

January 8, 2009

Electronic
Newsletter



Charlotte District

E-Connections

A New Year in the Charlotte District

One of the most substantive ways in which we clergy can demonstrate our support of one another and our commitment to the growth of the Kingdom of Christ is to advocate and encourage our new church starts. Especially in the Charlotte District have our new congregations contributed toward reaching neglected population centers and a younger demographic constituency.

On **Tuesday, January 13th**, beginning with a time of informal fellowship and continental breakfast **at 9:15 a.m.**, we shall have an opportunity to affirm and learn about our district's most recently initiated congregation—**Sanctuary**. Our Charlotte District Clergy Fellowship will convene at the temporary location of Sanctuary—namely, **13331-D York Center Drive**. If you are coming south on I-77, take the Westinghouse Boulevard exit, traveling west. Then take a left onto South Tryon and drive approximately one mile. On the right you will see a car wash and behind it a small mall—York Center. This is just one mile north of Good Shepherd UMC.



*Dr. Percival "Percy" Reeves
Pastor, Sanctuary Church*

On this morning we shall join in worship with the leadership of **Dr. Percival Reeves** who will preach during the service. Our colleague Percy will then share with us insights into the unique ministry of this congregation with its expanding vision and mission. After only one full year as a functioning mission, the weekly attendance has grown to over 185 per Sunday. There are over 200,000 African Americans residing in Charlotte with an additional 25,000 projected over the next five years. Less than 1,000 African Americans are actively involved in worship in the United Methodist Churches of the five districts in the immediate Metropolitan area within the WNC Annual Conference. Sanctuary is currently on a trajectory to have over 500 people engaged in worship and ministry over the next three years. The administrative structure of the new congregation is launched by seven coordinated and mission-directed **ships**: *worship, discipleship, membership, relationship, leadership, stewardship, and apostleship*. Dr. Reeves will explain how the monthly giving has increased by over 600% since launching this vessel of God's love. He will respond to your questions and concerns.

Come with an eagerness to learn more about Sanctuary, offer your personal support to our colleague and fellow pastor, and ask significant questions regarding the future vision and expectations of our most recent church start.

Grace and peace,

George

George E. Thompson
Charlotte District Superintendent

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Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration



**Western NC Conference UMC
2009 Celebration**
*Re-Membering the Body of Christ:
in memory of the*
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Coburn Memorial United Methodist Church
The Rev. Annalee Allen, Pastor | 901 South Church St., Salisbury
A collaboration of the WNCNC Committees on Religion/Race and Church/Society

January 17, 2009 | 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

For ALL United Methodists

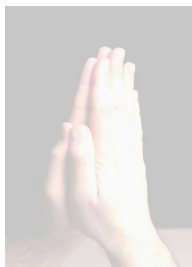


Essay Contest
7th, 8th, 9th graders
10th, 11th, 12th graders
Details on Flier

Bishop Larry Goodpaster will lead worship and communion during the 2009 Western NC Conference celebration in memory of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Jan. 17, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at Coburn Memorial UMC, 901 S. Church St., Salisbury. Dr. Reginald Broadnax, dean of academic affairs at Hood Theological Seminary, is keynote speaker. In a twist on leaders asking questions and young people responding, the youth participants of the essay contest will present questions for the panel discussion, “Immigration and Welcoming the Strangers

Among Us.” Panelists are Dr. Samuel Danshokho, Lisa Hughes, Patricia Pegram and a young person. The event is a collaboration of the WNCNC Committee on Religion and Race and Committee on Church and Society. Lunch is by donation. **Flier with details at <http://wnccumc.org/eth/pdf/mlk2009.pdf>**

“Healing of the Nation” Prayer Banquet



Healing of the Nation will be the theme of the Charlotte District Prayer Banquet at Myers Park UMC's Jubilee Hall on Monday, January 26, 2009, 6:30 p.m. The inspirational speaker for this significant occasion will be Bishop Larry M. Goodpaster. Prayers will be offered that reflect our earnest desire for unity instead of separation, a common vision rather than political polarization, and hope amidst the temptation to despair in a time of economic uncertainty. The banquet is sponsored by the Charlotte District Council on Laity and was planned prior to the general election in the hopes that the United Methodist Church in Charlotte will contribute to the healing of the nation. We encourage members of the churches to invite friends with conflicting political ideologies to be their guest at this banquet as an act of reconciliation and healing.

