

NC Conference UMC Youth Newsletter

ZOE Seed Grants

Several youth groups from the North Carolina United Methodist Conference have been selected to be the first recipients of a ZOE Seed Grant. They will be reaching out to others by raising awareness and money to support the African youth who are partaking in ZOE's Giving Hope Empowerment Project. Each group is given a Seed Grant of \$100 and will multiply their investments by coming up with ideas for fundraisers. Each North Carolina UMC Youth Partner Group has an adult mentor working with them.

Pine Valley UMC Youth Group in Wilmington will host "Leave Your Mark '09". It is the fund raising/awareness theme where there will be a family day featuring a benefit concert, car show and silent auction. Their mentors are Susan Graebe and Greg Jenks.

The youth from Soapstone UMC in Raleigh, NC designed a Pillow Pals Ministry where old t-shirts are turned into personal pillows. The proceeds from the ministry will go to ZOE's Giving Hope program. Susan Graebe is their mentor.

Mebane UMC Youth from Mebane, NC plan to host a ZOE Festival. It will include a pancake breakfast, a bake sale, and a "talent auction". The skills of the youth such as babysitting and yard work will be auctioned off to the highest bidder. At the end of the day the youth will care for children allowing a "Parents Night Out". Beth Rosko is their ZOE Mentor.

Harbor UMC youth group in Wilmington, NC will be creating ZOE prayer cards that can be used as bookmarks in order to raise awareness and monthly sponsors for ZOE Ministry. Lisa Southerland will be their ZOE Mentor.

Youth from First UMC in Wilson, NC will be having several fundraisers. These include two fellowship meals where participants will learn more about the work of ZOE and have the opportunity to support ZOE by donating money or purchasing crafts. Their goal is \$4,000 and their mentor is Dawn Woody.

The skit performed by Flat Rock UMYF from Henderson, NC, during Pilgrimage '08 will be performed several more times for churches and organizations to get more partners for ZOE. Mentors are Rhonda Bethea and Sandy Bryant.

The youth of Christ Community UMC in Clayton, NC have devised a unique way to raise awareness for ZOE through a project that began as a

funny story. Recently, as their youth group was standing in a parking lot, they watched an individual place fast food on top of his car so he could pull out his keys. He then drove away as his late-night snack went flying through the air. A few weeks later, someone from Christ Community created a fast food prototype, placed it on top of his car, and drove to their weekly youth meeting. Loving the joke, many people wanted one for their car as well. So they are taking orders and will include information about their church and ZOE Ministry in this attention-getting fundraiser. Greg Jenks is their mentor. If you see Greg driving around Clayton with chicken on his car, don't be alarmed!

Written by Sarah Cratt – Greenville District

Testimony

During the summer of 2008, my life was saved. I was at Camp Don Lee for the summer partaking in a four week leadership program. I had been at camp for less than a week when my boyfriend of over ten months called me and broke up with me for another girl... over voicemail. Our relationship was not a healthy one; I was alienated from all of my friends and family, completely dependent on him. For a long time before we got together I was a cutter, it was the only way I could come up with to deal with the pressures of my family, school, and my friends. I was always the strong one, at least on the outside, inside I was falling apart. When he and I got together I thought I had finally found someone who understood, but the isolation just made the cutting escalate. When I got that voicemail, as lame as it sounds, my world came crashing down. Because I was so isolated in the first place, I felt like I had nowhere to turn. Come to find out, the other twenty teenagers that surrounded me at camp, people I had only known for a few days, came to my rescue. One of the guys found out what I had been doing; I went to him one night when I knew I was on the verge of hurting myself. He talked me down, let me cry, and threw my knives away. Forty bucks down the drain, but because of that, he gave me my life back. Now, whenever I feel alone, or like my world is crumbling, I remember what they taught me. I pray, I ask for strength, I thank God for them, and I hold on tight to the life I finally have again. I haven't cut myself in nine months, and I thank God for everyday that I don't bleed.

