



The Methodist Messenger
JULY 2018
Whiteville United Methodist Church



Sunday School - 9:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship Service - 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday Communion Service - 6:30 p.m.

PASTOR'S PAGE

YOU CAN READ MY DIARY ON
THE 2018 SESSION OF THE NORTH
CAROLINA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

What follows is not a journalistic, fact-by-fact, event-by-event account of this year's Annual Conference. Frankly, I find such reports tedious to write and to read. Instead, what follows are diary-like tidbits from the conference that you might find to be of interest -- and perhaps even inspiration.

1. It all took place at the Greenville Convention Center in Greenville, NC. It officially began at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday (June 14), and it officially ended around 4:00 p.m. on Saturday (June 16). From the Whiteville United Methodist Church, Mrs. Carolyn Hankins, Mrs. Lynn Sellers, Mr. Marty Sellers, Mrs. Marsha Stallworth (observer), and the pastor attended.
2. The 2018 North Carolina Annual Conference was the shortest that this pastor can recall.
3. Rev. Bill Boykin -- who served the Whiteville United Church from 2009 until 2012, whose last appointment was First United Methodist Church in Havelock (2012-2018), and who will preach the Whiteville Church's 2018 Homecoming Sermon on October 14 -- is retiring this month. So is Rev. Pat Inman. Fear not: Rev. Inman will continue as the pastor of Chadbourn United Methodist Church and Evergreen United Methodist Church.
4. Rev. Ken Sides, who is the pastor of the Old Dock Charge, was reinstated as a local pastor.
5. For your information, Rev. Dustin Sprouse, who pastored Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church near Elizabethtown (2012-2014), was ordained elder.
6. Rev. Rob Renfroe -- the Pastor of Discipleship at The Woodlands United Methodist Church outside Houston, TX and the president of Good News -- addressed the Evangelical Fellowship at Covenant United Methodist Church in Winterville. He asked why the Council of Bishops had recommended the One Church Plan to the special, called 2019 General Conference -- especially since that recommendation was generally unacceptable to evangelical-orthodox United Methodists in the United States and in Africa. Admitting to being "a little angry," Rev. Renfroe responded to his own question: many bishops on the Council were prideful, unaware of evangelical determination on theological matters, and/or unwilling to take evangelical-orthodox United Methodists seriously. It was a lament, a tough talk delivered with sadness and love.
7. During a breakout workshop and during a general meeting of the Annual Conference, Rev. Julie Love, of the Kentucky Annual Conference, spoke about the work of the Commission on a Way Forward. Describing the persistent effort of the Commission, she demonstrated "convicted humility" in her presentations. According to Rev. Love, one compelling reason the One Church Plan should be adopted by the 2019 General Conference is that it does not ask anyone -- including laity, clergy, congregations, conference committees, annual conferences, and even jurisdictional conferences -- to change their beliefs.
8. The Opening Worship Service was a Service of Holy Communion and the annual Memorial Service -- all in one time slot! The sermon -- "How Can We Sing?" -- was preached by Rev. Tim Russell, who has preached at the Whiteville Church, and is married to Pam, who is from Whiteville.
9. Did you know there is something called Yahweh Yoga? Well, now you do.

10. Established in April 1968 in the Uniting Conference in Dallas, TX, The United Methodist Church resulted from joining together the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church. A 50th birthday party was held on Thursday evening in Greenville.

11. It was reported that two members of the North Carolina Conference -- Dr. Edgardo Colon-Emeric and Rev. Steve Hickle -- visited the Vatican and met Pope Francis last spring.

12. At the Duke Divinity School luncheon on Saturday, Dr. Randy L. Maddox, the William Kellon Quick Professor of Wesleyan and Methodist Studies, noted that Rev. Charles Wesley wrote 9,000 Christian hymns. Due to God's providence, human ingenuity, and digital wonders, these Wesleyan hymns are now posted online. He even wrote a few of them during, and about, his wife experiencing labor and giving birth to their children!

13. The Service for the Ordering of Ministry was the last event of the Annual Conference. It took place on Saturday afternoon. Those who would be licensed for pastoral ministry (27 men and women), commissioned (23), ordained deacon (3), ordained elder (14), certified as lay missionary (15), certified lay minister (9), and commissioned as deaconess (3) were front and center in the Convention Center.

