

## In Ministry to the Children of East Africa

BY BISHOP B. MICHAEL WATSON\*

A recent *Wesleyan Christian Advocate* article about our South Georgia/East Africa Partnership and the Humble United Methodist School in Uganda has caused several readers and churches to ask me to tell them again how they can help with this remarkable opportunity to be in Christian mission to the precious children in East Africa. I am happy to share this information with as many as are interested in joining this effort to make disciples of Jesus Christ as we minister to highly vulnerable children and battle the killer diseases of poverty such as HIV/Aids and malaria.

It is so easy to do a lot of good. By contributing through your local church to one of three **South Georgia Conference Advance Special Mission Funds**, you can literally make a world of difference in the lives of some of the poorest children in the world.

**A gift of \$1,500.00 will feed, clothe, house, educate and medicate one child for one year.** Humble Place, which is what we affectionately call the Humble United Methodist School, Church, Clinic, and related ministries, is currently seeking the funds to provide this kind of total care for over 200 children. Every gift of any amount is a blessing in this holy cause.

There are three funds to which you can give. Each one has a separate Conference Advance Special Mission number. They are: **Humble Place Program/Scholarship Fund # 1754, Humble Place Capital Fund # 1764, and the South Georgia/East Africa Partnership Fund # 1696.** Each one of these funds is a vital

part of this wonderful ministry. We need money for programs and scholarships, money for buildings and upkeep, and money for the support of the partnership between our two conferences which enables us to continue this mission ministry.

Surely we have 200 individuals; Sunday School classes; mission committees; other groups of children; youth, or adults; or local churches who would make a commitment to fund at least one child for at least three years. What about you, or your group, or your church?

Dear God, let it be!

\*BISHOP WATSON is the episcopal leader for the South Georgia area.

For more information, on the East Africa Partnership see page 8.

## News in Brief

**HealthFlex Incentives for Pastors:** Find out how you can earn money! (See page 3)

**Confirmation Retreats 2008:** The dates have been set. Start planning now. (See page 5)

**November Celebration:** This big youth event is only a month and a half away. Register today. (See page 6)

**Winter Camp Meeting:** The 2008 Winter Camp Meeting has been set for February 3-6. (See page 7)

**Multi-cultural event:** Housing scholarships are available for this event slated for Dec. 13-15. (See page 7)

God envisions faithful, fruitful and bold congregations and ministries passionately growing mature disciples of Jesus Christ who are living vessels of the Holy Spirit's desire and miraculous power to redeem every soul and circumstance.

faithful, fruitful, bold

## Our Two Companions

BY REV. LOWERY BRANTLEY\*

Elie Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor and Nobel Peace Prize winner, has captivated millions by his poignant writings. Sometimes chilling, but always powerful and eloquent, his writings always remind us of the

paradoxical powers of both good and evil.

Speaking as we were about to enter into a new century, he said:

"Once again, I think of the young Jewish boy from the Carpathian Mountains. He has accompanied the old man I have become throughout these years of quest and struggle. And together we walk towards the new millennium, carried by profound fear and extraordinary hope."

What a beautiful and powerful

metaphor of life: two companions – the young boy and the old man, the past and the present walking together into the future!

William Faulkner, in Requiem for a Nun, wrote of this strange relationship between the past and the present in this way: "The past is never dead. It's not even past."

Our two companions – the Past and the Present – always walk along beside us as we claim the future God has designed for us.

The future is always influenced by the past. The future is built upon the foundation of the past. The present moment is always filtered through the lenses of the past and our vision of the future.

The late Archbishop Oscar Romero spoke of Christians as "prophets of the future" . . . God's future for us . . . a future for which we stand on tiptoes with eager waiting and willing hands and loving hearts to embrace.

It is not our own vision of the future, but God's vision for which we stand on tiptoes in anticipation. Centuries ago, Jeremiah speaks of such a future: "For I know the plans I have for you . . . plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. [Jeremiah 29:11]"

It truly is a great time to be a part of our great church and conference, as God leads us to embrace our divine future!

