



Charlotte District E-Connections

January 10, 2012

Volume 37, Issue 22

Electronic Newsletter
Charlotte District Office
of the
United Methodist Church
Western NC Conference

Special points of interest:

- MLK, Jr. Celebration
- Vitality Rally (DLC 2012)
- Spring Seminar

Inside this issue:

Special Offerings	2
MLK, Jr. Celebration	3
Light of Christ Partnership	3
Plaza UMC A Missional Movement of God	4-5
Ghana Mission's Commitment	6
Vitality Rally (DLC 2012)	7
Spring Seminar	8
Lay School Registration	9



The Big Event: Another Chance

There is a story of a young man who called his girlfriend one morning and invited her to be a part of something big. "What is it?" she asked over and over again but without answer. "Be ready and I will pick you up at 9:00" he told her with excitement. As she waited, her mind raced as to what the "big event" could be. In a few moments he arrived in his

old, dilapidated, sun-faded car and off they went. "What is it? Where are we going?" she asked. He replied "just wait, we are almost there." Out into the country they drove and she could not, for the life of her, figure out where they were going and for what "big event" they were headed. Suddenly, he screamed "Here it is! It is now here! LOOK!" She screamed "Where? What?" Then he revealed it as he said – "My odometer has just made a full turn and is now back to 000000."

I would like to know the rest of that story to see if she shared in his excitement. However, there is a point from this story that should make us even more happy. The onset of a brand new year reminds us that no matter where we are, whatever senseless miles we have put on the odometer of our lives or what problem we face—God's grace can give us a new beginning. God always brings us back to that proverbial "another chance" for which we all wish at some level.

As you begin another year in the life of your church, I am sure you can look back and see things you wish you could change (I sure remember those regrets) or problems you would have handled differently or opportunities you let pass. Put all that behind you and know that you have a new, fresh start in 2012. Remember the words in Lamentations 3:22 – 23:

*The Lord's compassion never fails. Morning
by morning new mercies we see. Great is
thy faithfulness therefore we will wait and trust*

Now that IS something to be excited about. So, let's invite others to share in God's "big event."

Happy New Year!

Gary C. Royals
Dr. Gary C. Royals
Charlotte District Superintendent

UMC Special Sundays



Resources

2012 Special Sundays

- [Human Relations Day](#): January 15
- [One Great Hour of Sharing](#): March 18
- [Native American Ministries Sunday](#): April 22
- [Peace with Justice Sunday](#): June 3
- [World Communion Sunday](#): October 7
- [United Methodist Student Day](#): November 25

Click on the special Sunday above for additional resources.

When we give from the heart, we receive unexpected blessings—especially the joy of making a difference in someone’s life. In The United Methodist Church, we have six annual opportunities to share beyond our regular gifts through church-wide Special Sundays with offerings.

Don't forget you can celebrate these Special Sundays at anytime of the year.

Western NC Conference Special Sunday Offerings

Observance Critical to Ministry

“Each local church shall have a definite evangelistic, nurture and witness responsibility for its members and the surrounding area, and a missional outreach responsibility to the local and global community.”

The Book of Discipline ¶ 204



Nov. 2011



April 15, 2012



First Sunday in May or select an alternate date.



Mother’s Day—May 13, 2012



June 17, 2012



Disciple Bible Outreach—August 26, 2012



The Children’s Home
September 16, 2012

Observances:

Deaf Awareness Month
September, but Churches may observe deaf awareness any time during the year.

Volunteers in Mission Awareness Sunday
Churches may choose the Sunday of their choice for this observance.

Rural Life Sunday
Rural Life Sunday promotes rural themes related to the health and wholeness, conservation and stewardship of the environment. This observance keeps the rural crisis and issues before United Methodists.



Light of Christ Embraces Care Ring Mothers and Children at Christmas.

Light of Christ UMC Partners with CRNFP

Cozy Christmas cards do not quite capture the scandal of the first Christmas. Mary was young, unwed, and pregnant. Not exactly an easy situation to accept.

Care Ring Nurse-Family Partnership (CRNFP) works with young girls who find themselves in a similar situation. They partner with low income first-time mothers to provide an evidence-based home visitation program that improves the health, well-being, and self-sufficiency of the participants. This program has proven to improve prenatal health, to increase maternal employment, to improve school readiness, and to decrease childhood injuries. Participants are less likely than their peers to rely on social assistance programs.

Light of Christ partnered with CRNFP to provide Christmas gifts and a party for all 50 participants. This has opened the door for future partnership, as Light of Christ explores additional ways to support these mothers. It is a great opportunity to share God's love with

young women who need extra support at a very vulnerable time of their lives.

