

May 12, 2006

Electronic
Newsletter



Charlotte District

E-Connections



The Key that Connects

I encourage each pastor to make available in printed form an appropriate number of each edition of *E-Connections* from your district's office so that all leaders and interested parties within your congregation will indeed know what is happening around the Charlotte District. In addition to this, please forward this e-mail resource to your congregation's e-list.

When we were doing postal mailings of the bi-monthly *Connections* at a great expense, we rarely communicated current news. *Connections* didn't connect. But this alternate method will be equally ineffective unless it is disseminated within our local churches. **You are the key for making this happen.**

In the May 2 edition of *E-Connections*, we listed the projected appointments from and into the Charlotte District. Those who are leaving their present appointments are each experiencing some measure of grief, along with the excitement of venturing into a new parish appointment. On Thursday, May 18th, 6:30 p.m., at **Grace UMC**, we shall have an opportunity to embrace and affirm these colleagues and their families. We want to have as many clergy families as possible to be present at this farewell occasion. Any meal prepared by **Delores Jones** is special. The cost is \$9/person, \$5/child under the age of ten. **Joe and Camille Judge** from Matthews UMC will provide the entertainment. Their voices are unforgettably charming; so, we are in for a unique treat. Please get you're reservations into Hubert Clinard (704-827-2421) by Monday, May 15th.

Grace and peace,

George

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AN UPDATE ON SPENCER MEMORIAL: *THE RETURN OF ICHABOD*

The rapid growth in ministry presently experienced by Spencer Memorial, is not due to the wisdom and knowledge of man, but to that of God who in turn used sinful man like us, to effect his divine plans

Little over two years, Spencer experienced a major 95% membership migration that literally caused the death of this 100 year old ministry in the North Davidson Community. However, God in His own wisdom had a plan to resurrect His church. And so, in order to be aligned with the plans of God, the remnants of the exodus, sought the face of the Lord through fasting and praying as to what He will have us to do.

Then came the trying moment in February 2005 and the decision about whether Spencer Memorial should be allowed to continue to exist as a church due to her depleted finances and membership. But God proved to be the protector of the downtrodden when He heard our prayers and returned to dwell among us.

Due to the presence of the Lord, Spencer has progressed from a one-race congregation to a vibrant multi-racial congregation. Averaging in regular Sunday Worship from 95 – 150 compared to 25-40 in worship attendance around this time in 2005. We have grown from having only a single youth choir of eight members, to proudly boast of a Sanctuary Choir, a Praise Team and a Boys' Chorus who had their debut on Sunday, April 23, 2006 during our regular Worship Service. We have grown from a membership of 35 within 10 months to 126 members. To God be the Glory!

At Spencer we placed a high priority on each person developing a deeper relationship with God in order to effect a radical one-on-one evangelistic campaign designed in Kingdom building involving every member of Spencer. For we believe as a body that it's time to connect to God and to connect to each other in a real and authentic way, by loving and accepting all people for who they are regardless of their race or status. Something we pride ourselves in as a congregation and because of our commitment to doing these things, we are experiencing growth as recorded in the book of Acts 5:14 "More and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number."

Romans 15:1-3 tells us "We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up..." And so it was in late August 2005, through the initiative of Dr. George Thompson, Spencer & St. Stephen UMC came together to foster a ministry partnership. The purpose of said partnership was to strengthen Spencer in the following areas of ministries; Music (Organist), which we couldn't afford because of our depleted funds, and Adult Sunday school (Teachers) because of the unavailability of certified UMC Lay Speakers.



As a result of this partnership, our Music ministry has been revitalized while Spencer can now boast of having two certified Lay Speakers being ushered into taking over the teaching of Adult Sunday school class. We are grateful to St. Stephen UMC, for this partnership which gives us a whole new meaning of Romans 15:1-3.

Finally, being faced with death was the beginning of better things to come; staying committed to the things of God, is the only way we could've made progress in what has come, and by working together as partners, sustained what has already come among us, which is the Glory of the Lord.

Blessings and Peace!
Rev. Emmanuel S. Morris, Sr.

GOD ROCKS

Youth Rally 2006



featuring **7-MILES** leading worship
DENVER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH AND
SUNDAY JUNE 4TH
6:30-8:00PM **CORY SMITH**
FREE EVENT AS GUEST SPEAKER
CALL (704)483-1601
THIS IS AN OUTSIDE EVENT IT WILL BE MOVED INDOORS IN CASE OF RAIN

UPCOMING ...