With confidence and hope, we move forward with our two companions – the Past and the Present. We know that we are confidently and faithfully stepping out into God's bold future.

To God be the glory!

*\*LOWERY BRANTLEY is the Director of Connectional Ministries for the South Ga. Conference.*

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## Pathways Event Sees 600 Participants

BY REV. LOWERY BRANTLEY

A sense of anticipation was almost palpable as nearly 600 persons gathered at Trinity UMC in Warner Robins on August 18 for the fourth annual Pathways to a Healthy Church event. Some had traveled for several hours to get there; others had come just a few miles to participate. All had come to share in this annual event for training and inspiration. Thirty-nine different classes were offered with all age groups and many diverse interest groups provided for.

In the closing moments of the day as United Methodists gathered in the Sanctuary for the

Sending Forth by Bishop Mike Watson, that sense of excitement was real as participants savored the moments as they enjoyed the music of the Trinity Praise Band and then Bishop Watson's strong and encouraging words in the Sending Forth.

It had, indeed, been a good day.

For many participants, this good day will provide inspiration and information and resources for stronger ministries in local churches. For leaders and planners, this good day will be but a spring board for planning another such event in 2008.

## HealthFlex Incentives for Pastors

BY MIRIAM HAGAN\*

I don't know about you, but it seems like everywhere I turn lately I am reminded that I need to try to live a healthier life.

Almost weekly I see on the television ways to get into shape by taking the stairs, parking farther away from the store so we walk more, or suggesting menus we can eat that are "heart healthy."

Even the magazines and newspapers at my home seem to always have an article about getting healthier – from articles on "How to Lose Your Spare Tire" to a magazine with a whole section titled "Health for Life" with articles on "Starting Your Children Off Right While in the Womb" to "Helping Your Teenagers Get Enough Sleep" and a closing article about diabetes.

It seems that everywhere I turn there are reminders that I should make healthier choices from exercising to eating. So once again, I am writing about health issues and health insurance.

Even HealthFlex is working to promote healthier participants, including spouses and /or family members. HealthFlex will give our conference a cash incentive if we can get participants, spouses or family members in our active plan to take the WebMD survey and also have a wellness exam (or an annual physical exam) during this calendar year.

For participants that took advantage of the Pro Check Health Screening during annual conference, that does count as a wellness exam for this incentive. (One footnote – even if you participated in Pro Check, Health Flex will also pay for you to have a wellness exam.) If you are going to the doctor for you exam,

You can find the codes that your doctor needs to use in order to count your visit as a wellness exam under the Administrative Services page of the conference website, [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org).

If we can get 70% of our plan's active participants to have a wellness exam and take the WebMD survey before December 31, 2007, then our incentive may be as large as \$200,000. Last year we had a participation rate of about 41%, so 70% is a big goal.

Once again, the Conference Board of Pensions has decided to share any incentive that the conference receives in the Spring of 2008 with the participants and their churches who meet the requirements.

HealthFlex is also offering our participants the opportunity to participate in Weight Watchers at discounted prices. If you have wanted to try Weight Watchers but have not been sure you could afford the costs, then call our office at 1-800-535-4224 for additional information.

There is more good news from HealthFlex. For 2008, the HealthFlex premiums the conference will pay for our active plan will remain the same as they are this year. In addition to a zero percent rate increase our reserves have earned

enough money so that we can continue to use reserves to reduce the premiums we pay. This means that the rates that we charge churches, spouses and families will not be changed for 2008.

Our Conference Board of Pensions is pleased that for the third year in a row the amount that churches are billed for the cost of their minister's health insurance will remain the same. We did receive a 5.9% rate increase on the Medicare Companion plan we offer to persons age 65 or older. However, our Conference Board of Pensions was able to find reserves to offset the increase for our retired ministers.