For more information about this program, visit

<http://www.careringnc.org/programs/nurse-family-partnership/>.



WNCC Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration "We Are the Dream" Saturday, Jan. 14, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

The Office of Discipleship Ministry, in partnership with the WNCC Black Methodists for Church Renewal, invite youth and adults from all walks of life, as well as different backgrounds, to celebrate the life and achievements of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who shared his "dream" with the world. Bishop Larry M. Goodpaster is the featured speaker. The celebration will be held in Annie Merner Pfeiffer Chapel at [Bennett College for Women](http://www.bennettcollege.edu/), 900 E. Washington St., Greensboro.

In addition to worship, special music, cultural presentations and Holy Communion, this event features a Youth Essay Contest (submission deadline has passed). Group/Individual **registration deadline: Jan. 11**. Lunch will be provided and a donation of \$5/person will be collected during check-in.

Registration deadline is Wednesday, Jan. 11.

[PDFs: [Flier](#) | [Bulletin Insert](#)]

Plaza UMC— “A Missional Movement of God”



Rev. Bowman at entrance of the church's Community Life Center.

Plaza United Methodist Church has borrowed and altered just a bit the famous quote from the 1989 fantasy-drama, *Field of Dreams*. In the movie about a baseball field laid out in the middle of a cornfield, a voice tells the main character, “If you build it, he will come.”

Plaza believes that “If you build it, they will come.”

On April 23, 1961, six and one-third acres of land was purchased by the Charlotte District where an old dairy farm once existed in the northeast corridor of Charlotte. A groundbreaking ceremony took place on March 11, 1962, to establish the Plaza United Methodist Church. The official founding date was May 3, 1961.

Plaza Church is approaching 50 years of dedicated service in this northeast Charlotte community. The Church and the surrounding Plaza community has experienced sharp demographic, economic, cultural and racial transitions in those 50 years, but “The Voice,” a missional movement of God, continues to be heard, “If you build it, they will come.”

The German theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, during World War II, from his Flossenburg concentration prison camp, wrote, “The church is only the church when it exists for others.” Plaza Church have heard the 'Voice' and believes we are God's church, set apart to genuinely care for our community.

Our mission statement is “Moving from Membership to Discipleship, creating a Vision Beyond Us.”

A clear and compelling vision is any church's greatest asset. People and resources follow vision/mission. Not the other way around. As important as it is to worship God on Sunday, the vitality of the Plaza Church and community is predicated on what services we offer during the week to follow Jesus' teachings, make disciples through missions, and transform the Plaza community and the world.

The physical center of Plaza Church's missional vision is the 14.6-square-foot Community Life Center, which includes a gym, office space and a chapel. Its creation began with an October 21, 1973 groundbreaking and construction was completed in April 1975.

The Plaza Committee on Lay Leadership, after identifying areas which can offer an effective missional movement within the Plaza community, met with the church leadership to discuss missional services. They believe the Community Life Center should be the catalyst for serving in the Plaza Community and that a number of former activities should be resumed and revived.

A few of these services are identified in the list below:

- Health-related missions should be revitalized by reconnecting with our resources at Carolina Medical Center/Presbyterian Hospital to establish workshops to be held in the Community Life Center.
- Hosting Older Adult services should be renewed through an effective Older Adult Ministry since quite a few in the community are retired and will participate in daytime activities.
- Research and plans are underway for early childhood care (Pre-school and Head Start), After-School programs, and special activities for children with special needs, who are often overlooked and have limited places to receive support services.
- Family life can be enhanced through workshops hosted by Plaza Church, but sponsored by the City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, Child Care Resources and other social service agencies. Inquires to use the Community Life Center for workshops, training sessions and special programs are in the process of scheduling for first quarter 2012.
- The continuing need for food will be well served with the planned expansion of Loaves and Fishes which fed over 1,348 families and 4,113 individuals from the Plaza Church site this past year. To better serve this mission, the operation will move in the Plaza Community Life Center this year.
- A new mission Kids Café will be created with the support of Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina, to serve the 90 percent of kids receiving free lunch at school during the week in

Plaza UMC— “A Missional Movement of God” (continued from page 4)

the Plaza community. The mission is needed to provide a free breakfast for the children on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

These items, “*The Voice*”, and others are aligned with the Outreach function of *The United Methodist Discipline*, which focuses on ministries beyond the four walls of the church building – *what we do for those who don’t come to the church*. The ultimate goal is to share and introduce Christ to the least of these.

