2007 North Georgia Annual Conference Session
“We Are Called to Walk Humbly With God”
The Classic Center, Athens, Georgia
Bishop G. Lindsey Davis, presiding

2007 Annual Conference Wrap Up

The purpose of this document is to help clergy and lay delegates communicate the business of the 2007 Annual Conference Session to their local church membership. Please note that this document is not intended to be an exhaustive report of all that occurred during the conference session. Our hope is to provide you with information, which may have a direct impact on your church.

MONDAY, JUNE 11, 2007

Opening Communion and Memorial Service


Opening of Conference

• Bill Britt, Johnny Fowler, John Simmons, Athens Mayor Heidi Davison, and University of Georgia Director of Community Relations Pat Allen welcomed the conference to Athens.

• The Consent Agenda was presented.

• Emory Healthcare representatives John Fox, CEO EHC, and Woody Spackman, Executive Director of the Emory Center for Pastoral Services, presented a pedometer to Bishop Davis and challenged the clergy and laity to log their steps with the pedometers Emory Healthcare donated to every delegate in their registration packet. Bill McKoy introduced the devotional book “On the Move by Faith,” which was also distributed to each delegate in the registration packets. He invited everyone to log onto the America on the Move Web site to join the North Georgia Conference Group.
Service of Ordination and Commissioning

- Ordained two Full Connection Deacons: Lesley Derrick Langford and Laura Putman Rappold.
- Two Orders Recognized from Another Denomination: Sheila M. Crowe and Ronald Earl Goode.

Lay Ballots

- Elected 6 delegates to General Conference (in order): Lyn Powell, Joe Whittemore, Jane Finley, Hank Huckabee, Joel Mooneyhan and Marget Sikes.

TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 2007

Monitoring

- Nancy Johnson, Chair of the Committee on the Status and Role of Women, explained that COSROW would observe and report statistical data on gender, race, and status as lay or clergy of those speaking and participating in each session. Monitoring results will be made available to the conference and to delegates.
Boar of Pensions and Health Benefits

- Six recommendations were presented and approved. The Conference is on target to extinguish its $39,300,000 unfunded liability by 2021. Bill McKoy stated that rates for HealthFlex would remain the same for 2007, but may increase no more than 5% in 2008. Also, HealthFlex has developed several health initiatives making a difference across the denomination such as annual wellness visits, WebMD, and a relationship with Weight Watchers.

Recognition of Retiring Clergy


United Methodist Publishing House

- Presented Bishop Davis with a check for $14,457.89. The funds will be sent to the General Board of Pension for the Central Conference Pension Initiative.

Wesleyan Christian Advocate

- Honored Alice M. Smith, who is retiring, for her seven years of service as editor and for more than 20 years of service in United Methodist communications in North Georgia.

- Introduced Jim Nelson who will take the position of editor July 1.

- Announced discounted price of $20 for a year’s subscription available in June 2007 only.

Episcopacy/Episcopal Residence Committee

- Task Force to study Episcopal Residence recommends that the Episcopal Residence be moved to a location near Simpsonwood. The current residence was
appraised at $510,000. The Conference approved a request to provide $250,000 in addition to the sale price of the current residence to purchase or build a new Episcopal Residence and furnish the new residence.

**Staffing Committee**

- Task Force has studied the districts and determined that it is not in the best interest of the Conference to reduce the number of districts, but may be beneficial to realign the districts. The Conference approved the recommendation to keep 12 districts and to look into the realignment of the districts.

- The Conference also approved the formation of a four-person study committee to work with four South Georgia Conference members to examine churches on the shared border of the Conferences to determine if any fit better in one conference than the other. Any agreed upon changes would be taken to the 2008 Jurisdictional Conference.

**Board of Church Development**

- Committee for Black Church Development sponsored “A Summit on the Black Church” to provide a forum for strengthening the Black Church. Two follow-up meetings have been held and four task forces formed as well as a training team.

- Hispanic Church Development announces that there are 22 ministries with Latinos in our Conference which offer programs such as English classes, GED classes, computer classes, after-school programs and health services. There are 1,761 Hispanic/Latino members of our Conference. The Annual Celebration of Thanksgiving and Worship Service (at which Bishop Davis will preach) will be held in September.

