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SNAPSHOT



A MONTHLY RECAP OF LOCAL CHURCH NEWS & VIEWS

Show Your Work: Plans for Annual Conference

SHOW YOUR WORK



WORSHIP THAT INSPIRES ACTION

Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson and the Annual Conference Planning Committee are busy preparing for the 2017 Annual Conference Session, set for June 13-15 at The Classic Center in Athens.

The Conference begins on Tuesday morning at 10 a.m. with laity orientation in the Grand Hall and clergy executive session in the Theater. The three-day conference closes Thursday afternoon.

Members and guests will experience this year's theme, "Show Your Work: Worship That Inspires Action," through worship led by North Georgia United Methodists. A teaching time called "Show Your Work" is set to follow each worship service, allowing the worship planners to share practical tips and insight on what went into the making of the four services.

As the logo highlights, the worship planning committee is already modeling how prayer, study of scripture, collaboration and preparation leads to excellent worship that inspires action.

"Our goal is to have the best worship experiences we've had all year!" said Bishop Sue, who is presiding for the first time over the North Georgia Annual Conference Session this June.

Bishop Sue will preach Opening Worship and the Service of Ordination. She has invited Rev. Jimmy Moor, recently retired, to preach the Service of remembrance,

and Rev. Olu Brown to preach the service of Word and Table and Sending Forth on Thursday.

Not only will our Conference focus on worship innovation, the four services themselves will progress through the stages of worship. The services begin with gathering (Opening Worship), move into the word proclaimed (Service of Remembrance), a time of response (Ordination), and sending forth (Closing Worship).

Four teams of worship leaders are each planning one service:

Rev. Sonny Sellers of Griffin First UMC and Chapel Roswell Band are coordinating Opening Worship on Tuesday

Rev. Cindi McDonald of Mt Carmel UMC and Atticus Hicks of Oak Grove UMC Decatur will coordinate the Service of Remembrance on Wednesday afternoon

Robert McMichael of Mount Bethel UMC Marietta and Gerald Ricks of Central UMC Atlanta are coordinating the Service of Licensing, Commissioning and Ordination on Wednesday evening

Rev. Olu Brown of Impact UMC and the Impact Worship Team will coordinate closing worship on Thursday morning

The teams are collaborating with liturgists, servers, musicians and worship and visuals committees.

"After all, Liturgy comes from the word Liturgos," explained Rev. Herzen

Andone, director of Connectional Ministries. "Liturgos means 'work of the people.'" Connectional Ministries staff are preparing training opportunities for both lay and clergy after Annual Conference that build on what we learn in June.

Notable schedule changes from recent years include a shift in the day of the ordination service. This year's Service of Ordination and Commissioning is scheduled for the evening of Wednesday, June 14.

The laity dinner is moving to Wednesday before the service.

"The annual Laity Meal in North Georgia is one of the largest gatherings of its type," said Conference Lay Leader Bill Martin. "Moving the meal to Wednesday night will allow those wanting to attend the Service of Ordination to have a place at the Classic Center to share a meal together and then conveniently make their way to the service. The laity dinner also has a long history of outstanding speakers and this year will be no different."

A detailed agenda will be available in the spring.

Two things to count on every day of Annual Conference: Childcare and GROW Day Camp will again be offered and the beloved morning communion service is scheduled to be held each morning.

Find more information on Annual Conference 2017 at www.ngumc.org/AC2017.

Bishop Announces the Appointment of Four New District Superintendents



Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson has announced four new cabinet-level appointments effective in June.

Rev. Quincy Brown, currently executive pastor at Peachtree City UMC, will be appointed as district superintendent of the Atlanta-Decatur-Oxford District, succeeding Coy Hinton, who will re-retire after filling the vacancy created when Sharma Lewis was elected to the episcopacy.

"Quincy will bring a listening ear and a keen gift of discernment to encourage the churches to have a new evangelistic fervor," said Bishop Sue. "He served with distinction as the LaGrange College chaplain and as the Board of Ministry chair.