The Conference Board of Pensions was also able to offset the 5.9% rate increase for retiree spouses and surviving spouses. However, these persons will continue to assume 5% more of the cost of their insurance based on a plan started in the early 90's to gradually turn the responsibility for the cost of insurance over to the retiree's spouse or surviving spouse.

As members of local churches we need to encourage our ministers to make healthier choices including eating smarter, making time for exercise, and even taking time off each week.

*\*MIRIAM HAGAN is the Director of Administrative Services for the South Ga. Conference.*

### Insurance Coverage

A conference and district Safe Sanctuaries policy was adopted at Annual Conference. Related to the Safe Sanctuaries policy, it is suggested that local church trustees make sure that their local church insurance policy has a specific reference to Sexual Abuse and Molestation (SAM) coverage. This coverage should be listed separately on the declarations page generally with your general liability insurance coverage. Churches should not assume that general liability coverage will cover cases of sexual misconduct or sexual molestation. Check your policy and then contact your insurance agent if you need to get this added coverage.

## *Translating Advocacy Work into Community Building*

BY JEREMY GRAY\*

Over the years, Centenary UMC in Macon has become a significant advocate within our community.

We are an advocate for people who are homeless and poor, for people who are hungry and for those who struggle with drug abuse and addiction. Centenary is an advocate for affordable housing, fair labor standards, and equal access to quality healthcare. We are advocates with people through the legal system. We advocate community development and neighborhood revitalization. We even advocate for the access of poorer members of our community to organic and locally-grown produce options.

Wouldn't a more focused approach to advocacy suit us better? Isn't the saying true that they who stand for everything stand for nothing at all? Perhaps surprisingly, there is a common thread that runs through all these issues. Each one somehow represents the widely diverse people who are part of our congregation and community.

Centenary is a community of people and, almost by definition, people's lives are somewhat messy. As a community, we address the myriad issues of the messy lives we all lead.

Because our community at Centenary includes people who are homeless, homelessness becomes a significant advocacy issue for us. There are some in our community whose healthcare is provided exclusively by local emergency rooms because they cannot afford a visit to a doctor's office; access to quality healthcare and prescription drugs becomes an advocacy issue for us. Our neighborhood is in transition; reconciling the hopes and dreams of the old and new residents becomes important advocacy work.

Pictured: Lonnie and KK enjoy breakfast at Centenary.

The same is true for each of the other issues for which we are advocates.

Whether it concerns homelessness, world peace, or the rights of immigrants, advocacy work inherently requires identification with the people behind a particular issue. At Centenary, we go a step beyond empathizing with people to befriending them and adopting them into our community.

Our friendship with the people affected by an issue makes us more powerful advocates for them. We're outspoken advocates, not for issues, but for people. The individual issues are secondary to the people who are confronted with them.

As much as we long for justice in the world, we also long for the personal and spiritual development of those people who have suffered

injustice. They need to experience on a personal level the love of Jesus, and community creates a safe place for such encounters. In community, work for systemic change goes hand-in-hand with spiritual formation.

Jesus instructs us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. It follows that we must fight for our neighbor as our neighbor fights for himself. Will we love our neighbors enough to fight for them? Even more than that, will we love our neighbors enough to share our very lives with them through community? After all, our truest friends are often our strongest advocates.

*\*JEREMY GRAY is on staff at Centenary UMC in Macon, Ga and is also a member of the Conference Advocacy Team.*

### **Day of Love and Justice**

**February 11 – State Capitol Building in Atlanta**

“Stop the Cycle of Poverty NOW! Creating a new legacy for the next generation” will be the theme for the fourth annual Day of Love and Justice at the State Capitol Building in Atlanta February 11, 2008. Participants will gather at 10:00 a.m. A worship service will begin at 10:30 a.m. with a special ceremony at noon in the capitol rotunda. Bishops Watson and Davis will be the chaplains on this day of the senate and the house respectively. The focus of the day is to learn about and get involved in the legislative process concerning issues of love and justice, primarily with how this relates to children growing up in poverty. All Georgia United Methodists are encouraged to be a part of the day.

