



# Charlotte District Connections

Volume 29, Issue 1

March, 2004

## Growth, Nurture, Service

March 4-6, 2004 - Myers Park UMC

Dr. Doug Anderson will be our special guest and consultant to teams representing churches throughout the district. He is on the staff of the Bishop Rueben Job Center for Creative Leadership, specializing in consultation through "Church By Size Seminars."

He will help pastors and teams of laity to understand the unique

and important ministry their church size offers. Pastors are asked to recruit 5-10 key persons for a leadership team to be trained on these dates. Pastors of larger churches (over 250 average worship attendance), please prepare your church staff to attend on Friday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, during the day. These workshops will be

instructive, inspirational and practical as we learn how to nurture our congregations into reaching a higher plateau of effective performance.

Registration packets were distributed to clergy on January 28th.

See the insert "School of Christian Discipleship", for more information.

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## "Charlotte District Connections" on the Web

Now, instead of waiting for the newsletter to arrive in your mailbox, you can download it electronically, open it on your PC or laptop, print it now and/or review it again later. This new method of communicating the newsletter to you will provide quicker turnaround

time and also help reduce paper, ink and distribution costs.

Beginning with the May issue, each church in the Charlotte District will receive three (3) copies of the newsletter to be distributed by the pastor. Clergy partners, retired clergy,

other WNC District Offices and the WNC Conference Office will remain on the mailing list.

Anyone with an Internet connection will be able to download the "Charlotte District Connections" newsletter from the

(See ...on the Web, page 3)

### Special Points of Interest:

- ◆ Get your newsletter from the Web
- ◆ Church Histories
- ◆ Sending information for Publication in the Newsletter

A Publication of the  
Charlotte District of the  
United Methodist Church

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## Meet the Web Masters of [www.chardist.org](http://www.chardist.org)



**Tommy Pharr** graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1976 with a degree in Psychology. He is married to Donna and is the father of one daughter, Cristie. He has 23 years of experience working in computer programming and systems analysis. For the last 7.5 years he has been self-employed, providing programming, system analysis and computer consulting on IBM Midrange/AS400 computer systems and PC programming in Visual Basic. This past year, Tommy increased his expertise in web design and development. In addition to managing the District website, he is assisting in the rewrite of the Conference web site and developing websites for businesses in the area. Tommy has been an active member at Cokesbury UMC since 1993. He holds numerous committee positions and currently teaches the Senior High Sunday school class. He enjoys reading military and science fiction genre books and watching professional and college football and basketball.



**Robin Daughtry** graduated from Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg VA, in 1983. She is the wife of Hugh, and mother of 2 children, Cammie (13) and Zach (11). Robin has worked for Cross Automation since 1995 and is currently the Marketing Manager. She is involved in developing their website(s) and eNews ([www.cross-automation.com](http://www.cross-automation.com)). She has worked with computer graphics, as well as other software applications since 1988. She has also developed a few charity websites, such as [www.friends4ryan.com](http://www.friends4ryan.com). This past summer, she was involved in the development of the new logo for Providence UMC. Robin has been an active member at Providence UMC since 1990 as a Sunday School teacher for young children, Girls' Basketball Coach and Communications Work Area Chairperson. She is also very active in her children's schools, as well as in the Sardis Swim & Racquet Club. Robin is an active tennis player - playing on USTA and Queen City teams with Sardis.



**Ben House, Jr.** graduated from Lambuth College in Jackson, TN with a BS Degree in Data Processing and Business Administration. He is married to Leslie and has one son, Ben III. Ben has been a member of Providence United Methodist Church since 1995, and has served as the webmaster of their site since 1998. He is currently the co-chair of the Communications Work Area at Providence. He has developed several web sites for nonprofit and small business organizations. Ben is an IT Project Manager/Consultant. He enjoys bicycling, golf, scouting with his son and other family activities.

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## Providence Celebrates 50 Years

On January 11th, Providence UMC celebrated their 50th Anniversary. Pictured are the present pastor and former pastors who attended the worship and luncheon.

- Paul Yount (1954);
- George Thompson (1998-2003);
- Harley Dickson (1975-84);
- Ken Carter (present senior pastor);
- James Gilland (1990-98);
- Herman Nicholson (1954-57); and
- Bernard Fitzgerald (1966-70)



The Charlotte District of the United Methodist Church invites you to the...

