

STEWARDSHIP OF GIVING TASK FORCE

The Western North Carolina Conference Stewardship of Giving Task Force, in existence since the beginning of the current quadrennium, continues to offer vital stewardship education throughout western North Carolina.

Since last annual conference we have offered the following:

- A stewardship program for African-American churches;
- An educational event for new pastors entering the Western North Carolina Conference;
- A five-session stewardship DVD series with Bishop Kenneth L. Carder;
- A laity and clergy event, with Bishop Carder as the keynote speaker; and
- A "crash-course" in GoodSense Ministry.

The next 12 months promise to be as exciting and filled with opportunities as we make a gradual transition from the task force to the Stewardship Committee of The United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina, Inc.

We welcome the opportunity to present to you our plans for the future and invite you to participate in the Stewardship of Giving Task Force presentation to be held during the Friday afternoon session of the 2008 Western North Carolina Annual Conference in Stuart Auditorium at Lake Junaluska.

Sam H. Smith, Jr., *Chairperson*
David A. Snipes, *Staff Liaison*

DISCIPLE BIBLE OUTREACH MINISTRIES OF NORTH CAROLINA, INC.

"Extending the ministry of the Church from Murphy to Manteo"

DBOM's Vision: "Making disciples in pews and prisons through Bible studies to offer God's grace to a hurting world."

DBOM's Mission: "Developing and strengthening Bible study ministries to transform lives, make disciples, and empower Christians for outreach ministry."

Chartered as a ministry of the Western North Carolina and North Carolina conferences, DISCIPLE Bible Outreach Ministries of North Carolina, Inc. (DBOM) provides leadership for three powerful outreach ministries:

1. **Local Church DISCIPLE Bible Study ministry.** As the conferences' DISCIPLE Bible Study liaison, DBOM provides DISCIPLE Bible Study promotion and training to local churches throughout the state. Now in its second year, DBOM's district-sponsored training initiatives provide training in all four levels of DISCIPLE Bible Study and RINGS OF FELLOWSHIP youth curriculum, at no cost to participants. This training initiative is the only one of its kind in the country and makes DISCIPLE Bible study accessible and affordable to every local church.
2. **DISCIPLE Prison Ministry.** In the area of prison ministry, DBOM's DISCIPLE ministry is a model of lay empowerment. DBOM recruits, trains, and mobilizes volunteers from local churches as DISCIPLE Bible Study facilitators in prison. To date, more than 7,500 inmates have participated in this ministry, and more than 400 volunteers have been trained and certified as DBOM prison missionaries. The DISCIPLE Prison Ministry has grown to be one of the largest and most active prison ministries in North Carolina. DBOM extends the ministry of the Western North Carolina and North Carolina conferences behind stone walls and razor wire. In addition, DBOM has provided its model of ministry to other annual conferences in Methodism throughout the country.
3. **RINGS OF FELLOWSHIP Youth Outreach.** Just as in the DISCIPLE Prison Ministry, DBOM sends volunteers forth for ministry in the state's youth development centers with the RINGS OF FELLOWSHIP outreach. RINGS is a youth Bible curriculum based on the model of DISCIPLE. Currently, RINGS is the North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice's faith-based program and is active in youth development centers throughout the state. Recently updated and enhanced by a new DVD, featuring Andy Lambert, RINGS is being used in local churches as an exciting new middle-school Bible study curriculum.

We wish to thank the pastors and laity of the Western North Carolina Conference for their generous support of our August special offerings, and for their faithful participation as volunteers in prisons across western North Carolina. In 2008, this offering will be received on August 24. Thanks for making this significant outreach possible!

May God bless DBOM: Disciples making disciples for Jesus Christ!

Mark C. Hicks, *Director*
Mike Smith, *Board Chairperson*

Elected WNCC board members: Lynne B. Caldwell, Ed Campbell, David H. Christy, James H. Graves, Randolph H. Harry, Janet M. Hitch, Patricia Pegram, Mike Smith, Andy Lambert
Advisory Committee: J. Lawrence McCleskey, *Resident Bishop*

FINCH-HUNT INSTITUTE FOR HOMILETICAL STUDIES

The Finch-Hunt Institute for Homiletical Studies, established through the generosity of the late George D. and Lucy Finch, of Thomasville, North Carolina, and the vision of Bishop Earl G. Hunt, Jr., and other conference leaders, is devoted to the strengthening of Western North Carolina Conference pulpits. Laity and clergy both support the institute and benefit from its emphasis on continuing education as a means towards vital and effective preaching.

The primary offering of the institute occurs in February, when the annual Finch Lectures on Preaching are presented as part of the Mission to Ministers. Pastors from the conference gathered on Tuesday, February 5, 2008, to hear two outstanding speakers. Reverend Fleming Rutledge, one of the first women ordained to the priesthood of the Episcopal Church and a well known teacher of preachers, challenged us with her lecture and inspired us with her preaching. In a new approach to our programming, one of this year's speakers was one of our own. James C. Howell brought both humor and insight to his presentation on the struggle we face as preachers. The institute expresses appreciation to the staff and congregation of Myers Park Church, Charlotte, for hosting this year's event.

