

From the Florida Conference

May 15 - 16 (pick one)- "Intentional Discipling" One-Day Workshop - Fort Clarke UMC, Gainesville - \$45 either day - Go to www.flumc.org and click on button - "Simple Church" or e-mail Vicky.tica@flumc.org

Intentional Discipling is one of the five elements in the Living the Methodist Way - the other four are Passionate Worship, Radical Hospitality, Salty Service, and Extravagant Generosity.

Coming in October, 2009 at Leesburg, FL - Fall Men's Retreat "Walking With Jesus"

- **October 9-11, 2009** - Speakers: **Roger Watts** pastor, college teacher (St Pete College World Religion, Philosophy - Old & New Testament), **John Riley**, **Don Taylor**, **Chuck Englehardt**, Senior Pastor Aldersgate UMC, Seminole, FL Music - **Lenee Schroeder**

- **October 16-18 , 2009** Speakers: **Denny Heiberg** - Pastor Grace Church Gainesville, Bible study for Univ Florida Gator Baseball team; **Brad McClain** - businessman, pastor, husband, father; **Bob Laidlaw** - pastor - First UMC Madison, FL , high school teacher, businessman
Music - **Mark Jaeger and the Praise Team** from Aloma UMC
- **October 23-25, 2009** Speakers: **Riley Short** - Pastor, regular retreat speaker, **Bill Owens**, pastor First UMC Ormond Beach, FL
Music - **Ross Kimura**

- *For Retreat Reservations and Information, Contact the United Methodist Men - Florida Conference : **Don Heishman** P. O. Box 93370 Lakeland, FL 33804-3370 Telephone: 863-815-3692 Toll Free: 877-815-3692*

From Nashville, Tennessee - A once every 4 year event - the National UMMen - Lots to see and do in Nashville this time of year for the wife and the family. Anyone looking to ride and share the drive, please call Chet Klinger.

10th Annual Gathering of UMMen - July 10-12, 2009 - Belmont University, Nashville, Tennessee

"FOCUS ON THE CROSS - God to Man, Man to Man, and Man to Boy"

Speakers-

- **Dr. Patrick Morley** - Man in the Mirror and No Man Left Behind

Music – among others will include

- **Steve Hornbeak** - music artist, Nashville, TN
- **Vince Gill** - 19 Grammy Awards and two-time Entertainer of the Year Country Music Awards.
- **Registration: \$200 after 2/28/2009; \$250 after June 1, 2009 plus lodging & meals** There is a possibility the fee is \$175 ; to learn more call the 1-866 number below.

For more details and registration - go to www.gcumm.org or call

1-866-297-4313

Also From Nashville - The General Conference on United Methodist Men
New: Men's Ministry Specialist Online Course

More from the General Conference United Methodist Men can be found at their website -
<http://www.gcumm.org/site/c.miKWLaPKLnF/b.3576813/>

Your Gulf Central District Men's Ministry Leaders -

- **North Area VP** (Hudson and northward) - Steve Wisenbaker, First UMC Brooksville 352-799-8226 wisenbaker1122@aol.com
- **North Central Area** (Port Richey southward to Palm Harbor, east of US 19) - Jim Feierbacher East Lake UMC 727-786-8093 feierbacher@mindspring.com
- **Central Area VP** (Palm Harbor west of US 19 southward to Clearwater and Safety Harbor) - Gary Reid Palm Harbor UMC 727-943-9748 garyreid1@verizon.net
- **West Central Area VP** (St Petersburg, Pinellas Park, Seminole, Largo west of 49th St and Gulfport to Pinellas Park) - Lou Amandola – First UMC Gulfport 727-374-4524 lamandola@tampabay.rr.com
- **East Central Area VP** (St Petersburg, Pinellas Park, Largo - East of 49th St) - Gene Winland, Riviera UMC St Pete 727-526-6592 gmwinland@aol.com
- **South1 Area VP** (Bradenton and surrounding areas - tbd) - Keith Cook - Oneco UMC 941-727-4295 (after 3 pm weekdays)
- **South2 Area VP** (Bradenton and surrounding areas - tbd) - Charles Lefebvre Braden River UMC 941-739-6937
- **Treasurer** – Bill Elliot, St Paul UMC Largo 727-586-1159 MethodistMen@msn.com
- **Secretary** - Herbert James, Anona UMC 727-536-6698 hljames@aol.com
- **President** - Chet Klinger, Anona UMC 727-596-1483 cell: 727-643-1935 cklinger1@tampabay.rr.com

GET YOUR MEN'S MINISTRY MESSAGE IN THE June 2009 issue of FROM THE FOUR WINDS - E-mail cklinger1@tampabay.rr.com or call 727-596-1483.

From "Men's Minsitries - Building Effective Men's Ministries in your Church" by Kwasi Kena, The General Commission on United Methodist Men

1. Lead in the Spirit - John Wesley's disciplines – Cultivate a relationship with God through prayer, Bible study, fasting, public and private worship, Christian conversation, and acts of mercy. Encourage these practices among the ministry team participants.
2. Discover Current Reality – Learn the organizational structure, who does what, how things get done; engage in Christian conversation, be open to each other and listen to the voice of God.
3. Name A Shared Vision – See yourselves as God's agents of grace and love. Extend your ministry to reaching out, receiving people in the name of God, nurturing people in Christian living, and sending forth new ministers.
4. Develop Action Plan - Make the vision into reality through setting goals and developing action plans. Be flexible to God's many ways. Devise interim goals toward meeting a larger goal. Balance realism with boldness.
5. Monitor the Journey – Keep an eye on how things are going. Monitor progress of action plans – listen to the voices of the congregation – be ready to rethink and revise the action plan, or move ahead boldly and without fear. Discern the heart of God in fulfilling the mission of the church.