

B. CONFERENCE MINISTRIES ADVISORY COUNCIL

We invite you to read carefully, and with a spirit of celebration, the following section of reports. As the quadrennium draws to a close, we are grateful to God for guidance in so many ways. Especially are we thankful for the hundreds of dedicated persons who have selflessly provided their talents and time to make ministry happen. As these wonderful servants have worked, homes have been built for the poor, prisoners have been taught Disciple Bible, older adults have been encouraged and cared for, bridges have been built where barriers had prevailed, and people have been shown the Christ as specific embodiment of God's love again and again. In the words of Simeon as he held the child Jesus in the temple, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation" (Luke 2:30). It is in the seeing that the doing takes effective form and God again dwells among God's people. This is the measure of our work and worship.

We are also confident that God will lead us in new and renewed ways. One of our unfolding blessings is the presence of many new servants who will lead our conference ministries. This body of believers will reaffirm our primary purpose as your Conference Ministries Advisory Council: to resource and equip our local churches for effective witness and ministry. We encourage you to use the resources of CMAC to the fullest extent. Please pray for us as we move into a new quadrennium.

Mary Lou Roller, *Chairperson*
Thomas R. Sigmon, *Director of Connectional Ministries*

REPORTS FROM AGENCIES RELATED TO THE CONFERENCE MINISTRIES ADVISORY COUNCIL

1. COMMISSION ON NURTURE MINISTRIES

The commission continues to discern its direction and goals for ministry. We continue to work toward providing support for pastors as they lead congregations. We want to support them by providing opportunities for both spiritual enrichment in the Wesleyan tradition and renewal, so that they will be better able to care for themselves as they care for others. We ask for your prayers as we continue our time of discernment.

The Older Adult Ministries Committee chose not to sponsor a senior-adult event in 2003; however, we will be sponsoring the Day Apart for the Young at Heart on May 25, 2004. This event will provide senior adults and those interested in senior adult ministries with an opportunity to learn more about spirituality and discipleship for and with senior adults.

Pratt Davis, *Chairperson*
H. Donnell FitzJefferies, *Director of Nurture and Ethnic Ministries*

Proposal: Board of Trustees of Camp Tekoa

**(Referred as Petition 3 to Forum Group 2)
(Adopted by conference on June 11, 2004)**

The Committee on Camp and Retreat Ministries proposes that the following persons be elected as members of the Board of Trustees of Camp Tekoa, Inc.:

Class of 2004: J. Paul Christy, Bradford H. Holliman, Mike Jolly, David Speer, David Hampton.

Class of 2005: Shelly F. Webb, Jeff Gilliam, Tom Patton, Candis Walker, Roland T. Barnhardt.

Class of 2006: David O. Mason, Ed Hosack, Donald A. Newman, Daniel J. Lyons, Ellen Gilley.

Class of 2007: Emily New, Ruth Hoyle, Jimmy Dowless, Elizabeth Crenshaw Rosenbaum.

Ex Officio: Karen F. Miller, Katie S. Fralic, John H. Lively, James S. Johnson, Michael W. Collins.

Honorary: Bill King.

2. COMMISSION ON OUTREACH MINISTRIES

The evaluation of mission and outreach programs and projects has been an important part at each of our meetings. As the quadrennium closes, and with it my terms as chairperson, I find my reflections somewhat more in depth than in previous years.

Significant progress has been made in communication with local churches through the *Missions Alive* quarterly publication. A most successful conference-wide celebration, the Harvest of Blessings, inspired new enthusiasm for, and awareness of, our call to be in mission together. A much-needed facility was acquired and is functioning as our Mission Response Center, an integral part of our volunteer ministries. We are currently celebrating the 10th anniversary of Project Agape, through which you have demonstrated Christ's love and have given hope to the Armenian people.

These are but a few of the many efforts that are found in the reports that follow. I express heartfelt thanks to all the commission members who have been faithful servants for mission and outreach. It has been a joy to serve with them and to grow in faith through our work together. Challenges remain! Decreasing funds available from conference sources dictate the need for greater awareness in local churches if many current ministries are to continue. The need for personal involvement in order to make informed decisions has perhaps never been greater. God calls us to live out our faith through our actions. My prayer is that we will respond with new vitality for the task of keeping Christ's MISSIONS ALIVE!

Darwyn Van Gorp, *Chairperson*

Proposal: Advance Specials for 2004-2005

**(Referred as Petition 4 to Forum Group 14)
(Adopted by conference on June 11, 2004)**

General Advance Specials

Salary support for mission personnel affiliated with the WNCC:

Samuel Scott Haire, Red Bird (013025-3)
Jeffrey A. Hassel, Lithuania (013 158-8)
Anne Kolbe, Cambodia (013148-6)
Vickie B. Sigmon, Winston-Salem District (982916)
Donald and Ramona Turman, Indonesia (003848-0)
Keith and Chan Turman, Lithuania (014289-0AZ)
Second Church and Community Worker

Salary support for mission personnel who have connections with the WNCC:

