

Charlotte District E-Connections

June 17, 2011

Volume 36, Issue 16

Electronic Newsletter
Charlotte District
of The
United Methodist Church
Western NC Conference

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Special Points of Interest:

- ◆ 2011 Annual Conference Highlights
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Gracias!



Pat Thompson and D. S.
George Thompson

Among the many volumes that were gifted to eager readers by the Catholic priest, social activist, and Christian contemplative, Henri Nouwen, is a remarkable account of his experiences among the common people of Latin America entitled, *Gracias: A Latin American Journal*. His classic words resonate with my state of mind at the conclusion of forty-three years of active ministry: "It's hard for me to accept that the best I can do here is probably not to give but to receive. By receiving in a true and open way, those who give to me can become aware of their own gifts in the eyes of those who receive them gratefully. Gratitude thus becomes the virtue of a missionary. And what is more Eucharistic than a life of gratitude?"

My life among you has indeed been a Eucharistic existence. The more love that I have given, the more I have received. The reservoir of God's love is infinite in quantity and quality. Thus, I am grateful for the unique privilege of having been a pastor. Memorable parishioners of all ages and circumstances of life have shared with me the spiritual intimacies of their beings through sessions of counsel and confession. I have been given by our denomination the joy and challenge of serving seven appointments that have nurtured my developing discipleship, utilized my dormant spiritual gifts, and urged me to become more than I am.

Parish ministry is a calling of personal surrender to an Authority; thus, it implies self-sacrifice and servant leadership. But each pastor knows that, in the process of giving, the clergy servant receives far more than one gives. At this moment, I am overwhelmed by the generosity of our churches through the General Board of Pensions. Except for voluntary contributions into the Personal Investment Plan (PIP), my pension retirement funds come from the love of seven parishes that paid apportionments or paid directly into the Pension Fund. Back when my total annual salary was a mere \$4,800 (with no business travel reimbursement), those three little churches in Union County paid their apportionments and, thus, contributed toward my retirement income that will commence in July of this year. I do not take this blessing for granted!

The good news is that each of our appointments has provided a parsonage. The bad news is that each of our appointments has provided a parsonage. This paradoxical reality needs to be acknowledged by all our clergy on "day -one" of one's ministry in order that each clergy family develops a strategy for retirement. Fortunately, Pat and I were able to make a down-payment on a home in Waynesville thirteen years ago. We have never spent a night in our retirement home but have rented it through these years. We and Bank of America are proud of the mountain home we own together. Last week a *Time* magazine article disclosed that it is more economical to rent in cities like Charlotte and San Francisco than to invest in home ownership. But each pastoral family needs to dialogue with a reliable financial planner, develop an appropriate (continued on page 2)

Gracias! (continued from cover)

strategy, and stick to a monthly plan that builds toward a measure of retirement security. Our new address, after June 28th, will be 191 Highland Road, Waynesville, NC. 28786 “Y’all come!”

I am especially grateful for the privilege of serving as your district superintendent in Charlotte. I began this work with a selfish reluctance, rather than openness to what God wanted me to do. If I had not been appointed to this office, I would have never experienced the profundity of relationships with the many devoted leaders among the laity of this district, nor would I have the distinct honor of mentoring, consulting with, and affirming a cadre of some of the finest clergy servants in the United Methodist Church.

Words can never express the unique blessing I have received by having as my co-worker DeEtta Rivens, a WNC Conference veteran Administrative Assistant. No one does this work with more grace and competence. In these eight years I have never encountered her in a conversation with anyone related to this ministry that was not the epitome of graciousness, civility, and respect for the individual.

Thus my concluding word to the congregations and pastors of this district is “*Gracias!*” The clergy honored me with a dinner-on-the-lawn at Kilgo UMC in early May. Thanks for that generous donation to the Katrina Relief Work Teams in my honor. Thanks also to all who participated in the planning and execution of the gathering on the afternoon of June 5th at Providence UMC. Your laudatory words are not deserved but are greatly appreciated.

