

September 30, 2006

Electronic  
Newsletter



*Charlotte District*

# *E-Connections*

## *Fall Cluster Charge Conferences*



Charge Conference is an annual event in the life of each local church that intentionally encourages improved clarity of vision, renewed commitment to the congregation's mission, and planned accountability. Charge Conference is an outward and visible expression of our inward and spiritual belonging to the full body of Christ. Charge Conference affirms and celebrates our connection to the United Methodist Church and our ecumenical and global identity.

Last year the Charlotte District met in ten geographical clusters. Time was taken in order to discuss realistic ways in which our churches may share resources, partner in programming, and affirm our corporate witness. A task force compiled the creative ideas that percolated from these round-table discussions. During the year, several partnerships have emerged. The spirit of cooperation has intensified and competition has diminished.

We shall have twenty-three cluster conferences during the fall of 2006. In several of these gatherings the congregations are working together on some specific mission. A flow of our conferences will highlight covenants of cooperation in which a large church with abundant resources in personnel, leadership, and funding is providing encouragement and assistance to a legacy church currently experiencing decline. Some of our Charge Conferences remain geographical and will bring together congregations that are still processing how they may become helpful to one another.

We earnestly intend for the agenda of our School of Christian Discipleship to have a positive, reasonable impact upon the conduct of ministry within the district. This year I have asked each church to reflect upon Doug Anderson's lecture last spring, "Creating an Evangelism Culture." I want the pastors to have some creative dialogue with their church's leadership and answer in an essay, "How is your church developing an authentic culture of evangelism?" I also want to receive from the church leadership some reflection upon the place of your church in the life cycle chart discussed by Dr. Anderson. This clarification will help each local church to conduct strategic planning that can lead to sustained growth in mission, revitalization, re-missioning, or a legacy church providing resources for the birth of a new congregation.

We shall conclude each Charge Conference with the Eucharist and a celebration of God's grace in our corporate life.

These clusters are far more focused and intentional than the ones last fall. Planning requires conferencing, conversation, and planning with the involvement of representatives from each participating church.

I am grateful for your creativity, commitment to excellence, and focus upon our Lord's Great Commission. May we each receive renewed inspiration and encouragement as we prepare for these important moments of creative conferencing. Clarification, renewal, and accountability: these are our Wesleyan themes at each Charge Conference. Contact me if you need further clarification.

Grace and peace,

*George*

Charlotte District Superintendent

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### Faith Partners Ministry

As an Ordained Deacon, I am called to be a bridge between the church and the world. I am called to speak for those who can't. By this I mean that my call is to a ministry of recovery and healing. This June I was fortunate enough to attend the Chemical Dependency Summer School program presented by the UMC Oklahoma Conference. This school, in its 25<sup>th</sup> year, exceeded my expectations. We learned about the addiction disease process, the family trap, prevention and intervention.



Reverend Cindy Sloan

One week later I served on a Jurisdictional Leadership team that met in Nashville in July. Thirteen people including UMC clergy, professionals and interested laity gathered to review a ministry called *Faith Partners*. The UMC officially adopted this new ministry this past February ([www.rushcenter.org](http://www.rushcenter.org)). *Faith Partners: How Faith Institutions can Effectively address Chemical Dependency* will open the door to conversation about the devastating effects that alcohol and drugs have on families and communities.

The fact is that 38% of problems counseled by clergy are related to drug and alcohol directly or indirectly. This disease of the mind, body and spirit is a disease of the soul. It is a family disease that is affecting one in four people. *Faith Partners* effectively addresses this disease through education, prevention and intervention. Churches can break the silence. Churches can be advocates for those in recovery. Churches can remove the stigma of addiction and begin to celebrate those in recovery as a healing extension of the church. The church can be part of the solution.