- Korean Church Development planted a new Korean mission (Korean Church of Newnan) and has held coaching for missions and churches through the Natural Church Development program.

- Four new churches were chartered this year: Mosaic UMC in the Augusta District, Highlands UMC in the Gainesville District, Atlanta Bethany UMC in the Atlanta-Roswell District, and Still Waters UMC in the Atlanta-Emory District.

- Sixteen church planters were introduced who are in the process of starting new churches.

- Two churches received the Mother Church of the Year Award: Korean Church of Atlanta and Cornerstone UMC in Newnan.
• Small membership churches were honored from each district. They were: Ariel Bowen UMC (Atlanta-College Park), Starrsville UMC (Atlanta-Decatur-Oxford), Liberty UMC (Augusta), New Hope (Atlanta-Marietta), Korean Church of Atlanta (Atlanta-Emory), Providence (Athens) Mountain City (Gainesville), Culloden UMC (Griffin), St. Mary’s (LaGrange), Williamstown (Northwest), and Wesley Chapel (Rome-Carrollton).

• This year, the Estate of Reid Stephens made a substantial donation to the Charles Barnes fund, and a new endowment, the Douglas and Daisy Gibson Endowment Fund, was created.

• A resolution was passed to recommend the continuation of the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry.

Consent Agenda

• Conference approved the listed agenda items.

Georgia Florida United Methodist Federal Credit Union

• Presented a $1000 scholarship to Jonathon Godfrey.


Celebration of Mission

• Received the 2007 Bishop’s Appeal Offering for Simpsonwood Conference and Retreat Center. As of Thursday, close to $245,000 had been collected. Donations may still be mailed to the Conference Treasurer’s Office.

Lay Ballots

• Elected (in order) Joe Kilpatrick, Mathew Pinson, and Matthew Everhart as delegates to General Conference.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13, 2007

Housing and Homeless Council
• All money given to the annual Housing and Homeless Council now goes 100 percent to grants. Administrative costs are covered by an endowment.

• Top giving church award: Cascade UMC in Atlanta for $11,406.42. Griffin First was recognized for consistently high giving.

Aldersgate Homes/Collinswood

• A fully-accessible Dining Hall is being constructed at Collinswood and volunteers are needed to complete the work. Donations toward appliances and kitchen equipment are also welcome.

Wesley Woods

• In 2006-2007, Wesley Woods has cared for nearly 42,000 persons in retirement communities and health care facilities. Of these more than 75 percent received some form of financial assistance thanks to the support of the Mother’s Day Offering.

Great Day of Service

• More than 1400 conference delegates participated in multitude of service projects including a Red Cross blood drive, assembling school kits and hygiene kits, visiting nursing homes, doing yard work and writing letters to soldiers.

• New this year was a 5K Run/Walk to raise funds for Nothing But Nets.

Conference Information Office

• The best way to be informed is to sign up at www.ngumc.org for the various Conference e-mail communications: Monday Morning in North Georgia, Weekly Update, and Prayers and Celebrations.

Action Ministries

• Action Ministries thanked Conference for the generous contributions last year to the Bishop’s Appeal Offering. This money helped enable 78,885 meals to be served in feeding programs, 3,243 people be assisted with rent, utilities and medication, 57,385 bags of groceries given, 5,400 people received fresh milk, 38 women provided residential drug and alcohol treatment, and 2,000 families provided with toys and food.
Wesley Community Centers and Camp Wesley

- October 27, 2007 will be the 25th Wesley Walk for Others. The vision is to have a satellite walk in every district. Wesley Community Centers’ goal is to have 2,500 people walk in honor of this anniversary.

- Jimmy Moor, chair of Camp Wesley, Inc., announced that in recent months, the current property has been sold. Camp Wesley, Inc. purchased 300 acres in Meriwether County to develop another excellent camping resource for Wesley Community Centers and the North Georgia Conference.

Eleanor Richardson Award for Social Justice

- Rex Kaney presented the Eleanor Richardson award posthumously to Sally Daniel. It was accepted by members of her family.

Lay Ballots

- Elected (in order): Marjorie Kimbrough, Dianne Spencer, Richard Williamson, Jeff Jernigan, and Tom Jackson to General Conference, concluding the election of 14 needed delegates.