“Outreach includes ministries of compassion which involve a congregation in addressing the immediate needs of individuals, families, and communities. The congregation will respond to local community needs and provide food, clothing, and emergency housing, counseling, and employment opportunities. But outreach should also include ministries of concern and advocacy calling for a congregation’s involvement in the enrichment of community life. The church should be an *advocate* for justice and for issues related to welfare, housing, drug abuse, education, economic development, health, and other community concerns.”¹

The Committee on Lay leadership and the Plaza congregation realize we cannot do this alone. In January 2008, the Charlotte District Mission Society awarded the Plaza Church a grant of \$10,000 for the much-needed renovation of restrooms in the Plaza Community Life Center. The pastor challenged the Plaza congregation to match this grant or else it would not be accepted. The Plaza congregation willingly met the challenge!

Currently, the Plaza Community Life Center is in need of additional up-fitting (painting, carpeting, a sound system, and video and IT equipment) to make it aesthetically pleasing and more accommodating for missional ministry.

The Plaza Church’s almost 50 years of community service would not have been possible without our United Methodist connectional system. The voice that was heard on March 11, 1962 almost 50 years ago is the same voice, but now it is speaking to a different missional movement of God. The time has come for the Plaza Church, despite financially challenging operations and infrastructure issues, exacerbated by an unsettled economy, to work with the public and private sectors on behalf of the people in its community. Our mission is to transform the lives of God’s people.

The Plaza Church is now calling on all of those who heard “*The Voice*” since that day in March 1962 to join us with your prayers, support and love. The missional task has been established and we believe, “*if we build it, they will come!*”

Peace & Grace!

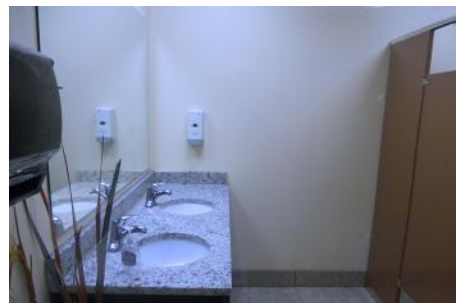
Dr. Fredrick B. Bowman, Pastor

Plaza UMC, Charlotte NC

¹The Book of Discipline of the UMC 2008



The chapel is painted and will be used for workshops/activities.



This is one of the two restrooms that has been totally renovated.

Ghana Mission's Commitment

We at Ghana Mission United Methodist Church, Charlotte would like to give praise and honor to our Lord and King, Jesus Christ for His manifold blessings. The idea of writing this article is to share with you what the Lord has been doing on the West Charlotte side of city near Charlotte/Douglas International Airport.

Ghana Mission United Methodist Church is committed to connecting people to God's message of love and hope through faith in the saving grace of Jesus Christ. The Church was formed out of two Bible Study groups about 7 years ago. The ministry really began expanding in 2005 from 18 members to 230 in 2010. Currently, we are averaging 250 in total membership. Ghana Mission presently worships in the Big Spring UMC facility.

Over the years, Ghana Mission has thrived in this obscured community with the Gospel of Christ. Every member upon joining the Church makes an **intentional** faith promise to obey Christ and to be loyal to the Church in its **intentional** outreach programs (such as Community Keep Fit, Health Screening, Picnic and charitable giving to Charlotte Men's and Women's Shelter and Crisis Assistance Ministry). Not long ago the Church donated an 18 passenger van to Trinity Theological Seminary in Ghana, West-Africa. The van is being used to transport pastors to the remote parts of the country to train and share the gospel with the least and the left behind.

We also offer opportunities for friendship to develop through small groups such as practical contemporary Bible Study, prayer groups, music groups, electrified and inspired worship services . One thing that will always remain the same at Ghana Mission is our deep passion and focus on God's Word and Community. This is what we do; this is what we live for! May God's name be praised and honored forever- Amen!



The ministration of song during Advent service.



Ghana Mission donated a van to Trinity Theological Seminary in Ghana, West Africa. It is used for transporting pastors to remote areas.



The sorting of clothes at "Crisis Assistance Ministry".



"Community Keep Fit" in action.



**2012
Charlotte District
Leadership
Vitality Rally**

Sunday
January 22, 2012
2:45 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Myers Park
United Methodist Church
1501 Queens Road
Charlotte, NC 28207

Keynote Speaker: Rev. Dr. Mark Ralls

Senior Pastor, Centenary UMC, Winston-Salem, NC

Co-author of the small-group program

Beginnings: The Spiritual Life and Beginnings-An Introduction to Christian Faith

Workshops (Select one to attend)

Streams Never Ceasing (Worship/Music)

Awakening (Evangelism)

Revitalizing Missions (Missions)

Resources for Revitalizing Our Churches (Education)

Revitalization of Prayer Life (Spiritual Enrichment)

Energize Outreach with Community Partnerships (Multi-Cultural Ministry)

Engage in Teenage Ministry (Youth Ministry)

Connecting Children's Ministry with Mission (Children's Ministry)

How to be a Terrible Local Church Finance Person (Finance Committees)

Trustees Training for the Future (Trustees)

Revitalizing Through SPRC: No Way or is there? (SPRC/PPRC Committees)

See brochure details at www.chardist.org,

Advance Childcare Registration Required: Contact 704-525-3395 no later than January 13th.

