

From Strength to Strength
Quadrennial Theme, North Carolina Conference
of The United Methodist Church

The psalmist writes of a place of joy, a source of strength, a place of security, and that place is in God's presence.

*“How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!
My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the Lord; . . .
Happy are those who live in your house . . .
Happy are those whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.
As they go through the valley of Baca
they make it a place of springs:
the early rain also covers it with pools.
They go from strength to strength;
the God of gods will be seen in Zion.” (Psalm 84:1-7)*

Christians find strength in every situation of life. We celebrate this reality that give us hope in any time of trouble, trial or stress. “Baca” appears in our journey. However, it does not define us. We overcome through Jesus Christ.

The message of the psalmist is that believers who find their strength in the living God not only find their spirits lifted, they transform the landscape into one of hope and refreshment. “They go from strength to strength” as they are nourished by their relationship to God. The benefits are contagious, as others recognize in them a source of vitality that sustains them and spills over in transformative ways. Jesus invited disciples into such a life-enhancing relationship. In the words of the Apostle Paul, “May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power.” (Colossians 1:11)

Over and over again, the scriptures speak of strength, not our own creation or development, but God's provision. Over and over again, the scriptures beckon us to remain rooted in Jesus Christ, so that we may bear fruit and lead productive lives for his sake.

In each year of this quadrennium, 2013-2016, our Annual Conference theme will focus on the strength we receive from God. Each year, we also will focus on one aspect of that relationship that produces growth, wellness, and a desire to serve and to give, transforming the lives and communities around us.

Grow!
Thrive!
Serve!
Give!

So that, people of all ages and places may come to know the life-giving love of Jesus Christ, and find themselves strengthened for the task he has given us. With a renewed commitment to our vision as people of the Wesleyan way, the North Carolina Conference seeks to be “healthy congregations and effective leaders in every place, making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” Welcome to the 2015 Annual Conference session in Wilmington, NC. Join us for the teaching, the singing, the celebrating of our ministries, all of which are God's gift of strength for us, as we live by faith in Jesus Christ.