

faithful, fruitful, bold

2007 *Pathways to a Healthy Church* event will equip lay and clergy

Equipping churches to become more spiritually healthy will again be the focus for the third annual *Pathways to a Healthy Church* event scheduled for **Saturday, August 18 at Trinity United Methodist Church in Warner Robins, Georgia.**

Thirty-seven workshops plus three day long workshops have been designed to assist churches struggling in a particular area of disciple-making, and for those who are new leaders to a specific ministry area.

Workshops will help participants be better prepared to guide their congregations in spiritual formation, worship, hospitality, evangelism, social action, outreach, community-building, stewardship, clarity of mission, effective communications, care of facilities and leadership development. Additional workshops will focus on ministering to children, youth, young adults and older adults.

Workshop leaders include pastors and laity from throughout the South Georgia Conference who have a proven record in the subject matter they will be presenting.

Each participant will attend three different workshops of their choice or choose from one of the three day-long workshops. The first of the three day-long workshops is a Youth Leadership Academy, which is intended for youth who are emerging leaders in their local church youth group. The second day-long workshop will be a Music Leadership Academy, which is designed

to coach volunteer choir directors of small and medium membership congregations. "I Have Had Enough!" is the third day-long workshop designed specifically for clergy spouses and will address some of the challenges they face.

A registration fee of \$25 per adult will help defray the cost of the event, plus provide lunch for the participant. Childcare is provided for those who have pre-registered and requested this service. The deadline to register is August 10.

Pastors and other congregational leaders are encouraged to recruit several others to attend the event with them. A complete list of workshops and other registration information is available at www.sgaumc.org. To request multiple brochures for your church call Kelly Roberson at 888-266-7642. Workshops fill up quickly so make sure to register early.

Pathways to a Healthy Church is being sponsored by the Connectional Ministries Council.

News in Brief

KidzQuest: Don't miss out on *KidzQuest*, a retreat designed especially for children! (See page 6)

Pastors' School: Bishop Violet Fisher will be the preacher for the 2007 Pastors' School. (See page 7)

Safe Sanctuaries: Make plans to attend one of the upcoming Safe Sanctuaries Training events. (See pages 8-9)

Conference Events: Make plans to attend upcoming conference events. (See page 10)

Annual Conference Recap: Check out a recap of the 2007 Annual Conference Session. (See page 11)

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.

Our Challenge and Our Joy

BY REV. LOWERY BRANTLEY*

Dr. William Brower, a long-time professor of speech at Princeton Theological Seminary, worked diligently with seminarians to develop a preaching style that would bring life and power to their preaching and life and hope to their congregations.

One day while listening to some of them preach, Dr. Brower got up and looked out the window. Then

he slowly turned around and said to them, "If half of what you say is true, then Christianity is the most fascinating religion in the world. What I can't understand is why your sermons have to be so dull!"

Preachers may point out that people only hear what they are listening for. But there is truth in Dr. Brower's observation. That is the preacher's challenge: not only to be faithful to the integrity of the Word of God but to hearts and minds of hearers.

Preaching is, I believe, crucial to the health and life of the Christian church. To proclaim good news each week to an expectant congregation is, indeed, an awesome responsibility and an inexpressible joy. To present that message in a gracious and authentic

manner and as interesting as possible is our challenge; to know that we have shared the good news faithfully and persuasively is our joy.

What Dr. Brower said about preachers and preaching can be said about Christianity and Christians. If half of what we say about the Christian life and faith is true, then Christianity is the most fascinating religion in the world! There is a reason why the Christian faith was known as the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ.

The extraordinary message of love and compassion, spoken and incarnated in Christ and then into subsequent disciples, made the Christian faith compelling and inviting to generations after Christ. Those early Christians experienced the joy and the excitement of their new faith in Jesus Christ. Many in the ancient world may have rejected the claims of Christians but they were not bored by their claims or by their witness.

Our challenge today is to know Christ more fully and to let Christ love the world through us in ways that are authentic, powerful, and engaging. Our joy comes in knowing that our life is being lived out within the perfect will of God!

Let me share two ways in which we are seeking to be more helpful to members in this annual conference as you seek to present

the gospel and live out the Christian faith in more interesting and exciting ways.