He has brought key strategic and visionary gifts to his work at Peachtree City which will serve him well in this new role."

Rev. Brian Clark, currently lead pastor at Simpsonwood UMC, will be the new district superintendent of the Athens-Elberton District, succeeding Gary Whetstone, who will retire after many years of fine service to the Conference.

"Brian has served effectively in the local church will bring a younger perspective to the cabinet," Bishop Sue explained. "He is innovative, visionary, and able to think in new ways about how a church should be impacting its community."

Rev. Susan Landry, currently lead pastor at Mt. Zion UMC, Marietta, will be the new district superintendent of the LaGrange District, succeeding Carol Cook, who after serving with excellence as a superintendent feels called to serve again in the local church and will accept a new appointment in June.

"Susan is a smart and very competent bridge builder who has led her churches well," says Bishop Sue. "She has served with excellence on the Board of Ministry and as a Covenant Group Leader. She will be a wise, attentive, and valuable resource to both the small and large churches of the district."

Rev. Mike Long, lead pastor at Roswell First for 16 years, will be the new district superintendent of the Atlanta-Emory District, succeeding Dana Everhart, who will be appointed as Director of the Office of Ministerial Services.

"Mike has decades of experience serving some of the largest churches in the Conference, and has led the Conference in many capacities, most recently in the area of finance and administration," shared Bishop Sue. "Mike has been a gracious mentor to many young clergy and staff, is a team player, and has been open to innovation in many areas, most notably in worship with Chapel Roswell."

Bishop Announces Three Appointive Cabinet Changes



Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson has announced three changes to the Appointive Cabinet effective June 2017.

Rev. Jane Brooks will be promoted to serve full time as Assistant to the Bishop. In this role she will ensure that all aspects of the Annual Conference are working together to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. She will ensure that all branches of the Annual Conference (Conference Staff, Board of Ministry, Cabinet) are working in concert and not duplicating efforts. She will also oversee special initiatives and projects as directed by the Bishop.

Rev. Dana Everhart will become the new Director of the Office of Ministerial Services and Board of Ministries Registrar. In addition to serving as Atlanta-Emory District Superintendent, Everhart has served as the Cabinet liaison to the Board of Ministry and his gifts uniquely lend themselves to effectively recruiting, forming, and developing clergy in this Annual Conference.

Rev. Dr. Phil Schroeder will remain as Director of the Office of Congregational Development, but will be promoted to serve as a full member of the Appointive Cabinet. This will include participating in appointment-making sessions to advise the Cabinet regarding matters of congregational development.

North Georgia Celebrates 2016 Apportionment Giving

At the close of 2016, North Georgia United Methodist churches had paid 94.7 percent of the apportionment budget, the highest percentage of apportionments paid in 15 years. Apportioned giving totaled \$20,896,626.

Six of the 12 districts increased versus the previous year, including the Atlanta-Marietta District which paid five percentage points more than the prior year.

Conference Treasurer Keith Cox celebrates the percentage increase, explaining that it signals an alignment between connectional giving and church budgets. He also makes an important note that the budget in 2016 was substantially less than the previous year, so the total dollars received was less than previous years.

Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson celebrates the generosity of North Georgia United Methodists as well.

"I am very grateful to our churches for supporting the connection and funding ministries that we do better together," said Bishop Sue. "I take our stewardship of these funds seriously, and we all are striving to streamline our Conference work so that more dollars remain in our local churches to make disciples and transform the world. I also see this level of support as a vote of confidence in our Conference leadership and ministries. Thank you for your faithfulness!"

Sean Taylor, chair of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, shares that the committee's work has been guided by the mission of the church. CF&A works with the treasurer, Conference leadership and local churches to set each year's budget.

"I think this is a concrete result of years of hard work by the CF&A and Conference staff to promote reduction in non-programmatic expenses and increase our mission effect," explained Taylor. "The churches hear this and are more likely to pay their apportionments, knowing these funds are furthering our mission as United Methodists. Speaking on behalf of CF&A, we will continue our focus to be hard-working stewards of that which God has given us responsibility to oversee."