Beginnings 2: The Spiritual Life – May 20 (Saturday) OR May 22 (Monday)

Central UMC, Concord, 9:30 am - 3:00 pm. Andy Langford, Mark Ralls, and Rob Weber will lead this event. The cost is \$25 and is open to the first 50 participants who will receive a free copy of Beginnings: The Spiritual Life Planning Kit for their congregation, which sells for \$125. Beginnings is an excellent resource for helping ordinary lay people and clergy share the gospel and welcome others into the body of Christ. Refreshments and lunch are included in the fee.

2006 Day Apart for Young at Heart – Two Big Days! – May 23 (Tuesday) OR May 25 (Thursday)

Older adults in both the Western NC and North Carolina Conferences are invited to choose the day they wish to attend this year's Day Apart for the Young at Heart Event: May 23 or May 25. Set to take place at West Market St. UMC in Greensboro, Dr. Rick Gentzler and F. Beldon Joyner, Jr., are the featured speakers. Bishops Al Gwinn and J. Lawrence McCleskey from both conferences will lead worship and celebrate Holy Communion. Also, Gentzler, director of the Center for Aging and Older Adult Ministries of the General Board of Discipleship (GBOD) of The United Methodist Church will lead a separate training event for older adult workers on Wednesday, May 24. Get all the details for both events at <http://www.wnccumc.org/fam/dayapart.htm>.

Annual Conference Spiritual Formation Event Announced – June 7 (Wednesday)

The theme for this year's Spiritual Day Apart at Annual Conference is "Covenant Discipleship Groups: Moving from Membership to Discipleship." The Rev. Dr. Steven W. Manskar, director of accountable discipleship of the General Board of Discipleship, is the featured speaker. This event will be at Central UMC in Clyde, (less than 3 miles from Lake Junaluska just off US 19/23). Registration deadline is May 31 or when 150 persons have registered, whichever comes first. Contact Randy Sherrill at rsherrill@triad.rr.com or 336-765-6186. Get a registration form at <http://www.wnccumc.org/cmnspiritform.htm>.

Council on Laity Honors Clergy Women – June 8 (Thursday)

This year marks the 50th anniversary of clergywomen in full connection. The Council on Laity will honor clergywomen at the Clergy Women's Breakfast during Annual Conference, Thursday, June 8. All lay people in the conference are offered the opportunity to help by making donations (suggested amount is \$15) in honor or memory of a clergywoman who has touched their life. Send donations, payable to Council on Laity, to Dr. David Heath, 1040 William Brown Lane, Kernersville, NC 27284. Designate in the memo section of check "Clergywomen's Breakfast."

SEJ QUAKE – June 11-25

QUAKE is a two week intensive leadership development for rising high school juniors and seniors that includes classroom, mission and leadership opportunities. Visit www.sejumc.org for more information.

Harambee Goes to the Beach – June 28-July 2

Youth and their leaders will gather at Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Beach, Florida from June 28-July 2 for Harambee. This spiritual conference is designed to help youth develop spiritual, leadership and interpersonal skills, develop relationships, connect with each other and learn how to bridge the gap between generations. The event is sponsored by the SEJ Black Methodist Church Renewal, Inc. Registration deadline is May 22. Contact Dawn Hand, dhand@wnccumc.org for details. Get the brochure and registration form at <http://www.wnccumc.org/yth/harambee.htm>.

Duke Youth Academy – July 9-22

This is a two-week summer program for selected high school students to live in an intentional Christian community on the Duke University campus in Durham. It is an intensive encounter with Christian life. For more information, go to www.duyouth.duke.edu

UPCOMING ... (continued)

Keeping Sabbath Ministers' Conference 2006 – July 10-14

Your life is in danger! If you have fallen prey to the violence that busyness and overwork can cause to our bodies and spirits, you need to come away to the mountains to find the life renewing balance God built into the very fabric of creation. Come and experience Sabbath! The purpose of Ministers' Conference is to offer clergy opportunities for renewal through inspiration, learning and fellowship Platform Leaders: Rev. Wayne Muller and Billie Fidler. Evening Worship Speakers: Monday: Bishop Hope Ward; Tuesday: Bishop Wil Willimon; and Thursday: Bishop Al Gwinn. Register on-line at www.sejumc.org.

10 Ministry Tracks Offered at School of Congregational Development – August 3-8

Pastors, church teams and laity may choose from 10 ministry tracks at the UMC School of Congregational Development. Offerings include new church development, turning around, multi-site congregations, multi-ethnic/multi-cultural churches, and much more. Sponsored by the General Board of Global Ministries and the General Board of Discipleship, this dynamic event is being hosted in San Diego in the California-Pacific Conference. Registration deadline: July 7. Read about these exciting ministry tracks, the distinguished leaders and registration details at <http://www.newchurchUMC.org>.