## 2004 District Leadership Conference

**Sunday, March 28, 2004**

**2:00-5:00 p.m.**

**Central UMC**

**6030 Albemarle Road**

**Charlotte, NC 28229**



**Keynote Speaker: Dr. Ed Trimmer**  
**Head of the School of Religion – Pfeiffer University**

*“Being Ambassadors for Christ and the Church”*

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**♥Bring Non-Perishable Food Items for Loaves & Fishes!!**  
**Lets fill a truck!**

Child Care is available by reservation. Please contact Becky Bingham at 704-537-2060 or MUMCBECKY@carolina.rr.com

Contact the district office at 704-525-3395 if you need additional information

### ... On the Web

www.chardist.org website. Please send your email address to the newsletter editor, Marcella Cook, at mcook@carolina.rr.com to receive your edition notice. If you currently receive the district's E-pistle, you will automatically be members of this electronic notification

process and do not need to take any action. If you do not have email access, you may request to remain on the mailing list by contacting Marcella Cook at 704-597-5270.

**First United Methodist Church**  
**invites you to hear the...**

### **Vienna Choir Boys**

Saturday, March 27, 2004

8:00 p.m.

501 North Tryon Street  
Charlotte, NC 28202

Tickets: \$20

For more information and tickets call  
704-971-4000

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## “Linked to Something Great”

“We are Linked to Something Great”, is the theme we heard in Dr. Percival T. Reeves’ report to the District Committee on Congregational Development. The committee held its January meeting at Plaza United Methodist Church where Dr. Reeves is the pastor. That “something great” is the United Methodist Church which is linked to something even bigger - the body of Christ.

Vince Withers, a staff member, writes in the

November 2003 newsletter, “Plaza UMC stands at a fork in the road. Having successfully overcome what should have been a demise, the church now stands at a crossroads ... God has brought us this far. Now it is decision time for Plaza.”

As it moves to new plateaus, the church’s accomplishments are truly

remarkable. Pastor Reeves reported that both men and women have moved to affiliate their organizations with the United Methodist Church by obtaining charters. There is a very active Recreation Ministry and a Performing Arts Ministry. Under the direction of Rowena Lewis, the Music Ministry currently has two active choirs.

At the annual charge conference, Pastor Reeves recognized three church members who are candidates for the ordained ministry. Two others were recognized as beginning the process.

With so many accomplishments, it appears that Plaza UMC has thus far taken the right fork in the road and with its outstanding leadership, will continue on this road.

By Mabel Topping

**Plaza UMC  
stands at a fork  
in the road.**

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## Emphasis on the “Web”

One of the workshops that you can attend at the District Leadership Conference will focus on communications with an emphasis on the Web. We believe that every church should have a presence on the Web and we plan to give you some tips on getting started. If you’ve already got a site - great! Then you can attend to learn some new ideas and/or share your experiences. Links on your website are important to extend your coverage, and help your visitors find more information. Here are a few links for United Methodists (this list will be available at the conference.)

[www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org)  
[www.chardist.org](http://www.chardist.org)

[www.wnccumc.org](http://www.wnccumc.org)  
[www.sejac-umc.org](http://www.sejac-umc.org)  
[www.umcom.org](http://www.umcom.org)  
[www.crt.umc.org/umac/default.asp](http://www.crt.umc.org/umac/default.asp)  
[www.gbgm.org](http://www.gbgm.org)  
[www.humbsite.com](http://www.humbsite.com)  
[www.upperroom.org](http://www.upperroom.org)

Official Site of the United Methodist Church  
The Charlotte district site. There’s a lot going on here, let the word go forth!  
Western NC Conference site.  
South East jurisdiction UMC  
United Methodist Communications  
UM Association of Communicators (UMAC)  
General board of global ministries.  
Hear your favorite Hymn.  
the Upper room.

Try linking to some of these sites and see what happens to your web.

Larry Hansen, Chairperson of District Committee on Communications

## Church Histories

Russ Ford, a longtime member of Hawthorne Lane UMC and local history buff, is compiling a history of Methodism in Mecklenburg County. Many churches in the district have already provided their individual histories for this project, but some have not yet responded. If your church has a brief written history which you can mail to Russ, he would appreciate it. The address is: Russ Ford, 9630 Watergate Road, Charlotte, NC 28270. You may also contact Russ by email at russford@att.net, or call 704-847-3302.

### Charlotte District Connections...

is published bi-monthly by the District Office. Please send information, articles and announcements for publication to: DeEtta Rivens, United Methodist Church District Office, 4108 Park Road, Suite 101, Charlotte, NC 28209-2259 or email articles and digital pictures to chardist@bellsouth.net.

Future deadlines for articles and announcements are April 14, June 14, August 14, October 14 and Dec. 14.