See Collins Memorial UMC in 'Hidden Figures'



Collins Memorial UMC in Atlanta is known for its community outreach and beautiful stained glass windows. Now it can add filming location for an Oscar nominated movie to that list!

The church's interior, exterior and grounds were used in the making of *Hidden Figures*, a movie telling the true story of Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, and Mary Jackson—three African-American women working at NASA who served as the brains behind the launch of astronaut John Glenn into orbit. (If you've seen the movie, the picnic scenes, wedding scene, and church scenes were all filmed at Collins.)

Last year the church was contacted by Hollywood representatives who had scouted 30 locations. After much prayer, the congregation, led by Rev. Sheila Crowe, agreed to open Collins Memorial as a location to film.

Opening the church doors is nothing new to this church. Collins is a multi-ethnic congregation that has a passion to serve God by serving the community. The church offers large food distributions, community events, and concerts given by the Atlanta Musician's Orchestra among other activities.

Black History Month Resources and Stories From Across Our Connection

February is Black History Month and there are a number of stories and resources available from United Methodist Communications, Global Ministries, and Discipleship Ministries.

- [Center Honors Black Methodists' History](#)
- [The History of Black History Month](#)
- [First United Methodist Church of Lewisville's Litany for MLK Day](#)
- [Global Ministries' Black History Month resources](#)
- [Worship Resources from the African American Lectionary](#)
- [Timeline: Methodism in Black and White](#)

Black History Month Stories from our United Methodist Connection

Center Honors Black Methodists' History
<http://www.umc.org/who-we-are/center-honors-black-methodists-history>

Video: Jim Lawson Reflections on Nonviolence in Civil Rights Movement
<http://www.umc.org/how-we-serve/james-lawson-reflections-on-life-nonviolence-civil-rights-mlk>

Methodist History: Bishop Fought Slavery
<http://www.umc.org/news-and-media/methodist-history-bishop-fought-slavery>

Tindley Temple: A Highlight of Methodist History
<http://www.umc.org/who-we-are/tindley-temple-a-highlight-of-methodist-history>

Walking with King Series
<http://www.umc.org/news-and-media/united-methodists-share-mlks-dream>

Part of History, African-American Spirituals Still Heal
<http://www.umc.org/resources/part-of-history-african-american-spirituals-still-heal>



40 New Friends: Clergy Couple Sets Sights on Meeting the Neighbors

By Sybil Davidson



"Hi!" "Nice to meet you!" "Great shirt!" "So, you drink coffee?"

Revs. Anjie and Andy Woodworth were appointed in June to start a new church in the Candler Park neighborhood of Atlanta with the members of the merged Epworth UMC and Druid Hills UMC. The clergy couple in this unique appointment are finding their way using an age old method — getting to know the neighbors!

They have challenged themselves to meet 40 people each week. They keep a running list of names on their cell phones and compare and share notes as they go.

"Pastors serve church and community," explained Andy.

The goal is simply to have a relationship with other people in the area.

NOT A NEW CONCEPT

Anjie learned years ago from Retired Bishop Bev Jones to make herself a note about people she met, so the Woodworths do just that.

"When we cross paths with someone a second time, we can say 'Hi, we met on the playground,'" Anjie explained.

As Andy meets people he asks himself, What was God up to when he made this person?

"This is basic, old school preacher stuff," said Anjie.

Church planter Jim Griffith suggests putting pebbles or

pennies in your pocket and moving them from one pocket to the other as you meet new people and not going home until you've moved every item to the second pocket.

MEETINGS

While 40 people seemed like an intimidating number at first, they're finding that they can meet the goal.

Some people they just meet organically, for instance waiting in line for coffee. Others they meet at community gatherings like a recent s'mores roast in the community garden.

Anjie says she goes home each day energized.

On Halloween, rather than sending their kids to ring doorbells, the whole family walked to the front door.

The parent you met at your child's gymnastics class might live two blocks away, they said.

