

TRANSPORTATION TASK FORCE
DUKE MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
REPORT TO COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES
September 24, 1975

*Accepted &
revised 12/19/75*

The Transportation Task Force was appointed on April 23, 1975 by Dr. Earl I. Brown, II, in his capacity as Chairman of the Council on Ministries. It was composed of J. A. McLean, Chairman, Houston Blair, Mrs. C. Fred Clark, Laney Funderburk, Mrs. George Miller, and Miss Sheila Rodenhizer. The mission of the task force, as stated by Dr. Brown, was "...To consider problems related to transportation of church members and their families to church activities, and make recommendations of actions that will hopefully overcome transportation problems." Dr. Brown observed that "One action for consideration is the purchase and church use of an activities bus." The task force was asked to submit a complete report to the Council on Ministries at its regular October, 1975 meeting. This is it.

The task force held meetings in May, June, July, August and September. Valuable assistance was rendered by the church staff -- particularly by the Reverend Bob Wallace, who attended most of the meetings, and who contributed useful ideas and some valuable spadework.

The task force, in pursuance of its charge, sought to examine the total transportation needs of the church. The chairman, through the church bulletin, asked for suggestions from members of the congregation. Members of the task force were asked to seek suggestions from the various organizations and church leaders with whom they were associated. A number of ideas were advanced, and the more practical ones form a part of the recommendations set forth in this report.

PURCHASE OF A BUS. It was agreed by task force members that a "busing ministry" was not within the scope of this study. It was also agreed that the possibility of church-owned, member-operated buses was a matter which should be carefully explored and evaluated. Investigation was made of bus transportation programs at First Baptist Church of Durham, Trinity Avenue Presbyterian Church of Durham, Fairmont United Methodist Church of Raleigh, First United Methodist Church of Graham, Watts Street Baptist Church of Durham -- churches with programs which vary widely from each other.

Investigated also was the sale of used school buses by Durham County Schools, possible experience with buses of Baptist State Convention, and N. C. Conference Headquarters of the Methodist Church -- Both of Raleigh. None of these leads was fruitful.

One misconception which was disposed of was the objection that insurance and taxes, along with licensing requirements for drivers, constitute a problem. It was learned that insurance and tax costs are moderate, and that special licenses are not needed.

The cost of buses can be substantial. New buses can cost in the \$8,000 - 10,000 range, and acceptable quality used buses are generally in the range of \$1,000 - \$4,000.

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PUBLIC BUS TRANSPORTATION. City buses in Durham appear to run at two-hour intervals on Sundays, which makes it difficult for church members attending Sunday services, unless they are willing to come early, leave late, or both. The task force felt that present Sunday schedules maintained by Duke Power Company make it impractical, if not impossible for members of the congregation to use this method of transportation.

TAXICABS. The task force discussed the cost and practicality of use of taxicabs on Sunday mornings for persons who were unable to make other arrangements to attend services. A recommendation regarding this will be found later in this report.

CAR POOLS. This matter of car pools was discussed, since this device is widely used in school and work situations. There was doubt on the part of task force members, however, that this is a viable method of transportation for church purposes.

YOUTH NEEDS. Representatives of youth groups who made their feelings known were quite vocal in their desire for means of mass transportation. MYF members hoped a bus would be available for transporting groups of youth to places like Kerr Lake, Salter Path, and Methodist camps. Explorer Scouts felt a van would be best suited to their needs. Senior MYF has taken four trips since August, 1974, and felt a bus was much preferable to going in automobiles, from standpoint of economy, fellowship, and satisfactory supervision.

NEEDS OF OLDER PERSONS. Despite several efforts to get older persons to speak out on their transportation needs, there was an apparent reluctance on their part to do so. The task force felt that there is a definite need for Sunday transportation to services on the part of some who are unwilling to make it known -- perhaps for fear of being the object of pity or concern. These persons are apparently unwilling to contact even the church office to make their needs known. Nevertheless, the need is believed to be present, and should be a matter of continuing interest and concern to all of us.

The Transportation Task Force makes the following recommendations regarding transportation needs for Duke Memorial Church.

I. Church Bus Purchase Fund.

It is recommended that consideration be given to establishment of a voluntary fund for the purchase of an activity bus for the church. A dollar goal could be set -- perhaps \$3,500 -- for purchase of a used quality school bus. A target date -- perhaps April 1, 1977 -- could be set. During the intervening months publicity could be given to the fund. Individuals, groups, and organizations would be invited and encouraged to make contributions to the Fund. Provision could be made, in the event the Fund failed to approach its goal, for reversion of funds collected to some other worthwhile purpose -- perhaps the general funds of the church. It is likely that a committee would be needed to operate this activity.

