

## REPORT TO SHARON CHURCH ON THE 170<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE NIC

The 170<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church was held in St. Charles II at the Pheasant Run Resort on June 7-9, 2009. Sharon Church was represented by Pastor Melissa Hood and Lay Member to Annual Conference Clif Gray.

In addition to hearing reports from the various organizations that are a part of the NIC or are partners with our conference, we voted on various resolutions, including the annual budget and proposed amendments to the Constitution of the UM Church from the 2008 General Conference and had a presentation on Harvest 2020.

### **AMENDMENTS & RESOLUTIONS**

There were 32 amendments to the UM Constitution that were voted on at the Conference. To approve an amendment, it must receive 2/3 of all votes cast by all delegates at each of the 122 Annual Conferences world-wide. (This is equivalent to the popular vote in a presidential election rather than electoral vote).

23 of these amendments concerned changing terminology of conferences in anticipation of additional changes to be voted on in 2012. These would allow the General Conference to create similar structures for all of our world-wide church. Each Annual Conference would belong to a Regional Conference which would be able to organize sub-units called Jurisdictional Conferences. We currently have Annual, Jurisdictional and General. Those opposed stated that it would add an additional layer of bureaucracy (Regional). These 23 amendments received approximately 73% of the vote.

There were 4 amendments that were non controversial and received between 86 & 94 % of the votes cast. These 1) requires the adoption of ethics and conflict of interest policies; 2) adds gender to the list of persons protected in the list of duties of the General Conference; 3) Requires a minimum of 100 delegates from each Jurisdictional Conference to attend the General Conference; and 4) Adds Bermuda to the Baltimore – Washington Conference.

Three amendments dealing with; 1) Lay & Clergy membership of the Annual Conference; 2) Allow lay members on the committee on investigations to vote on matters of ordination, character, and conference relation of clergy; and 3) to allow all clergy members to participate in selection of clergy delegates to General, Jurisdictional and Central conferences. These amendments received between 46 & 48 % of the votes cast..

The last amendment, the one that carried the most debate, revised the wording on who was eligible to be a member of the UMC. Those in favor stated it eliminated personal agendas against people becoming members and ensures the eligibility of all persons to become members. Those opposed stated that it removed the pastors discretion that



The 2009-2010 budget was presented for approval on Tuesday. The budget for 2009 was \$8.377 Million, approximately \$200K less than 2008. The projected budget for 2010 is \$6.8 Million approximately \$1.5 Million less than 2010. The conference is looking everywhere it can to cut expenses and appear to be doing a good job.

## **HARVEST 2020**

On Monday night, the Annual Conference heard the presentation on Harvest 2020. The goal of this effort is to bring in 100 new faith communities by 2020. There are currently 28 Harvest 2020 projects budgeted in the NIC. During this presentation, the pastors assigned to these 28 Faith Communities were commissioned by the Bishop for this work. Included among those commissioned was our new pastor, Beth Streif who will be involved ½ time with the new Shorewood Church and ½ time for Sharon.

These faith communities are funded as follows

NIC Church Development Fund	28%
NIC Apportionment	15%
Partner Churches	20%
National Plans	8%
Individual Gifts	29%

The conference has approved \$15,000 for ½ of Pastor Beth's salary and expenses for the remainder of the year and \$37,000 for 2010.

Please feel free to ask me any questions you may have after church or at anytime in the future.

Clif Gray  
Lay Member to Annual Conference.