Many of us might still believe that alcoholism is about weakness and will power. But addiction is a disease that is **progressive, chronic and fatal** if not arrested. Our faith communities can offer hope and help. I've heard many stories of people asking their pastors for help. Often pastors are ill equipped, lacking knowledge of community assets, referral resources and other ways of helping. The pastor often prays for the alcoholic only to find the person drinking again. This leaves the alcoholic/addict and those who love them feeling hopeless and helpless. The shame and guilt pile up and it looks as if there is no place to turn. Training in *Faith Partners* will aid in healing and recovery ([www.johnsoninstitute.com/news](http://www.johnsoninstitute.com/news)).

Recently, I had an opportunity to meet with concerned professionals and clergy at Duke Endowment. They recognize the present Methamphetamine crisis. They have begun to talk out loud and find ways to intervene. I shared *Faith Partners* as a vital church resource. I believe there is a solution that the church is responsible for.

Leonard Sweet's book *Strong in the Broken Places* reviews that life of George Everett Ross. As Rector at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Akron Ohio, he was a crusader for the addicted and homeless. Ross presided over the church in which AA was founded. George also battled his own alcoholism. He knew first hand what Paul described in Romans 7: "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do, ...for I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out."

Sweet refers to a quote by author John Updike. After listening to a sermon by a UM Pastor, John states, "the greatest challenge in preaching is to get people, who can't bear either to look at themselves or to look away, to look within and to see the shape they are in. We resist looking in because we shrink from pain. But the doctor cannot set a broken bone without inflicting pain...Only by passing through the pain can healing begin..."

Training for *Faith Partners* will be offered in 2007-08 in our five jurisdictions. In addition, Core Competencies for Clergy will be offered to train and assist pastors and pastoral counselors in addressing drug and alcohol addiction. As one member of our Nashville team stated, "it is an **ethical imperative** to speak for those who can't." Addiction **happens** in isolation but doesn't **exist** in isolation. (continued on page 3)

## Outreach

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### Faith Ministries (continued)

Our churches can break through the silence and allow the Light to heal. When this happens, the church becomes a healing place “where recovery is seen, honored and made visible.” The church becomes a doorway to freedom; *Open Doors, Open Hearts and Open Minds*.

Locations for training in Core Competencies for Clergy and Faith Partners will be announced soon. I leave you with a quote from the Missouri Recovery and Advocacy Task Force:

“How will anyone know about recovery from addiction if we don’t tell them? Will we continue to allow stigma, shame, and misunderstanding to destroy our friends, our families, and our communities?”

#### **How will anyone know?**

Sloan is a Substance Abuse Counselor with Dilworth Center for Chemical Dependency in Charlotte where she facilitates group therapy for women. She is an Ordained UM Deacon called to build a bridge between basements and sanctuaries. She is available to speak about addiction and recovery to congregations, Sunday Schools, Stephens Ministers and others. You can email her at [sadiemaec@aol.com](mailto:sadiemaec@aol.com) or call (704) 619-4847.



# All Saints Day Service

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## Charlotte District All Saints Day Service

November 1 • 7:00 p.m.

### First United Methodist Church, 501 N. Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC

The combined choirs of First, Memorial, Hawthorne Lane, Matthews, and St. Stephen United Methodist Churches will give leadership to an extraordinary service of worship for All Saints Day. Todd Henry, Director of Music at Memorial United Methodist Church, will direct the music and encourages other choral groups to join in this district-wide event on November 1<sup>st</sup> at First UMC. Music directors and pastors may contact Todd at [Todd.Henry2@wachovia.com](mailto:Todd.Henry2@wachovia.com) or phone the Memorial Church office (704-537-2060) to learn more about how to become involved in preparing for this act of worship.

