

bishop's speaking schedule



Apr. 15: Main Street UMC at 11 a.m.; Mt. Olivet UMC/East Tazewell Circuit at 3 p.m.; Belfast UMC at 6 p.m. (all Tazewell District)

Apr. 17: "Clergy Day with the Bishop," State Street UMC (Abingdon District) at 10 a.m.; "Bishop's Dinner for Scouting," Central-Radford UMC (Wytheville District) at 6:30 p.m. ■



The Call

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wings

By Bishop James Edward Swanson Sr.



Leadership is relational

In our church today we argue over issues that divide us in conflict. Some blame these conflicts for our membership decline and loss of enthusiasm. But for many of us, it's clear that a crisis in leadership is causing our decline.

Specifically, our crisis stems from a misunderstanding of leadership. In the book, "Practicing Right Relationship," authors Mary Sellon and Dan Smith write: *We mistakenly assume that leadership is based in the skills and activities of the individual person, so we try to build leaders rather than the right relationships through which leadership can be offered. Leadership resides not in the leader but in the "space between" the leader and the led. Leadership is relational.*

During this time of appointment-making, I pray that both clergy and congregation will work on building relationships rather than blaming each other for their problems. Blame leads to frustration, division, and unhealthy behavior. Sellon and Smith observe that "pastors who possessed strong relational skills and worked at establishing healthy relationships thrived almost anywhere they went." As author of the book's forward, Gil Rendle noted that he "strongly agrees" with Sellon and Smith. "My experience, however, is that most of the excellent leaders I observe practice their art intuitively."

Given our need for leadership, how do we as United Methodists help our pastors do what others do intuitively? This is a matter of choice on the part of our pastors. Are we willing to change in order to be more effective? Rendle also made this statement in his forward: *Healthy, faithful leaders not only need to practice right relationships as a way of leading but must serve as models and mentors for others as they build relationships in their own faith practice. Building right relationships goes even deeper than the questions of how to lead and addresses the issue of how to live.*

Our system seems to make some pastors dependent upon the structure for their own development and improvement. Even in the wider society, there was a time when we could depend on the system to care for us throughout our careers. Those days are fading fast.

Sellon and Smith address self-awareness issues and offer skills for developing awareness of where we are, what we feel, what we value, and what we dream. I highly recommend this book, published by the Alban Institute.

One of my favorite songs is "I Can Only Imagine" – because it pushes us to look forward to a time of ultimate redemption. I can only imagine the face of pastoral leadership in the United Methodist Church if we could begin *now* to build healthy, positive relationships and allow our love for Christ and each other to move us forward.

Two weeks ago, the Appointment Cabinet and I experienced healthy, positive relationships as we gathered to make appointments. It was evident to us that many of our pastors and congregations also saw themselves in relationship to us, because we experienced the results of their prayers as we sought God's heart desire for the placement of pastoral leaders.

I thank you for your prayers, but please do not stop now. Continue to pray that the projected appointments will begin great relationships between clergy and congregations. ■



exchange:

BRISTOL, Tenn. – Anderson Street UMC seeks a part-time youth director, effective July 1. Applicants should send resumes to: Keith Thompson, Staff-Parish Relations Chairperson, c/o Anderson Street UMC, 954 Anderson Street, Bristol, TN 37620.

MARYVILLE, Tenn. – Fairview UMC seeks a full-time children's director. Candidates must have a bachelor's degree in elementary or Christian education or comparable training as well as a minimum of three years working in a church with at least 400 members. Send resumes to Gary Fowler at gsfowler@chartertn.net

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. – Bearden UMC seeks part-time music director. Salary is negotiable. Send resume to or contact: Rev. Tom Seay, P.O. Box 11065, Knoxville, TN 37939, or call (865) 588-6562.

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. – Bearden UMC seeks part-time organist/accompanist. Salary is negotiable. Send resume to or contact: Rev. Tom Seay, P.O. Box 11065, Knoxville, TN 37939, or call (865) 588-6562.

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. – Church Street UMC seeks part-time college coordinator. Applicant must be member of the United Methodist Church. Leadership and participation in youth or college program or similar spiritual outreach program is a plus. Position includes 20 hours/week from mid-August 2007 to mid-May 2008. Send letters of interest along with resume to: Rick Isbell, Minister of Program, Church Street UMC, P.O. Box 1303, Knoxville, TN 37901, or to risbell@churchstreetumc.org.

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. – Fountain City UMC seeks a female summer intern. The position will focus on building meaningful, authentic relationships with all students with emphasis on females. This is an 11-week program beginning May 27, 2007, and ending Aug. 12, 2007. More information and applications are available at www.fountaincityumc.org. Application deadline is April 13.

LENOIR CITY, Tenn. – Trinity UMC seeks part-time music director for traditional worship service. Send resume to: Trinity UMC, P.O. Box 606, Lenoir City, TN 37771-0606, or e-mail trinityumclc@bellsouth.net

ALCOA, Tenn. – First Alcoa UMC is accepting applications for a church secretary. Send resume by fax to (865) 982-5558, or mail to: AFUMC SPR Committee, 617 Gilbert Street, Alcoa, TN 37701.

"Exchange" is continued on page 11.



... she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus ...