



Charlotte District Connections

Volume 29, Issue 2

May, 2004

Inside this issue:

Charlotte Website Bulletin Board	2
A Spiritual Day Apart Registration Form	3
District Invitations and Announcements	3-4
Conference Journal On-line	5
Reporting Conference Absences	5
UMW Upcoming Events	5
District Calendar	6

Special Points of Interest:

- ◆ *Posting Notices on
the Charlotte website
Bulletin Board*
- ◆ *Shalom Spring Fling*
- ◆ *Opportunities to
Serve Announce-
ments*

A Publication of the Charlotte District
of the United Methodist Church

STAY FOCUSED

That is a difficult task when there are so many sensational distractions. A few years ago, Bishop Richard Wilke statistically demonstrated that the United Methodist Church has experienced its most severe declines during the quadrennial years of General Conference. We have concentrated excessively upon the bureaucratic tasks of ecclesiastical maintenance and not the urgent agenda of growing the church's mission and cultivating discipleship. A decision by a committee in the Pacific Northwest Conference regarding the ethics of a "self-avowed practicing homosexual" will consume much energy of the delegates who will represent all United Methodists in Pittsburgh at the April 27-May 7 legislative assembly.

I especially question the ethics of a General Conference that will spend much time at all discussing an issue that was never

directly addressed by Jesus in any of his teachings. The most accurate thing that we can say about this divisive ethical issue is that we United Methodists are very conflicted. Our perspectives are influenced more by region than age or gender. I encourage our delegation to uphold the current wording of the Social Principles and to encourage the continuation of prayerful discernment and respectful dialogue. As a denomination, we have not achieved a clear consensus. Furthermore, there is not a Damman thing we can do to force the Northwest Pacific Conference into compliance. Do we really want to unseat their delegation?

Methodism is at risk of losing its focus upon the command of Christ to make disciples, nurture disciples, and imitate the servant leadership example of our Lord.

I encourage us to seize this opportunity here in the Charlotte District. Our entire region is exploding with growth and diversity. The real enemies of Christ are greed, materialism, sexual promiscuity, racism, violence, and the idolatry of a self-centered agenda. The culture surrounding us is hungry for the gospel and the presence of an inclusive community that embodies the love of God. We are stewards of the message of redemption, wholeness, and peace. Our theology offers that superb balance of the warm heart and the informed mind, the combination of scriptural holiness and constructive social action.

On Easter Sunday, I worshiped with the First Hmong UMC at their farm property and site of a future home. I felt the spirit of Eighteenth Century Methodism. I preached under the cover of a horse

(Cont'd on page 2)

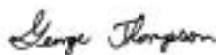
Stay Focused, cont'd)

stable, reminding me of the context of Wesley's excursions from the Foundary to the countryside. After worship, we joined in the fellowship of a delightful Hmong cookout. We ate delicious ethnic foods and watched the many children play games. The spirit of Christ was everywhere. Four young adults lingered to talk with me about steps they will take toward training for leadership as lay pastors.

The population of our district is growing rapidly with people who are arriving from throughout the world. We can share with them our greatest treasure: the love of God revealed in Christ Jesus and embodied within his community of faith.

We can do this joyfully and faithfully, only if we **keep our focus.**

Grace and peace,



District Superintendent

Hmong UMC Celebrates Easter



POST IT ON THE "BULLETIN BOARD"

The District newsletter is published bi-monthly. If you have an announcement, invitation, job description or etc. that needs to be shared before the newsletter is published, you can post it on the "Bulletin Board" on the chardist.org website. Visit the website, click on the words "Bulletin Board" on the left and follow the directions. If you need help, you may contact Webmaster Tommy Pharr at tpharr@carolina.rr.com.

Summer Concerts at the Cross



Cole Memorial United Methodist Church proudly presents our second annual series of **Summer Concerts at the Cross**, Saturday nights beginning June 19th at 7:30 p.m. Concerts will feature Christian musicians performing a wide variety of styles from Contemporary Christian to Southern Gospel. **The purpose of this concert series is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to encourage Christian fellowship in the Derita community.** Free admission. A love offering will be received to

help defray the expenses of the musicians. Bring your lawn chair or a blanket and join us under our 40-foot wooden cross. We are located at 2022 Sugar Creek Road (the intersection of Graham Street, Mineral Springs Road, and Sugar Creek Road), in the Derita Community. In case of rain, concerts will move inside the gymnasium. For more information, ***or to schedule your musical group or choir to present a concert***, call 704-596-2356, or e-mail carelink@bellsouth.net.

Visit the Chardist.org website "Bulletin Board" to see who will present our opening concert this year.

"What Does the Lord Require of Us?"

A Spiritual Day Apart featuring

Dr. Roberta Bondi, Professor of Church History

Candler School of Theology at Emory University

Western North Carolina Annual Conference

Wednesday, June 9, 2004

Harrell Center Auditorium, Lake Junaluska, North Carolina

Dr. Roberta Bondi, a leading teacher, writer and speaker will be our resource person for the 2004 Spiritual Day Apart. She has written nine books, with many speaking directly to faith and spiritual issues that face all of us. Dr. Bondi has an inviting narrative style of presentation and writing, coupled with a deep humility about the awesomeness of discipleship. She will lead us in an examination of the Micah 6:8 passage and how we can respond to this challenge.

The Day's schedule will begin promptly at 10:00 a.m. with the opening session, led by Dr. Bondi. Persons can check in at Harrell Center Auditorium beginning at 9:00 a.m. Lunch is included in the event and will be served in our meeting space from noon until 1:00 p.m. The afternoon session will conclude with a closing service of Holy Communion. The sessions will include presentations by Dr. Bondi, and time for questions, discussion, and small group time.

Registration information

All interested persons (laity and clergy) are invited to register and attend. This is NOT restricted to delegates to the WNC Annual Conference. Participants will be limited to the first 200 persons submitting their registrations. The all-inclusive cost of the event is \$20, and checks should be made to "WNC Conference Treasurer" and sent to our Registrar, Randy N. Sherrill, 3231 Blenheim Place, Winston-Salem, NC 27106. The registration deadline is Tuesday, June 1, or when 200 persons have registered, whichever comes first. Registration fees are NON-REFUNDABLE, since we will have ordered lunch for you, but you can contact our Registrar to transfer your registration to another person. Randy can also be contacted at rsherrill@triad.rr.com or 336-765-6186.

(Complete the form below and mail, with \$20 check made to "WNC Conference Treasurer" to:
Randy N. Sherrill 3231 Blenheim Place, Winston-Salem, NC 27106)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone and Email: _____

Number of attendees: _____ X \$20 each = _____ (Amount enclosed)

Don't Miss This!!!



"Spring Fling" at Thomasboro Elementary will offer you the opportunity to see the success of Shalom in person. Come out and tour the community at 11 am, 12 noon or 1:00 pm on **May 22**, to learn more about Shalom.

Thomasboro Elementary School
538 Bradford Dr Charlotte, NC 28208

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

Part time Church Administrative Assistant

Demonstrate strong organizational and computer skills, be proficient in Word, Excel, Access, and Quick Books; work well without direct supervision. Send cover letter and resume to: Thomas Mattox, 6824 Tuckaseegee Road, Charlotte, NC 28214.

If you have questions, please contact:
Jessie Keaton, Covenant UMC - Charlotte, NC
704-392-3925
keatonjessie@wmconnect.com

Director of Christian Education

Pleasant Grove UMC; Full time DCE position; Degree in Christian Education Required; For full job description, write or email church office,
pleasantgroveumc@carolina.rr.com.

Send resume to: Search Committee, 1915 Oakdale Road, Charlotte, NC 28216.

Harriett McCachren
Pleasant Grove UMC
704.392.2387

DISCIPLE Training Event

May 20-22
Hilton Charlotte & Towers, 222 E. Third

The DISCIPLE Training Event is beginning to fill up. There are still 90 DISCIPLE, 70 Jesus and the Gospels and 45 Christian Believer openings. This is the only DISCIPLE Training Event scheduled for NC in 2004. Reservations made 30 days or less prior to May 20th will be charged an additional \$50 for training. We are most grateful for your support of DISCIPLE Bible Study. God Bless.

Darrell Hayden
dhayden@northstate.net



George and Pat Thompson are the proud grandparents of a baby boy. Max Ambrose Vannoy was born on Saturday, March 20, 2004 at 4:42 a.m., in Greensboro, NC. He weighed 8 lbs.15 ozs. and was 22½ inches long. Congratulations to the Vannoy's. Stephanie and Max are doing fine.

Condolences to...

Mrs. Jane Wolfe and family in the passing of Mr. Daniel H. Wolfe who died on February 29th. Mr. Wolfe served as treasurer of the Charlotte District for many years.



