

# Charlotte District E-Connections

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Electronic Newsletter  
Charlotte District  
of The  
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Western NC Conference

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## Special Point of Interest:

- ◆ 2011 Annual Conference Pre-Briefing Update
- ◆ 2011-2012 Charlotte District Projected Appointments

## Holy Conferencing in the Wesleyan Spirit, 2011



*D. S. George Thompson*

The very first Annual Conference that I attended was held at Centenary United Methodist Church in Winston-Salem. That year the WNCC Conference voted to do a revolutionary thing: move the session to Lake Junaluska's Stuart Auditorium where there would be plenty of room for delegates. Nearly half a century later we continue to gather at lakeside, and the agenda has settled into predictable patterns in that crowded space. An analytical friend of mine has cynically observed, "If you've seen one Annual Conference, you've seen them all."

Until now. The holy conferencing of June 8-12, 2011, will be remarkably different, culminating on Pentecost Sunday with a motivating service of worship. All our churches, in spiritual preparation for this year's gathering, are asked to pursue a reading plan focused upon Luke's volume two---the Book of Acts. (An ongoing blog entitle the *WNCC 50 Days of Acts* can be accessed on the Conference web-site.)

**All lay and clergy delegates are strongly urged to attend the Charlotte District Pre-Conference Briefing on May 15<sup>th</sup>, with registration at 3:45 p.m. and initial presentation at 4:00 p.m., Memorial UMC, at 4012 Central Avenue, Charlotte. Key lay leaders are also encouraged to attend.**

Why so important? The business for this Annual Conference will require much forethought and careful discernment. This year's session will not be an effortless "come and go" affair. The following presenters on May 15<sup>th</sup> will make complex matters perfectly clear to all: Steve James will serve as the afternoon's Event Manager; Nancy Rankin will interpret the new directions of the Conference's Connectional Table; Laurie Guy will interpret the intricate budgetary proposals of the Conference Committee on Finance and Administration; and Mark Edwards will have a clarifying interpretation regarding the business of the Board of Pensions and cost of health care and the clergy retirement plan.

Bishop Goodpaster and members of the Cabinet vehemently feel that the present performance by many of our congregations is mediocre at best. We have settled for good when Christ has called us to discipleship with excellence. We have mouthed ambitious power-of-three goals: 300,000 professing members by 2015; 30,000 in worship by that date; 3,000 vibrant mission teams outside the walls of the church; 300 revitalized churches by the conclusion of 2012 and 300 more by New Year's Eve, 2015; and the launching of 30 new faith communities within a three year period.

Our collective performance to date is paltry at best: stagnant membership, dwindling worship attendance, aging congregations, and financial shortfalls that compromise the mission of the church.

At this year's Annual Conference Bishop Goodpaster will be proposing an exciting, positive "Path into the Future." We know why some of our congregations defy these stagnated patterns and are growing stalwartly. The bishop's proposals will move our Conference to reflect the example of many vital congregations in our midst. Collectively we shall volitionally move away from institutional maintenance and (continued on page 2)

## **Holy Conferencing in the Wesleyan Spirit, 2011** (continued from cover)

toward our central mission---making disciples who will provide transforming leadership in vital, healthy churches.

The path to this energized, focused future will require a departure from merely maintaining fifteen districts. The Bishop/Cabinet resolution at the 2011 session of the WNC Conference will significantly reduce the number of districts beginning July, 2012. This carefully prepared reduction will funnel resources into a path that will lead to the creation of vital, missional churches and will dramatically reset the financial baseline of the conference. This reduction is projected to "save" more than \$1.5 million per year and enable the conference to spend more energy and resources on reaching our Power of Three goals---growing congregations, starting new ones, revitalizing existing churches, and retooling leaders.

