



E-Connections

The Top Ten Reasons

The top ten reasons why you should attend the Charlotte District Spring Seminar this Thursday and Friday, March 1-2:

10. Kennon L. Callahan, Ph.D., is inimitably qualified to address the subject of “exploring and practicing the spiritual dimensions of stewardship”; he has more degrees than a thermometer, and is the author of 15 influential books dealing with effective church ministry and administration.



Dr. Kennon Callahan

9. Dr. Callahan’s volume, *Giving and Stewardship* is still a pace-setter in the literature focused upon the principles of giving.

8. Our lecturer will demonstrate the joy of growing a generous life.

7. All who attend will receive an easy-to-follow workbook, making each power-point-illustrated session easy to remember and readily applicable to our life in the parish.

6. It is very likely that your church is not reaching its stewardship potential and Ken Callahan, who teaches the joy of generosity, will offer something far more profound than a few gimmicks that will temporarily bolster the financial performance of your church.

5. Dr. Callahan is much funnier than David Letterman, and he does not have a gap between his two front teeth.

4. Only by coming to the seminar will you know if he looks as good as this picture we have circulated in our promotional material.

3. The Charlotte District Program Budget has invested big bucks for this gig, and your DS is Scottish.

2. Every pastor is required to attend, promote and practice the wisdom contained in this seminar.

1. This year there is an opening at a six-point charge in the Waynesville District, and you could be appointed there.

Indeed we are all in for a treat during these days of extraordinary opportunity for our churches. Keep in mind that the missional priority of stewardship will receive much attention throughout the Annual Conference this year. Thus, on Thursday before the arrival of Dr. Callahan, we shall have the gathering of our clergy fellowship (10:30 a.m.) and explore new, exciting initiatives offered by the Methodist Foundation. Our own Reverend Glenn Kinken of the Foundation will share these insights with us before we break for a luncheon prepared by the hospitality staff of Myers Park UMC. The first Callahan presentation, entitled “Growing Generous Givers,” will begin at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday in Jubilee Hall. An evening meal will be available for those who have made reservations with the district office. The evening lecture begins at 7 p.m. and is entitled, “Building the Motivations for Giving and Stewardship.” A similar format and schedule will be followed on Friday afternoon and evening, with lecture titles—“Developing the Sources of Giving in Our Time,” and “Advancing Our Strengths.”

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Spring Seminar (continued)

I am very appreciative of those from churches with small membership who insist that there should always be something in our connectional seminars and workshops that speaks uniquely to their situation. One size does not fit all; thus, a Saturday morning agenda has been added once again to our Spring Seminar's agenda. This morning with Reverend David Snipes will be an extraordinary opportunity for the teams for these uniquely valuable congregations.

I have far more than these ten reasons why I shall likely leave an important Cabinet session on Thursday before the bishop officially dismisses this august group of presiding elders. One of those reasons is that my colleagues on the Cabinet will probably be discussing, in my absence, the six-point charge in the Waynesville District, and I shall not have a single candidate for that position.

Grace and peace,

George

George Thompson
Charlotte District Superintendent

Schedule for Spring Seminar, March 1-3, 2007

Myers Park United Methodist Church, Jubilee Hall

March 1, 2007 • Thursday

- 10:30 a.m. The clergy alone are asked to meet in Jubilee Hall in the morning session with the District Superintendent and Glenn Kinken, of the UM Foundation. We shall learn about new initiatives developed by the Foundation and discuss the relationship of this Spring Seminar to the 2007 Charge Conference.
- 12 Noon Lunch and time for gathering. Laity and clergy are to make advance reservations.
- 1:30-4 p.m. Presentations by Kennon Callahan, “**Growing Generous Givers**”
The audience will be the pastors and a team of laity from their churches, especially representing stewardship and finance. Suggested team participation: Large churches (8-12, including laity and staff), Middle-sized churches (5-7, pastors and laity), Small churches (3-4, pastor and laity).
- 6 p.m. Dinner. Laity and clergy are to make advance reservations.
- 7-9 p.m. Presentation by Kennon Callahan, “**Building the Motivations for Giving and Stewardship**” .
A general invitation: pastors, church teams, and the general membership from around the district will be encouraged to come.