Written by Reynolds Bond – Fayetteville District

Lord, Help My Unbelief!

As I write this it is Palm/Passion Sunday afternoon. Of course, you're reading this much later than that but when I have one of those "ah-ha!" moments, I like to get it down while it's still fresh on my mind. I had one of those "ah-ha!" moments this morning.

At worship this morning we read both the Scripture passages from the Gospel of Mark: Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem with the waving of palms and the shouts of "Hosanna!" and the trial, sentencing, and crucifixion of Jesus as the crowds shouted "Crucify Him!" Rev. Lisa Yebuah (Pilgrimage speaker a couple of years ago and the Associate Pastor at my church) preached on how we are both voices – sometimes shouting "Hosanna!" and sometimes shouting "Crucify Him!" She talked about how we don't like to admit that or think about that – we want to be the "Hosanna!" people – and not think of ourselves as the "Crucify Him!" crowd.

The other thing that happened today was my reading of the latest edition of *The United Methodist Reporter*. The issue focused on the response of our churches and people of faith to the current economic situation in which we find ourselves. Anytime I start to think about the economy – I get depressed and discouraged. I start to despair and become fearful. Not much of a response for a so-called person of faith. Sounds like more of a "crucify him" voice than a "hosanna" shout. Then I read an article titled "*What can Wesleyans offer to ease economic anxiety?*" Here are some of the highlights from that article: [denominational leaders – Bishops and agency leaders – reminded United Methodists in an "open letter"]:

... "our faith does not rise and fall with the financial markets but resides in the enduring love of God who is present with us as we struggle and strive to love God and our neighbors {Hey, isn't that our youth ministry theme for this year?} ... At all times, but especially in fearful and dangerous days, we followers of Jesus are called to live in hope and in the assurance that God is present with us."

In his book *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*, Bishop Robert Schnase says: "People need to know that they are not alone; that when they face life's difficulties, they are surrounded by a community of grace..." {the church}. "People need to know the peace that runs deeper than an absence of conflict, the hope that sustains them even through the most painful periods of grief, the sense of belonging that blesses them and stretches them and lifts them out of their own preoccupations."

In the words of our Methodist founder John Wesley in his sermon "The Danger of Riches": "I

gain all I can, without hurting either soul or body. I save all I can, not willingly wasting anything. I give all I can, so I am effectually secured from laying up treasures on earth." {We have summarized this to say earn all you can, save all you can, give all you can ...}

Now trying to tie all this together – I'm faced with asking myself: What's really important? Where do I place my faith? Do I have that peace and hope and belonging that Schnase talks about? When am I being a voice of "Crucify Him" and when am I being a voice of "Hosanna!"? The point of this morning's sermon was that we are both voices (that is the human condition) but Jesus is steadfast through it all. That steadfastness, uncompromising sacrifice of Jesus for me and you and all the world is what's really important – in good times as well as challenging, difficult times. Also what's really important is how I respond to that gift of God's boundless grace and love. Read Psalm 27:1-5, 13-14. *Lord, help my unbelief!*

May that faith, peace, love and joy be yours and mine!

Written by Sue Ellen Nicholson
Conference Youth Coordinator

Amazing Love, Amazing Youth, Amazing Witness

Last fall, some of the youth of the New Bern District participated in a Stop Hunger Now event, packaging food for the world's hungry. That event catapulted youth and leaders to an energized and amazing outcome. Let me tell you the stories I know. Richlands UMC youth heard about this 30 Hour Famine event after packaging the meals – though they did not travel to Don Lee Center, they participated in the famine. **28 students** slept in boxes, fasted, and collected approximately **\$2,600** towards World Visions famine relief efforts. When they called World Vision they heard of the matching sponsor grant and the **\$2,500** they reported in the phone call was matched at 5 times their efforts. That means **\$2,600 plus \$12,500** going towards eliminating hunger in the world.