All of them were given a General Examination at the same time. It contained this important challenge: "Remember that you are called to serve rather than to be served, to proclaim the faith of the Church and no other, to look after the concerns of God above all." All were asked, among other questions: "Are you persuaded that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain all things necessary for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ[,] and are the unique and authoritative standard for the Church's faith and life?" "Will you be loyal to The United Methodist Church, accepting its order [that is, organization or government], liturgy, doctrine, and discipline, defending it against all doctrines contrary to God's Holy Word, and committing yourself to be accountable with those serving with you, and to the bishop and those who are appointed to supervise your ministry?"

Those ordained elder were charged to "take thou authority as an elder to preach the Word of God, to administer the Holy Sacraments, and to order the life of the Church, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

14. Rev. Laura Wacker Stern, who is the Chair of the Order of Elders and the pastor of Soapstone United Methodist Church in Raleigh, gave a brief speech about being an ordained elder in The United Methodist Church. Her speech, in full, follows.

"For nearly fifteen years, I have begun my sermons with the same prayer, 'From the cowardice that dares not face new truth, from the laziness that is contented with half-truth, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, Good Lord, deliver me.' (#597, The United Methodist Hymnal)

"I cannot say I penned this prayer myself. My father always says, 'there is no such thing as an original idea. If you think it is original, you just forgot where you got it from.' I am sure, of course, he got that line from someone else.

"But every time I pray these words, I am reminded that my job, my calling, is to be a preacher of truths. To uncover what is real, what is important, what is timeless and universal...and bring that wisdom to life in a way that is transformative and holy.

"To be the voice, perhaps the only voice in a person's life that says there is such a thing as Good News. Things like hope, Resurrection, forgiveness, love, miracles, faith, the promise of eternal life...are not whimsical ideals or fantastic fairy tales. These are truths -- truths we can stake our lives on.

"Jesus said, 'I am the way and the truth....' (John 14:6)

"Such work is not easy. We live in a time of bombastic rhetoric, fake news, and knee-jerk social media posts. Truth and the pursuit of truth are at a premium.

"The world needs clergy. It needs lovers of truth called to the four-fold office of Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service. Workers for the Kingdom, clad in collars and stoles, blue jeans and bowties, crosses and flames, poised and willing to stand at the bedside, preside at the Table, counsel the brokenhearted, and preach the Word of God.

"People whose very presence in a community lays claim to the perseverance of truth.

"At our church's confirmation retreat last fall, one of the youth volunteered to give the sermon at the Sunday morning gathering. To my surprise, the twelve-year-old girl stood up before her peers and began her sermon with the prayer, 'From the cowardice that dares not face new truth, from the laziness that is contented with half-truth, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, Good Lord, deliver me.'

"The youth are watching us. The church is watching us. The world is watching us. Watching, waiting, asking: Who will be the bearers of truth?"

All in all, the 2018 Session of the North Carolina Annual Conference was both short and sweet. It was a 48-hour Annual Conference (no kidding!), and it welcomed and encouraged minimal disagreement and debate. Perhaps at this time in United Methodist life, that is well and good.

But the shortness and sweetness led to something surprising. The Annual Conference's

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

As June comes to an end, I can't help but recall the wide variety of worshipful experiences our church has celebrated this month. We are most grateful to Heather LaMora and our Youth for leading the Worship Service on June 3rd. During this service, Ellen McLam, who is also the 2018 Sam T. and Thelma G. Gore Memorial Scholarship recipient, delivered her message "Thanks Be to God" to the congregation, and the Youth Hand Chimes shared their musical talents with such enthusiasm. A special "thank you" to Ann Suggs for so beautifully accompanying the Chancel Choir on June 18th, Father's Day. Also, high school and college graduates, we congratulate you and extend our best wishes as you continue to grow and use the gifts and talents God has given you. To all of you who have actively participated in our worship services and to those of you who so faithfully attend, thank you!

This summer, for the next few weeks (June 18 – July 29), Paul Stallworth will be preaching a sermon series on The Barmen Declaration. Prior to the presentation of each Article, Scripture lessons can be found each Sunday in the bulletin so that we can be more prepared for what will be preached on each Sunday.