WORLD WIDE TRANSPORTATION. City buses in Durham appear to run at two-hour intervals on Sundays, which makes it difficult for church members attending Sunday services, unless they are willing to come early, leave late, or both. The task force felt that present Sunday schedules maintained by Duke Power Company make it impractical, if not impossible for members of the congregation to use this method of transportation.

WEEKENDS. The task force discussed the cost and practicality of use of cars on Sunday mornings for persons who were unable to make other arrangements to attend services. A recommendation regarding this will be found later in this report.

CAR POOLS. This method of car pools was discussed, since this device is widely used in school and work situations. There was doubt on the part of task force members, however, that this is a viable method of transportation for church members.

YOUTH NEEDS. Transportation of youth groups who make their regular meetings were quite good in their needs for means of mass transportation. The task force had a list of available for transportation groups of youth to places like local lakes, Carter Falls, and Methodist camp. Explorer Scouts left a van which was used in their needs. Senior W.P. has taken four trips since August, 1974, and felt a bus was much preferable to going in automobiles, from standpoint of economy, reliability, and satisfactory operation.

NEEDS OF OTHER MEMBERS. Despite several efforts to get other persons to speak out on their transportation needs, there was an apparent reluctance on their part to do so. The task force felt that there is a definite need for Sunday transportation to services on the part of some who are willing to make it. Plans -- perhaps for lack of being the object of any concern. These persons are apparently willing to contact even the church office to make their needs known. Nevertheless, the need is believed to be present, and should be a matter of continuing interest and concern to all of us.

The transportation task force makes the following recommendations regarding transportation needs for Duke Memorial Church:

I. Church Bus Program Fund.

It is recommended that consideration be given to developing part of a voluntary fund for the purchase of an activity bus for the church. A dollar goal could be set -- perhaps \$2,500 -- for purchase of a used quality school bus. A target date -- perhaps April 1, 1977 -- could be set. During the intervening months publicity could be given to the fund. Individuals, groups, and organizations would be invited and encouraged to make contributions to the fund. Producers could be made, in the event the fund failed to approach the goal, for reversion of funds collected to some other worthwhile purpose -- perhaps the general funds of the church. It is likely that a committee would be needed to operate the activity.

II. City Bus Sunday Schedule

It is recommended that Duke Power Company be urged to consider revised schedules of city bus operation on Sunday. The present schedule does not fit the needs of churchgoers. If it were possible to make a concerted approach to that company through the Center City Church Council or the Durham Ministerial Association, such a combined appeal might be more effective.

III. EMC Needs Inquiry

It is recommended that workers on the Every Member Canvass be asked to assist in determining whether there are other members who have transportation needs. Canvassers could be furnished with separate cards, on which answers to questions regarding transportation could be recorded, and relayed to the church office for compilation and future action.

IV. Taxicab Transportation

It is recommended that, on a limited basis and for a trial period, our church offer to pay cab fares for persons unable to secure other transportation to Sunday services. Such an offer would require coordination by the church office or some other central authority. A trial period would help establish need, and also determine whether cost of such a program would be a significant item.

V. Newspaper Advertising

It is recommended that if some of the above measures are adopted, consideration be given to purchase of advertising space in the newspapers to acquaint the public with those means of transportation which are being made available to potential churchgoers by Duke Memorial.

TRANSPORTATION TASK FORCE

J. A. McLean, Chairman
Houston Blair
Mrs. C. Fred Clark
Laney Funderburk
Mrs. George Miller
Miss Sheila Rodenhizer

II. City Bus Sunday Schedule

It is recommended that Duke Paper Company be urged to consider revised schedules of city bus operation on Sunday. The present schedule does not fit the needs of churchgoers. It is possible to make a concerted effort to that company through the Center City Church Council or the Urban Ministerial Association, such a combined appeal might be more effective.

III. New Needs Inquiry

It is recommended that workers on the Youth Worker Council be asked to assist in determining whether there are other members who have transportation needs. Counselors could be furnished with separate cards on which answers to questions regarding transportation could be recorded, and referred to the church office for consultation and future action.

IV. Further Transportation

It is recommended that, on a limited basis and for a trial period, our church offer to pay cash fares for persons unable to secure other transportation to Sunday services. Such an effort would require coordination by the church office or some other central authority. A trial period would help establish need, and also determine whether cost of such a program would be a significant item.

V. Newspaper Advertising

It is recommended that if some of the above resources are adopted, consideration be given to purchase of advertising space in the newspaper to reach the public with these means of transportation which are being made available to potential churchgoers by Duke Hospital.

TRANSPORTATION TASK FORCE

- 1. A. Nelson, Chairman
- Houston Blair
- Mr. C. Fred Clark
- Janev Zambert
- Mr. George Miller
- Miss Stella Robinson