March 2, 2007 • Friday

- 12 Noon Lunch and time for gathering. Laity and clergy are to make advance reservations.
- 1:30-4 p.m. Presentation by Kennon Callahan, “**Developing the Sources of Giving in Our Time**”. The audience will be the pastors and a team of laity from each church.
- 6 p.m. Dinner. Laity and clergy are to make advance reservations.
- 7-9 p.m. Presentation by Kennon Callahan, “**Advancing Our Strengths**”
A general invitation: pastors, church stewardship team, and the general membership.

March 3, 2007 • Saturday

- 9-12 NOON ***The Spiritual Dimensions of Stewardship in the Small Church***
Teams from the small membership churches are invited. The UM Foundation staff will lead this session.

Gratitude for a Job Well Done: On January 17, 2007, the statistical summaries and composite report of our Conference's financial performance were distributed by the office of Bill Wyman. The over-all news was close to excellent. Giving across the board was substantially increased during 2006. The message of Bishop McCleskey at the 2006 Annual Conference session was heard with clarity, and the laity of the church responded with strong statements of affirmation. The program staff of our Conference has functioned with austerity and frugality. Several positions were eliminated this year. But the local churches throughout western North Carolina clearly affirmed the seven visionary objectives of the Bishop and Cabinet and want to give financial backing to our efforts to strengthen evangelism and nurture disciples of Jesus Christ.

There is good news and bad news about the performance of the Charlotte District. The good news is that the churches of this district have done an admirable job of paying what they accepted at the 2005 Charge Conferences on the nineteen funds that constitute the mission budget of the Annual Conference. Collectively we paid 94.91% of the funds which we accepted at the cluster conferences during the previous fall. That is a commendable achievement and exceeds our most recent performances. The problem lies in the amount that our Charlotte District churches accepted. The Charlotte District performance evaluation drops precipitously when we observe the percentage of our total apportionments actually paid. This figure is only 79.77%--eleventh among the fourteen districts.

I strongly urge all pastors, serving churches that did not accept the full amount of their apportionments for the mission budget of the conference for 2007, to adopt the personal goal next fall of increasing that percentage of acceptance with a sustained 100% as the ultimate goal in connectional accountability.

Some of our congregations, that did not pay all of their acceptances, encountered unanticipated obstacles. Let us pray especially for these churches and reach out with words of encouragement and hands of generosity to those colleague pastors who may need our corporate wisdom and understanding in the matter of stewardship. We shall all benefit from our exposure to the teachings of Kennon Callahan at the Spring Seminar. These congregations will want to send some of their most influential leaders on the team that will receive the sagacious insights of Dr. Callahan. The following congregations failed to pay their full acceptances:

Burge Memorial	45.68%
Christ	75.94%
Cole Memorial	88.52%
Grace	79.46%
Lake Norman	93.21%
Oak Grove	55.56%
Plaza	81.34%
Pleasant Grove	94.67%
St. Andrews	83.30%
St. John's	15.44%
St Luke	80.41%
St. Mark's	20.44%
Spencer Memorial	81.08%
Tucker's Grove	63.17%
University City	52.57%
Victory Native American	62.34%

Around the Charlotte District: Gratitude for a Job Well Done (continued)

The financial support of our five Charlotte District funds was very impressive. 95.1% of all acceptances were paid for a total of \$503,927.28. These ministries were sustained with enthusiasm during 2006: the District Expense Fund, District Mission Society, Methodist Counseling Center Services, Bethlehem Center, and ReachOut Ministry (for Cambodian and Hmong mission congregations). The following churches were a bit deficient in support of these ministries:

Asbury	40%
Christ	50%
Lake Norman	75%
Mouzon	73.2%
Oak Grove	0%
Plaza	32.9%
St. Francis	0%
St. John's	35.2%
St. Mark's	34%
Simpson-Gillespie	20%
Victory, N.A.	41.2%

The noble goal of reaching 100% in acceptances and payments is not reached by a sudden burst of enthusiasm in November. Stewardship performance is the result of careful process planning and clear visionary leadership, starting with the education and motivation of clergy and laity. To this end shall we direct our energies as we participate in the Spring Seminar and several cluster activities during this calendar year.

