

## *Bishop King to preach, Hope for the Children of Africa Choir to perform at the 2008 Annual Conference Session*

The United Methodists of Columbus, Georgia are preparing to host the 2008 South Georgia Annual Conference session, which will be held on June 8 -11 at the Columbus Civic Center.

About 1,400 lay and clergy members, plus guests, will gather around the theme, "Glorifying God – Bearing Fruit."

"This theme will bring focus to what we seek to do as we live into God's vision for this Annual Conference," said Bishop Mike Watson. "Glorifying God is our primary motive as we seek to be faithful, fruitful and bold."

One of the most exciting examples of spiritual fruit will be celebrated through the presence of a delegation of about 40 persons from the East Africa Annual Conference.

Bishop Daniel Wandabula will lead this group from the East Africa Annual Conference on a United States visit spearheaded by an invitation from the South Georgia Annual Conference. Rev. Denise Walton, Conference Mission Secretary, and the members of The Open Hands Partnership are coordinating the East Africa delegation trip.

The twenty-three voice Hope for the Children of Africa Choir will be part of the delegation. The choir will participate several times during our Annual Conference, including a special concert on Tuesday night.

"This delegation's presence in South Georgia will celebrate the relationship we have initiated with East Africa United Methodists over the last several years and will expose our Conference to the vibrant faith of our brothers and sisters who live in one of the poorest and most oppressed places in the whole world," said Rev. Walton.

The Conference will begin on Sunday evening, June 8, with concurrent sessions for clergy and laity. Both sessions will begin at 7:00 p.m. The laity will meet in the Columbus Civic Center for an orientation session led by Mr. Roy Blackwood, Conference Lay Leader. The clergy will meet in the St. Luke UMC Sanctuary to conduct the business related to clergy credentials.

Bishop James King, presiding bishop of the Kentucky Annual Conference, will be the guest preacher for our opening worship service on Monday morning at 8:30 a.m. in the Columbus Civic Center. Bishop King will preach again in the Ordination Service on Monday evening at 7:30 p.m. at St. Luke United Methodist Church.

SEE ANNUAL CONFERENCE PAGE 10

### **News in Brief**

**Congregational Specialist Named:** Rev. Tom Nichols has been selected as the new Congregational Specialist. (See page 2)

**Summer Camps:** Registration for Summer Camps has begun. Don't miss out! (See page 5)

**Annual Conference 2008:** Find information on Annual Conference, set for June 8-11. (See pages 9-13)

**Hope for Children of Africa Choir:** The Children's Choir will be in South Georgia June 4-24. (See page 13)

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*

## Thoughts on Pastoral Change and Transition

BY REV. LOWERY BRANTLEY\*

Across the denomination, many clergy and laity are anticipating changes in pastoral appointments. Bishop Mike Watson and the Appointive Cabinet have been very engaged in the appointment-making process. Soon the Review Session will be over and the process of transition will begin in earnest. This process of transition should begin long before Moving Day if moving from one congregation to another is to be healthy and positive. Of course, this process of transition will continue for some time after the actual change has taken place.

Change in one's appointment means primarily a shift in location or situation, in both work and residence. Significant change takes place whenever one takes a new job, buys a new home, or marries. Transition, on the other hand, is not the change itself, but the way in which we respond to that change. William Bridges, in his book The Way of Transition, says that transition is the way in which we come to terms with change. Transition, he writes, "is the process of letting go of the way things used to be and then taking hold of the way they subsequently become." This

distinction is a very important one.

A smooth transition is the goal toward which every moving pastor (and family) and receiving congregation should be earnestly and thoughtfully working toward now as they anticipate moving day. A smooth transition means that effective ministry has a greater probability of taking place in a new setting. Transition means that we are present, really present, once we have moved to our new appointment. We have said our goodbyes, appropriately thanked people who made our previous appointment good and effective and edifying to people and to the kingdom. We have expressed to God our thanks for the time given us in that previous appointment and forgiven ourselves for mistakes and inadequacies, but we have moved on to another place and congregation. Transition means that we have dealt in a healthy manner with any disappointment about our new appointment before we have moved. By the time we arrive at our new appointment, we are happy to be there and eager to move forward with God's ministry within our new congregation. A smooth transition affords us with gifts of perspective and energy to move forward in our new ministry.

A smooth transition also means, to paraphrase Bishop Watson, that when we leave a place we are truly

gone. Our relationships within a congregation changes when we move to a new appointment. We remain friends but we are no longer their pastor. We do not interfere with our successor in establishing a good and effective relationship with the congregation. He or she is now their pastor. Once we were, but now we are not. We are careful not to interfere with our successor's ministry. We rejoice in his or her successes, and remain silent about their failures. We move forward, and we trust that our previous congregation will move forward in ministry and life. We go back for funerals and/or weddings or other occasions only upon our successor's invitation, and when we do go back, we go back as an invited guest. We do nothing to demean or diminish the current pastor or congregation.

A smooth transition requires a great deal of energy and effort. The health of the entire annual conference will be impacted by the manner in which our pastoral changes are made and by the way clergy and congregations implement the challenges of a smooth transition.

Just as our conference was called to prayer for the appointive process, let us covenant together in faithful and fervent prayer for the transition process.

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

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## Congregational Specialist Named

The Reverend Tom Nichols has been named as the new Congregational Specialist, a new position approved by the 2007 Annual Conference. Tom is currently the pastor of the Byron United Methodist Church and is retiring this June. Previously he served as a Navy chaplain for 22 years. Beginning on July 1, Tom will be assigned to work in

the Savannah and the Statesboro Districts. The Reverend Denise Walton, who had been working in the Savannah District, will be re-assigned to the Waycross District. A third Congregational Specialist is expected to be named effective January 1, 2009.

