

CHARGE CONFERENCE REPORT

NOVEMBER 1997

Ann C. Stallings
Assistant in Ministry

"Go, make of all disciples." That is the impetus for all of our programs at Duke Memorial. From the babies to older people, we are trying to share Christ's love and help members grow toward Christian discipleship. Whether in Parents' Morning Out, Stephen's Ministry, or visits to shut-ins, we find "People Need the Lord."

In the Children's Ministry, we have been emphasizing service more -- whether in cleaning up our own classrooms, making pumpkin faces for Community Life (adult day care at our church) and Henderson Towers, or giving toys at Christmas for needy people (through our White Christmas program). The children have made Valentine cookies for shut-ins at Valentine's, had an Easter egg hunt, Vacation Bible School with 25 teachers and over 100 children, an All-Summer Day Camp with 26 children to help parents with childcare over the summer, Chestnut Ridge Day Camp where we take 15 scholarship children from the West End Area for a week of outdoor activities, the fall hotdog roast and hayride where the children decorated the pumpkins, and White Christmas with a play about the birth of Jesus and the giving of toys wrapped in white paper.

We also hold Parents' Morning Out every weekday and keep 125 babies and toddlers during the week so parents can take some time off from their parenting duties. Between the PMO program and the church nurseries, I have had to hire 4 new babysitters since August. We have four nurseries on Sunday morning (we have 54 children four and under in our church), using 5 childcare workers and four sets of parents on Sundays, and we have six teachers every weekday in PMO.

With adults we are expanding ways to teach discipleship: having more programming on Wednesday nights at Wonderful Wednesday -- short-term Bible studies taught by Dr. Thomas Langford and Marge Clark, Methodism classes taught by Mark Wethington, hymn sings, fun classes like "Cooking for Christmas," and so on. The Thursday Study Group is studying Celebration of Discipline to learn more about meditation, study of the Bible, prayer, fasting, etc. We are offering Disciple I taught by Bob Irvine in the daytime and for the first time Disciple III facilitated at night by Ann Stallings.

The Singles Council plans programming for singles of all ages in our church. We met in October for a pizza and planning session and set up events through January, including the possibility of a Thanksgiving dinner for folks who would be alone on the holiday and going out Christmas caroling to shut-ins at Christmas.

Stephen Ministry continues to reach out in bonding experiences to our Stephen Ministers as well as helping our care receivers through crises or transitions in their lives. We have served 15 people this year. Twice a month we have continuing

education programs and supervision to help each other with our relationships with the care receivers.

To reach out to our older church members who are sometimes homebound or in nursing homes, we have a Visitation Team of about 40 members who visit our shut-ins and bring Christ's love to them. We had a tea to honor the Visitation Team in September with a speaker, Dr. Linda Jordan from Hospice, speaking on how to help people grieving the loss of a loved one. Once a month a group also meets to visit shut-ins and then go out to eat together.

Our Older Adults Council plans a meal and program once a month for all adults over 55. Birthdays for each month are celebrated with a cake and singing. We have had programs about the Duke Art Museum, the Center for Living, and Duke Learning in Retirement. We usually have 30+ people in attendance, thanks to the good work of Elbert Wethington, Older Adult Chairperson. The dinner for November will be a Thanksgiving meal.

Young and old alike, we are studying and learning together and reaching out to each other in Christian love. We are trying to be Christ's hands, feet, and voice on earth.