I am grateful to Bishop Larry Goodpaster for his wisdom in making such good appointment matches, especially within this district. None is more appreciated than his choice of Gary Royals as my replacement in the office of responsibility.

At every parish from which I have departed, the consensus declaration is this: “We shall soon get over your departure, George; but we cannot replace Pat.” She and I met in high school and had our first date in 1957. I shared with her then my sense of calling to ministry and my desire to be an effective pastor. Throughout our years of courtship, she affirmed and embraced this vision of our shared future. We have always been a team in service to others. During our pilgrimage of fifty-four years, we have lived out the reality of this initial dream.

On June 26th I shall return to the sanctuary of First UMC in Charlotte and, thanks to the graciousness of Elizabeth Coppedge-Henley, shall preach near the baptismal font where my faith pilgrimage began with this sacrament on July 4th, 1943. Life has come full circle for me.

The biblical faith provides no **theology of retirement**; but it has a profound and comprehensive **theology of rest**. (I recommend the Book of Exodus for all persons my age or older.) The rest and inner peace that I earnestly desire to receive is rooted in the reality that none of this has been in vain and that, throughout the tragedies and triumphs of parish life, God is at work **amidst all these things** in order to bring about God’s ultimate good.

For this I can only say, *Gracias!*

Soli Deo Gloria

George & Pat

George and Pat Thompson

Welcome

2011-2012 Clergy Newly Appointed in the Charlotte District

We welcome the following pastors into their appointments in the Charlotte District and look forward to the gifts they will bring to our churches and communities. Clergy move day is June 28th and the first Sunday of senior pastors in the pulpit is July 10th. The Charlotte District Clergy Fellowship will host the Clergy Family's welcome celebration on Thursday evening, August 11th at First UMC, Charlotte. Additional details forthcoming.



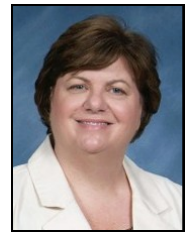
Charles Baker, Jr., First-Belmont



Morris Brown, Blair Road



Patience Brumley, Assistant, Cole Mem.-St. Luke Cooperative Parish



Michelle Chappell, Central



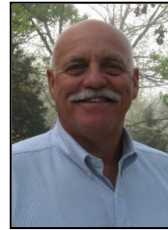
John Fitzgerald, Providence



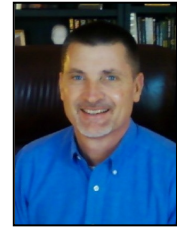
Stephanie Hand, Providence Associate



John Hester, St. Andrew's



Wayne Lynch, Morningstar Assistant



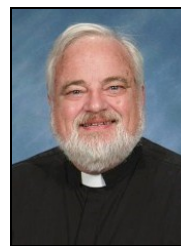
Kyle McCain, Cole Mem.-St. Luke Cooperative Parish Assistant



Donald Newman, Memorial



Angela Pleasants, First-Mt. Holly



Gary Richardson, Park Street



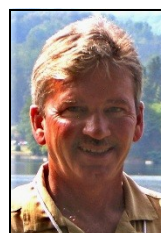
Ellen Robison, Myers Park, Minister of Worship and the Arts



Marilyn Smith, Zoar



Susan Webster, Central Assistant,



Robert Whittaker, St. Mark's Assistant



Nina Wynn, St. John's Associate



Confirmands outside Stuart Auditorium at the Chief Junaluska statue.