Clara Biswas, Cambodia (13592-Z)
Gordon and Ardele Graner, Bolivia (010835-SEZ)
Esther Gitobu, Cambodia (013959-5HZ)
Susan Henry, Bolivia (002332-0EZ)
Fran Lynch, Alaska (982590-1)
Djamba Mundeke, Democratic Republic of Congo (014021-8HZ)
Darla and Glenn Rowley, Senegal (009682-6AZ)
Herbert and Mary Zigbuo, Liberia (010911-I BZ)

Parish Partners Support

Alaska Missionary Conference (931027-4)
Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference (583634-4)
Rio Grande Conference (531733-1)

Other Projects

Africa Church Growth and Development Fund (008233-0)
Andean Rural Health Care Program (010158-2RA)
Appalachian Regional Ministries (982041-0)
Baltic Mission Center, Tallinn, Estonia (010923-SAN)
Bethlehem Center, Charlotte (982149-3)
Bethlehem Center, Winston-Salem (982149-3)
Cambodia General (000230-AR)

Cherokee Indian Mission (731144-8)
Diengenga Technical School, Lodja, Democratic Republic of Congo, Trade School Building
(012674-4)
English-Speaking Congregation (12001)
HELP Ministries, International Trust, Cape Town (013157-7RA)
Henderson Settlement, Kentucky (773365-2)
Hinton Rural Life Center, Hayesville, NC (Program) (73 1372-2)
Hispanic Ministry, Greensboro/Northeast Districts (791500)
How Far Can You Go, Indonesia (013404-6)
John Wesley School, Equipment, South Africa (011032-5 BN)
Mission in Commonwealth of Independent States (0011510-IRA)
Red Bird Mission, Kentucky (773726-2)
Retreats for Sunday School Teachers, Indonesia (0143243)
Society of St. Andrew (Potato Project) (801600-0)
Stop Hunger Now (982795-6)
Strengthening Reestablished UMC, Lithuania (012168-2RA)
Thui Rancho Project, Bolivia (012309-8RA)
Unalaska UMC Mission Congregation, Alaska
Pastor Support (931848-5) (Kathy Wilson)
Outreach (931855)
Capital (931852-1)

UMCOR Projects

Bread for the World (982325-3)
Children's Ministries, Africa (101225-3)
CROP (Church World Service) (982380-1)
Disaster Response, USA (901670-1)
Disaster Response, International (982450-8)
Grace Children's Hospital, Port-au-Prince, Haiti (418520-7)
Heifer Project International (982530-8)
Middle East Refugee Program (601732-2)
Sager Brown Depot (901515-8)

Annual Conference Advance Specials

Building Materials, Scholarships for Building Teams
Carolina Cross Connection
Children of Vietnam
Conference Disaster Response Fund
Diengenga Relief Fund
Disciple Bible Outreach Ministry
Epiphany
FaithAction, Greensboro
Materials, Scholarships, Supplies for Medical Teams
Middle School Missions Camp
Open Arms Community, Winston-Salem
Prison MATCH Program
Project AGAPE
Salkahatchie Summer Service-WNCC
Scandinavian Caravan
UMAR-WNC, Inc.
W.N.C. Conference Deaf Ministry
W.N.C.C. Good Samaritan Clinic, Dominican Republic
W.N.C.C. Mission Response Center
Yokefellow Prison Ministry of North Carolina

Other Opportunities in Mission

Children's Fund
Bishop's Initiative on Children in Poverty
Permanent Fund: Encounter Christ (025100)
Youth Service Fund
World Service Special: Africa University (WSSG #03-01-88)

Missions Personnel Committee

The past quadrennium has kept the Missions Personnel Committee focused on meeting the needs of our conference, as have sent several people to serve as missionaries globally.

Mike and Ariel Collins began and completed a term in Cambodia. Anne Kolbe is entering her second term in Cambodia. Jeff Hassell and Keith and Chan Turman are in Lithuania. Don and Ramona Turman are in Indonesia. Scott Haire is at the Red Bird Missionary Conference in Kentucky. Vickie Sigmon

continues as a church and community worker at the Open Arms Community in Winston-Salem. The committee recommended to the General Board of Global Ministries nine 10-10-10 missionaries, all of whose three-year terms have expired. These missionaries served all over our conference. This year, a church and community worker will be placed at the Mission Resource Center in Mooresville. It has been a joy serving as chair of this committee in such a missions-oriented conference.

Jeffrey W. Johnsen, *Chairperson*

Golden Cross

Golden Cross is a unique mission and ministry in the name and spirit of Jesus Christ, who was concerned with the whole person. The purpose of Golden Cross is to enhance life by providing assistance with medical costs. The special focus is on United Methodist families who are burdened with medical costs and who sometimes forego needed medical treatment or prescribed medicine because they cannot afford it.

In the year 2003, 71 families of our conference were assisted with grants from Golden Cross. This is the largest number assisted in recent years. The amount of assistance for each family ranged from \$105 to \$1,500, for a total of \$46,522.55. Additionally, from the conference apportioned fund for Golden Cross, four scholarship grants for parish-nurse training were given, for a total of \$2,375.00. The total of all grants in 2003 was \$48,897.55.

Families assisted with Golden Cross grants in 2003 included families in every district of our conference. Many of the families were in situations where employment had ended, factories had closed, etc. Some were in situations in which, though persons were working, income was minimal and there were no job benefits. In both situations, the families could not afford medical insurance, yet a medical crisis occurred. Because the difficult employment situation continues for many families across our conference, the number of requests for Golden Cross assistance in 2004 will very likely be as large as, or larger than, in 2003.

