

## Narratives give practical strength to *The Book of Hard Choices*

By Daniel R. Gangler

*The Book of Hard Choices: How to Make the Right Decisions at Work and Keep Your Self-Respect* by James A. Autry and Peter Roy (Morgan Road Books, 2006) reads as a practical primer on the process of making good and lasting decisions rather than another how-to book on making decisions. Even though it's a book based on business decisions, the overriding theme is good management based on ethics, a must for the management of the church.

Its strength becomes evident within the first few pages. Each chapter is based on a true-life sto-

ry told mostly by those in business of how managers, CEOs and other leaders took the more difficult higher road of integrity rather than the fast-fix road to an immediate short-term solution.

Autry and Roy define the five most important aspects of integrity as doing what you say you're going to do, putting other people's needs first, behaving courageously, ensuring the common good above all, and maintaining focus on

respect, honesty, trust and fairness.

The book is divided into twenty-two chapters. Each chapter is based upon a principle written in the form of a question, such as: "Look the other way or face down

the corruption?" The question is then answered by a true-life story told from the viewpoint of a manager usually in relationship to employees and other managers including presidents and CEOs.

With this literary device, the authors tell twenty-two stories interweaving their own comments. In these commentaries, why becomes more important than what. Doing is secondary to being and the personal integrity of the storyteller.

Two stories deal directly with stories about Christian belief. One is in chapter seven about the story of a woman senior pastor who "fires" an associate pastor. Another is in chapter twenty-one about the CEO of an amusement park in Missouri who made moral decisions about gambling and alcohol-

ic beverages which cost his company millions of dollars in revenue.

Like the Gospel stories, there is a moral or practical dimension woven into each story that is worth repeating and applying to real life. Like real life, the higher road usually takes longer, is risky but often results in a major change in the climate or culture of the workplace.

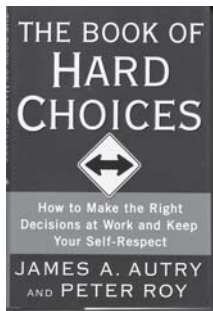
I found chapters three and five particularly important as the North and South Indiana conferences of the church make decisions on being a new conference. In chapter three the authors write, "It is critical that leaders understand the long-term and short-term implications of their possible choices, and to understand that the implications are not just about money but also about vision and values."

In chapter five, they comment: "You've got to get decision-making as close to the customer as possible. That requires trust."

Another strength is a summary following each chapter – "Lessons to remember" – that give advice considered in the chapter just read.

The book is a fast three-to-four hour read, but one that would be more easily digested chapter-by-chapter to give time for reflection.

Like previous books in the Bishop's Bundle of Books, a blog is available to those who would like to comment or read comments by others about this book at [www.bookofhardchoices.blogspot.com](http://www.bookofhardchoices.blogspot.com). This book is available from [www.Cokesbury.com](http://www.Cokesbury.com) (both in hardback edition or as an e-book) and from [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com) (new, used and electronic).



## APPOINTMENTS

Bishop Michael J. Coyner has announced the following changes within the Indiana Area. All dates effective 2007 unless otherwise noted. These appointments are based on Cabinet reports received by Indiana Area Communication during the months of November and December 2007.

### North Indiana Conference

Andrews, Greg from Supply, Huntington to Local Pastor, Huntington, 1/1/08  
Boggs, Tamara first appointment to Lowell, Calumet, 1/1/08  
Bradford, Gregory from no appointment to Liberty Mills, Huntington, 1/1/08  
Burke, Fred E. Jr. from no appointment to Alexandria Joyce Chapel, Marion, 11/25  
Davault-Gilbert, Denise from North Liberty, Michiana to Family Leave, 11/1  
French, W. Edward from Liberty Mills to Retirement, 12/31

Inskeep, Dave from Reynolds/Yeoman, Lafayette to Stidham, Lafayette, 1/1/08  
Knepple, Sandra J. from Stidham, Lafayette to Winchester First, Muncie, 12/1  
Martinez, Juan from Dayton Associate/El Mesias, Lafayette to no appointment, Calumet, 9/30  
McLin, David from Gary Fifth Ave., Calumet to no appointment (CME-337.1), 11/15  
Neal, Pat from Alexandria Joyce Chapel, Marion to no appointment, Marion, 11/04  
Nunemaker, Donald first appointment to Richland Center/Burton, Warsaw, 1/1/08  
Reyes, Janie G. from Fort Wayne: Christ, Fort Wayne to Fort Wayne: Inglesia Cristiana, Fort Wayne, 1/1/08  
Smith, Jeffrey from Jackson Hts./West Pt., Lafayette to West Point, Lafayette, 1/1/08  
Thornton, Joyce from Epworth, Marion to Epworth/Alexandria