Registration Form for the Charlotte District Healing the Nation Prayer Banquet
Monday, January 26, 2009 - 6:30 PM – Myers Park United Methodist Church
Cost: Adults - \$10.00 ▪ Children (12 and under) - \$5.00

Name: _____ Church: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Home Phone: _____

Child Care-Children's
 Names: _____ Ages: _____
(Children must be pre-registered)

Make check payable to Charlotte District UMC Office - mark for District Prayer Banquet
Absolute reservation deadline: January 16

Upcoming Events/Opportunities



Lay Speaker's Training in February

The annual school for training and certifying lay speakers for ministry in the church is recognition that every baptized Christian is indeed a minister in chosen fields of service. This training is not designed to be a preface for the ministry of ordination. The training on the consecutive Mondays of February (at 6:30 p.m.) is developed to equip the participant for a more profound expression of discipleship in the vast range of service opportunities in the life of the church. Those who are first-time participants or who have not sought re-certification within the past three years will want to take the introductory, basic course with a curriculum written by John Gilbert and Nancy Zoller. This year's advanced course will feature the theme, *Discover Spiritual Gifts*, with study materials authored by William J. Carter. During the fall's Charge Conference reports, the Charlotte District office received the application of a considerable number of participants. But it is not too late for us to receive additional names. Please secure the registration form from the District website (www.chardist.org, downloads), complete the information, and return to DeEtta Rivens. We want to have a full dozen in each of the classes.



The following instructors will give class leadership to the Basic Course for lay speaking: Betty Warner, Elizabeth Puckett, Dr. Robert McLawhorn, and Rev. Laurie Knoespel. The Advanced Course that focuses upon spiritual gifts will be led by Rev. Sheila Bishop, Rev. Barbara Barden, and Rev. Gail Montgomery. All participating churches will be enhanced in the quality of discipleship by the experiences of those who will be trained and motivated. The graduation service for the 2009 Lay Speaker's Training will be held on Sunday, March 1st at Grace UMC, 737 E. Woodlawn Rd., Charlotte, NC 28209, at 4 p.m.



Supporting adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

UMAR Sponsors Friends' Luncheon in February

Friends of UMAR are invited to a luncheon Tuesday, February 24th at Providence UMC, 2810 Providence Road, Charlotte. This is a free, one-hour lunch to raise awareness and funds for UMAR's vision and mission for the homes in the area. At the conclusion of the luncheon, friends will have an opportunity to make a donation of any amount. To make a reservation, contact Nicole at 704-659-7632.



"KEEP ON BELIEVIN" 2009 Bishop's Confirmation Celebration

Bishop Larry Goodpaster will lead the 2009 Bishop's Confirmation Celebration, "Keep on Believin," at two locations, Feb. 21 in Waynesville and Feb. 28 in Charlotte. Facilities are to be announced and will be placed on the Conference website in the near future. The celebration is for youth who are in the process of or have completed confirmation studies in a celebration of faith in Christ and our connection to The United Methodist Church, along with their pastors, youth leaders and mentors. Music from the Confirmation Praise Band and displays from conference ministries and camps will be featured. Register by Feb. 6.

Details/form at www.wnccumc.org/yth/pdf/2009BCCweb.pdf

District Leadership Conference (DLC)



What constitutes the essential qualities of a healthy congregation? How can a strong, healthy church move to a higher plateau of effectiveness and spiritual fervor? What can be done by lay and clergy leadership to bring healing and hope to a struggling, declining congregation?