## Confirmation Retreats 2008

**Retreat 1: Feb. 8-10**

**Retreat 2: Feb. 29 – March 2**

Excitement is growing as plans are well underway for **BOTH** of the upcoming Confirmation Retreats. The first Confirmation Event will be **February 8-10, 2008**, and the second event will be **February 29-March 2, 2008**. Space is still limited to 500 participants per retreat. The retreats are intended for 6<sup>th</sup> graders and above. Each year this event provides students with an experience that helps them understand the grace offered through Jesus and information about the rich heritage of the United Methodist Church. The Join the Journey Confirmation Retreat is modeled after the Claim the Name curriculum and is intended to be a supplement to the ongoing training offered by local congregations. The cost for this weekend event is \$40 per person and includes a t-shirt, meals, lodging, and program costs. For more information, please contact Adam Ricker at (888) 266-7642 or [adam@sgaumc.com](mailto:adam@sgaumc.com).

## Two KidzQuest Retreats for '08

Six hundred children and their adult counselors came to Epworth By The Sea for the annual South Georgia Conference KidzQuest Retreat held in September. This event has experienced tremendous growth each year as more and more kids discover what KidzQuest is all about. Everyone involved enjoyed a great concert, a BMX stunt bike show, worship led by Uncle Charlie, messages from Mark Danzey, and exciting games with "Hey Ya."

We are excited to announce that in 2008 the South Georgia Conference will be offering 2 KidzQuest Retreats in the fall. The dates for these retreats will be **September 26-28** and **October 10-12**. Make plans now to attend one of the best retreats available for children in the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grades.

### 2008 Summer Camps

#### MID HIGH CAMPS

**Mid-High Mania 1: June 9-13**

**Mid-High Mania 2: June 16-20**

Epworth By The Sea

For those entering 6th-9th grades

#### ELEMENTARY CAMPS

**Elem. Camp 1: June 23-27**

**Elem. Camp 2: July 7-11**

**Elem. Camp 3: July 14-18**

Epworth By The Sea

For those entering 4th-6th grades

### Applications being accepted for summer camp counselors

The summer break is too far away for most of us to think about, but plans are already underway for the South Georgia Conference Summer Camps at Epworth By The Sea. We are currently accepting applications for the 2008 Summer Leadership Team. Applications are available under the camping section on the conference website, [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org). If you know someone who will have completed their freshman year of college by May 2008 and would make a great camp counselor please pass along the information. The summer will run from **May 24 – July 26**.

## November Celebration is just around the corner!

“Breathe” is the theme for November Celebration '07 set for **November 30 – December 2, 2007**, at Epworth By The Sea.

Scripture tells us that it was God who first breathed into us and gave us life. In order for us to truly live we must continue to allow Him to breathe into our lives. Students will experience a weekend of fresh air as they encounter the living God in worship, fellowship, and fun during this weekend retreat. Also included in the weekend will be individual church times, workshops, large group sessions, nightly entertainment, and afternoons of fun.

**“Breathe”  
Nov 30 – Dec 2  
Epworth By The Sea**

### **Guest Speaker: Rev. Denise Walton**

Rev. Denise Walton, Associate Director of South Georgia's Connectional Ministries, will be the featured speaker for the weekend. Denise is the mother of two boys, a pastor, a teacher, and a dynamic communicator. Before being called into the ministry, Denise worked as a long-term care ombudsman, advocating for elder abuse victims. She also worked at the Department of Family and Children Services and as the Program Director at Open Door Community in Columbus. Denise is quickly becoming one of the most sought after speakers in the South Georgia Conference and beyond. Denise's life experiences and passion for the Lord will bring added excitement to November Celebration '07.

