

Fillmore Free Methodist Church

2009-2010 CONFERENCE YEAR PASTOR & DELEGATE REPORT

Pastor Mike Hopper; Associate Pastor Janet Hopper; Delegate: Scott Rain

Jesus told His followers: "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field." (Matthew 9:37-38) The equipping and deployment of workers and leaders to serve Christ is an important part of our mission "to plant spiritual seeds through evangelism, cultivate spiritual growth, and harvest dedicated workers and leaders for Christ." Please join us in celebrating some of what has been accomplished toward this mission during this past conference year.

(1) Planting Spiritual Seeds (Outreach and Evangelism):

During the past year, at least 2 persons have committed their lives to Christ; others have taken forward steps in their faith. Seven persons (4 teens and 3 adults) were baptized in the nearby Root River. Several babies have been born and dedicated. Ten new families have begun attending worship services regularly.



Outreach to children and youth has been a priority. About 170 children attended our Vacation Bible School (staffed by 100 adults and youth). About 240 persons watched the children present the Christmas musical "Meet Me at the Manger" in our sanctuary. The youth have invited their friends to youth group and game nights and to special events like canoeing and bonfires. The prayer quilt ministry is reaching hurting families.

Outreach has gone beyond the local area. Our church has financially supported missionaries Jim & Deb Wilson in the Philippines and two children (one in Haiti and the other in Kenya) through the childcare sponsorship ministry. The Fillmore Church supports the Olive Branch Mission in Chicago. Nine persons helped with construction projects at a Christian orphanage in Honduras and ministered to the children there, and a medical / dental team also ministered in Honduras. In addition, the children of Vacation Bible School raised over \$1,000 for that orphanage. And children and adults filled 52 shoe boxes with new toys that were delivered to needy children around the world through "Operation Christmas Child." In addition, \$2,100 was provided for earthquake relief in Haiti.

The Fillmore Church has prayerfully supported our attenders as they have served God away from the church. Attenders of this church have been encouraged to share their faith wherever they go; and many are doing it.

(2) Cultivating Spiritual Growth (Spiritual Growth Encouragement): Last fall, our actively attending adults were polled as to how they had been influenced by the ministries of the Fillmore Church. The encouraging results revealed significant progress in personal spiritual growth and in the development of Christian disciplines.



Spiritual growth has been encouraged in the lives of children through Sunday School. In addition, our teens have attended weekly youth meetings. Five Bible quizzers competed this season, brought home numerous trophies, and memorized many Bible verses from I & II Corinthians. Fourteen children and youth profited from the ministry of our conference camping ministry at Sky Lodge Camp in Montello, Wisconsin.

Opportunities for spiritual growth for adults have included Sunday School, home Bible studies, and our contemporary and traditional worship services. About 40 women are growing spiritually through several women's Bible studies, and two other Bible studies (one for couples and one for men) continue to teach God's word. About 70 adults attended "Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage" at the Fillmore Church. This DVD series seminar effectively used humor to help strengthen marriages.

Between our two morning worship services, a monthly Friendship "Donut Day" Time encouraged our attenders to get to know one another. Other social events to build relationships have included a Harvest-Time Dinner, Valentine Party, and Easter breakfast. Periodic "Girlz Nite Out" activities encouraged women in their relationship with the Lord and provided great times of fellowship. This Spring, the Fillmore Church hosted a Women's Retreat Weekend at Ironwood Springs Camp, and 70 local women (including many who do not attend the Fillmore Church) participated in this time of fun and spiritual encouragement.



Each week those who missed the worship services received a copy of the Sunday message (sent by e-mail or the US postal service). New persons are participating in Bible studies, in Sunday School, and in the worship services. Worship attendance has grown 5 percent, and Sunday School has increased 17 percent.

(3) Harvesting (Worker and Leadership Development): An important focus of the Fillmore Church has been on involving individuals in ministry. Attenders have been regularly challenged to take a spiritual gift questionnaire and explore opportunities to serve God in ministries that match their giftedness and passions. The number of persons serving in some church ministry has grown to 120. And 4 new preparatory members joined.



Our teens have assisted in children's ministries, in providing worship music, and in expanding our tech team to operate the sound and video equipment in our worship services. 50 children and youth presented a Christmas musical drama. A number of persons rang Christmas bells for the Salvation Army.



Ten individuals attended a children's ministry seminar at the Autumn Ridge Church; ten attended the Free Methodist GROW ministry training event in Austin; and a dozen attended a leadership development seminar at the Eagle Brook Church. Serving Christ was one of the focuses for the 21 teens who attended the Fillmore Snow Retreat. We have recognized that leadership development needs to be a priority if the Fillmore Church is to continue to grow.

(4) Equipment for Harvesting: (Resources): On May 20, 2007, the Fillmore Church dedicated a major building addition. The total cost for the "Building for Ministry in the Harvest" church expansion project was \$500,000. Through advanced paying on that debt the past three years, eight years of the 20-year debt is now paid off. Church attenders are giving faithfully toward the building project.



Also, through the dedicated giving of many, our bills have been paid each month, and a number of ministries outside the local church have been supported. In addition, during this year, facility improvements have included considerable painting, siding part of the chapel, and some new carpet in the parsonage.

Our greatest resource is God--Whom we have approached through prayer in a variety of ways. These included the Emergency Prayer Network (about 65 persons praying), prayer in the Bible studies, pre-service prayer times in the church office, and prayer in the worship services. In addition, a prayer network of persons around the country has regularly prayed for the pastoral family and ministries of the Fillmore Church.

Over the past 16 years, Pastor Mike and Janet have enjoyed being a part of the Fillmore Church team, and are thankful to God for so many serving in some kind of ministry. As we seek to faithfully serve the Lord, we pray that the Fillmore Church will regularly send persons into the harvest fields that many lives might be transformed by the power of God. May God help the Fillmore Church team to continually honor Christ as we "plant spiritual seeds through evangelism, cultivate spiritual growth, and harvest dedicated workers and leaders for Christ."

