

Among many other agenda items during the four-day event, conference members:

- participated in a worship experience inspired by the story of the wedding in Cana.
- approved a resolution called “Every Church Gives,” which encourages that every church financially support the conference-related health and welfare agencies.
- reversed a decision made by the 2008 Annual Conference session which outlined a transition plan for clergy families to provide their own furnishings for the parsonage.
- approved the building of a new Conference Center in Macon.
- were introduced to Kara Witherow, editor for the new *South Georgia Advocate*, which is now a publication of the conference communications office.
- celebrated that Wesleyan College in Macon, Ga. is preparing to give a full scholarship to a qualified student from the HUMBLE United Methodist School in Uganda to attend Wesleyan College once they have completed their secondary education.
- approved a \$12.4 million budget for mission and ministry for the next year.

A complete appointment book as well as full coverage of Annual Conference may be found at www.sgaumc.org.



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South Georgia Annual Conference Session



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2009 South Georgia Annual Conference Session

"Seek Ye First" was the theme for the 2009 South Georgia Annual Conference Session meeting June 7-10 in Columbus, Ga.

Bishop James R. King, Jr., presiding over his first Annual Conference session since becoming the resident bishop of the South Georgia Area, set the tone for the conference during the opening worship service on Monday morning. In keeping with the theme, Bishop King challenged South Georgia United Methodist to seek God first and claim the slogan: "Growing a Christlike world."

"I want you to focus on five areas of your spiritual life in order to grow more like Christ: worship, Christian education, fellowship accountability, evangelism/witness and justice ministry," said Bishop King.

Special Offering: Central Conference Pension Initiative

Prior to this year's conference, congregations were encouraged to take up a special offering to support the Central Conference Pension Initiative (CCPI). Together South Georgia United Methodists had the privilege of making a significant difference, collecting over \$32,000. Bishop King announced at conference that these gifts have been made even more significant by a \$500,000 donation by an anonymous donor in Georgia, with another donation possible if individuals and churches in South and North Georgia show their support by making gifts and multi-year pledges before October 1.

Day of Service

On Tuesday morning of Annual Conference, conference members traded in their coats and ties, hung up the dresses and heels and put on t-shirts that proclaimed "Seeking the SON through service." More than 400 United Methodists spread out across the community to participate various service projects during the fourth annual Great Day of Service. As Bishop King toured several of the volunteer stations, he said he found love and justice being shown to some of Columbus' neediest citizens. "I saw these Christ-like images throughout Columbus, and that was so exciting," said Bishop King. "It's amazing how manageable the Kingdom of God really is."

Constitutional Amendments

In one of the major actions at the 2009 Annual Conference session, seven hundred fifty-eight conference members voted on 32 proposed constitutional amendments, many of them related to the denomination's structure as a global body. These amendments were approved at the 2008 General Conference session and are now being considered by every United Methodist Annual Conference. Only 5 of the 32 proposed amendments received affirmative support from South Georgia representatives: II, VIII, IX, XIX, XXII.

Worship Leadership

Along with Bishop King, worship leadership was provided by Bishop Marion Edwards in the Ordination Service, Dr. Hugh Davis in the Memorial Service and Dr. Evelyn Laycock in the Bible studies.

Service of Ordination

During a Service of Ordination June 8 fourteen people were ordained as members in full connection:

Carl Randy Barnhardt
Jim R. Coleman
Donald Charles Combs
Sandra Elder Conley
Walter Allen Hartsfield
Bernard Nailiang Khaw
Andrew Howard Lamon

Michael Donovan McCord
Cecile Mitchell
Ivelisse Quinones
Devin A. Schultz
Mike Toluba
Roy Alexander Tracy
Peter Willem Vermeulen

Service of Commissioning and Retirement Recognition

Eleven clergy entering into a probationary relationship with the conference were commissioned and fifteen retired clergy were honored during a Service of Commissioning and Retirement Recognition on June 8. Charles Rupert Puryear, III, was recognized as an associate member of the annual conference. Those being commissioned as elders were:

Joel T. Bateman
George Eugene Collison, Jr.
William Jeffrey Cook
Michael R. Davis
Cathy E. Green
Brett Maddocks

Tyler Plaxico
Bruce Sack
Randall Smith
Reginald "Reggie" Williams
Don Wolfgang

Those retiring were:

Ronald L. Culpepper
Hugh L. Davis
Thomas W. Davis, Jr.
Lonnie E. Dunbar
George F. Durham
C. Graton Helms
Sandra D. Henry
Charles L. Houston, Jr.

Paula Lytle
Michael A. McAfee, Sr.
John A. Mitchell, Jr.
John J. O'Connor
Jeri V. Pruette
E. Warren Williams
Robert F. Williams

Service of Remembrance

Twenty-eight clergy and clergy spouses who died in the past year were remembered during a Memorial Service on Tuesday, June 9.