### **Music: The David Herndon Band**

David Herndon, Worship Leader/Youth Pastor of The Chapel Brunswick, will be leading the music throughout the weekend. David is the father of two boys, a youth pastor, worship leader, and incredible speaker. He has been leading worship for the Gathering Place main event and is a featured artist with Rebuilt Records. We're not sure if there is anything that David cannot do!

### **Friday Night Concert: Jason Harwell & Paul Reeves**

Drawing media comparisons to songwriters such as Ryan Adams, Matthew Sweet, David Gray, and Tom Petty, Jason's brand of folk/pop/Americana has gained a strong following around Georgia and earned a little critical recognition as well. Jason has placed as a semi-finalist in the International Songwriting Competition.

Cost for the event, intended for 6th -12th graders, is \$125 and is all-inclusive. Adult counselors must accompany each group, and a 1 adult per 6 youth ratio is required. Make plans to attend as registrations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. To register online or download a brochure, visit [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org). For more information, contact Adam or Diane at 888-266-7642.

## **YOUTH SPECIALTIES**

November 16-19, 2007 - Atlanta, Georgia

Every year thousands of youth workers attend one of the Youth Specialties premiere training events. This year you could be one of them. Find more information about the event at [www.youthspecialties.com](http://www.youthspecialties.com). Be sure to enter the discount code: RDSGCC7 when you register to receive a discounted South Georgia UMC rate.

## Winter Camp Meeting Plans Announced *South Georgians to Provide Leadership*

The Board of Managers has announced plans for the 2008 Winter Camp Meeting to be held at Epworth By The Sea February 3-6, 2008. This year the event will start on Sunday, February 3, and will end on Wednesday, February 6 at noon.

Bishop Mike Watson will preach on Sunday evening as Winter Camp Meeting begins. Sharing together in both preaching and teaching will be the Reverend Hal Brady and the Reverend Joseph Roberson.

Reverend Roberson is currently serving very effectively as the Senior Pastor of South Columbus UMC in Columbus. Dr. Brady is the Senior Pastor of St. Luke UMC in Columbus and is known for his gifted leadership, preaching and teaching.

The Reverend Thad Haygood will return as the song leader. Newly assigned as Senior Pastor of Crossroads UMC in Perry, Thad will also coordinate the special music for which Winter Camp Meeting is known. Long-time favorites at Winter Camp Meeting, Russell and Jane Jacobs will be returning as organist and pianist respectively.

Chairing the Winter Camp Meeting Board is the Reverend Alan Fennell, Associate Pastor of Vineville UMC in Macon.

Mark these dates and make plans to attend. A brochure and registration information will soon be online at [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org).

**Bishop Mike Watson**  
South Georgia Episcopal Leader  
Sunday Evening Preacher

**Rev. Joseph Roberson**  
Senior Pastor, South Columbus UMC  
Preacher & Bible Study Leader

**Dr. Hal Brady**  
Senior Pastor, St. Luke UMC  
Preacher & Bible Study Leader

**Rev. Thad Haygood**  
Senior Pastor, Crossroads UMC  
Song Leader

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## Scholarships Available for Multi-cultural Event

The United Methodist Church strives to be a Church for all of God's children. Many congregations struggle to be inclusive and welcoming to all. Leaders also frequently find themselves ill-equipped and unprepared to guide their congregation through a change for inclusiveness and to assure a diverse Church for all.

The Southeastern Jurisdiction and Lake Junaluska Conference and Retreat Center are pleased to present an innovative conference **December 13-15, 2007 at Lake Junaluska** that will address these challenges.

Designed to inspire and equip, the *Transforming Lives by Embracing God's Diversity* conference will show you how to be more ethnically inclusive through relevant and well researched techniques and methods. Not only will these skills help build

diverse congregations; they can also be used to address other areas of conflict and differences within the church.

The Southeastern Jurisdiction has discovered there are many who sincerely desire to create a more ethnically inclusive church. However, members of our churches are asking for guidance and tools to help them make God's inclusive church a reality within The United Methodist Church.