When the need is there in any of our churches, Golden Cross is there to assist. The process is simple. Pastors make applications for assistance on behalf of members/families of their churches. When the grant is approved, grant checks are sent to pastors, who present the grant checks to the recipients on behalf of the conference. Applications for a Golden Cross grant are available from district directors of Golden Cross or from the conference director of Golden Cross.

The ministry of Golden Cross is supported in two ways, by a small item in the conference apportionments and by special gifts from churches, church groups, and individuals. These extra gifts are the strength of Golden Cross! Every dollar of these special gifts goes to assist families of our churches. The more who give, the more Golden Cross can assist those who are burdened with medical costs. In a very real sense, Golden Cross is a channel through which United Methodists all across our conference reach out to one another. In 2003, extra support in the amount of \$10,332.47 was received from 56 churches, and \$275 was received from individuals giving directly to the Golden Cross Fund.

Proposal: Golden Cross

**(Referred as Petition 5 to Forum Group 14)
(Adopted by conference on June 11, 2004)**

The Commission on Outreach Ministries proposes that in 2005 every church of our conference designate one Sunday as "Golden Cross Sunday" and take a few moments to (1) make the church aware of this unique mission of our conference, reminding parishioners that, when the need is there, assistance is available for them as well as for families of every church, and (2) provide opportunity for parishioners to make a special gift/offering to be used through Golden Cross to assist United Methodists of our conference who are struggling with overwhelming medical costs.

A. Gayle Ford, *Director*

Scandinavian Caravan

Now in its 49th year, the Scandinavian Caravan brings together young adults from two continents to share in exciting mission/outreach projects, worship, and fellowship. A team of ten, led by Anne Grudeborn, a student at the Methodist Seminary in Gothenburg, Sweden, will visit the following congregations during July: Bunker Hill, Statesville: Broad Street, Brevard: First, Montmorenci, Abernethy Memorial, Bethlehem and Denver.

In late 2004, local churches will receive application forms to be completed by young adults (ages 18 to 25 who will have completed one year of college or equivalent by June 2005) who wish to spend four weeks visiting Scandinavian churches during the summer of 2005.

Patrick S. Hamrick and Jonathan D. Coppedge-Henley, *Co-Chairpersons*

Project AGAPE – Outreach To Armenia

Annual conference 2004 celebrates the 10th anniversary of our mission to Armenia. By the invitation of the Armenian Apostolic Church, United Methodists from across North Carolina have sent tons of food, clothing, medicine, sewing supplies, and other material aid to enable our brothers and sisters in Armenia

to rebuild their lives after an earthquake, Soviet occupation, and a civil war. Because United Methodists answered the call, Christ has touched millions of lives in this land far from our shores.

In 2003, we have seen the completion of the restoration of the Christian Education Center that was destroyed by fire in 2000. Agape continues to meet the needs of our "family" in terms of food, clothing, medical care, education assistance, and moral and spiritual support. The Children's Home in Lachin continues to give hope to 35-50 children each year. The folks in two towns of western Armenia continue to be blessed by the water systems Agape installed. Children of Spitak can go to school in a new classroom building we completed two years ago. The community of Lachin has continued to be sustained by the food and clothing distributions made there regularly.

As we enter the 11th year of our ministry, Armenia continues to face high unemployment and slow economic recovery in the Karabagh region. There are still 250 children in Spitak going to school in awful containers. The Lachin area is still in desperate need of better medical facilities. It is imperative that we continue to reach out to "the least of these." The Agape board has set goals of building the needed school building in Spitak and a hospital in Lachin and to continue the type of support we have given for the last 10 years. It is our hope that the Western North Carolina Conference will continue to give generously so that God will continue to build His kingdom in Armenia.

As you sit in Stuart Auditorium now, please lift a prayer for your conference building team that is serving on your behalf, June 9-24, in Armenia. The team is building a new bathroom for a handicapped-children's home in Stepanekert and putting in a basketball court at the Lachin Children's Home. Know that you have been the difference between life and death for many through Agape.

Cecil E. Donahue, *Vice-Chair*

Town And Country Ministries

This has been another exciting year in town and country ministries. We continue to encourage town-and-country churches to use Natural Church Development as a means of setting the groundwork for growth. This program looks at the eight quality principles that have been found in growing churches. It is a process that takes a number of years to see the benefits, but the end result will be to see town-and-country churches healthier and growing.

This year, we were a part of the Harvest of Blessings celebration. What a great event! Mark L. Barden and his team did a great job planning and carrying out this celebration. This event helped us tell the story of town and country ministries in our conference. Thanks go out to Claudia G. Harrelson for her work with our booth for the United Methodist Rural Fellowship.

This year the Town and Country Committee has aided the Southeastern Jurisdiction in providing an educational opportunity for clergy and laity. This event was held at Hinton Rural Life Center and was entitled "Navigating the Valleys." The keynote speaker was Bishop Clay F. Lee. The workshops were: Conflict Resolution, General Conference Issues, National Comprehensive Plan for Town and Country Ministries, Reconciling Congregations/Transforming Congregations, Tenure of Pastoral Leadership, and the Emotional and Spiritual Health of Pastors in Small-Membership Churches.