Caregivers will be based upon advance registration.

CHANGE CONFERENCE

at Christ United Methodist Church
in Hickory, NC
christnc.com

COMING
MARCH 9-10
2012

SPEAKERS

Dr. Jorge Acevedo
Grace UMC
Fort Myers, FL

Rev. Carolyn Moore
Mosaic UMC
Augusta, GA

Pastor Kevin Myers
12 Stone Church
Atlanta, GA

Bishop Larry Goodpaster
WNC Annual Conference
President of the Council of Bishops

Dr. Charles Kyker
Christ UMC
Hickory, NC



POSTIVE CHANGE. ONE LEADER, ONE LAYER AT A TIME.

*Change a leader, you change a church.
Change a church, you change a community.
Change a community, you change a nation.
Change a nation, you can change the world!*

Sponsored by
the Statesville District of the United Methodist Church
and Christ UMC, Hickory, NC

SCHEDULE

Friday, March 9th

7:00pm Worship with **Jorge Acevedo**, "Casting the Vision"
8:00pm **Kevin Myers**, "Radical Generosity"

Saturday, March 10th

8:30am **Jorge Acevedo**, "A Healthy Church Brings Healthy Change"
9:30am **Charles Kyker**,
"Two Tracking: One Foot in the Present, One Foot in the Future"
10:15am Break
10:30am **Kevin Myers**, "Healthy Change One Layer at a Time"
11:30am Worship Music
11:45am **Carolyn Moore**, "Preaching for Change"
12:30pm **Lunch Breakout Sessions** (choose one):
Worship, Senior Pastors Only, Children,
Life Groups, Creative Outreach, Funding the Mission
1:45pm **Afternoon Breakout Sessions** (choose one):
Session #1: Jorge Acevedo
"Revitalizing Existing Churches"
Session #2: Charles Kyker & Christ UMC Campus Pastors
"Starting New Worship Services & Launching New Campuses"
Session #3: Carolyn Moore
"Message, Medium, and Audience:
Marketing Your Church to a Starbucks Crowd"
3:15pm **Bishop Larry Goodpaster**, "Impacting Our World for Christ"
4:30pm Closing Worship

CHARLOTTE DISTRICT SPRING SEMINAR

It is customary for us, in the Charlotte district, to have a "Spring Seminar" in March or April to help sharpen our saw for effective ministry. In preparation I couldn't help but focus on the "call to action" which has been issued to us to revitalize our churches for growth. We live in changing times and must find new ways to reach out and bring people in. When you put this together, the two things I believe we need to focus upon are: evangelism and transition. I began to think of someone who could share with us and help prepare us, in practical ways, to be effective in ministry. The person who came to mind was Dr. Jorge Acevedo who is the pastor of the Grace UMC in the Florida conference. He has implemented a plan for evangelism and church growth which is very successful. After making contact about his availability during early March, I learned that Dr. Jorge was going to be in Statesville at the Christ UMC on the dates of March 9 – 10, 2012. The Charlotte District Christian Discipleship Academy suggested that we "piggy-back" with the Statesville District, and make this event OUR spring seminar event.

Each church in our district is encouraged to participate in the "Change Conference."

Stay tuned. Registration details for churches will be sent to pastors.



Lay Speaking Ministry
Charlotte District
2012 Lay Speaker's Training

The Charlotte District is excited to announce its 2012 Lay Speaking training courses.

The training is open to all. You will have the opportunity to gain valuable experience, knowledge, and confidence that will serve you in your ministry. Lay Speaking courses are offered in basic and advanced classes. The goal is to provide effective leadership in our churches through the laity. Whether you teach Sunday school or lead a Bible study you will gain valuable insights into how to become an effective leader in your chosen ministry. Every Church Lay Leader should be a certified lay speaker. The basic (new certification) curriculum focuses on the many ways lay speakers are called to be in ministry. Our advanced (renewal certification) curriculum this year is "Create Disciple-Making Faith Communities" by Craig K. Miller.

Visit www.gbod.org to obtain information on Laity and Lay Speaking Ministry.

