



United Methodist Church of the Dunes
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United Methodist Church of the Dunes Receives Volunteer Service Award From President Barack Obama

GRAND HAVEN, MICH., March 15, 2011—Dan Duncan, senior pastor with United Methodist Church of the Dunes (UMC-Dunes) announced today the church has received the President's Volunteer Service Award, including a signed letter from President Barack Obama along with a certificate.

The certificate is presented by the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation. It states the reason for the award as follows: "In recognition and appreciation of your commitment to strengthening our nation and for making a difference through volunteer service."

UMC-Dunes is located at 717 Sheldon Road in Grand Haven.

"The church has been a strong proponent of voluntarism and welcoming of community members, as evidenced by our work serving as a host site for the Family Promise program, building homes through Habitat for Humanity, working with the Mission for Area People (MAP) Supper House, plus participating in the Coast Guard Festival," said senior pastor Dan Duncan.

For the past two years, UMC-Dunes' involvement with the Family Promise Program entails serving as one of the 14 local church sites that hosts low-income families and homeless persons for a week each quarter of the year.

"Our church provides the food, shelter, shower facilities, spiritual support, donated goods, plus congregational members who make all of the meals and host the families experiencing poverty as they get back on track with their lives and learn to live independently," said Duncan, adding, "This program is especially important to us because of our ability to partner with other churches in the Interfaith Hospitality Network."

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UMC-Dunes' involvement with the local Habitat for Humanity program saw church members doing general construction and working with a home builder on a recent build-out for a family in need in Spring Lake. A crew of congregational members put up walls, helped with dry wall installation, painting, installing hardware and counter tops. Also, several church members have been involved for a number of years in other Habitat for Humanity home building projects in the Tri-Cities and other states.

MAP Supper House includes 22 volunteer churches whose members rotate in serving dinner to homeless persons from 4-5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, year round. Each church's members serve once a month. The UMC-Dunes' involvement with MAP Supper House brings 10 to 12 of its church members together with members at Temple United Methodist Church in Muskegon Heights. There the members greet recipients and serve them dinners the fourth Friday each month, along with providing hospitality to recipients. On average, 120 persons have a meal each time MAP Supper House is offered. UMC-Dunes members also serve on the MAP Supper house board of directors.

During the past two years, some 50-to-60 UMC-Dunes members have also marched in the annual Coast Guard Festival parade. Church volunteers sing, dance to choreographed routines, dress up in themed costumes and hand out candy to people along the parade route.

UMC-Dunes is also involved in community volunteer projects and provides support to the following Tri-Cities organizations: International Aid; Faith in Action International; Love, INC; Salvation Army; Tri-Cities Ministries and CROP Walk.

"The Dunes' Church considers it a great privilege working alongside other community volunteers, leaders and church members to reach out to persons in need and demonstrate a culture of caring in line with God's teachings," said Duncan.

Anyone interested in receiving further information about the United Methodist Church of the Dunes' President's Volunteer Service Award should contact Dan Duncan, senior pastor at UMC-Dunes: 616/842-7980, or via e-mail: dand@umcdunes.org.

The mission of United Methodist Church of the Dunes is "to be a church with outstretched arms demonstrating the caring of Christ to each other, the community, and the world by encouraging growth in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, challenging and equipping all to be faithful disciples for the transformation of the world." Founded in 1873, UMC-Dunes moved to its present location at 717 Sheldon Road, Grand Haven in February 1962. The church provides a variety of community outreach ministries to women, children, men and families in the area, supports Family Promise and the annual CROP Walk, offers membership in its United Methodist Men and United Methodist Women groups, plus book and Bible studies, a weekly creative arts and crafts group, participation in Coast Guard Festival, plus Christian service projects to ministries in Panama and Haiti. Children's, youth and adult educational programs, book study groups, arts and crafts groups, plus weekly Wednesday evening dinners are provided throughout the year. For further information about UMC-Dunes or church membership, contact the church's administrative office at 616/842-7980.

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