The 2009 Mission to Ministers will be held on Tuesday, February 3, in the Charlotte area. Other programs of the Finch-Institute include the annual Bishop's Reading Program and awards to those who demonstrate excellence in preaching.

Finances

The treasurer's report was received and approved by the Board of Trustees in the annual meeting on February 5, 2008.

Beginning balance as of 02/06/2007	\$15,644.59
Receipts	\$4,135.80
Disbursements	<u>4,713.89</u>
Ending Balance as of 2/05/2008.....	\$15,066.50
Operating Funds Available	\$ 8,833.50
Holy Land Award Funds Available.....	<u>6,233.00</u>
Balance of Funds Available	\$15,066.50
Endowment Account –First Citizens Investor Services	<u>82,196.29</u>
Total Assets	\$97,262.79

Submitted with great appreciation to the laity and clergy who support the institute.

J. Lawrence McCleskey, *Chairperson*
 Julianne Brittain, *Executive Vice-President*
 Patricia W. Wiseman, *Secretary*
 David B. Wall, *Treasurer*

TRUSTEES OF THE EUGENE M. COLE FOUNDATION

The Will of Eugene M. Cole established the foundation in 1944 to provide benefits for retired ministers and surviving spouses of the Western North Carolina Conference. In 2007, the foundation directed monthly payments to the conference treasurer to supplement the cost of health care benefits to retired ministers and spouses. The monthly payments exceeded \$200,000 in 2007. The trustees have determined that the monthly payments for health-care benefits shall continue for 2008. The Trustees also sponsor a breakfast for retired clergy and spouses at annual conference. The trustees recently transferred the assets of the foundation to The United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina, Inc., for investment management.

The foundation is governed by three (3) trustees elected by the annual conference: James C. Windham, Jr., chairperson; Juanita T. Henderson, vice-chair; and R. Anthony Orsbon, secretary.

Proposal: Cole Foundation Trustee

(Petition 19)

The trustees of the Eugene M. Cole Foundation propose that Juanita T. Henderson, whose term as trustee expires in 2008, be re-elected for another three (3)-year term, expiring in 2011.

James C. Windham, Jr., *Chairperson*

THE UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA, INC.

The United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina, Inc., has had the privilege of being in ministry with churches and church-related institutions in western North Carolina for the past 23 years. Our task has always been challenging, yet surrounded with a true sense of calling. We owe a great deal of gratitude to you, our brothers and sisters in Christ, for allowing us the opportunity to be in ministry with you.

As is the case in life, the past 12 months have not been without change at the foundation. In December, we said goodbye to P. Glenn Kinken III, our senior vice-president for planned giving and communication, as he answered a call back to parish ministry. In January, we welcomed our newest staff member, Lauralee Bailey, as the senior vice-president of communication. Lauralee comes to us from Bank of America Investment Services and brings a lifetime of knowledge related to the church, as she is a clergy spouse. In the near future, we hope to add more staff as we expand our existing ministries (and consider new ones) to better serve you.

One of the highlights of the last year was reached in the fourth quarter when the total assets of the foundation surpassed the \$105-million mark. By December 31, 2007, the total assets of the foundation were in excess of \$101 million, an all-time, year-end high. This was achievable, not only because of a favorable market, but, more importantly, because of the faith that has been placed in us by our constituents throughout western North Carolina.

One of the most exciting ministries of the foundation is that of grant-making. The UMF Ministry Fund continues to financially support the work of the conference Stewardship of Giving Task Force, as well as other worthwhile ministries throughout the connection. Also, the Royce and Jane Reynolds Fund continues to financially support ministries at home and abroad that make disciples for Jesus Christ. When you take into consideration these ministries, as well as the ministries of endowment development, planned giving, fund management, stewardship education, and the UMF Loan Program/Development Fund, we hope you see that we are about more than just money...we are about ministry. Like the first line of our mission statement says, "We are a ministry of the church, for the church." Without you, we would not be in existence.

The annual meeting of the membership of the United Methodist Foundation will be held on Thursday night of annual conference in Stuart Auditorium, on the grounds of Lake Junaluska. We invite you to join us then, when we will share more of the exciting ministries we have to offer. Also, we will have a ministry tent on the grounds, as well as other displays that include helpful resources and information pertaining to our ministries. We hope you will become familiar with us and look forward to the time when we are in ministry with you.

Sam H. Smith, Jr., *Chairperson*
David A. Snipes, *President and CEO*

RFD CDC

RFD CDC is a catalyst for things hoped for....

Specifically, the mission is to be a faith-based catalyst for the wellbeing of rural and/or small communities, congregations, and institutional ministries. The vision is to provide faith-based services that expand rural faith development, community development, rural funding, research, and design. The organization is self-sustaining through grants and fees for ministry services.

In the first eight months since its founding in July 2007, RFD has made 91 contacts and 49 on-site consultations and is working on projects or project possibilities in 25 locations. The work is in four broad categories :

- (1) Consulting and coaching rural and small-membership churches in North Carolina;
- (2) Economic and community development with small and/or rural North Carolina communities;
- (3) Faith-based housing for seniors and lower-income families; and
- (4) Consulting as requested with United Methodist mission organizations outside of the Western North Carolina Conference. To date, those outside the conference include Gulfside Assembly, in Mississippi; Wesley Community Services, in Virginia; and the United Methodists of McDowell County, West Virginia.

