

## What is Lay Speaking Ministry?

Leading, Caring, Communicating: these words characterize what lay speakers do in ministry as the United Methodist church engages the world of the twenty-first century.

**LEADING:** Lay speakers combine words and actions in leadership roles within their churches and communities.

**CARING:** As lay speakers combine words with deeds, they find ways to care for others. Some are involved in crisis ministries, such as visiting grieving families. Lay speakers share a ministry of caring one-on-one with people in times of need and in times of joy, and show their faith by responding to others with care-giving love and service.

**COMMUNICATING:** Both the *Bible* and Christian experience point to the importance of proclaiming God's transforming love for a broken world. Lay speakers often fill pulpits, lead *Bible* studies, or speak in youth and children's groups, healthcare centers, retirement centers, prison ministries, and more.

Lay Speaking Ministries is a program to provide training opportunities and experiences to equip disciples of Jesus Christ to realize and respond to their personal call to ministry. Since each disciple is "gifted" with one or more spiritual gifts (skills given by the Holy Spirit for the express purpose of serving the body of believers and thereby God), Lay Speaking Ministries strives to help disciples become aware of their particular gift or gifts by offering educational events to enhance and develop the skill level necessary for the full fruition of these gifts. It is an excellent vehicle for servant ministry skill development and has aided thousands of church members to be better servants of Jesus Christ, to become stronger church family leaders, and to more capably assist their pastors.