



North Carolina Annual Conference
of The United Methodist Church

Saturday
June 12, 2010

Conference Blessed at Laity Event

Laity ministries were the focus of last night's celebration. Featured speaker, Dr. Tom Morris, layperson of Wrightsville UMC and author of such books as *Philosophy for Dummies*, talked about "True Success in Times of Change." He shared "7 C's of Success": Conception, Confidence, Concentration, Consistency, Commitment, Character, and a Capacity to Enjoy.

The music for the evening was provided by the African Children's Choir which is committed to giving each child an opportunity to reach their God-given potential. Many of the 23 children have lost their parents. Their music was delightful and energetic.



Financial Challenges Addressed

The Committee on Finance and Administration (CF&A), led by Conference Treasurer Christine Dodson and Committee chairperson the Rev. Danny Allen, brought to the Annual Conference a report that included a budget and the reports of their various subcommittees and boards. The report and all of its parts were approved as brought by the CF&A, but not without a great deal of discussion.

The budget approved by the Conference for 2012 is for \$20,345,625 of ministry funding. This represents an increase of 0.34% over the budget for 2011. Our Annual Conference votes on a budget that will be raised the next year and used to fund ministry in the following year.

Section VI of the CF&A report made a recommendation for the 2011 salary level for district superintendents. The Annual Conference policy has been that the salary be set at the average of the top 25 salaries and non-vouchered cash allowances of the pastors across the Conference. This means that the Superintendents will receive \$101,994 which is a 1.6% raise over 2010.

Another increase came from the Board of Pension

report and the funding plan for the pre-1982 pension benefits paid to retirees. Those benefits are paid in the form of a "per service year rate" (PSR). The Conference approved a 2.1% (\$639) increase in the PSR for 2011. This action means that our liability for the payment of future benefits will be \$51,397,193. Almost \$35 million of this is funded.

Good news came to the Conference from the Insurance Committee that recommended no change in eligibility, benefits, or rates for the 2011 insurance year. This is the seventh year that the active plan premiums have remained constant. However, the Committee anticipates that an increase in rates will be needed for 2012 premiums.

The Committee on Equitable Compensation brought a recommendation for no increase in the salary, travel, and utilities for pastors on minimum salary. After much discussion, the Conference approved their report. The Committee brought a proposal in 2010 for an increase for 2011, but the Conference changed it to no increase.

This year's CF&A report included new minimum standards regarding local church finances that can be found in Section IV.

To Raleigh for 2011 Conference, Maybe Raleigh for 2012

This year, the Annual Conference determined the location for its 2011 and 2012 gatherings. The Greenville Convention Center will not be available for 2011. Other locations considered were the Expo Center in Fayetteville, the Raleigh Convention Center, and the Wilmington Convention Center.

Ultimately, the Conference voted to go to Raleigh for 2011 and 2012. The Raleigh Business Development Fund pledged to pay our \$20,200 cost for the convention center in 2011 if members book at least 500 hotel rooms during our stay.



Statistician Shows Low Growth Rate Across NC Conference

Conference Statistician, the Rev. George Speake, reminded members yesterday that there were 145 fewer first-time professions of faith in 2009 than there were in 2008. Our total full membership at the end of 2009 was 237,495. This represents an overall increase of only 5, the smallest increase in over 20 years. However, the average worship attendance in our Conference went up by 400.

Clergy and others using the Online Data Collection System were informed that the system will undergo many needed changes this fall and reminded to be as accurate as possible in their reporting.

Friday's Monitoring and Accountability Report

Jesus invited his disciples to "follow him." Think of the worshippers in your church. Are they comprised of persons more like the demographic makeup here at our annual conference, or more like the demographics reported in the USA Today. The Friday edition reported that our nation's demographics are changing dramatically and rapidly right before our eyes. Within our Annual Conference, about 4% of the persons are from racial/ethnic minorities. When we look at our churches, who are missing from our pews? The Monitoring and Accountability Committee invites the Annual Conference to wonder and discuss where Jesus might be calling us to follow, especially in light of the Bishop's address Thursday night? Jesus might be leading us out into the very neighborhoods visible from our own front porches, filled with persons of different cultures and backgrounds than our own. Will we have the courage to follow? -The Rev. Ed Priestaf

Projects Put Conference

Faith in Action Today

During the dinner break on Thursday evening, Conference members packaged about 20,000 meals for Stop Hunger Now.

Three other service projects are available for Conference members today in Greenville after the closing worship. At the Wesley Foundation campus ministry in Greenville, the kitchen needs to be gutted and some of the student gathering and study rooms need painting. The Wesley Foundation is at 501 E. Fifth Street. Some supplies will be provided.

Two handicap ramps in Greenville will be the site of two more projects on Saturday afternoon. One is at 1104 E. Tenth Street.



The other is at 2706 Sunset Street. Hammers and nails will be provided.

Conversations, Action

Come Out of Resolutions

The Committee on Resolutions, led by the Rev. Alan Swartz, presented the Resolutions yesterday. However, Bishop Gwinn ruled Resolutions 1, 2, 3 and 7 to be out of order because they would change the policy of the Annual Conference. Such a change in policy would need to be made in the form of a motion, not a resolution.

Resolutions 1 and 2 related to the role of District Superintendents with regards to the professions of faith in our Conference. The third and seventh resolutions addressed Conference medical insurance.

The Committee recommended to the Conference concurrence with Resolutions 4, 5, and 6.

Resolution 4 deals with human trafficking in North Carolina and was approved unchanged.

The fifth resolution calls for the Conference to speak out against discrimination and hate crimes against Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender people. With wording changes that clarify how the resolution relates to ministry in the local church, the resolution was approved.

With a few changes to Resolution 6 to clarify wording and an amendment to include the immigration policies of other nations, the resolution calling for comprehensive immigration reform was approved.



Today's Agenda

Highlights:

- 9:30AM - Closing Worship, Service of Ordination, Fixing of the Appointments

**2010 Annual Conference
Registration: 1,605**

Stamp Out Malaria/Nothing But Nets™

Total Raised
Thursday Evening:
\$7,933.15



Lay Ministries of Year

Burlington District: Orange UMC "Prison Ministry"

Durham District: Carr UMC "Firefighter Ministry"

Elizabeth City District: Mt. Olivet UMC "Joy Store Ministry"

Fayetteville District: Person St. UMC "Martha's Table" & "Community Kitchen"

Greenville District: Salem UMC "Kids for Jesus" and Trinity UMC "Feed the Need Stamped"

New Bern District: Trinity, Centenary, & Gerber UMC's "iServe Ministry"

Raleigh District: Horne Memorial UMC "Ryan Epps Home for Children in Haiti"

Rockingham District: Pee Dee UMC "Community Breakfast Ministry"

Rocky Mount District: Spring Hope UM Charge "Faith Christian Ministries"

Sanford District: Military Ministries

Wilmington District: Wesley Memorial UMC "S.O.ers"

