



District Connections

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Welcome to “Morningstar”

Morningstar was envisioned in January of 2001 as a new church in the rapidly growing Steele Creek area of Charlotte. In June of 2002, Rev. Brad Thie was appointed as Pastor of Steeleberry UMC. The members of what was formerly Steeleberry UMC have formed the leadership team of Morningstar. The people of Morningstar have been planning and working over the last year to share the Good News of Jesus with the community, offering ministry to the people of Steele Creek. Their efforts culminated in an opening worship service at Olympic High School on Sunday, September 14, 2003.



A diverse gathering of over 100 people attended the first public worship service, including members of other Charlotte UM Churches. JOY! (Jesus, Others, and You) ministry was offered during worship as a ministry to children 4th grade and younger. Morningstar has been blessed by new families who have been drawn to God’s new church. Morningstar cherishes the opportunity God has given them to share the caring love and light of Jesus with those who do not know Him. You can learn more about Morningstar’s ministry at www.morningstar-umc.org.

Morningstar would like to acknowledge the Western NC Conference Congregational Development and the District Mission Society for their support. We are grateful for the area churches who supported our opening worship service. We want to recognize Good Shepherd and Providence United Methodist churches for their on-going support. Finally, we are extremely grateful to our Prayer Partners for surrounding us in prayer during this time.



Rev. Brad Thie



*Praise God from Whom All
Blessings Flow*

Highlights

Apportionments Update ...	2
District Newss ...	2-5
Job Announcements ...	4
Memorial Notices ...	4
District Calendar ...	6

Hunters Chapel Celebrates Founder's Day



Hunters Chapel holds the distinction of being the only minority UMC in the northern area of Mecklenburg County. This small, family oriented church is nestled in the midst of "The Peninsula" near Lake Norman. It has sent forth three of its members to be "Soldiers in the Army of the Lord". On October 12, 2003, Rev. Leroy Smith, church members and their invited guest celebrated 94 years of serving our Lord Jesus Christ.

The celebration was blessed with the presence of five of their past ministers - Rev. Thomas E. Simpson, Rev. Paul Perkins, Rev. John Epps, and Rev. Timothy Johnson. Special recognition was given to Rev. Benjamin Stewart who passed earlier this year. Also in attendance were the three who were called to be Disciples of Christ - Rev. Vera M. Rivens of St. Paul/Wesley Chapel UMCs in Reidsville, Rev. Charlie Rivens of South Tryon Community UMC in Charlotte, and Rev. Rush Rivens of Beaver Creek/St Home UMCs in the Wilkesboro District.



The Praise Service was conducted by the Heavenly Voices of Hinton's Memorial UMC in Lincolnton. Rev. Vera Rivens was their previous minister. The celebration message - *'I Found the Answer When I Learned to Pray'* - was delivered by Rev. Vera Rivens. The Children's Choir and the Adult Choir from St. Paul rendered songs of inspiration and praise during the program.

This joyous occasion was something to behold and will be remembered for years to come by all who attended.

Apportionments

The End of The Year is Near

Appreciation is expressed to our Charlotte District pastors, local church treasurers, and congregations who have worked so dutifully to meet this year's conference and district apportionment faith goals and acceptances. As of October 30 we are at 69.42%. The year-end is rapidly approaching. Every church is expected to do their fair share. Payments toward apportionments should be in to the district and conference treasurers no later than December 31st.

The Conference close out date is January 9, 2004 at 5 p.m. This means that all checks must be cleared from the bank and credited to your account on that date. Remember that it takes an average of 5-7 days for checks to clear the banks.

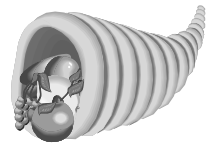


"Where's The Password?"

"I'm working on Charge Conference paperwork and have discovered that a password is needed to complete the Charge Conference Acceptances for 2004 (Pages 1 and 2), and the Local Leadership Contact List."

In July the Conference Office mailed to our senior pastors and local church treasurers material with the heading: "Annual Conference Apportioned Funds and Special Appeals for 2004". Halfway down the page, on the right side, just below the 2004 Pastor's Health Benefits premium is your user name and password. It may have easily been overlooked. We thank you for your patience as we continue to expand electronic forms and reporting.

Harvest of Blessings



Many thanks to the churches of the Western North Carolina Conference for a tremendous day at Harvest of Blessings. Several have inquired as to the amount of money raised for the UMCOR Hunger Fund and the Mission Response Center. Here is the breakdown of what we have in hand thus far: Silent Auction Sales - \$2,879.00; Live Auction Sales - \$9,615.00; Bake Sale - \$797.21; Offerings - \$970.18; Total - \$14,261.39

We've not unloaded the truck with the flood buckets, but we will have a count of them as soon as we do. Thanks again for your support of missions!