Our committee is working with the United Methodist Rural Fellowship and the Open Arms Community in Winston-Salem to develop a youth mission event. The goal is to involve youth from rural communities to work in the inner city on a mission project. This event will also have a spiritual component to develop the spiritual lives of these youth.

Keys S. Pendleton, *Chairperson*

Health Care Ministries

The purpose of the Health Care Ministries Committee is to raise awareness and promote communication of all health-related and parish-nurse ministries within the conference. This committee will support and promote these ministries and offer guidelines and be a resource for them. For example, churches wishing to develop a health or parish-nurse ministry would be encouraged to communicate and utilize an identified resource on the district or conference level.

The year 2003 has been a year of striving to live out our purpose through the development of a master list of all *known* parish nurses and church health promoters functioning within United Methodist churches. Four registered nurses have received scholarships from Golden Cross to help supplement the cost of attending the required parish-nurse training and are now serving as parish nurses to congregations. The committee has also served as a resource to pastors and congregations regarding establishment of health ministries and Wellness Fairs and where to turn for help for members of the congregation.

Parish nurses coordinated two large conference Wellness Fairs, one at annual conference last June and another at the Harvest of Blessings last October. Both were well attended, with participants taking advantage of the many screenings, educational offerings, and information.

Judy Durham, *Chairperson*

Volunteer Response Ministries

Volunteer Response Ministries serves as the channel through which church members can become involved in mission beyond the local church. There are many places where different ministries can take place.

Since September 18, 2003, Disaster Response has been involved in the recovery from Hurricane Isabel. Many individuals and churches have worked through the North Carolina Conference M.E.R.C.I. center to help those in need. We have sent over \$50,000 to help set up response centers in Elizabeth City, Hyde County, and New Bern. Two trucks have been loaned to the North Carolina Conference and other equipment provided to assist with the recovery. One shower trailer has been equipped and given to the North Carolina Conference and two others loaned for the use of volunteer teams.

Rural Affordable Housing has now become fully operational. During 2003, four homes were completed in Catawba County and six homes in Iredell County. The goal is to complete 15 homes in 2004. The process has begun to acquire more land for future development.

Building teams continue to be a major part of our Volunteer Response Ministries. Thirty-eight teams have worked in 11 countries and Alaska, building and repairing churches, education buildings, and parsonages.

Medical teams continue to serve in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

The success of these ministries is due to the sacrificial dedication of volunteers who have answered the call to "come over and help us." We are grateful for all the individuals and churches that have made this ministry possible.

Alec M. Alvord, *Director of Volunteer Response Ministries*

Rural Affordable Housing, Inc.

Rural Affordable Housing, Inc. (RAH) opened its doors in Statesville in early 2002, funded by a grant from The Duke Endowment to the Western North Carolina Conference. The mission of this incorporated, non-profit organization is to build affordable homes in rural areas of the conference for all who qualify, regardless of religion, race, or creed. By definition, "rural" is either (1) within a community of less than 1,500 or (2) beyond a mile from any community with a population of 1,500 or greater. "Affordable housing" is defined as a layer of financing through grants, low-cost loans, and government subsidies so that a quality home may be built for low- and very-low-income families, with house payments they can afford. Volunteer labor is used in order to reduce building costs, and particular care is taken in construction techniques to minimize normal homeowner costs such as heating and cooling expenses.

In order to qualify, a client must have a household income below 80% of the median income for the county of residence. A client with a household income below 50% of the median income is considered to be "very low," and special financial considerations may apply. Following client identification and qualification, support from RAH includes a close working relationship with the client and related agencies to obtain the best possible financing. Other services include financial counseling, debt-reduction training, support for credit-improvement efforts, and homeowner training.

Currently, RAH is building homes based on three separate plans ranging from 1,200 to 1,400 square feet and including both three- and four-bedroom homes. Ten homes were completed in 2003, including four in Maple Glen, an existing community in Catawba County, together with six in Westglow, a new community near Union Grove in Iredell County. We plan to build at least 15 more homes in 2004, including our Westglow development, as well as at Mocksville in Davie County. Since our plan is to build communities of grace and hope throughout the Western North Carolina Conference, our Site Selection Committee is actively seeking new building sites where we expect work to begin in 2005.

Lawrence E. Carella, *Managing Director*

Proposal: Directors of Rural Affordable Housing

**(Referred as Petition 6 to Forum Group 14)
(Adopted by conference on June 11, 2004)**

The Board of Directors of Rural Affordable Housing, Inc., proposes that the following persons be confirmed by the annual conference as members of that board:

J. Richard Alsop, Jr., Alec M. Alvord, Janet H. Collins, James H. Graves, Walter M. Hand, Randolph H. Harry, Roy H. Helm, Jr., Coley Hooker, Jr., Olin B. Isenhour, Helen Rogers, Thomas R. Sigmon, and Sam H. Smith, Jr.