The Congregational Specialist will have four major areas of responsibility:

- (1) work with Natural Church Development in two South Georgia districts,
- (2) assist District Superintendents in implementing Safe Sanctuaries in 2008,
- (3) where appropriate work with the Urban Task Force(s), and
- (4) assist in deploying resources for making disciples.

## *Earn money by participating in HealthFlex incentive*

BY MIRIAM HAGAN\*

In 2006 HealthFlex began offering incentives to annual conferences whose participants participated in taking the WebMD Survey. As a result our conference received a check for over \$40,000, which was disbursed to our participants and their churches.

The 2007 incentive had two parts: (a) a minimum participation of 40% of eligible participants in the WebMD Health Quotient survey and (b) a minimum participation of 50% of eligible participants having an annual “wellness exam.” South Georgia earned an incentive totaling \$78,545.28. We are in the process of determining which churches and participants are eligible to receive the incentive and will be mailing checks before annual conference.

This year we again have the opportunity to earn an incentive from HealthFlex using the same criteria as last year: (a) participation in the WebMD Health Quotient survey and (b) having a “wellness exam.” As before, the higher participation in this program, the more South Georgia will receive in this year’s incentive. Though retirees are not

eligible to receive the incentive, we recommend that they still participate in the survey and have their wellness exam annually as a preventative measure.

Because we know that having a “wellness exam” is important and can help detect potential health problems early, we are again going to be offering the Procheck Health Screening during annual conference. If you are a participant in HealthFlex the cost of the screening will be covered by HealthFlex. *This screening is available to all of our participants – both Active AND Retirees.*

We encourage our participants to have the screening during annual conference and then take their result with them and share with their doctor during their annual “wellness exam.” We have already heard from participants whose Procheck screening and visit to their doctor resulted in early diagnosis of potentially dangerous health conditions. Participants can have the screening as well as their annual “wellness exam” with their doctor, and HealthFlex will cover them both.

For persons attending annual conference who are not HealthFlex participants, they can also have the health screening done at a cost of \$115.

**This spring, the General Board of Pensions is sponsoring an “Incentive**

**Blitz” for HealthFlex participants. The reward is a \$100 Visa gift card for participants in our PPO (or active) plan who take the WebMD Survey by June 30, 2008.** If a married couple both are covered by HealthFlex, then *each of them must take* the WebMD Health Quotient survey in order for them to earn the incentive. In the case of married participants where both participate they will each receive a \$100 Visa gift card. The gift cards will arrive in your mailbox by August 31, 2008. Please note: the Visa card incentive is not available to participants in the Medicare companion plan.

The “Incentive Blitz” is in addition to the incentive that the conference can earn in 2008 described earlier in this article. Taking the WebMD Survey for this incentive will earn you a Visa gift card and also help the conference earn an incentive based on the percentage of participants who take the WebMD Survey.

We are urging you to log into the General Board of Pensions web site, [www.gbophb.org](http://www.gbophb.org) and select “HealthFlex WebMD” on the right side of the screen under “Account Login.” If you have questions about how to log on, call the Health Team at the General Board of Pensions at 800-851-2201, or call Bob Shell in our office at 800-535-4224.

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

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## *Evangelism Award Nominations Being Accepted*

Know a pastor or lay person in the South Georgia Annual Conference who has distinguished themselves in the area of evangelism? If so then you are encouraged to submit his or her name to be nominated for the Denman Evangelism Award or the Carl and Ruth Looney Evangelism Award.

The Denman Evangelism Award recognizes both a pastor and a lay

person who are effective in developing true disciples of Jesus Christ in keeping with United Methodist history and tradition. The Carl and Ruth Looney Evangelism Award recognizes a clergy person who has completed their educational requirements, are serving in a full time ministry position, and have the gifts, graces and passion for evangelism and outreach. This award includes a scholarship for continuing their

education in evangelism.

Visit [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org) to download the Carl and Ruth Looney Evangelism Award or the Harry Denman Evangelism Award nomination forms. For questions, contact Rev. Mark Addington, Witness Team Chair, at 478-781-0332. The deadline is April 30, 2008.

## *Excitement is brewing with NRCD*

BY ANN CODY BEALL\*

I bring you greetings on behalf of the New and Revitalized Congregational Development (NRCD) committee. We want to share with you some of the excitement brewing in the 36 ministries of NRCD. These ministries are the heart of the South Georgia Conference, and we want you to be a part of the excitement that is NRCD!

### HISPANIC MINISTRIES

In our Hispanic Ministries, Dr. Hugo Magallanes and the Hispanic pastors of South Georgia have been busy. Today there are 17 Hispanic Congregations spread across South Georgia. The Warner Robins congregation has expanded their already vibrant ministry and will be welcoming many of Hispanic brothers and sisters into official United Methodist membership in May. Ministry has begun in Savannah with a dynamic group worshipping and reaching out to their neighbors. With an ever growing membership (over 700 in worship weekly) and expanding reach into the communities that they serve, the Hispanic Ministries of the South Georgia Annual Conference are one of the fastest growing segments of our United Methodist population.

### NEW CONGREGATIONS

Currently eight New Congregations are growing and thriving in South Georgia. Our most recent addition is Gateway United Methodist Church in Pooler, Georgia. We are excited that Rev. Matt Hearn is leading this vibrant new congregation. The Pointe in South Lee County continues to see amazing ministry and growth. Under Bryan Gerstel's leadership, they are averaging more than 500 people in worship each Sunday.

### REVITALIZATION

There are eleven (11) churches going through the process of Revitalization. At Sherwood United Methodist Church in Columbus they are reaching out to their community and finding great success! By sponsoring children's activities and encouraging participation from everyone in their community they have discovered, as one member

said, "if we reach the children we reach the whole family." Please continue to pray with them and for them as they reach out to the children of their community.