2006 Gathering of the Laity – August 18-20

The laity are set to meet for the annual Gathering of the Laity, August 18-20 at the Lake Junaluska Assembly. This year's theme is "Christ-Centered Transformation." Featured speakers are Dr. Ellsworth Kalas, Rev. Roger Hunter, Dr. James Howell, Rev. Janet Wolfe, and Rev. Barbara Brokhoff. All laity are invited to attend. The brochure and registration form is available at <http://www.wnccumc.org/gol/gathering.htm>.

Trail Hikes – September 1-4

The Labor Day Weekend Adult Hike in Pisgah National Forest, September 1-4, 2006 offers Christians four days and three nights of adventure, group fellowship, cooperation and challenge. No prior backpacking experience is required. Hikers should expect to hike several hours under loaded pack each day. Learn more and download the brochure and registration form at <http://www.wnccumc.org/cpr/trailhikes.htm>.

Exploration 2006 – November 17-18

This is an event for high school seniors through age 24 considering ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church held in Jacksonville, Florida. For more info., go to www.jbhem.org/exploration.

CONNECTIONAL NOTES...

WNC CONFERENCE NEWSLETTER

Are you receiving the WNC Conference newsletter? E-News is distributed every Wednesday from Conference Center office of Dawn Hand. If you are not currently on the distribution list, contact Dawn at Dhand@wnccumc.org. Rather than flooding the conference office with email addresses of your parishioners, please forward the E-News to your church folks or make copies and pass along to persons in your church who do not have access to a computer.

JURISDICTIONAL CONFIRMATION WEEKENDS

Please consider attending the Jurisdictional Confirmation Weekends. They are sponsored by the Intentional Growth Center. Brochures have recently been mailed to all churches; however, if for some reason you did not get one, please call 800-482-1442 or email lbutters@intentionalgrowthcenter.org for additional information.

ATTENTION, DUKE ENDOWMENT CHURCHES:

Confirmation Scholarships Available to Jurisdictional Confirmation Weekends

The Intentional Growth Center, which sponsors the Confirmation Weekends for the Southeastern Jurisdiction, is offering a special discount to Duke Endowment Churches. The regular cost would be \$25 less for Duke Endowment Churches. Please call 800-482-1442 for a brochure. Also, information could be sent by email or fax. Contact lbutters@intentionalgrowthcenter.org and let her know if you would like materials emailed or faxed. Larry Ousley, D.Min., CPCC, ACC - Director, The Intentional Growth Center 1-800-482-1442 www.IntentionalGrowthCenter.org; LarryOusley@IntentionalGrowthCenter.org

DISCIPLE BIBLE OUTREACH MINISTRIES EXPANDS VISION

Learn about the DBOM's exciting news and information by viewing the latest edition of the Cross and Key Newsletter, <http://www.disciplebibleoutreach.org/fileadmin/PDFs/2ndqtrnews.pdf>.

UMC GIVING BLOGS

This 'blog' website features national and global short updates on social issues, personal testimonies and lots more in relation to UMC giving. Log on to see the current postings or click on archives for back-dated postings, <http://umcsgiving.blogspot.com/>.

MISSIONS ALIVE! NOW ON-LINE

All the items included in the recent mailing of Missions Alive!, the WNCC Mission/Outreach newsletter, are now available at <http://www.wnccumc.org/mis/info.htm>.

Relief and Recovery for Hurricane Victims Continues

Teams continue to go to the Gulf Coast. To schedule a team, please click on the KARE symbol at <http://www.wnccumc.org> and go to "Other Teams and Personnel." If you schedule a team, please e-mail Mike Collins at mcollins@wnccumc.org to let him know.

Action Needed To Help Refugees

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) requests action from United Methodists to help assure that the United States immigration system is fixed through passage of a humane and well-planned legislative reform. Ariel Collins is the conference liaison that works with refugee ministries. She can be contacted at arielconnect@aol.com and 336.375.0259. For details of the call for action and sample letter on the WNCC Mission/Outreach page: <http://www.wnccumc.org/mis/refugees.htm>.

Soul Tending

In your congregation, do you provide the time, the support and the opportunities for the "shepherds," both clergy and laity, to be tended spiritually? All leaders need time apart to be renewed and refilled with the Spirit. Leaders cannot give to others what they do not have. Find out more at <http://www.wnccumc.org/ced/soultending.htm>.

CONNECTIONAL NOTES... (continued)

Exercise for Life

The second article offered by Family and Older Adults Ministries for the Health Hints feature is about the importance of exercising for life. It is written by Jane Morrow, parish nurse. See <http://www.wnccumc.org/fam/healthhints.htm>.

