



Cornerstone United Methodist Church

1411 Rim Road Fayetteville North Carolina 28311 868-5686

October 2002

Marching to Zion!

September 30, 2002

Cornerstone United Methodist Church has experienced incredible blessing and ministry since my last report to the Charge Conference. Without a doubt, opening the doors of our first church building was the high point of our year. On February 24, 2002 we held our first worship service in our new building with 177 people in attendance. The presence of God's Holy Spirit was palpable as we exalted in what God had done for and through us.



In March of this year we began offering an early worship service at 9:30 a.m. as well as our regular 11:00 a.m. worship on Sunday mornings. The early service features a more contemporary form of music as compared to our later service. Moreover, we continue to offer weekly Eucharist at the early service as well as at the 11:00 a.m. service. The option of an early worship hour has been very well received by the community we serve. We often have as many, if not more, people in attendance at the early service as we do at the later service.



On July 14, 2002 the Rev. David Malloy, our District Superintendent presided over the consecration of our new sanctuary as a place of Christian worship and ministry. Having our own building has enabled us to offer more ministry to our community than ever before. Especially worth noting is the addition of our Wednesday evening children's ministry, "FW Friends." Also, we continue to experiment with offering a Saturday evening coffee house ministry to the unchurched individuals in our area. Every aspect of the ministry of our church has been enhanced by having our own place to meet.



We continue to reach out to our community in significant ways. In September our congregation worked together to have a BBQ and Fried Chicken Dinner fundraiser for the purpose of funding more outreach. After preparing and selling 597 plates we have sufficient funds to reach approximately 14,500 homes with an impact card designed to ultimately present these families with the Good News about Jesus Christ.

We recognized the incredible stress the families (most of whom are connected with the military) in our area face on a daily basis. Economic difficulties, indebtedness, child abuse, infidelity, and substance abuse are just a few

Children's Church

Come check out the children's church board in the fellowship hall. Everyone should find their name in the little basket if they are on the current phone list (and there are blanks for those not yet printed). So, come on by and check it out, your name that is and pick a Sunday to be a blessing in the lives of children from 3-5 years old. Two and a half years ago when I first started being active in the ministries of Cornerstone, I did it because I believe you should support whatever you are a part of and do your equal share of the work, but I must say that in committing time to these various activities, I have learned the real truth. Through opening yourself to others and putting yourself in their service, God can touch your heart in real ways, help you to grow, and really communicate with you like you wouldn't believe. So if you are looking for a way to be closer to God, take a step out in faith and do something you've never done before and He will be there to guide you and bless you for it.



Fayetteville Urban Ministries

Fayetteville Urban Ministries are always looking for items to make snack packs and hygiene kits for the homeless community that come through their facility. There is a blue box in the fellowship hall for such items. Stop by the box to get a list of what they are looking for and next time you are at the grocery store, do a little mission work, pick up a little something for someone else.

Continued on page 2

of the challenges faced by folks in our community. We pray the contact we offer through our Autumn outreach will be the first step in leading our neighbors to Christ and helping them to become faithful disciples.

Our church is healthy spiritually, numerically, and financially. Small group fellowships offering Bible Study, Christian discipleship training, and encouragement remain the backbone of our congregation. However, in order to avoid losing this vital element of Cornerstone's life, we must continually emphasize small group involvement.

Cornerstone United Methodist Church has grown in average weekly worship attendance from **114** in January to **187** in September. This is an increase in attendance of 64%, making our church one of the fastest growing congregations in the NC Annual Conference. Those persons who actually commit to church membership have been faithful to tithe, thus ensuring that we continue to meet our financial obligations as a local church.



The spiritual life of Cornerstone United Methodist Church is characterized by a Christ-like willingness to embrace others regardless of their differences. This is especially obvious in that God has entrusted us with many people who have special needs. Many of our attendees and members are physically, emotionally, or mentally challenged. At Cornerstone, we recognize that these individuals are

the precious and beautiful objects of God's love. I feel truly honored to serve a congregation that demonstrates its devotion to Jesus by opening its heart to those who feel marginalized in other areas of society.