Building Teams Committee

Renewed enthusiasm was demonstrated when the annual Rally and Reunion was relocated to Christ Church, Hickory. Attendance surpassed that of several previous years, and a record number of first-time participants joined us to discover more about this ministry and their place in it. This event was so successful that plans are already in place to hold the 2004 Rally and Reunion again at Christ Church, Hickory, on October 1-2.

By the end of this summer, over 500 short-term missionaries will have traveled with 35 teams to work on 25 projects in 12 different countries. Several firsts occurred this year: Three new countries (Cambodia, Chile, and Lithuania) were added to the list of countries we regularly serve. In Cambodia, we deployed a special hybrid team that took a group of Christian educators to help train and equip Christian educators and assist with a children's program there. Our work in Cambodia and Lithuania

came as a direct result of appeals from local congregations that already had relationships with ministries in these countries. Approximately one third of all of our missionaries were first-time participants in the program this year, and nearly all of those indicated a desire to join another team in the coming years. In addition to this, a record number of women and young adults were a part of our teams this year, and almost 10% of our team leaders were leading teams for the very first time. We are currently considering a request for help from one of our bishops in India and have also had a request from Liberia. We have also initiated a conversation with the Medical Teams Committee, in hopes of developing more hybrid teams that go with multiple goals.

This was all accomplished on a budget of just over \$600,000. The majority of these funds are raised through participant fees and gifts. Requests for additional teams for additional projects and countries continue to confront us. Our reserve funds saw a significant decrease this year, as a result of higher costs, increasing our number of teams, and a changing economy. We are grateful to the Commission on Outreach Ministries for its support in making us a ministry priority in the face of a shrinking conference budget. We pray that God will continue to find faithful servants that can assist us as missionaries and financial supporters as we seek to be faithful to God's missionary call across the globe.

Dana A. McKim, *Chairperson*

3. COMMISSION ON WITNESS MINISTRIES

The Commission on Witness Ministries is very pleased to finish this quadrennium by remembering the many outstanding events and training opportunities that it has helped to provide to the Western North Carolina Conference.

Motorsports Evangelism: The commission has sponsored cars at the racetrack now for six years. This ministry began in the summer of 1998. Last year, five vehicles carried the United Methodist Cross and Flame. The ministry distributes over 1,000 fan guides at each race and also at tractor-pull events. This gives the church a presence at these events, provides material that promotes the United Methodist Church and explains how to contact the *Upper Room* prayer line, and opens doors for drivers and crews to share their faith and pray with people at the races.

Awards Program: Approximately 50 churches each year are awarded the Church of Excellence award, which gives recognition to churches that increase their worship attendance by 5%, receive a percentage of their new members on profession of faith, and pay their apportionments in full. Last year, 64 churches received the award, and 88 churches qualified statistically to be a Church of Excellence. The Denman Awards are also given to a clergy person, a lay person, and a group that have shown excellence in evangelism.

Natural Church Development: Ninety-nine churches have used Natural Church Development as a process for revitalization. Twenty churches engaged in the one-year process this past year, using a coach and conducting a survey to determine the areas of strength and weakness regarding church health.

Igniting Ministry Consultants: Five persons are trained and continue to do training in local churches around hospitality evangelism and the Igniting Ministry program.

Contemporary Worship Workshops: These workshops have been offered now for four years. Starting in 2001, teams have been attending these workshops to learn how to do contemporary worship in their own settings. Each year, approximately 300 people will attend.

Church Building Conference: The sixth annual Church Building Conference will take place this year on August 26 at University City Church, Charlotte. Churches send their whole building committees or planning/study committees to learn more about how to build or how to get started in building or renovating and to meet vendors in a trade show.

Leadership Academy: Thirteen churches completed a two-year Leadership Academy that introduced them to a wide variety of church-leadership topics.

Multi-Staff Conference: Last year, this event was offered to help multiple-staff churches discover better methods of working together as a team. This year, it will be offered again under the name of "Equipping the Saints." Ron and Karen Ballard will be the conference leaders, August 16-18 at Lake Junaluska.

Prayer Encounter: The commission is pleased to have co-sponsored Terry Teykl with various churches now for several years. Terry was here again this year at Covenant Community Church, Asheville, this past May to guide churches in starting intentional prayer ministries.

Mission to Ministers: The commission works with the Finch-Hunt Institute board of directors to put on this event each year. This past year, Adam Hamilton was the evangelism lecturer.

Evangelism Toolbox: The toolbox, containing ten different ready-to-use programs for effective evangelism, was distributed three years ago and has been given to each new pastor each year since. The commission has recently made the decision to do a new revised version and make it available on CD-ROM, with all materials downloadable and available for each church to print out the programs in which it is interested.

New Members Curriculum: This curriculum was created by the commission three years ago and is available electronically to any church that wants it. More than 300 churches have requested it. It contains both a leader's guide and a participant's manual in a four-session format.

Demographic Studies: Through a contractual arrangement with the Percept Company, our churches are able to download free demographic studies of their communities and order other materials that can be used to plan for the future. Currently, 250 churches are registered with Percept to receive materials.

Church Statistics: The Office of Congregational Development also makes available each local church's statistics in a one-page summary. Plans are being made to work with an organization that will offer this to each church in a five-page report that will show both past and future trends.

We thank the members of the commission, who faithfully attend our meetings and help in the planning and implementation of these programs and in the communication with each district.