Officers of our board are W. H. (Bill) Osborne, Jr., president; James H. Graves, vice-president; and Lynne B. Caldwell, secretary-treasurer. Other board members include Arnetta E. Beverly, Leslie Boney, Lillie Madison Jones, Tom Lambeth, Robin Pulver, Valerie B. Rosenquist, Clay Smith, Jeremy I. Troxler, Janice A. Virtue, and Randy L. Wall. R. A. (Alan) Rice, Jr., is the executive director.

Bill H. Osborne, Jr., *President*
R. A. (Alan) Rice, *Executive Director*

BROTHERHOOD/SISTERHOOD OF THE WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE

The Brotherhood/Sisterhood of The Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church was founded more than a century ago by concerned clergy and laity who became aware of the difficult circumstances that families of United Methodist pastors face upon the pastor's death. On receiving word that a BH/SH clergy member has died, a check in the amount of \$9,500 is immediately taken to the surviving spouse or designated beneficiary. This provides immediate financial assistance to the family of the deceased clergy member and, at the same time, assures the family of our continued love and gratitude for the clergy member's ministry and service.

The officers of The Brotherhood/Sisterhood want to thank both the clergy and the laity who are members of the Brotherhood/Sisterhood for their generous and faithful support of this ministry. This benevolent organization over the past 12 years has provided gifts in excess of \$1.6 million to the loved ones of deceased clergy.

At the present time, fewer than 50% of clergy in the Western North Carolina Conference and 1% of the laity of the annual conference have membership in the Brotherhood/Sisterhood. Membership is open to all clergy members of the annual conference (full, probationary, associate, and local pastor). Clergy under the age of 35, or who have been members of the annual conference for fewer than five years, may join by making an application and paying a registration fee of \$10.00. Clergy who are over age 35, or who have been members of the annual conference for more than five years, will be asked to sign a non-interest-bearing promissory note for all assessments since their 35th birthday.

The Brotherhood/Sisterhood is an important connection of the clergy of the annual conference. It is one way that we can pull together and express our gratitude for the life and ministry of our brothers and sisters in ministry.

Treasurer's Report Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007

Receipts:			
	Advance Payments for Calls	\$ - 2,826.00	
	Revenue from Calls: Clergy	88,314.00	
	Revenue from Calls: Lay Members	69,695.49	
	Revenue from Notes: Clergy	11,583.00	
	Interest Income	1,124.08	
	Other Revenues	<u>20,852.00</u>	
	Total Receipts		\$188,742.57
Disbursements:			
	Death Benefits	\$141,065.00	
	Net Salaries	17,717.46	
	Federal Taxes	2,323.00	
	State Taxes	1,033.00	
	FICA Taxes	2,822.48	
	Medicare Taxes	660.48	
	Office Supplies	289.62	
	Printing and Outside Copies	4,496.10	
	Postage and Shipping	9,990.84	
	Computer Expenses	640.00	
	Rent Expense	600.00	
	Telephone Expense	2,068.64	
	Payroll Tax Expense	0.00	
	Laity Expense	227.96	
	Dir. Operating Expense	6,253.16	
	Professional Services	2,244.00	
	Investment Handling Fees	0.00	
	Travel/Mileage	900.09	
	Transfer funds to Cash Invest	0.00	
	Other Operating Expenses	<u>1,857.76</u>	
	Total Disbursements		<u>\$195,189.59</u>
	Change in Cash During Period		- 6,447.02
	Cash Balance, Beginning		<u>24,955.48</u>
	Cash Balance, Ending		\$ 18,508.46

Proposals

(To be acted upon in meeting of Brotherhood/Sisterhood membership)

1. That the assessment rate for clergy members be \$8.00 per call, that lay participants contribute \$3.00 per call, that the initiation fee for new clergy members be \$10.00, and that the benefit paid to beneficiaries of deceased clergy be \$9,500.00.
2. That both laity and clergy be encouraged to include the Brotherhood/Sisterhood in their wills.
3. That clergy members be encouraged to pay in advance an annual estimated assessment of \$112.00, based on an average of 14 assessments per year.
4. That persons with notes be encouraged to begin payments on any outstanding balances.
5. That assessments are to be paid upon receipt of notice or within 60 days of the notice.
6. That each local church be encouraged to observe Brotherhood/Sisterhood Sunday on the third Sunday in February or on another Sunday more suitable to the particular congregation.