Already the Cabinet is redefining the superintendency. The D.S. of the future will serve as consultant to local churches, a vision caster, and one who helps train lay and clergy leaders. As always, the superintendent will guide the appointment-making process. How can this be done with an expanded size of district? Several auxiliary "presiding elders" will be designated in each district to work with the superintendent. Those chosen for this responsibility will be pastors with experience of excellence in growing the church. They will preside over charge conferences in their region and encourage clergy colleagues to conduct strategic planning. Along with the district superintendent, these "presiding elders" will help hold each pastor and parish accountable for designating and reaching specific goals.

Yes, Annual Conference will be a challenging event with implications that are epoch in dimension. I am personally pleased with the proposed path toward the future outlined by our bishop through his visionary designs. This proposed path is realistic, attainable, positive, affordable, and can be charted upon a reasonable time-line. I wish that I could have started with this altered design for the work of a district superintendent eight years ago. But, due to the innovative spirit of the Charlotte District, we have already begun to change the culture within several churches, giving greater priority to mission and not to maintenance. Already many of our congregations are primarily driven by a vision of God's future for a people of faith that practice radical hospitality, passionate worship, intentional faith development, risk-taking mission and service, and extravagant generosity. I pray for the day in which these faithful, Wesleyan practices will describe every church in the district I so dearly love.

Grace and peace,

*George*

Charlotte District Superintendent  
Western NC Conference of the UMC

### **Skyler Nimmons named Communications**

**Specialist for WNCC** Skyler E. Nimmons joined the conference ministry team as communications specialist on March 16. Skyler, a lay member of the South Carolina Conference, has a broad range of experience in communications, event management, marketing, Web site management, public relations and social media campaigns. A member of Trinity UMC, Orangeburg, S.C., Skyler served on the local and general church level in a variety of ways over the years. He has also served the South Carolina Conference as communications chair for the Young Adult Ministries Network, communications coordinator for the Youth Network and an ex-officio member of the nominations committee. Mark Barden, previous communications director, has worked with Skyler during the transition and will enter into a renewal leave for study and preparation to return to parish ministry in July. Learn more about Skyler at <http://www.wnccumc.org/nws/Nimmons.htm>



### **Jennifer Burton to serve as next Treasurer of WNCC**

The Council on Finance and Administration has selected Jennifer Burton as the next Western NC Conference Treasurer and Director of Administrative Services, who will assume the position on June 1. She is the successor to William "Bill" Wyman who will enter retirement after serving 31 years in ministry. Bill served 19 of those years as treasurer and director of administrative services of the conference. Jennifer is a member of Pleasant Grove UMC, Thomasville and has served in various levels of UM leadership including a member of Council of Finance and Administration, Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference of The United Methodist Church. Learn more about Jennifer at <http://www.wnccumc.org/nws/burton.html>





# Projected Appointments 2011-2012

Bishop Larry Goodpaster convened the Cabinet of the Western NC Conference on March 28-April 1 in order to project appointment changes. He began the process by announcing that Gary Royals of Jamestown UMC would become the Charlotte District Superintendent, effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. He then announced that Nancy Rankin would be appointed to the Salisbury District, following Sally Langford. After carefully considering the pastoral needs of Blair Road UMC, the Cabinet projected the appointment of Morris Brown, former pastor of Grace UMC, Greensboro to follow Nancy's leadership. Bishop Goodpaster also chose another Charlotte District pastor –Ken Carter of Providence UMC—to be his superintendent in the Waynesville District. The Bishop and Cabinet projected John Fitzgerald, presently serving Boone UMC, to fill the Providence pulpit and give pastoral leadership to that congregation.

First UMC of Belmont will receive a new pastor after the ten years of faithful leadership of Mark Andrews. He will be succeeded by Charles Baker, currently serving First UMC, Elkin. St. Andrews' of Charlotte will express gratitude to Jack Knoespel for his years of service upon his departure for a new appointment at First UMC, Rutherfordton, and will greet their new pastor, Daniel Hester, currently serving Harrisburg UMC. Laurie Knoespel will receive an appointment in Rutherford County, near the count seat town of Rutherfordton. The church is Salem UMC, just outside the town of Bostic.

