

PROFESSIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH
SECRETARIES
OF THE
ALABAMA WEST
FLORDIA
CONFERENCE



AWF VITAL LINK

May—July 2009

A Word from the President:

Welcome, summer! Due to the summer heat, this Season tends to be the longest surviving among all four. But it also brings out the simple pleasures of life such as family picnics, barbecues, and fun in the sun in our backyards or at the beach. The summer recreational activities list goes on and on. Whether you will spend most of your extra time indoors or outdoors, please remember our heavenly Creator and take time to enjoy the splendor of the summer season.

I am happy to share with you that the National Conference in Des Moines, Iowa was a success! The “*Going Green*” Theme gives us a lot to contemplate and serves as a vivid reminder that our environment is very important to our well-being. I am sure that everyone in attendance came back refreshed and revived and ready to take on the world; literally. I encourage each and everyone to participate in a National Conference whenever the chance arises. It is a blessing and inspiration to gain new friends in our profession. It also gives us valuable resources that enable us to better serve our fellow Pastor and congregation and ultimately further the kingdom.

I also encourage you to think about enrolling in the Certification Class at the national level of the Professional Association of the United Methodist Church Secretaries. It is held every July in Atlanta, Ga. You will gain a greater understanding of the United Methodist structure and beliefs. Please check out the National PAUMCS website at www.paumcs.org for a brochure and registration details. Some scholarship help is available on a first come, first served basis. ***Congratulations and Good Luck to one of our own Alabama-West Florida PAUMCS members, Crissy Lambert!***

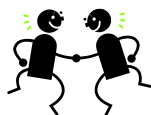
The Executive Committee is working hard to plan our upcoming Chapter Fall Conference. Our theme this year is, “*Keeping Ministry Alive in Difficult Times.*” With our economy facing uncertainty, it seems to be difficult to even break even in our personal lives and in the administration of the church. We can always find comfort and assurance in the belief that our God will not abandon us. Praise God, there is a light at the end of the tunnel!

We encourage any ideas/suggestions/comments/likes or dislikes about past conferences. We value your opinions and take these into consideration when planning for future conferences. Email your thoughts to me at alynnlc@yahoo.com or to our new Communications Coordinator, Sarah Marsh at awf.paumcs.communications@gmail.com. Remember -every suggestion will be helpful and appreciated.

Your Sister In Christ,
Amy Catrett, Chapter President



The executive committee is underway planning this year’s conference. If you would like to offer a suggestion of a topic you would find beneficial, please email me or one of the executive committee members.



Meet the 2008-2009 Executive Committee !!

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**Feel free to contact anyone on the Committee
for any comments or concerns.**



Saving energy at work

LIGHTING

Artificial lighting consumes 44 percent of electricity used in office buildings.

-Make it a habit to turn off the lights when you're leaving any room for 15 minutes or more and utilize natural light when you can.

-Make it a policy to buy Energy Star-rated light bulbs and fixtures, which use at least two-thirds less energy than regular lighting, and install timers or motion sensors that automatically shut off lights when they're not needed.



PLEASE SEND CHAPTER DUES ASAP!!

**Please complete the enclosed membership form and
return with your check for annual dues (\$15.00) to:**

Jorie Welch, PO Box 241347, Montgomery, AL 36124

Everyone is welcomed, loved, and appreciated in our organization!

A Personal View of Certification and Annual Conference...



I would like to express my opinion about the certification class and the annual conference in Iowa. First of all, the class located at Candler University is one that will not be forgotten. We had the best teacher one could ask for. I don't think we closed our eyes once (that is to sleep). We learned a lot of information (nuggets) to help us with our everyday environment. We had approximately 36 people in our class. Each one of us bonded with several people and we now have a close knit group of friends. It was a wonderful experience. For those who are attending this year, I would like to give you some advice. The weather is hot and humid in Atlanta, be prepared to melt. Bring essential items for your rooms (toilet paper, or anything you would like to cook or eat with unless you plan to eat out, wireless is difficult to connect to, so bring your own line to connect to outlet for internet and bring comfortable walking shoes). I suggest in the evening you go traveling with friends and explore the surrounding area. For those traveling by car, there is always construction work occurring, expect delays and detours. Have a great time and sing happy birthday aloud to someone, even if it's not their birthday.

I attended the Annual Conference in Iowa. What a beautiful area! We talked about going green. I actually learned more than I thought I could. I just need to find the time to put the information to use now. I had a wonderful time with my old friends. We enjoyed a "who done it" mystery dinner. For those who didn't attend, I wish you could have been there. It was hilarious. The certification process was delightful. I am proud of the ladies who walked across the stage and had a great time receiving their certificate. I would like to thank all who were involved in putting the conference together. What an awesome job you all did. We had already begun speaking about the conference in Orlando next year. So, put this in your budget and keep your stand. You each deserve to be at the next conference. We are a vital link to the community.