The Worship Committee will meet Thursday, August 30th, at 5:00 p.m. in the Pastor's Study for the purpose of organizing Homecoming and requesting or changing our budget needs for 2019.
- Betty Gray, Chair

UNITED METHODIST MEN

The Whiteville United Methodist Men meeting for July is scheduled for Thursday, July 12th, at 6:30 p.m. at a restaurant to be determined depending on our program. Please make plans to attend for great fellowship and food. - Thanks, Brad

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

We will partner with Hallsboro United Methodist Church to host a Rise Against Hunger (formerly Stop Hunger Now) packaging event on Saturday, September 29, in our Fellowship Hall. We will need lots of volunteers to package 25,000 meals, so let me or another member of the committee know of your willingness to help. It's a fun time and really allows us to "feed the hungry." We will be asking many churches in the county as well as Whiteville Rotary, to team up with us to complete this. We will also need approximately \$7,000.00 to purchase the items needed to package the meals. Please be in prayer about this and contribute as you can. Please give contributions to me, Carolyn Hankins, place them in the offering plate, or give to Kathy in the Church Office with "Rise Against Hunger" in the memo line.

- Vicki Pait, Outreach Chair

NURTURE COMMITTEE

"Blessed is the Father who walks with God" and "Fathers of Faith Teach, Reach and Inspire." These are two of the quotes printed on the writing pens that the Nurture Committee gave to the men of the church on Father's Day. We also gave one to the young men of the church as "future fathers." We hope it will serve as a reminder that a man of faith has a tremendous impact on the children with whom he comes into contact, whether it be his own children, as an uncle, stepfather, mentor, teacher, etc. What better way to be a role model than to live your life openly in Christian faith and love! If anyone did not get a pen last Sunday, there are some extras in the narthex. Please help yourself! We hope everyone has a safe and restful summer and safe travels! Debbie Conway, Chair

VISIT FROM MARY ZIGBUO MANTOR



On Wednesday, August 1st, we will welcome Mary Zigbuo Mantor to an evening fellowship meal and sharing time. Mary is well known in the NC Conference and our church, as she was raised in Bolton, NC. Mary met and married Herbert Zigbuo and both of them eventually became missionaries in Liberia—Herbert's home country. After Herbert's death, Mary has continued to serve as a missionary in Liberia and was particularly instrumental in helping the Liberian people during the Ebola crisis.

In working with the various hospitals, she met Patrick Mantor, who became the Administrator of Ganta Hospital. After their marriage, Mary has continued to serve the UMC with special emphasis on helping the work of Global Health to function well in Liberia.

We will have a meal (Outreach team will provide meat and beverage; attendees bring salad or dessert to complete our table) beginning at 5:30 that Wednesday evening. There is no charge for the meal; and an opportunity to give a gift to Mary will be offered. Other community churches will be invited to join us and hear Mary and Patrick speak about conditions in Liberia.

Our church budget gives support for Sustainable Agriculture and, this year, is funding three children for the 2018-2019 school year at Ganta mission school.

Put the date on your calendar and plan to bring others with you to learn more.

Whiteville United Methodist Church will host another Blood Drive on Thursday, August 2, from 2:00 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Contact Peggy Huffman at 646-3546, or Pat Ray at 642-4813, for more details.



Whiteville United
Methodist Church
902 Pinckney Street
Whiteville, NC 28472

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Mission Statement of Whiteville United Methodist Church

As people of the body of Christ, we will gather for and be strengthened by Word and Sacraments, participate in loving fellowship, grow in discipleship, and serve our community and the world in Christ's name.

The Whiteville United Methodist Church Service of Worship is broadcast on WTXY 1540 AM from 10:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. on Sundays. Also it is available online at www.wtxy1540.com: **click on "Church Services" in the upper heading, and then click on "Click to Listen Live" next to "United Methodist Church of Whiteville"** at 10:00 a.m. to hear the complete audio of the service.

Mrs. Kathy Graham, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Layton Dowless, Custodian

July and August Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

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Rev. Paul T. Stallsworth, Pastor