



Clarkston United Methodist Church

Vision Statement:

To Vitally Connect People to People and People to God

Core Values:

*Committed to Christ • Worship That Makes a Difference
Making Disciples • Biblical Hospitality • Transformational Mission*

January 8, 2010

Dear Friends,

I am writing to you as your new Lay Leader to share my enthusiasm for a discernment process soon to be launched and to invite you to begin today to create a solid spiritual foundation from which we can build.

A new Study Committee, approved at last November's Church Conference will be formed to begin to identify what is needed to fulfill God's plan for our future ministry. This group will build on the vital base laid by the ACT team, active for two years beginning in 2001. The Study Committee's report will be presented at the November, 2010 Church Conference. I celebrate all God has done through us! But, I say "Amen!" to our District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Eugene Blair, who warned in a recent letter against falling into a comfortable rerun of 2009. I believe that we will find God's vision is larger than that.

*"See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up;
Do you not perceive it?" (Isaiah 43:19a)*

If we are to see, really see, what God asks of Clarkston United Methodist Church, then we must surrender to a new intensity of listening to Him and to each other. Recently, following a visit by 3 year old Jenna, this grandma was surprised by a unique arrangement of our nativity figures. They had been moved out of the stable, to a new spacious place, and were carefully placed, every animal, every shepherd, wise man and angel, tightly clustered inward around the infant Jesus. A holy huddle! I see us postured in this way during the months to come, closely connected, fixed on Jesus, leaning in patiently to "hear" His voice.

I admit to stepping up my prayer life significantly in the weeks since I agreed to serve as your Lay Leader. I recognize my own inadequacy and, at the same time, I am convinced of God's sufficiency. I ask you to join me in committing to a deeper relationship with our Source through daily times of prayer and reflection on scripture. I also urge you to pause, in our scattered places, at noon each day for the remaining days of January and ask God what He wants us to be and do as a body of believers. Ask that our leaders, especially Pastor Rick, be clothed in wisdom and boldness. Ask these things again as you meet Him in His word, using the Upper Room booklets available at the Crossroads (also at <http://www.upperroom.org/Devotional>) or other guides for daily reading. To clearly hear God's direction, let us first humbly seek His guidance. A simple to [two month reading plan](#) is also available in the church office.

I am bursting with anticipation! I have not a doubt that through our holy huddling we will hear from God and be led into exciting and richly satisfying places of service inside our walls and beyond.

Love in Christ,

Julie A. Hall
Lay Leader