### GIVING CLUBS

The Giving Clubs of NRCD (Kingdom Builders, New Congregational Supporters, Vision Promoters, and New Congregational Planters) are bringing much needed financial and prayerful support to all of our congregations! It is truly a privilege and joy to see God working through your generosity to make these ministries a reality in South Georgia.

For additional information contact me at [acbeall@cox.net](mailto:acbeall@cox.net) or (478) 737 - 6299. For those of you who have not begun supporting this important ministry I invite you to join us, and for those of you who already stand with us thank you for all that you do for NRCD.

*\*ANN CODY BEALL is the Assistant for Development and Communications for NRCD.*

Hispanic Ministry Retreat

Gateway Community Church in Pooler

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## **I want to be a part of the Kingdom Builder's Club!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Church: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I/We want to be:  **Kingdom Builders:** \$15 twice a year  **New Congregation Supporters:** \$50 twice a year

**Vision Promoters:** \$100 twice a year  **New Congregation Planters:** \$500 twice a year

## *Summer camps will provide thirst quenching experience*

As warm weather starts setting in across South Georgia, students young and old yearn for the day that school gets out. Opportunities abound, but there's one place every child wants to spend at least one week, and that's at summer camp! "Thirsty" summer camps, sponsored by the South Georgia Conference Youth and Children's Ministries, are just a couple

of months away.

Looking for a thirst quenching experience this summer? This year we will discover how God can satisfy our spiritual thirst. All Mid High Mania and Elementary Camps are filled with a week's worth of fun activities and opportunities to grow closer to Christ. Campers will enjoy the beach, pool, boat rides, crafts, games, and much

more at this year's camp.

Cost for the week is \$225 and includes lodging, meals, programs, a t-shirt, and a camp DVD.

Counselors are provided. Online registration and a brochure is available at [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org).

For more information, call the Connectional Ministries office toll free at (888) 266-7642.

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### MID HIGH MANIA 1 & 2

MID HIGH MANIA, for all students entering 6th-9th grades, will have two different sessions at Epworth By The Sea. The first session will be held June 9-13, while the second session will be held June 16-20. Mid High Camps give youth an opportunity to pursue Christ on a deeper level. Campers will enjoy a week away from the distractions of daily life, pursuing Christian fellowship and experiencing Christ-centered daily activities. We are adding to the fun and excitement of our Mid-High Camps with a trip to Summer Waves Water Park. Other activities include high-energy, hilarious morning shows, small group Bible studies, beach trips, pool time, boat rides, craft shack, camp-wide competitions, and evenings of powerful worship. Cost is \$225. Counselors are provided.

### ELEMENTARY CAMPS 1, 2 & 3

Three ELEMENTARY CAMPS will also be offered this summer at Epworth By The Sea. The first session is June 23-27; the second session is July 7-11; and the final session is July 14-18. Elementary Camps are filled with a week's worth of fun activities and opportunities to grow closer to Christ through daily worship, Bible study, and fellowship. Campers will enjoy the beach, pool, boat rides, crafts, camp-wide games, morning shows, and worship. Don't forget to invite a friend to travel to the depths of the "C" with you! Cost is \$225. Counselors are provided.

### ROAD RULES

The South Georgia Conference Summer Leadership Team is available to come to your church for ROAD RULES during the week of July 20-25. A team can lead a youth week, children's event, camp meeting, or some other program resource for children and youth. They will be available in small groups or large for the entire week or for specific days within that week. Call Adam Ricker at 888-266-7642 to reserve your team.

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### REGISTER FOR SUMMER CAMPS ONLINE

Register online at [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org) for a faster, more accurate registration process. Credit card payments are accepted online only. To ensure efficiency and correct information with regards to the large number of registrants for summer camp, faxed registration forms to the Connectional Ministries office will not be accepted, nor will reservations by phone.

Due to limited availability for each event, online registration will be the fastest and most secure form of registration, while mailed in registrations will also be accepted. All forms and money must be turned in for campers to be completely registered, whether online or by mail. Please see our website for camp policies before registering your child for camp. For more information, visit [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org). You may also contact Diane Giles, Camp Registrar, at (888) 266-7642.

## Summer Leadership Team 2008

The 2008 Leadership Team for the South Georgia Conference summer camps has been finalized. Please be in prayer for these individuals who have given their summer to be in ministry to God's children and youth. These college students will be in ministry to over 700 children and youth this summer. They have a tough job ahead but a rewarding one as well. As each of these counselors listens to God's call on his/her life to be in full-time Christian service, please continue to lift each of these young servants up in prayer.

### Girls:

Ashley Boyer	Armstrong Atlantic State Univ.
Lauren Caldwell	University of Georgia
Rebecca Ezell	Georgia College & State Univ.
Kayla Franklin	Valdosta State Univ.
Joanna Freeburg	Georgia College & State Univ.
Sara Garrard	Emory University
Emily Hoxsie	Lagrange College
Jona Ogden	University of Georgia
Alison Ozment	Samford University
Sarah Parker	Georgia College & State Univ.
Kaelyn Parkins	Georgia Southwestern State Univ.

### Head Counselors:

Alex Carter	Valdosta State University
Teresa Feagain	Georgia Southern Univ.

### Guys:

Jack Caldwell	Georgia Southern Univ.
Isaac Callahan	Mercer University
John Pierce Drake II	Reinhardt College
Aaron Fox	Valdosta State University
Stephen Sparks	Valdosta State University
Troy Stephens	Jacksonville, FL

### Assistant Camp Director:

Mary Pinson	Lagrange College
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### Camp Nurse:

Danielle MacMinn	Lagrange College
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### Video/Sound:

Joshua Harris	Wofford College
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## *Mark your calendar for these fall events*

### **Youth Celebration '08**

On November 21- 23, 2008, the South Georgia Conference Youth Ministries will be sponsoring Youth Celebration '08 at Epworth By The Sea. Included in the weekend will be worship, individual church time, workshops, large group sessions, nightly entertainment, and afternoons of fun.