Mark Barden, WNCC Director of Mission/Outreach



for Charlotte District Youth

Charlotte District Youth, ages 15 - 18, will have the opportunity to attend the FIRST Lay Speaker School for Youth. This event will occur February 27-29, 2004 at Trinity United Methodist Church. Organizers of this event are Reverend Rick Auten, Youth Coordinator of the Charlotte District and Michelene Mathews, Charlotte District Director of Lay Speaker School. The goal is to train our Youth to share their testimonies and faith experiences through public speaking. It is hoped that this event will provide the tools needed by our Youth to tell their 'Story'. A great weekend has been planned for all who will be involved.

Session facilitators will include Deb Paulson - Assurance UMC; Dawn Hand - Director of Communications for the WNC Conference; Lowell McNanney - Crossroads UMC; Andrew Brown - First UMC-Valdese; and Jim Martin- Mouzon UMC.

Friday night's schedule includes a meal, praise and worship service, study sessions and a sleepover. Saturday's schedule begins with breakfast, praise and worship and more study sessions. Youth participants will leave at the end of the day on Saturday and return on Sunday afternoon to complete their sessions. Breaks and some downtime are interwoven into the schedule. A fellowship meal and the closing celebration will be held on Sunday. The cost for the weekend will be \$35.00 per person.

Registration information will be mailed in December, 2003. For additional information contact Michelene Mathews at 704-527-5093 or Reverend Rick Auten at 704-399-1684.

Reminder... District Clergy Partner Dues

You may wonder...why pay dues? District clergy partner dues are to provide support to one another.

 We send flowers when a partner is hospitalized or has a prolonged illness. We send greeting cards when a partner is sick, loses a loved one, has a new child, etc. We also purchase table decorations for joint events between partners and clergy. We make donations or purchases toward events sponsored by the WNCC Fellowship of Clergy Partners such as the annual conference luncheon, gifts for new brides and retirees, retiree luncheon, support committee, etc. Dues for partners are \$5 (make checks payable to "Charlotte District Clergy Partners Fellowship". Please mail to Barbara George, 940 Burnley Road, Charlotte, NC 28210.

St. Mark's 5th Annual Women's Retreat

Join the women of St. Mark's United Methodist Church for the 5th Annual Women's Retreat, March 19 - 21, 2004 at the beautiful Simpsonwood Retreat Center, nestled on 239 wooded acres along the Chattahoochee River. Simpsonwood is located just 25 miles north of Atlanta in the town of Norcross, GA. This will be a time for Spiritual and Physical renewal that each of us needs in order to live our lives for Christ. If you have never been on a women's retreat before, we invite you to come and be a part of this fun, relaxing, faith-filled weekend. Retreat Presenter will be Rev. Jessie Keaton, Pastor of Covenant United Methodist Church, Charlotte. For more information contact Brenda Eggleston at St. Mark's (704-523-7483) between the hours of 10:00 am and 2:00 PM.

Charlotte District United Methodist Women Dates to remember...

January 24 - District Mission Study, "Mexico", Pleasant Grove UMC

March 12-14 - Southeastern Jurisdictional Meeting, "Vessels of Mission", Galt House, Louisville, KY

March 27 - UM Women Charlotte District Annual PrayerBreakfast, Cokesbury UMC

Contact your local church UMW president or Sandy Hieronymus, Charlotte District UMW President at 704-545-6910.



Free Pews to Good Church Home

If your church is interested in having seven 12-foot long oak pews, please contact Linda Turner at Davidson UMC 704-892-8277.

The Western North Carolina Conference Council on Laity
 invites you to participate in
LAITY ADDRESSES
 at the
2004 Annual Conference and Gathering of the Laity
"What Does the Lord Require of Us?"

Any United Methodist interested in preparing and presenting a 10 - 15 minute address on the subject of "What Does the Lord Require of Us?" is invited to submit a proposed lecture for consideration. Selected addresses will be presented at Annual Conference in June 2004 and at the Gathering of the Laity in August 2004. One Laity Address will be selected for each event.

Requirements:

1. Submissions must be based on the theme or a closely related one.
2. Manuscripts must be received by January 15, 2004
3. The actual presentation must be as submitted in the manuscript.
4. The invitation is open to all United Methodist Laity in the Western North Carolina Conference, excluding members of the Council on Laity.
5. Include name, address, telephone number, and district with the submission.

Send submissions to: Mitchell Matthews, WNC Conference Director of Lay Speaking Ministries, 110 Auden Drive, Greensboro, NC 27406 by January 15, 2004.

