

Holy Conversation

June 13, 2008

This past week was Annual Conference for the Wisconsin Annual Conference. We gathered in Middleton, WI. There were about 1,000 people who came together.

The main purpose of what we do is to have holy conversation about what it means for us as United Methodists to be in mission and ministry within the boundaries of our state and in the greater world. We made decisions around basic things like, Annual Conference staffing, budgets, and also ministries within our conference. We celebrated passages. We remembered and celebrated those who have retired from a lifetime of ministry. We welcomed new people into the ministry. We remembered those who have died in this past year, who have been a part of our life together.

We took time to learn about the scriptures, to renew old friendships, and be reminded of our United Methodist heritage. Annual Conference takes its name from John Wesley, who used to gather pastors under his care each year. It was a time for holy conversation (or conferencing), about how to be faithful in the world today. It was and is a way for people to intentionally connect with God and grow in faith.

If we are going to be intentional in our faith growth and development today, it requires us (I believe) to engage in holy conversation in our lives as well. There are several components of having holy conversation that are helpful. (1) Am I willing to engage in holy conversation with God? This often comes through practicing disciplines like public worship and private quiet time with God. (2) Am I willing to engage in holy conversation with others? This often comes through practicing disciplines like engaging in Bible Study, small group ministries where we can connect with others and ask our questions of faith. (3) Am I willing to engage in holy conversation on behalf of God in the world? This is asking each other how can we best live in the world and meet the needs of a hurting world, in the name of God? This is about asking how I personally can live in mission and ministry in a world that is hurting, on behalf of people who are hurting.

What are you doing to engage in holy conversation? What are you doing to reconnect with God? What are you doing to live out the faith that God is calling you to?

Annual Conference is a once a year event. But it reminds me that holy conversation is to be a part of my daily, routine life. May holy conversation become a part of your life as well, as we seek to be faithful to Jesus Christ.

In the hope Jesus offers us,

Rev. Scott Carlson

The Mission of Sun Prairie United Methodist Church is to invite and welcome people to be committed and compassionate followers of Jesus Christ through worship, through spiritual growth, through fellowship and through service to others.