

Outstanding Lay Ministries:

Burlington District: Orange UMC—“Prison Ministry”

This ministry aims to restore and heal the lives of incarcerated fathers, their children, and their caregivers by offering the life saving grace of Jesus Christ. At the annual “One day with God Camp” Orange UMC brings 24 fathers from the Orange Correctional Center together with their children for a day of food, fellowship, games, crafts, praise and worship. Prior to this day the fathers spend time in parenting classes. As a follow-up to the camp church members meet monthly with the fathers to encourage them to continue strengthening their relationships with their children. Caregivers of the children are simultaneously given a special day as well. The church members also serve on faith teams that are designed to help fathers re-enter society when their prison term has ended. The church also reaches out to inmates and their children through Angel Tree—gifts at Christmas, bimonthly worship services at the prison, bible study, and the “sponsorship of inmates” with the inmates having supervised time away from prison.

Durham District: Carr UMC- “Firefighter Ministry”

Carr UMC chose 4 fire stations within a 5 mile radius of the church and “adopted” the 40-50 firefighters who are based at those stations into their care. All members of the church including shut-ins are involved in the ministry in some way. They prepare and deliver care packages, they pray for the firefighters and their families, they make and deliver prayer cloths. This small church is reaching out to its community and building relationships in the name of Jesus Christ.

Elizabeth City District: Mount Olivet UMC--“Joy Store Ministry”

Housed in the church, the Joy Store is set up to provide persons with financial needs the ability to purchase new items at drastically reduced prices at Christmas. Once the shopper has paid for their items they are given a food voucher to the local grocery store for half the amount they spent. The remaining monies collected go toward stocking the church food pantry for the rest of the year. It took approximately \$8,000.00 to stock the store with items to sell. Over the last 2 years 875 individuals in 229 families were served with 135 church members volunteering their time to the ministry.

Fayetteville District: Person Street UMC--“Martha’s Table Community Kitchen”

In the spirit of John Wesley, Person Street UMC (a small membership church) is reaching out to their community to feed the hungry and homeless twice a month. By this outreach they seek to fill the physical needs and spiritual hunger of the poor in their community and to offer dignity, grace, and the love of Jesus Christ.

Greenville District: Salem UMC – “Kids for Jesus” and Trinity UMC, Belhaven – “Feed the Need Stampede Ministry”

“Kids for Jesus” is focused on reaching the diverse children of the community and drawing them into the life of the church. A Wednesday night meal and ministry with children is held weekly as well as special holiday events. The outreach to the community is widespread and the events are publicized through the public schools and area day care centers. Also, the children are encouraged and inspired to participate in mission related activities. Worship attendance at the church has grown from 150 to 250 persons since the beginning of this ministry.

“Feed the Need Stampede” provides (free of charge) a breakfast of eggs, bacon, grits, bread, muffins, and coffee to approximately 75 person in the community once a month. Fellowship and loving hospitality abound as the poor are feed. The church volunteers supply the food and also cook and serve it. In addition, they also deliver food to shut-ins. As the outreach has grown the members of Trinity are not only serving plates to the poor but also those who work in service to

the poor such as the local hospital staff, the local Boys and Girls Club, as well as local police personnel.

New Bern District: Trinity-New Bern, Centenary, Garber UMC---“iServe Ministry”

Youth from these three United Methodist Churches as well as youth from other denominations and the local high school come together for this student-led ministry. “iServe” is a community based service organization whose purpose is to serve the needs of lower income individuals and families. The services projects include a recreation day for Burmese refugee children, yard work, volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, park clean-ups, painting for the ECPI Pregnancy Center, and recently the building of wheelchair ramps for persons with disabilities. Adult volunteers add support and advise.