Leaders for the event include Bishop Hope Morgan Ward of the Mississippi Annual Conference, Bishop James Swanson, Sr. of the Holston Annual Conference and Bishop Woodie White (retired).

In an effort to promote and encourage maximum participation of the South Georgia Annual Conference, The Ethnic Local Church Concerns Committee is offering housing

scholarships for participants attending this event. Participants in need of housing assistance should contact Denise Walton, Associate Director of Connectional Ministries, at [denise@sgaumc.com](mailto:denise@sgaumc.com). The scholarships are open to lay and clergy.

"We are looking forward to a diverse representation from all of our churches in South Georgia," said Walton. "This will be a wonderful opportunity to receive training and engage in dialogue around these issues."

Registration information and schedule details are available at [www.lakejunaluska.com/events](http://www.lakejunaluska.com/events). Participants must register directly with Lake Junaluska prior to receiving a housing scholarship.

## *Partnering with the East Africa Annual Conference*

BY DENISE WALTON\*

### **A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY**

In 2001, Bishop B. Michael Watson of The South Georgia Annual Conference and four other bishops traveled with the General Board of Global Ministries to the East Africa Annual Conference as a part of an orientation to the Episcopal office. During this visit, Bishop Watson witnessed the most innocent victims of war, poverty and disease – the orphans of East Africa.

There is a great need in Uganda and the whole of East Africa to provide for children whose families have been affected by poverty, civil war and the staggering AIDS epidemic. It is estimated that 40 million orphans will exist on the continent of Africa within the next ten years.

After this visit, a partnership was birthed between The South Georgia Annual Conference, The East Africa Annual Conference, The Ugandan United Methodist Church, representatives from a local church in the Virginia Annual Conference and The General Board of Global Ministries. The vision of Humble Place School was born.

### **HUMBLE PLACE**

Humble Place, a ministry of the East Africa Annual Conference, is a model facility where the physical and spiritual needs of children can be met. Humble is an acronym for Helping Ugandan Mwana by Loving Example. Mwana is the Lugandan (official language for East Africa) word for children.

Humble Place is more than an orphanage. It is more than a boarding school. It is a home for children without families; it is a primary school where children can learn and excel; it is a clinic where illnesses are treated and a church where the community finds hope and spiritual growth.

In 2001, The East Africa Annual Conference purchased twenty five acres of land in Mukono, a town between the capital city of Kampala and Uganda's second largest city, Jinja, at the source of the Nile River. The South Georgia Annual Conference raised a special offering of \$140,000.00 which was used to erect the first two buildings on this site. These two buildings contain several

classrooms, dormitory space, administrative offices, a medical clinic and library, two latrines and an outdoor kitchen area. The local church partner in the Virginia Annual Conference provided the initial scholarship assistance for the student body.

Today Humble School provides housing and education for 204 children from various areas of Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, Sudan and Kenya. Bishop Daniel Wandabula of East Africa states that Humble Place is a place where those who have no hope will find hope.

“This project meets the basic needs of children, such as food, shelter, education, medical care and spiritual growth, while at the same time employing local teachers and other workers in the area,” said Bishop Wandabula.

### **TRAVELING TO EAST AFRICA**

In August 2007, Bishop Watson, Benjamin Lee Watson (the Bishop's son), Revs. Marshall and Frances Howell, Rev. Jimmy Cason, Rev. Denise Walton, Rev. Larry Rollins and Rev. Jimmy Towson traveled to Uganda for a mission trip. The group was accompanied by Dr. Caroline Njuki, Assistant General Secretary of the General Board of Global Ministries, and representatives from a church in the Virginia Conference.

Of the trip Bishop Watson said, “It was a God inspired experience of mutual ministry and exchange between us and our brothers and sisters in the East Africa Annual Conference. We rejoice that members of our team were able to worship and serve in northern Uganda and Burundi, share \$45,000.00 in the funding for the new vehicle, meet with conference leaders in the Episcopal Office, participate in the Leaders Conference for Reconciliation, officially open Humble United Methodist School, lay a foundation stone for a new girl's dormitory, meet with countless children, youth, and adults, share clothing, monies and other items, and strengthen the already strong relations between South Georgian and East African United Methodist laity and clergy.”