Mississippi Conference Needs More Help

Bishop Hope Morgan Ward of the Mississippi Area is asking every church to receive special Lenten offerings to help restore Mississippi Conference churches impacted by Katrina. Losses to underinsured and uninsured church properties are more than \$4 million. Bulletin inserts/resources are available online through the Mississippi Conference web site at <http://www.mississippi-umc.org/>.

Church Extension to dissolve after 25 years

For 25 years, Church Extension has been in ministry building churches, fellowship halls, parsonages and other church facilities throughout Western North Carolina. On March 9, the Church Extension's board voted to dissolve the organization. Among others, the board cited consolidation, closings, and membership decline in small rural churches and increased restrictive building codes versus skill levels of volunteers as the primary reason to dissolve the organization. To see the full media release from the Church Extension board, see <http://www.wnccumc.org/nws/dissolve.htm>.

Jobs

WNCC church positions available throughout the conference, as submitted to the communication office, will be posted for one week, to coincide with the release of e-wnccnews. For listings and submission instructions, go to <http://www.wnccumc.org/nws/jobs.htm>.

Annual Habitat Golf Tournament

The St. Stephen United Methodist Men invites everyone to pull out their clubs and register for the Annual Habitat Golf Tournament to benefit the building of the next Habitat for Humanity House for a family in need. St. Stephen builds at least one house a year and you can help by playing golf with us. We'd like to challenge all of the churches in the District to participate in this worthy and important Men's Ministry. Want to play but don't have a foursome? Sign up individually and we'll take care of making teams.

Cost: \$65 for adults, \$55 for Youth which includes range balls, cart, cookout lunch, and lots of prizes!

When: **May 20th**. Get there by 9:00am to register and hit some balls on the driving range with a shotgun start at 10:00am.

Where: Charlie T. Meyers Golf Course.

How: Contact Ben Fletcher at (704) 366-9097 to sign up.

Clergy Couples & Family Dinner

Date: Friday, **June 9th**, 2006

Time: 5:30p.m.

Place: Central UMC in Canton, NC. (8 miles from the Lake Junaluska Assembly on Hwy 19 at 34 Church St.)

\$10 per adult & \$3 per child.

Please RSVP by May 29th to gcumc@asheboro.com or call Rev. Doug. & Rev. Mary Miller Tel: 336-824-2463

or 336-824-4463. Nursery will be provided during the program. Please let us know the number and ages of your children. Child care is free but donations are appreciated.

There are now no fewer than 75 clergy couple families within the Western NC Conference, with both spouses serving Christ's Church in many different ways. We want to extend an invitation to all clergy couples to a Clergy Couples & Family Dinner during the '06 Annual Conference. This dinner is hosted by the nine clergy couples in the High Point District for the purpose of fellowship, mutual support, and the advancement of issues directly related to clergy couples. Please plan on joining us for this inaugural event. RSVP by May 29th to gcumc@asheboro.com.

CONNECTIONAL NOTES ... (continued)

UM Foundation Offers Newsletter

Money and Meaning, the newsletter of The United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina, Inc. is available through the following link: <http://www.umfoundationwncc.org/enewsletters.cfm>.

Missionary's Newsletter on Web

Read the most recent newsletter of Anne Kolbe, GBGM UMC and WNCC missionary to Cambodia, at <http://www.wnccumc.org/mis/missionaries.htm>.

Witness Ministries Publishes Resources

Want to learn more about resources to promote evangelism in your church and community? Download the new Witness Ministries brochure at <http://www.wnccumc.org/cgd/evangelismwitness.htm>.

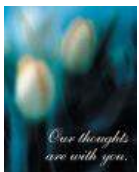
Golden Cross Celebrates 75 Years

It has been 75 years since WNCC Golden Cross began its ministry to help clergy and laity with medical expenses. This ministry is dependent upon the goodwill of the members of the WNCC conference. Churches are encouraged to designate a Sunday to celebrate Golden Cross. Learn more and download the bulletin insert at <http://www.wnccumc.org/mis/goldencross.htm>.

Visioning Conversation with Conference Staff

Want to dialogue and learn more about mission, disaster response and justice ministries? Six cluster visioning sessions have been arranged throughout the conference. Several conference staff personnel will be on-hand to talk about their specific areas of ministry. For details log onto <http://www.wnccumc.org/eth/visioning.htm>

CONDOLENCES TO...



- Reverend William (Bill) Roth (Myers Park Associate) and family in the passing of his father, Mr. James Maurice Roth, on Monday, May 8th.

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