(1) The Pathways to a Healthy Church workshop on Saturday, August 18, at Trinity UMC in Warner Robins is designed with this focus in mind. We want every workshop setting to be helpful, relevant, and interesting. You will find more information about this event on page 1 of the Communicator.

(2) Our conference website is being re-designed to make it more interesting and more helpful to you. In our newly designed website, you will find the daily meditation from The Upper Room and the Daily Bible Reading Guide. Worship leaders will find a link to the Division on Worship's website for Worship Planning. Preachers will also find links for the actual weekly Lectionary scriptures and Preaching Helps.

The Office of Connectional Ministries is dedicated to our shared vision of congregations transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit who are being used by God to redeem every soul and circumstance. Our faith is good news, indeed. May we strive together to share the good news in ways that are both engaging and transforming! Herein are both our challenge and our joy!

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

Delegates Elected to General & Jurisdictional Conferences

General - Clergy

1. Hal Brady
2. Joseph Roberson
3. Bob Moon
4. Mike McAfee
5. Brad Brady
6. Robert Beckum

Jurisdictional - Clergy

1. Cindy Autry
2. Buddy Cooper
3. Hugh Davis
4. Don Adams
5. Ramon Hernandez
6. Jimmy Cason

General - Laity

1. Charlene Black
2. Bill Hatcher
3. Roy Blackwood
4. Sunshine Bird
5. Taylor Phillips
6. Steve Rumford

Jurisdictional - Laity

1. Miriam Hagan
2. Gloria Gilmore
3. Mark Shelnett
4. Richard Shinhoster
5. Lee Bush
6. Flo Martin

Alternates - Clergy

1. Marcia Cochran
2. Beverly Flowers
3. Ronnie Wills

Alternates - Laity

1. Gloria Morgan
2. Matthew Martin
3. Robert Anderson

Clergy Compensation Workshops Scheduled

BY MIRIAM HAGAN*

At Annual Conference last month, the Clergy Compensation Task Force made a report that addressed the current method local churches are using to reimburse ministers for business expenses they incur while serving the church. The report, which was approved, contained recommendations about establishing

policies for reimbursing the minister for business expenses incurred while carrying out the mission and ministry of the local church or agency to which they are appointed.

Workshops will be held in each district beginning in late July and continuing throughout August to discuss the recommendations and the suggested policy as well as answer questions that churches might have.

We will be discussing why we need to make the proposed changes and the value of having a written policy as well as suggestions on how to implement the change.

Lay persons serving as staff or pastor parish chair, the finance committee chair, the treasurer, the minister, and other interested leaders are encouraged to attend one of the workshops.

The list of dates, times and locations are below. If the meeting in your district is not at a convenient time for your church, please feel free to attend one in a neighboring district.

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

SCHEDULE OF DISTRICT WORKSHOPS			
Waycross District	July 30	7:00 PM	First UMC, Waycross
	July 31	7:00 PM	College Place UMC, Brunswick
Columbus District	August 6	7:00 PM	St. Paul UMC, Columbus
Macon District	August 7	7:00 PM	Wesley UMC, Macon
Dublin District	August 9	7:00 PM	Pine Forest UMC, Dublin
Statesboro District	August 13	7:00 PM	Sylvania UMC, Sylvania
	August 14	7:00 PM	Reidsville UMC, Reidsville
Valdosta District	August 20	7:00 PM	Adel UMC, Adel
Savannah District	August 21	7:00 PM	White Bluff UMC, Savannah
Americus District	August 23	7:00 PM	First UMC, Cordele
	August 30	7:00 PM	First UMC, Eastman
Thomasville District	August 28	7:00 PM	Porterfield Memorial UMC, Albany

AC Special Offering Report

By the end of June over **\$65,000** had been received for the Annual Conference Offering this year, which is being used to support our partnership with the East Africa Annual Conference. Thank you for your generous gifts!

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.

By All Means...something is afoot

BY ANN CODY BEALL*

BY ALL MEANS something is afoot in the South Georgia Conference: new congregations...revitalized congregations... many different ethnic groups.

BY ALL MEANS we are growing God's kingdom in South Georgia. Since 2002 we have started or grown 31 ministries.

