



Cross Connection

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Thank you for extravagant generosity in 2006

By Bishop Janice Riggle Huie
Texas Annual Conference



Dear Friends,
Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I write to say a "heartfelt thank you"

for your extravagant generosity in your 2006 connectional giving. As I write this, the Center for Connectional Resources is still in the process of final verification of all categories of giving.

However, it is clear that the pastors and congregations of the Texas Annual Conference went "the second

mile" and even "the third mile" to underwrite the mission and ministry of our own conference and the whole United Methodist Church.

Our total payout for 2006 is 93.52 percent – a full two percentage points above 2005 receipts. This means The Texas Annual Conference received \$19,549,180 of our \$20,904,422 budget. This is the largest payout in many, many years.

Your generosity will support ministries from transformation of existing churches to starting new churches to pas-

toral leadership development to fully underwriting our portion of both the General Church World Service Fund (a long tradition in our conference) and the General Church Episcopal Fund (a newer tradition). It also means you exceeded the financial improvement goal you set at the 2006 Annual Conference session.

Four of our nine districts were "100% Districts." Although two or three congregations in each of these districts did not complete

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'Keep the movement moving'

Bishop Norris uplifts King holiday celebrants

By Eleanor L. Colvin
Director of Communications

Bishop Alfred L. Norris of the North Texas Annual Conference recently fanned the flames of change as he encouraged attendees of the Martin Luther King Jr., celebration breakfast in Houston. The Houston Chapter of Black Methodists for Church Renewal hosts the annual event.

The thought-provoking message provided a glimpse at the bishop's involvement in the civil rights movement as a young seminarian in Atlanta in the 1960s, and his personal encounters with Dr. King.

"Though he looked up at me from a physical standpoint, I looked up at him

from a spiritual standpoint," said Bishop Norris. "He was a giant. He was a spiritual



Bishop Alfred L. Norris of the North Texas Conference gives a stirring tribute to King's legacy.

giant."

Addressing a crowd of 400 on the celebration's theme – Lest We Forget –

Norris noted that in the nation's remembrance of King, there is often temptation to idolize the man who the bishop described as an apostle of non-violence.

"King was not Jesus. He was a disciple of Jesus, who looked at Jesus as a model of non-violence, love and peace," said Norris.

Let the record reflect

Norris, who was the first African-American bishop to serve the Texas Annual Conference, also reflected on the relevance of remembering not only King's legacy, but the legacy and contributions of people of color in the United Methodist Church.

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UM Service Center welcomes Banman to Center for Missional Excellence

By Thelma Jones
Editor, Cross Connection



Jacqueline Banman

The Center for Missional Excellence began 2007 by adding new personnel to its staff - - Associate Director

Jacquelyn Banman. She will work closely with Rev. Rick Goodrich, Assistant to the Bishop of the Texas Conference.

"The main focus of my position is to assist Rev. Goodrich in guiding and directing the Missional Excellence teams in the Conference's new model for ministry," says Banman.

With a background as a pastor and ordained Elder (Hillcrest UMC in Mayfield Heights, E. Ohio Conference), a chaplain and Human Resources manager, she is uniquely qualified for the position.

Banman's past ministerial experience and training are assets in her current position.

She developed and received recognition for a program for animal-assisted therapy. The goal of the program was the study of positive interaction between older adults and children with animals in a psychiatric hospital. The program was published in the *Journal of Pastoral Care*.

Additionally, she has served as a Chaplain at Prairie View Mental Health Center in Newton, Kansas (1983), Georgia Mental Health Institute's Children Unit in Atlanta, Georgia (1987-1988) and the Harris County Psychiatric Center in Houston, Texas (1989-1992).

So, what is next for this native of Ohio?

"To utilize my corporate business background and my ministry to fit in with the new structure for the Conference," she says.

In her spare time she enjoys sailing (which is evident by the artwork in her office) and spending time with her eight year old huskie, Shasha.

