

## **Report to church about 2008 Annual Conference**

Bill Cain, Lay Leader

Good things come in 3's. This morning, I will present a 3-minute summary of a 3-day experience. In addition, I will be talking about 3 different conferences. The focus will be the Southwest Texas Annual Conference in Corpus Christi in early June. It was attended by delegates from 400 United Methodist Churches located in the purple area extending from San Angelo to Corpus Christi to Brownsville and including Austin and San Antonio.

Bill Henderson updated us on the Conference New Church Initiative. It is an ongoing effort to provide churches to serve an area that will have 1,000,000 more people in 2018. With a goal of \$5,000,000, the Conference has raised \$6,500,000 to support this initiative. I hope that you will help in some way to plant a new church in Austin, just like we were planted here 41 years ago.

Besides the business sessions, services were held to celebrate the lives of those clergy who died this past year, those who are retiring, and those who are taking the first and second steps of becoming ministers. The services featured great music, powerful preaching, and enthusiastic participation.

Jim Mayfield, a former pastor here, let the new preachers have it. He talked about temptations Jesus, he, and the new preachers had in common, and what to do about it—in forceful terms.

I also saw former pastors like Ray Kiser, former members who are becoming ministers like Wade Lindstrom and Tim Payne, and a former associate pastor here, Jeanne Whitehurst.

Jay Brim gave a report on the worldwide General Conference, held in late April in Fort Worth. He described the use of Holy Conferencing in finding common ground around a proposed amendment to the church constitution. If it is ratified next year by enough of the Annual Conferences, it will say simply that membership in the United Methodist Church is open to all.

Our bishop for the past 8 years, Joel Martinez, will retire in August. He is much loved, much appreciated, and very effective. The South Central Jurisdiction Conference in Dallas in July will appoint successors to the 3 retiring bishops in the Jurisdiction. Walt Lengel from our church will help other Jurisdictional delegates make the selections.

If your name is on the projection, please stand up. Any of us will be glad to answer any questions you may have. Finally, the Annual Conference ratified the re-appointments of Madeline and Bill to our church. We will celebrate that later in the service.