

Frequently Asked Questions

Why “Rethink Church”?

This campaign seeks to redefine the church experience as one that extends beyond our doors and seeks to transform the world. People seeking a church community can become involved at various levels – many of them non-traditional – such as volunteering with groups outside the church building and even through making online connections.

For those outside a church community, their church experience may start out as a daycare, youth group ski trip, a men’s basketball league or something that addresses a secular need, such as Habitat for Humanity.

Bishop Sally Dyck, bishop of the Minnesota annual conference and president of the United Methodist Commission on Communication, says that this message “goes from just receiving the gospel in kind of a passive way to...living that gospel out in the world. It’s a challenge to not only believe but to act and to live.”

Who is the target for this effort?

The messages and media choices are designed for Seekers – those who are either outside a faith community or dissatisfied with their current one, and are longing for a different spiritual experience. While the primary target is 18-34 years old, the message is relevant for audiences both younger and older.

“Rethink Church” is a message that challenges not only Seekers, but the church as a whole. The goal is to encourage a global spiritual dialogue both within and outside the church.

How does this campaign relate to Igniting Ministry’s messages of the past eight years?

We are building on the foundation of “Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.” to communicate the active nature of our community of believers. In the new campaign, the word “open” becomes a verb that directs, instead of an adjective that describes—so that together we begin to open hearts, open minds and open doors.

How does this tie into the General Conference's areas of focus?

In April 2008, the General Conference laid out a long-term focus on four areas of emphasis: leadership development, church growth and revitalization, ministry with the poor, and global health. While many of the external components of this effort – especially early in the quadrennium – will highlight global health and ministries with the poor, there will be a component for each focus within this communications effort.

When will this effort start?

We are sharing this message with internal United Methodist Church audiences now, and will be launching a comprehensive public media effort in May 2009. The campaign has no seasonality. The message is relevant to seekers every day of the week. To sustain awareness with seekers, messages will be scheduled every week through the end of the year.

What media will be used?

The external campaign will utilize a broad mix of television, radio, magazines, online including a dedicated Web site, text messages, social networks, email, events, sponsorships, outdoor, collateral and public relations. The media mix will be constantly evaluated throughout the next four years.

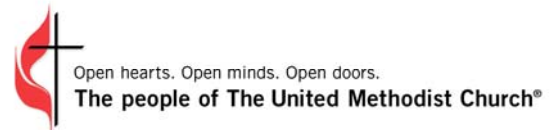
What is RethinkChurch.org?

While The United Methodist Church has many Web sites for specific agencies and audiences, RethinkChurch.org is designed for Seekers. It is a way to illustrate the many “doors” available for entry into a church life, and provide easy ways to get involved. Many of the media elements point to this Web site, so that Seekers can be exposed to more information than can be contained in a 30-second television spot or one-page magazine advertisement. It also serves as a “social hub” for engaging seekers across United Methodist ministries near them, and with many denominational initiatives.

Why is Find-a-Church so important to this effort?

Through the RethinkChurch.org Web site, people will be able to search for a church that fits their specific needs and interests. For example, someone may be searching for a church in their area that offers a contemporary worship service, volunteer opportunities or a strong youth ministry. But in order to make that information available, it is critical for local churches to update their Find-a-Church profiles so that seekers will be able to find them. Find-a-Church offers an opportunity to tell more about your church: who you are, what you offer, how you serve, and what people can expect when they visit.

RETHINK CHURCH



How is this funded?

At the 2008 General Conference, approximately \$20 million was allocated to advertising and media campaign work for the next four years.

Will there be multi-lingual messages available?

The details of each language used are still being finalized, but there will be more languages than English utilized in each campaign. As in the past, great care will be given to ensure cultural context, rather than a word-for-word translation of each message.

How can I get involved? This type of effort will take the unified resources of the entire United Methodist Church. Some things you can do immediately:

- Serve as an ambassador for the campaign – share the message with your conference, your district and your congregation through your communication outlets.
- Have a conversation with your Bishop; encourage a Rethink Church emphasis at your annual conference meeting.
- Encourage your congregations to update their [Find-a-Church](#) profile.
- Identify local church activities and story ideas that make the world a better place and send to rethinkchurch@umcom.org.
- As you collect your church stories, create an RSS-enabled digital home so you can continue to gather and share them.

If you have questions, please send to rethinkchurch@umcom.org. (Feb. 11)