Adult counselors must accompany each group, and a 1 adult per 6 youth ratio is required. Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more information to come.

### **2 KidzQuest Events for 2008**

Due to growing numbers we are now offering two identical KidzQuest events in 2008! On September 26-28 and October 10-12, 2008, the South Georgia Conference annual children's retreat, KidzQuest, will be held at Epworth By The Sea for all 3rd-6th graders. Registration will be available this summer so stay tuned to [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org) for more information.

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## **Methodist Home for Children and Youth Celebration Day**

You are invited to be a part of the Celebration Day for the Methodist Home for Children and Youth on Saturday, April 26, 2008, from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm on their Macon campus. The annual Celebration Day is a fun "carnival" day which provides enjoyment and proceeds for the mission of The Methodist Children's Home. Enjoy a meal (with a choice of fish or chicken) as well as a live auction, silent auction, arts & crafts store, baked goods sale, entertainment, and more. In recent years the auctions have included fur coats, hunting trips, fine jewelry, fishing excursions, and weekend getaways. You can help out by donating items for the arts and crafts store, the auction, and/or the baked goods sale. For more information, contact Elizabeth W. Hart at 478-751-2800. You can also visit [www.themethodisthome.org](http://www.themethodisthome.org) to learn more.

## *S GA United Methodists Send Delegates to Fort Worth*

When the United Methodist Church's top legislative body meets this spring in Fort Worth, Texas, nearly 1,000 delegates from around the world will once again speak to issues of the day and set direction for the denomination. South Georgia United Methodists will be sending 12 delegates as its representative in Fort Worth.

Convened every four years, the General Conference is the only entity that speaks for the 11.5-million member denomination. The 2008 assembly will meet April 23-May 2 in Fort Worth under the theme "A Future With Hope."

"We're trying to move General Conference from what it now is—an exercise in the management of petitions—to a genuine Christian conferencing with high quality conversation about the most important issues facing the church and the world," said Gail Murphy-Geiss, chairwoman of the Commission on General Conference. "We hope the conference will be more positive and uniting—a movement toward a 'future with hope.'"

The primary focus of the conference will be on the elected delegates who have the authority to

set policy and direction for the church and establish positions on social issues. At its Annual Conference last year, the South Georgia Conference elected six lay members and six clergy members, along with six alternates, from among the nearly 650 local South Georgia United Methodist churches to represent them in Fort Worth.

In an intense nine-day session, 992 delegates from the United States, Europe, Africa and Asia will handle more than 1,500 pieces of legislation. They will also participate in daily worship and take other action related to guiding the church for the 2009-12 period.

"These elected delegates will have the challenge of revising/rewriting the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church, approving a general church budget for the upcoming quadrennium (four-year-period), electing the Judicial Council (supreme court) of the church, and taking other actions that will impact the church worldwide," explained Bishop Mike Watson, resident Bishop of South Georgia. Although Watson will be present at General Conference, bishops can neither vote on any proposal nor voice an opinion, unless granted permission from the delegates.

"In 2008, our 'connection' is at work through this very important conference," continued Watson. "Our United Methodist structure is often called a 'connection' because it binds us together in Christian ministry and mission locally, regionally, nationally and globally."

The United Methodist Church is a "connectional church," which means churches are connected by a relational system to guide their work and govern their policies. This also allows them to pool resources so that they may more efficiently work together and be in ministry throughout the world.

**For additional information on General Conference and to sign up for daily e-mails, visit [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org)**

### Delegates to General Conference

<p><b>CLERGY</b></p> <p>Hal Brady Joseph Roberson Bob Moon Mike McAfee Brad Brady Robert Beckum</p> <p><b>Alternates</b></p> <p>Cindy Autry Buddy Cooper Hugh Davis</p>	<p><b>LAITY</b></p> <p>Charlene Black Bill Hatcher Roy Blackwood Sunshine Bird Taylor Phillips Steve Rumford</p> <p><b>Alternates</b></p> <p>Miriam Hagan Gloria Gilmore Mark Shelnett</p>
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*Please keep these delegates in your prayers as they represent the South Georgia Conference in Fort Worth.*

### General Conference News and Information

[SGAUMC.org](http://www.sgaumc.org) is your home for General Conference news, resources, and information relevant to South Georgia United Methodists. You will find links to the following information at [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org) (see General Conference '08).

**Sign Up for the General Conference 2008 Daily E-mail:** The South Georgia Communications Office will offer a daily e-mail during the 10-day conference. Sign up today!

**Bulletin Insert Available:** Promote the General Conference Daily E-mail in your church by downloading and distributing the provided bulletin insert.

**Online Legislation Tracking Now Available:** You can now track General Conference legislation online. Search by keyword, committee, or organization. Visit <http://calms.umc.org/2008/> to use this helpful tool.

**April Prayer Calendar for General Conference:** You and your church are invited to pray daily for General Conference 2008. This daily Prayer Calendar for the month of April will help guide you in prayer.

## Workshops Provided for Moving Pastors

The South Georgia Conference is offering, for the fifth year, Transitional Workshops for pastors who will be moving to new assignments in June.

These workshops will be offered in two separate locations. The first session will be held on Tuesday, May 20 at First United Methodist Church in Tifton. The second session will be offered on the following day, May 21, at First United Methodist Church in Dublin. The sessions will begin at 9:30 a.m. and will conclude at 3:30 p.m.