Ebenezer's Confirmation Class

The 2011 Confirmation Class at Ebenezer enjoyed a day trip to Lake Junaluska on Saturday, May 22. It was the first visit for several to Lake Junaluska. The group toured the assembly grounds enjoying stops at the cross, the Lambuth Inn and the Inspiration Point and Garden, Stuart Auditorium, Bethea Welcome Center, and a guided tour at the World Methodist Council and Museum. The tour and lecture by Mrs. Miriam Ward was an excellent and comprehensive review of the history the class has learned during confirmation. After visiting the World Methodist Council the group enjoyed a walk along the rose path and across the bridge. The confirmation class was accompanied by their pastor, Rev. Angela Hollar, her husband, Mark Hollar, and one parent, Crystal Christian. The confirmands will join the church on Sunday, June 19. The 2011 class: Ashley Christian, Katlynn Christian, Peyton Dowdle, Pete Hayes, Katie Painter and Leslee Taylor.

By Rev. Angela Hollar, Pastor, Ebenezer UMC, Belmont



Confirmands visit the World Methodist Council Museum internationally renown for having the largest collection of artifacts commemorating the earliest beginnings of the Wesleyan movement.



Confirmands stand with their pastor, Rev. Angela Hollar, at the foot of the Junaluska cross, a beacon of light and hope.



Capital Improvements Campaign at Ebenezer

Ebenezer UMC, located in Belmont, launched a capital improvements campaign in January. Their goal is to replace all HVAC throughout the facility, renovations for the addition of a lift to make the church handicap-accessible to 5 different levels and renovation of two bathrooms. Fund raising is underway. Here you see a picture of the six contestants in the Womanless Beauty Contest on April 9th. It was a night of great fun and laughter that raised \$2,021 for capital improvements.

Hunter's Chapel Host Pastor Appreciation Celebration

On the evening of June 4th the grateful members of Hunters Chapel UMC gathered in the dining hall of Huntersville UMC in order to celebrate an evening of pastoral appreciation as they rendered heart-felt thanks to their pastor, Rev. Emmanuel K. Boakye-Yiadom, for the past seven years of extraordinary service. Expressions of affection were articulated by a variety of speakers, including Kenneth Jackson who made a round trip from a commitment in Atlanta in order to render a personal statement of praise. Tamera Moody offered intercessory prayer for the Yiadom family and the congregation of Hunters Chapel, liturgical dancers performed, Steve Wilson provided inspirational music, and Raven Ferguson (one of the youth) read this poem that she had written especially for this occasion:

We Love Our Pastor Rev. Emmanuel Boakye-Yiadom By Raven Ferguson

Upon this night we show
how much we love you
for helping us grow.
Many of us had lost our way
and a wondrous man,
saved the day.
We were trapped in darkness
and you used all your might,
to step on in
and guide us towards light.
Truly blessed we are
to have you here
sheltering us,
from our deepest fear.
Not once have you given in
no matter how many trials we bring,
with a smile on your face
you just pray and sing.
All of us here
have gathered to say
We adore Reverend Yiadom
Happy Pastor Appreciation Day.



Rev. Emmanuel Boakye-Yiadom with his mother Mary (left) and wife Janet (right).

Men In Christ Ministry at Myers Park

Charlotte's Myers Park United Methodist is reaching out to men in a fresh, new way, sharing the love of God and support of their peers as they face some of life's most challenging issues.

Men In Christ began in February, when 150 men united in Jubilee Hall to share a barbecue dinner and hear Rev. Jody Seymour of Davidson United Methodist challenge them to reconsider what's most important in life. From there, 35 men have come together in small covenant groups to continue the conversation about faith, life, family and balance. The idea, says Rev. Shane Page, Minister of Evangelism/Involvement, is for large gatherings to offer inspiration and fellowship, and smaller gatherings a chance to talk openly and in depth. Page calls these small groups optional and guilt-free.

Church member John Herrmann, active in a small group, says the men with whom he has bonded have prepared a written covenant setting forth expectations, among them: Praying daily for each others, and balancing the time spent on work, family and friends. "The group encourages us to share our feelings and questions about God," Herrmann says. "Becoming comfortable enough to do this takes time. Once that trust is established, the men's group blesses me with a community."

Another member of a small group told Page, "I can feel myself getting spiritually centered to where I was before the recession hit and before becoming a new parent – no small adjustment."