My personal calling as the pastor of this church is to shape Christian disciples who are equipped by the grace of God through Word and Sacrament to become saints and martyrs in the classical Christian sense. May God find me faithful in honoring this vocation on the Day I am called to give an account for the ministry he has entrusted to me.

*Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Benjamin S. Sharpe, Jr.*

**Group Work
Camps are
amazing
places for
youth!**

**Coming
soon...
to a youth
meeting near
you!**



Blood of Jesus

One night in a church service a young woman felt the tug of God at her heart. She responded to God's call and accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior. The young woman had a very rough past, involving alcohol, drugs, and prostitution. But, the change in her was evident.

As time went on she became a faithful member of the church. She eventually became involved in the ministry, teaching young children. It was not very long until this faithful young woman had caught the eye and heart of the pastor's son. The relationship grew and they began to make wedding plans. This is when the problems began.

You see, about one half of the church did not think that a woman with a past such as hers was suitable for a pastor's son. The church began to argue and fight about the matter. So they decided to have a meeting. As the people made their arguments and tensions increased, the meeting was getting completely out of hand. The young woman became very upset about all the things being brought up about her past. As she began to cry the pastor's son stood to speak. He could not bear the pain it was causing his wife-to-be. He began to speak and his statement was this: "My fiancée's past is not what is on trial here. What you are questioning is the ability of the blood of Jesus to wash away sin. Today you have put the blood of Jesus on trial. So, does it wash away sin or not?"

The whole church began to weep as they realized that they had been slandering the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Too often, even as Christians, we bring up the past and use it as a weapon against our brothers and sisters. Forgiveness is a very foundational part of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. If the blood of Jesus does not cleanse the other person completely then it cannot cleanse us completely. If that is the case, then we are all in a lot of trouble. What can wash away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus! End of case! "Cast your burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain you. He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Psalm 55:23

Are you a Lumberjack or a Faith-Sharer

by Douglas Dalton

During the month of August my grandmother was here visiting, and she told me a story my grandfather used to tell when he was a minister for Christ. She stated that he would tell this story to people whenever he spoke about the responsibility of Christians in sharing their faith. The story goes like this:

There once was a lumberjack who stayed in the mountains of Oregon. Year-round he stayed in the mountains to cut timber. But on the few occasions he made it into town he always looked forward to going into the saloons and having a good old-time, getting drunk, and getting into fights. On this particular Sunday it had been several months since he had been into town. He was looking forward to going into town and going to his favorite saloon. But this time when he arrived into town he could hear a different type of music coming out of his favorite bar. As he arrived at the bar he had not realized that it had been converted into a church but he knew that it was somehow a different place. The tune that he heard made him step inside so that he could hear the music and the words better. As the congregation sang **Amazing Grace** he sat down to listen and his heart was filled with joy and sorrow at the wonder of it. By the end of that service when the altar call was made that old sinner of a lumberjack went forward, and with tears in his eyes he bent down to confess his sinful nature and accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. At the end of the service he met with the minister and told the minister about his life and why he was so happy to be a Christian now. Shortly after he returned to the mountains to continue cutting timber. Several months went by in which the minister eagerly awaited the return of the lumberjack. When that day finally arrived the lumberjack was at the Sunday service, giving praise to God, singing, praying, and shouting Amen to everything the minister said in his sermon. Following the service the minister met with the lumberjack, eagerly awaiting to hear about his experiences as a Christian lumberjack in the mountains of Oregon. When the minister asked the lumberjack how it went the lumberjack replied, "It went so well that nobody even caught on."

We can relate to this experience today. Often times as Christians we continue to live our life without sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ and the atonement of His blood. There are many excuses for why we don't share our faith in Jesus with others but in reality not one of them is a legitimate reason. A friend of mine sent me an e-mail today and it read in part "Being a Christian is not doing what God doesn't like to keep him from getting mad. Being a Christian is doing what God likes because you love him!" Because we love God we should be sharing our faith about Jesus Christ so that others can experience that same love and atonement.