There is one statistic which I think is most remarkable. Did you know that in the Americus District the average worship attendance each Sunday is a little over 4,600 people? In the 31 churches under the umbrella of New and Revitalized Congregational Development the average attendance of our new and revitalized congregations is 4,455 and continuing to grow all the time.

In only 5 years we have nearly added a district in worship

attendance with these congregations!

It is a remarkable story... and the story continues... BY ALL MEANS.

Aren't you ready to become personally involved in this dynamic ministry? If your church, Sunday School Class or group is not currently supporting NRCD isn't it time that you step up and take a stand for God's Kingdom in South Georgia!

Please contact me to arrange for

one of us to bring the message of hope and excitement to your church or group, Ann Beall at (478) 737 – 6299 or email me at acbeall@cox.net.

BY ALL MEANS your support is making a tremendous difference for people all across South Georgia!

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

Pictured: Members of The Pointe UMC in Lee County welcome guests to weekly worship services.

Churches under the Umbrella of NRCD

New Congregations

Harvest UMC, Warner Robins
Gateway UMC, Savannah
North Glynn UMC, Brunswick
The Chapel UMC, Brunswick
St. Peter UMC, Columbus
Vision of Jesus UMC, Macon
Heritage at Houston mission congregation, Macon
The Pointe UMC, Lee County
The Gathering UMC, Valdosta

Congregations in Revitalization

Guyton UMC, Guyton
Waverly Hall UMC, Waverly Hall
Ellerslie UMC, Ellerslie
Rincon UMC, Rincon
Centenary UMC, Macon
Grace UMC, Savannah
Alpha UMC, Bloomingdale
Goshen UMC, Rincon
Sherwood UMC, Columbus

Hispanic Ministries

First UMC, Warner Robins
Morningside UMC, Albany
Lake Park UMC, Lake Park
Iglesia de la Vision, Macon
Bulloch Hispanic mission, Statesboro
Cairo mission, Cairo
St. Luke UMC mission, Columbus
Vienna UMC mission, Vienna
(connected with First UMC, Cordele)
First UMC, Americus
Montezuma UMC, Montezuma
South Columbus - South Columbus UMC and Buena Vista
Glynn County - First UMC, Brunswick and Jesup
New Prospect UMC, Manor



September 14-16, 2007

Epworth By The Sea

Get ready to ELEVATE this fall at the annual KidzQuest retreat set for September 14-16, 2007, at Epworth By The Sea. Kids in the 3rd-6th grades will experience a weekend of incredible worship, exciting stunt bikes, and a whole lot more. Uncle Charlie will be back and is more excited than ever to lead us in a time of high-energy worship. Kids will enjoy indoor and outdoor games, Bible studies, large group worship times with awesome multi-media, crafts, church time, swimming, cookouts, and hanging out with the hundreds of other children in attendance. Cost for the event is \$125 and full payment is required to complete registration. For more information or to register online, log onto www.sgaumc.org or call Diane Giles or Adam Ricker at 888-266-7642.

Summer Camp at Epworth By The 'C'

By Head Counselors Charlie Judd and Mary Pinson*

Well, it's summer time here again at Epworth By The Sea, and as head counselors we are excited as ever to have 15 new best friends as counselors! This summer we have set out on an adventure over the high "C's" as we embark on our C quest to focus on: Calling, Character, Courage, and Commitment.

It is amazing how God has revealed Himself to us this summer – in our lives and in the lives of the kids that we have been spending our time with.

This summer started out as we all met our new counselor friends and began an extensive and grueling training week. After a week of learning energizing dances and dominating the ropes course, we were ready to take on the task of pumping kids up and making sure they have a great summer. Before camp, however, we had the privilege of going to Annual Conference and had an amazing opportunity to serve the pastors in the area and everyone else at Conference. We also helped with the day of service for children on Tybee Island.

After we ran back to Saint Simons (so we could keep our energy up), we

began the final preparations for camp. We practiced skits, dances, and built a pretty awesome set complete with fish and sea turtles. After a few more training sessions, we felt like Joshua when he and his people took down the walls at Jericho. We were so pumped for Mid-High camp and couldn't wait for the week to start.

