

REPORT TO CHARGE CONFERENCE  
NOVEMBER 6, 1996

In my report as Assistant in Ministry, I will highlight three special areas I enjoy working with: Singles Ministry, Children's Ministry, and Stephen Ministry.

Did you know that 40% of all adults in the United States are single? (That includes the never-married, the separated and divorced, the widows and the widowers.) And that of these single adults, only 15% of them go to church? This is a wide-open field for ministry. Our Singles Council meets four times a year to plan at least two events a month for singles -- we include all ages and all kinds of singles -- we've gone to the Durham Bulls game, for a hike on the Eno after eating breakfast together, to the Sports Comedy Club (we need to laugh), to Centerfest, had a covered dish and swim party, etc.

We know about loneliness for singles so we have a Thanksgiving dinner in a home planned where people can bring food and cook it together, and a similar one at Christmas. We get Stephen Ministers for singles who are going through transitions and also steer them towards Divorce Recovery Groups, Grief Groups, or singles events like Fall Fest, according to their needs.

In the Children's Division, Parents' Morning Out at our church employs 12 women part-time (with free child care for their children) and 5 or 6 substitutes, takes care of 130 babies and two-year olds each week so that parents can have a morning(s) free. In the past year we have purchased 5 new brightly colored tables for the church and one area carpet, and we gave \$1000 to the church as a thank-you gift for utilities, etc. We have grown from 8 children 8 years ago to this large program, and have given advice and materials to two other churches on how to start a Parents' Morning Out program.

Besides our yearly programs for children such as Vacation Bible School (we had about 120 children this year in VBS), All-Summer Day Camp, one week day camp at Camp Chestnut Ridge, Music and Drama Camp, we had several new things this year. We had a Bible Study for children combining studying the book of Philippians with art, had a night when we discussed and made crafts about Hurricane Fran (including posters to send to the power company), and are planning a fall hayride and storytelling around the campfire night.

Our Stephen Ministry program has been in place almost two years now. We have six active Stephen Ministers and six more in training in a new night class. Our new Stephen Leader, Blaine Butterworth, was an answer to prayer; he co-teaches the night class with me, and I do the day class alone. Our Stephen Ministers have helped 20 people going through crises in their lives since we began our program. We began a Grief Group because so many people in our congregation had losses of loved ones. We also inform people of such services as Camp Releaf, a camp for children who have lost loved ones, and three children from our church attended this year.

Ann Stallings, Assistant in Ministry