Unfortunately, many times we are afraid to share our faith with others or we don't know how to share our faith. I think that is the position that our Christian lumberjack was in – he was afraid and did not know how to share his faith. The key to sharing our faith depends upon several disciplines: 1. reading the Bible and understanding the Good News so that you can share with others; 2. a prayer life that requires you to pray for others, those of whom you would like to share your faith with and for the opportunity to share your faith with; 3. a prayer life that asks the Holy Spirit to energize you in your efforts to share faith; and 4. an understanding that sharing faith is the direct result of your relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

Sharing faith does not demand a lifelong study of how to share faith. It emanates from your love of God and your desire to share that same love of God with others. So you may be asking "How do I share my faith?" I think the best way to answer that is to explain to you the process by which people become Christians.

Continued on page 4



GIRL SCOUTS

Cornerstone has its own Cadette Girl Scout Troop. This is a terrific program for girls in grades 6-9. This troop, #272, has been active since 1992 but has just recently started meeting at our church. There are now 6 girls in the troop, but we have room for a few more. We meet the first, second, and fourth Thursdays of each month in the Fellowship Hall.

For more information, call Beth Wiggs at 867-4058 or email at bethwiggs@aol.com.



Get it?

Do you know how Noah spent his time in the ark? After all, he couldn't play cards. An elephant stood on the deck!

Who was the first to come out of the ark when it stopped raining and the floods subsided? Noah? No, the Bible says Noah came "forth" from the Ark.

in his book *What's Gone Wrong with the Harvest*, (Zondervan 1975) is one very useful way of seeing the process.

The *Engel Scale* proposed 13 steps through which people usually travel on their spiritual journey:

- 8 Awareness of supreme being, no knowledge of Gospel
- 7 Initial awareness of Gospel
- 6 Awareness of basic of Gospel
- 5 Grasp implications of Gospel
- 4 Positive attitude towards Gospel
- 3 Personal problem recognition
- 2 Decision to act
- 1 Repentance and faith in Christ
New birth
- +1 Post-decision evaluation
- +2 Incorporation into Body
- +3 Conceptual/behavioral growth
- +4 Communion with God
- +5 Stewardship

You can see from this scale that perhaps we should present the Gospel differently to people who are at different points. Someone at -7 on the scale cannot be treated the same as a person at -3 who already understands much of the Truth and is almost ready to place their faith in Jesus.

The problem is that Christian outreach often only touches people who already have an understanding of the Gospel because of previous church background. They already know the language and concepts. So, we can be quite good at reaching the 'once-churched', yet may miss the 'never-churched' completely.

We must assume that people have zero Christian knowledge. We therefore need to avoid using Christian jargon words. "Most Christian literature... begins too far along the evangelistic process; it assumes that the reader has at least some basic knowledge of Christianity and biblical concepts," said the director of a very effective literature outreach recently in *Interlit* magazine. We live in a post-Christian culture. Since most people have never attended church, been to Sunday School, or learned anything of the Bible in school, they have a complete

lack of knowledge or understanding, and no biblical framework in their minds. Any 'spirituality' that people have, is usually shaped by New Age ideas.

For people who may be antagonistic or uninterested, we must work hard to identify with their feelings. We must avoid a 'preachy' approach, and instead place ourselves at their level, in their shoes, relating to their interests and language. This is sometimes called "contextualization". It has nothing to do with compromising or watering down the Gospel. Catherine Booth, co-founder of Salvation Army, said, "God forbid that I should ever teach any adaptation of the Gospel. But I contend that we may serve it up in any sort of dish that will induce the people to partake of it."

Contextualization is important to communicate with those of other faiths or none. "You never know till you try to reach them how accessible men are; but you must approach each man by the right door." (Henry Ward Beecher)

In other words, the sharing of faith depends upon developing relationships with whom you are trying to share faith with. So you may ask yourself "How do I develop a relationship?" I think the best way of developing a relationship with another person is by discussing areas of shared experiences. It is here where meaningful communication takes place.