Raleigh District: Horne Memorial UMC-“Ryan Epps Home for Children in Haiti”

In 2007 Helen Little a lay member of Horne Memorial UMC established the Ryan Epps Home for Children in Haiti. Members of Horne UMC cover 90% of school fees and 75% of living expenses for the orphans. Salaries for the caregivers and money for food also come from church members. (Since the earthquake the children and their caregivers are living in tents. They are safe, well-fed, and receive medical care when necessary). Due to the spring rainy season plans for a permanent facility have been put into overdrive. Horne Memorial (Patrick Tormey & Helen Little), UMVIM (Butch Huffman), and Compassionate Alliance (Steve Ewing) are partnering together to build a new facility. The facility will house 32 children. It will also provide a school for the orphans and the community, a Christian church, and shelter during storms and hurricanes. In addition, many members of Horne Memorial UMC including youth travel to Haiti on mission trips, organize and participate in fundraisers for the orphanage, and solicit and package supplies for the children.

Rockingham District: Pee Dee UMC—“Community Breakfast Ministry”

This ministry provides breakfast monthly to primarily un-churched persons in the Rockingham area. The breakfast is intended to provide ministry outside the church walls and invite people into a safe environment, allowing them to feed their physical body as well as their spiritual body. The ministry has enabled the members of Pee Dee to be in risk-taking ministry and show the love of Christ to persons who may be in need of spiritual healing. The theme of this ministry is "You must meet people where they are." The ministry is entirely self-supporting. Pee Dee also participates in local ecumenical food ministries taking hot meals to shut-ins in partnership with Baker House Ministries of Rockingham.

Rocky Mount District: Spring Hope Charge (Gibson Memorial / White Oak)—“Faith Christian Ministries of Spring Hope—Uniting in Christ to Feed His People”

14 churches from several denominations joined together to establish a clothing thrift store for the community. The proceeds are used to support an onsite food pantry and to assist the poor with paying utility bills. An empty store-front was offered to the ministry on a 10 year lease for \$1.00 per month. Volunteers from each of the churches worked side-by-side remodeling the space. Community ecumenical worship services in support of the ministries draw hundreds of people in the area. The poor are being served and the faith community is crossing ecumenical and interracial boundaries as witness to their faith.

Sanford District: Jonesboro UMC –“Military Ministry”

The members of Jonesboro UMC have “adopted” 3 military units; one 96 member unit stationed in Baghdad, Iraq, a 68 member unit stationed in Ur, Iraq, and their local 86 member Sanford National Guard stationed just outside of Baghdad. The church members have sent hundreds of care boxes, homemade cookie boxes, Christmas, Easter, and Valentine cards, pocket bibles and

crosses, and Christmas gifts. They also paid for the shipping of 227 pounds of school supplies and playground supplies such as soccer balls, jump ropes, frisbees etc. Children, youth and adults have all participated in this outreach ministry.

Wilmington District: Oleander UMC and Pine Valley UMC-“Common Threads” and Wesley Memorial UMC—“(S.O.W.ers) Serving Others at Wesley”

“Common Threads” is a ministry outreach that seeks to bring comfort to persons who are terminally ill. As a part of the outreach the group designs and creates pillowcases to be given to individuals who are dying. The brightly colored cases with the butterfly symbol serve as a visible reminder that hope lives even as death becomes a reality. Attached to each pillowcase is the scripture verse; “I will both lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me lie down in safety.” (Psalm 4:8). Pillowcases are taken to the Hospice Life Centers, to individuals in the care of Coastal AIDS Resource Effort, and the AIDS Clinic of New Hanover Regional Hospital. Members of the ministry provide companionship to the recipients as they witness to the love of Jesus Christ. To date 217 butterfly pillowcases have been distributed.

The “Sowers Ministry” reaches out to senior citizens, widows, and other persons in need by providing home maintenance care for things they can no longer do or afford to do for themselves. The church members have provided help with plumbing, trimming shrubbery, checking smoke alarms, housing painting, door repair and many other kinds of routine house maintenance. Their goal is to ease the burdens of their aging neighbors and to “be the church” in their community by sharing the love of Christ.