Do you have information to share with others?

The next deadline for the Cross Connection newspaper is February 2, 2007.



The mission of the Texas Annual Conference is to equip congregations to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world to the glory of God.

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Bishop Norris uplifts King holiday celebrants

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“Don’t destroy your records. People coming behind us need to know

forget them?”

A part of remembering is retelling. One way of safe-

skin pigmentation was light.

“Tell that to your chil-

dren, so they won’t grow up believing that only blacks achieved freedom for blacks. There were a whole lot of white people in the struggle. They didn’t have to be. But they had to be because of their relationship with God.”

“People coming behind us need to know where we were, what we were doing, what we were saying and how we were faring. They can’t know it if we don’t keep our records . . . Some of the records indicate that people of color have not passed this way.”

**Bishop Alfred L. Norris
North Texas Annual Conference**

where we were, what we were doing, what we were saying and how we were faring,” Norris said. “They can’t know it if we don’t keep our records. . . . Some of the records indicate that people of color have not passed this way.

“If we don’t keep records it will read as though we never paid a penny in church apportionments. It will read as though we never served a Windsor Village, Trinity, St. John’s, Riverside, Norris Chapel or any of the rest. It’s just that simple.”

The social amnesia that some suffer from – the inability or unwillingness to remember the journey – could be credited to the gains that people of color have made.

“The gains. . . have dulled our senses and erased our memory of sacrifices made by our forbearers,” Norris said. “In the desire to be propelled forward, how can we

guarding the legacy is to pass it on to the next generation.

“We didn’t get where we are because someone was generous enough to walk up and say, ‘You ought to have this,’” said Norris. “Let your children know what we went through.”

One in the spirit

The bishop’s address also promoted unity among Christians of all ethnicity. Recognizing that all who call God, “Father,” must call one another “brother” and “sister.”

“Some of you may think the war for racial integration, civil rights, human rights was waged by black people and nobody else helped,” Norris said. “People the color of Karen Dorris and Jim Foster and Jim Jackson helped. A whole lot of people were murdered whose

Still today, it’s one’s relationship with God that continues to remain a driving force in righting relationships with one’s fellow man. Following in the footsteps of Jesus, Martin Luther King Jr., modeled the Christian’s role in the continuing struggle for human rights. King not only preached non-violence, Norris said, he personified non-violence to the core.

Hence, the ancient challenge for the contemporary Christian: to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God.

“We are the church of Jesus Christ. We must lay down the implements of war and walk peacefully, walk determinedly, walk in community,” Norris said. “We must do it because we believe that unless we do it the kingdom won’t come on earth as it is in heaven.”

Thanks for the extravagant generosity in 2006

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their full contribution, other churches in the district gave “over and above” so that their district would be “paid in full.” I want to say a special thank you to those pastors and congregations.

Finally, each year brings a different situation for each of our congregations. Some of you are in building programs. Others are carrying significant debt from previous capital improvement. Still others have experienced unexpected changes in circumstance. Such demands increase the difficulty of full pay out.

A number of congregations truly gave sacrificially in order to fully fund their part of benevolence giving. On behalf of the whole church, thank you for holding steady in a particularly difficult time.

Please be assured that I will do my best to continue to lead the Texas Annual Conference to use your gifts wisely to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

We will give you more complete information as it is available.

God bless you in this New Year,

Janice Riggle Huie



Conference Memorials

Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Psalms 16:9-11

July 2006

Audrey C. Pace Barfield

August 2006

Rev. Mimi Nochola
Rev. Cecil D. Harper, Jr.

September 2006

Rev. James Earl McCullar
Elodie Pillet Breaux

October 2006

Rev. William Darwin Andrus
Bettye Walline Earle Raines
Evelyn M. Wyatt

November 2006

Rev. J. Wayne Haberson
Rev. John Monroe Cheney, Jr.
Pearl Jones Cornelius
Rev. Richard Franklin Crosson

December 2006

Marjorie Berry Chapman
Bobbie R. Morrison
Mary Lou Krause
Rev. Neal Anthony Seymour

January 2007

Rev. William M. Robinson

Ignite!