Camp started and we were off. Nurse Daniel, our camp nurse, has kept everyone extra safe and is doing an amazing job. Our very own "Crafty Kelly" keeps us all entertained with her amazing tie-dyeing and fish skills.

Our weeks at Epworth are filled with high-energy morning shows and night time worship, which we like to call "The Reef." During the day we go on boat rides, to the pool, to the beach, play games and just have an all-around amazing time!

Keep us all in your prayers and pray that God will continue to bless us all in our adventure this summer!

**Charlie Judd is from Macon, Ga. and is a recent graduate of Valdosta State University. Mary Pinson is from Augusta, Ga. and will be a senior at LaGrange College.*

'Breathe' will be the theme of Youth Celebration '07

Did you know that the average person can hold their breath for as long as 2 to 3 minutes? Did you know that Tom Sietas holds the world record for time spent underwater with one breath at 9 minutes and 8 seconds? No matter how hard and long we try to hold it, though, it's a fact that all of us need to breathe in order to survive.

"Breathe" will be the theme for Youth 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.

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 Youth Celebration '07.

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 requested. Make plans to attend as registrations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Please note the shift in dates for Youth Celebration '07. The dates have been changed to allow youth leaders the opportunity to attend Youth Specialties the weekend of November 16-19.

Youth Worker Opportunities

YOUTH SPECIALTIES

November 16-19, 2007
Atlanta, Georgia

RENEW

August 2-5, 2007
Lake Junaluska, NC

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

Renew is a place for youth workers to gather and learn skills and receive tools for effective ministry; rest and take a Sabbath away from the craziness of youth ministry; network, share ideas, hopes and dreams about ministry; and worship and hear God. Check out more at www.sejmyp.org.

Youth Leadership Academy

A Leadership Academy designed specifically for youth will be held during the Pathways to a Healthy Church event August 18 at Trinity UMC in Warner Robins. Josh Burnham, youth director at Brooklet UMC, and Jim Morrow, youth director at St. Marys UMC, will lead this day-long workshop. Youth who are emerging as leaders in their local church youth group will be taught some of the basics of spiritual leadership. Visit www.sgaumc.org for registration information.

PK Retreats Cancelled

Due to lack of participation both of the 2007 summer PK Retreats have been cancelled. Plans are in the works for an alternative event in 2008. Stay tuned for information later in the year from the Commission on Pastoral Counseling. For questions, please contact Rev. Deborah Wight-Knight at 478-929-1032 or fumcdwk@bellsouth.net.

Pastors' School set for July 23-26

Meeting under the theme "Rethinking Christian Education," the annual Georgia Pastor's School is set for July 23-26, 2007, at Epworth By The Sea. This four-day retreat provides inspiration, education, fellowship, fun and relaxation for North and South Georgia clergy and their families. Active and retired clergy are invited to experience this combination of continuing education and personal renewal.

Program leaders for the week include Bishop Violet L. Fisher, preacher, and lecturers Craig Kennet Miller and Harriet Jane Olson.

Since 2000, Bishop Fisher has served as resident bishop of the New York West Area, the first African-American woman from the Northeastern Jurisdiction to be elected to the episcopacy. Bishop Fisher has received several awards, including The United Methodist Church Denman Evangelism Award. In 1993, she was named Black United Methodist Preacher of the Year for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the UMC.

Within the UMC, Bishop Fisher serves as President of the Northeastern Jurisdiction College of Bishops. She is a member of the Commission on Pan-Methodist Cooperation and Union and of The Black Methodists for Church Renewal. Currently Vice President of the General Board of Global Ministries, Bishop Fisher sits on the Board's Audit Committee and Hope for the Children of Africa Committee. In addition, she continues her work with the General Board of Discipleship Committee on Older Adult Ministries. In June 2004 Bishop Fisher was the keynote speaker for the International Prayer Conference for Wesleyans in Renewal held in Singapore.

Craig Kennet Miller is the Director of the Center for Evangelism through New Congregational Development at the General Board of Discipleship. He is a specialist in Generational Studies

and has a Doctor of Ministry Degree from Fuller Theological Seminary. He is the author of many books, including *Baby Boomer Spirituality*, *Postmoderns: The Beliefs, Hopes and Fears of Young Americans*, and *NextChurch.Now: Creating New Faith Communities*. Miller will share key principles for new faith communities in existing and new churches.