Says Page: "They're changing lives, these small groups."

The larger gatherings – through a meal, program and informal worship – are connecting with men, too.

At the second *Men in Christ* dinner, evangelist Leighton Ford of Charlotte counseled 100 men to pay attention to what God is doing in their lives. Follow your instincts. And slow down, a lesson he says he especially embraced after the death of their son, Sandy.

He told the men to always ask themselves: What do we miss in life by not paying attention?

The next dinner meeting of *Men In Christ* – open to men 18 and over in the congregation and community beyond the church – will be at 6 p.m. Sunday, Oct, 23, in Jubilee Hall. Bishop Larry Goodpaster will speak.

To learn more about the men's ministry, including how to get one going in a congregation, reach Rev. Shane Page at (704) 295-4823 or shane@mpumc.org.

By Ken Garfield, Director of Communications, Myers Park UMC, (704) 295-4819



Charlotte evangelist Leighton Ford (left) spoke to the new **Men In Christ** ministry at Myers Park United Methodist Church, then stayed to talk some more. His message: Pay attention to what you might be missing in life.

Fredrick Bowman Receives Doctor of Ministry Degree

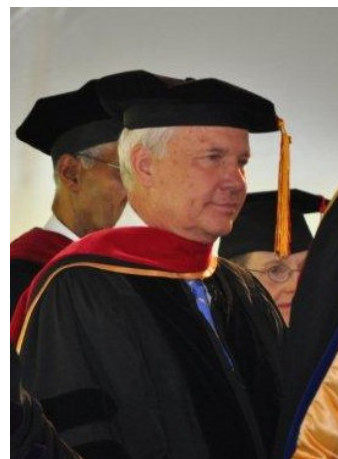
On May 14th Hood Theological Seminary, at its Tenth Commencement in Salisbury, NC, conferred upon Fredrick Bernard Bowman the Doctor of Ministry degree. Dr. Bowman's thesis was on the following theme: *A Program in Leadership Orientation at Plaza in Accordance with the Discipline of the UMC*. He is eager to implement many of the insights of his paper within the parish of Plaza UMC.

Families, friends, and parishioners of the graduating students crowded the worship space as Bishop William "Will" Willimon delivered an inspiring address and President of Hood, Dr. Albert J. D. Aymer, presented the candidates for the various degrees. Dr. Marcia Conston, Assistant Pastor at Providence UMC and Senior Vice President at CPCC, was presented the Master of Divinity Degree, *cum laude*, but was unable to attend due to the graduation exercises of her child on the same day.

Hood Theological Seminary is a graduate and professional school sponsored by the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and dedicated to the education and preparation of persons for leadership in the various ministries and vocations of the Christian church. -- By George Thompson



Dr. Fredrick B. Bowman with daughter, Meagan, and spouse, Kim.



Bishop William Willimon was the keynote speaker and recipient of Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree.

Korean-Anglo Service at Wesley



Rev. Jae Lee, pastor of Wesley.

On May 22nd the Charlotte District Superintendent, Dr. George Thompson, was the guest preacher at Wesley UMC at one of the services in which the congregation combines the language and culture of Korean and Anglo members. Words of hymns are placed in the two languages upon the screen so that each worshiper may sing in his or her native language in the spirit of Pentecost. The biblical text was read in bi-lingual context. Rev. Jae Lee received an advance copy of Dr. Thompson's sermon and distributed a one-page summary in the Korean language for the few in the membership that are not proficient in English. Several members, including Rev. Lee (shown in this photograph), dressed in traditional Korean clothing. Following the service of worship, the youth demonstrated their skills in karate, Korean dance and music. All enjoyed a festive Korean meal and fellowship at the noon hour.