First, Marion, 1/1/08  
Williams, Keith A. from no appointment to Eaton, Muncie, 1/1/08

### South Indiana Conference

Buttery, Wendy from no appointment to Greens Fork, Rushville, 9/1  
Campbell, Norman W. From Mt. Comfort, Indianapolis East to Voluntary Leave of Absence, 12/1  
Haysler, George C. from no appointment to Rush Branch/Rush Branch: Ebenezer, Columbus 11/1  
Kirts, Robert from Leesville, Bloomington to Bedford: Grace, Bloomington, 1/15/08

Lewis, James F. from no appointment to Clarks: Ohio Falls, New Albany, 1/1/08  
Mair, Jeffery L. from Shirley-Wilkinson Community, Rushville to Indianapolis: Cumberland, Indianapolis East, 1/15  
Modlin, Mary Jane from no appointment to Conners: New Life, Rushville, 8/1  
Morgan, Mary Beth from no appointment to Bloomington: First, Bloomington, 7/1  
Pence, Diane Menke from Great Rivers Annual Conference, Illinois to Extension Ministry: Hamilton Center, 10/16  
Pendleton, Frank A. from Mt. Zion/Mt. Zion: Embury, New

Albany to Mt. Zion/Mt. Zion: Embury, New Albany, 9/1  
Reynolds, Hugh W. from Tunnelton: Bono/Tunnelton, Bloomington to no appointment, 11/30  
Slough, Max from Linton: Glenburn, Bloomington to no appointment, 7/1  
Stiles, Kevin from Indianapolis: Cumberland, Indianapolis East to Shirley-Wilkinson Community, Rushville, 1/15/08  
Thompson, Richard from no appointment to Fishers, Indianapolis East, 1/1/08  
Wilfong, Charles D. from Greensburg, Rushville to New Albany District Superintendent, New Albany, 12/1

## Pension board offers free financial planning to participants

The United Methodist General Board of Pension and Health Benefits has announced a change in the cost for their Retirement Planning Services for 2008.

For 2008, these services will be FREE to all eligible participants in the UM Pension Plans. This year, Ernst & Young Financial Planning Services is being offered to eligible participants at no cost. In the past, this service was \$99 Jan. 1 through March 31 and \$149 after March 31.

Another change to this service is that participants now have unlimited phone time. In the past, this program was sold in three-

hour blocks. But all this year, participants can call Ernst & Young as often as they like and spend as much time on the phone as necessary.

Ernst & Young Financial Planning Services are available to:

- ◆ Active participants,
- ◆ Surviving spouses, and
- ◆ Terminated and retired participants with an account balance of at least \$10,000.

Eligible participants can take advantage of this free service by calling Ernst & Young directly at 800-360-2539 from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., EST, Monday through Friday.

## Bring joy and make them smile

By Cindy Stump

For the past four years, the members at First United Methodist Church in Noblesville, Ind., have helped the staff at Indiana United Methodist Children's Home in Lebanon make Christmas special for the children and youth living there. The home serves more than 165 children each year by providing them with food, shelter, clothing, counseling and education. As victims of neglect, abandonment and abuse the individual care and loving environment at the home is a beacon of hope for these often forgotten

children.

Each year Noblesville First helps the home by providing Christmas presents for all of the children. After each child is asked, "what do you want for Christmas?" three gift tags per child are prepared, sent to the church and placed on a tree. Noblesville First members take the tags and make Christmas wishes come true.

One couple negotiated a dream of a deal then purchased a new, top of the line cotton candy machine for the home to use at their festivals and celebrations. Three friends enjoyed hunting through

countless stores for the exact pair of red tennis shoes one young woman couldn't live without. Another family spent Thanksgiving weekend scouring the Internet in search of the hard-to-find youth-size Dallas Clark Colts jersey that a certain boy just had to have.

Once the fun is done an endless parade of gifts is hand delivered to the Children's Home staff who take the baton and do their part to ensure each child has everything he or she asked for under the tree on Christmas morning.

For more information, log on to <http://childrenshome.net>.

## Huntington District presents Cross and Flame Awards

HUNTINGTON, Ind. – The Huntington District honored ten United Methodist laity with the 2007 Cross and Flame Awards during a district worship service held at Evangelical UMC on Nov. 5. The district recognized them for their dedication as dis-



ciples of Jesus Christ and for their work in their congregation.

They included: **Aimee Currie** of Monroe UMC, **Carol Day** of Richvalley UMC, **George DeWeese**

of Liberty Center UMC, **Dean and Barbara Hart** of Jefferson Center UMC, **Mary Jane Nichols** of New Corydon UMC, **Arden Schilling** of Evangelical UMC in Huntington, **Mary Smith** of Poneto UMC, **Ann Spahr** of Roanoke Seminary UMC and **Doris Stout** of Berne Trinity UMC.