



District News and Notes

July 29, 2010

The South Carolina District of The Wesleyan Church is a community of Christ followers committed to the transformation of South Carolina and the world by resourcing leaders and multiplying churches.

Resourcing ⇒ Multiplying ⇒ Transforming

South Carolina District –The Wesleyan Church • 127 Bethany Cove Drive, Pickens, SC • (864) 878-3478

What's Been Happening

The last of June and the month of July just seems to all run together for us here at the district office. I am hard pressed to keep track of dates and days of the week. I am so grateful for the prayers of God's people for us throughout the year but especially at this time. Fortunately we keep our printed calendars and schedule of visits to help us remember our appointments.

On June 6, the early service schedule allowed us to make a brief visit and bring greetings and prayer at **True Life Christian Fellowship's** first service in their new location. It was pretty exciting to see the work that had been done in preparation; but most of all, to sense the spirit and passion of this congregation. More than 80 persons were present for the morning service. (Pictured at right) It is my sincere conviction that good things are ahead for this group and Pastor Gene Burgess.



We then traveled to **Horton Memorial** for the morning service and meeting with church leaders. This congregation has grown over the past two years under the leadership of Pastor Wilbur Key. It was a pleasure to see and greet people we have known across the years. We shared in the bountiful lunch and fellowship prior to the leadership training time in the afternoon. Rev. Doug Carr is now serving as Assistant Pastor.

The **Providence Wesleyan Church** was our scheduled visit on June 13. Their consideration and eventual approval of an arrangement whereby Pastor Doug Windsor would serve both the Providence and Chesnee congregations had already included two previous meetings with the leaders. It was good to be able to share with the congregation and then meet again with the leaders. The ministry of the Windsors has truly been appreciated by this congregation and we are grateful for the Kingdom spirit they are demonstrating. It is our feeling that this decision is a "win-win" for both the Providence and Chesnee congregations and for this fine pastoral couple.

On June 27, we visited with the **Pleasant View** congregation that serves that Belton and Williamston communities in Anderson County. Pastor Dan Fortney is the Senior Pastor and Jonathan Payne serves as the Associate Pastor. It was a delight to share God's Word with the congregation and to seek to encourage and challenge them. Following a delicious lunch, a profitable time of meeting with the leaders concluded our time at the church. Pastor Dan and Dorene were missed due to his father's death and funeral.

On our way home, Joan and I went by to visit Mrs. Patsy Fortune—a long-time leader in the congregation and often a district conference delegate—who would go to be with Jesus in just a few days. Her indomitable spirit was very evident even in this stage of weakness. She leaves a legacy of service and devotion to her church.



Other special events in June included the Middle School and Senior High camps. Both of these weeks are highlights of the year and it is delightful to have our teens and their leaders here at Table Rock. The camps seemed to go well and I appreciated the opportunity to attend most of the evening rallies. (Pictured above) Our youth pastors and leaders provided the leadership for the camps and the speakers and bands were outstanding. Each evening the tender hearts of the youth were evident as many went forward for prayer and surrender. We are so grateful for the time and energy invested by the quality group of youth pastors and leaders. I must add, however, that it is disheartening to realize that so many of our churches have no youth from their congregations attending these camps. Join me in praying that this will be the year when pastors and local leaders in every church will commit to doing everything possible to see that their youth have this significant experience.

In June, I had more than the usual number of LBA meetings and one Local Church Conference meeting in addition to meetings with the DBMD, DBA, Table Rock Board of Directors and Leadership Team.

On July 4th, I had the opportunity of being present at Trinity for their incredible *"We Honor America"* service. Pastor Don and staff are to be congratulated for this wonderful time of worship, reflection and celebration. On July 11th, Joan and I made a "drop-in-visit" and July 18th and 25th were Family Camp Sundays.

