

July 20, 2006

Electronic
Newsletter



Charlotte District

E-Connections

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors



Patrick and Laura Hamrick are appointed as the new clergy couple at Fair View UMC (Mt. Mourne, NC).

Pat and I have appreciated the opportunity of visiting in the homes of nearly all of the pastors who have moved into the Charlotte District. Our sojourn was made a bit more convenient this year because some of the associates were able to arrive ahead of the magical moving day and several pastors were delayed due to parsonage renovation. Thus, over a five-day period, we were able to greet nearly all those who come bringing the full measure of their devotion to ministry in their new parish appointment in the Charlotte District. Even though our next move will likely be to a place for retirement in 2009, we empathized (due to eight previous moves) with every tale of woe experienced by those in transit: grief in departure, joy in receiving hospitality; anger in response to fatigue and unrealistic expectations, and peace in contemplation of pastoral achievements and goals realized.

On July 25th, we shall have the opportunity to honor and greet those who are our newly-arrived colleagues. The new pastors and their families will be guests of clergy families who attend a welcoming dinner at Simpson-Gillespie UMC. We shall have no business agenda (except for the distribution of a packet and a few announcement reminders). The host church will provide the food, along with some musical entertainment and inspiration.

We shall have at the dinner copies of a new book by L. Gregory Jones and Kevin R. Armstrong entitled, Resurrecting Excellence. The cost of the book cost is \$12.00. We are excited about the fact that Greg Jones will make one of his first public appearances after the publication of this book by being our keynote speaker at the Charlotte District Clergy fellowship meeting on September 6, 9:30 AM at Dilworth UMC. Please place this event on your calendar now. Frankly, I cannot imagine why any of us would want to miss this extraordinary opportunity. Get your reservations into DeEtta Rivens in the Superintendent's office if you wish to have lunch with Greg at Dilworth.

How do we develop and sustain in our professional life the spirit of the apostle Paul who challenged the Philippians to "live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ...standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel. And are in no way intimidated by your opponents" (Philippians 1:27-28). I encourage all of us to read Resurrecting Excellence and see its message as an answer to the challenges presented by Bishop McCleskey at the clergy session of the Annual Conference. Let us strive to support one another as we resurrect excellence through spiritual disciplines that are rooted in Christ-centered priorities. Let us work smarter (not necessarily harder) at addressing the seven visionary priorities adopted by our Conference. And, let us be unified through putting on the mind of Christ as articulated by Paul in Philippians 2:1-11.

To this end, the Executive Committee of our Charlotte District Clergy Fellowship will plan for an early morning, 8 AM monthly communion service for neighboring clergy at various locations throughout the district. Each Eucharist will be led by the host pastor.

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Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

Each is open to all our clergy, church staff, and others. But we encourage especially those in the cluster or neighborhood regions to attend. This is our schedule for the Conference Year (all on first Tuesdays of the month and limited to one hour 8-9 a.m.):

October 3, 2006 at St. Stephen
January 2, 2007 at St. Mark's
April 3, 2007 at Thrift

November 7, 2006 at Salem
February 6, 2007 at Good Shepherd
May 1, 2007 at Huntersville

December 5, 2006 at First
March 6, 2007 at Providence

On Thursday, November 2nd, our fellowship will meet at Dilworth, and I will render an address entitled, "The State of the Charlotte District," followed by discussion and lunch. On January 4th, we shall assemble at the Bethlehem Center. Our March 1st clergy gathering will be the first phase of the Annual Spring Seminar. Attendance is required for this, due to the importance of the event, its relevance, and its accountability linkage to the Charge Conferences of 2007. Kenneth Callahan will be our special guest lecturer on the general theme, "The Spiritual Dimensions of Stewardship".

No district in all of Methodism is so blessed by a vibrant economy, growing populations, and hunger for the gospel. Our vineyard is an exciting and productive arena for practicing excellence in ministry. But we shall each fail in our attempt to the faithful if we attempt to do the ministry of Christ alone. Let us collectively, as clergy of the Charlotte District, put on the mind of Christ who emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, humbling himself and becoming obedient to the point of the cross. Through what he has done, excellence will be resurrected within us as we joyfully follow in this way.

Grace and peace,

George

George Thompson
Charlotte District Superintendent

McCLESKEYS LEAD HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE



January 16 and 17, 2007 are the departure dates for an exciting journey to the land and sites so vital to our faith history. Bishop and Mrs. Lawrence McCleskey will be our hosts for these unique and transformational experiences. There are two options, "Holy Land 2007", leaving on January 16 and "Jesus and the Galilee 2007", leaving on January 17. Each trip will include shared times with the other and the McCleskeys will also spend time with both. Persons, regardless of prior experiences in Holy Land travel, may register for either. Clergy, you can earn your trip by recruiting and hosting members of your church, friends and family as you give them the wonderful opportunity to travel to places that connect us more fully to the life of Jesus—the Galilee, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, etc. What an opportunity to expand your Disciple Bible ministry and to provide Sunday School teachers a deeper background for leadership through direct contact with the land of the Bible.

