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Dear Colleagues in Christ's Mission:

Grace and peace to you from the King of Glory, the Lord of hosts.

I write to thank you and the leaders of your congregations for joining the **Unleashing New Life Breakthrough Prayer Movement** launched at our last Annual Conference session in June. Thousands of the breakthrough prayer table tent cards have been distributed across the conference. Thousands of West Ohio United Methodists are praying daily for God to unleash new life in their churches. Thousands are praying daily to be unbound and empowered for joyful, fruitful mission and evangelism. Thousands are praying daily for the Holy Spirit to transform and boldly use them, without limits or reservations, to reach and make new disciples of Jesus Christ and change the world.

This fall you were invited to expand your breakthrough prayers and pray for the Holy Spirit to empower and guide your congregation to reach and exceed ministry and mission goals reflecting where God is leading you to break through and unleash new life. Your **2012 Breakthrough Ministry Goals** have been gathered in and prayed over at charge conferences and district gatherings. The Extended Cabinet and I have also prayed over the goal cards. I will invite the 2012 Annual Conference session to also pray over the cards and ask God to bless, honor and magnify your efforts.

*Together, we are ready to take the next steps to support and resource our West Ohio congregations as you grow towards reaching and exceeding your 2012 goals. On January 1, 2012, the West Ohio Conference will launch an **online Breakthrough Dashboard**. This is an additional tool the Cabinet has designed to assist churches to record and celebrate what God is doing in and through their ministry goals. The Breakthrough Dashboard looks just like the breakthrough prayer goal card and will show your congregation's 2012 breakthrough ministry goals. Each week, someone from your church can get online and enter your weekly progress toward your breakthrough goals. I believe this dashboard will prove to be an invaluable tool in supporting your congregation as you pray for God's work to flourish and bear fruit in and through you.*

In the next few days **you will receive a letter from your district superintendent** with additional and more detailed information about the Breakthrough Dashboard and specific instructions on how to learn about and use the dashboard to enhance your church's ministry. Hopefully, this letter will adequately address all of your questions.



Your prayers and breakthrough ministry goals are already being answered! The Extended Cabinet and I hear, nearly every day, of miraculous breakthroughs happening in and through our West Ohio congregations. Breakthroughs in empowered, transformed leaders. Breakthroughs in new people being saved, professing faith and being baptized into Christ's holy church. Breakthroughs in extravagant generosity and stewardship. Breakthroughs in engaging in ministry with the poor and disenfranchised. Breakthroughs in congregations multiplying themselves. Breakthroughs in spiritual growth and vitality. Breakthroughs in weekly worship attendance. Breakthroughs in churches rediscovering and reclaiming their missional DNA. The Holy Spirit is moving across the West Ohio Conference and **unleashing new life** in and through our congregations.

Every Monday morning, while serving as the pastor of a local church, I reviewed the reports from Sunday's ministry -- worship attendance, new members who joined, Sunday School, youth group and confirmation attendance, persons commissioned for mission and outreach activities and, of course, the offering figures. Every Monday, the numbers told me a story about the Holy Spirit's activity in the lives of "my people." Every Monday, I was able to assess how well we, as a congregation, were living out our response to Jesus' Great Commandment: "Love God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself." Every Monday, the reports, whether they made me wince or smile, drove me to my knees as I prayed that the Spirit of God would fill our hearts, minds, souls and lives with a passion for the Gospel and a commitment to live daily as faithful and fruitful witnesses to the power of God's love made known in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And so, I continue to pray:

*O come, Spirit of God,
open our hearts,
expand our minds,
fill our souls,
multiply our strength,
lift up our heads;
that the King of Glory may come in—breakthrough—
and renew our passion,
set us free to love as You love,
work through us to accomplish your Kingdom purposes,
unleashing new life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

With Advent anticipation, I remain

Yours in Christ,

Bruce R. Ough