Please call or write Mitchell Matthews if you have questions. Phone 336-674-3073, or e-mail mmatthe@co.guilford.nc.us.

Congratulations!

Rev. Veranita Alvord (Dilworth Associate pastor) and Rev. Joe Tarpley (Homestead pastor) in the birth of your son Ivan Joseph Alvord Tarpley on September 16, 2003. Ivan weighed 8 pounds 4 ounces, and is 20 ½ inches long.



An Opportunity to Serve

Youth Director: Davidson UMC...Full time position for experienced person who will oversee the Junior and Senior High Program. Contact Jody Seymour at 704-892-8277 or by email at jseymour@davidsonumc.org

Condolences to...

the family of Rev. Rick Fite, pastor of Central UMC, in the death of his father, Mr. John Earl Fite.



the family of Neal and Rev. Patience Brumley (Minister of Pastoral Care and Counseling) of Cole Memorial UMC, in the death of their adult son, Mr. Al Brumley.

CLERGY SERVICE DAY at Crisis Assistance Ministries, Inc.

Making Disciples

Throughout the thirty-five years of my ministry in the parish I have often desired to visit my colleagues during times of worship. Except for a few vacation Sundays, I have been denied this privilege. Until now.

Pat and I have maintained the pace of attending two services each Sunday morning and have thereby worshiped with twenty-nine congregations to date (October 26). This means that we have visited forty percent of the churches in the district. But this pace will slow down somewhat due to the fact that most of our seventy-seven congregations provide the Great Hour at eleven o'clock alone. None the less, we plan eventually to experience worship in all these locations in order to affirm the great variety of ministry and styles of worship within our district.

Our focus in the Charlotte District is always upon **making disciples**. Period. By maintaining this focus through our connectional resources, we shall experience some exciting things throughout the district.

I have found that we are nurturing disciples through many authentic expressions of worship. We are not really divided as a denomination between the conventional and contemporary, liturgical and spontaneous, intellectually challenging and Jesus-lite. I have observed, however, that the really distinctive criterion by which these experiences may be evaluated is whether or not worship is conducted with quality. The bottom line issues are quality and theological integrity. Are we giving our very best to God?

I have no intentions of making my D.S. rounds like some white-gloved ecclesiastical sergeant. But, if congregations wish to strengthen their quality of impact and expectation, I intend to recommend training events and resources to bring about intended changes in quality. In March of 2004, we shall host Dr. Doug Anderson from the Bishop Allan Jobe Center for Congregational Development. Doug will conduct workshops for congregations according to size of attendance at Sunday worship. I hope that every one of our churches in this district will send representatives to the workshop in March that uniquely fits your congregational needs.

We also make disciples through modeling servant leadership. Throughout the year our district pastors will participate in various service days. Last month fourteen pastors labored together at the Crisis Ministry Center on Spratt Street and shared lunch with the director, Carol Hughes. We were introduced to several agencies that minister to the poor in Charlotte. On October 23rd, the Denver area pastors gathered at East Lincoln County Christian Ministry Center for a day of work and fellowship. On December 9th several pastors will serve an evening meal at the downtown night shelter for the homeless.

Evangelism encompasses all that we do as a denomination. When we worship, we glorify Christ and open our doors, minds and hearts in order that others may know the joy of the gospel. When we engage in the imitation of Christ through sacrificial service, we invite others to discover meaning in life through following in the manner of the Master. Thus, we nurture disciples by glorifying God and serving others.



Getting directions



Concentrating on folding



I think this is right!



Madeline Gray models a coat that will be given away!

George E. Thompson, D. S.

Calendar of Events

November, 2003

- 11 District Communications Committee Meeting,
7:00 p.m., District Office
- 11-12 *Cabinet Meeting*
- 18 Charlotte District Hispanic Ministries meeting,
4 p.m., District Office
- 24-26 *Cabinet Meeting*
- 27-28 District Office Closed, Thanksgiving Holiday
- 30 United Methodist Student Day

December, 2003

- 3 District Clergy Christmas Gathering, 6:30 p.m.
- 8 Program Ministries Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Location TBA
- 22-26 District Office Closed, Christmas Holiday

January, 2004

- 1 District Office Closed, New Year's Holiday
- 4-7 *Cabinet Meeting*
- 8 District Clergy Gathering, Bethlehem Center,
9:30 a.m.
- 12 District Committee on Ordained Ministry,
Location TBA
- 19 District Office Closed, Martin L. King, Jr. Observance
- 25 District Leadership Conference, Providence UMC,
2-5 p.m.
- 30-31 Program Ministries Retreat, Location TBA

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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