A. Owen Peeler, *President*

Christopher M. Westmoreland, *Vice-President*

Barbara J. Barden, *Recording Secretary*

Robert W. Combs, *Executive Director*

James A. Harrell, Sr., and Jack Young, *Co-Directors of Laity*

NORTH CAROLINA PASTORS' SCHOOL AND DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL CONVOCATION

On October 8-10, 2007, almost 650 clergy gathered for the annual Convocation and Pastors' School at Duke Divinity School. The event focused on the theme, "Our Daily Bread: A Theology and Practice of Sustainable Living." The event featured inspiring lectures, seminars, and worship services. Featured speaker Wendell Berry, novelist, essayist, poet, academic, and farmer, offered a provocative, yet thoughtful message of peace and compassion for our community. The James A. Gray Lectures were presented by Norman Wirzba, professor and chair of the philosophy department at Georgetown College in Georgetown, Kentucky, and an adjunct professor of Christianity and culture at the Baptist Seminary of Kentucky. Wes Jackson, founder and president of The Land Institute, a Kansas-based non-profit research and educational organization, presented the Franklin S. Hickman Lecture. The convocation preachers were Carol Bechtel, professor of Old Testament at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan, and Ellen Davis, professor of Bible and practical theology at Duke Divinity School. Seventeen different continuing education seminars enrolled over 485 participants. The seminars included, "Call for the Abolition of War," "Remembering the Land: Reading the Bible through Agrarian Eyes," "The Gospel of Abundance in a World of Scarcity," and, "The Field at Anathoth: A Community Garden in Babylon."

The 2008 Convocation and Pastors' School will be held October 13-15 and will explore Christian leadership with Blair Sheppard, dean of Duke's Fuqua School of Business; Ronald Heifetz, author and Harvard University professor; Adam Hamilton, United Methodist pastor; and a distinguished panel of United Methodist bishops. A detailed brochure will be available from Duke Divinity School later this summer. Individuals are encouraged to contact the Center for Continuing Education for more information (www.divinity.duke.edu/learningforlife; email div-conted@duke.edu; phone 888-845-4216).

G. Paul Phillips, *Chairperson*

SCHOOLS OF THEOLOGY

1. CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Candler School of Theology is grounded in the Christian faith and shaped by the Wesleyan tradition of evangelical piety, ecumenical openness, and social concerns. Our mission is *to educate faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries in the world*. Candler is one of the 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church and is one of nine schools at Emory, a top-20 research university, founded in memory of Methodist Bishop John Emory and his commitment to "mold both character and intellect."

Unlike other large research campuses, Emory is neither indifferent to nor embarrassed by religion. Rather, this university is eager to address an urgent need at home and abroad: helping different faith traditions cooperate rather than collide. Emory prides itself in being a destination university, internationally recognized as an inquiry-driven, ethically engaged, and diverse community, whose members work collaboratively for positive transformation in the world.

At Candler, we proclaim the Gospel and nurture students' growth in the Christian faith. A stellar faculty, a dedicated staff, and vibrant students form an active community of teaching and learning that prepares excellent leaders for Christian ministries. We carry out this mission, however, in an extraordinary university-based educational environment, where hearts and minds engage across deeply held religious differences, preparing our students to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Candler's faculty continues to be among the most distinctive in theological education. Forty-three members hold full-time appointments, and five hold part-time appointments. An additional 23 serve in an adjunct capacity. Woodie W. White and Marshall L. (Jack) Meadors, Jr., serve as the United Methodist bishops in residence. Bishop L. Bevel Jones III remains at Candler, working with the Development Office.

In our commitment to the practice of ministry, we partner with 80 churches to ensure that ministerial preparation takes place both in the local church and on the campus. Candler's contextual education program intentionally pairs a faculty member with supervisors from church and community ministries, so that teaching teams represent the church and the academy. Twenty-two teaching supervisors support our contextual education and teaching parish (student pastor) programs. The Reverend Dr. Alice Rogers has broadened the teaching parish program to include students appointed to churches in the Alabama-West Florida, North Alabama, North Georgia, South Georgia, and South Carolina annual conferences. We also taught more than 250 United Methodist students in the Course of Study in 2006-2007.

This year, enrollment was 535, with 440 in the master of divinity program, 54 in the master of theological studies program, 12 in the master of theology program, 10 in the doctor of theology program, and 19 enrolled as special, non-degree students. Eighty-three percent of students are enrolled full time. The student population is 25% United States ethnic minority; 11%, international; and 52%, women. Nearly 50 denominations are represented, with 52% of M.Div. students being United Methodist, from 37 annual conferences. Other denominations of the Methodist family represented at Candler include African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal, Church of the Nazarene, Free Methodist, Wesleyan Methodist, and the Methodist Church of Korea. The average age of our students is now 31, with 57% under 30. The median age of our M.Div. students is 27.

Lots of wonderful new initiatives are under way. We will move into Phase I of our new building in early August 2008. It offers 65,000 square feet for classrooms, offices, and community life. We hope construction on Phase II will begin late in 2008. It will hold the Pitts Library and the Wesley Teaching Chapel. The first year of implementation of a new M.Div. curriculum is nearly complete. This program deepens faculty roles in advising and mentoring and requires a course in a religion other than Christianity. A new director of lifelong learning should be in place by fall 2008 to initiate a renewed emphasis on programs that benefit congregations and their leaders in continuing education. Designed to address the changing needs of church and society, both at home and abroad, this program will work cooperatively with local churches, judicatory leaders, and denominational agencies to strengthen the church and its ministries.

