

## **Lay Leader Report 2012**

In the wake of the 50th anniversary celebration of our church, in my report last year I tried to highlight some of the changes and growth that had taken place in the life of our church over those fifty years. And certainly there was much to highlight and a lot for which to give God thanks. Changes continue to occur and as they do, we pray that they will also have the blessing of God as we seek to be His presence in this community.

Our most recent addition to ministry and outreach is that of the *Shepherd's Shelf*; it was discussed with our pastor and approved by the Church Council at its meeting held on September 18, 2012. This ministry has been started by Peter Mantell and supported by his wife Anna, Beth Hart, Sherry Peterson, Jean Hansen, and Janelle Ash; the support of others is welcomed. As Peter tells it, this ministry is a direct result of his pilgrimage to Taize and his call ministry. It is a ministry whose focus is to provide food for those in need and provide instruction in the preparation of healthy meals. The team will work in cooperation with existing food ministries such as Elijah's Kitchen, FISH and CUMAC ECHO.

We pray that this new ministry will also be a means to share the love of Christ and the spirit of our church. For we are surrounded by several churches, some of which are other United Methodist Churches, but I believe that within our immediate radius there are many who are unchurched or under churched. I believe that we are strategically located to be a magnet church; a church that attracts passersby and a church that can make a difference in the spiritual life of those it attracts.

It is critical that we make use of the placement with which we are blessed for we face a graying congregation and a migration of matured members to places of retirement. As this migration continues, and it seems sure to continue for a while, we will lose members of experience and years of service. Often, there will be no one who can be called upon to make the replacement so not only will the physical make-up of the church be hurt but our ability to do ministry will be seriously affected.

We are aware of the need to attract and make disciples of young adults. Our church is doing well in all the ages through high school but there is a great need for college and young adult disciples. To this end we have attempted to create a focus group that will address this need. We have not been able to fill out this group so far but will continue to pursue it and if necessary, change the current approach. Your input as members of the congregation is welcomed.

Training and development of leaders are ongoing needs in the life of any congregation, especially for those who are serving on a committee for the first time. To this end we will arrange for local training classes in the New Year after members are officially seated on their committees. We will also encourage committee members and other members to make use of the Resource Days and Days of Learning offered by the district.

Respectfully submitted,  
Keith A. Cunningham