Each participating church is asked to submit to the office of Memorial UMC the names of all persons in their congregation who have died since last year's observance of All Saints. A full list will be compiled and distributed in the service bulletin. Families that have experienced these losses will especially be encouraged to attend this time of remembrance and thanksgiving. The following anthems, liturgical selections, and hymns will be included:

Processional: *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* (Martin Luther), Congregation/Choir

Hanging of the 95 Theses/Call to Worship: Liturgist/Congregation

Choral Introit: *Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation* (Dale Wood)

First Reading (Liturgist): Ephesians 2:1-9; Romans 5:1-3; 6-8

Lesson (Liturgist): *Faith vs. Works and the Early Protestant Reformation*

Hymn of Reformation: *The Church's One Foundation* (Charles Wesley / arr. Diemer), Congregation/Choir

Collect (Liturgist)

Offertory (Organist): Nicene Creed

Stories/Lessons of Early Saints and Martyrs (Liturgist)

Second Reading (Liturgist): Revelation 21:1-21

Anthem: *Canticle of Heaven* (Craig Courtney), Choir

Lesson (Liturgist): *Our Saints in Heaven*

Reading of Names (Liturgist): Each Candle Flame Extinguished represents our loss of a saint on earth.

Hymn of Celebration: *Canticle: For All the Saints* (Vaughan Williams / arr. Doug Wagner), Congregation/ Choir

Benediction (Liturgist)

Choral Response: *Sevenfold Amen* (Stainer), Choir

**Please publicize this service in your congregation's e-mail, bulletin, and newsletter.**

## Around the Charlotte District...

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### St. Paul Youth

Worship at St. Paul UMC in August. The youth had just returned from Carolina Cross Connections and gave an inspiring testimony related to their experience.



### Covenant Discipleship

Steven W. Manskar, staff member of the Board of Discipleship in Nashville, Tennessee, led an all-day seminar at Providence UMC, September 16th, on Covenant Discipleship Groups. A large contingency of the crowd was from the Charlotte District.



## 100th Anniversary

On Sunday, September 17th, Davidson UMC celebrated the beginning of a week-end observance of the church's 100th Anniversary. Here are scenes from the Saturday outdoor picnic and a service of worship.



### Vision 20/20



CONRAD, our Conference Committee on Congregational Development, and our Charlotte District Committee met on Monday, September 18th, at University City for dialogue with local church pastors and leaders.

### Time Away



During their August vacation, George and Pat Thompson spend a week in Washington. Here they are seen after a tour of the White House.

## Opportunities and Events

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### **Eugene Peterson to Speak at 2006 Convocation & Pastors' School – Oct. 9-11**

“Called to Follow. Called to Lead” will feature scholar and author Eugene Peterson as the James A. Gray lecturer. Theologian Craig Dykstra will deliver the Franklin S. Hickman lectures. Laity and clergy are invited. Register online:

[www.divinity.duke.edu/called](http://www.divinity.duke.edu/called)

### **Lauren Winner to Lead WNC Elders' Retreat – Nov. 13-15**

Kanuga Conference Center, near Hendersonville. Theme: “Our Story in God’s Story”. Leaders include Lauren Winner author of *Girl Meets God* and Dr. Tracy Radosevic, Biblical storyteller and president of the international Network of Biblical Storytellers. Register online at [www.divinity.duke.edu/elders](http://www.divinity.duke.edu/elders)

### **2006-2007 Study Leave at Duke Divinity School**

As a member of the Western North Carolina Conference, pastors are eligible for a \$400.00 scholarship so that total program cost, excluding travel to and from the program, will only be \$100.00. For more information about general program information and an application form, contact Dina G. Helderma at [dhelderma@div.duke.edu](mailto:dhelderma@div.duke.edu).

### **Africa University Newsletter Posted**

Get the latest news from Africa University. The July-Aug. issue of *Acacia*, the official newsletter of Africa University, has been posted online at <http://www.wnccumc.org/vsn/au2.htm>

### **Mission Teams Note New Security Measures**

With the newest threats to international travel, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has issued new security procedures for air travel. For those embarking on mission and disaster response trips, see <http://www.wnccumc.org/mis/volunteers.htm>.

