

RETHINK CHURCH

“Rethink Church” Conversation Starters

The 2009-12 quadrennium brings change for the denomination’s “Open hearts” advertising and welcoming ministry. Through the Igniting Ministry team, United Methodist Communications will initiate a conversation at all levels of the connection, designed to open a global dialogue about reaching spiritual seekers with the good news of Jesus Christ. Building upon the success of the first eight years of this unprecedented identity campaign, this exchange will challenge congregations to “Rethink Church” and move beyond expectations of improved attendance and membership toward genuine engagement with the world at large.

To fulfill the mission of the denomination, “To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world,” we can no longer hold “Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.” as merely a description of corporate attributes. We must grow this “brand promise” into a verb that enables “the people of The United Methodist Church,” in partnership with unchurched people across the globe, to change the world.

Powered by the Holy Spirit, this “Rethink Church” strategic direction will serve as a catalyst that moves the denomination, and those we hope to reach, into dialogue – and ultimately, into transformative, collaborative action. To that end, this document outlines a series of ideas, Scriptures, and ministry tools for leaders. We trust that these ideas provide merely a touch point for worldwide transformation that will be fueled by the passion and creativity of United Methodists throughout the connection.

As you prayerfully consider how to use these tools with your congregation, please remember these suggested guidelines:

- include members and community residents who represent all age groups, with mindful regard for the young adults (ages 18-34) this ministry seeks to reach
- reflect upon these ideas from three perspectives:
 - personal - how does this topic or issue affect my spiritual journey and life?
 - corporate - how does it impact our church’s ministry?
 - community - how does it change our relationship with our neighbors/the world?

Thank you for partnering with the denomination on this important journey of discovery/re-discovery. Please share insights and ministry plans derived from these conversations with the “Rethink Church” ministry at United Methodist Communications. We’d love to hear how you’re using these tools! Call 877-281-6535, email IM@umcom.org, and visit RethinkChurch.org.