More information is available by contacting the Rev. Dr. Thomas R. Sigmon. Tom is serving as Charlotte District Coordinator. Tom will be glad to provide information and assistance to you as you make you plans for participation. Please do so soon. January 2007 is not far away! You may contact him at 5518 Dunedin Lane, Charlotte, NC 28270-6500, 704-362-2398 or trsigmon@carolina.rr.com.



A Move Within

Rev. Jim Humphries was fortunate enough to move within the Charlotte District--from Asbury to Christ UMC. He is featured here with his family at the Asbury parsonage following the final service of worship and before taking his new appointment.

Ghana Mission Celebration



On the week-end of June 23-25 the Ghana Mission United Methodist Church celebrated its inauguration through a series of services culminating in worship on Sunday. The Mission meets each Sunday for worship at Big Spring UMC, 5300 Old Dowd Road, Charlotte but this inauguration has launched the congregation's ministry in the larger community of Charlotte. Over 300 persons were in attendance during these services. The host pastor is Emmanuel Boakye-Yiadom and the guest preacher for the final service was District Superintendent George Thompson. Fea-



Ghana Mission Choir

tured here (right) are several men leaders of the Ghana Mission congregation at a time of greeting, the Very Rev. Kofi Bart-Martin (below), from the Methodist Church Conference in Ghana.



Children's Sabbath - It's Not Too Early to Plan Your Event

The National Observance of Children's Sabbath on **October 20-22, 2006**, encourages a long-term commitment to help children and families through prayer, education and service, with a special emphasis in 2006 on putting our faith into action. Think about what your church can do to address the needs of children.

Visit www.kintera.org/TR.asp?ID=M7181526410943704331235365 for additional information.



At the worship service of July 16 the children of Hunter's Chapel UMC gather to hear the children's meditation that dealt with the theme of prayer in the life of each believer.

Western NC UMC Conference News

Urgent notice to all SpiritUs group leaders, pastors

Very important Safe Sanctuaries reminder: Our conference policy is that every church shall have a Safe Sanctuaries policy and procedures in place and enforced. This policy includes the performance of criminal background checks on all adult supervisors /counselors (including pastors, parents, youth leaders), completion of the required questionnaires and information on file for all adult supervisors, as well as appropriate training, team teaching and supervision. **Each church sending a group of campers to SpiritUs must have a Safe Sanctuaries policy in place prior to arrival at camp and the policy must be followed for the group attending.** Please make sure your church is in compliance.

For more information about Safe Sanctuaries, visit www.wnccumc.org/yth/pdf/WNCC-YouthEventProcedures.pdf

Spiritual Gifts: the MAGI Method



To: Pastors, Staff, and Laity

From: Rev. Bev Copley, Charlotte District Evangelism and Discipleship Coach

Re: **Learning Module Coming to Your Area – Sunday, July 30, 3-5 pm**

Teaching the Congregation About Spiritual Gifts: The MAGI Method

I hope your time at Annual Conference was both restful and inspiring, and that you are now in the midst of a summer schedule that will lead to a great fall season for your churches. I am delighted to announce a learning module that will take place at **Grace UMC** (737 E. Woodlawn Rd., Charlotte) on Sunday, July 30 from 3-5 pm. Pastor Sheila Ferrell Bishop and congregation will be hosting us. **Rev. Judi Hunt, of the Matthews United Methodist Church**, will be our facilitator and her topic will be **Teaching the Congregation About Spiritual Gifts: the MAGI Method**. Many of you have been asking for a localized module on Spiritual Gifts, and Judi is a great teacher with a proven track record for equipping the saints for the work of ministry in their areas of giftedness and passion. We look forward to using Judi on many occasions, and this will be her debut in this role in the Charlotte District.

This event is for: Pastors, Staff Members, Church Council Members, Committees on Lay Leadership (Nominations), Age-Level Ministries Leaders in Need of Recruiting Tools.

These events will always be RSVP events, so that we can know you are coming in order to have appropriate handouts available. Please let us know the (approximate) number of folks in your church who will be in attendance. Please RSVP to Rev. Judi Hunt at judi@matthewsumc.org **no later than Monday, July 24**. She will be giving you the tools you need to recruit by gifts, reduce burnout in your local church, and watch people grow in their faith. As always, e-mail me with any questions at bcopley@ucumc.org, and we hope this module will be helpful for you all.