Harriett Jane Olson is senior vice president and editorial director for Abingdon Press and has been nominated as chief executive of the Women's Division, United Methodist Board of Global Ministries. In addition to guiding the publishing program at Abingdon Press, Dimensions for Living, and Kingswood Books, she also provides strategic direction for Cokesbury's curriculum publishing. She has served for 7 years in the elected posts of Book Editor for the UMC and for 5 years as Editor of Church School Publications. She earned the J.D. degree from Harvard Law School and practiced environmental law in New Jersey for 12 years prior to joining Abingdon Press.

Continuing education units are offered to those who complete the requirements, including paying the registration fee. The registration fee for the school is \$75 per clergyperson. Retired clergy pay \$10. Spouses may attend sessions at no charge.

A pre-school program as well as an elementary children's program are scheduled. A nursery will also be available.

There are a limited number of \$70.00 housing scholarships available. For more information, please contact your District Superintendent. A brochure and registration form can be downloaded at www.sgaumc.org. Housing reservations can be made online at www.epworthbythesea.org.

BISHOP VIOLET L. FISHER

CRAIG KENNET MILLER

HARRIETT JANE OLSON

Safe Sanctuaries policy approved at annual conference

A Safe Sanctuaries policy designed to ensure the protection and safety of children, youth and vulnerable adults while participating in conference and district activities was approved by South Georgia United Methodists at the 2007 Annual Conference in June.

The aim of the policy is to prevent verbal, physical and sexual abuse and create an environment in which children, youth and vulnerable adults have boundaries of safety and protection.

The conference and district policy approved is now in effect with full compliance expected by July 1, 2008, while local churches must draft

and approve their own policies by January 1, 2009, if not sooner.

“We are encouraged by the enthusiastic responses reported from church leaders across our Annual Conference as local churches begin addressing the important and challenging task of developing a Safe Sanctuaries policy for their local church,” said Denise Walton, Associate Director of Connectional Ministries. “Many laity have already gone through the screening process in other settings and know the value of taking every precaution possible in the selection of those who work with the most vulnerable.”

Expressing his thankfulness,

Adam Ricker, Associate Director of Life Span Ministries said, “We are grateful that churches are taking this seriously and that they desire to create a safe place for those whom God has entrusted to us.

“We are looking forward to helping local churches walk through this process,” Ricker concluded.

The policy adopted at Annual Conference can be viewed at www.sgaumc.org.

Below are answers to some common questions that will help steer your church in the right direction as you begin to take steps in developing your own Safe Sanctuaries policy.

Safe Sanctuaries FAQs

My church is eager to get started with Safe Sanctuaries. Where do we begin?

To begin the process of developing a local church Safe Sanctuaries policy, churches are encouraged to form a Safe Sanctuaries Committee and send representatives to one of the five trainings scheduled in 2007-2008. The materials received at the conference training, along with Joy Melton's books *Safe Sanctuaries for Children* and *Safe Sanctuaries for Youth*, will guide the committee in developing a policy appropriate for your church's particular ministry setting. Joy Melton's books can be purchased at Cokesbury, www.cokesbury.com, or during the conference training sessions.

Where can we go to get the Safe Sanctuaries training?

The Office of Connectional Ministries has scheduled five Safe Sanctuaries trainings (see next page for dates). This day-long workshop will focus on the scope of child abuse and the five primary types of abuse; best ways to establish and implement a Safe Sanctuaries policy in your church; proper ways to recruit and screen workers with children, youth and vulnerable adults; proven procedures for safe ministry with children, youth and vulnerable adults; and appropriate ways to respond to allegations of abuse for all involved. Mr. Adam Ricker, Rev. Denise Walton, Rev. Deborah Wight-Knight, Rev. Lowery Brantley and other members of the South Georgia Conference Safe Sanctuaries team will lead the training. All trainings will begin at 10 a.m. and conclude by 3 p.m. Continuing education credit will be available for clergy. Visit www.sgaumc.org for registration information. If you have questions about the training, please contact Adam Ricker or Denise Walton at 888-266-7642.