Workshops will be based on the average church (charge) attendance in worship: small churches (with average attendance under 125), mid-size churches (with average attendance between 125 and 299), and

large churches (with average attendance over 300).

Associate pastors will meet in the larger church workshop. There will also be a time when the associates will meet together with their senior pastor. In churches where there is to be a change of the associate or senior pastor, both should attend. All of those going to their first appointment, as well as those moving to a new type of church, are expected to attend the session on the day and place most convenient. The leaders will have valuable input and much time will be reserved for participants to ask questions and seek guidance.

Leaders for these workshops will be: (1) The Rev. Clay Smith, Director of the Hinton Rural Life Center in North Carolina, who will lead the

pastors of small membership churches; (2) Dr. James T. Pennell, Retired South Georgia Conference Minister, who will lead the pastors of medium membership churches; and (3) Dr. Hal Brady, Senior Pastor of St. Luke UMC in Columbus, will lead the pastors of large membership churches.

There is no registration fee for the event. Lunch will be provided by the host church at a cost of \$5 per participant. Reservations must be made with your District Superintendent by May 13.

All pastors who are moving to new appointments this June are required to attend one.

## Pathways to a Healthy Church

**Saturday, August 16**  
**Trinity UMC in Warner Robins**  
**9:45 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

### 3 Day Long Workshops

Workshops for Youth, Clergy Spouses & Small Membership Churches

### 42 Dynamic Workshops

Workshops will cover a wide range of topics that will be helpful for leaders in every segment of the church's life.

Pathways to a Healthy Church is a day of training intended to help support local churches as they seek to fulfill their mission of making disciples for Jesus Christ. The goal is for participants to be stimulated with new ideas that will work in their local ministry setting, recommitted to their role as spiritual leaders, and empowered to go forth to offer vision-driven leadership. Mark your calendars and plan to bring a group from your local church! Brochures will be available at Annual Conference or online after Conference at [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org).

## Sexual Ethics Workshops

The next scheduled Sexual Ethics Workshops are set for April 19, 2008, at Americus First UMC from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. and May 8, 2008, at White Bluff UMC in Savannah from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Lunch will be provided. Participants MUST register for any of these workshops by e-mailing Rev. Deborah Wight-Knight, Conference Pastoral Counselor, at [fumcdwk@bellsouth.net](mailto:fumcdwk@bellsouth.net). Please note that spouses and lay employees who are not appointed by the bishop are not eligible to attend the workshop. This event is being sponsored by the Conference Commission on Pastoral Counseling.

## UMM Spring Retreat

The 2008 South Georgia Conference United Methodist Men's Spring Retreat is set for April 25-27 at Epworth By The Sea. The featured speaker will be Butch Rhodenizer. A true cowboy, Butch hails from Live Oak, Florida and preaches at rodeos all over America. A golf tournament has been scheduled for Friday afternoon, April 25, 2008, at Coastal Pines Golf Course in Brunswick. For more information on the retreat and on the golf tournament as well as to download a brochure, visit [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org). Mark your calendar and make plans to bring a group of men from your church.

### *School of Christian Mission*

July 17-20, 2008

### *Georgia Pastors' School*

July 21-24, 2008

# 2008 South Georgia Annual Conference Session

June 8-11, 2008

Columbus Civic Center

Columbus, Georgia

Hosted by the Columbus District

## 2008 Annual Conference Agenda

### Sunday, June 8

**7:00 pm Laity Orientation Session**

Columbus Civic Center  
Reception to follow

**7:00 pm Clergy Session**

St. Luke United Methodist Church  
Reception to follow

### Monday, June 9

**8:30 am The Conference Worships**

Bishop James King, preaching  
Columbus Civic Center

**10:00 am Plenary Business Session**

Hymn: *And Are We Yet Alive*  
Prayer

Welcome

Organization of the Conference

Election of Secretarial Staff and Tellers

Roll Call

Establishing the Bar of the Conference

Adoption of the Agenda

Preliminary Report Presentations

Celebrating the Fortieth Anniversary of the  
Uniting Conference

The Lay Leader's Address

The Episcopal Address

Vision Moment Video

Cabinet Report

Conference Boundaries Task Force

District Lines

Vision Moment Video

Board of Ordained Ministry

--Extension Clergy Introductions

--Reception of Clergy to new

Conference Relationships

Welcome East Africa Annual Conference  
Delegation

Vision Moment Video

Closing Prayer

**Noon Lunch Break**

**2:00 pm The Conference Worships**

Commissioning of Probationary Clergy and  
Recognition of Retiring Clergy  
Columbus Civic Center

**3:30 pm Plenary Business Session**

Opening Prayer

Golden Anniversary in Ministry

Cokesbury Pension Gift

Vision Moment Video

General Conference Delegation

Teaching: *The United Methodist Way*

led by Bishop Watson

Vision Moment Video

Consent Calendar

Standing Rules

Nominations

Vision Moment Video

**4:30 pm The East Africa Story**

Led by Bishop Daniel Wandabula

Closing Prayer

**5:15 pm Supper Break**

**7:30 pm The Conference Worships**

The Service of Ordination

Bishop James King, preaching

St. Luke United Methodist Church

### Tuesday, June 11

Members of the South Georgia Annual  
Conference will scatter across the  
Columbus community to participate in  
one of thirty service projects in our third  
annual **Day of Service**.

