

The Answers to All Your Questions

Well, maybe not all, but you can answer many of your questions about how to build an effective men's ministry at "Understanding Men's Ministry," an advanced lay-speaking course coming to Blue Lake on March 16, 17, and 18.

Jim Boesch, a staff member of the **General Commission on United Methodist Men**, will lead the course, which begins on a Friday night and ends on Sunday morning. A resident of the Orlando area, he has taught the course in both Florida and Ohio and has an extensive background in corporate training as well as years as a leader in **UMM**. Click [here](#) for the brochure for the weekend.

The content of the course has been developed cooperatively by Man in the Mirror and **GCUMM**. While it can be taken for credit as an advanced lay-speaking course by people who have completed the basic course, one does not have to complete the basic course to take this one. According to Helen Edwards, director of AWFC lay-speaking, men may take the course simply for the valuable information it provides without applying for lay-speaking certification.

The course is **not** designed to train men to become speakers in church pulpits. It is designed to train men to facilitate a strong men's ministry in a local church by offering them a fuller understanding of men's spiritual needs. AWFC **UMM** president John Croft urges local **UMM** units or churches to provide scholarships to men from their church. The small investment will pay tremendous dividends by bringing more men into the life of the church.

For best results, Jim Boesch suggests that two or three men from a church attend the course. For more information about the course, contact John Croft at johnboy@andycable.com or a call 334-222-3523.



Unit Enhances Blue Lake Grounds

Eleven men from the Fairhope UMC did more than plant a seed: they planted 80 ornamental shrubs at Blue Lake. The men spent November 29th planting and mulching camellias, magnolias, sweet olives, Indian hawthorn, encore azaleas and Scarlet's peak hollies in highly visible spots around the assembly's three campground areas.

The work is part of the conference UMM's 100 under 100 Project—an ongoing ministry to maintain and beautify the Blue Lake grounds. Other UMM units have updated lighting in campers' cabins, covered windows with screens, built wheelchair ramps, recovered gables, installed benches at a vesper point for physically challenged campers, maintained individual cabins, replaced and repaired doors, and aided Blue Lake workers in rehabbing a wing of rooms and the camp's largest kitchen.

In addition to serving Blue Lake, the men of the Fairhope UMC also sponsor an annual softball tourney to support the conference's United Methodist Children's Home.

UMM leaders will release an updated list of maintenance and improvement projects at the UMM Advance in April. Pick one for your unit to complete or give to support someone else's project.

'You Ought to be in Pictures'

Do you have anybody in your unit as handsome as the ten guys from Fairhope in the picture above? Even if the men in your unit are as ugly as sin in the wintertime with a hangover, we'd still like to have a picture of them doing the Lord's work. Send a picture of your unit working at a project with a brief caption to Jan Hinnen, our AWFC communications director, at gjanhinnen@gmail.com.

Don't carve that email address into your desk though because we'll be changing it soon to one on our new website. That's right: **we're going to have our own website** with the latest news from national, jurisdictional, conference, district, and local UMM levels including pictures of your members, handsome or not.

Of course, if you have a story without a picture, send that too. And don't forget to send your pictures and stories to our jurisdictional website and our national magazine. The Southeast Jurisdiction website is sejumm.org and the email address for news is mensnews@sejumm.org. If you look now, you'll see the picture of the Fairhope guys on their own page.

To send a story to **UMMen**, our national quarterly magazine, go to rpeck@gcumm.org and file your story. Check out the picture of the Andalusia UMM on page 33 of the winter edition, which chartered units have just received.

We want to know what you are doing in your unit for three reasons: first, we want to celebrate what you are doing to bring God's kingdom here to earth; second, we want to honor you for your work; and third, if you've got a really good idea, we want to steal it.

Please help us build a great website by sending your news to Jan.

Time to Advance

This is your three-month notice: the Advance is coming. Make your plans and mark your calendar for **Friday and Saturday, April 20-21**. Those are the dates of our 2012 Advance at Blue Lake. Rev. Chris Buskirk, the minister of Abiding Harvest UMC in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, will be our keynoter.

Chris has a stellar pedigree. He is the son of noted evangelist Jimmy Buskirk and served as an associate minister under Bill Henson at the Houston First United Methodist Church. While he's an outstanding pulpit minister, he's even better known for the organization of his church, Abiding Harvest. The central core of his congregation is twelve groups called home teams—committed followers of Christ who meet together each week to hold themselves and their church accountable to God.

The ministry of the church grows from those teams into a unique, effective witness of God's power in hearts and minds of His people. We've asked Chris to tell us about the individual and group dynamics of such a heart-gripping ministry.

Brochures for the Advance will be emailed in early February. If you are a leader in your unit, please make copies and distribute them among your men. The expected cost is \$85 as prices at Blue Lake have increased slightly.

Time to Renew Your Charter

If you haven't renewed your charter for 2012, you can do so easily. Go to the GGUMM website (<http://www.gcumm.org/>), download the form, fill it out and send it in with your check for \$85. You can also renew online if you are a computer scientist or have a teenager in your home.

(Leaders: Please email copies of this newsletter to all your members, or copy it for them and distribute it. We send this newsletter only to the leaders in each unit.)