My church has already attended the conference sponsored Safe Sanctuaries Training. What are the next steps toward developing our policy?

Once your church has completed the five hour conference Safe Sanctuaries training, the church should have all of the necessary information to begin working on your policy. Your Safe Sanctuaries Committee is now ready to proceed in developing your church's policy. Sample policies are available on the conference website at www.sgaumc.org. Once your policy has been developed, members of the Conference Safe Sanctuaries team will be happy to review your policy and provide feedback. For more information, please contact Adam Ricker or Denise Walton at 888-266-7642.

Five Safe Sanctuaries Trainings Scheduled

You are encouraged to send representatives from your local church to one of the following Safe Sanctuaries trainings. If you have questions about the trainings, please contact Adam Ricker or Denise Walton 888-266-7642.

2007-2008 TRAINING DATES

Saturday, September 22, 2007

Pine Forest United Methodist Church, Dublin

Saturday, October 13, 2007

Albany First United Methodist Church, Albany

Saturday, November 3, 2007

Cordele United Methodist Church, Cordele

Saturday, January 26, 2008

Pittman Park United Methodist Church, Statesboro

Saturday, February 16, 2008

Waycross First United Methodist Church, Waycross

Register online at www.sgaumc.org.

Safe Sanctuaries Workshops to be held at Pathways event

Two workshops at the Pathways to a Healthy Church event, scheduled for August 18, 2007, at Trinity United Methodist Church in Warner Robins, will provide information on Safe Sanctuaries. The first workshop is "Where Do We Begin?" and will focus on how to develop a Safe Sanctuaries policy that is appropriate for your local church's ministry. The second workshop is "The Circle of Protection" and will focus on how to develop a Safe Sanctuaries process in your local church to screen paid and volunteer workers. This particular workshop assumes that those attending have participated in the basic five hour Safe Sanctuaries training. For more information on the Pathways event and to register, visit www.sgaumc.org.

South GA United Methodists to travel to East Africa

BY BISHOP MIKE WATSON*

Because of the gracious response to this year's special offering taken during the South Georgia Annual Conference session, enough money has been sent to the East African Annual Conference to purchase the greatly needed 4-wheel drive vehicle that South Georgia United Methodists were asked to provide. This vehicle will enable the bishop and other leaders within the area to travel in mission and ministry across the five nations of Burundi, Uganda, Rwanda, Sudan, and Kenya that make up the diverse East African Annual Conference.

Next month I will be honored to dedicate that vehicle while in Uganda with a mission team from South Georgia as we participate in the latest effort to build our

partnership with East Africa.

Our team will also officially open the wonderful Humble Place United Methodist School in Uganda, take an active part in a Unity Conference for all United Methodists in this far reaching area, preach, teach, baptize, and tangibly proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to our sisters and brothers in East Africa.

We will also be able to take additional financial support with us for the ongoing ministry of Humble Place and other critical human needs because of South Georgia United Methodist generosity through the recent special offering.

The needs in East Africa seem overwhelming from a human point of view. However, South Georgia United Methodist Christians believe that God has given us a vision as

passionate, growing, maturing disciples of our Lord that those who serve in the name of Jesus Christ are living vessels of the Holy Spirit's desire and miraculous power to redeem every soul and circumstance. It is with faith in Christ, emboldened by our vision, that we offer ourselves in ministry even in the face of the most difficult human situations in the world.

We are not alone. God has promised to be with us. God's power is awesome. God's grace is sufficient. The ultimate victory of God's will is assured. Glory hallelujah!

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

School of Christian Mission

Sponsored By: The United Methodist Women

Set for **July 19-22, 2007**, at Epworth By The Sea, the South Georgia Conference School of Christian Mission is still accepting registrations. The school provides opportunities to prepare for leadership in mission study and personal enrichment. It challenges individuals to fulfill their mission calling. This year's Spiritual Growth Study on "Music and Mission" will be led by Rev. Robert and Mrs. Mary Pat Beckum. Rev. Jimmy Cason, Ms. Susan Leonard and Rev. Dr. Charles Cravey will lead the geographic studies on Israel and Palestine, while Mrs. Pat Maddox will lead the general issue study on globalization. Sharing ways individuals and churches can be involved in Volunteers in Missions is Mrs. Jamiellen Gibson. A youth study (rising 7-12 graders) will be led by Courtney Jones and Christopher Topham. Joyce Dent and Sunshine Bird will again be the children's study directors for children in rising grades 1-3 and 4-6. Visit www.sgaumc.org to download a registration form.