### **Youth Building Team Scheduled for Guatemala**

The 2007 WNCC building team program will send a youth team to Quiche, Guatemala, June 22-July 2 led by Louisa Suggs. Cost is \$1,120 per person. Complete information and application forms are available at [http://www.wnccumc.org/bgt/building\\_teams.htm](http://www.wnccumc.org/bgt/building_teams.htm).

### **Changes in UMCOR Kit Contents, Project AGAPE Packing Announced**

Due to major changes in Armenian customs policy, new packing instructions are now required for humanitarian aid going to Project AGAPE. Along with UMCOR kits, humanitarian aid may be taken to the WNCC Mission Response Center or to one of nine pick-up locations throughout the conference the week prior to the Nov. 19 deadline. Get the changes, packing guide, check lists, pick-up information and more at <http://www.wnccumc.org/mis/center.htm> and [http://www.wnccumc.org/mis/pick-up\\_dates.htm](http://www.wnccumc.org/mis/pick-up_dates.htm).

### **2007 Building Team Applications Available**

Applications are available for 38 building teams heading to 13 countries with hammers and nails, shovels and picks, and also taking a huge portion of love and passion for Christian servanthood as they work as United Methodist Volunteers in Mission, repairing and building churches and other facilities for those in need. Applications are due by Oct. 20. The brochure also includes information about the Hammer and a Nail Rally, where past and current building team members gather for the afternoon at Christ UMC in Hickory on October 7.

For more information and downloads go to [http://www.wnccumc.org/bgt/building\\_teams.htm](http://www.wnccumc.org/bgt/building_teams.htm).

## Opportunities and Events (continued)

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### Grants Encourage Building Team Participation

Want to go on a building team project, but think you can't afford it? Grants and scholarships are available to qualifying ethnic minorities and those from rural churches that qualify for Duke Endowment funds. They are awarded for first-time building team participation in 2007. Another grant, by the Fellows Committee, is based on need. Learn about these funds at [http://www.wnccumc.org/bgt/additional\\_support.htm](http://www.wnccumc.org/bgt/additional_support.htm).

### Missionaries Visit Conference

Anne Kolbe, missionary to Cambodia, will return home on Aug. 31 and be available for church visits Oct. 15 through the end of November. Also, Susan Henry, missionary to Bolivia will itinerate in our conference during January. If you would like either missionary to visit your church, please contact Mike Collins at [mcollins@wnccumc.org](mailto:mcollins@wnccumc.org) with three possible dates/times. Priority will be given to churches with covenant relationships with Kolbe and Henry along with those sponsoring ministries in Cambodia and Bolivia. Read about these and other missionaries at <http://www.wnccumc.org/mis/missionaries.htm>. Do you want to sponsor a missionary? See the Mission Guidebook at <http://www.wnccumc.org/pub/missionguidebook.htm>.

### Secretaries to Hold Annual Meeting – Oct. 20-22

The Western NC Chapter of the Professional Association of United Methodist Secretaries (PAUMCS) will hold their 15th annual conference Oct. 20-22 at Lambuth Inn at Lake Junaluska. See the PAUMCS newsletter at <http://www.wnccumc.org/pau/paumcs.htm> and get details about the conference at <http://www.wnccumc.org/pau/events.htm>.

### Youth Worker Summit to Draw Big Crowd – Nov. 12-15

Nearly 600 adult workers in youth ministry are expected at the Youth Worker Summit, Nov. 12-15 at Walt Disney World's Coronado Springs Resort near Orlando. "We Do Not Lose Heart" is the theme of the event planned by the Ecumenical Youth Ministries Staff Team of the National Council of Churches of Christ. Three days will include dialogue/networking with other youth ministry professionals, worship, leadership development, and resource sharing. Details: <http://www.youthworkersummit.org>.

### 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 information, go to [www.gbhem.org/exploration](http://www.gbhem.org/exploration).

#### e-wnccnews

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