

## **Greetings to the Iowa Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church**

**Bishop Richard Pates  
Bishop of Des Moines**

I am most honored to be invited to the Iowa annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

I bring the warm greetings of the members of the Roman Catholic Church of Des Moines as well as its Sister Dioceses of Dubuque, Davenport and Sioux City. Moreover, it is my privilege to represent the ecumenical community today. We join in the common undertaking of making Jesus Christ known and loved in our time. We feel grateful to be partners in this challenging yet noble mission.

In our era of severe political partisanship, rampant violence, pervasive terrorism, the isolation of individualism, widespread racial prejudice, unjustified hunger and poverty, lack of economic ethics and so many other ills arising from the human heart, the words of John Wesley are compelling:

“And while he thus always exercises his love to God, by praying without ceasing, rejoicing evermore, and in everything giving thanks, this commandment is written in his heart. “That he who loveth God, love his brother also.” And he accordingly loves his neighbor as himself; he loves every man as his own soul. His heart is full of love to all mankind, to every child of “the Father of the spirits of all flesh.”

(The Character of a Methodist, #9)

As we face the daunting evils of our day may we be renewed and strongly committed as followers of Jesus Christ in implementing this basic commandment as espoused by John Wesley. United in voice, united in prayer, united in faith – we can bring hope to a beleaguered world and have immediate impact here in our home of Iowa.

I extend greetings to your distinguished Bishop and my friend, Julius Trimble very appreciative of his leadership and ecumenical spirit.

It is our prayer that this conference will be most successful and contribute to the renewed spirit of the United Methodist Church in Iowa.

I conclude with the Evangelization Prayer which has been composed for the centenary of the Diocese of Des Moines which we celebrate in 2011. I believe it has applicability to the shared mission of our Methodist and Roman Catholic Communities.

## **Evangelization Prayer**

Holy God,  
Fill our hearts with the fire of your love.

Awaken us, Holy Spirit,  
To witness to the presence of Jesus in  
Every moment of our lives.

Renew us, Lord,  
So that our homes, parishes, communities and world are transformed into your kingdom on earth,  
where peace and justice reign.

Amen