David Wyant, after four years of effective ministry at Memorial UMC, will assume responsibilities at First UMC, Lincoln, and will be followed in leadership by Don Newman who is currently ministering at Center UMC of Concord.

Larry Kimel, who has rendered over forty years of faithful service within the WNC Conference, will be retiring from First UMC, Mt. Holly. He will be followed by Angela Pleasants who has completed four years of dynamic, inspirational ministry at Central UMC, Charlotte. Michelle Chappell will make the long move from First UMC, Reidsville (Northeast District) in order to continue leadership of excellence at Central UMC.

Hal Schwantes will begin a new phase of ministry with a well-deserved retirement. He will be followed in pastoral leadership at Belmont's Park Street by Gary Richardson, presently the pastor at Friendship UMC in Iredell County.

Rick Clough, after eight years of effective work at St. Luke of Charlotte, will be heading up the road to Bethany UMC in Albemarle for his next appointment.

Ellen Robison, who has served with skill and creativity, Minister of Worship and the Arts at Myers Park UMC, will be commissioned as a provisional deacon at this Annual Conference and appointed to that great church. Another deacon to receive an appointment is Stephanie Hand who will be assigned to Providence UMC in a new parish position as Associate Pastor.

Dianne Lawhorn will be leaving her very effective work as Associate Pastor at Hickory Grove in order to serve two fortunate churches near her new home in Iredell County – Macedonia and Olin UMC.

Certified Candidates and new Local Pastor, Wayne Lynch, will be appointed as an Assistant Pastor at Morningstar UMC. Dr. Marilyn Smith, a professor at Winthrop University, and new Certified Candidate will assume the responsibility of part-time Local Pastor at Zoar UMC.

This year the Charlotte District will witness the formation of two cooperatives:

1. Three pastors will be appointed to the Cole Memorial-St. Luke Cooperative Mission Parish – David Ortigoza, full-time Senior Pastor (Elder); Kyle McCain, part-time Local Pastor Assistant; and Patience Brumley, part-time Assistant (Deacon).
2. Three pastors will compose the pastoral team for the Commonwealth-First Hmong-Kilgo Cooperative Mission Parish – Michael Harris, full-time Senior Pastor; Peggy Bridgers, part-time pastor; Tou-Chao Her, part-time Local Pastor.

These projections were confirmed after the Cabinet met on April 26-28 to consider requests for re-consideration. The final listing of appointments will be printed and circulated on Pentecost Sunday at the cooperative worship in Lake Junaluska's Stuart Auditorium that concludes the 2011 Conference session.



## Morningstar VBS Goes to the Community



*The objective lessons held the children's attention.*

Last summer, Morningstar UMC wanted to have a Vacation Bible School, like most churches do. Recognizing that they didn't have quite enough children to do something entirely internal, and wanting to continue their relationship helping the folks at nearby Arrowood Mobile Home Park, they opted to do an outdoor VBS for those children at that site during the last week of July.

When I arrived at Morningstar earlier that month, I wasn't 100% enthusiastic about the idea. I don't much like heat to begin with. I had just moved down to Charlotte from the nice, cool mountains. And on top of all this, I was 8 months pregnant. Outdoor VBS in July? This can't be good.

But it was! Isn't it cool how God works that way?

Our mantra became, "Keep it simple and do it well." Our daily activities included crafts, object lessons, yard games, music with lots of silly motions, and a light snack. It was really amazing to see how the Holy Spirit stepped in to make our simple program a really joyous and meaningful time.

One day, it looked as though it might rain. In fact, some of our adults couldn't get to Arrowood because of the torrential downpour in their part of Charlotte! Would we cancel? Could we go on? At the last minute the rain cleared up, and we let loose with a capella song and improvised games. We huddled under an undersized shelter for a slightly-out-of-control lesson. We were unsure that things could go well that day, but it ended up one of our favorites, with lots of smiles and laughter. One of the adult volunteers remarked, "That's the most fun I've had in a long time!" I'm so grateful for the times when my plans get messed up and I remember that I'm really not in control. God is so good!

