

Amazing Grace

Letting God's Love Hold Us Together



2008 Clergy Orders Retreat
for Deacons, Elders, & Local Pastors

October 14-16, Snow Mountain Ranch

"...The real issue is broader and deeper than health insurance. It's about a health malaise across the denomination." Barbara Boigegrain, GBOPHB

Trends in medical and disability claims data of United Methodist clergy and lay employees in the United States are raising red flags. Weight and cardiac disease are higher than the national average. The diabetes rate is twice the national average. Chronic arthritis is rising rapidly. And 54 percent of disabilities include mental/nervous diagnoses. Deuteronomy calls us to "choose life," and yet we are doing anything but.

So what can we do? What should we do? What does God want for us in the face of these unhealthy trends?

This year at the Orders Retreat we will take the matter of our health head on. While some of us are already good at the discipline of maintaining a balanced and healthy lifestyle, the statistics say that most of us could use some reinforcement. Plan on joining with colleagues at Snow Mountain Ranch (outside Winter Park, CO) to learn, to worship, and to renew your spirit as we take a look at how God enables us to be whole persons.

Judy Johnston, of the University of Kansas School of Medicine in Wichita, will be joining us as our presenter. Ms. Johnston is a dietitian with 40 years of clinical, management, and public health experience. Since 2004, she has been developing and presenting the Self-Care Covenant Workshop, with over 800 clergy and lay participants to date. The workshop has been developed through the Health Ministry Fund of the Kansas West Annual Conference (healthfund.org) and is endorsed by the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits. It encourages holistic self-care, with emphases on spiritual, mental, physical, and social components.

The retreat will again run from Tuesday noon to Thursday noon. Free time, as well as gatherings of the Orders and Fellowship of Local Pastors, will be incorporated. As usual, you are encouraged to spend your time as you are led. Worship will revolve around the notion of wholeness, reminding us that salvation is not simply about what happens in the hereafter, but that it matters for us in the here and now. Come to Snow Mountain Ranch ready to truly connect with God and one another in body, mind, and spirit.

The regular fee this year is \$65, increasing to \$80 if postmarked after August 31st. Single (\$235 per person), double (\$145), triple (\$115), and quad (\$100) accommodations, including meals, are available. Cabins may be reserved through Snow Mountain Ranch. Brochures with detailed registration information will be sent out in July, and information will be posted on the conference website. Limited financial assistance is available through the Orders, though you are encouraged to first apply for MEF funding.

*Choose life,
so that you and all who come after you may live.*

*Love God,
listen to God,
embrace God...
and live!*