

# Bridges Bulletin

to the **Future** Capital Campaign for

Kansas United Methodists

Kansas West Annual Conference  
January 2010

*Through the faithful giving of individuals and churches across the Kansas West Annual Conference, camping, campus ministry and church growth and development ministries are moving forward with projects and expanding ministry in Kansas.*

*The Conference Focus Team receives requests for funds at its quarterly meetings and approves distributions based on available funds. The Focus Team has approved more than \$1.5 million in distributions from the Bridges to the Future campaign.*

## Revitalizing small membership churches

The Center for Small Membership Churches will launch a new effort in the fall to bring training to local churches through monthly online training sessions. The sessions will be offered using Adobe Connect, an online meeting software that is offered through United Methodist Communications.

“We’ve discovered a way to offer training to local churches that cuts down on travel costs, giving them more funds with which to do ministry in their local communities,” said Rev. Carl Ellis, center director.

Churches can enroll to participate in these sessions by joining the newly created



*Rev. Carl Ellis leads a small-membership church rally at Nickerson UMC.*

Starting this fall the Center for Small Membership Churches will be offering a series of monthly webinars for growing the small membership church, with helpful ideas for worship and Sunday School programs.

Wesleyan Society for churches and individuals who are interested in living out John Wesley’s rules for living the United Methodist Way—Do no harm. Do good. Stay in love with God. Society membership is available for \$5 per church member.



The Society will have an annual meeting at Kansas Wesleyan for renewal and worship together. Members will receive a quarterly newsletter, and have the opportunity to participate in 9 webcasts throughout the year.

The 2010-2011 program will focus on the theme “Rethink Church.” Webinars will be the first Sunday of each month and will last approximately an hour with

35-45 minutes of presentation and 15-25 minutes of discussion and question and answer.

“I’m really looking forward to this,” Ellis said. “I believe this initiative will save time and resources.”

Ellis also is working on a Vacation Bible School project. He is

recruiting a team of Kansas Wesleyan students who will go out and put on VBS in small-membership churches this summer.

## Bridges supports Hispanic Ministry

In Hispanic Ministry, Bridges to the Future funds provide salary support for key leaders and pastors and equipment.

“This support is coming at a crucial time,” said Corey Godbey, associate coordinator of Hispanic Ministry and facilitator of Hispanic Ministry at Dodge City First United Methodist Church. “Our local churches are experiencing growth in quantity and quality of ministry. As our leadership’s effectiveness increases, we continue to build a sustainable foundation for the future. This foundation brings unity.”

Pastor Walter Marsella at University UMC in Salina, Pastor Juan Garcia at Liberal First and Hugoton UMCs, and



*Hispanic leaders in the Kansas West Conference*

Godbey all receive support through Bridges to the Future.

The leaders gain strength for their local ministries through

their connection and collaboration at the conference level. Leaders are involved in Module training, Incubator for

pastors/leaders, UNIDOS/ UNITED services, Family Camp, and Lay Speaker training as well as sharing resources and talents between their congregations.

### Meet Juan Garcia

Juan Garcia, now a licensed local pastor, has been in the ministry for more than a decade. But just this year, has had the opportunity to begin full-time ministry because of salary support provided by “Bridges to the Future.”

“It was important in the life of our congregations to take this next step,” Garcia said. “Now that I am full-time, I can give necessary time to visitation, teaching and preparing sermons in order to feed the congregations with something more ‘solid.’”

Garcia said the church is in a “discovery phase.” While quantitative growth is still slow, he said he is seeing many lay leaders growing in their faith as they discover their gifts and graces in God. Garcia said this growth is evident through their commitment and taking initiative to minister to one another and in outreach to others.

“Over the past couple of years, eight persons from our church have attended the Module-I leadership training as well as two others who have gone to Lay Speaker training,” Garcia said.

Because of the ongoing training Garcia has received, he said he is more confident in his pastoral skills. “I am attending Course of Study at Perkins School of Theology in Dallas, where I am gaining a better theological base and understanding our rich Wesleyan history as Methodists,” Garcia said.

“I attended the Boot Camp for Church Planters in Atlanta, where I received tools for helping us be more focused, creative and intentional in our evangelistic outreach. I have also taken ESL (English as a Second Language) classes as well as a course on basic computer skills. All of these opportunities to learn and grow will pay off in the future and are only possible now that I have more time to invest in the ministry.”



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“All of this would be difficult without the extra support that ‘Bridges’ provides, which allows them to focus their ministry efforts full-time,” said Rev. Linda Louderback, director of Connectional Ministries.

*Juan Garcia serves Hispanic congregation at Liberal First UMC.*