Ministry focuses on connecting local churches and college students

By Wesley Duncan, Director of College Ministries - Christ UMC College Station and Thelma Jones, Editor Cross Connection

Ignite! Webster's dictionary defines the word, as to set fire to or to arouse or kindle the passions of something or someone. Using these definitions of the word, it is not surprising that The South Six College Ministries of Christ United Methodist Church in College Station, Texas chose 'Ignite' as the title for a conference for college students scheduled for Saturday, February 10, 2007, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Wesley Duncan the coordinator of this event feels there is a great need for the college community to know that the Methodist church has not forgotten college students during this period of their lives.

"We have an opportunity to reach out to many of the future leaders of our churches and encourage and educate them to all that the Methodist church has to offer them and their future," he says. "If they get involved in the church today and form a bond with the work of the church, we can help create educated, dynamic leaders of the church tomorrow."

What should the church

do to attract and keep young adults involved in the life of the church?

"This is a prime opportunity to let the community of college students know that the Methodist church is vibrant, cutting edge and influential in the world. We must form churches or have churches in college communities that target and focus on helping college students by making them a priority."

Duncan also suggests offering new and dynamic worship services.

"Our congregations must minister to these students now, so they can become the founders of ministry in the future."

Leslie Mott, a student involved in the College Ministry feels the church could do more to support students. "We feel that the churches that we grew up in have abandoned us during our college years," says Mott.

"An occasional phone call or package that encourages us in our spiritual journey would be welcome. When we come home for the summer or for breaks, there is no college Sunday School class or activi-

ties for us."

The conference is geared toward rejuvenating the college age group within the United Methodist Church. Guest speakers will engage and challenge students to pursue a Christ-focused life through their lifestyle, missions, worship and leadership. It will also tackle some of the concerns about students and the local church staying connected.

Guest speakers include Rev. Robert Johnson (Windsor Village UMC), Rev. Todd Jordan (Trinity UMC, Beaumont), Josef Klam (Chapelwood UMC, Houston) and West District Superintendent, Dr. W. Earl Bledsoe who will lead small group discussions. Recording artist Wayne Kerr will lead all worship services.

The cost for the conference is \$15 with lunch included. To register for the conference or for more information, contact Wesley Duncan at wesley-duncan@christ-umc.org.

Perkins announces 2007 recipient of distinguished alumnus award

By Dena Hill
SMU - Perkins School of Theology



Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, announces the selection of the Rev. Dr. William A. Holmes as the Perkins School of Theology Distinguished Alumnus for 2007.

The award is given each year to an alumnus or alumna who personifies effectiveness and integrity in service to the church and wider community; support and involvement in the goals of

the seminary and university; and exemplary character. This award will be presented at an 11:30 a.m. luncheon in Dr. Holmes' honor on Feb. 6, 2007, during Perkins' Ministers Week.

Dr. Holmes, who first came to national prominence following a sermon preached in the days following the assassination of John F. Kennedy, has served in a number of significant ministries.

He began his career in Dallas in 1955 as associate minister of Highland Park

United Methodist Church and also has been the minister of Northaven UMC in Dallas; a part-time instructor in Homiletics at Perkins; a senior minister at First UMC in Denton, Texas; senior minister of University UMC in Austin, Texas; and minister of preaching and administration, National United Methodist, Metropolitan Memorial UMC in Washington, D.C., where he is Minister *Emeritus*. Holmes retired in 1998.

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Celebration invites you to make a new resolution: Go deeper with God

By Cathy Busa, Vice President
Celebration Women's Ministry

This time of the year people often are thinking about what they can do to improve themselves. This year, Celebration Ministries offers the following challenge to women in the United Methodist church:

Consider truly making this New Year the year that you take that next step in your faith journey and come to know Jesus on a deeper level.