Kids Kamp, July 11-14, was a huge success. Facilities were stretched by an attendance of 140 campers and dozens of staff. Our thanks go to Director Cynthia Edge and her assistant, Audra Fowler, and to Stephanie Rhyne and Hannah Wilson, Rally Directors. We are so thankful for a great group of counselors and for the ALIVE rally team that came through in their usual outstanding way. (The picture at right is from a Kids Kamp rally.)

As we reflect on all of the events of the summer, it has taken a lot of people to make it all happen. Our cook, Laurie Molloseau and her staff did a really super job with the meals for all of the camps and district conference. Wesleyan



Men's groups stepped up in a big way: I was so pleased to discover that the Wesleyan Men from Trinity volunteered to help with the noon meal at district conference, and we can't forget the United men who cooked delicious hamburgers and hot dogs during Family Camp. Joan had outstanding assistance with the District Conference preparation from the office volunteers: Carol Milstead, Martha Rampey, Emily Miller, Sue and Mickey Rickman, Marty Grimes, Jean Beard, Clara Eads, Dr. Martin LaBar, and Celia Stockton . . . and a copier that just keeps on performing flawlessly for 16 hours a day that final week!) Appreciation is also expressed to Sonnie Andrews and Terri Rainey who worked so diligently on the Pastors' Wives' dinner on Tuesday evening of Family Camp. It simply could not have been accomplished without each of you.

We continue to be grateful and humbled by the opportunity to serve our beloved South Carolina District family. We recognize that we are truly blessed to be a part of wonderful group of pastors and lay persons. We also recognize the tremendous gift that your prayers are to us each and every day. You may never know how much it

means, as we travel around the district, to have someone simply remind us that we are in their *daily* prayers. We will never know the full impact and significance of those prayers, but we do know how precious and necessary they are. Please continue to pray for us and our family, for our pastors and their spouses and their families, for our congregations and local leaders, for the communities surrounding the churches, and for the great and mighty grip of the Spirit of God to get hold of all of us, propelling us forward in the awesome task and mission of giving every man, woman, and child in our circles of accountability the repeated opportunity to hear and respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Believing in each other,
Pastor Buddy

District Conference Highlights

ORDINATION SERVICE

The Service of Ordination was led by Rev. Tony Casey, Assistant District Superintendent and Chair of the DBMD. The ministerial members of the DBMD comprised the Council of Ordination and assisted throughout the service. After the Call to Worship, the singing of *“Lead On O King Eternal”*, and the invocation, General Superintendent Dr. Jerry Pence preached an ordination sermon that preceded a symbolic moment in the life of the SC District with the ordination of three individuals, which included the ordination of a husband/wife team. A Validation of Ordination through Transfer was also bestowed on another individual who is in educational service at Southern Wesleyan University. The three individuals ordained for ministry in the Wesleyan Church were **Dr. Shelley Chapman, Dustin Wilson,** and **Hannah Wilson.** **Dr. Christina Accornero** received the Validation of Ordination through Transfer. The Council of Ordination and the congregation joined in prayers of enduement led by individuals chosen by each of the ordinands. A prayer of benediction was offered by Dr. Fred Andrews for God’s Spirit to rest upon these servants of the Lord for lives of faithful and effective service to Christ and the Church.

At the conclusion of the service and following the recessional of all ordained ministers in attendance, a reception was held in the Tabor Building in honor of the four ordinands and their families.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

The Leadership Team award for **Missional Church of the Year** was presented to **Rev. Jeff Powell** and the **Tuckasegee Wesleyan Church** which is located in Jackson County, NC. This is Pastor Jeff’s home church and he has been serving this congregation and community for 15 years following his graduation from Southern Wesleyan University. Jeff and his wife, Jennifer, have two boys, Brady and Bradley.

In April, 2009, lay persons became burdened for the hurting in the community as a result of the downturn in the economy. After prayer and study, the church began operating a food pantry for the community out of the church parsonage which was no longer used as a residence for the pastor. Since beginning operation, this ministry has grown significantly to serve approximately 70 families and 140 individuals. This ministry is operated by sacrificial lay persons in the church who do everything from picking up the food to completing the paper work for the grants.