Over the course of the week some teenage boys started hanging around, especially during snack time at the end. We encouraged them to participate if they wanted, and they responded as I might have at their age: "Nah, that's kid stuff." What a treat to see them on the last night working carefully on that evening's craft and then doing the ridiculous motions to the songs right along with us!

By the end of our week at Arrowood we had grown close to some of the children and parents. Morningstar continues to help this mobile home park with food and clothing drives and donations to families in dire need, but we hadn't had that same personal contact since last summer. So this year Morningstar has made its VBS plans with a new twist. Instead of four nights during one week, we plan to do Wednesday nights all summer long in the hopes of really building some long-term relationships with the children, youth, and parents there. With a little luck, our plans to "keep it simple and do it well" will be thrown off track a couple times, allowing us to relinquish control and be open to the adventures that God has in store for us!

*By Rev. Mary Brown, Pastor, Morningstar UMC, Charlotte NC*



*The children enjoyed sharing in the yard games with their leaders.*



*Children and youth work along side each other making crafts.*

## Broadcaster Jim Nantz visits Providence

Legendary broadcaster Jim Nantz, the voice of the *Masters*, the *Final Four* and the *Super Bowl* each year, spoke for 90 minutes to 250 in a unique question and answer session about sports, Nantz's life, his faith and his late father at Providence United Methodist Church in Charlotte Friday, May 6. Dan Owens was the interviewer/emcee for the event. Nantz, who grew up in Mt. Holly, was baptized years ago at the church, and his father's funeral was held at Providence UMC in 2008. The event was hosted by the *Methodist Men's Fellowship* (MMF) at Providence UMC, Charlotte.



*Legendary CBS broadcaster Jim Nantz answers a question by Providence UMC member at the May 6 question and answer session at Providence UMC.*



*Pictured from left: Immediate MMF Past President Dan Owens, MMF President Brian Moroz, CBS Broadcaster Jim Nantz, MMF V.P. Jay Harrill, Denny Hammack and MMF Program Director Michael Childs.*

## General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegate Elections

The profiles of laity who have offered their name for consideration to be elected as a delegate to General and Jurisdictional Conference are now available online at [www.wnccumc.org](http://www.wnccumc.org). Lay members of the annual conference are encouraged to print and bring this booklet with them to annual conference. It will not be distributed. Write-in names are always welcome. All clergy who are eligible to be elected will be assigned a number. This list is also available on the conference website. The Supplement publication which is distributed at annual conference will include names and assigned numbers for clergy and laity.

Members of the annual conference are encouraged to bring a #2 pencil or black ink pen with them to annual conference. Persons may want to bring a flashlight and/or magnifying glass as the print on the balloting cards is small.

## **2011 Western NC Annual Conference Updates**

### **June 8-12 Lake Junaluska, NC**

#### **2011 Annual Conference theme is *Inspire the Living Faith***

*Inspire the Living Faith*, drawn from a Charles Wesley hymn, is the theme for this year's Annual Conference at Lake Junaluska, June 8-12. Bishop Larry Goodpaster said, "My hope and prayer is that this will not just be a theme for four days in June, but will become the message that launches a renewed passion for extending the Gospel in our communities, among our neighbors, and around the world." *Learn ways your congregation can be involved at <http://www.wnccumc.org/ac11/pdf/ACtheme.pdf>*

**Attention All Annual Conference Delegates** (Local Church, District At-Large, Conference At-Large, Youth Delegates, Young Adult Delegates, Pastors, etc.) This year each district is hosting a Pre-Conference Briefing. These briefings will provide important information before this year's Annual Conference. The **Charlotte District Pre-Conference Briefing** is scheduled for Sunday, May 15th - 3:45 PM registration, presentation begins 4:00 PM at Memorial United Methodist Church, 4012 Central Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28205. All delegates should make plans to be present. *Be sure to print and bring with you the pre-conference briefing information packet available at <http://wnccumc.org/ac11/pdf/2011PreACBriefingInfo.pdf>. Read additional details on page 1 of this newsletter.*

