

Charlotte District E-Pistle

October 8, 2008

Colleagues:

George Ragsdale, an associate pastor at Myers Park UMC and a new member of the Board of Directors for the Charlotte District School of Christian Discipleship, has devised a tool to assist us in assessing the strengths and needs of our district as we plan leadership training and disciple-making events. It is based upon **Bishop Robert Schnase's *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations***. All the churches of our district have been challenged to read this volume in small groups of leaders and to use these five principles and practices to evaluate the spiritual health and performance of the congregation's ministry. I am pleased in general with the enthusiastic response to this assessment tool as a resource in the preparation of Charge Conference agendas.

You can be very helpful in the planning of future events sponsored by the School of Christian Discipleship. Thanks to the generosity and planning of Providence UMC, Bishop Schnase will be our special guest next fall—Monday, **September 28, 2009**. Prior to this opportunity to learn from an engaging Episcopal leader, we shall want to provide workshop experiences whereby we can all learn from the successes of neighboring congregations that have been particularly fruitful in the exercise of these practices.

Please thoughtfully fill out the following questionnaire that has been prepared by George Ragsdale, in consultation with the Board of the SCD. **Return to my office by November 7th** the survey with attached information about ministries that are instructive and exciting. Evaluate your church's performance in each of these categories. We would particularly want to know if you will be willing to share what you're doing with other churches in the district. If there is an area in which your congregation would like to improve, we'd like to know if you would be interested in learning more through district training events, workshops or seminars.

I hope to hear from each of you by November 7th.

Grace and peace,

George