

February 2008

Please forward this newsletter and/or print out copies for your local church bulletin board and for distribution.

It was one sad day on the 8th of January as we lost two valuable members of our conference.

~ In the morning hours Elmer Hauck passed away as the result of a heart attack. Elmer was an elder of the Williamsport church and a member of the Chesapeake Conference Association Board of Trustees. He was retired after a long and storied career in denominational service. He served as a teacher, the comptroller of Atlantic Union College, the associate treasurer of both the Afro-Mid Eastern and East Africa Divisions, the treasurer of the Southern Asia Division, the treasurer of Christian Record Braille Foundation and the under-treasurer of the Mid America Union. Elmer was as dedicated and unselfish as they come. In his retirement years he kept very active in his local church, his community and this conference. He was 72 at the time of his death. Please keep his wife Mary in your prayers.

~ Later that same day, Sharon Marsden, wife of Pikesville International church pastor Roosevelt Marsden, lost her four-year battle with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), more commonly known as "Lou Gehrig's Disease." Sharon had just turned 43. The Marsdens have been at Pikesville (previously Towson) since 1994 and brought three beautiful daughters into the world before Sharon was diagnosed with the disease: Stacy-Ann (17), Daedre-Ann (10) and Aveann (4). She had completed a bachelors degree in Health Administration from Columbia Union College in 2002 and was just getting into her new career when she became ill. The testimonies at her three-hour funeral gave clear evidence that Sharon had provided a remarkable example of faith under pressure, during her illness. Please remember Roosevelt and his girls in your prayers.

The Executive Committee at its January 29 meeting spent considerable time discussing areas of the conference's overall agenda regarding mission and nurture. The discussion resulted in an enabling action for administration to develop scenarios where more of our constituents would be impacted in a positive way by conference-wide programming. The discussion included but was not limited to ideas regarding an elder's advisory; camp meeting; evangelistic training and summer camp ministries. The Committee offered valuable insights and advice making crystal clear their intent to do more than simply business as usual. Other items of action included:

~ voted, to approval the preliminary 2008 budget and to finalize it at the March 18 meeting.

~ voted, to ask Dr. Hal Butler to fill the vacancy created with Cheryl Smith's resignation.

~ voted, to put on hold any further exploration of the merging of the conference and the association. We will review the possibilities as we get a clearer idea of how other conferences that cover more than one state are addressing some of the difficulties we have encountered in our investigation.

~ voted, to recommend to the Columbia Union Conference, the retirement request of Elder Art Miller effective May 1, 2008. Art spent the majority of his denominational experience in the publishing ministry. He has been pastor of the Providence / Rising Sun district for the past 4 ½ years.

~ voted, an enabling action for the personnel committee to work on finding a new pastor for the Baltimore Korean church. Elder James Lim has accepted an invitation from the Northern California Conference to become pastor of the Napa Korean church. James will make the transition the end of April.

~ voted, to approve the building plans for the new Baltimore Korean church that will be built just off Route 32 and Cedar Lane near the conference office. They hope to break ground soon.

There were several other action items with attached contingencies that will be reported on as soon as the conference administration is able to address the individual matters and bring them to resolution.

2007 Year End Report~ Conference Clerk Barbara-Lee Boyd reports that during 2007 we had 405 accessions to the church through baptism or profession of faith. That is more than a 10% gain over our annual average. Our conference membership saw marginal growth due to several churches making significant adjustment to their membership records. We ended the year at 12,771.

~ Conference Treasurer Ramon Chow was pleased to announce that Chesapeake ended 2007 with a 3.75% tithe gain over the previous year. Our total tithe was \$14,648,103.71 and represented a per capita of \$1,163. While the gain was less than our average, we are most grateful for a gain given the current economic forecast. The modest gain still led the entire

Columbia Union. Chesapeake also led the Union in percentage gain for giving to world missions / Sabbath School. A more detailed report will be presented as the information is analyzed. The faithfulness of our members is greatly appreciated.

Youth Ministries Update

~ The Pathfinder Bible Achievement program begins its area level elimination rounds on February 9 at 3:00 p.m. at the following church locations: New Hope, Highland View, Waldorf, West Wilmington and Wilna. There are 19 Pathfinder clubs registered for this year's program. The conference level PBA will be held at the Atholton Church and the union level PBA at Highland View church. More details to follow in the next issue of Currents.

~ The last of two Family Ski Days at Jack Frost Ski Resort is scheduled for Sunday, February 10. Local church groups need to arrive between 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. at the reservation booth. The ski area is open until 10:00 p.m.

~ The bi-annual Youth Leaders Enrichment Day is scheduled for March 8 at the Baltimore White Marsh church. The speaker for the worship hour is Jonathan Tejal. Classes leading toward certification will be available in seven different tracks.

~ Flowing out of recent Executive Committee discussions is the development of a FLAG Camp ministry (Fun Learning About God camp) where a team of a half dozen young adults would take a roving day camp program out to various areas of the conference. While our traditional summer camp program ministers to more than 500 young people, it is obvious that the majority of our young people do not get to experience a week at camp. The day camps being considered for this coming summer include the Hagerstown area, Waldorf, Salisbury, Dover and Wilmington. Local churches could use the FLAG Camp not only as a ministry to their own children but as a great opportunity to reach out into the community. A bus will be purchased so that the FLAG Camp staff is able to transport the children to various activities. The children would pay a fee for the five-day program and provide their own sack lunch. More details will be published as they become available.

~ The 2008 Summer Camp schedule for Mt. Aetna Camp has been published as follows:

Adventurer	7-10 year olds	June 22-29
Junior Camp I	10-12 year olds	June 29 – July 6
Junior Camp II	10-12 year olds	July 6-13
Tween Camp I	12-14 year olds	July 13-20
Tween Camp II	12-14 year olds	July 20-27
Teen Camp	13-16 year olds	July 27 – August 3

~ All Teen Outpost Camps for 13-17 year olds are the week of June 22-29 and include Water-skiing, Cowboy, Golf, and Outdoor Extreme camps.

~ C.I.T. Camps (Counselors in Training) for 15-17 year olds correspond with Adventurer and Junior Camp dates. For additional information, check out the camp website at www.mtaetnacamp.com.

Chesapeake Singles Ministry is planning a Valentine Meal and Social Night on February 9 at the conference office from 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. The meal is a potluck so plan accordingly. The singles ministry is also planning a Mission Trip to Brazil from February 28 – March 12. They will be working out of the Euzebio church near Fortaleza. For more information contact Dirci Marquart at dirci@missionserv.org.

Maryland Men of Faith – the men's ministry initiative of the Atholton and Baltimore First churches has planned an evening with Ed Reid, NAD Stewardship director, on money management. It will be held on Tuesday, February 26 at 7:00 p.m. at the Atholton church. Light refreshments will be served following the meeting. Men from churches throughout the region are welcome to attend – and bring a friend!

Another VBS Training event is scheduled for Sabbath, March 1 at the Takoma Park (MD) church from 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. There is no cost for the workshop but pre-registration is required by contacting toniah@pcsda.org. The workshop is sponsored by the Potomac Conference Children's Ministries Department.

The Currents mailing list is in need of revision. If your church is not getting the Currents delivered electronically, it may be due to an inaccurate email address for the contact person. Any corrections or additions should be sent to Millie Maplesden at mmaplesden@ccosda.org.