They're meeting people by getting plugged in with events put on by community organizations like the neighborhood Tour of Homes, and volunteering at the community garden and at the school. Actually, whenever there is a volunteer opportunity in the community they are sending a call out to all the church members and encouraging them to sign up.

They recently met a number of neighbors at the Candler Park Fall Festival. The church sits on a hill at the entrance to the large city park where the festival is held. They put out sidewalk chalk and bubbles, they had water bowls out for neighbors walking dogs, and they opened the church restrooms. They also offered a station for festival-goers to make prayer flags to hang in front of the church with their prayers, hopes, and dreams for the community.

They've asked church members and neighbors who they should know in the neighborhood, then they try to set up a meeting simply to get to know them better.

"I haven't had anyone say no yet," said Andy.

In the scheduled

meetings, they try to get a perspective on the community. They're getting to know people like the president of the neighborhood association, the leader of the local park conservancy -- neighbors of varying backgrounds and religions with shared community values and goals.

These meetings are set without an agenda.

"If someone expresses interest in the church, we tell them about it," said Anjie.

This effort isn't just limited to the pastors. The work is being multiplied exponentially as church members get to know more neighbors.

One member, who wasn't sure just how to break the ice with nearby neighbors, had the idea to have a party for her house which will be 100 years old this year. She will invite the Woodworths to come to the party and share a house blessing.

The work could be intimidating, especially for an introvert, but both Anjie and Andy see great potential for this effort in an existing church. Anjie suggests meeting 10 people and setting up a one-on-one meeting each week -- or another number that makes sense for your church and context.

RESULTS

As the members and pastors work to start a new church, they're already seeing fruit from the connections they've made. In the church's first two preview services they had more than 100 adults and 25 kids.

When the new church hosted a pizza party in the neighborhood playground, they had 20 existing members arrive and 30 others from the community! Andy met one family while he was carrying the pizzas to the park!

"It will change the way you understand the world outside your church," said Anjie. "It's amazing what can happen!"

Kindling the Fire Lectionary Reading Event Brings Clergy to Glisson

A beloved time apart for North Georgia clergy, Kindling the Fire Lectionary Reading Week will return to Glisson Camp and Retreat Center in 2017.

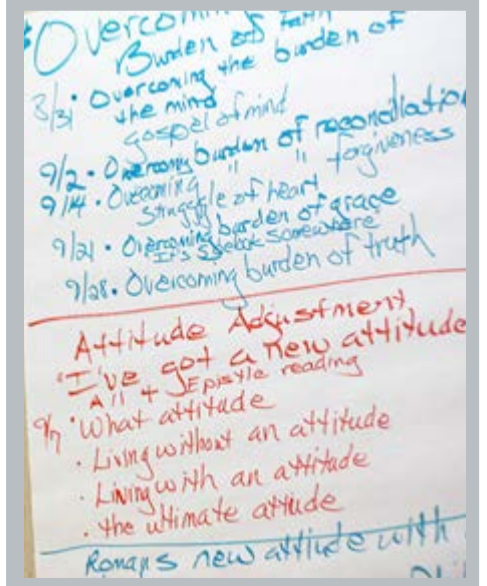
This year's dates are March 6-8, one day shorter than years past.

"We are trying a slightly abbreviated format," explained Rev. Emily Case, one of the organizers of Kindling. "Instead of planning for 10 months, we will hold this retreat twice a year (spring and fall) and plan 6 months at a time. This will allow us to be more responsive to the needs of our communities. Plus, we will all be able to be home in time for Wednesday Night Activities!"

This year's retreat will focus on texts in August 2017-Epiphany in January 2016.

Not changed are the expectations of powerful worship and a fresh look at scripture. Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson will be present on Tuesday, March 7, and District Superintendents and church leaders will read scripture aloud.

Registration is currently open.



Hundreds Attend Fresh Expressions Event in Atlanta

On January 25, the Center for Mission Innovation (CMI) hosted a Fresh Expressions Spark Day Event at the General Board of Global Ministries headquarters. This event was held to equip Christians to plant Fresh Expressions communities locally by learning how to renew existing congregations. Attendees learned a variety of ways to start Fresh Expressions communities by building networks and relationships. More than 240 members of the North Georgia, South Georgia, and Florida Annual Conferences attended -- a capacity audience for the event.

