

The Charlotte District E-Pistle

September 26, 2005

Dear Colleague:

Many of you have inquired about the possibility of having your congregation matched with a United Methodist Church in the region damaged by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Some of you have reported to me the direct contacts you have already made through communication initiated by a pastor or United Methodist lay representative within a congregation devastated by these storms.

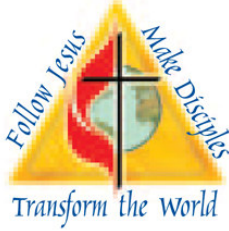
Today I have received an important message from Mike Collins, our Director of Volunteer Response Ministries. I have attached here his letter concerning our corporate efforts as the WNC Conference to reach out in ministry to the storm-affected conferences. Also, I have included a ***Church Partnership Form*** that you are encouraged to complete. Please note that Mike has been in contact with all three Conferences on our behalf, and the bishops in these regions are still trying to assess what future needs are anticipated and just what *partnership* entails. Mike has designated **Pam Carter** to coordinate the assigning of partnerships. Pam is an elder and spouse of Ken Carter, Senior Pastor of Providence UMC. If your church desires to establish such a partnership with a Gulf region church with acute needs, please complete the attached form and send it to Mrs. Pam Carter, c/o Providence United Methodist Church, 2810 Providence Road, Charlotte, NC 28211. It may be scanned and emailed to Pam at Epamcarter@carolina.rr.com or pcarter@providenceumc.com

We want to work toward a district-to-district relationship so that our transportation to a region can be better coordinated through the months and years ahead. It will eventually become a disadvantage to be broadly scattered in our response teams from the Charlotte District. By working in a coordinated way, we can maximize our resources and do the most good for the benefit of the greatest number of people. Mike Collins will be in contact with the affected districts this week concerning the subject of organizing partnerships. I have already reported to Pam those churches that have already taken the initiative to established partnerships based upon direct contacts in the region.

Thank you for your continued patience and guidance in our Disaster Response efforts.

Grace and peace,

George



Western North Carolina Conference The United Methodist Church

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Date: September 26, 2005
To: Western North Carolina United Methodist Churches
From: Mike Collins, Director of Volunteer Response Ministries
Re: Partnership with Hurricane-affected Churches

Grace and peace in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ!

Over the past several weeks, many Western North Carolina Conference churches have contacted me concerning what we are doing to help in the Hurricane-affected areas, and whether or not a partner-church relationship with Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama-West Florida Annual Conferences is possible. Thank you for your patience as we have spent quality time looking into the possibilities and into what the affected conferences wished for in our help.

Here is a basic understanding concerning each Conference and how we have worked with them:

- 1. We have sent numerous Early Response Teams to the Mississippi Annual Conference with additional teams to follow. Funds and supplies have been dispersed from our conference to the Mississippi Annual Conference for Disaster Response. The funds are not ear-marked funds and may be used as the Mississippi Annual Conference deems best for disaster response.*

The Mississippi Conference will have partnership relationships with the North Carolina Conference through the NCC districts. Bishop Hope Morgan Ward is from the North Carolina Conference, and thus there is a special tie between the two.

The Mississippi Annual Conference has an insurance plan helping with its basic pastoral salaries and needs. However, other conferences have been asked if they could help in providing funds to help pay staff salaries and administrative needs within local churches. We must realize that in a disaster the administration needed increases and must be paid from somewhere.

In the near future we will be asked to provide work teams to help in the recovery efforts.

2. *The Louisiana Annual Conference is still in the Emergency phase, thus, few Early Response Teams have been sent to that Annual Conference. Most early response teams will come from outside the Southeast Jurisdiction. Later we may be asked to send teams to Louisiana, depending on the needs. Funds and supplies have been dispersed from our conference to the Louisiana Annual Conference for Disaster Response. The funds are not ear-marked funds and may be used as the Louisiana Annual Conference deems best for disaster response.*

In my correspondence with Bishop Bill Hutchinson, he has indicated a willingness to have a partnership relationship with churches in the Western North Carolina Conference. Just what “partnering” means is unclear and may be different with each church. One specific need the conference has is meeting the salary and apportionment needs of the affected churches. These figures have been sent to us to explore.

As Louisiana moves into the recovery stage, we will be asked to provide work teams to help in the recovery efforts.

3. *The Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference has received teams from neighboring conferences. We have sent funds and supplies to the conference, as well.*

Bishop Larry Goodpastor contacted my office on Friday, September 23rd to say they are interested in a partnership relationship, but just what this means is not clear at this time.

In the future we will be asked to send work teams to the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference.

With the above being addressed, I invite churches already in a partnership relationship with hurricane-affected churches to continue in this relationship. I will stay in touch with the three affected conferences and attempt to clarify the kind of relationship they wish to engage. Mrs. Pam Carter has agreed to coordinate the effort of matching our churches with a church in the hurricane-affected areas. Please complete the enclosed form and send it to Mrs. Pam Carter, c/o Providence United Methodist Church, 2810 Providence Road, Charlotte, NC 28211. Pam’s emails are Epamcarter@carolina.rr.com and pcarter@providenceumc.org.

May God bless us as we continue to minister to God’s people.

Sincerely,

*Mike Collins
Director of Volunteer Response Ministries
Western North Carolina Conference, UMC*



CHURCH PARTNERSHIP INFORMATION

WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE CHURCH INFORMATION:

Name of Church: _____

District: _____

Contact Person & Telephone Number: _____

Email: _____

How does this church/congregation wish to help (please 'X' all that apply):

Funds towards a Pastor's Salary/Benefits: _____

Funds towards a Church's Apportionments: _____

Funds towards Administrative Needs: _____

Funds towards Congregational Needs arising from the storms: _____

Future Building/Ministry Teams to a Church: _____

Other: _____

If the Western North Carolina Conference is asked to match a 'district' to 'an affected church' would your congregation be willing to work in this manner?

Please complete the form and submit it to: Mrs. Pam Carter, c/o Providence United Methodist Church, 2810 Providence Road, Charlotte, NC 28211. It may be scanned and emailed to Pam at Epamcarter@carolina.rr.com or pcarter@providenceumc.com