This past year all our Charlotte District churches applied the *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations* by Bishop Robert Schnase in order to assess the current state of the parish. Our own Bishop Larry Goodpaster outlines ten corollary factors that contribute toward the healthy and well-being of our churches. The international research project led by Christian Schwarz, through a study of over 1,000 churches in 32 countries, discovered that every truly healthy church will have eight quality characteristics.

The 2008 Charlotte District DLC provided on **Saturday, February 28th, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., at St. Stephen UMC** (6800 Sardis Road, Charlotte) will capitalize upon the wisdom of these excellent resources in workshops with both a general and specific appeal.

The following classes will be offered during one of the hours for this splendid morning:

1. ***Facilitating with Ease*** - Chairs of any committee are encouraged to attend, but any leader who wishes to improve their skills will benefit.
2. ***Building Blocks*** - Participants will learn much about church property. Trustees are especially encouraged to come to this class.
3. ***Staff and Lay Relations*** - SPRC and PPRC members will especially benefit.
4. ***Methodism 101*** – A general topic for any member. Lay leaders are asked to attend this class.
5. ***Building a Generous Church*** – In this economic climate, this topic will have a general appeal, but the stewardship committees are especially targeted here.
6. ***From Wall Street to Church Street*** – Our facilitator will deal with the budget as a spiritual document that expresses the missional priorities of the congregation.
7. ***The World Is Our Parish*** – Participants will seek to re-capture John Wesley's passion for mission, servant leadership and evangelism. Mission and evangelism committees will find this class helpful.
8. ***Energizing Children's Ministry*** for workers with children.
9. ***High Impact Ministry*** – Facilitators of small groups, Sunday school or any other expressions of intentional faith development will benefit.
10. ***Irresistible Youth Ministry*** is for workers with youth and youth.
11. ***Senior Adult Ministry That Works*** is designed for our retirement age members and those who minister with them.
12. ***Pastor's Non-Anxious Presence in Time of Anxiety*** will be a great source of inspiration and encouragement for each pastor.

This year we have added a new training element for all DLC participants. We will have designated classes that explore the characteristics of a healthy church. We encourage each church to bring clergy and laity in order to explore these characteristics of a healthy church, to be able to take back to your respective parishes to evaluate, and implement new strategies for ministry.

We have received commitments from some very exciting instructors and church leaders. A promotional brochure will be made available in early January with a delineation of leadership.

Around the District



Pat joins with me in expressing to all the clergy of the Charlotte District our appreciation for the love offering by which we were honored at the Christmas Banquet at Good Shepherd UMC in early December.



This cloth banner, displayed in the Queens Road entrance of Myers Park UMC, is the creation of retired clergy Rev. Bill Doser who enthusiastically attends the church with his wife Mabel. The banner celebrates especially the seasons of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. Rev. Doser's creations are displayed in select churches throughout this Conference and one has had a place of prominence at the United Nations.



On Christmas Eve at Cole Memorial UMC, Laura Garrett, pictured (left) here with her husband Hayes, led the choir in the anthems and carols of that holy night. The light rain diminished just as the congregation walked into the darkness of night with lighted candles singing, "Silent Night." Our superintendent, George Thompson (pictured here with his wife Pat) was the celebrant at the Eucharist that evening.

Around the District

Bishop Larry Goodpaster was the guest preacher on December 21st at First United Methodist Church in downtown Charlotte. He is pictured here with his wife Deborah as they greeted the congregation in a reception in their honor in the fellowship hall. Bishop Goodpaster illustrated his theme with a story about the origins of the English language word, *Bedlam*, in a sermon entitled, "From Bethlehem to Bedlam and Back." The Chancel Choir, under the direction of Rev. John-Palmer Smith, provided several anthems by J. S. Bach. Pastors Eddie Ingram, Ann Self, and Bob Boggan had a role in the liturgy of a very inspirational service on the Sunday before Christmas Day.



On December 28, George Ragsdale, Associate Pastor of Myers Park, preached at two of the morning services and reminded the congregation that the theology of the church--not the consumer culture--should define our understanding of Christmas. He challenged the listener to sustain the power and hope of the incarnation message that speaks profoundly to the economic uncertainties of the present era.