In 1998, Pastor Jeff started volunteering as a Chaplain at the Sherriff’s office and eventually he was employed as a detention officer. He has a significant ministry there to the officers, whose jobs produce much stress for them and their families and marriages. He has made himself available as a pastor and started a Face Book page, called Shield a Badge with Prayer, where Christians are encouraged to pray for those who wear a badge which now has over 2,200 fans.



Rev. Powell is also on call for emergency situations in the county. This includes everything from drownings to homicides. He is there for the families and community support personnel. God's anointing upon his life in these settings is evident and this has provided opportunity for extended ministry past the times of crisis.

Another part of Pastor Jeff's ministry in the community is in the county jail. He is involved regularly in ministering to the inmates along with other volunteer chaplains. Last year they distributed over 400 Bibles along with other Christian literature. This area of ministry spills over as he has opportunity to see these individuals in the community and helps with those on work release in providing assistance to help them be able to work to support their families.

The Tuckasegee Church has benefited across the years from the support of the people of the SC District especially during the depression and war years and now this congregation stands on top of hill as a beacon of hope and help to the people of the community and county. As they have been blessed, they are blessing others.

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP AWARDS 2010

(Attendance increase percentage noted)

Paul Di Toma (Columbia Crossroads NE) 18.4 %	Michael Stepp (Carlisle) 15.7%	Wilbur Key (Horton Mem.) 11.1%
Rick Gilbert (Bethany) 16.6%	Steve Stanley (Greenville First) 12.3%	

Honorable Mention goes to the following pastors whose churches experienced increases in primary worship:

James Ramsay (Martin Grove) 62.5%	Jim Reed (Perry Road) 11.1%	Tim Jones (United) 7.1%
Wade Rogers (Iva First) 27.5%	Frank Cantrell (Glendale) 8.7%	Scott Smith (Faith) 6.6%
Ken Culbertson (Westminster) 23%	Tom Harding (FWC/ALIVE) 7.7%	Brenda Singleton (Healing Waters) 6.6%
Ralph Campbell (Glenville) 16.7	Kerry Rainer (Walhalla) 7.4%	Dumar Camacho (Amistad Cristiana) 5.6%

The following churches/pastors in the SC District have met what are now the more stringent requirements for receiving the *Excellence in Ministry Award*:

NAME	CHURCH	CITY/TOWN
Rev. Scott Smith	Faith Wesleyan Church	Little River, SC
Rev. Dumar Camacho	Iglesia Wesleyana Amistad Cristiana	Greenville, SC
Rev. Tim Jones	United Wesleyan Church	Easley, SC

Rev. Robert Wilson is retiring at the end of this year after 19 years of service to the Columbia Northeast congregation.

ELECTIONS

District Superintendent – Rev. Buddy Rampey (4 year call)

District Board of Administration –

Assistant District Superintendents* – Rev. Tony Casey, Dr. Fred Andrews, Rev. Tim Jones

District Secretary – Sue Rickman

District Treasurer* – Mark Payne

At-Large Ministers – Steve Stanley, Tom Harding, Michelle Bryant, Richard Hall, Frankie Rodriguez, Phil Bailly

At-Large Laypersons – Joy Bryant, Charles Tegen, Bryan Stepp, Casey Gadsby, Dr. Josh Ray, Linda Moore

* elected by DBA

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE REPORT OF THE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

Statistically, this will be the most difficult report I have given as your district leader. After strong gains in the key areas for the past five years, this year's report has been a shock to the system. It is easy to give a report when the numbers are good. When they are not good, we are tempted to make excuses. We cannot take that road. Nor can we turn down "Happy Talk Lane." We have mastered that in church circles and it is a dead-end road. Quite frankly, as I have studied and analyzed the information I am presenting, it is a **strong reality check**. It has forced me, and I

believe forces each of us, to ask some hard questions. In addition, it challenges us to examine our motivation while calling for increased accountability, beginning with the leader and then moving to every pastor.