At the center of our upcoming capital campaign is a program to boost financial support for students. This year, 76% of eligible students received scholarship support from Candler, with an average scholarship covering 71% of tuition. Among these awards, more than \$2.4 million was provided to 198 United Methodist students. Gifts from the Ministerial Education Fund (MEF) have played a large role in this support. However, so much more needs to be done. More than 60% of Candler's M.Div. graduates leave school with educational debt. This burden undermines their effectiveness in ministry, such that some seek alternative employment. Your continued support, gifts, and prayers mean a great deal as we work to provide a strong educational program, as well as support for the courageous and committed students who choose to undertake the challenge of theological education.

Thank you for your support of Candler. Candler exists to serve the church of Jesus Christ and The United Methodist Church in particular. If you have insights on what we could do better to fulfill this service, please let me know.

Jan Love, Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics

2. THE DIVINITY SCHOOL OF DUKE UNIVERSITY

Duke Divinity School prepares students to become effective, faithful leaders in the church, the academy, and the world through its attention to spiritual formation and transforming ministry, as well as to leadership and academic rigor. The school is committed to preparing ordained leaders in The United Methodist Church. It is also an integral part of Duke University, and divinity students enjoy and contribute to the university's intellectual, spiritual, and social resources.

Programs

The Divinity School began work on two major initiatives in 2007 that build on previous efforts to partner with the church and other institutions to provide leadership in areas of great importance to congregations.

The Duke Endowment awarded Duke Divinity School \$12 million in the summer of 2007 to lead a wide-ranging effort that aims to assess, track, and improve the health of every United Methodist pastor in North Carolina. The Divinity School is collaborating with the Western North Carolina Conference and the North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church on the project.

The initiative in clergy health, planned to last seven years, will include an initial health assessment of ministers, followed by a longitudinal study of their physical, spiritual, and mental health. Information-gathering will focus on such issues as job satisfaction, spiritual practices, exercise, cultivating friendships, and general well-being.

Also in 2007, the Divinity School began planning for an initiative in Christian leadership that will help Christian leaders combine theological insight with wise business practices to meet real-world challenges.

Leadership education at Duke Divinity will teach, coach, and provide resources for leaders of key Christian institutions that support and sustain congregations and pastors. Its reach will extend from bish-

ops and executive directors of denominations to senior leaders of seminaries and other organizations that serve congregations.

Supported with a \$14-million grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc., the initiative will develop a variety of programs that focus on leading and managing Christian institutions. The initiative also will convene Christian leaders at Duke and across the country to address pivotal issues, and will develop a website where leaders of Christian institutions can interact to share resources and ideas.

Students

We welcomed a superb and diverse group of new students to Duke Divinity School in the fall of 2007. Total enrollment remained steady at about 575 students representing 34 states and seven foreign countries. More than half of our master of divinity students are United Methodist, 14% are Baptist, and the others come from more than 30 different denominations in the Christian faith.

The median age of the entering master of divinity class continues to be low; this year it was approximately 24. The overall entering class has an ethnic-minority enrollment of approximately 21%. The median undergraduate G.P.A. of the entering class was 3.61.

We also welcomed our second class of doctor of theology students. Eight outstanding students entered in this class, out of more than 50 applicants.

Our field education program continues to provide important contextual learning for students. More than 180 of our students experienced summer field education placements, including many in rural United Methodist congregations (whose stipends were supported by The Duke Endowment), 12 in our Teaching Congregations program, 6 in the Center for Reconciliation's Teaching Communities program, and 18 international placements in South Africa (5), Guatemala and El Salvador (4), Brazil (2), Canada (2), Peru (2), Uganda (2), and Kenya (1).

Events and Activities

The Divinity School hosted "Charles Wesley at 300," a three-day conference in June 2007 celebrating Wesley's life and work. The school also sponsored our annual Summer Wesley Institute for scholars from around the world to gather for four weeks of study, research, and conversation.

In August 2007, the Divinity School was well represented at the Oxford Institute of Methodist Studies, where eight faculty and one Th.D. student participated, and several provided significant leadership.

The Divinity School's Center for Reconciliation convened a gathering of more than 40 Christian leaders in Africa in November 2006 and again in January 2008 to develop strategies for focusing the church's work in addressing issues and conflicts such as genocide, civil war, and AIDS.

In February 2007, the Divinity School welcomed Archbishop Elias Chacour, a Palestinian-Israeli priest, educator, peacemaker, and leader, for several days of lectures and conversation. And the Right Reverend George Carey, former Archbishop of Canterbury, spoke at the Divinity School the following month as a part of the efforts of the Anglican Episcopal House of Studies.

The Divinity School hosted the Fund for Theological Education's summer conference for African-American doctoral students in June 2007. In addition, we hosted the Hispanic Summer Program, which brought to our campus Hispanic students and faculty for two weeks of coursework, worship, and reflection.

Faculty

Stephen Gunter became associate dean for Methodist studies and research professor of evangelism and Methodist studies. Gunter taught at Candler School of Theology before serving as president of Young Harris College. This new position enables the Divinity School to build on strengths in Wesleyan studies and further develop service and outreach to United Methodist constituencies.

Edgardo Colon-Emeric joined the Divinity School as director of our new Hispanic Studies Program and assistant research professor of theology and Hispanic studies. We anticipate that this program will enhance course offerings and field education for M.Div. students, while also addressing Course of Study education and other workshops for practicing Hispanic pastors.