Ebenezer UMC, Belmont

On January 4th, the first Sunday of the New Year, Rev. Angela Hollar led the congregation of Ebenezer UMC of Belmont in a Eucharistic service with the story of the journey of the magi in Matthew, chapter 2, as the background for the sermon, music, and liturgy for the service of communion. On this eleventh day of Christmastide, the church was beautifully decorated with the Chrismon Tree in the background of this photo of Angela.

Things to Remember

Deadlines

- **District and Conference Apportionments Remittance** The final day for 2008 is Friday, January 9th at 3:00 pm. Payments must be posted in WNCC Treasury Services books by then and not just in the mail.
- **Year-End Statistical Reports** are due in the district office on Thursday, **January 22nd at 12 noon.** Please mail or hand-deliver your report so that it will arrive on time.

Keeping Local Church Contact Information Current

Beginning in 2009, local churches are able to make changes to the Local Church Leadership Contact List (LCLCL) all year long. It is important that the leadership contact information is current and correct so that ministry information gets to the right people in a timely and direct manner. As a result, you are now able to go into your LCLCL at any point and make updates. You will access your LCLCL list on the WNCC Administrative website (www.wnccadmin.org) just like you did when the names were originally submitted. Much of the communication happens through email so it is important that all contacts with access to email have an address listed. Please remember to make changes in the LCLCL database as they arise! The conference office will access contact information directly from the LCLCL for mailings/e-mailings.

2009 IRS Mileage

Beginning January 1, 2009, the standard rate will be 55 cents per mile for business miles driven.

Calendar

January 2009

- 1 New Year's Observance—District Office closed
- 9 District and Conference Apportionment payments due at WNC Treasury Services by 3 p.m.
- 13 District Clergy Fellowship—9:30 am, Sanctuary UMC, Charlotte
- 17 WNC Conference ML King, Jr. Celebration, Coburn Memorial UMC, Salisbury, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
- 19 Martin Luther King Holiday Observed—District Office closed
- 22 Year-End Statistical Reports due in District Office by 12 noon
- 24 District Mission Study: Native American Survival—Blair Rd. UMC
- 26 District Healing of Nation Prayer Banquet—Myers Park UMC, Jubilee Hall, 6:30 p.m.

February 2009

- 2, 9, 16, 23 District Lay Speaking Training—Dilworth UMC, 6:30 p.m.—9 p.m.
- 3 Mission to Ministers, Myers Park UMC
- 28 Charlotte District Dist. Leadership Conference, St. Stephen UMC, 9 a.m.— 1 p.m.
- 28 Bishop's Confirmation Celebration, Location TBA

March 2009

- 1 Graduation service for 2009 Lay Speaker's Training, 4 p.m., Grace UMC
- 8-9 District's Annual Spring Seminar, Facilitator Gil Rendle, Myers Park UMC, Jubilee Hall

April 2009

- 21 District Clergy Fellowship—9:30 a.m., Location TBA

Visit the Western NC Conference Calendar at <http://wnccumc.org/Cal/calendar-events.htm>

Free Download Worship Planning Calendars:

2009 (<http://www.gbod.org/worship/2009cwrplanningcal.pdf>)

2010 (<http://www.gbod.org/worship/2010cwrplanningcal.pdf>).

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

Bishop Initiates Weekly Message to WNCC Clergy, Laity

Beginning this week, Bishop Larry Goodpaster will offer his thoughts and insights in a weekly letter to WNCC clergy and laity. Bishop G's E-pistle will be emailed to all clergy and laity who subscribe to WNCC e-NEWS. The bishop is looking forward to the future in utilizing electronic technology to share his letters, reflections, thoughts and ideas. Persons who would like to receive the weekly message may contact Laura Diviney (ldiviney@wnccumc.org) at 800-562-7929, ext.121.

visit <http://wnccumc.org/bsh/BishopGs-e-pistle.htm>

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

WNCC e-News

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