



North Carolina Annual Conference
of The United Methodist Church

Friday
June 11, 2010

Conference Begins With Worship

Annual Conference 2010 began, as it always does, with worship. The Rev. Kelli Sorg set the tone for authentic and passionate worship this year with her singing. This was soon followed by the deeply thoughtful preaching of the Rev. Dr. Richard Hays, professor and interim dean of Duke Divinity School.

In his sermon entitled “Carrying the Death of Jesus,” Dr. Hays reminded the conference that, as the apostle Paul writes, “We do not preach ourselves. We proclaim Jesus as Lord” (2 Cor. 4:5). Dr. Hays said of those being memorialized



that though they have died, “through their faith, they still speak.”

An All Saints Celebration followed the preaching. The congregation remembered 19 clergy and 10 spouses that have died since the last Annual Conference. An offering for the Central Conference Pension Initiative raised \$352,866.16 in total pledges and \$47,794.64 in cash and checks to provide long-term financial security for dedicated church leaders and surviving spouses in the Central Conferences of The United Methodist Church.

Financial Overview Presented

Christine Dodson, Conference Treasurer, was joined by the chairperson of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration (CF&A), the Rev. Danny Allen, in a special presentation on the financial status of our Annual Conference and The United Methodist Church as a whole.

The Board of Pension section of their report recommended that the “per service year rate” (PSR) increase by 2.1% (to \$639) for next year. The PSR is the rate at which benefits will be paid out. To pay at this new PSR, the Conference would be liable for \$51,397,193 in future payments. Of that amount, almost \$35 million has been raised for an overall funded status of about 67%.

Another part of the CF&A report came from the Insurance Committee. For the seventh year in a row, they are recommending no change in eligibility, benefits, or rates for the 2011 insurance year. However, the committee projects that an increase in rates will be needed

for 2012.

The report included an adjustment to the salaries of the District Superintendents and a section from the Commission on Equitable Compensation on minimum salary, both of which are addressed on page 2 of this publication.

Our Annual Conference votes on a budget this year to be raised next year to be used for ministry the following year. The budget requested by CF&A for 2012 would represent a 0.34% increase for 2012 over the 2011 budget.

Dodson and Allen will return on Friday afternoon when the body will vote on their report. The Annual Conference voted this year to change the Conference rules so that any business of the Annual Conference that will have a financial implication will be eligible for a motion, discussion, and a vote on whether or not to refer the matter to CF&A.

Ministry Celebration Inspires

The United Methodist Foundation awarded the Saints of God award for faithful stewardship to Lynn Smith Crumpler of Garris Chapel UMC.

The Foundation for Evangelism presented the Harry Denman award to the Rev. Dr. Jerry A. Jackson of Bellemont UMC. A youth person from Bellemont UMC, Stephanie Patterson, also received the award as did Mr. Eston Brinkley, Jr., of Wesley Memorial UMC in Wilmington.

The G. Ross Freeman Leadership Award, given by the United Methodist Men, went to the Rev. Richard Stone of Fuquay-Varina UMC for strengthening the fellow-

ships of United Methodist Men. The United Methodist Men of the Conference awarded the Society of John Wesley Award to Bishop Al Gwinn for his support of men’s ministry.

The Key Taylor Award went to Bethlehem UMC of the Bladen Charge in the Wilmington District. The Rev. Jack and Kay Crum award for prophetic ministry recipient was Sanctuary UMC in Durham for their outreach to the “least, the last, and the lost.”

An offering was received last night for Stamp Out Malaria/Nothing But Nets™ to combat malaria in Africa. The total amount raised will be announced soon.

Financial Report Presents Salary Recommendations

As a part of the report of the Council on Finance and Administration (CF&A), the Commission on Equitable Compensation brought their recommendation for the minimum salaries of full-time and student appointments. For 2011, they recommend no funding changes. After an amendment to their report was approved last year, there was no change for 2010 funding.

The CF&A report also addressed salaries for District Superintendents. They recommended a formula in which these salaries would be the average of the top 25 pastors' salaries in the Conference for the previous year. This would raise the 2011 salary by 1.6% to \$101,994.