**Clergy Attendance Expectations** The Western North Carolina Annual Conference is scheduled for June 8-12 at Lake Junaluska. All deacons and elders in full connection, provisional and associate members, and local pastors are expected to attend. Clergy who cannot participate should request an excused absence. Retired clergy and those on leave of absence will be excused if not present. Please write a letter to Bishop Larry M. Goodpaster and send it to Rev. Kim Ingram, Conference Secretary, at P. O. Box 18005, Charlotte, NC 28218 or [kingram@wnccumc.org](mailto:kingram@wnccumc.org).

**Booklet Available: Laity Who Have Consented to being Considered for Election as Delegates to the 2012 General and Jurisdictional Conferences.** The booklet containing pictures and biographical information of 59 lay persons who have consented to being considered for election as delegates to the 2012 General and Southeastern Jurisdictional Conferences is now online. The booklet was prepared for information in accordance with a plan approved by the 2010 Annual Conference. Visit <http://www.wnccumc.org/ac11/pdf/2011LaityBooklet.pdf>

#### **Instructions and List of Clergy Eligible for Election as Delegates to the 2012 General and Jurisdictional Conferences.**

Clergy will also elect at this year's session of the WNC Annual Conference 11 ordained ministerial members as delegates to the 2012 General Conference plus an additional 11 for the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference. Conference Secretary Kim Ingram has prepared instructions and a list of persons who are eligible for election. This information is available at <http://www.wnccumc.org/ac11/pdf/ClergyInstructionsList.pdf>

#### **Churches Invited To Help With Annual Conference Worship**

The WNCC Town And Country Committee, along with other groups committed to rural ministry, are asking all rural churches to encourage their children to make "Flame Fans" for worship on June 9. The fans are easy to make. We hope to show that rural churches are a diverse group unified in the Holy Spirit. Please contact the Rev. David Christy, [davidchristy66@yahoo.com](mailto:davidchristy66@yahoo.com) or 828.648.2793, when your "Flame Fans" are completed. He will arrange to pick them up. We ask that all "Flame Fans" be completed by May 15. Fan directions are available at <http://www.wnccumc.org/ac11/pdf/FlameFans.pdf>

**Annual Conference Childcare Information/Registration** available at <http://www.wnccumc.org/ac11/pdf/2011ACChildcareRegistration.pdf>

The **Program and Reports Booklet** will soon be available for download at [www.wnccumc.org](http://www.wnccumc.org). An email will be sent as soon as the booklet is posted online.

*This information is an excerpt from the <http://www.wnccumc.org/ac11/11ac-briefingdates.htm>*



The **Laity Service Award Banquet** will be held on **Thursday, May 19 at Cokesbury UMC, Charlotte**. Registration will begin at 6:30 pm and the meal will be served at 7 pm. *Reservation deadline May 13th*. Obtain form from your Church Lay Leader or pastor.

A **Service of Celebration and Appreciation for Dr. George Thompson's retirement** will be held on **Sunday, June 5 at Providence UMC at 3 pm**. Letters of invitation will be sent to all congregations in the Charlotte District from the District Committee on Superintendency and the District Board of Laity.

A **Service Celebrating the Appointment of Gary Royals**, the incoming Charlotte District Superintendent will be held later this summer. Additional details including the date, time, and location will be provided in a future newsletter. Gary, currently serving Jamestown UMC (Jamestown, NC), will be appointed to the **Charlotte District** as the successor to George Thompson.