Lauren Winner, who had been serving as a visiting faculty member, joined the Divinity School in a full-time tenure-track capacity. A Ph.D. graduate of Columbia University, Winner is well known for such books as *Girl Meets God* and *Mudhouse Sabbath*. She also writes regularly and widely for such publications as *Books and Culture*, *Christian Century*, *Christianity Today*, and *The New York Times Book Review*.

Paul Griffiths, an internationally known scholar in the field of Catholic studies, was appointed as Duke Divinity School's first William K. Warren Foundation Professor of Catholic Theology. Griffiths previously held the Schmitt Chair of Catholic studies at the University of Illinois in Chicago.

Notable books published by our faculty in 2006-07 included *Early Methodist Spirituality*, by Paul Chilcote; *Prophets, Sages, and Poets*, by Jim Crenshaw; *Places of Redemption*, by Mary McClintock Fulkerson; *Matthew and The State of the University*, by Stanley Hauerwas; *Saving Women*, by Lacey Warner; and *Power and Passion*, by Sam Wells.

Honors & Achievements

Richard Lischer, Duke Divinity School's James T. and Alice Mead Cleland Professor of Preaching, was presented with a lifetime achievement award by the Academy of Homiletics.

Richard Heitzenrater, William Kellon Quick Professor of Church History and Wesley Studies, was honored for his academic achievements in a special session of the American Society of Church History.

We are thankful for the relationships among The United Methodist Church, this annual conference, and Duke Divinity School, and we look forward to another year of working to prepare men and women for

Christian ministry. To learn more about Duke Divinity School, please visit our website at www.divinity.duke.edu.

L. Gregory Jones, *Dean*

3. GAMMON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Gammon Theological Seminary is one of 13 accredited theological institutions of The United Methodist Church. Gammon is the only historically African American graduate theological school related to The United Methodist Church.

Gammon will celebrate its 125th year of founding this year during the annual Founders' Day and Thirkield-Jones Lecture Series, October 6-9, 2008. "Remembering Who We Are: Seeking New Pathways," is our theme for our 125th celebration. Bishop Violet Fisher will serve as our Founders' Day Worship Service speaker, and Bishop Gregory Palmer will serve as our guest lecturer for the Thirkield-Jones Lecture Series. A Founders' Day Banquet and Gala will be held during this event to honor the alumni who have matriculated at Gammon and served The United Methodist Church for the last 125 years. The Methodist Episcopal Church founded Gammon Theological Seminary in 1883. Bishop Gilbert Haven and the officers of the Freedmen's Aid Society had purchased nearly 500 acres of high land in the southern suburbs of Atlanta, Georgia. Gammon initially began as the Department of Theology at Clark University. Through the efforts of Bishop Henry White Warren and the gift of \$20,000 for endowment from the Reverend Elijah H. Gammon, a Methodist minister of the Rock River (Illinois) Conference, along with the enthusiasm of these two men, Gammon Hall was constructed. The Reverend Wilbur Patterson Thirkield was elected dean, and Gammon School of Theology was officially opened on October 3, 1883.

Gammon is the United Methodist member of the consortium of theological schools known across the world as The Interdenominational Theological Center, located in Atlanta, Georgia. We offer a broad curriculum in the scholar-minister tradition and also offer a holistic educational experience that continues to stress scholarship and service.

Students prepare for administration and leadership, counseling, teaching and preaching, and a range of other spiritual and secular roles, with a blend of scholarship in the classroom and practical experience in the community. The interdisciplinary curriculum integrates theological studies with preparation for the ministry, merging theory with practice to equip the student for scholarship in the academy, service in the parish, and leadership in the community. Degree programs offered are master of divinity; master of arts in Christian education; master of arts in church music; and the dual degrees of doctor of theology and doctor of ministry with a specialty in pastoral counseling.

Inquiries about Gammon may be directed to Madelyn C. Greene, alumni and student affairs director, at 404-581-0310 or mgreenegammon@bellsouth.net.

Walter H. McKelvey, *President/Dean*

4. UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

"Spirit Led, Renewing the Church!"

It is a joy to send greetings on behalf of United Theological Seminary to the annual conferences within the United Methodist connection!

United Theological Seminary celebrates with you 137 years of service in the ministry of theological education since our founding in 1871. We are grateful to God for the privileges of equipping faithful leadership for the church, leading in reflection on Wesleyan theology, and assisting the church in making disciples of all nations! We seek the Holy Spirit's leading, so that we may do our part in the renewal of the church for the mission of Jesus Christ in the world!

Here are some current highlights from United Theological Seminary:

- A new master of divinity degree concentration in church renewal!
- A continuing, central role for orthodox Christian doctrine and deep grounding in the study of the Bible.
- An emphasis upon the world as our context for theological education, including the Middle East, Africa, Southeast Asia, and Eastern Europe.
- New initiatives in distance learning to serve the underserved—including five new online courses in the fall of 2008!
- Growing partnerships with African American church leaders and institutions.
- New partnerships with other schools, judicatories, agencies, and congregations!
- An opportunity to lead the church in reflection on the Wesleyan theological tradition through the work of our faculty and the Center for Evangelical United Brethren Heritage.
- Increasing enrollment in our master's degrees, doctor of ministry degree, and non-degree programs, as we respond to new needs for clergy and lay education
- Our fine students, faculty, and staff!
- A state-of-the-art, completely accessible campus.

