



*The SpiritNET*

# Daily News Report

Transformed by the Holy Spirit we will be united in trust as we boldly proclaim Christ to the world.

New England Annual Conference • 2010 Session • Thurs June 17, 2010

## Becoming the "new" New England Conference

For a final time, the "old" configuration of New England Annual Conference convened briefly on Thursday afternoon. Hearing and attending to the business of the existing conference, members of New England voted on two important resolutions, transferring membership and voting rights for lay members and clergy members from Vermont churches.

Having already approved the same two resolutions at the closing session of Troy Annual Conference in May, Vermont delegates looked on as the New England members approved both resolutions unanimously.

This rare and historic vote was hailed by Bishop Weaver as a tremendous affirmation of our new ministry together.

Following the vote, all of the delegates present were invited to exchange their old voting cards, whether yellow New England cards or red Vermont cards for new green cards, issued to all voting delegates from the new configuration of the New England Annual Conference. Following grace, the old configuration of New England Annual Conference adjourned, so that the new and expanded New England Annual Conference could convene following the meal.



## Keynote: "Is That You?"



Rev. Dr. Zan Holmes, known to many as the narrator of the Disciple I Bible Study, gives the opening keynote address.

aspects of the early church. The first feature he stressed was that the early church was unique but united. No two people or churches look alike, he said. "The Holy Spirit is like Clorox 2; it's color safe," he exclaimed. "It cleanses but does not wash out colors. In fact, colors shine brighter."

The Reverend Doctor Zan Holmes of Disciple Bible Study fame began his first Keynote conversation with a story about the confusion that can result if we don't look like the picture of who we are supposed to be. He challenged the body to reflect on whether or not the church is recognizable; do we look like the picture of the early church?

To answer this question, Dr. Holmes suggested that we first examine some of the

Rather than either putting down or worshipping their uniqueness, however, the early church was united in their common love of Christ, and in their mission.

He stressed that the mission of the church should be "to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the church and the world," since the world cannot be transformed until and unless the church is transformed.

*Continued on next page...*

### In Conference Business:

RS-218 Lay Members from Vermont and RS-219 Clergy Members from Vermont (both pass unanimously). Welcome, Vermont!

RS-213 Amendments to the Conference Rules—passed.

RS-216 Number of Districts in the Annual Conference. Motion for nine districts, which adds one district to the Conference—passed. Bishop Weaver announced that the Vermont churches will be in one new "Vermont" district. Other district boundaries will remain the same.

Removed from the consent calendar and will be addressed individually: RS-112, 203, 204, 207 and 212. The rest of the consent calendar will be voted on Saturday morning.

## *In Brief*

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE "LIVE"**  
This year's Annual Conference is being webcast live from the conference floor! Those not attending Annual Conference can log in to see the schedule and view the webcast at [www.neumc.org/acstream](http://www.neumc.org/acstream).



**FLOWING WITH MUSIC:** The music team, led by our own Mitch Thomas, once again offered their musical gifts to the Annual Conference.

\* \* \*

**OFFERINGS:** Memorial service offering for Haiti: \$5467.12.

Preachers Aid society of NE sent a check to Florida Annual Conference to partner with the Methodist Church in Haiti for \$15,000 to support Methodist pastors in Haiti.

\* \* \*

**RETIREEES RECOGNIZED:** For the first time this year, the retirees were honored with personalized videos, to be shown throughout the Conference Session.

The retiring class gathered on stage, as the Bishop led the body in a prayer of thanksgiving for the witness and service to God and God's church rendered by these leaders.

\* \* \*

### **The SpiritNET Daily News**

Articles and Reporting: Rebecca Clark. Editing and layout: Alexx Wood. Photographs: Calvin Scherle. See all the daily news reports at [www.neumc.org/AC10news](http://www.neumc.org/AC10news).

## **...Is That You? (continued)**

Another defining feature of the early church was that the participants expected something to happen, and waited on the power of the Holy Spirit to lead them in the evangelical and social justice tasks of their day. "The Pentecostal power did not come," Dr. Holmes said, "until they were facing the Pentecostal task." Today, however, he decried our sin of low expectancy. "There is not a shortage of power; there is a shortage of purpose."

In waiting on the power of the Spirit, the disciples were told to return to Jerusalem, the place of their failure and disappointment.

Only there, Dr. Holmes

reminded the body, can we receive the true gift of God's power, given at the moment when we are truly helpless, stripped of all pride.

At this same point, he continued, when all we can offer God is our need and not our own power, we are ready not only to receive the Spirit as a gift, but to be transformed. "I know why we are here," Dr. Holmes proclaimed. "We are here to get our pictures touched up. By the grace of God, we do not need to leave this place like we came; we can leave looking more like the people we are supposed to be."

The Reverend Doctor Holmes will address the Conference session next on Friday morning.

## **Shall We Gather at the River?**

The Conference music team invited members and guests to gather at the river as the opening worship service of New England Annual Conference 2010 began.

Recalling the different views of the River of Life, worship leaders named those who have crossed that river this year; clergy and spouses who have passed away and places where congregations are letting go of buildings and established church settings to embrace new ministries.

Family members of those remembered added water to the fountain at the front of the chapel throughout the service.

Bishop Weaver reminded the body of the sorrow and pain of death, and of the witness to God's faithfulness in the face of death. He led the gathering in remembrance of United Methodist leaders Clinton Rabb and Sam Dixon and the countless others who died in the earthquake and its aftermath in Haiti this past winter.

Playing on the words of the sung prayer "The King of Love My Shepherd Is," the Bishop asked, "Isn't death the failure of God's goodness?" As the service progressed with reminders of God's faithfulness and the promise of hope and strength beyond sorrow, his question was met with increasingly resounding cries of "no way!", and through sacrament and song, the communion service led us into celebration of Christ's victory over death.



The custom fountain's flowing water symbolizes the River of Life during the Memorial Service.