Wilbur Schramm's simple diagram of overlapping circles demonstrates visually 1 Cor 9:19-23 - seeking to identify and find areas of common ground: ¹⁹*Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible.* ²⁰*To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law.* ²¹*To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law.* ²²*To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have*

become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. ²³*I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.* (1 Corinthians 9:19-23) NIV

If you want to engage people in a relationship talk to them about things that interest them. Such topics can include: sports, health, sex and relationships, advice on personal problems, hobbies, local information, tourism ideas, humor, films, music, news-related topics, famous people, plus a million other things.

Developing a relationship based upon similar interests will allow you to establish a bond of trust and similarity. By identifying with their real interest and your real interest you are building a bridge whereby you can share your faith and your testimony – your story and your life. Introduce yourself first, where you live, what you like, etc. Then go on to explain how something happened to you which changed your whole view of life. People are interested in people.

And at some point you will be ready to discuss the essentials of the Gospel. It is actually hard to explain the essentials of Gospel but when you do remember to consider the following:

- use easy non-religious language when communicating the Gospel;
- clearly explain that the Gospel is completely free (few non-Christians understand this), yet balancing it with the other truth – that it is not "easy-believism";
- show that God wants to care and support people in every problem of life – yet there are no automatic promises of health or wealth;
- discuss with them how God loves his creation, especially people;
- explain to them that God's Grace is for all;
- explain to them that the bondage of sin is universal;
- tell them how He has made a way for people to escape the human problem we are all born with - self-centeredness and sin;

Continued on page 5

The 'Engel Scale of Spiritual Decision', produced by the missiologist James Engel serve. If Jesus had been only a perfect human person, his death could only pay for the sins of one human. If Jesus was God but not also a true man, he could not really die. But because he was completely God and completely man, his life was of sufficient value to pay for all the sins of everyone, ever. (That's why his mother Mary was a virgin - because he had human and divine parentage.)

- teach them there is nothing we can do to deserve God's goodness, or in any way pay for the things we do wrong, everything we receive from him is free. That's what 'grace' means. All that we can do is ask, trust, and receive. He promises us a place with Him forever, which we do not deserve and can never earn;

- show that person that everything we can do for God flows out of the fact that we are already accepted by Him, we cannot earn any more acceptance or love from him, because we already have it, 100%;

- help them see that Jesus actually understands the pains, problems and temptations we have, because he suffered them too;

- help them to understand that Salvation, redemption, and reconciliation are possible only through Jesus Christ;

- explain to them that the human response to God's love is repentance and trust;

- reassure them that Holy Spirit grants assurance to the heart of those who trust in God through Jesus Christ; and

- help them to understand that holiness of heart and life is the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church and the world.

When you talk to people be sensitive to them. Never criticize someone's beliefs. Be positive - share what Jesus gives you in your life.

However, sharing your faith can never be complete until you extend the invitation to know Christ. In Eddie Fox's

and George Morris's book, *Let the Redeemed of the Lord Say So!* They make the following statement:

"Because the call to respond is part of the essence of the gospel, the early apostles were not shy about asking people to decide for or against the God who had already decided for them. The apostles first proclaimed the deeds of salvation that put humankind right with God, and then they challenged persons to respond to this gift of forgiveness. It was natural for the hearers to inquire, "What shall we do to be saved?" The response that we sought was repentance, faith, and baptism. The early apostles understood the dynamic that makes it necessary for an offered gift to be accepted in order for it to be appropriated in the receiver's life."

Let us suppose that a person receives a check for a large sum of money. Everything is in order. It is clearly made out with the correct name. The individual who has the money in the bank has appropriately signed it with his signature. Once it is handed to the recipient, can the recipient spend the money? Is the money now in possession of the recipient? We are all well aware the money becomes a reality only when the recipient endorses the check. Like a check, undeserved, or unmerited, grace is given freely to all persons. Grace is adequate for everyone's salvation, and the prevenient grace of God frees the will and enables response. It requires only the response of acceptance. The recipient endorses with his/her life the grace of Christ Jesus, and grace is appropriated in one's experience. The gospel, of its very nature, is a knock at the door that claims attention and demands response.

This is the essential of sharing your faith - developing an honesty-based relationship of common interest so that you can build a bridge in which to share your story and life in Jesus Christ, and extend to them an invitation to know Christ Jesus.