Lay Rally

August 21, 2004

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*Place this date on your church's calendar.*  
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Our Charlotte District will host a festive gathering at the Rock Springs Campgrounds in Denver on August 21, 2004, 3 to 8 p.m. We shall begin with a rally of youth. Choirs and musical groups will then sing and a barbeque meal will be served. Doug Mayes, a member of Denver UMC and former WBTV anchor, will be our Master of Ceremonies. The closing worship will include holy communion. Brochures, bulletin insert information, and other forms of publicity will be e-mailed through the district office.



JOURNAL AVAILABLE ON-LINE

Volume II (Statistics) of the 2003 annual conference journal is now available on-line!

This is the beginning of what we intend to be our practice from now on. As soon as the journal (both volumes) is ready for publication - but still weeks before it will be issued as a printed book - we will post it to the Conference Website. We will also do the same with the Program and Reports booklet for each annual conference session.

At conference this year, the Committee on the Annual Conference Meeting will propose that this on-line version become the only way in which the journal will be available free of charge. The plan is to make it available also on compact disc and, of course, as a printed book, but the conference would begin to charge \$12 per 2-volume set for the printed books or a CD. In this way, the journal will truly become self-sustaining, which is at it should be. Many other conferences are already providing their journals in this manner. If you are a member of conference, I hope that you will see your way clear to vote for this proposal.

In the meantime, enjoy this on-line version and become familiar with how it works. You may access Volume II by:

1. Log onto www.wnccadmin.org (the conference's still relatively new administrative website).
2. Under "Announcements" on the left-hand side, click on the link that appears in the item about the journal.
3. Read the brief informational piece which will come up next, especially the part about how to get the Adobe Acrobat Reader if you do not have it. Once Acrobat Reader is installed, click on the picture of the journal cover.
4. You then see the Table of Contents and can begin to navigate your way through the journal. You may print any section you wish, but you will not be able to do any copying, editing, or changing!

Please let my assistant, Shannon Redden, or me know what you think of this new way of communicating, and feel free to make any suggestions for improvement.

Denny White, Conference Secretary

Absence from Conference

Clergy in active service who will be unable to attend the 2004 annual conference, June 10-13, are to ***"report by letter to the conference secretary, setting forth the reason for the absence,"*** as provided in the Discipline Paragraph 602.8.



If any ordained minister in active service is absent without a satisfactory reason, the secretary is required to report the matter to the Board of Ordained Ministry. Conference Secretary Denny White may be contacted at dwhite@wnccumc.org or P. O. Box 18005, Charlotte, NC 28218.

UM Women Updates

You're Invited to a Birthday Celebration!

Please join the District Annual Meeting as we celebrate
 135 years of mission service
 August 28, 2004, 9 a.m.
 St. Andrew's UMC
 1900 Emerywood Drive, Charlotte.
 Cost: \$4.50 per person. RSVP by Aug. 20.

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 WNC Conference School of Christian Mission  
**"The 6 T's"**  
 Greensboro College  
 July 22-25, 2004

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 WNC UMW Annual Meeting
 September 10-12, 2004
 Lake Junaluska Conference & Retreat Center
Theme: "To God Be The Glory"
 Contact your local church UMW President to obtain registration information for these events.

District Calendar of Events

Apr. 27 - May 7 General conference, Pittsburg, PA

MAY

- 2** WNC Annual Conference Pre-Briefing Session, 3:00 p.m. at Assurance UMC, Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road
- 12 - 13** *Cabinet Meeting*
- 19** District Hispanic Committee Meeting, Memorial UMC, 4 p.m.
- 20** District Laity Banquet, St. Andrew's UMC, 7 p.m.
- 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, 828-327-9837
- 27** District Clergy Farewell, Hickory Grove UMC, 6:30 pm
- 31** District Office Closed, Memorial Day Holiday

JUNE

- 10-13** WNCC Annual Conference, Lake Junaluska
- 12** Annual Clergy Partners' WNC Conference Luncheon, First UMC, Waynesville, 12:30 p.m.
- 12** Retiring Clergy/Spouses, WNC Conference, Harrell Center (Hospitality - 8 a.m., Reception - 10:30 a.m.)

JULY

- 15** District Clergy Welcome Gathering, Location TBA
- 22-25** UM Women's School of Christian Mission, Greensboro College

AUGUST

- 21** Lay Rally, Rock Springs Campground, Denver, NC, 3 to 8 p.m.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

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