**2:00 pm The Conference Worships**

The Memorial Service with the  
Sacrament of Holy Communion

Dr. William H. Hurdle, preaching

Columbus Civic Center

**3:45 pm Plenary Business Session**

Opening Prayer

Vision Moment Video

Conference Personnel

Vision Moment Video

Equitable Compensation

Vision Moment Video

Resolutions

Vision Moment Video

Teaching: *The United Methodist Way*

led by Bishop Watson

Board of Pensions

Vision Moment Video

Closing Announcements

Closing Prayer

**5:30 pm Supper Break**

**7:30 pm The Conference Worships**

Hope for the Children of Africa Choir  
Concert

Columbus Civic Center

### Wednesday, June 11

**8:30 am Morning Praise and  
Devotional**

Gathering Music by Wesley  
Foundation Music Team

Reverend Melissa Traver, Campus

Minister to the Savannah Colleges  
and Universities, preaching

Columbus Civic Center

**9:10 am Plenary Business Session**

Call to Order

Vision Moment Video

Georgia Commission on Higher

Education and Campus Ministry

Teaching: *The United Methodist Way*

led by Bishop Watson

Council on Finance and Administration

Conference Trustees

Celebrating Safe Sanctuaries

Church Closings

Parsonage Task Force

Vision Moment Video

Unfinished Business

Consent Calendar Items

Awards in Review

Day of Service Video

Invitation for 2009 Annual Conference  
Session

Closing Motions

Celebrating Bishop Watson's Term

Standing Transition Break

**11:00 am The Conference Worships**

Fixing of the Appointments and  
Sending Forth

Columbus Civic Center

**12:30 pm Adjournment**

# Annual Conference 2008

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

A worship service to mark the commissioning of new probationary clergy and the retirement of other clergy will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Monday afternoon.

The Memorial worship service will be held on Tuesday afternoon at 2:00 p.m. and will include the sacrament of Holy Communion. Dr. Bill Hurdle will be the preacher for the Memorial service.

This conference session will follow the quadrennial General Conference session held in April 2008. In addition to a report from the South Georgia delegation, we will have an opportunity to be exposed to "The United Methodist Way." Bishop Mike Watson has agreed to teach on the subject of the "Three Simple Rules," which is based on the historic General Rules of the United Methodist Church. Each lay and clergy member will be given a copy of Bishop Ruben Job's book by the same title.

The Columbus Local Arrangements Committee is making thorough and creative preparation for our session. One major project being coordinated is the third annual Day of Service, which will be held on Tuesday morning. About thirty very meaningful service projects are being planned for our laity and clergy to engage in as a way to expand our impact and Christian witness in the Columbus community.

"The Day of Service has become a highly anticipated component to our Annual Conference session," said Bishop

Watson. "Laity and clergy have been blessed by the opportunity to extend the witness of our beloved Conference to the community in which we meet.

"As with all service projects, this has been a mutual blessing for those served and those being served. We enthusiastically anticipate the opportunity to become better acquainted with the Columbus community as we intentionally take on the servant's role."

This year's special offering has been designated to benefit United Methodist Higher Education and Campus Ministries. The first \$20,000 given is designated for South Georgia's share in the United Methodist Leadership Scholars program. This program provides scholarship possibilities for students desiring to attend a United Methodist college or university. All funds given beyond this \$20,000 will be distributed by the Georgia Commission on Higher Education and Campus Ministries as a special gift to the South Georgia Wesley Foundations and Campus Ministries. Each church is encouraged to receive an offering in the weeks prior to Annual Conference and to bring this offering to the Monday morning worship service.

Our final morning of the Annual Conference session will begin with a worship segment led by students from one of our Wesley Foundations and with a message preached by the Reverend Melissa Traver. Rev. Traver is the campus minister for the Savannah

Bishop James R. King, Jr. will preach at the 2008 conference session.

Colleges and Universities.

"We are grateful for the many people who are planning and working on the various aspects of the 2008 Annual Conference session," said Dr. Brad Brady, Conference Secretary. "The local arrangements committee, worship committee, Board of Ordained Ministry, various programmatic and administrative committees, and conference staff are all fully engaged in making sure everything is logistically and spiritually ready for our gathering.

"In deed, everyone is offering their labors out of a desire to glorify God and in the faith-filled hope that we will bear much fruit."

Please visit [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org) for the latest Annual Conference information.

## Annual Conference Hotel Accommodations

The following hotels have blocked rooms for the South Georgia Annual Conference and have given us a special rate. You must specify that you are with the United Methodist South Georgia Annual Conference to receive these discounted rates. Please check cancellation and early departure fees with hotel.

<b>Downtown Marriot</b> 800 Front Ave. 706-324-1800 \$130	<b>Quality Inn</b> 1325 Veterans Pkwy 706-322-2522 \$79	<b>Hilton Garden Inn</b> 1500 Bradley Lake Blvd. 706-660-1000 \$119	<b>Holiday Inn Express</b> 7336 Bear Lane 760-507-7200 \$129	<b>Wyndham Garden Hotel</b> 4027 Veterans Ct. 706-507-1111 \$129
<b>Four Points Sheraton</b> 5351 Sidney Simons Blvd 706-327-6868 \$100	<b>Wingate Inn</b> 1711 Rollins Way 706-225-1000 \$109	<b>Days Inn</b> 3452 Macon Rd. 706-561-4400 \$70	<b>Howard Johnson</b> 1011 Veterans Pkwy 706-322-6641 \$62	<b>Courtyard Marriot</b> 3501 Courtyard Way 706-323-2323 \$149

# 2008 Annual Conference Information

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**AWARDS:** No awards will be personally presented. All groups who present awards will be asked to share their award recipients in the following manner:

1) Submit any pictures of recipient(s) to Kelly Roberson ([kelly@sgaumc.com](mailto:kelly@sgaumc.com)) by May 19, 2008, for inclusion in a media presentation that will be shown at Annual Conference.

2) Plan to present your award directly to the recipient in their own local church or at your organization's banquet. Please note that the Outreach Team will not be hosting a banquet in May.

