

**1996 CHARGE CONFERENCE REPORT
DUKE MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
NOVEMBER 6, 1996
JANET THORNTON IRVINE, PROGRAM DIRECTOR**

After many years of serving the church, I finally during the past three years have taken the time to know myself and to listen to and heed the call of God. I have spent much time in thought and prayer in discovering who I am and who I am called by God to be. I considered every aspect of what it means to be called as a diaconal minister to the specialized ministries of service, justice, and love. I prayerfully considered what gifts and strengths God has given me and how I could use them best to serve God and God's people. I finally know what I am sure that God has known all along... that Janet Thornton Irvine has been and is called by a very patient God to a life of servanthood as a diaconal minister in The United Methodist Church. I am confident that God has called me in this time and place through events and people in my life, through the gifts and skills that God has blessed me with, and through God's loving acceptance of me with all my imperfections.

In following the process of candidacy outlined in the *Discipline*, I was examined carefully by Duke Memorial's Staff/Parish Committee on April 22 and unanimously recommended by them as a candidate for the diaconal ministry. The Charge Conference of Duke Memorial met on May 21 and under the leadership of Charles Kenneth Morrison, the elder authorized to conduct this meeting by District Superintendent Albert Shuler, this body voted to recommend me for the Office of Diaconal Minister. I will meet with the North Carolina Conference Board of Diaconal Ministry on Thursday, December 5, to gain their approval for my candidacy into this office. I am grateful to my husband, Bob, and to the people of this church for their support as I make this journey.

Before completing my candidacy, I will have become a certified Director of Christian Education in The United Methodist Church and will have completed ten graduate classes in Bible, New and Old Testament, Doctrine and Polity, Mission and the Church, Teaching and Learning, Administration and Leadership, Church History, and Theology. I have completed Bible and will soon finish Doctrine and Polity taken through the Methodist Theological Seminary of Ohio at their Pfeiffer/Charlotte Campus. I have thoroughly enjoyed being a student again and have learned a great deal which will help me in my work here.

I continue to enjoy my work as Program Director here at Duke Memorial. Putting my communication skills to work in INSIGHTS, creating new program possibilities, watching children grow in their love and knowledge of God through the Wesley Singers, and working with the Family Life Council are some of my favorite areas that I am involved in. Our program of integrating our children into worship continues. First graders will continue in Worship Education until Pentecost in May under the excellent leadership of Julie Allen and Carolyn Parrish. Second graders and their families will again be invited to join us for a four week workshop on the sacraments during Lent. All-Summer Day Camp continued to thrive this summer and was able to provide for the first time scholarship aid to two families who needed it. Parents and families of those involved expressed gratitude to Duke Memorial for this ministry which meant so much to them. Music and Drama Camp continues to be a delight.

It is a joy to be serving God in this special place with such special people and I thank God and all of you for this opportunity.

