

# BAYPINES DISTRICT NETWORK

ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE

APRIL 2008

251-580-2021

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Fort Worth, Texas  
Apr. 23–May 2, 2008

## *General Conference 101*

A UMNS Report  
By J. Richard Peck

### *What is General Conference?*

As the top policy-making body of the international United Methodist Church, General Conference is the only body that officially speaks for the 11.5-million member denomination (13 million if including baptized children who have not become members).

During the nine-day session, 992 delegates will revise the Book of Discipline, which regulates the manner in which local churches, annual conferences and general agencies are organized. The book also sets policies regarding church membership, ordination, administration, property and judicial procedures. The assembly may modify most disciplinary paragraphs by majority vote, but the Constitution can only be amended by a two-thirds affirmative vote, followed by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the aggregate number of members voting in annual conference session. Delegates may not revoke or change the Articles of Religion or the Confession of Faith unless two-thirds of the delegates agree to change this provision and three-fourths of the annual conference members also agree.

Delegates also revise the Book of Resolutions, a volume declaring the church's stance on a wide variety of social justice issues. The book contains more than 300 resolutions that are considered instructive and persuasive, but are not binding on members.

### *Where does the conference meet?*

Meeting sites rotate among the church's five geographic U.S. jurisdictions.

### *When will the gathering be held?*

The assembly meets once every four years in the months of April or May unless a special session to deal with a particular issue is called by the Council of Bishops or General Conference.

### *Who are the delegates?*

The 992 delegates to the 2008 gathering are United Methodists elected by their annual conferences. Annual conferences consist of ordained clergypersons and an equal number of laypersons elected by their local churches.

Once every four years, annual conferences elect equal numbers of lay and clergy members to represent them at General Conference. Lay members vote for lay delegates and clergy for clergy delegates. The number of delegates from each conference is based on the number of clergy members and the number of lay members.

However, even conferences with few lay and clergy members are guaranteed one clergy and one lay delegate. The Constitution permits General Conference to be composed of at least 600 and no more than 1,000 delegates.

Churches in the Southeastern Jurisdiction will have the largest number of delegates from the United States. However, because of membership increases in central conferences (outside the United States), that jurisdiction will have only 252 delegates, down from 278 at the 2004 gathering. North Central will have 138, down from 164; Northeastern, 126, down from 144; South Central, 148, down from 170; and Western, 40, down from 44.

### *What does the assembly cost?*

The projected cost of the 2008 session is \$6.6 million, compared with \$4.1 million for the 2000 conference and \$5.3 million for the 2004 session. Three percent of the cost is for committee functions and Commission on

The central conferences will have 278 delegates, up 100 from the 2004 assembly and up 136 from the gathering in 2000. Africa will be represented by 186 of the central conference delegates, up 94 from 2004. The 21 annual conferences in the Philippines will have 42 delegates. An additional 10 delegates will come from "concordat" churches with which the denomination has a formal relationship.

General Conference expenses; 9 percent covers the cost of the offices of the business manager, treasurer and the secretary of the General Conference; 24 percent is for operations; 18 percent for language services; and 46 percent for delegate expenses.

About \$1.6 million of the total \$6.6 million will pay delegate travel, and \$1.4 million will fund the cost of housing and food (each delegate will be given \$118 per diem). The Daily Christian Advocate will cost \$265,000 and the computer-tracking system will be \$230,000. Renting the convention center is expected to total \$99,000.

### *How does the legislative process work?*

At General Conference, petitions will be considered first by one of 13 legislative committees (up from 11 in 2004) that may vote to adopt, reject or refer. The Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order is proposing to eliminate language of "concurrence or non-concurrence or concurrence as amended."

Most of the first four days is spent considering proposals in committees. During the second week, the entire gathering considers legislation proposed by the committees. A proposal coming from a committee is called a "calendar item."

### *What is the conference theme?*

The theme of the 2008 General Conference will be "A Future With Hope." "We're trying to move General Conference from what it now is—an exercise in the management of petitions—to a genuine Christian conferencing with high quality conversation about the most important issues facing the church and the world," said Gail Murphy-Geiss, chairwoman of the Commission on General Conference. "We hope the conference will be more positive and uniting—a movement toward a 'future with hope.'" The commission is asking the conference to change the constitution to limit the number of delegates from a 1,000 maximum to a 600 maximum in order to increase dialogue and reduce costs.



FROM THE DISTRICT DESK

*TRANSITIONS*

“...Only fear the LORD, and serve him faithfully with all your heart; for consider what great things he has done for you...”  
- 1 Samuel 12:24 (RSV)

The month of April 2008 represents a time of transition for United Methodists. Beginning April 23 and continuing to May 1, 2008, the General Conference of the United Methodist Church will meet in Fort Worth, Texas. This is the highest legislative body of the United Methodist Church. It meets every four years and is the only body which can speak officially for the denomination. In other words, every four years the UMC has to develop organization, structure, budget and ministry for the next four years.