In His Service,

Bobbie Denny

Bobbie Denny

District Director of Lay Speaking

704-536-69783333

Irma Ellwanger

Irma Ellwanger

District Lay Leader

cc: 2009 Lay Speakers, Lay Leaders, Pastors

2012 Basic/Advanced Lay Speaker Training

Dates: Monday nights in February (Feb. 6, 13, 20 and 27)
Lay Speaker Training Graduation, Sunday, March 4, 3 p.m., also at St. Paul UMC
Time: Registration 6 p.m., Class 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Location: St. Paul UMC, 2830 Dorchester Place, Charlotte NC
Cost: \$10 Basic Course (New Certification), \$30 Advanced (Renewal Certification)



Registration Form for Lay Speaker's Training – Charlotte District

February 6, 13, 20, and 27, 2012

Name: _____ Church: _____

Street Address: _____ City, State Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Office Phone: _____

Email: _____

____ Basic (New Certification) \$10 per person or ____ Advanced (Renewal Certification) \$30 per person

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Pastor's Signature _____

Make check payable to Charlotte Methodist District Fund and mark for LSCS and to: Charlotte District Office,
The United Methodist Church, PO Box 5622, Charlotte, NC 28299



2012 IRS Mileage

The Internal Revenue Service issued the 2012 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes.

Beginning on Jan. 1, 2012, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) is:

- 55.5 cents per mile for business miles driven
- 23 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes
- 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations

The rate for business miles driven is unchanged from the mid-year adjustment that became effective on July 1, 2011. The medical and moving rate has been reduced by 0.5 cents per mile.



The deadline to complete this process is January 15, 2012.

The annual clergy profile is to be reviewed online annually by each pastor. The annual church profile is to be reviewed by the SPRC/PPRC and updated by the committee's chairperson. It is important to note that annual profiles of pastors and churches are **required irrespective of an anticipated change in appointment or not**. Profile information is used to maintain current information files about pastors and churches in the Western North Carolina Conference.

If you have questions or need login assistance please contact the district office at 704-525-3395.



The 2011 End of Year reports/statistical information will be **due on Tuesday, January 31, 2012**. Churches will input information into the online system again this year. Access will again be available through the church's log-in on the WNCC administrative website (www.wnccadmin.org). The system will open on January 9, 2012. Instructions have been sent via email to pastors. If you need additional assistance contact the district office (704-525-3395).



2012 Western NC Annual Conference

Mark Your Calendar!
The 2012 Annual Conference date is June 20-24 at
Lake Junaluska.

Stay tuned to <http://www.wnccumc.org/ac12/12ac.htm>

**CHARLOTTE
DISTRICT OFFICE
OF THE UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH**



3400 Shamrock Drive
Charlotte, NC 28215
Mail: P.O. Box 5622
Charlotte, NC 28299

Phone: 704-525-3395
Fax: 704-525-4238
www.chardist.org

District Office Email:
drivens@wnccumc.org

Gary C. Royals,
District Superintendent

DeEtta Rivens,
Administrative Assistant

Calendar

JANUARY 2012

- 2 District Office Closed: Observance New Year's
- 8 Local Church Lay Leader Training, 2:30 pm, St. Andrews UMC, Charlotte
- 10 Charlotte District Clergy Meeting, Myers Park UMC, Special Guest, Biblical Scholar Dr. Ben Witherington, 9:30 am
- 14 WNCC Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, 10 am-3 pm, Bennett College (pg. 3)
- 16 District Office Closed: Observance Martin L. King, Jr.
- 22 Charlotte District DLC "Vitality Rally", Myers Park UMC, 2:45 pm, (pg. 7) (Inclement weather date Jan. 29)

FEBRUARY 2012

- 4 *Turning Tippers in Tithers*, Huntersville
- 6, 13, 20, 27 Charlotte District Lay Speakers Training, St. Paul UMC, Charlotte (pg. 9)
- 9 Mission to Ministers, Myers Park UMC, Additional details TBA.
- 11 UM Women Mission Study, Providence UMC (Inclement weather date Feb. 25)
- 24-26 Preacher's Kid Weekend, Age 10 to Grade 8, Camp Carolwood, Lenior <http://wnccumc.org/Cal/pdf/PKweekend2012.pdf>

MARCH 2012

- 4 Lay Speakers Graduation, St. Paul UMC, Time TBA
- 9-10 Spring Seminar Partnership with Statesville District, Christ UMC-Hickory "Positive Changes: One Leader, One Layer at a Time", (pg. 8)
- 17 UM Women Prayer Breakfast, Mouzon UMC, Time TBA

Learn about other upcoming events/opportunities in the Western NC Conference at <http://wnccumc.org/Cal/calendar-events.htm>