Doris D. Vincent, *Chairperson*
Mark J. Key, *Director*

4. COMMISSION ON RELIGION AND RACE

The Commission on Religion and Race continues to work to build bridges of communication and understanding between the various groups and cultures within our great church and annual conference. To that end, we have taken some creative steps to help our annual conference consider and confront some of the blocks that continue to disrupt our Christian unity.

Over the past year, the commission has sponsored a gathering called "Christian Love: One Body, One Family." This gathering took place at Pfeiffer University in November and took the place of our usual Multicultural Celebration. The participants in this event had the opportunity to work on issues of inclusion in three areas: the local church, the district, and the conference. Each work area then formed a small group that would continue the work over the next year, with the goal of forming legislation for the consideration of the annual conference.

The commission also sponsored our annual celebration of the life of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This celebration took place in Archdale at Archdale Church. John A. Moore delivered an inspiring sermon, and the participants in the celebration brought food that represented their own cultures.

H. Donnell FitzJefferies, *Director of Nurture and Ethnic Ministries*

COMMITTEE ON ETHNIC LOCAL CHURCH CONCERNS

The Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns (ELCC) continues to provide support and advocacy for ethnic churches in our annual conference. Over the past year, we have given grants that have enabled local churches to build computer labs and form tutorial ministries in their local communities. Grants from ELCC have also given local churches the support they needed to begin new studies to deepen their spiritual life and strengthen their sense of purpose. We continue to provide much needed support for pastors, so that they can more effectively serve their local churches. In 2003, ELCC provided a total of \$87,263 in grants to local churches; of this amount, \$52,183 was given in salary-supplement grants. These grants enabled pastors to serve and share their gifts and graces with a variety of local churches.

H. Donnell FitzJefferies, *Director of Nurture and Ethnic Ministries*

5. COMMISSION ON THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN

The conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) succeeded in accomplishing each of its goals during the 2000-2004 quadrennium, the majority brought to completion during the past year. These accomplishments include:

- a. Under the direction of Mark E. Curtis, the completion of a unique *Study on the Status and Role of Clergywomen (Elders)* in the Western North Carolina Conference. The short version of this study is available in PowerPoint for use in districts and churches, and the complete version is available on the COSROW link on the conference website. Highlights of the study are included below.
- b. At the 2004 annual conference, COSROW presented a petition to continue the statistical portion of the clergywomen study through 2016.
- c. Under the direction of Jill D. Alventosa-Brown, an easy-to-use curriculum guide, *Christian Women 101*, which highlights significant female Biblical figures, traces the ordination of women in The United Methodist Church, and offers contributions by women to the Christian church, is now available for widespread use from the Conference Resource Center and the Office of Connectional Ministries.

- d. Under the direction of S. Amelia Stinson-Wesley, a reference guide to assist persons who may have suffered abuse by clergy, entitled *Victim Guide Brochure*, is available to district superintendents and churches.
- e. Additionally, COSROW partnered with the conference Board of Ordained Ministry to bring training to our pastors in the area of sexual ethics.
- Highlights of the *Study on the Status and Role of Clergywomen* are included here:

United Methodists Positive about Women as Church Pastors

A new study by the Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) of the Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church reports that United Methodist congregations support the assignment of women as ministers to their churches. Conducted in collaboration with the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, the study focused on the appointments of clergywomen made through the year 2000, as well as contemporary attitudes toward clergywomen on the part of laity, as well as their male clergy counterparts. The study tabulated statistics related to clergy assignments, including church size and compensation, and also surveyed lay and clergy attitudes.

Heidi Campbell-Robinson, chair of COSROW, reported the following findings:

- 16% of clergy elders (clergy in full standing) in the Western North Carolina Conference are women.
- Over 92% of both male and female clergy said that they deliberately encourage the participation of women in church committees and/or leadership roles.
- Clergywomen were favorably received by the laity in their congregations when invited to preach.
- 84% of laity surveyed would support the appointment of a female pastor to their church.
- 77% of laity surveyed would support the appointment of a female pastor as senior minister of their church.
- 75% would support the appointment of a pastor of another race or culture.

Despite the receptivity toward female pastors as senior ministers, the study highlighted that only 19% of laity surveyed reported actually *experiencing* a female pastor as pastor-in-charge. In addition, progress still needs to be made with regard to equity in congregational size and salaries. The average church size to which clergymen are appointed is 508 members, while the average church size for clergywomen is 282 members. With regard to salaries, female pastors who are elders earn \$.79 to every \$1.00 that their male counterparts earn. Said Mark E. Curtis, chair of the COSROW demographics subcommittee, "While 79 cents to the dollar is consistent with the national earning average for women, as the Church we must ask ourselves to which standard we are to be held accountable, that of society or that of God?" Thus, when male and female clergy elders with the same number of years of experience are compared, the findings indicate that women are less likely than men to be pastors-in-charge, are assigned to smaller congregations, and have lower salaries, given the same type of appointment.

The Commission on the Status and Role of Women is an agency of The United Methodist Church that is charged with working to achieve the full and equal participation and leadership of women in The United Methodist Church. Elected from across the denomination, the commission members include one third lay women, one third lay men, and one third clergy, and comprise a broad spectrum of ethnic groups, ages, and viewpoints.