We thank you for your ongoing partnership with us in the ministry of Jesus Christ!

Wendy J. Deichmann Edwards, *President*

5. WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A Multiplier Institution

Wesley is one of the largest and most diverse seminaries in the world. Our alumni are in ministry in all 50 states and in 20 countries as leaders of the church and other service organizations. We have one of the finest faculties in theological education. Nationally, we have the largest lay education program of any seminary. We reach tens of thousands of people each year through our video-based adult-education effort. These courses are a vehicle for connecting the church's best teachers with the people of the church. Wesley has partnered with Pfeiffer University to establish the Center for Deacon Education, to provide deacon education and ordination for people of The United Methodist Church.

Wesley is committed to a vision of a church of the 21st century that is focused on being a part of God's mission in the world. This church is hopeful and future-oriented. It is full of joy and a sense of purpose. It is relevant and global. It seeks justice from the perspective of faith. We are lifting up the future leaders of this church of the 21st century through our academic programs.

A Resource for the Church and the People of the Church

We are preparing men and women to lead the church of the 21st century. Our goal is fruitful leadership for congregations that are vital and engaged effectively in mission and service to their communities and the world.

Members of just one of Wesley Theological Seminary's graduating class will minister to more than half a million people. Wesley has come to have such an impact because of the seminary's commitment to being where God is working in the world—centered in the church. We have built many lasting partnerships with congregations that have strengthened the individual churches and the seminary.

With the support of our partners in ministry, Wesley:

- Recruited more than 540 masters-level students for the 2007-08 academic year.
- Is building a satellite campus at Mount Vernon Place United Methodist in the heart of Washington, D.C.
- Offers the National Capital Semester for Seminarians, in which students from other seminaries come to Washington for an intensive, semester-long study in ethics, theology, and public policy.
- Established the Bishop Sundo Kim Chair in World Christianity in October to better prepare students to lead congregations in going out into our diverse society and the world.

An Invitation

At Wesley, our graduates hold the promise of thousands of ministries that stretch far into the future. We welcome all who would join us in our work. Learn more about the exciting things happening at Wesley through our monthly electronic newsletter. You can subscribe at www.WesleySeminary.edu/eCalling.

David McAllister-Wilson, President

SOUTHEASTERN JURISDICTION CONNECTIONAL TABLE

Greetings on behalf of the Southeastern Jurisdiction Connectional Table and our president, Bishop J. Lawrence McCleskey. I am pleased to report to the Western North Carolina Annual Conference on some of the actions and accomplishments at Lake Junaluska and in the jurisdiction.

We were excited to consecrate the Bethea Welcome Center at Lake Junaluska on July 9, 2007. There were United Methodist leaders from several general agencies, colleges, and universities present for this historic event. We are happy to report that the building is in use and offers Christian hospitality to Lake Junaluska guests and visitors to western North Carolina. We thank the Western North Carolina Conference for your financial commitment to make this symbol of reconciliation a reality.

Lake Junaluska grounds and facilities are a priority. We have completed the new Lake Junaluska golf course clubhouse. This was supported by a number of individuals who use this part of Lake Junaluska's ministry of recreation.

As we prepare and plan for Lake Junaluska's becoming a premier conference center for The United Methodist Church, we have a representative group from around the jurisdiction serving on the Lake Junaluska Campus and Stuart Center Design Group to recommend a master plan for the campus. We have Cornell University studying our operations and services to better serve the church.

Along with looking at our facilities, we have reorganized our ministry area into the Ministry Event Development Office. Rev. Roger Dowdy is giving superb leadership in evaluating our ministries, establishing procedures, and developing partnerships to meet the needs of The United Methodist Church. An agreement has been made to establish Alban Institute at Lake Junaluska. We began to experience this partnership April 13-16, with *Healthy Congregations* seminar led by Alban Institute. The centerpiece of the partnership will be an Alban Institute seminar July 6-10, at the newly envisioned Ministry Summit (formerly the SEJ Ministers' Conference). There is a new relationship between the ministry and marketing departments at Lake Junaluska. Ken Howle and Roger Dowdy are leading us in considering new possibilities for the future, built on research of needs of the church, coupled with good business practices.

The Ministries with Young People continues to serve the largest numbers of United Methodists at Lake Junaluska. The summer youth events and winter ski retreats are being well attended this year.

An outstanding multi-cultural event, *Embracing God's Diversity*, was held in December. The leadership

of the jurisdiction made this one of the most exciting and diverse groups that has ever met at Lake Junaluska.

Below are snapshots of the work of the seven southeastern jurisdiction agencies:

Gulfside Assembly

Mollie Stewart reports that the Gulfside board feels good about the SEJ and thanks them. A draft of what the new campus might look like has been drawn. Two years after Katrina, during the week of August 13, we sensed a clear direction of hope and a future bright with promise. They began the relationship building in the community, began talking to officials in Waveland and the state, and began building partnerships. They are considering senior housing on the gulf and will not be selling any more land, but will utilize what they have. When the tax revenues go through, they will redeem 25 acres of previously owned land. They are not duplicating ministry, but enhancing what they have. They have a house that is being used as an office and a place to stay when in the area. When the campus is completed, that house will be used for the director's home.