2011 Western NC Annual Conference Highlights

June 8-12 Lake Junaluska, NC

Worship Services*

Opening Worship, Wednesday, June 8, Rev. L. Shane Stanford
 Commissioning Worship Service, June 10: Rev. Susan Pendleton Jones
 Worship, June 10th and June 11, Bishop Gregory V. Palmer
 Celebration of Life Service, June 11, Rev. Ashley Crowder Stanley
 Laity Address, June 11, Gregg Drabek
 Closing Worship and Sending Forth, June 12, Bishop Goodpaster
 Bible Study with Bishop Goodpaster

The Daily Digest of the Annual Conference are available at <http://www.wnccumc.org/ac11/11ac-Digest.htm>
Provides a daily overview of Annual Conference, resolutions and petitions, and other important information.

Election of 2012 General Conference Delegates

(Event: April 24, 2012 through May 4, 2012, Tampa, FL)

11 Clergy: Ken Carter, Kim Ingram, Sally Langford, Andy Langford, Angela Pleasants, Amy Coles, David Christy, Jeremy Troxler, James Howell, Arnetta Beverly, In-Yong Lee. *11 Laity:* Jennifer Davis, Robert Upchurch, Jennifer Burton, Betty Jo Hardy, Kim Wright, Coley Hooker, Amy Johnson, Jim Windham, Neffie Connie Locklear, Rob Lee, Lynne Gilbert.

Election of 2012 Jurisdictional Conference Delegates

(Event: July 18, 2012 through July 20, 2012, Lake Junaluska)

11 clergy: Nancy Rankin, Mark Key, Jan Brittain, Alan Rice, Shelly Webb, Stephanie Hand, Jody Seymour, Ashley Crowder, Andy Lambert, Lillie M. Jones, Charles Kyker. *11 Laity:* Joseph Lopez, Denny Wright, John Howard, Tonya Lanier, Mildred Carter, Sarah McKinney, Harry Underwood, Sandy Hieronymus, Ann Aldridge, William Green, Lazelle Free. *Clergy Reserves:* Terry Moore, Sam Moore, Sarah Davis, Elizabeth Coppedge-Henley, Saxon Scarborough, Sally Queen. *Laity Reserves:* James Hastings, Caroline Wood, Daphne Strickland, Irma Ellwanger, Philip Wingeier-Rayo, Megann Marbry.



UMCOR. Be There. Be Hope.

UMCOR's mission is to alleviate human suffering—whether caused by war, conflict, or natural disaster—with open minds and hearts to all people.

2011 US Spring Storms (Advance #3021326)

Haiti: Cholera Response In Moliere (Advance #418325)

Zimbabwe: Clean Water in Nyadire (Advance #3020600)

Bulletin inserts, remittance details and other information available at <http://new.gbgm-umc.org/umcor/>



A Service Celebrating the Appointment of Gary Royals the incoming Charlotte District Superintendent, will be held on Sunday, July 31st, 5 pm in the sanctuary of Myers Park United Methodist Church, 1501 Queens Road, Charlotte. A reception will follow in Jubilee Hall. Come join us for this celebration and the opportunity to meet Gary and his family. Gary, currently serves as senior pastor at Jamestown UMC (Jamestown, NC). He will bring greetings in the July issue of the district newsletter.



The Disciple Bible Outreach Giving Sunday is Sunday August 28th. The offering envelopes for your church have arrived in the district office. Flyers, videos, and talking points are available at http://disciplebibleoutreach.org/special_sunday_offering. For additional information call [336-454-5348](tel:336-454-5348) or e-mail MCHicks@northstate.net

Please call the district office (704-525-3395) and make arrangements to pick up by June 21st. This will assist us in the reduction of boxes to transport during our move to the new location. Thank you.

The Charlotte District Announces

The Rev. Dr. George Thompson Proclamation Institute

Three full days of "Theological Conversations"
Limited to 70 participants per session

August 30th, September 27th, and November 1st, 2011
10 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Co-sponsored with Pfeiffer University
Pfeiffer University Charlotte Campus
4701 Park Road, Charlotte, NC 28209



Cost \$30 per day (includes lunch)= Total for all three is \$90

.5 CEU for each event

Board of Ordained Ministry members will be present during lunch.