New Ministries – New Opportunities

Reverend P. Glenn Kinken, III

Here at the United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina, Inc. we are constantly seeking new opportunities to strengthen our connection with the churches and institutions of the Western North Carolina Conference. At Annual Conference we unveiled two opportunities that will provide for a stronger conference. The UMF Development Fund and the UMF Loan Program will work together to meet the income and borrowing needs of churches and institutions across western North Carolina.

The UMF Development Fund is an investment vehicle whereby individuals, churches and institutions can deposit money and earn a competitive return. Many of our churches and institutions seek an investment that provides a competitive return. The new UMF Development Fund is a relatively low risk fund that is designed to generate a positive return. The rate of interest on the fund will be evaluated on a quarterly basis and will be adjusted as necessary. Currently the fund is paying 5.0% interest.

The UMF Development Fund also represents the Foundation's first investment option for individuals. Now individuals can invest their resources alongside those of the churches and institutions of the annual conference and earn the same rate of return. Money invested in the UMF Development Fund will be loaned to United Methodist churches and institutions across the state. In reality, an investment in the UMF Development Fund is an investment in our conference's growth.

The UMF Loan Program is a part of the Foundation's ongoing goal of helping churches and institutions be good stewards of their resources. Funds provided by the UMF Development Fund will be used to make competitive loans to churches and institutions for new construction, renovation, property acquisition and debt refinancing. Currently loans through the UMF Loan Program are being offered at 7.0% compared to the Prime Rate of 8.25% as of July 1, 2006. As a part of the Loan Program we have produced the *Church Building and Loan Manual*. This is an excellent resource for guiding churches through all the necessary steps required for building and to aid them in assessing their financial picture.

These two new ministries have been designed with your needs in mind. They are the ultimate win-win situation for our annual conference. Through the UMF Development Fund individuals, churches and institutions earn competitive returns while providing a funding base for the growth of our churches. Likewise churches involved in the UMF Loan Program receive competitive loans to expand and through the interest paid, provide income for the churches and individuals that believe in them and the cause of United Methodism in western North Carolina. Ultimately these two new ministries go hand-in-hand as United Methodists helping United Methodists.

To learn more about the UMF Development Fund, the UMF Loan Program, or about the other ministries of the Foundation – Endowment Development, Planned Giving, and Fund Management – contact us at 1-800-562-7929, ext. 146 or visit our website www.umfoundationwnc.org. We look forward to serving you!



Reverend P. Glenn Kinken, III is the Senior Vice-President for Planned Giving and Communication for the United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina, Inc.

District and Conference Information

Job Opportunities

Asbury UMC in Huntersville has an opening for a pianist/choir director. For more information, please contact Pastor Jimmy Howard at 704-458-8187.

South Point UMC in Belmont is looking for a part-time pre-school director for their small pre-school. Interested persons may contact sptumc@southpointumc.com.

Southeastern Jurisdiction Association of Older Adults is sponsoring the "Terra Incognita" Conference at Lake Junaluska **August 7-10, 2006**. This year's theme explores participants walk with God through unknown lands of their lives. This event is for anyone over age 55, and persons working with older adult ministries in their congregations. Registration information: www.sejumc.org/sejac/ministries_lay.cfm?id=158 or call 828-454-6710.

Western NC Conference Charge Conference and Year-End Report Workshop

Thursday, August 24th Registration at 9:30 a.m.— Workshop 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. (Lunch Included at Noon)
Myers Park UMC, 1501 Queens Road, Charlotte

This workshop is designed to assist clergy and office staff as they prepare for Charge Conference and the Year-End Report. The cost of the workshop is \$10 per person. Registration forms will be sent to each pastor by mail and will be available at the district website www.chardist.org.

"Having the Marriage of Your Dreams"

Topic: Leave, Weave, and Cleave

Second Annual Marriage Enrichment Experience

Presented by University City United Methodist Church, 3835 WT Harris Blvd., Charlotte

Palmer Trice will share tips to strengthen your marriage and how to put these suggestions into action. Friday and Saturday, **Sept. 22-23, 2006**. Register online at www.ucumc.org or call 704-369-8007.

Reminders and Deadlines

Orders accepted for 2006 WNCC Journal

The conference secretary's office is accepting orders for the *2006 WNCC Journal*. This volume contains the proceedings of the 2006 annual conference session (addresses, appointments, minutes, reports, etc.) and the statistical tables for 2005. Cost is \$20 for a printed book and \$10 for a compact disc (PDF files). The journal will also be posted on the conference web site. Persons wishing to order a book and/or a disc should send a check, made payable to 'WNCC Treasurer,' to Sandra Hargett, PO Box 18005, Charlotte NC 28218, no later than August 2.

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