We are thankful for the gains that have been realized this year. The following numbers represent increases in these areas:

- Persons Sanctified – 80 (+94%)
- Students in Wesleyan Colleges/Universities – 74 (+7.2%)
- Global Partners Offering - \$139,783 (+21%)

Areas where we show decreases include:

- Primary Worship – 189 (-4.6%)
- Covenant Membership – 196 (-5.1%)
- Total Membership – 152 (-3.6%)
- Number Saved – 311 (-12.1%)
- Baptisms – 181 (-24.9%)
- Called into ministry/missions – 11 (-37.9%)
- Number participating in Short-Term Missions Trips – 13 (-12.7%)
- Discipleship Enrollment – 399 (-11.3%)
- Sunday School – 137 (-6.4%)
- Assessable Income – \$5,956,077 (-4.03%)
- Percentage of USF/EIF Paid – Decreased from 96.1% to 94.9%

. . . In an effort to wrap my mind and heart around where we are, I spent some time reviewing information gathered over the past five years and found it to be just as unsettling. Here are some of my findings.

From 2005-2010 -

- 22 Churches show an increase in primary worship
- 28 Churches showed a decrease in primary worship
- 2 Churches remained the same in primary worship

In reality, the increase of 397 worshippers during this time is the result of the growth of one church (FWC/ALIVE increased by 216) and the church plants (combined average attendance of 261) . . . which together totals 477. So the overall strength across the remainder of the district has decreased rather substantially. As you examine the church charts in your packets, the trend for many of our congregations is alarming and lets us know that **there must be intervention**, or we will lose a sizable number of our congregations in the next five to ten years.

I am delighted to report to you again this year that the South Carolina District paid **100% of our United Stewardship Fund/Educational Investment Fund assessment**. This represents five years in a row that we have fulfilled this commitment! This comes as a result of the leadership of pastors and the commitment and sacrifice of local congregations and a *courageous and committed* DBA. But here is the reality: in order to fulfill our 100% commitment, paying the uncollected USF/EIF meant that the district was absent over \$15,000 in operating income . . . a significant amount of ministry resource that was simply missing. If the collection rate does not increase, we will be forced to do one of the following: not pay 100%, increase assessment (which penalizes those who are already doing their fair share), or find additional streams of revenue.

Here is a summary of our goals for the next four years:

	<u>Growth Goal</u>	<u>Strong Growth Goal</u>
Worship attendance	10% - 4,400	20% - 4,800
Baptisms	200 annually – 800	250 annually – 1,000
Discipleship	Increases in Membership, Sunday School attendance and Discipleship Enrollment	
Church Plants	8	10
Assessment % Paid	98%	99%

MISSIONS RALLY

This year, the Missions Rally and the start of the expanded Family Camp were one in the same. Rev. Dave Tolan, District Missions Director, led a service that was marked with passion and a great spirit to fulfill the great commission. The sharing of the missionaries was inspiring, and a tremendous offering—which now totals over \$5,600—was received. These funds will go toward the “start-up” expenses for the Greg Edmonds family as they go to Haiti in November. Dr. Aron Willis presented a challenging message focusing on our call to be a sending church both abroad and within the borders of our district.

FAMILY CAMP

How grateful we are for the sweet presence of the Holy Spirit throughout the full week of Family Camp at Table Rock! The attendance was good, especially in light of the intense summer heat and our services being in an “open-air” setting. The preaching by Dr. Aron Willis and Dr. Anthony Graham was powerful and anointed, centered in the Word and given with incredible passion and clarity. Praise and worship led by Bob and Gail Kerstetter and Bob Cooley was stirring and powerful, marked by such a beautiful spirit as well as excellence in presentation. The congregation was lifted into the presence of God as we joined in the singing. The feedback we have received indicates that the “blend” was a good one. The breakout sessions led by our evangelists and Dr. Roger McKenzie and Rev. Tony Casey were of the highest quality and the obvious preparation was truly appreciated. The financial support for an expanded camp was encouraging. As the dust settles, it appears that contributions/offerings have come very close to meeting budget, and additional funds—especially from churches—are still coming in. The leadership of Pastor Richard Hall, Chair, and the Family Camp Board is deeply appreciated. Please be in prayer as we face the challenge of maintaining a strong tradition while, at the same time, remaining committed to relevance in this new day.

