

## PASTOR'S REPORT

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Life at Duke Memorial is never boring. This is a happening place! What with 13 staff members generating all kinds of things and 8 adjunct ministries housed in our facilities (e.g. Durham Congregations In Action, Alcoholics Anonymous, Interfaith Hospitality Network, Parent's Morning Out, Weekday School, Community Life Center, Society of St. Andrew, and Cristo Vive Hispanic Ministry), there is never a dull moment.

Membership has experienced a net increase for the second year which is very good news since in prior years our membership was on the decline. More importantly, attendance at worship is increasing. The influx of young adults has birthed a new Sunday School Class called the YAKS, which will soon stand for Youth Adults with or without Children. A new young women's circle has formed, and Wonderful Wednesday participation has increased.

Giving is up with an amazing 100% received of the 1999 pledged amount to the church. Next year's budget will be an all time high of just under \$700,000 which represents a modest increase in staff salaries, apportionments, and program expenses but a large increase in youth ministry and communications. We celebrate the acquisition of Greig Ashurst, Interim Youth Director, and Cynthia Livingood, Publications Manager. We are constantly working to discover how we can stay in touch with our growing membership. Especially, we are concerned about our 40 college students. With the new computer technology, which includes state-of-the-art computers, a Website, and access to Email, we are finding better ways to stay connected.

Add to that our new phone system, which has the wonderful feature of Voice Mail. Not only is time saved by the office staff, but personal confidential messages can be left. Soon you will receive your Pictorial Directory, which we hope will enable you to become better acquainted with one another. (Thank you Elisabeth Luck and committee.)

We even have a plan to keep you near us after death. Our columbarium is in its final stages of completion. When the landscaping is complete, we believe that the church will be proud of its ministry, not only a ministry from cradle to grave, but even beyond death (although we know that God will care for your soul even better than we will your body.)

Efforts have been made to be good stewards of this beautiful building. We use it extensively but we also care for it extensively. Shine Time and Dump Day are two new additions to our calendar. These congregational clean-up days give us a chance to care for those often forgotten eyesores. Plastering, painting, floor stripping, carpet shampooing, are but a few of the ongoing maintenance projects.

When describing Duke Memorial to prospective members, I often make comment about the way this church maintains a balance between spirituality and outreach, piety and service, worship and missions. My heart has found a home with people who care for what goes on inside as well as outside its walls.

You will soon be given a more active roll in caring for the West End Community through our Communities of Shalom Program. We are declaring the West End "A Shalom Zone," and have pledge ourselves to work with other faith communities to foster



peace and justice and economic well-being for its residents. Also we have committed ourselves to helping other Methodist Churches in Durham build a Habitat House, and we have exceed our goal of \$5000.

As for my own ministry, I find it difficult to be calm. There is so much I want to do, and I feel God harnessing me from time to time and telling me, "Be still and know that I am God." There is just too much I want to do.

This summer I had the privilege of being an adult team member on our Bi-Annual Senior High Mission Trip to South Dakota. There we worked on the Rosebud Indian Reservation. The friendships I made with the other adults, and the interaction with the high school youth will long be a highlight of my ministry.

This winter Bob and I will be leading a tour to The Holy Land. I see this as another opportunity to become better acquainted with members of Duke Memorial and to learn about distant lands. I further expect this to be a life forming experience as we study, worship and learn together.

In my "free time" I serve on the Conference Christian Unity Dialogue Committee (which has been addressing the matter of Homosexuality), the Durham Ministerial Association, the Durham Congregational Development Committee, and the District Board of Church Location and Building.

I rejoice over lives changed and enriched by my witness to the love of Jesus Christ. I feel a sense of satisfaction when I know that something I said in a sermon or in the hall, helped someone. I continue to expect miracles to occur through our corporate life and ministry. What a blessing it is to have been appointed to the great church!