Lay Speaker Training

Sponsored By: The Office of Connectional Ministries

Two lay speaking courses will be offered during the 2007 Conference School of Christian Mission scheduled for **July 19-22, 2007** at Epworth By The Sea. Basic Lay Speaking will be taught by Rev. Earl James, Senior Pastor of M.L. Harris UMC in Columbus. An Advanced Lay Speaking course on Spiritual Gifts will also be offered. Randel Bryan, Dublin District Lay Leader, will teach the advanced course. For questions, please contact Rev. Denise Walton at 888-266-7642. Visit www.sgaumc.org to download a registration form.

Discover God's Call

Sponsored By: The Foundation on Evangelism

A Discover God's Call Retreat will be held **November 9-11, 2007**, in Norman Park, GA. Discover God's Call is a three day retreat program preceded by a 26-day home study. Leadership of the retreat is provided primarily by volunteer lay people. The focus of the study and the weekend is to assist participants in identifying their God-given spiritual gifts and how to use these gifts in ministry within their local church and community. The registration deadline is September 28, and the pre-retreat study begins on October 8. Mira Barrett will be the inspirational speaker. Visit www.sgaumc.org to download the registration form. For more information email Buddy Whatley at cbwhatley@hotmail.com.

Georgia PAUMCS Conference

Sponsored By: GA PAUMCS

The Georgia Professional Association of United Methodist Church Secretaries will meet **August 9-12, 2007**, at Aldersgate UMC in Savannah, Ga. for their annual conference and retreat. This retreat is intended to provide a supportive base for the unity and fellowship of its members in order to provide opportunities of individual growth through professional development, continuing education classes, networking and spiritual enrichment. All secretaries, administrative assistants, finance administrators, and other office personnel in United Methodist O offices are encouraged to attend. Visit www.sgaumc.org to download a brochure and registration form.

Sexual Ethics Workshop

Sponsored By: The 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. To register, please contact the office of Deborah Wight-Knight at 478-929-1032 or fumcdwk@bellsouth.net.

September 6, 2007

Tifton First UMC

9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Upcoming Concerts

Third Day

July 21, 2007

Wild Adventures – Valdosta, Ga.

www.wildadventures.net

Mercy Me

Post Game Concert

August 4, 2007

Turner Field – Atlanta, Ga.

braves.mlb.com

2007 Annual Conference Recap

Meeting under the theme “By All Means,” South Georgia United Methodists focused on tangible evangelism during their 2007 Annual Conference at the Savannah Civic Center in Savannah, GA June 3-7.

“A major priority for every Christian is to share faith with others so all can experience the benefits of salvation,” said Bishop B. Michael Watson, resident Bishop of the South Georgia area. “This year’s theme encourages us to follow Paul’s example by prayerfully reaching out to people in ways that will instantly bring a connection so our faith in Christ can be authentically shared.”

The conference celebrated the 300th birthday of Charles Wesley in an uplifting opening worship service. During the service Bishop Watson challenged conference members with two questions: “Are we willing to be the means God can use in our day? Are we willing to use all of the means at our disposal to make disciples of Jesus Christ to save souls and transform the world?”

Hundreds of members took this challenge and, for the second year in a row, scattered across the Savannah community Wednesday morning to be witnesses of faith in Jesus Christ. This Day of Service was a very specific way for members to “by all means” reach out by engaging in various service projects that meaningfully served their neighbors.

Delegates were elected to the 2008 General and Jurisdictional Conferences. Lay delegates elected to General Conference include: Charlene Black (chair), Sylvania; Bill Hatcher, Statesboro; Roy Blackwood, Statesboro; Sunshine Bird, Rincon; Taylor Phillips, Macon; Steve Rumford, Macon. Clergy delegates: Hal Brady, Columbus; Joseph Roberson, Columbus; Bob Moon, Macon; Mike McAfee, Albany; Brad Brady, Macon; Robert Beckum, Americus.