DS Schedule for August

Jul 28	Mt. Olivet	PM
1	Greenville, First	AM
2	Hispanic Ministries Advisory Council	PM
4	Oakway	7pm
8	Startex	AM
12	Leadership Team	AM
12-17	Denver, CO	Vacation/Family
18	TBA	
20-21	Youth Leaders Retreat	
22	LifeJourney <i>Growing Pastors</i>	AM – Pastor Installation PM
25	TBA	
27-28	DBA Retreat	Table Rock
29	CenterPoint	AM – Pastor Installation
31	Developing Pastors Meeting	PM

Pastor/ Church Relations

CenterPoint – Scott Buchanan
 Chesnee – Doug Windsor, Supply Pastor
 Davis Chapel – Ken Hales, Supply Pastor
 Life Journey (Pelzer) – Wade Rogers

Mt. Olivet – Rondald Smith, Supply Pastor
 Northeast (Columbia) – Cecil Bayne, Supply Pastor
 Oakway – Heath Mullikin, Supply Pastor
 Startex – In the hands of the DBA

NEWS and INFORMATION

HAITI MISSIONS TRIPS FOR 2010-2011

The dates are:

Trip #1: January 27th – February 4th (Trip leader – Daniel Stanley)

Trip #2: March 17th -March 25th (Trip leader – Michelle Bryant)

As of right now the status is:

Trip #1: 8 people are signed up

Trip #2: 4 confirmed (with the deposit paid) and 5 who have said they plan on going.

Space is limited to the first 12 people who return their application and deposit. The cost is \$1200 per person

PRAYER FOCUS

Church for the Week:

August 1, 2010

Healing Waters – Brenda & Jeff Singleton

August 8, 2010

Heritage – Mark & Pepsi Stevenson

August 15, 2010

Horton Memorial – Wilbur & Jewel Key

August 22, 2010

Iglesia El Camino – Frankie & Deysi Rodriguez

August 29, 2010

Iva First –

September 5, 2010

Knighton Chapel – Jackie & Blanche Ray

September 12, 2010

Landrum – Harold & Gloria Jones

September 29, 2010

Liberty – Alan & Jean Abshire

The **grandson of Chet and Kathy Rowan–Craig, Jr.**– will undergo tests at Emory Hospital on Friday for a potentially very serious diagnosis.

Jennifer Powell, wife of Pastor Jeff Powell (Tuckasegee), underwent a tonsillectomy on July 20 and has experienced a significant amount of pain during her recovery.

Rev. Dan Belcher is awaiting the results of bone marrow testing done earlier this week to determine the cause of a significantly increased platelet count.

Lillian Bryant, widow of former District Superintendent Clyde T. Bryant, has been moved to skilled nursing care, following a hospitalization due to pneumonia.

Mary Mitchell, wife of the late Dr. Virgil Mitchell (former General Superintendent and District Superintendent), was moved to St. Francis Hospital in Greenville on Monday for additional therapy following surgery on July 19 for a broken hip. During her post-op treatment, an irregularity in heartbeat was discovered and is now being controlled through medication.

Phil Kellett, husband of Wesleyan Women Director Julie Kellett, was admitted to Greenville Memorial Hospital on Tuesday after experiencing some breathing difficulty and chest discomfort. Phil has been diagnosed with pneumonia and his heart condition is being monitored.

Dr. Malcom Ellis, a retired ordained minister, has received confirmation that the prostate cancer has not spread and will be treated with hormone therapy followed by radiation if necessary.

Rev. Steve Pickel (Easley, First) continues to recover from injuries suffered in a motorcycle accident. Though not seriously injured, he did experience numerous scrapes and bruises.