Intentional Growth Center

Larry Ousley reports that the Intentional Growth Center has been in business for 30 years, and their area shows signs of health. They planned 57 events this year. They drew on reserve funds each of the last three years, but this year have not and think they will break even at the end of the year. They trained over 400 interim pastors in this denomination. They are getting a good response from district superintendents all over the country, with one third from outside the jurisdiction. They helped with "heads in beds" in the Conference Center with \$175,000 of business. IGC is grateful for the Morgan Charitable Trust, that will help as they move into the future. They are planning a major keynoting event in 2008 and look forward to working with the lay leaders.

Southeastern Jurisdictional Agency for Native American Ministries (SEJANAM)

Darlene Jacobs reports that SEJANAM became an agency in 1993 to strengthen Native American ministries. It provided advocacy and technical assistance in writing grants, with \$250,000 representing almost 100 tribes and 23 churches and ministries, with over 6,000 persons being United Methodists. They work with churches in rural and urban areas and one of the largest Native American churches with 1,000 members. They have a platform for holy conferencing and going beyond the boards of the SEJ. They allow for modeling and growth. Programs have increased from 25% to 50%, and one of the largest Native American events in The United Methodist Church is at Lake Junaluska. Through mission trips, we have erected homes and are establishing health clinics and water systems and have 250 team members for that mission project alone. They are in ministry in Mississippi, with Choctaw, and in Louisiana, where Katrina struck. They have received \$100,000 for the Cummins Endowment for the support of SEJANAM's program. They are raising money to name the Cummins and Queen Room in the Bethea Welcome Center. Their agency is unique, the only one of its kind throughout all the jurisdictions. It gives presence, a voice, and visibility in the jurisdiction. They deal with violence, health, and other issues in the course of their work and appreciate the support of the SEJ.

Southeastern United Methodist Church Agency for Rehabilitation, Inc. (SEMAR)

Chryl Eure reports that SEMAR is the oldest agency of the jurisdiction, 38 years old. The most defining moment in 2007 was the creation of the Laurels of Junaluska, affordable housing for the elderly. October 12 was the grand opening, and the residents moved in on November 15 to a safe and comfortable place. We appreciate the Western North Carolina Conference and Givens Estates for making this a reality. SEMAR provides technical systems to annual conferences for persons with developmental disabilities. They have entered into a contract with Mike Dyson to run SEMAR. He will lead the board in strategic planning and determine how SEMAR can continue to be effective for The United Methodist Church. They are seeking additional board members, interested people with a passion and desire to be involved with persons with developmental disabilities.

United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM)

Nick Elliott thanks all annual conferences for their support over the last 31 years. They began in the SEJ and are now national. In 2005, 26,000 people went out in service, and in 2006 it was 31,000. Half of them responded to the hurricane disasters on the gulf coast; 80% of the Katrina relief people are faith-based and United Methodist.

Hinton Rural Life Center

Clay Smith reports that The United Methodist Church has more local churches than there are United States post offices. Rural communities are growing for the first time in 100 years. Hinton does consulting, provides training, and builds effective ministries. Mollie Stewart and Clay spent four days in the Virginia Conference and three days in the Florida Conference and will spend every weekend until Easter next year working with small-group congregations. They have a wonderful First Parish Project for young clergy in small churches. Thirty-five came to Hinton for six weeks during the last two years, ten of whom are United Methodist. They work with affordable housing and substance abuse intervention. They have a conference and retreat center which brings in 1,200 people a year. At General Conference in April, someone took trees from Gulfside Assembly and is making furniture for General Conference. The whole church is committed to Katrina relief and Gulfside Assembly.

Archives and History

Nell Thrift reports that Art Swarthout is the interim director of the Commission on Archives and History and the Heritage Center. The main focus of the commission is the Heritage Center, which acquires, organizes, preserves, and makes available records of the Southeastern Jurisdiction. The center provides training for confirmation classes from throughout the jurisdiction, with approximately 1,300 young people using the center in 2007. The museum is also part of the tour for youth groups meeting at the lake. In addition, drop-in visitors, researchers, and mail, telephone, and e-mail requests for information make the Heritage Center a vital and lively place. The center has received several notable acquisitions this year. Anne Blanchard, widow of the Reverend Richard Blanchard, author of the hymn, "Fill My Cup," continues to share manuscripts of his music, as well as hymnals and other copies of his many songs. The family and friends of Bishop Edward Tullis have recently donated artifacts of his life and ministry, including photographs and diplomas. When you are at Lake Junaluska, visit the Heritage Center in the lower level of the Harrell Center.

We were thrilled to host the United Methodist Council of Bishops and the extended cabinets in November. In July, it will be our honor to welcome the 2008 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference to Lake Junaluska. The SEJ Connectional Table appreciates the support we receive from annual conferences.

Jimmy L. Carr, *Executive Director*