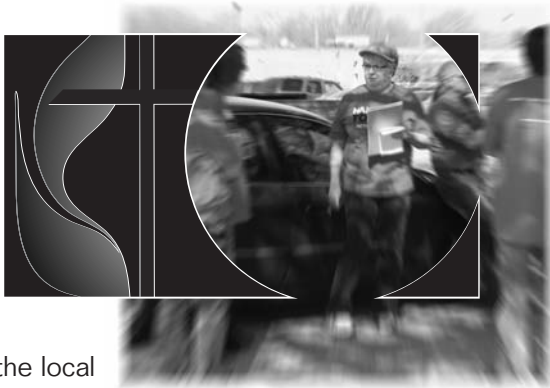


IN MISSION & MINISTRY

United Methodists at Work Preparing the Way



The most direct tie between the local church and the annual conference is the district superintendent. **“...knowing your churches the best you can.”** There are 11 superintendents in Kansas, six in West and five in East.

The Book of Discipline outlines five responsibilities for the DS: supervision of clergy, recruitment and deployment of personnel, spiritual and pastoral leadership, administration and programming.

“I remember when I came on the district, the bishop told me the secret to being a successful DS with appointment-making is knowing your churches the best you can and knowing your clergy the best you can,” said Rev. Rick Saylor, Hutchinson District superintendent. “That’s really stuck with me.”

And it’s guided the way he and the other superintendents work with their clergy and the staff-parish relations committees in their districts as well.

“It’s been really good to have someone that I feel like I can go and talk to and that listens and hears what I’m saying and is supportive of the things that I’m doing,” said Laura Cherry, a pastor in the Salina District.

Cherry is new to ministry, and her district superintendent has been very supportive of her work.

“There are a lot of things that come up that he’s given me a lot of good advice for, and he’s always there when I have an issue that comes up, to talk to me, and just be there in support,” she said.



District superintendents link churches and pastors



“For me, the heart of ministry is relationship.”

District superintendents work not only with the clergy in their districts, but also the churches. Dses work with each church’s pastor-parish relations committee to assess the goals, desires, strengths and needs of the church, they meet with churches for charge conferences and sometimes with church councils and other leadership teams in the church. Dses help churches plan mission strategies for reaching the mission field around their church – helping them vision and holding them accountable to that vision.



“For me, the heart of ministry is relationship. It’s important for me to know the churches and pastors of my district in deeper ways than those offered through church conferences and business meetings,” said Rev. Dennis Ackerman, Five Rivers District superintendent. “I look for opportunities to connect with churches in ways that give me a better feel for the people, the heart, the spirit and the faith of congregations. A church is better known and understood when you have had a glimpse of the ‘real’ life of the faith community.”

The Dses couldn’t do their jobs without the support of their administrative assistants, who take on those pesky administrative duties like following up with churches on their annual audits, new pastor e-mail addresses, annual statistical reports and other employment paperwork that must be turned in for clergy. ■



United Methodists at Work ...

District superintendents are a vital link between congregations and the annual conference. Your congregation’s commitment to mission and ministry makes this connection possible.

Learn more at: www.kswestumc.org/districts or www.kansaseast.org/districts.