

HISTORY OF GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN FAYETTEVILLE

The Native American Urban Ministries Initiative had its beginning in 1986. It was a National Division response to the need for new direction in Native American urban ministry. This need was clearly articulated by Native American mission leadership and affirmed by General Conference action. It was a comprehensive Division-wide attempt to give focused direction to Native American ministries in selected cities. The ministry was aimed at leading the United Methodist Church in the development of innovative and creative ministries to meet the spiritual, physical and social needs of Native Americans in targeted urban/metro areas. This initiative was unique in that it would also affirm tribal identity and Native American cultural/religious values. This affirmation would be reflected in all programmatic areas. Native Americans viewed this initiative with great hope in that it began to focus on the needs of Native Americans with intentionality.

In October, 1986, the Native American Urban Ministries Initiative was approved by the National Division Board of Directors. This initiative began January 1987 for a projected term of five years.

In 1987, Annual Conferences received information about the plans of the Initiative. The North Carolina Conference expressed an interest in the Initiative.

In June of 1988, The Rev. Samuel Wynn was appointed to the Native American Urban Ministries Task Force in the Fayetteville Area. That same year Mr. Wynn sent a grant request to the Native American Urban Ministries Initiative of the General Board of Global Ministries and received funding for starting a new ministry with Native Americans in the Fayetteville area. This ministry was aimed at helping youth and to assist people in leadership development. The focus was on getting the people ready to develop and support their own church.

Mr. Wynn established a Native American Urban Ministries Task Force in Fayetteville and this body established goals for the route of the ministry through 1991 and met regularly to evaluate the progress being made.

From a census, Mr. Wynn learned that approximately 5,000 Native Americans live in Cumberland County. Of this 5,000, approximately 40 percent are Lumbees. The remaining are Cherokee, Waccamaw-Siouan, Haliwa-Saponi, Tuscarora and Coharie. Mr. Wynn and started making contacts in the area of his residence.

July 15, 1988, Mr. Wynn Started a Bible Study in the basement of his home, 3636 Deaver Place in Fayetteville.

In the fall of 1988 Calvary United Methodist Church on Ireland Drive in Fayetteville, which was closing, agreed to merge with the Native American Congregation. These two congregations merged as Grace United Methodist Church. The first joint worship service was held October 31, 1988.

Calvary United Methodist Church officially closed February 9, 1989. Seventeen of the Calvary members remained with the new church.

Grace United Methodist Church was chartered on April 9, 1989.

Deborah Huff was the church's first delegate to Annual Conference in June of 1989 and Bonnie Goins was alternate.

In July 1989, Grace United Methodist Church had 17 persons to participate in the Native American National Family Camp at Cherokee.

At the close of 1989, the Grace United Methodist Church had 36 members.

In the fall of 1988, the church established the following Mission Statement and Goals for 1988-1990:

MISSION STATEMENT:

Grace United Methodist Church is a holistic church with a holistic vision for ministry in worship and service, seeking to celebrate Christ in the world. We believe the Church of Jesus Christ is an authentic expression of the gospel. It is a living organism made visible in the world that consists of diverse cultures, classes and varied theological convictions. As a United Methodist Church, we seek to be a spiritually nurturing community that reveals the love of God to one another and the world. We recognize there are diverse ways through which ministry can be both expressed and experienced. We therefore will try to influence the lives of people who choose to worship with us and seek to minister to both spiritual and physical needs--by proclaiming the Gospel and making disciples. We also believe the church must respond to human and spiritual need by authentically living out the Gospel and making disciples. Grace United Methodist Church will respond to the socio-economic, legal, political and spiritual needs of the community.

GOALS FOR 1988-1990

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:

1. Hold at least one laity training event. We will seek leadership from the Conference Council on Ministries, TLC Teams for Children's and Youth Ministry.
2. Attend January Workshops for Administrative Council on Ministries.

GOALS (Continued)

3. Recruit at least 4 new members on the Administrative Council on Ministries.
4. Attend the 5th National Native American Family Camp in July of 1990.
5. Encourage our lay leader to attend lay speaker training.
6. Recruit at least 3 persons to over see Children's Church and the nursery.
7. Activate the United Methodist Men's group.
8. Implement the 12 Keys of the Vitalization Project as outlined in Ken Callahan's book.
9. Hold a Stewardship training event for our church in January of 1990.
10. Develop job descriptions for the Administrative Council on Ministries members.
11. Hold Vacation Bible School in June of 1990.
12. Develop a church brochure defining our ministry.

FAITH DEVELOPMENT:

1. Identify at least 5 new families who will join our church.
2. Seek to win at least 3 persons to Christ.
3. Hold a Fall Revival.
4. Establish an Intercessory Prayer Group.
5. Increase our Sunday School attendance by 15 persons.
6. Reach 4 unchurched families in the community.
7. Seek to have 75 persons attending Sunday morning worship.
8. Recruit at least 10 new members for the Young at Heart group.

STEWARDSHIP:

1. Pay 100 percent of our conference outreach ministries.
2. Meet our church budget 100 percent.
3. Develop a sound Biblical understanding of:
 - (a) Stewardship, e.g., volunteering personal time
 - (b) Tithing
4. Double our Mission outreach giving. (3)

GOALS (Continued)

5. Pick up one third of the pastors salary.
6. Hold several fund raising events.

SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRIES:

1. Hold a Voter Registration and Alcohol/Drug Program.
(Recruit at least 5 volunteers from the congregation to participate in this program.)
2. Develop Youth Ministry.
3. Continue to strengthen our working relationship with the CCAOP.