Celebration's *Pure Joy Conference* will be held February 23-25 at the Hotel Sofitel in Houston, Texas. This event is designed to help you meet your spiritual goals for 2007. Joanna Weaver, nationally known author of *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World*, will be the keynote speaker of the conference and its leader through the weekend.

This year's workshop speakers promise a wide variety of topics that will aid you in getting to know yourself and truly looking at where God is in life's situations:

Rev. Suzette Caldwell's workshop is entitled, "The Little Black Book - Don't Leave Home Without It." Caldwell, who heads the Kingdom Builders Prayer Institute, has committed her life to achieving excellence through Biblical living. She strongly believes that any person who is willing to "walk by

faith" and trust God will achieve their dreams and desires.

Shannon Perry is one of Christian music's most anointed artists. Not only does she write and sing the powerful message of Jesus Christ, she knows the importance of living it on a daily basis. Her workshop topic is "Can You Hear Me Now?"

Dr. Lydia Waters, a lively Methodist preacher, is back by popular demand from the 2006 event. She may have officially "retired," but she still serves as a church consultant and workshop leader across the nation. Dr. Waters will lead the workshop: *Becoming "A Bold and Beautiful Believer."*

Plan to bring your daughters or young ladies that are in junior and/or senior high. Youth leader Lisa Mayhugh, accompanied by a team of college-age counselors has planned great activities for the youth to help them learn more about living a Godly life.

Celebration Ministries invites you to come and find out what God has in store for you in 2007.

For more information or to register online, visit www.celebrationministries.org or call Cathy Busa, VP/Conference, at 281.890.2466.

**Wiley College A'Cappella Choir
will be in Concert at
Blueridge UMC
2929 Reed Road**

Sunday, February 25, 2007 at 4 P.M.

**This event is sponsored by the
Houston Area Wiley Alumni Club**

**The choir will also perform at the morning
worship service at Trinity UMC
2600 Holman
Houston, Texas**

Internship to aid 12 young disciples in discerning call to ministry

By The Center for Clergy Excellence

The Center for Clergy Excellence is accepting applications for a new pastoral internship program tailored to meet the needs of young adults who are considering God's call to ministry in their lives.

Twelve individuals between the ages of 19-24 will be selected from applicants across the conference for this summer's inaugural program.

While the Bible is full of tales about God summoning ordinary people into God's service, it is still a challenge for many young people to know whether or not they have truly heard "the call" in their own lives. It is a story as old as Samuel and a question as timely as tomorrow.

The Pastoral Internship Project of the Texas Annual Conference was developed to help people answer that question. The program will provide a transformational experience in Christian ministry within the United

Methodist setting and a positive peer and mentor group for further

reflection and discernment.

The Pastoral Internship Project is not for everyone, but only for those who are genuinely open to the idea of God's calling as they discover whether their gifts and graces match the needs and requirements of ordained ministry within the church.

Interns must have complet-

ed at least one year of college, earning no less than a 2.5 grade point average, and be interested in exploring the ministry as a career.

Additionally, interns should have some past experience in mission programs such as U.M. ARMY, Partners in Mission, or the equivalent.

"We anticipate that in three years we'll have students waiting in line for these internships," said the Rev. Carol Bruse, associate director of the Center for Clergy Excellence. "But this is the first year, so they just don't know about it yet."

Summer of service

Following their selection, those participating in the internship program will begin their summer with a mandatory orientation retreat May 22-23, in Galveston. The retreat will be followed by their assignment in teams of two to their

Interns will gain hands-on experience in all aspects of pastoral ministry, including pastoral care, visitation, outreach, and sharing God's word with others.

"Summer of Service" ministry site. Ministry sites will be located throughout the bounds of the conference.