The complete study is available on the COSROW link on the website of the Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church, www.wnccumc.org.

Heidi Campbell-Robinson, *Chair*

Proposal: Study of Appointments of Clergy Women

**(Referred as Petition 7 to Forum Group 20)
(Adopted by conference on June 11, 2004)**

The Commission on the Status and Role of Women proposes the adoption of the following resolution: Whereas, The Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW), under the leadership of Heidi Campbell-Robinson, Mark E. Curtis (chair of the Statistics and Demographics Committee), and S. Amelia Stinson-Wesley, completed in January 2004 a study of the status and role of elders who are clergywomen in the Western North Carolina Annual Conference; and

Whereas, This is a "one-of-a-kind" study for our annual conference and throughout The United Methodist Church; and

Whereas, This study helps the bishop and the Cabinet and members of our annual conference track the progress in the appointing of clergy women; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Western North Carolina Annual Conference authorize, at the recommendation of the bishop and the Cabinet, a longitudinal study to be conducted by COSROW over the next 16 years to extend this original study, begun and completed during the 2000-2004 quadrennium, thereby providing 20 years of data regarding the appointment of clergywomen.

Resolved, That, specifically, the ongoing study chart the progress of clergywomen who are ordained elders by compiling the same statistics and that this survey be conducted once every four years, using

data from Volume II of the conference journal for the years 2004, 2008, 2012, and 2016. (The first study used data from year 2000.)

Heidi Campbell-Robinson, *Chairperson*
Charlene P. Kammerer, *Resident Bishop*

6. COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL CONCERNS

The Committee on Social Concerns has, for the first time this quadrennium, had a year not dominated by the North Carolina lottery issue.

We continued working on our priority of encouraging local churches to have a study on the Social Principles. In August, we sent out copies of the Social Principles booklets and study guides. I have heard from several pastors that they had good experiences with their studies, and I know that some districts have helped with classes at the district leadership conferences. We encourage other churches and districts to have this study.

One of our priority issues for this quadrennium has been to encourage the North Carolina General Assembly to place a two-year moratorium on the death penalty. On June 8, 2001, the Western North Carolina Annual Conference voted overwhelmingly to support the moratorium. Last summer, it was approved by the North Carolina Senate. It could come up for a vote in the North Carolina House of Representatives late this spring or early summer. We encourage you to write or call your representatives, telling them that you support the death-penalty moratorium. For talking points, see the petition on page 244 of the 2001 journal (Volume I). By the time you read this, there should be helpful links on our website (<http://www.gbgm-umc.org/albemarle/socon.html>), including how to find out who represents you and how to reach them. (Note that there will be a transition to housing this information on the revised annual-conference website as it is developed.)

There are opponents of the death penalty who oppose the moratorium on the grounds that the purpose is to fix a system that is fundamentally immoral and therefore cannot be salvaged. But the reality is that the death penalty is not going away any time soon, so those who favor and those who oppose the death penalty need to work together to support this moratorium.

Even without the moratorium, our state legislature has begun to make some reforms to the seriously flawed current system. It is unlikely that much would have been done so far without the attention the issue of a moratorium has brought. A two-year moratorium on carrying out death sentences would not stop people from being sentenced to death or take anyone off death row. It would, however, give the state impetus to give fundamental consideration of the system and time and the will to make serious reforms.

There are regional forums this spring on this issue sponsored by some of our churches. We encourage you to participate in one in your area or to help organize one if there is none planned.

I would like to thank all those who have served on the Committee on Social Concerns during the 2000-04 quadrennium; all of our churches that have taken stands on social issues; all of our pastors and lay folk who got in touch with their legislators on these issues, and those who identified themselves as United Methodists when they did; and all the congregations that observed Peace with Justice Sunday and gave to the special offering. I would also especially like to thank Mark L. Barden for his leadership and support in our committee.

Proposal: Changes in Committee Name and Membership

**(Referred as Petition 32 to Forum Group 12)
(Adopted by conference on June 11, 2004)**

The Committee on Social Concerns proposes that the 2004 session of the annual conference instruct the Committee on the Annual Conference Meeting to bring to the 2005 session a proposal for the amendment of the plan of organization to address for the following concerns:

1. Change the name of the Committee on Social Concerns to the Committee on Church and Society.
2. Change the description of the membership of the committee (Part I.D.7.c) to provide for up to 18 members, one half clergy and one half laity, including the peace with justice coordinator; environmental justice coordinator; conference United Methodist Women social action coordinator; and one of the conference representatives to the North Carolina Council of Churches, selected by the committee; and providing, further, that representatives holding district church and society positions may serve as ex-officio members.

Rationale:

The change in name is proposed so that the name will be consistent with the *Discipline* and the name of the general agency to which the committee relates.

The change in membership is proposed because the committee has found during the past few quadrennia that, under the present arrangement, district representatives change frequently, resulting in unstable membership for the committee. In order to provide more effective leadership for the annual

conference, consistent membership is needed. This change will create a core committee that can provide consistent leadership and devote four years to the work of the committee. Ex-officio membership of district representatives (or their equivalents) will allow these persons to be involved in the work of the committee and link the conference and district efforts.