The stories don't stop there. The youth groups able to come to Don Lee Center met Friday night in the CLC. David Weber, Lance Sellon, Ellen Creasman and I are grateful for the leaders that came and stepped up into unexpected roles over the course of the weekend. Close to **90 youth and adults** fasted for 30 hours, worked in the rain, learned about hunger and poverty. We had youth from Trinity Jacksonville, Tabernacle, Swansboro, Garber, Centenary, Northwoods, and First UMC Havelock.

These students committed to raise **\$5,000** by September for our next Stop Hunger Now meal packaging event. **This equates to 20,000 meals.**

During the closing communion service, students witnessed to the understanding that the love of God connects all of us together and through those connections brings about life-changing love in action. New Bern District has amazing youth and leaders. They are willing to share their amazing love with the world and make an amazing witness to the power of God to change people's lives.

Let us hear your stories!

Written by Carolyn Roy – New Bern District Youth Coordinator

Now for a word from the Conference Youth Officers...

From the President

Hello everyone,

This is your Conference Youth President James Van Staaldin. I hope all of you are as excited about this summer as I am. I have a few things to tell you about in this letter, but I would first like to mention Annual Conference which takes place June 10 – 13. I know most of you are thinking that Annual Conference is boring and only for adults, but I must say that nothing is farther from the truth. As a matter of fact, each district is asked to have two youth members attend AC each year. It may be too late to be registered as a youth member (I'm honestly not sure), but it would be fine for youth to come to Annual Conference as a visitor. If any youth are interested in attending Annual Conference please contact your district youth coordinator for more information. If you are interested, the youth report will be given by yours truly on Friday, June 12.

Another upcoming event that I would like to mention is Annual Conference Session for Youth or ACS. It will be held July 20 – 25, at Methodist University in Fayetteville. It is not too late to register, so if you are interested in attending please register soon and don't forget! I hope all of you have a great summer, and I hope to see you all soon. Love and God bless!

Written by James Van Staaldin

From the Vice President

Hello Youth,

I am excited to say this year is already off to a great start! Since the last newsletter, we have already had **SIX** conference events!!! Wow hard to believe how time flies. The six events that have come and gone are the PK Getaway, Lay Speaker Training, Confirmation Celebration, Global Vision, Kaleidoscope, and Rally Day. Don't worry, there are still four more events you can register for but hurry up because they are filling up fast.

Unfortunately I was only able to make it to two of these past events, but I had a blast while I was there. I spoke about my life growing up in the church at the Confirmation Celebration. It was amazing to see the large number of youth ready to make a commitment to the Methodist Church. They seemed extremely excited to embark on a lifelong faith journey.

Rally Day was a great time to socialize and grow with youth from all over the conference. We could not have asked for better weather this year. The sun was shining and the sky was bright blue as we played on moon-bounces, ran around the open field, and sang along with the band. Charles Killian graced us with a story as he spoke to the crowd.

I was also privileged enough to attend the Elizabeth City Beach Retreat in February. I was a little bit nervous on my drive to Nags Head because I could count the number of people I knew there on one hand, but as soon as I got there I was instantly welcomed and had a blast. A group of guys even let me room with them even though I had never met them before that night.

As the 2009 school year comes to an end, remember to stay strong in your faith. **DON'T FORGET TO REGISTER FOR THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL HIKE, ACS, AND PILGRIMAGE!!!**

Written by Murphy Carroll

From the LAP

Hey everyone! Ben Lord here, your Conference Legislative Affairs Person. We're halfway between the two major events in the year of the youth Legislative Affairs Person; Global Vision and ACS. Global Vision was a smashing success this year, with a group of around 35 youth representing the NCCUMC UMYF (gotta love the acronyms!) at the United Methodist building in Washington D.C., and at the United Nations church building in classic New York City. We attended thought-provoking and view-challenging seminars regarding poverty and globalization. ACS is just around the corner and your

2008-2009 Resolutions Committee has prepared some positively spectacular potential resolutions for debate and consideration, on topics ranging from nuclear non-proliferation to farmer worker's rights. However, if any youth would like to contribute more to the Resolutions Committee or if you have questions about legislative affairs or any other conference events, feel free to email me at bglord37@gmail.com. Thanks guys and God Bless! I love you dearly.