Additional information is forthcoming

Contact: Rev. Margaret Nunez at mmnunez@bellsouth.net

The *Rev. Dr. George Thompson Proclamation Institute* is geared towards Deacons, Local Pastors and Elders who are preparing for their commissioning and ordination. Those who are already ordained and would like a chance to refresh their knowledge in the areas of Theology, Call and Disciplined Life, and Proclamation are also welcome.

Each of the three dates will focus on either Theology, Call and Disciplined Life, or Proclamation for the full day. This year's focus will be on being able to communicate knowledge verbally in these three areas. Members of the Board of Ordained Ministry will be present at lunch for questions and answers. Our speakers will be educators who have been on the Board of Ordained Ministry in the past or are experts in their fields of knowledge.



UM Volunteers in Mission Opportunities

WNCC Building Teams
Local Church Teams
Conference Disaster Response/Recovery
Wesley Community Development Corp.

The Western North Carolina Conference Volunteers In Mission promote, encourage and enable Christians to exemplify "Christian Love In Action." Our aim is to achieve the Great Commission through providing short-term mission opportunities for everyday Christians to reach a new generation with God's love. We are a key component in expanding the conference vision, **Power of 3 for WNCC**, to have **3,000 UMVIM teams yearly by 2012**.

Learn more at: <http://www.wnccumc.org/vim/VIM.htm>

Effective June 22, 2011

moving

The Charlotte District Office of the United Methodist Church will relocate from
 4108 Park Road, Suite 101
 Charlotte, NC 28209

to
 3400 Shamrock Drive
 Charlotte, NC 28215

Mailing address:
 PO Box 5622
 Charlotte, NC 28299

Telephone and Fax Numbers remain the same:
 Ofc: 704-525-3395; Fax: 704-525-4238

The office will be located at the Western NC Conference Memorial Center in the former space of the United Methodist Foundation.

Charlotte District

Western NC Conference
4108 Park Road, Suite 101
Charlotte, NC 28209-2259
www.chardist.org

Phone: 704-525-3395
Fax: 704-525-4238
Email: charlottedistofc@wnccumc.org

George E. Thompson, District Superintendent
DeEtta Rivens, Administrative Assistant

*Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.*

John Wesley (1703-1791)

Calendar

JUNE 2011

- 17-18 WNCC UM Women Spiritual Growth Retreat, Lake J.
<http://www.wnccumw.org/>
- 19 UMAR Sunday Conference-wide
- 22-26 Harambee! spiritual retreat for youth and their coun-
selors, sponsored by the SEJ BMCR, Paine College*
- 28 Moving Day for clergy with change in appointments

JULY 2011

- 1 Official start day of moving clergy
- 3 Transition Sunday for moving clergy
- 4 District Office Closed: Observance Independence Day
- 10 First Sunday in pulpit at new appointment
- 14-17 WNCC UM Women School of Christian Mission,
Pfeiffer University. Visit <http://www.wnccumw.org/>
- 29-31 UM Deaf Ministry— 40th Anniversary Celebration,
Lake Junaluska
- 31 Service and Reception Celebrating the Appointment of
D.S. Gary Royals, 5 pm, Myers Park UMC

AUGUST 2011

- 11 Dist. Clergy Family Welcome, 6 pm First UMC-Char.
- 12-14 Gathering of the Laity, Lake Junaluska
- 27 Dist. UM Women Annual Meeting, 9 am, St. Stephens

SEPTEMBER 2011

- 5 District Office Closed: Observance Labor Day
- 9-11 WNCC UM Women Annual Meeting, Lake Junaluska
www.wnccumw.org

OCTOBER 2011

- 1 IMPACT Community Day
- 10-11 Convocation & Pastor's School, Duke Divinity

* Event details at <http://www.wnccumc.org/yth/yth-events.htm>