Elected to the 2008 Jurisdictional Conference are: Miriam Hagan, Statesboro; Gloria Gilmore, Savannah; Mark Shelnett, Columbus; Richard

Shinhoster, Savannah; Lee Bush, Bainbridge; Flo Martin, Warner Robins. Clergy delegates: Cindy Autry, Columbus; Buddy Cooper, Columbus; Hugh Davis, Thomasville; Don Adams, Valdosta; Ramon Hernandez, Thomasville; Jimmy Cason, Statesboro.

Alternates are: Laity – Gloria Morgan, Dublin; Matthew Martin, Warner Robins; Robert Anderson, Columbus. Clergy – Marcia Cochran, Waycross; Beverly Flowers, Savannah; Ronnie Wills, Cordele.

In other actions, members:

- Took a special offering for the East Africa Initiative in the amount of \$65,570. Offering was also taken for the Fund for Special Relief (\$2,582.16) and the Ministerial Education Fund (\$2,871.33).
- Adopted a conference and district Safe Sanctuaries policy.
- Approved the recommendations by the District Study Task Force, including shifting the funding for districts to permit drawing new district lines.
- Approved a motion to empower the Bishop and Cabinet to form a committee to engage in dialogue with the North Georgia Annual Conference to study conference lines.
- Voted to move the Conference Pastoral Counselor to a full time position.
- Heard powerful messages from Bishop Lindsey Davis in the Ordination Service, Dr. Don Kea in the Memorial Service and Rev. Hugo Magallanes in the morning

Bible studies.

- Affirmed the ministry of New and Revitalized Congregational Development within the bounds of the South Georgia Conference.
- Were led in an evening worship service by the Mitchell County and Tallahassee Boys’ Choirs.
- Approved a policy that brings the way clergy expenses are paid into compliance with IRS standards.
- Recognized Dr. Sandi Hortman, the first Deaconess consecrated from the South Georgia Conference within the last forty-four years.
- Approved three resolutions, one calling for inclusiveness in the selection of General and Jurisdictional Delegates; one reopening the discussion on parsonages; and one opposing the expansion of alcohol use and abuse.
- Approved a motion that the Council on Finance and Administration study the apportionment formula.
- Received \$10,254.67 from the Publishing House and voted to give this money to be utilized for clergy pensions in the central conferences for the fifth year in a row.
- Approved a budget of \$11,505,287.

Ten people were commissioned, and eight were ordained as full elders. Sixteen pastors retired, and seven were recognized for achieving their 50th anniversary in ministry.

Membership stands 136,805, down 1,017 from the previous year. Worship attendance stands at 52,958, down 75. Church school attendance stands at 27,802, down 1,107.

**Find more
Annual Conference
information at
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including:
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Daily recaps
Bulletin Insert**

Conference Coordinated Calendar 2007

July

16-20 Elementary 3 Camp, EBTS*
19-22 School of Mission, EBTS*
19-22 Lay Speaker Training, EBTS*
21-27 Road Rules
23-26 Pastors' School, EBTS*
24 Extended Cabinet
25 Appointive Cabinet
30 AC Program Committee, Columbus

August

2-13 East Africa Mission Trip
4 UMW Social Issue Workshop, Dublin
9-12 Ga. PAUMCS Conference, Savannah
18 Pathways to a Healthy Church, Warner Robins
24-25 UMW Finance & Executive Committee Meeting, Fitzgerald

September

3 Labor Day Holiday
6 Sexual Ethics Workshop, Tifton
14-16 KidzQuest, EBTS*
24 CFA**, Macon
28 Pastoral Counseling Commission

October

2 Board of Pensions, Macon
13 Safe Sanctuaries, Albany
25-26 Cabinet Spiritual Retreat
26 Petitions Deadline to General Conference

November

3 Safe Sanctuaries, Cordele
8-11 Extended Cabinet Consultation, Lake Junaluska

9-11 Discover God's Call Retreat, Norman Park
22-23 Thanksgiving Holiday

November-December

30-02 Youth Celebration '07, EBTS*

December

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

* Epworth By The Sea

** Council on Finance and Administration

Online Communicator

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