When we come to the end of our lives and stand before Christ and he asks

us how it went are we going to reply "It went so well that nobody even caught on." Or are we going to say to Jesus Christ, "It went well Lord. Because of my love for you, and the energizing power of the Holy Spirit, I met with many people on your behalf. I made friends with them and developed relationships with them. I shared your Good News with everyone I could, just as you commanded me to. And I made an invitation to each one that they may know you. It went well Lord." I hope that someday each of us can stand before Christ and say "It went well Lord." So are you a lumberjack or a Faith-Sharer?

Bibliography:

Bessie Guthrie for the lumberjack story my grandfather Franklin Wayne Guthrie told.

Eddie Fox, and George Morris, *Let the Redeemed of the Lord Say So!*, Providence House Publishers, Franklin, Tennessee, 2nd Edition, 1999, P. 70.

"Web Evangelism through Faith Sharing", http://www.orthovox.org/cornerstone/web_evangelism.htm

'Engel Scale of Spiritual Decision', produced by James Engel *What's Gone Wrong with the Harvest*, (Zondervan 1975).<http://www.gospelcom.net/guide/pics/engel5.gif>

"Other religions - the differences between Christianity and other faiths", <http://www.gospelcom.net/guide/sidepage/religion.php>

"The Schramm concept of effective communication", <http://www.gospelcom.net/guide/sidepage/communicate.php>

Wilbur Schramm principle of communication demonstrated in the Bible, <http://www.gospelcom.net/guide/pics/schram.gif>



*Is a minister
rehearsing his sermon
practicing what he
preaches?*



Cornerstone Small Groups

Monday Women's Bible Study	Joy Semrad	867-6786
Wednesday Night Bible Study	Ben Sharpe H-868-6991/W-868-5686	
Promise Keepers Men's Group	Ken Dye	864-5373
Friday Fellowship	Jon & Antonia Ban	860-3470
United Methodist Men	Steve Kublank	424-1757
Senior High Youth	Brian & Christyn Hahn	480-0603
Junior High Youth	Mike & Sue Todd	425-6443

Worship the Lord with gladness;
Come before Him with joyful songs.

Ps 100.2

The Cornerstone Choir will resume rehearsals and needs singers excited about making music for the Lord. The choir will rehearse weekly for one hour. At this time of year we will focus primarily on preparing holiday music.

We need singers in all voice ranges. If you can stay with the tune and are willing to learn parts by listening to tapes and following those next to you, you are welcome to come out. Interested high school youth may also participate.

Rehearsals resume on Thursday, October 3rd from 7-8 PM at the Church. Contact Dwight Harro at 860-9735 or 3pines-harro@msn.com with questions.

Kids Grades K-6

We need YOU for our Christmas Program this year! It's a musical drama called, "The Little Drummer Boy Behind The Music." This is an excellent way to help the whole church truly celebrate Christmas. Rehearsals will be on Sundays 5-6 PM starting October 6th at the church, and the program is planned for the evening of Sunday December 15th.

Fun guaranteed!

To find out more, contact Melinda Alleyne 764-9083 or Dwight Harro 860-9735 and come to the first rehearsal!

FW Friends

FW Friends, our midweek children's program, is going great. We meet every Wednesday night from 7:00 - 8:30. FW Friends has activities for children 3 years to 5th grade. Junior high and senior high kids can be a part of this ministry also through being a circle of friends leader for a group of five children.

Adults are also needed to be either a circle of friends leader or to help out with some of the activities. Adults, no preparation required for his. All of the lesson plans are already done, all of the materials are already bought and gathered; all you have to do is come and help lead our children in some great time learning about praising the Lord.

"Where does the idea come from that if what we are doing is fun, it can't be God's will? The God who made giraffes, has a sense of humor. Make no mistake about that."