Inclusivity a Priority at Annual Conference 2010

The Monitoring and Accountability Committee enthusiastically teamed up to monitor the 2010 Annual Conference in an effort to review, evaluate and challenge the Annual Conference to achieve racial and ethnic inclusiveness.

"Christian accountability affirms our witness in the Body of Jesus Christ as the committee is determined to carry out this ministry for the sake of the Annual Conference in order to make disciples for the transformation of the world," remarked Rev. Ed Drew, committee co-chairperson.

The committee encourages all to read Psalm 133 and Corinthians 12:13-14. "During the opening worship service and organizational session of the first day," reported Annie Fairley, committee chairperson, "there appeared to be a varied representation across gender and racial/ethnic lines."

The committee stresses that in order for the conference and the local church to become more fully inclusive, we will have to be more intentional and attentive in fulfilling the Great Commission to welcome all into the family of God.

Bishop Asks Important Questions of Conference

Bishop Al Gwinn presented a State of the Church address after the Evening of Celebration last night. The bishop's remarks were centered around three questions: (1) Who are we? (2) Where are we (at this moment in time)? and (3) What is our calling?

In response to the first question, Bishop Gwinn referenced *The Great Omission* by Dallas Willard. He said that in most of our churches, we know the Great Commission but we fail to respond to it. In most of our churches, one can be a good church member without ever being a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Where are we at this moment in time? "We're at the edge of the now and the not yet," responded Bishop Gwinn. He reminded the congregation of the Conference Treasurer's report (see "Financial Overview Presented" in this publication) that deals with sustainability. At the General Conference 2012, Bishop Gwinn believes that The United Methodist Church will have to decide "if we are going to die in the wilderness or get the courage to cross the Jordan and go in a new direction."

In the third question, the Conference was asked "What is our calling?" The bishop invited the people to look at the Great Commission and ask themselves, "Why did our Lord give us this commission?" Because it is the heart of God, he explained.

Bishop Gwinn told about how he prayed one night: "God, if I could show you 30 people in our Conference, out of our 235,000 members, who went to bed tonight and stained their pillow cases with tears as they prayed for lost people would you be willing to open up the windows of heaven and pour your Holy Spirit out upon us in a powerful way?" He said that God's response was, "If you could show me 10 North Carolina United Methodists who stained their pillows last night with tears for lost people, I would bless you more than you can ever know."



The Rev. Kelli Sorg sings for Opening Worship.

Special Meals:

- 12:00PM - Duke Divinity, Hilton
- 12:00PM - Extension Ministry, Hilton
- 12:00PM - UMM (Men's Ministry Specialist), St. James UMC
- 12:00PM - Clergy Partners, City Bistro
- 5:30PM - Asbury Alumni, Covenant UMC

Today's Agenda Highlights:

- 3:00PM - Celebration of Laity Ministries
- 7:30PM - Laity Celebration

Clergy and Spouses Remembered

Yesterday morning's worship service included the remembrance of the following deceased clergy:

Riley Tex Hamilton, Barney Lee Davidson, Robert Joseph Rudd, Wayne Esmond Thomas, Dean Healy Morton, Sr., Roger Everett Thompson, Clyde Gay McCarver, Richard J. Williams, Benjamin Ray Melvin, Pernicie C. Yelverton, Patrick Joseph Looney, Bobby Powell Tyson, Sr., Hobart William Burnside, Jr., Leonard Edward Mayo, Samuel Williams Dixon, Jr., Harold "Pete" McElroy Chrismon, Sr., Neil Howard Thompson, Herman Nathan Ward, Jr., and Robert Edward Lee Moser.



And the following deceased spouses of clergy:

Callie Powell Wooten, Louise Stallings Dawson Forbes, Mildred Murrie Lee, Alta Stone Russell, Glenda Ann Craig, Nancy Wike Andrews, Velva Bass Williams Little, Annie Margaret Johnson Beane, Catharine Allen Vick, and Linda Lane Blue.