

IN MISSION & MINISTRY

# United Methodists at Work Developing Disciples



The L<sup>3</sup> Incubator combines the ideas of loving self and each other, learning about successful leadership practices, disciple-making systems and organizational behaviors and leading in a spiritual fashion. Participants form their own teams in their local churches where they love, learn and lead their congregations together toward a Ministry Action Plan. The goals of the L<sup>3</sup> incubator are to develop spiritual leaders who model Christian community that learns and leads together, to create environments that foster transformation, and to establish processes that create results.

Overbrook United Methodist Church's pastor, Rev. Kathleen Whitmore was in the first clergy incubator in the Kansas East Conference, and has now led two incubator groups in her own congregation.

"The L<sup>3</sup> process was extremely important to this church in that it allowed the laity to begin to reclaim the ministry and to understand that ministry isn't just the pastor's to do. We're all called to ministry, and it's a shared ministry," Whitmore said. "The direction we were going changed drastically. It was a definite "God" thing. As a result, the people in the church have begun to own the ministry."



**L<sup>3</sup> = Loving, Learning & Leading Together**

The congregation knew it needed to identify why God had put them in ministry in this place and at this time, she said.

One of the things Overbrook's congregation found attractive about the Incubator process is that it's a 2-3 year commitment required for participation.

"I think that's one of the things that they appreciated," Whitmore said. "It gave them permission to try and really put themselves into it. It's not a quick-fix type program. The L<sup>3</sup> process is very deliberate and it is a program that, when you use it properly, will change the lives of individuals. It's about changing individuals so churches can change."

Whitmore said group-building is slow process; because of that, it's tempting to skip it. But if you do the work, the group becomes very close and and changes as a whole through the changes in the individual. ■

### United Methodists at Work ...

*Incubator funding is shared between the annual conference and the local churches whose pastors participate in an incubator before leading the process in their congregations. The incubator is a 2-3 year commitment for the congregation and its pastor.*

### Learn More About ...

The incubator process online at [www.kansaseast.org/incubator](http://www.kansaseast.org/incubator)

## Incubators Strengthen Leaders



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