- Elected 14 to join those elected to General Conference as Jurisdictional Conference Delegates (in order): Tonya Murphy, Gary Fuller, Harvey Johnson, Ida Jones, Debbie Stikes, Yooeui Sohn, Leon Jourolmon, Tom Cook, Diane Traynham, Jasper Russell, Charles Miller, Karen Vaughn, Janet Sligar, and Sue Raymond.

Clergy Ballots


THURSDAY, JUNE 14, 2007

Treasurer’s Report

- Membership: 346,430 (up 4,385)
• Professions of faith: 6,760 (up 116)
• Average worship attendance 136,148 (up 2,407)
• Church school attendance 113,595 (down slightly)
• Total apportionment payments: $22,079,098
• North Georgia Conference was the top payer of General Church apportionments, with a total paid of $6,532,213.
• Payments to Conference and General Advances and to special offerings totaled $1,932,369.
• The Gainesville District paid 100% of it’s apportionments for the seventh consecutive year. The Northwest District was second, paying 98%.

**Simpsonwood**

• The following updates were reported on the action taken at the March Called Session of Annual Conference: the appraisal has been completed; paperwork is ready for closing; a capital campaign is being explored; candidate identification has begun for a Director of Development; internet upgrades are complete; and Hotel Equities, Inc. is to take over day-to-day operations July 1.

**United Methodist Men**

• The North Georgia Conference United Methodist Men are at work funding and building a volunteer center in Mississippi.

**United Methodist Women**

• Presented Bishop Davis with a framed Charter for Racial Justice Policies to be placed in the United Methodist Center.

**Connectional Ministries**

• Connectional Ministries offers a new program, “1448: 1 Vision, 4 Objects, 4 Movements, 8 Measures.” Staff members will lead this process at your church at no cost. Call (678) 533-1448 for more information.
• The Media Center has a variety of DVDs, books, resources and study materials available at no cost.

• The Young Adult Task Force is developing and nurturing programs to support ministries to young adults and has made an effort to increase young adult involvement in Annual Conference. The Young Adult committee has recently launched a podcast, 'the bug.'

• Participation in Youth Ministry Institute is encouraged for paid and volunteer youth workers. Information is available at www.yminstitute.org.

• The conference thanked Gary Greenwald for nine years of excellent leadership and welcomed Russell Davis as the new director of Camp Glisson.

Resolutions

• Four resolutions were passed for submission to the 2008 General Conference. They included a call for recodification of the Discipline, an amendment to the Constitution calling for fairness in representation, an amendment giving the General Conference the right to define membership of the Annual Conference, and a resolution to correct misinterpretation of legislation on fair representation in general boards and agencies.

• A resolution on immigration reform was passed.

Clergy Ballots

• Elected to General Conference (in order): Nora Martinez, Steve Wood, Richard Hunter, Alice Rogers, and Chuck Savage.

• Elected to Jurisdictional Conference (in order): Bridgette Young, Bill Britt, Diane Parish, Joy Melton, Mike Cavin, Clay Jacobs and Renita Thomas.

Lay Ballots

• Elected as reserve delegates (in order): Sylvia Moore, Evelyn Wells, Betty Whitten, Catherine White and Al Rowe.
FRIDAY, JUNE 15, 2007

Laity Report

- In February the Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders met and unanimously voted to propose legislation for two changes to the Discipline at the 2008 General Conference: the addition of a paragraph titled “The Ministry of the Laity” and to change the new member pledge to include supporting the church with “Prayers, Presence, Gifts, Service and Witness.”

- North Georgia Conference Lay Leader Lyn Powell has been selected to give the Laity Address (on behalf of lay members worldwide) at the 2008 General Conference.

Southeastern Jurisdiction/Lake Junaluska

- Lake Junaluska will have a celebration July 9 to consecrate its new Bethea Welcome Center. All are invited to attend.

Evangelism Committee

- A Faith Sharing Event will be held Oct. 20 at Mt. Bethel UMC in Marietta. Eddie Fox and George Morris from the World Methodist Council will be among the speakers. The committee asks each church to sponsor two people to attend. The cost is $25 per person.

Clergy Ballots

- Elected as reserve delegates (in order): Byron Thomas, Jimmy Moor, Sharma Lewis, Mary Gene Lee and Jimmy Ellison.

Annual Conference 2008 will be held June 17-20 at the Athens Classic Center.