There were so many wonderful moments on our trip. We made many church visits and attended worship services. We were also blessed to experience the baptism of Baby Joyce

Wandabula by Bishop Watson, the first born child of Bishop Daniel and Mrs. Betty Wandabula. It was by far, however, the children of Humble Place who really captured our hearts as we visited the villages and areas where many of them were born. We saw firsthand the impact on their lives through Humble Place School and the Ugandan United Methodist Church.

This recent visit revealed the tremendous progress of this ministry in the last seven years. In addition to the original buildings, there are now staff housing units and a new community medical clinic under construction. Humble Place is now a major stakeholder in its own community.

### **OUR CONTINUED PARTNERSHIP**

As we return there is a very strong desire among the persons who visited as well as our brothers and sisters in East Africa to have the Hope for Africa Children's Choir (children from Humble Place School and the Ugandan United Methodist Church) to join us next year for our Annual Conference. Anyone who is in the presence of these precious children from Uganda, Sudan, Burundi, Rwanda and Kenya as they sing and dance joyfully to the Lord will feel the presence of the redeeming Christ. Hearts will be warmed and souls touched by the Holy Spirit.

Since being back from Uganda we have learned more about the efforts of the St. Marys Foundation and its East Africa Initiative and partnership with Church World Service. This is the connection that we have been praying for to help provide the Humble Place program with training and best practice models which have proven to be successful on the continent of Africa. We are currently in the process of gathering information from Church World Service that will be provided to the East Africa Annual Conference, Humble Place Board of Management and The General Board of Global Ministries.

Stay tuned for more information on how you can be part of this incredible project. For more information, please call me at 888-266-7642.

\*DENISE WALTON is the Associate Director of Connectional Ministries.

## Safe Sanctuaries Trainings

Sponsored By: Office of Connectional Ministries

**Saturday, November 3, 2007**  
Cordele UMC in Cordele

**Saturday, January 26, 2008**  
Pittman Park UMC in Statesboro

**Saturday, February 16, 2008**  
Waycross First UMC in Waycross

For more information or to register visit [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org).

## Older Adult Retreat

Sponsored By: Office of Connectional Ministries

Mark your calendars for the 2008 Older Adult Retreat, "Just As I Am – Now!" set for **April 7-9, 2008**, at Epworth By The Sea. This year's retreat promises to be a wonderful experience in fellowship, worship, and outreach and will explore the mystery of God's design to use us at every stage in life, including right now. The retreat speaker will be the Reverend Don Kea and the Bible study leader will be Evelyn Laycock. The retreat will begin on Monday, April 7, at 1pm and will conclude Wednesday, April 9, at 1pm. An additional night's stay may be added to your retreat package for those who cannot get enough of beautiful St. Simons Island. For more information please contact Adam Ricker at the Connectional Ministries Office at (888) 266-7642 or by email at [adam@sgaumc.com](mailto:adam@sgaumc.com).

## Congress on Evangelism

Sponsored By: The Council on Evangelism and the General Board of Discipleship

The 2008 Congress on Evangelism will be held in Savannah **January 2-5** at the Savannah Convention Center. This year's theme, "Spirit of Faith Come Down," will honor Charles Wesley's birth and will be one of the largest United Methodist gatherings to focus on the historic recollection of this brother in Christ. Presenters for the event include Bishop James Swanson, Episcopal Leader of the Holston Conference, Dr. Robert Tuttle, Professor of Evangelism at Asbury Seminary - Florida Campus, Dr. Evelyn Laycock, retired Director of the Lay Ministry Center for Southeastern Jurisdictional Council, and Dr. Bill Bouknight, former pastor of Christ UMC in Memphis. Rev. Grace Imathiu, pastor, Bible teacher, and evangelist, will be the Bible Study Leader. For more information or to register, visit [www.congressonevangelism.com/](http://www.congressonevangelism.com/).

