

## Jim's Tool Box

### The Four Areas of Focus in the CAS District



Dr. Hank Stringer, District Superintendent of the Capitol Area South District (CAS) has worked with the Leadership and Visioning Team (LVT) to reorganize the work of this team around the **Four Areas of Focus**. As the group that develops strategy for the

ministry work of the district, the team has augmented its membership by recruiting additional persons to staff four teams – one for each focus area.

The work around the **Four Areas of Focus** began with conversations led by the Council of Bishops and then included the Table of General Secretaries, the Connectional Table, annual conferences, and local congregations. It is reported that everyone choosing to participate in this conversation came to believe that what they were doing was nothing short of answering the questions for our time: *What is the United Methodist vision for living Wesley's principles — doing no harm, doing good and loving God? And how does that vision enable us to fulfill the church's mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world?*

The growing belief is that these areas of focus provide that answer. They are:

- ✓ **Developing principled Christian leaders for the church and the world.** The church must recruit young people for ministry and provide them with the skills necessary to be effective in this new time of opportunity. That includes women and people of color the world over. Similarly, we must offer leadership training for lay people who are in ministry in countless ways.
- ✓ **Creating new places for new people by starting new congregations and renewing existing ones.** If we are to remain faithful to our commitment to transform the world, we will reach out with genuine hospitality to people wherever they are. We will make them feel welcome as we start new faith communities, seek to renew existing ones and inspire faithful discipleship.
- ✓ **Engaging in ministry with the poor.** As an expression of our discipleship, United Methodists seek to alleviate conditions that undermine quality of life and limit the opportunity to flourish as we believe God intends for all. As with John Wesley, we seek to change conditions that are unjust, alienating and disempowering. We engage in ministry with the poor, and in this, we especially want to reach out to and protect children.
- ✓ **Stamping out killer diseases by improving health globally.** Conditions of poverty cause illness and death. The lack of access to doctors, nurses, medications and appropriate facilities is deadly, especially among those who live in conditions of poverty. But the diseases of poverty are not inevitable. We believe the people of The United Methodist Church can play a significant role in educating others about diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria, and treating and preventing their devastating effects.

Dr. Hank Stringer has challenged the members of the CAS Leadership and Visioning Team to discover ways that the congregations and ministries of the CAS District can respond to the focus areas in our district and globally.

You can go to the Four Areas of Focus Homepage on [umc.org](http://umc.org) by clicking [HERE](#). Download a copy of the Four Areas of Focus brochure by clicking [HERE](#). There is an online course that you can take through which you can learn more about the Four Areas of Focus. Click [HERE](#) to go to the online course.

*What are ways that your congregation is/can respond to these focus areas?* **Send me an email ([jwaugh@wocumc.org](mailto:jwaugh@wocumc.org)) and tell me more about your story. I will share it with others across the district.**