- Catherine Marshall

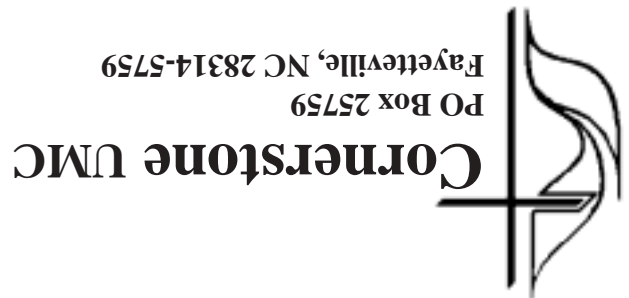
**Administrative
Team Leaders:
Please have
your projected
budget for 2003
to Bill Holland
by October 30**

October 2002 November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Noon Prayer Group/Bible Study 7:00/FW Friends 7:00 CBS 8:00	3 Promise Keepers 7:00 Choir 7:00 Cadette Girl Scouts 7:00	4 Friday Night Fellowship 7:00	5
6 Cornerstone Pizza Sunday @ Two Brothers!	7 Pastor's Day Off Women's Bible Study	8	9 Noon Prayer Group/Bible Study 7:00/FW Friends 7:00	10 Promise Keepers 7:00 Choir 7:00 Cadette Girl Scouts 7:00	11 Friday Night Fellowship 7:00	12
13 Council Mtg 7:00	14 Pastor's Day Off Women's Bible Study	15	16 Noon Prayer Group/Bible Study 7:00/FW Friends 7:00 CBS 8:00	17 Promise Keepers 7:00 Choir 7:00	18 Friday Night Fellowship 7:00	19
20	21 Pastor's Day Off Women's Bible Study	22	23 Noon Prayer Group/Bible Study 7:00/FW Friends 7:00	24 Promise Keepers 7:00 Choir 7:00 Cadette Girl Scouts 7:00	25 Friday Night Fellowship 7:00	26 Cadette Girl Scout Camporee
27	28 Pastor's Day Off Women's Bible Study Charge Conference 7:00	29	30 Noon Prayer Group/Bible Study 7:00/FW Friends 7:00 CBS 8:00	31 Promise Keepers 7:00 Choir 7:00	1 Friday Night Fellowship 7:00	2
3 Cornerstone Pizza Sunday @ Two Brothers!	4 Pastor's Day Off Women's Bible Study	5	6 Noon Prayer Group/Bible Study 7:00/FW Friends 7:00	7 Promise Keepers 7:00 Choir 7:00 Cadette Girl Scouts 7:00	8 Friday Night Fellow- ship 7:00	9
10 Church Council Meeting 7:00	11 Pastor's Day Off Women's Bible Study	12	13 Noon Prayer Group/Bible Study 7:00/FW Friends 7:00 CBS 8:00	14 Promise Keepers 7:00 Choir 7:00 Cadette Girl Scouts 7:00	15 Friday Night Fellowship 7:00	16

There's always something happening at Cornerstone!

You are... God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief Cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. *Ephesians 2:19-22*



The Strength of a Man

The strength of a man isn't seen in the width of his shoulders.
It's seen in the width of his arms that circle you.

The strength of a man isn't in the deep tone of his voice.
It's in the gentle words he whispers.

The strength of a father isn't how many buddies he has.
It's how good a buddy he is with his kids.

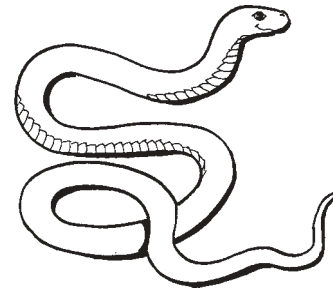
The strength of a man isn't in how respected he is at work.
It's in how respected he is at home.

The strength of a man isn't in how hard he hits.
It's in how tender he touches.

The strength of a man isn't in the hair on his chest.
It's in the emotional "heart" that lies within his chest.

The strength of a man isn't how many women he's loved.
It's in his lifelong fidelity to one woman.

The strength of a man isn't in the weight he can lift.
It's in the burdens he can carry.



Math Problem

After it was all over and Noah lowered the ramp of the ark for all the animals to leave, he told the animals "to go forth and multiply." All the animals left except two snakes who lay quietly in the corner of the ark.

"Why don't you go forth and multiply?" demanded Noah.

"We can't," answered the snakes. "We're adders."