**VIDEO/MEDIA PRESENTATIONS:** Any media presentation (video, DVD, PowerPoint, etc.) intended to be shown at the Annual Conference session must be submitted to Kelly Roberson ([kelly@sgaumc.com](mailto:kelly@sgaumc.com)) no later than May 19. Any last minute presentations should be given to Kelly, who will present them to our AV provider.

**BANQUETS & DISPLAYS:** Contact Mrs. Sally Walden at [sally1501@aol.com](mailto:sally1501@aol.com) to make arrangements for banquets or displays. The conference policy for permissible displays is that a group must have a direct relation to the Annual Conference through the conference structure or be an approved conference advance special.

**LOCAL CONTACT:** Dr. Hal Brady is the chair of the Local Arrangements Committee for the 2008 conference. You may contact Dr. Brady at (706) 327-4343 or [maggie@stlukeum.com](mailto:maggie@stlukeum.com). You should contact him for any of the following reasons: 1) event information for the conference brochure; 2) coordination of business items to be included in the conference packet; or 3) any other questions or needs concerning local arrangements.

**PACKET INSERTS:** Only business related information will be placed in the conference packets. All groups wanting to distribute promotional materials should arrange to have a display space. Promotional items will not be allowed to be distributed on the floor.

**PARKING:** Abundant parking places are assessable at the Columbus Civic Center. Parking is free.

## CHILDCARE INFORMATION

Childcare will be available for children ages newborn-5th grade throughout Annual Conference. **Pre-registration is very important.** A registration form can be found on the conference website, [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org). The form needs to be returned before May 1, 2008. For questions, contact Rev. Loretta Dunbar Loretta at 706-327-4343 or [loretta@stlukeum.com](mailto:loretta@stlukeum.com).

### DROP-IN Childcare for young children (Newborn-5 years old)

Drop-in Childcare will be available at St. Luke UMC for preschool-aged children during all conference sessions beginning at **6:30 p.m.** on Sunday and then **8:00 a.m.** each day until 1 hour after the closing session. St. Luke is about 1 mile north of the Civic Center. A lunch meal will be provided for your child on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday with advance registration and payment of \$3 for each meal. Parents may provide meals for their children or pick them up for meals before 12:15 p.m. Parents must pickup their child(ren) by 5:30 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday. Parents must pick up their child(ren) by 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday.

### ALL DAY Care for older children (completed kindergarten years – completed 5th grade)

All Day Care is available for older children Monday-Tuesday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Wednesday 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at St. Luke UMC. Lunch is provided. The cost for this childcare is \$15 per child, \$35 maximum per family for all three days, which includes the cost of lunch. You will receive additional information including waiver forms for activities such as swimming, roller skating, and service projects upon registration. St. Luke UMC is located approximately 1 mile north of the Civic Center. Please note: we will be unable to accommodate children completed kindergarten and up who are not pre-registered. Childcare is not provided for children over age 11, and these children will not be permitted to stay with younger children.

### NEW FOR 2008

- Childcare will begin at 8:00 a.m. each morning.
- Lunch will be provided for children at drop-in care for the cost of \$3/meal.
- Childcare for elementary-aged (K-5<sup>th</sup> grade) is \$15 per child or \$35 max/family for all three days.
- Evening childcare will only be for preschool-aged children at St. Luke UMC.

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## 2008 South Georgia Annual Conference Day of Service

*June 10, 2008 ▪ 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
In the Columbus Community*

**Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors. The people of The United Methodist Church.**

During the 2008 South Georgia Annual Conference session the people of The United Methodist Church will open the doors of the annual conference and scatter across the Columbus community to be witnesses of our faith in Jesus Christ by serving through word and deed. The third annual Day of Service is set for Tuesday morning, June 10. Most service projects will begin at 9:00 a.m. and conclude around noon.

Service project opportunities range from knitting prayer shawls to preparing casseroles for the Ronald McDonald House, from participating in blood drive to painting walls at a women's shelter, from sorting items at a clothing bank to writing letters to soldiers in hospitals, from baking cookies for local EMT workers to light

yard work at a home for troubled teens.

Each project will have a team leader who is from the Columbus area. Once you register and the teams are formed, the team leader will contact you prior to conference. Your leader will provide you with all the information you need (i.e. location, directions, attire, etc.).

A list of each project as well as a registration form will be included in the pre-conference mailing that will be mailed out in May. You can also find the list and registration form at [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org). Online registration and payment is also

available.

Day of Service t-shirts are available for pre-purchase (see registration form).

Lunch will be prepared for those interested at St. Luke United Methodist Church from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Cost is \$7 for hot meal, \$5 for soup/salad and \$5 for soup & sandwich.

The Columbus Local Arrangements Committee is coordinating this morning of service. It is their prayer and intention that we make a positive impact on the community as we live out God's vision that every soul and circumstance be redeemed.

*“Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”*

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## AC Blood Drive

During the 2008 Annual Conference Session, an American Red Cross Blood Drive will be held on Tuesday, June 10, 2008, from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. in the Columbus Civic Center Hospitality Room. Rev. Cindy Garrard is coordinating the drive. Please reserve your time to donate by emailing [cindy@stlukeum.com](mailto:cindy@stlukeum.com) for available time slots. If you wish to be a “double red” cell donor, please let her know that as well (special qualifications apply, see [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) for additional information). Please allow about one hour for the process from start to finish. Drink lots of fluids on the day of the drive, and be sure to eat iron-rich foods between now and June 10. Donors who have reservations will be taken ahead of those who do not have reservations.

## Calling All Artists!

In conjunction with the Day of Service, the Columbus Local Arrangements Committee is seeking donated pieces of original art for a silent auction. All money raised will be donated to Higher Education and Campus Ministries. For more details, contact Beth Brown at 707-580-6379 or [seth.brown36@gmail.com](mailto:seth.brown36@gmail.com).