## Witness/Evangelism Upcoming Events 2004

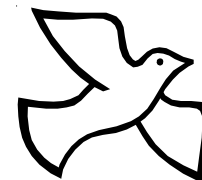


### Church of Excellence 2003

Deadline March 31, 2004

### Denman Awards 2003 (Clergy, Laity, Group)

Deadline March 15, 2004



### Contemporary Worship Workshops

Multi-Media/Technology

Music

Worship Dance (Crossroads Only)

Drama (Crossroads Only)

Starting a Contemporary Service in a Traditional Church

Planning a Contemporary Worship Service

Marking Contemporary Worship Work in Your Setting

(Crossroads Only)

New for 2004 – Worship for Youth & Students

(Crossroads Only)

March 20, 2004 Covenant– Asheville

March 27, 2004 Crossroads-Concord



### Natural Church Development

Help your church grow!



For more information or to request a registration form please contact the Office of Congregational Development at: 800-562-7929 x 123

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## District Calendar of Events

### MARCH

- 5-7 C2SX (Choose 2 Share Christ, Grades 9-11), YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly/Black Mountain
- 4-6 Charlotte District Church by Growth Seminars, Myers Park UMC (See article)
- 19-21 Training for Sidewalk Sunday School participants
- 26-28 WNCC and SC Conference Singles Event, Lake Junaluska
- 27 Bishops' Confirmation Celebration, Catawba Valley Comm. College, Hickory
- 27 District UM Women's Prayer Breakfast, 9:30 a.m., Cokesbury UMC
- 28 District Leadership Conference at Central UMC, 2-5 p.m.  
District Nominations Committee Meeting, TBA
- 31 - April 2, Cabinet Meeting

### APRIL

- District Committee on Ordained Ministry, TBA
- Golden Years Fellowship Gathering, 12 noon, TBA
- 11 EASTER SUNDAY
- 9 & 12 District Office Closed, Easter Holiday
- 14 Deadline to submit articles for next newsletter
- 15 Program Ministries Executive Council, 6:30 p.m.,

Providence UMC

- 16-17 PAUMCS (Church Secretaries) National Conference, Greensboro
- 16-18 Kaleidoscope (Grades 6-8), Camp Thunderbird, Lake Wylie
- 18 Sidewalk Sunday School Kickoff Sunday, 2-5 p.m., Providence UMC
- 21 District Hispanic Ministries Council, 4 p.m., Providence UMC
- 23-25 WNC Clergy Partners Annual Retreat, Catholic Retreat Center, Hickory
- 27 - May 7, General Conference, Pittsburgh, PA

### MAY

- WNC Annual Conference Pre-Briefing Session, TBA
- District Clergy Farewell, Date & Location TBA
- 20 District Laity Banquet, 7 p.m., St. Andrew's UMC
- 20-22 Disciple, Christian Believer, Jesus in the Gospel Training Sessions, Hilton Charlotte & Towers (222 East 3rd. St., contact 615-749-6068 to register)
- 25 WNCC Older Day Apart, St. Luke's UMC, Hickory

### JUNE

- 10-13 WNCC Annual Conference, Lake Junaluska

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GEORGE THOMPSON, District Superintendent  
DeETTA RIVENS, Administrative Assistant  
Marcella Cook, Editor/Publisher

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## School of Christian Discipleship

During my years of service at Providence UMC, I was impressed by the vast array of resources within that particular congregation and the collective resources of the Charlotte District. We have pastors assigned here who are reservoirs of information and inspiration. Some have given academic focus to issues of theology and ethics. Others have become extremely efficient at church growth with integrity. We have among us those who have devoted a life-time to studies of Wesley or biblical themes. We have laity in our congregations who work professionally with philanthropic giving and matters of stewardship. Moreover, some of our churches invite annually major inspirational leaders and theologians to the pulpit or lectern

The Charlotte region is a vibrant, paradoxical population of exploding growth and spiritual hunger. Yet, our United Methodist composite figures disclose modest numerical growth for our denomination. More than a few of our churches are in serious decline. Why?

Perhaps we have failed to maintain our focus upon making disciples, nurturing disciples, and commissioning disciples for Christ-centered service. Likewise, we have failed to utilize our most obvious strength: a compelling theology within a connectional system.

How can we use grow again with enthusiasm, vision, and clarity of purpose?

Let us begin by moving from **competition** to **cooperation**. Let us share our resources: personnel, programs, and spiritual gifts.