Fresh Expressions is an international movement that is creating new church communities alongside existing ones that are primarily for the benefit of those who are not yet a part of any church. Born from a Church of England and British Methodist Church initiative, Fresh Expressions has since expanded to other countries, including the United States.

Often, people go to a church and want to provide a prescription, "this is how we need to do things." However, explains the Rev. Audrey Warren, Pastor of the First United Methodist Church of Miami, Fla., which has a Fresh Expressions community. "A prophetic description before prescription is how we work towards a great church," she said. Fresh Expressions catalyzes churches for new people in new places, and in new ways.

Bishop Ken Carter of the Florida Conference

was quoted at the event: "The time of the professional minister is over; the time of the missionary pastor has come."

The kind of relationships formed through Fresh Expressions are the kind that the church, as we do it now, would have no chance of creating. Some examples of Fresh Expressions include Wildwood United Methodist Church in Wildwood, Fla., which holds a service at a tattoo parlor where the Rev. Michael Beck leads a Bible study to share the gospel with workers and customers as they are getting inked. Another is a yoga class at the Yoga Chapel for newcomers to church that allows them discover a new form of worship at First UMC in Miami.

The healthiest and most sustainable Fresh Expressions congregations are operated as a team-based effort by following the five characteristics of a healthy team as described by the Rev. Keven Griffin pastor of Connect & Form at Grace Community Center in North Fort Myers, Fla:

- a deep level of trust
- healthy conflict
- commitment
- high standards
- and results

Griffin shared a quote from Bishop Graham Cray, "This is not solo effort. Fresh Expression must be birthed out of a team, not by a solo pioneer!" Griffin reminded everyone in the session that even Jesus built a team. When pastors try to do it all, we rob people of the ministry they are called to do.

Fresh Expressions is transforming the way we look at ministry; showing an outward expression of an inward grace. It is a way in which God is birthing new things. As the CMI mission statement notes, "The Spirit is always moving to sweep the Church into a new mission age."

Red Oak UMC Stockbridge Celebrates Growth



By Ansley Brackin

Red Oak UMC in Stockbridge is seeing an increase in youth and child involvement, and in professions of faith.

Church pastor Rev. Jacqui Rose-Tucker says the thriving congregation gives younger people a voice and gives everyone room to be themselves.

Worship is not designed by a sole person or group, but instead is planned using a collection of ideas from children, teens, young adults, parents, and anyone else who would like to be involved.

As the younger generation grows and matures, Rose-Tucker and Red Oak members have made sure to grow alongside them. What was first an increase in children is now an increase in teens and the church is already thinking ahead to pave a way for their involvement when they grow into young adults.

In the past few years, Red Oak has grown from 10 or less children in Sunday services to curating a choir of more than 60 children and youth on Wednesdays. This increase didn't come from staying secluded from the community.

Rose-Tucker has formed relationships in the local schools. She visits with both staff and students at lunch time and attends school events,

including graduations.

She's made her office space into an area that invites conversation, with food and coffee close by.

"I think my biggest draw is my candy dish," Rose-Tucker jokes.

It's easy to view worshipers as a congregation and not as individual people, but Rose-Tucker has found that honoring individuality is what plants the seeds of growth.

"Kids go where they're wanted," she says. "They are individual people, and we need to care about their concerns. We care about their quality of life."

The welcoming spirit has spread to children and teens who readily invite newcomers and welcome visitors. When new parents visit, the congregation is quick to be helpful. Clothing and food drives have drawn those in need.

Rose-Tucker does all she can to make herself accessible to the entire community. She attends town meetings, and has hosted a few at Red Oak. She sits with new people each time and makes herself known to those who are not in church.

"People are hurting, searching, seeking," says Rose-Tucker, and the people of Red Oak UMC are eager to give their love and support. She thinks that love and support explains the increase in professions of faith.

