

Pastor's Report

The analogy which I like to use to describe the ministry of Duke Memorial is that of Covenant Discipleship; namely, worship, devotion, compassion and justice. My pastoral role is to enable persons to be in all of these dimensions of ministry. Since my appointment here I have sought to move our worship toward patterns adopted by the United Methodist Church and more in keeping with scripture and the church's tradition: the Eucharist is celebrated the first Sunday of every month and during high festival times; in 1994 it is my intention to provide an alternate worship experience with weekly Eucharist; we have sought to give more interpretation of worship and we have brought generally unfamiliar worship experiences to Duke Memorial including the Wesley Covenant Service and the Service of Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant. This year I have brought St. Mark AME Zion Church into our ecumenical Thanksgiving Service with Temple Baptist and Immaculate Conception Catholic Church.

In the area of devotion we have carried on a strong emphasis upon Covenant Discipleship groups, small prayer and study groups, Disciple Bible Study, and the accessibility of devotional resources. While we have had 3 pilot Covenant Discipleship groups during 1993, it is my hope that we can at least double this number in 1994 (bringing those involved to 40 persons.)

In the area of compassion and justice I continue to encourage Duke Memorial to increase its outreach to the Durham community and to the world. During this year we have begun a sister church relationship with St. Mark AME Zion Church and we have continued to build on our relationship with the West End Community (having completed the work on the community center we are now involved in their programming, with tutoring, etc.); this year we opened up office space to the administrative office of Durham Congregations in Action, the Society of St. Andrew and the Workers Reform Mission of the North Carolina Council of Churches, in addition to the existing programs of the Senior Adult Community Center, the Weekday School, the Parents' Morning Out and various AA programs. This December we will be hosting the Hospice Tree of Remembrance programs; and we have hosted programs in our building associated with the West End Community, Wesley Fellowship of Duke, the police department, the North Carolina Council of Churches, and various district programs such as the January Workshops and the Lay Rally. This Fall we will be opening our facility to provide overnight lodging for homeless families as part of the Interfaith Hospitality Network. In addition, we have begun monthly Wednesday evening forums on issues pertinent to Christians, including health reform and NAFTA. Five from this congregation were scheduled to be a part of the Annual Conference Covenant Team to Peru and are on hold until this trip can be rescheduled. A fair amount of time is spent giving counsel and hospitality to "persons off the street."

In addition to the preaching, worship, counseling, teaching, visitation, programming, staff organization, and administrative responsibilities of this congregation, my ministry is extended in a variety of other ways: as adjunct faculty at Duke Divinity School as well as instructor in the Duke Course of Study and occasional Continuing Education events, as a member of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry and Chair of the Theology and Doctrine Committee and the Committee on Appointments beyond the Local Church, as Chair of the Finance Committee of DCIA, as Chair of the Staff/Campus Relations

Committee of the Duke Wesley Fellowship, as Treasurer and Advisor to the Wesley Heritage Foundation (for the translation of Wesley's Works into Spanish), as Chair of the NC Conference Peru Covenant Taskforce, as Co-Coordinator of the Durham CROP Walk, and as a Supervising Pastor to persons in candidacy for ordained ministry; in addition, I have been chosen to be a part of the leadership team of the Lilly-funded project on "United Methodism and American Culture."

During the past year, Covenant Discipleship has added greatly to the formation of my devotional life, by holding me accountable for the time I need to give toward spiritual growth. I am thankful for those within my group who have assisted me in this growth.

My primary continuing education event this year was my involvement a Duke in the two-week seminar on ^{help} Training for ^{help} Class Leaders. This was an important event for preparing me to ^{help} lead this congregation toward reclaiming the office of class leader.

I am encouraged by the growth we have experienced during the past year, with the addition of members of all ages, along with a growing number of children (many times as many as 40 coming forward Sunday mornings for the ^{small} Children's message). I am thankful for a gifted and cooperative staff with whom I share a common vision for ministry and who so gracefully and lovingly support me and one another. Bob Irvine and his wife, Jan, have been a ^{recent} blessed addition to our community.

In all of the above my call to ordained ministry is both fulfilled and challenged, if not at times overwhelming. I give thanks for the grace of God which continues to sustain and encourage me, and, to the people of Duke Memorial for their acceptance of my leadership and their expressions of love and friendship. Shirley Few and other members of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee have shown tremendous support and have graciously encouraged and assisted me along the way.

I give added thanks to God for my family, for my wife Bobbi, who is a tremendous source of love, strength and encouragement; and for my children, who are a gift of joy and laughter, of love given and love received; and for my parents, who I am blessed to have as a supportive part of this congregation.

I pray that the ministry and mission of Duke Memorial will continue to be my place of calling for years to come.