In His name,
Twyla German-Lewis
Executive Assistant
Ozark FUMC



NATIONAL PAUMCS CONFERENCE 2010 ORLANDO, FL APRIL 15-18

Now is the time to begin making plans to attend the National PAUMCS Conference in Orlando, FL on April 15-18. You will want to start saving for this trip, get the amount into your budget, or just simply do whatever it takes to attend, and you won't be sorry. This is an excellent location to take along the family on vacation and you

will be located close to all the exciting events that Orlando has to offer. The conference will be held at the Wyndham Orlando Hotel, 8001 International Drive, located at the corner of Sand Lake Road & International Drive. The website is www.wyndhamorlandoresort.com so go online and take a look. Much has already been confirmed for this event by your National Executive Committee and it promises to be an exciting, educational, fun-filled conference. Two speakers have been confirmed and we will have Beanie Rankin, assistant director or Records and Statistics at the General Council of Finance and Administration of The United Methodist Church in Nashville, TN. She will be speaking on the United Methodist "Membership Guidelines" and that will be of interest to most everyone working in a local church. We also have Barbara Bruce, Educator, Speaker, and Author, presenting "Keeping Your Mind, Body, and Soul Healthy in the Workplace". Barbara teaches the mind/body/spirit connection to groups across the U.S.

Orlando spells fun and this conference is no exception. You will have an optional opportunity to visit the Kennedy Space Center and the Outing for the conference which will be included with registration is a trip to Sea World. Our very important annual Mission Project will be for the Cornerstone Family Ministries.

The logo for the conference is LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE so we hope to see you in Orlando in 2010 shining for the SON.

Zanatta Hagan, National PAUMCS Treasurer

The website to view pictures of the Des Moines, Iowa National PAUMCS Conference held April 30-May 3 is: <http://www.snapfish.com/groups/paumcs-desmoines>

A UMNS Report By Heather Hahn*

May 27, 2009 | LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (UMNS)

United Methodists in northeast Arkansas came together in prayer after a church secretary was stabbed and robbed in her office.

The pastor and church members rushed to the hospital after Vickie Jo Mueller, 52, was stabbed twice in the chest and twice in the abdomen May 22 by a man who came into the office of St. Paul United Methodist Church in Jonesboro asking for gas money.

And that night about 180 people — including pastors and members of other area United Methodist churches — gathered at St. Paul to pray some more. Mueller's husband, Bill, and daughter Dena, a sophomore at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, also were there.

By May 26, Mueller's vital signs were stable and she was in fair condition at the city's St. Bernards Medical Center.

God was present even in this brutal act, said the Rev. Beth Waldrup, St. Paul's senior pastor, who got a catch in her voice as she recounted what happened to her friend and co-worker.

"Jo shouldn't be here with us," Waldrup said. "The surgeon said there were three wounds that should have killed her. You can see God at work in her being here, and you can see God at work in the way this church has come together."

Heroic effort

Mueller was alone in the office, printing Sunday bulletins, at around 10:30 a.m. May 22 when a man came in asking for gas money, Waldrup said.

Mueller told the man the church did not provide that service. He then asked to use the church bathroom, and she pointed the way to the men's room. He went into the bathroom for a moment, came out and attacked Mueller from behind. After stabbing Mueller, the man grabbed her purse and bolted out the door, Waldrup said.

Despite her injuries, Mueller was able to drag herself to the phone and call 911. Just as emergency workers were loading Mueller into an ambulance, an altar guild member drove by the church and started calling church leaders including Waldrup, who is off on Fridays. Waldrup and church members joined Mueller's family at the hospital to wait and pray.

"We're all still kind of in shock," Waldrup said. "But she told me, 'Beth, it's going to be OK. I have faith.'"

According to the Jonesboro Sun, police arrested a suspect in the crime the afternoon of May 22. Roy "Ray" Lee Anthony, 47, of Forrest City, Ark., is accused of first-degree battery, aggravated robbery and fraudulent use of a credit card, the newspaper reported. He also is a suspect in several other robberies in this eastern Arkansas city.

The church responds

As the police tracked down the suspect, St. Paul's congregation and other area United Methodists mobilized to show support for the Muellers and provide them with food.

Church member Linda Graham helped organize a prayer service for the Muellers that night at the church. Graham is a school psychologist and member of the county's crisis response team.

For her, the assault brought back memories of another act of violence. Graham was among the crisis counselors on the scene after two students fatally shot four students and a teacher at Westside Middle School in Jonesboro in 1998.

"Both acts were violations," she said. "A school and a church are both supposed to be safe. The prayer vigil was a really good thing because you have to reclaim your turf."

Graham said she was particularly touched when those gathered sang the hymn "I am Standing on Hallowed Ground."

David Sutton, who also helped plan the Friday night service, has long known the Muellers.

"Jo is a very strong woman and very inspirational in her love for her family and her dedication to the church," Sutton said. "To have the fortitude to know what she needed to do [even after the attack] is just amazing to me."

Waldrup said the church is re-examining its safety procedures. She wants St. Paul to continue to be a sanctuary and not become a fortress. She also wants other churches to take precautions.

"You think it can't happen to you, but it can," she said.

*Hahn is editor of the Arkansas United Methodist.

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Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries
of the Alabama West Florida Conference

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We're on the web!
www.awf-paumcs.com



**Please continue
to pray
for everyone
affected by the
economic
hardships in the
AWF Conference
and our Country.**



****Any questions or comments for your Executive
Committee, please contact any one on the committee.
Don't forget to email all praise reports
and prayer requests to
prayerandpraiseline@gmail.com****



Mission Statement:

The Mission of the Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries is to provide a supportive base for the unity and fellowship of its members in order to provide individual growth, professional development, continuing education, and spiritual enrichment.