The dash-board indicators for the Charlotte District are indeed reflecting a positive movement, and this would not be the case without the devotion and aggressive leadership of pastors and laity who want to be faithful to Christ who is the center of our mission and the object of our praise through acts of generosity.

Grace and peace,

George

George Thompson
Charlotte District Superintendent

Crop Walk On January 30, 2007, a recognition event was held at St. John's Baptist Church, next to Presbyterian Hospital, announcing the results of this past fall's CROP Walk. This event involves a vast number of faith communities throughout the city of Charlotte and is the largest in the nation, according to Church World Service that sponsors the walk. Rev. Brandon Dirks, Youth Director at St. Stephen UMC, rendered the invocation. Chuck Boozer, Master of Ceremonies recognized individuals who have raised significant amounts. Pat Thompson, who collected \$4,593.00, was fourth highest among individual walkers in the city. She has walked in 28 consecutive events in a variety of towns and cities since the beginning of this fund raiser for Church World Service.

Among smaller membership churches, four received special recognition, two of which are United Methodist: Calvary UMC (contributing \$2,813.50) and St. Paul (raising \$1,824.00). Four churches with membership between 1,000 and 2,499 were recognized with St. Stephen UMC leading in this category, contributing to CROP \$18,187.00. St. Paul UMC was recognized for having 24 recruits, Hawthorne Lane with 33 walkers, Matthews UMC commissioned 65 recruits, and St. Stephen UMC had 37 walkers. We anticipate every church in the district engaging in the Charlotte CROP Walk or another community providing an opportunity for this event.

St. Stephen United Methodist Men Presents
Habitat For Humanity Golf Tournament
Saturday, April 28, 2007 at C.T. Myers Golf Course

Fun Facts

- Practice balls, cart fee, green fee, lunch, door prize for all, 2 close to pins, 2 long drives, and a trophy with prize for winning team.
- Eagle Pot by Team - \$20 per team.
- Fellowship with old friends and new ones too.
- Chance to bring the young people out and play golf in a format that all skill levels can enjoy.
- Know that you helped build another Habitat for Humanity House in the Charlotte area.

How to Sign Up and Play

- Sign up at the CT Myers Pro Shop.
- Sign up as individual or group.
- Register via email to cfbeal@bellsouth.net.
- Sign up at St. Stephen UMC.
- Show up at about 8:45 AM to sign in and hit some practice balls.
- Shotgun start at 10:00 AM.
- Please pay by check if possible. Cash accepted. No credit cards please.
- Adults = \$80 fee - \$30 of that amount is a donation to Habitat.
- Youth = 18 and younger = \$65 - \$15 of that amount is a donation to Habitat.

Visit the Western NC Conference website
<http://www.wnccumc.org/min/ministries.htm>
to obtain information about the
various ministries throughout our Conference.

In search of various Conference publications
visit <http://www.wnccumc.org/pub/publications.htm>

E-wnccnews

Subscribe to e-wnccnews, the brief, weekly WNCC e-newsletter, with convenient ministry links. Send your e-mail address to webministry@wnccumc.org with “e-news subscribe” in the subject line. The Conference Center does not share this email list with anyone.

George E. Thompson, District Superintendent
DeEtta Rivens, Administrative Assistant
Website: www.chardist.org
E-mail: chardist@bellsouth.net

Charlotte District
Western NC Conference
4108 Park Road, Suite 101
Charlotte, NC 28209-2259
Ofc: 704-525-3395 · Fax: 704-525-4238