### 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.

Visit the UMCOR Hotline at <http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/umcor/newsroom/hotline> for updates. The current emergencies are listed below:

Cote D'Ivoire Crisis  
UMCOR Advance #982450

Liberia Emergency  
UMCOR Advance #150300

Japan/Pacific Emergency  
UMCOR Advance #3021317

US Spring Storms  
UMCOR Advance #3021326

### Ways to Give

#### Online Global Ministries Online Donation System:

[http://secure.gb-gm-umc.org/donations/umcor/donate\\_select\\_project.cfm](http://secure.gb-gm-umc.org/donations/umcor/donate_select_project.cfm)

**At Church** Put your gift in the offering plate on Sunday.

**By Mail** Make your check to UMCOR and mail to: **UMCOR**, PO Box 9068, New York, NY 10087

**By Phone** Call toll-free (800) 554-8583

**Relief Supplies** <http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/umcor/getconnected/supplies/>

**UMCOR Gift Catalog** <http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/umcor/give/gift-catalog>

UMCOR excerpts from <http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/umcor>  
UMCOR is part of the General Board of Global Ministries.

## Attn: All those interested in Early Disaster Response

### UMCOR Early Disaster Response

#### Training Event

**Saturday, May 14th - 8:30am till 3:30pm**  
**West Market St. UMC - Greensboro, NC**  
**(Cost: \$30 )**

Official certification by a recognized volunteer relief organization (such as UMCOR) is now required by FEMA for all people who are going into impacted areas. There are so many who want to help with tornado relief, but do not have current UMCOR certification as ERT (Emergency Response Trained). Therefore, during the next weeks regional ERT Training events will be going on around the WNCC. These are sponsored by the Conference Committee on Disaster Response. The first of these will be on Saturday, May 14th from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. It will be hosted at West Market St. UMC in Greensboro, NC. The cost of the training will be \$30 and includes lunch, a manual, background check, and a UMCOR photo ID (mailed at a latter date). Pre-registration is required and space is limited.

Pre-registration closes at noon, May 13.

Please pre-register by contacting

Elizabeth Montgomery at (336 275-4587  
 (ex. 16) or [emontgomery@wmsumc.org](mailto:emontgomery@wmsumc.org)

Learn more at:

<http://www.wnccumc.org/vim/dsr-DisasterResponse.htm>



This year on Sunday, June 19 don't give Dad the typical tie for Father's Day - give him a worthy tie to a Methodist mission.

Honor your DAD by supporting UMAR Sunday - Disability Awareness Day!

#### How You Can Get Involved:

1. **D**isability - fundraise with UMAR as a mission
2. **A**wareness - recognize people with disabilities in your community
3. **D**ay - make a donation on Father's Day to UMAR in honor of your father (UMAR, P.O. Box 1558, Huntersville, NC 28070-1558)

For other ways to celebrate Father's Day during UMAR Sunday, please contact Ruby Mossor at 704-408-3223 or [RubyM@UMARinfo.com](mailto:RubyM@UMARinfo.com)!



*Started in 1983 as a ministry of WNCC-UMC, UMAR supports adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities across western North Carolina. UMAR currently provides services to more than 325 adults through group homes, job opportunities and art programs. Find us online at [www.UMARinfo.com](http://www.UMARinfo.com)!*

## Charlotte District

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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

### MAY 2011

- 1 Public Announcement of 2011 Clergy Appointments  
Observance of Golden Cross Sunday Conference-wide
- 5 Dist. Clergy Farewell Event, Kilgo UMC, 6 pm
- 8 Mother's Day Offering—Conference-wide
- 15 Charlotte District Pre-Conference Briefing,  
Memorial UMC-Charlotte, 4 pm (see page 1)
- 19 Dist. Laity Service Award Celebration, 7 pm,  
Cokesbury UMC, Charlotte. Stay tuned for future  
reservation form.
- 23-25 Cabinet Meeting
- 30 District Office Closed: Observance of Memorial Day

### JUNE 2011

- 5 Celebration and Appreciation for Dr. George  
Thompson's retirement, 3 pm,  
Providence UMC, Charlotte
- 8-12 Western NC Annual Conference, Lake Junaluska  
(page 1 and 6)
- 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

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