

Charlotte District E-Pistle

September 10, 2006

Subject: 2007 DISCIPLE Training Events and District DISCIPLE Surveys

Colleagues:

One of our Annual Conference's visionary objectives is to teach and learn biblically-based discipleship and leadership. Bishop McCleskey is strongly urging each local church or charge to offer Disciple Bible classes.

As you know, Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries (DBOM) will begin the District DISCIPLE Bible Study training initiative in 2007. With help from the Duke Endowment, this initiative will bring DISCIPLE Bible Study and RINGS OF FELLOWSHIP training to every district over the next three years. The training will be **FREE** to all clergy and lay people in NC. It is our hope that every church will take advantage of this unique opportunity. Ours is the first state in the country to offer such a program.

Recognizing the strong impetus to this program brought by Bishop McCleskey, the Duke Endowment has requested that we develop a database of each district's participation in DISCIPLE. In this way, we can know who has and has not had a program and any problem the churches may have encountered with the program. Such information is necessary if we are to fulfill the bishop's vision. In order to gather this information, I am sending you a three page survey to be completed by November 15th. Please complete the attached survey and returned to the Charlotte District Office in hardcopy form. I shall be sending the results to Mark Hicks in order that he and DBOM will be able to create a database.

With charge conferences, I realize that this is a busy time for you and your church leaders. Therefore, I am sending out this request well in advance. If you are preparing for Charge Conference prior to the November 15th date, you may want to include this as part of your church's Charge Conference report; but, early or on time, please treat this survey as a priority .

The times (in 2007) and locations of the trainings are as follows:

February 3 – Wilmington District – Whiteville UMC
February 10 – Burlington District – Front Street UMC
February 17 – Goldsboro District – St. Paul UMC
February 24 – Greenville District – St. James UMC

May 5 – Charlotte District – Providence UMC
May 12 – Greensboro District – Christ UMC
May 19 – Waynesville District – First UMC, Franklin
May 26 – Northeast District – Palmyra UMC

DISCIPLE training will take place from 8:30 AM-3:30 PM. RINGS OF FELLOWSHIP training will take place from 4:00 PM-6:00 PM. Lunch will be provided for \$5. This will be a marvelous time for training new group leaders and equippers in congregations that already have a Disciple Bible ministry. This is a unique opportunity for churches that have not yet explored this ministry opportunity.

One of the questions at this fall's Charge Conference is "Are you providing Disciple Bible groups in the program of your church?"

If you have any questions about the specific aspects of this training event, please contact

Rev. Mark Hicks (336) 434-8612
DISCIPLE Survey
Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries
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I do not know of any program of the United Methodist Church that has more profoundly changed the lives of participants in my thirty-five years of parish ministry than Disciple Bible. I encourage all our pastors to give leadership and advocacy to this significant ministry.

Grace and peace,

George