Written by Ben Lord

From the Treasurer

Hey Conference People!

Can you believe how fast this year is flying by? I know I can't and I am excited about the upcoming events this summer! Breakaway is right around the corner and it is such an awesome experience. If you haven't gone before, you definitely need to look into going soon. There isn't any room left this year, but you should make plans for next year, because it's just that awesome! Then after Breakaway is ACS for the Senior High kids!!! If you haven't signed up, there is still time to do so and I strongly encourage everyone of the age to do it. ACS has definitely made a huge impact on my life and I will never forget the memories made there. ACS is where all the officers for the conference are elected so if you want to become one, you need to go and run!! Being an officer has enriched my conference experience over the past year and I would recommend it to anyone who wants to do it. All the officers are seniors this year, so all the positions are going to be wide open. So if you feel like you are great for the job, than just run!

So now to YSF!! The North Carolina Conference is currently the number two conference in the entire Methodist Church all over the world in their offerings to YSF!!!! How awesome is this?! But you know we want to be number one. In which case, you should definitely help us out by buying the awesome new hoodies and t-shirts, that are extremely cool if I do say so myself. Also, we have the amazing and multi-talented (for those of you that were at Rally Day ha-ha) YSF blankets. We still have water bottles and stickers too. Whichever event you come to, just be ready to go home with the great YSF gear that we have available for you. Well that just about does it for me, but don't forget about ACS and if you are going to Breakaway, I hope you have a great time. I hope to see you at both!! Stay cool conference people and have a spiffacular summer.

God loves you and so do I.

Written by Jon Pritchard

From the Secretary

Hello Conference Kids!

Wow! This year has gone by so quickly! From so many lasts to all new beginnings, all I can say is that it has been fun!

Speaking of new beginnings, this past year has been such an awesome experience because it was the first year with the Newsletter Committee. They have been so helpful and I am so thankful that those of you at ACS '08 passed the resolution to make it! It's been pretty successful. We came up with a lot of new things, like the Fun Page, and made some decisions, like sending the newsletter to all the youth leaders. Hopefully next year, the Newsletter Committee will have a better turn-out and more district representation! I want to give huge, huge thanks to Sue Ellen for helping us out and the girls on the committee. By the way, there doesn't have to be only girls. We could use a guy's point of view, or maybe a guy secretary! Well maybe, let's not get ahead of ourselves ☺

I want to send my luck out to everyone running for office, from JURP and CCYM to our committees and officers. Keep your heart in the right place and be sure you are running for the right reasons. It is a responsibility that you shouldn't take for granted. I know that I have been late for some deadlines (sorry Sue Ellen!) but I've learned that being responsible is just better for everyone involved. I genuinely appreciate the opportunity that I have had these past two years and I hope that those of you coming up will as well. So try your best to be serious about whatever you are running for and good luck once again.

Congratulations to you graduates and to those of you moving from eighth grade to high school! High school isn't as terrible as you'd think, but it is pretty awful. And college, well I don't know, but I'm sure it won't be as terrible as we think either. And to everyone in between hang in there!