Stephen F. Lee, *Chairperson*

7. COMMITTEE ON HISPANIC MINISTRIES

The conference Committee on Hispanic Ministries continues to call our annual conference to reach out in ministry and service to the fast growing Hispanic population of western North Carolina. We express deep gratitude to Bishop Charlene Kammerer for her strong support of Hispanic ministries. Although this year there were no new Hispanic congregations started, highlights for 2003-04 did include:

- Currently, this conference has six Hispanic local pastors (seven, counting conference director Frank Ramos) and five lay missionaries, serving in 10 of our 14 districts.
- Modules 1 and 2 of the National Plan for Hispanic Ministries (which is training for Hispanic ministries) have been presented three times in the conference year, and Module 3 (which is continuing education for those in Hispanic ministries) has been presented twice.
- New ministries related to the National Plan for Hispanic Ministries have been started in Charlotte, Greensboro, Kernersville, Monroe, Salisbury, Waynesville, and Winston-Salem during the conference year.
- Pentecost Journey, a training workshop for non-Hispanic congregations wanting to begin Hispanic ministries, has been presented several times throughout the conference.
- A lay-speaker training for Hispanics was offered two times in our conference and one time in cooperation with the North Carolina Conference.
- An outline of how a lay missionary is to be deployed and a job description for lay missionaries were created and presented to the Cabinet and passed as the plan for our annual conference.
- \$15,000 in Equitable Compensation Fund grants were distributed for pastoral salaries.

For 2004-05, the National Plan Modules 1 & 2 training, Module 3 continuing education, Pentecost Journey, and lay-speaker training workshops will all be continued, as well as plans for workshops for non-Hispanic pastor mentors in their districts, workshops for Hispanic lay missionaries, and continuing plans to create and inspire district committees on Hispanic ministries in all 14 districts. A Web page for our Hispanic ministries, linked to our conference website, is being created. We continue to look for new ways to share the gospel of our Lord Jesus in word and deed with Latinos, creating faith communities and worshipping congregations. With your prayers and continued support, we will continue to reach Hispanics in our communities.

Frank Ramos, *Director of Hispanic Ministries*

8. COMMITTEE ON NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES

The goal of the conference Committee on Native American Ministries (CONAM) for the last several years has been, and still is, Native American visibility within our conference and throughout Methodism. Thanks to the conference Worship Committee and Steven E. Phillippi, pastor of Cherokee Church, Cherokee, Native Americans from that church, Victory Church, and Triad Native American Church were invited to lead the Friday night worship service at the 2003 annual conference. We accepted the invitation and have received positive feedback from all over the conference. In 2003, we helped support three pastors in continuing their education as they strive to be better pastors. We assisted one woman who went on a work trip to Bolivia. We continue to train native persons to speak on Native American Ministries Sunday and to serve on conference, district, and national committees. We have worked very hard as a committee, meeting six times this year, exceeding our normal meeting schedule of once a quarter. We did this so that we could accomplish our goal of having a retreat, the first of its kind in the nation, called "Connectionalism: Coming Full Circle," September 8-9, 2003. This two-day retreat brought CCONAM members, Bishop Charlene Kammerer, the Cabinet, and native resource persons together to discuss issues concerning Native American/Indian communities, and it was an opportunity for all of us to learn and worship together. At this retreat, we gave a Native American Heritage Kit to the bishop and to each district superintendent. These kits tell about Native American programs throughout Methodism, as well as providing information and materials about Native American history and culture. The resource kits are now available at the district level for local churches in our conference, to assist them in planning their Native American Ministries Sunday. The CCONAM also developed our own brochure, with our mission statement and goals. The cost of printing the brochures was donated by a local business. You can see our brochure and a video of the Friday night worship service under the tent at annual conference. Thanks to all the churches in the conference that honor us by celebrating Native American Ministries Sunday. Without the celebration, the CCONAM would not be able to do the work that it does.

Thanks also to all committee members for their hard work.

Daphine L. Strickland, *Chairperson*

9. FAMILY MINISTRY

The Family Ministry area of the Conference Ministries Advisory Council continues to work on ways to resource families in the local churches. A list of people, places, and resources, both print and audio-visual, which can help the local church minister and support its families is continually being updated. Workshops offered at district leadership conferences in November 2003 and January 2004 focused on single parenting as a focus for family ministries in the local church and expanding the scope of ministry to families in the local church.

Mary S. Robinson, *Staff Director*

10. CONFERENCE RESOURCE CENTER

The Conference Resource Center continues to provide a wide variety of resources for use in the local churches and in district and conference areas of ministry. All types of resources, both print and video, are available for use in Sunday School classes for all ages, youth programs, children's church and after-school programs, family nights, UMWomen and UMMen programs, and short- or long-term study groups. In addition to specific requested resources, we also offer consultation on topics and resources that are available. The Resource Center has also offered consultation and resourcing for local churches that are developing new libraries or revamping existing ones. The catalog for the Resource Center is now on-line through the conference website, www.wnccumc.org. Visitors to the catalog website can e-mail requests directly from the website or contact the Resource Center by telephone for questions and additional information. Plans for 2004 include updating the website to make it easier for you to browse through.

Mary S. Robinson, *Director*