I have proposed, and the Program Council has endorsed, the idea of a Charlotte District School of Christian Discipleship. The first event sponsored by this “school” is the “Church By Size Seminars.” This mailing of District Connections should reach you approximately at the time Dr. Doug Anderson will be providing for us new insights on how to inspire each church to a new plateau of faithfulness in discipleship.

The school will provide continuity. You will be supplied at the seminar a listing of potential activities and events to be sponsored by the Charlotte District School. We shall meet in clusters after the March 4-6 seminars in order to implement strategies for cooperation among neighboring congregations.

Pfeiffer University is interested in partnering with our district as we develop curriculum and resources for this concept. The District Leadership Conference (now rescheduled for March 28<sup>th</sup> at Central UMC, from 2 to 5 p.m.) can be expanded into opportunities for year-round leadership training. We could provide some short-term classes available to members from the smallest of churches. We could coordinate district-wide Disciple Bible study so that all classes are filled with twelve, plus a facilitator and no one who wants to complete all four stages will be left behind due to inadequate resources in a small church.

How will such an idea be financed? Money follows mission. We shall start this ministry March 4-6 using existing district funds. If the people called Methodist in Charlotte really want to grow the church through cooperation (and the elimination of competition), the funding will follow.

This is an exciting time in our Charlotte region. The Panthers are not the only “team” that is poised for victory and joyous celebration. Cooperation and team work is the key to our maintaining our focus upon the Great Commission. As with Wesley, “If your heart is as my heart, then give me your hand.”

Grace and peace,  
George Thompson  
District Superintendent

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## Charlotte District Program Council Retreat

On the Friday evening and Saturday morning of January 30-31 the Program Council of our district met in retreat at Providence UMC. The tone of these sessions was set by our district superintendent, George Thompson, through the opening devotional exercise. He challenged the Council to equip each church in the district to be a “mission outpost” for proclaiming, through word and service, the Leadership of Christ.

In order to achieve this vision the various committees and work areas of the Council were assigned to one of the following four program functions: (1) Ministries of Evangelism (making disciples), (2) Ministries of Nurture (nurturing disciples), (3) Ministries of Serve and Outreach (equipping disciples for Christ-centered service), and (4) Ministries of Administration and Support.

Louretta Howze, chair of our Program Ministries Council, provided posters containing a statement of purpose for the Council defined by the Discipline: “The central purpose of the Charlotte District Program Council (DPC) is to resource and empower the local church to make disciples. Our mission is to nurture disciples effectively so that they may serve faithfully in the spirit of Jesus Christ.” Louretta led a discussion of this statement and challenged each of the ministry groups to prioritize a list of district-wide programs that we shall initiate in 2004.

The Council subsequently endorsed a central initiative for generating these initiatives: namely, the establishment of a School of Christian Discipleship. This school’s first sponsored activity will be for the purpose of making disciples through the Dr. Doug Anderson “Church By Size Seminars,” March 4-6.

This “school” will be staffed by adjunct faculty, using the voluntary resources of the Conference Program Staff, various pastors in the Charlotte District, and lay leadership with expertise in particular facets of ministry. Money allocated in the district program budget for seminars and retreat leaders will be used to employ the services of inspiration speakers and faculty personnel, from colleges and seminaries. Pfeiffer University is very interested in partnering with us in this initiative.

The Program Council is also endorsed the innovations coming from Rick Moore (District Lay Leader) and Laity Council regarding a Lay Rally at the Rock Spring Campground on August 21, 3-8 p.m., on Campground Road in Denver. Through this rally, we shall celebrate our heritage as Methodists by utilizing an old format of evangelism with a new voice of ethnic and cultural diversity.

On February 19 the Executive Committee of the Program Council met in order to start the process of prioritizing the many ideas stimulated by the retreat’s discussion. Bob Boggan will lead those engaged in programs of mission and outreach in a discussion of priorities so that all our outreach ministries will maintain a focus upon the effective expressions of evangelism, nurture, and service.

The Council will provide a questionnaire at the Church by Size Seminars in order to give leaders from each church an opportunity to define training and inspirational events for the School of Christian Discipleship.

Those attending the Program Council retreat were Mike Bailey, George Bradshaw, Stephanie Wilson, Paul Revere, Marie Parrott-Withers, Bob Mick, Gary Fulker, Rick Auten, Rick Moore, Lisa Martinez, Becky Bingham, Irma Ellwanger, Iva Allen, Sally Ainslie, Louretta Howze, Nina Wynn, Tom Sigmon, Sandy Hieronymus, Wade Lower, George Thompson, Bob Mick, T.L. Foster, Linda Jones, Debbie Juncula, Cynthia Robinson, and Fernando Little.