## AC Golf

### Tournament

As part of the Day of Service during Annual Conference, a golf tournament will be held Tuesday morning, June 10, to benefit Wesley Glen, a South Georgia Conference United Methodist agency in ministry to mentally challenged adults. The tournament will begin with a shotgun start at 7:30 a.m. at Maple Ridge Golf Course in Columbus. The tournament format will be an “Ambrose Competition.” Cost to play is \$75.00. Visit [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org) (see Annual Conference link) for a detailed informational flyer and registration form. Registration is open to the first 72 golfers. After May 1, the tournament will open to local golfers. For questions, contact Buddy Cooper at 706-327-7419. More detailed information is available on the conference website.

## *Hope for the Children of Africa Choir to sing at General Conference and South Georgia Conference*

(UMNS) A slender young woman stands behind the audience--well out of the limelight.

Twenty-three pairs of little eyes watch her every move. She smiles, they smile. She enunciates each word; they pay close attention. She sways. She directs. She cradles the children in her capable hands.

"Auntie Lydia" is the conductor and manager for the Hope for Africa Children's Choir and Academy.

Lydia Namageme knows how hard these children's lives have been, and she loves her charges. When they need a hug, she's there. When they need a little tough love, she is there for that too.

Namageme serves as the right hand of Tonny Mbowe, the choir director. She lives with the children at the United Methodist school that has rescued them from lives of poverty.

The 23 children live together night and day and are preparing for their "first ever international tour." The highlight of the tour will be two performances at the 2008 United Methodist General Conference in Fort Worth, Texas, on April 28 and 29. After their performance in Texas, the

children will tour and sing at United Methodist churches in Arkansas, Georgia, Wisconsin, Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee until the end of July.

"We are grateful to God for the opportunity to host the Hope for Africa Children's Choir in The South Georgia Annual Conference" says Rev. Denise Walton of Connectional Ministries.

The choir is scheduled to be in South Georgia June 4-June 23. They will perform on Tuesday, June 10 at

The Columbus Civic Center in Columbus, Georgia. The performance is scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m.

Following the annual conference session, the choir will be traveling across the conference to perform in various districts. A complete listing of the tour will be available on the conference website, [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org), on May 1, 2008.

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## **2008 Annual Conference Special Offering: Touch the Present, Empower the Future**

The Special Offering at the 2008 Session of the South Georgia Annual Conference Session will be used to support the work of the Georgia United Methodist Commission on Higher Education and Campus Ministry (GUMCHECM) within the South Georgia Conference.

One part of the offering will be used to provide support for the United Methodist leadership Scholars (UMLS) Program. UMLS is a jurisdictional initiative intended to encourage the enrollment in our United Methodist Colleges and

Universities. The balance of your generous offering will be used to support the Wesley Foundation ministries of the South Georgia Conference. The needs vary all the way from work on deferred maintenance, new construction, property acquisition and support for student interns.

Visit [www.gahied.com](http://www.gahied.com) to learn more about the work of the Commission and the plans for the special offering.

A bulletin insert is available at [www.sgaumc.org](http://www.sgaumc.org) to help promote the offering in your local church.

## Conference Coordinated Calendar 2008

<b>April</b>		15	Wesley Glen Day	25-27	Black Church Summit, Savannah
19	Sexual Ethics Workshop, Americus	16-20	Mid-High 2 Summer Camp, EBTS*	26-28	KidzQuest 1, EBTS*
25-27	UMM Retreat, EBTS*			<b>October</b>	
26	Methodist Home for Children and Youth Celebration Day	18	Moving Day for Pastors	5	World Communion Day
<b>April-May</b>		23-27	Elementary 1 Summer Camp, EBTS*	10-12	KidzQuest 2, EBTS*
23-2	General Conference, Forth Worth, TX	<b>July</b>		18	UMW Annual Meeting, Americus
<b>May</b>		7-11	Elementary 2 Summer Camp, EBTS*	19	Vashti Day
7-8	Nominations Committee Meeting	13	Golden Cross Sunday	<b>November</b>	
8	Board of Ordained Ministry Meeting	14-18	Elementary 3 Summer Camp, EBTS*	9	Wesleyan College Day
8	Sexual Ethics Workshop, Savannah	16-19	Jurisdictional Conference, Lake Junaluska	10-12	Eagles' Retreat
11	Magnolia Manor Sunday	17-20	School of Christian Mission, EBTS*	21-23	November Youth Celebration, EBTS*
16-17	UMW Executive Committee Meeting, Dublin	20-25	Summer Leadership Team Road Rules	30	United Methodist Student Day
18	Peace with Justice Sunday	21-24	Georgia Pastors' School, EBTS*	<b>December</b>	
20	Moving Pastors Transition Workshop, Tifton	<b>August</b>		7	United Methodist Global AIDS Fund Sunday
21	Moving Pastors Transition Workshop, Dublin	16	Pathways to a Healthy Church Event, Warner Robins		
27-28	Natural Church Development Training, EBTS*	17	Christian Education Sunday		
<b>June</b>		<b>September</b>			
8-11	Annual Conference, Columbus	11	Sexual Ethics Seminar, Columbus		
9-13	Mid-High 1 Summer Camp, EBTS*	21	Methodist Children's Home Sunday		

\* Epworth By The Sea

### Online Communicator

#### Office of Connectional Ministries

P.O. Box 20408, St. Simons Island, GA 31522

(912) 638-8626 - (888) 266-7642 - Fax (912) 638-5258

South Georgia Conference website: <http://www.sgaumc.org>

E-Mail Address: [connectionalministries@sgaumc.com](mailto:connectionalministries@sgaumc.com)

The Online Communicator is published quarterly (Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall) as an Adobe .pdf document and is available on the conference website, <http://www.sgaumc.org>.

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