## Sexual Ethics Workshop

Sponsored By: Commission on Pastoral Counseling

The South Georgia Conference requires that all ministers under appointment by the Bishop take a five hour course in sexual ethics every three years, beginning June 2005. This means that by June 2008 every minister under appointment should have attended one of the workshops. The next scheduled workshop is **February 14, 2008**, at Epworth By The Sea from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Lunch is on your own. To register send an e-mail to [williamscenter1@yahoo.com](mailto:williamscenter1@yahoo.com). There will be one more workshop offered in May, date TBA.

## Ministry Exploration Event

Sponsored By: South Georgia Conference Board of Ordained Ministry

Set for **January 4-6, 2008**, this Ministry Exploration Event is intended for students in the 11th grade though age 25 who are thinking about entering the ministry. For more information, please contact Charles Adams at Epworth By The Sea at 912-638-8688.

## 2008 Peace Conference

Sponsored By: The Southeastern Jurisdiction

The first Peace Conference is set for **January 31 – February 2, 2008**, at Lake Junaluska and will provide a great opportunity of dialogue on finding the church's voice in a violent world. The conference will be led by some of the best minds in the church today including: Dr. Peter Storey, former Methodist Bishop in South Africa, Dr. Jan Love, Dean of Candler School of Theology, Bishop Ken Carder, former bishop and current professor at Duke Divinity School and Jim Winkler, General Secretary, General Board of Church and Society. The goal of the conference is to encourage participants to be advocates for peace, justice and to be the reconcilers that Christ wants us to be in our communities. For more information, visit [www.lakejunaluska.com/Peace.aspx](http://www.lakejunaluska.com/Peace.aspx).

**Spouses' Retreat**  
March 13-15, 2008

**UMW Spiritual Growth Retreat**  
March 28-30, 2008

**UMM Spring Retreat**  
April 25-27, 2008

## Conference Coordinated Calendar 2007-2008

### October

19-21 Andrew College Homecoming Weekend, Cuthbert  
20 UMW Annual Meeting, Douglas  
21 Vashti Sunday  
25-26 Cabinet Spiritual Retreat  
26 Petitions Deadline to General Conference  
26-27 GSU Wesley Foundation Alumni Weekend

### November

3 Safe Sanctuaries Training, Cordele  
5-7 Eagles Retreat, EBTS\*  
8-11 Extended Cabinet Consultation, Lake Junaluska  
9-11 Discover God's Call Retreat, Norman Park  
11 Wesleyan College Sunday  
22-23 Thanksgiving Holidays  
25 United Methodist Student Day  
29-30 Natural Church Development Training, EBTS\*

### November-December

30-02 November Celebration, EBTS\*

### December

12 Extended Cabinet Meeting, Lake Junaluska  
13-15 SEJ Multi-Cultural Event, Lake Junaluska  
24-28 Christmas Holidays  
25 Christmas Day

### January

2-5 Congress on Evangelism, Savannah  
4-6 UMW Executive Committee Meeting, EBTS\*  
4-6 Ministry Exploration Event, EBTS\*  
26 Safe Sanctuaries Training, Statesboro

### January-February

31-2 Peace Conference, Lake Junaluska

### February

3-6 Winter Camp Meeting, EBTS\*  
4 Annual Conference Program Committee Meeting, EBTS\*  
11 Day of Love and Justice, State Capitol  
8-15 License to Preach School, EBTS\*  
14 Sexual Ethics Workshop, EBTS\*  
16 Safe Sanctuaries Training, Waycross  
22-24 Confirmation Retreat 1  
25-26 Natural Church Development Training, EBTS\*  
27 Day of Prayer for the Appointive Process

### February-March

29-2 Confirmation Retreat 2

\* Epworth By The Sea

\*\* Council on Finance and Administration

### Online Communicator

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