If assigned to a place away from their hometowns, housing for the interns will be provided by the host congregation. Housing may include independent living arrangements or staying with a host family.

Interns will be responsible for their own meals, transportation and personal expenses.

Church pastors will supervise the internships, which are



intended to be expansive in nature – beyond simply working with youth or children. Interns will gain hands-on experience in all aspects of pastoral ministry, including pastoral care, visitation, outreach, and sharing God's word with others.

A day-long meeting of all project participants will be held midway through the summer. In addition,

there will be scheduled visits to a variety of ministry settings and a visit with selected conference officers. A second retreat at the conclusion of the summer will enable interns to process and reflect upon their experiences, as well as the possibility of ministry as a career.

Thanks to a generous

grant by the Permanent Endowment Fund of Moody Memorial United Methodist Church in Galveston, and through additional funds of the

young people moving toward ordained ministry within The United Methodist Church.

Apply now

Application forms are available online at www.txcumc.org. Click Administration, Center for Clergy Excellence and Candidates. Return the application along with the required letters of reference to Rev. Carol Bruse at the Center for Clergy Excellence.

Personal interviews for prospective candidates will be held in late March, and those selected for the project will be notified by April 1.

Participants will be required to complete a background check and Safe Sanctuary training, offered as a part of the orientation retreat. The project will conclude on August 1.

The deadline to submit an application form and three letters of reference is March 1. One letter should be from the pastor of the applicant's home congregation or any campus ministries with which the applicant has been involved. Candidates must be active in a United Methodist Church or campus ministry at the time of application.

For additional information, contact Rev. Bruse, associate director of the Center for Clergy Excellence at 713-521-9383; bruse@txcumc.org or Texas Annual Conference, 5215 Main Street, Houston, Texas, 77002.

Perkins announces recipient for alumnus award

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Holmes graduated from Hendrix College in Conway, Ark., in 1952, with a Bachelor of Arts degree. He earned a Master of Divinity degree from Perkins in 1954, and continued in postgraduate studies at Union Theological seminary in New York, N.Y., through 1955.

In addition, he was awarded a Doctor of Divinity Degree in 1970 from Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas, and a Doctor of Humane Letters in 1978 from Western Maryland

College in Westminster, Md.

Holmes' experience includes work as an author, lecturer, and television host.

His sermons have been published in *A Man Named John F. Kennedy*, Paulist Press; "The Christian Century;" and *Sermons on Suicide*, Westminster/John Knos Press, 1989.

Holmes is married to Nancy Murray, and they have two grown sons, Will and Chris, and six grandchildren.

Lay and clergy must work for growth

By Eleanor L. Colvin
Director of Communications

The first 2007 meeting of the Core Leadership Team took place Friday, January 19, with the group exploring the 2006 activities of the Centers for Excellence and examining a process of accountability for the conference.

Additionally, the Core Leadership Team will host a listening tour throughout the Annual Conference March 4-9, to gain feedback from laity and clergy regarding the first year of service under the new Model for Ministry.

As always, the CLT meeting began with devotion. Lay member Minta Clark of Devers

First UMC in the Southeast District led the January devotion, which she centered on 1 Timothy and the importance of strong lay leadership and clergy working together.

Clark recounted a time in her congregation when a pastor died while under appointment there. In the following months, the lay workers stepped up to fill the ministry voids and retired ministers, and even the district superintendent stepped in to meet the preaching needs.

"Frankly, we were not used to such good speaking," Clark said. "We've had pastors with outstanding talents ... After

the death of our pastor, we found we could do a lot of the pastoring ourselves – visit the sick, visiting the nursing homes. We became so acutely aware of what a good communicator in the pulpit can do."

Excellent communication of the church's mission, vision and spiritual mandate is essential.

"We need to support and aid our ministers all we can," Clark said. "And, get good communicators in the pulpit. If the message doesn't come through from the pulpit, we're going to have a hard time making our churches grow."