



For immediate release:

September 10, 2014

Re: Great Plains United Methodists announce next phase of education partnership

Contact: Kathryn Witte, 404-464-5994, ext. 113, kwitte@greatplainsumc.org

Big, hairy, audacious education caravan

United Methodists in Nebraska and Kansas launched its public school partnership with an education caravan in July at three Kansas locations designed to bring attention to the importance of public schools. Three more are scheduled in Nebraska on Sept. 29, 30 and Oct. 2. United Methodists in the new Great Plains Conference (Nebraska and Kansas) intend to increase collaborative efforts between United Methodist congregations, schools and community partners to support local schools.

Each event features local public education experts, advocates, interactive displays showcasing successful partnerships, small group conversations and a short address by Bishop Scott J. Jones, bishop of the Great Plains Conference of the United Methodist Church. Pie and ice cream will be served. Each event begins at 6:30 p.m. (6:30 MDT in Scottsbluff). Locations, dates and special guests for the upcoming Nebraska events include:

- Scottsbluff First UMC, Sept. 29, 2002 4th St., with featured guest Paul Snyder, local attorney and school board member. He is also active with the state school board.
- Kearney First UMC, Sept. 30, 4500 Linden Dr., with featured guest Dr. Scott Maline, Litchfield, Nebraska, school superintendent, formerly with the Minden school district.
- Lincoln Saint Paul UMC, Oct. 2, 1144 M St. (will be webcast at GreatPlainsUMC.org/livestream) with featured speaker Dr. Marilyn Moore, president of Bryan College of Health Sciences.

Members and groups of local UMC congregations, community partners, local education leaders, and members of the public are encouraged to attend. A short program begins at 7 p.m., (7 p.m. MDT in Scottsbluff) followed by small group discussion and refreshments.

These rallies follow the passage of a resolution in June, during the Great Plains Annual Conference Session, which included voting members from congregations in Kansas and Nebraska. Church groups, community organizations and individuals are invited to register to ensure there is enough pie and ice cream (and to make sure enough materials are prepared). **To register (optional but helps make sure we have enough materials and refreshments) go to greatplainsumc.org/education. Coverage of the Kansas events is also reported there with video, along with promotional resources and featured congregations who are already engaged in partnerships. Information on matching grants is also available on the website.**

The Great Plains Conference of the United Methodist Church took effect Jan. 1, 2014, and includes the former Kansas East, Kansas West and Nebraska conferences. Together, the new conference has 17 districts, 1,035 local congregations, 220,000 lay people and nearly 800 active elders, deacons, associate members and local pastors.

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Wichita
9440 E Boston Suite 110
Wichita, KS 67207 | 800.745.2350
Fax: 316.684.0044

Topeka
4201 SW 15th St.
P.O. Box 4187
Topeka, KS 66604 | 877.972.9111
Fax: 785.272.9135

Lincoln
3333 Landmark Cir.
Lincoln, NE 68504 | 800.435.6107
Fax: 402.464.6203

www.GreatPlainsUMC.org