

The Charlotte District E-Pistle

January 30, 2006

On Friday of last week I sent by postal mail a packet of materials concerning our annual Spring Seminar, March 2-4, at Myers Park UMC. Our special guest and seminar leader will be Dr. Doug Anderson, Executive Director of the Bishop Rueben Job Center for Leadership Development.

Your participation and leadership in this event is crucial. I shall expect every pastor to attend and recruit a laity team of five or more persons for the workshop experiences. Bi-vocational lay pastors will note that the workshops for small and mid-sized churches are scheduled for Saturday, March 4th, in order to avoid the week-day schedules of laity.

Please place in your newsletters and other forms of communication an invitation to your entire congregation to attend the general lectures that will be presented on Thursday and Friday evenings. The subjects—*The Life Cycles of the Congregation* and *Developing a Congregational Culture of Evangelism*—are relevant and engaging.

Thursday morning and afternoon are planned to fit the needs of our pastors. I hope that all our pastors will set aside this day for the fellowship and challenge through time spent together with Dr. Anderson. Wisdom will permeate the room when the vast experience of all our clergy is gathered within Jubilee Hall through oneness of spirit. The pastors will indeed be the key to the success of the seminar.

Of course, the purpose of the *Churches by Size Spring Seminar* is not attendance at a series of challenging workshops or merely having a splendid time of clergy fellowship. These are natural outcomes in route to transforming our maintenance church culture to mission and a vibrant culture of evangelism. No one goes to a Panthers game in order to watch players huddle. At next fall's charge conferences we shall celebrate the results of our applying the things we learn this spring.

If rain, sleet, or snow prevents the mailman from delivering your packet, contact DeEtta by Wednesday and she will e-mail you the document. We shall need your response for the registration related to meals and attendance.

Episcopal bishop Claude Payne has rightly asserted, "Evangelism is not a program of the Church; rather, it is the essential work of the Church. It is not an option for Christians but an obligation, a fundamental commission of their Christ." To this end we shall commit ourselves to foster a culture of authentic evangelism in each of our congregations.

Grace and peace,

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