"People come in one way and leave another," the pastor says. "Our job is to catch them, not clean them. Only God can do that. We cannot do church the same way we did it 30 years ago," Rose-Tucker explains. "You can't expect them to become just like you."

For other congregations looking to grow, Rose-Tucker has one piece of advice that sums it all up.

"No one can turn down love," she says. "It's just too hard to come by."

Common Ground Coffee House Celebrates One Year of Coffee and Community



Members of Connexion UMC at North Covington knew that in order to achieve their dreams of running a community coffee ministry, they would have to be fearless. The fruits of their labor are providing the surrounding neighborhoods, families, and colleges with a welcoming place to grab some coffee, listen to live music, and participate in spiritual conversation.

While Common Ground Coffee House has become a "community and missional arm" for the church, the main focus is to provide comfort, kindness, and, of course, delicious coffee.

This, Rev. Andrew Covington believes, is how customers "experience the heart of the church."

Common Ground serves coffee from Safehouse Coffee Roasters. Located in Griffin, Safehouse focuses on providing high quality coffee beans that are often "hidden away from the masses of grocery store shelves and mass retailers on every street corner," according to their website. It is a product that is a pleasure to drink

rather than a quick source of caffeine.

A weekend at Common Ground often offers open mic nights where musicians come to perform a wide range of music styles. The work of Covington's visual artists are displayed across the walls of the coffee house. Musicians are encouraged to sell their CDs and merchandise, and the artists can provide price tags for their pieces with 20% going toward the coffee house.

The musicians and artists are rarely members of Connexion Church but are a part of the surrounding community. Many are students of the local high schools or colleges, and some are even from out of state.

"We wanted to reach people who are not church goers, and provide a place to meet people where they are," says Covington. He's found that not everyone is eager to attend a Sunday morning church service, but spending a few minutes at Common Ground to enjoy a cup of coffee still provides a brief interaction with the church.

Rev. Covington began Coffee + Conversation on Thursday evenings with non-church goers in mind. The weekly event invites anyone who's interested to come join discussions and ask questions.

The Common Ground team also has relationships with Oxford College and Perimeter College. They provide coffee for several on-campus events, and have partnered with Bread Oxford, a college community open to students of any faith. Bread Oxford uses the coffee house for meetings and small groups. These connections have

resulted in college students visiting the church on Sunday mornings, some even brought their families with them over Christmas break.

The success of Connexion's coffee ministry is largely accredited to the hard work and all-in attitude of the congregation.

"You can't be afraid. There will always be pros and cons," says Covington. "Uncertainty could win that debate every time."

In 2017, Common Ground looks forward to further expanding its hours, and providing more top notch products, such as blended drinks in the warmer months.

They are also hoping to further promote their private meeting space. Common Ground wants to build friendships with as many local ministries, businesses, and associations that they can.

Covington believes the openness to the surrounding community is part what makes Common Ground Coffee House a popular venue.

"You have to serve great coffee, and you have to care about those you're serving," he says. "The goal is to provide an experience for the community, and that may lead to an interaction with Jesus Christ."



105 Year Old Eagle Scout is Member of Hopewell UMC Tyrone



Scoutmaster Kevin Snyder and the Scouts from Troop 175 in Fayette County celebrate the birthday of 105-year-old Lamar Wallace (seated), the oldest living Eagle Scout. Photo by Bill Torpy

At 105 years old Mr. Lamar Wallace, a member of Hopewell UMC in Tyrone, is thought to be the oldest living Eagle Scout. The superlative has gotten him quite a bit of attention in recent months.

Recently, Atlanta Journal-Constitution columnist Bill Torphy attended Mr. Wallace's birthday party and wrote about the occasion in his column.

This month his story was shared in Scouting Magazine.

His pastor, Rev. Jenny Anderson, said that Mr. Wallace is beloved by his church and that many in the congregation consider him family. When he moved to assisted living in the spring the congregation helped with the move.

"He is very important to Hopewell," said Rev. Anderson. "He held every job in the church and is loved and respected by the congregation."