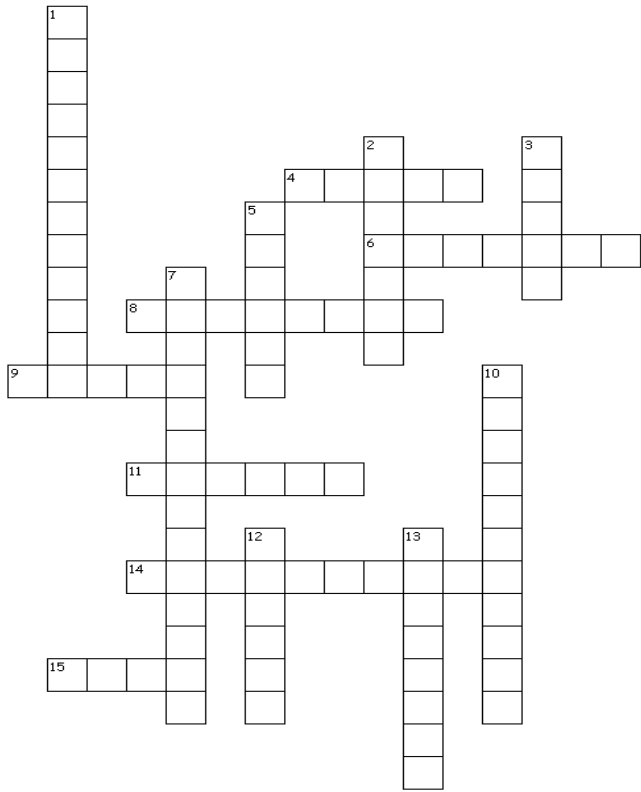
I can't wait to see how the summer unfolds and to see those of you who are going to be at Breakaway and ACS. If you didn't get in to Breakaway, be sure that if you reeeeeeally want to go that you register in like October. It fills up so fast that you could get whiplash. For those going, I'll see you soon. Don't be a stranger and say hi to me!

Love always and God Bless.

Written by Ally Soukup

Fun Page

Da, da, da, da, Da, da, da, da
Da, da, da, da A-men! (snap, snap)



Across

4. "Our Social _____", basic statement of our convictions about relationships between God, God's creation and humanity
6. _____ Area, comprised of one or more annual conferences
8. _____ Council, determines the constitutionality of acts, or proposed acts, of all conferences
9. _____ and Cross, the United Methodist Church's symbol
11. _____ Conference, meetings presided by the bishop that ordains clergy as elders and deacons
14. Form of communion where you dip the bread in to the juice and eat it
15. Wesley founder of Methodism

Down

1. _____ Table, oversees the coordination of mission, ministries, and resources
2. _____ Conference, only body that sets official policy
3. John Wesley describes it as prevenient, justifying and sanctifying
5. _____ Principles, guide to official church action
7. District _____, a six-year appointment of an elder made by the bishop
10. Time between each General Conference
12. Directed to provide oversight of the entire church with specific leadership in a certain area
13. Group of churches in a geographic area, similar to counties

Blessing!

Alright guys, this edition's blessing is the Addams Family blessing. We do it often, but not often enough for everyone to remember it! Youth staff, consider doing it more for practice. And big surprise, we are going to sing it to the tune of the Addams Family theme song.

Da, da, da, da (snap, snap)
Da, da, da, da (snap, snap)
Da, da, da, da, Da, da, da, da
Da, da, da, da (snap, snap)
We thank the Lord for giving
The things we need for living
The food, the fun, the friendship
The Conference family
Da, da, da, da (snap, snap)
Da, da, da, da (snap, snap)

EZGtoons.com

by Erin Gillespie



If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? ---1 John 3:17

District Events and Coordinators

Burlington District

October 4 – Fall Rally at Chestnut Ridge

Tom Pritchard; talkntom@bellsouth.net

Durham District

Ray Pearce; rpearce@nccumc.org

Elizabeth City District

Susie Fitch-Slater; preachsue@aol.com

Fayetteville District

August 9-14 – Summer SPLAT at Camp Rockfish

October 4, 3 to 6p.m. – Fall Rally at Rockfish

Outdoor Center

Mary Frances McClure; mfmclure@nccumc.org

Goldsboro District

Steve Denhup;

garrischapelyouth@suddenlinkmail.com

Greenville District

Matt Seals; matt_86_98@yahoo.com

New Bern District

Carolyn Roy; cnbroy@nccumc.org

Raleigh District

(to be named)

Rockingham District

Libby Ferguson; dferguson36@nc.rr.com

Rocky Mount District

Bryan Levangie; blevangie@firstmethodistm.org

Sanford District

Janette Scott; janettescott@windstream.net

Wilmington District

Sarah Mansbery; sarah@wrightsvilleumc.org