

CHARGE CONFERENCE REPORT

November 8, 1998

At Duke Memorial several special programs reach out to people in our community in Christ's name -- people in need of emotional, physical, and spiritual support.

In the Older Adult area we have made a special effort this year to visit our shut-in and homebound people. We get many people involved to take them Valentines and a visit in February, Circle 8 takes cookies and a visit in March, and the children visited older people during the summer. This fall for the first time under the leadership of our Senior Minister Ruth Harper Stevens, seven of our ministers and eight Stephen Ministers took communion to 32 of our homebound people. At Christmas we will go Christmas caroling to their homes and take poinsettias or fruit baskets. Our Thursday Study and Service Group visits shut-ins once a month; we saw about 10 last Thursday. About 35 members visit our shut-ins on a regular basis.

The Older Adult Committee plans covered-dish meals and excellent programs each month -- programs such as Dr. Robert Durden speaking about the beginning of Duke University, or beautiful slides of the Duke Gardens in each season of the year. Thanks to Elbert Wethington we welcome members of the Methodist Retirement Community (many outside our church), to our lunches and celebrate their birthdays monthly along with our older adults.

Our Children's Ministry reaches out to children in the West End Community near here and takes 15 of them to our Camp Chestnut Ridge for a week in July. We also administer a Parents' Morning Out Program for 127 parents, babies and toddlers in our community. The program operates every day of the week and helps parents with their childcare so that they don't feel burdened by the care for very young children.

The Stephen Ministry Program seeks to help make broken people whole. With God as the curegiver, we are the caregivers for people whose lives are broken by the death of a loved one, a separation or divorce, a chronic or terminal illness, or a similar problem. All our seven Stephen Ministers have carereceivers now -- five are members of our church, and three are from our Durham community. We have also gotten Stephen Ministers for 4 other people this year from the Stephen Ministry programs at The Congregation at Duke Chapel, Westminster Presbyterian, and the Chapel of the Cross. We are training a new Stephen Ministry class on Monday nights, and the current Stephen Ministers meet twice a month on Wednesdays.

We urge church members to come to our Wonderful Wednesday meals and programs. This year we are having topics such as "Experiencing the Psalms" by Marge Clark, "Does God Still Speak to Us?" by Dr. Gail Felton, and a Bible study on I and II Corinthians by Dr. Maurice Ritchie. In December we will have a "Hanging of the Greens" service and a program on our church bells.

These are some of the ways we minister to people inside and outside our church community.

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