During the month of April, the Bishop and cabinet engage in a process known as appointment-making. This is a season of heightened expectancy and hope.

Transition has been defined as movement or passage from one position, state, stage, subject or concept to another- change. In the Book of 1 Samuel we are witnessing a momentous transition- change. Israel has requested a change in appointment. The ministry of Samuel has come to an end, or to put it in 21st century language- the congregation (some) believes Samuel is no longer effective. Samuel has been a patriarch, judge and prophet for ancient Israel. Now the time of his ministry has come to an end. The people feel Samuel has gotten old. His preaching is not as inspiring anymore. The children are not behaving, and his children are pathetic. It appears other nations have gone to a new trend in ministry. Every nation now seems to be ruled by a king and apparently the nations (congregations) are happy. As any pastor would, Samuel appeals to the nation (congregation) for another year. The nation has made up its mind- they want a king (a new and different kind of pastor). Finally, Samuel realizes his ministry in Israel has ended. It is time to move on to God's next appointment for him.

Instead of being a malcontent, angry or disappointed, Samuel gives his farewell address. Samuel's words in 1 Samuel 12:23 are timely for us in 2008 as General, annual (AWF) and jurisdictional (SEJ) Conference approach us. Each encounter will be a time, a moment of transition for the church and our lives collectively. As God told Samuel, He also speaks to us “... they are not rejecting you, Samuel. They are rejecting me...” To remain above rejection, Samuel gives one last point to the sermon, “...only fear the LORD, and serve him faithfully with all your heart...” Regardless of the transition, one thing we must do is bow before the presence of the most high. God has not brought us this far to leave us. Whatever happens at General Conference, what happens to my appointment, whatever happens at annual conference, whoever our next bishop might be? Let us remember, “...what great things he (GOD) has done for you...” May you continue to have peace and blessings through all your transitions.

UNTIL NEXT TIME,

*Brother Outlaw*



Receive the latest news and information on the 2008 General Conference Session right in your inbox!

The 2008 General Conference, which will be held in Fort Worth, TX April 23-May 2, is an extremely important meeting in the life of our United Methodist denomination. Stay up-to-date with the latest on General Conference through a free daily e-mail offered to you by the Alabama - West Florida Office of Communications.

This free daily e-mail will offer you:

- Breaking news relevant to Alabama - West Florida United Methodists
- Ability to track the progress of proposed legislation
- News of the day
- Photos
- Interviews with members of Alabama - West Florida's delegation

To receive this free e-mail in your inbox each day during General Conference (April 23-May2), please sign up below:

Sign up for General Conference emails at [www.awfumc.org](http://www.awfumc.org) and click on the left at "join the e community".

Only those who have subscribed will receive the emails.

To learn more about the United Methodist General Conference Session, please log onto [www.awfumc.org/gc2008](http://www.awfumc.org/gc2008) of Communications. Receive the latest news and information on the 2008 General Conference Session right in your inbox!

## General Conference Prayer Calendar

Please pray for our General Conference. A calendar may be downloaded and used in your church and/or for personal use. This calendar would also make a wonderful bulletin insert for Sundays. Find this calendar at:

[www.awfumc.org/gc2008](http://www.awfumc.org/gc2008)

## "Growing the Church: Moving To The Next Level" Leadership Seminar

There are times in ministry when we need help in taking our congregation to the next level. We need the perspective of someone who knows what is needed to make that happen. Your Alabama-West Florida Conference Resource Center is sponsoring this event to help both clergy and laity move their church to the next level. Bert Jones, CEO/President of Go International, will be in our conference for three days in April. Bert brings knowledge and experience to help clergy and laity move their congregations in growth and mission.

Three exciting one-day events held in different conference locations:

- April 7, 2008 St. James UMC  
9045 Vaughn Road  
Montgomery, AL 36117
- April 8, 2008 First UMC  
167 E. Broad St.  
Ozark, AL 36360
- April 9, 2008 Cokesbury UMC  
5725 N. 9<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Pensacola, FL 32504

Register online at [www.awfumc.org/bertjones](http://www.awfumc.org/bertjones) and mail payment (instructions online) or call the Conference Resource Center at 888-873-3127. Registration fee is \$20, which includes lunch.



*Methodist Men's Softball Tournament*  
The ASA Benefit Men's Slow Pitch Softball Tournament will take place May 31<sup>st</sup> at the Sports Complex in Daphne. For more information, call Tony Caminiti at 251-928-8585.



## GUIDELINES FOR THE ANNUAL LOCAL CHURCH HERITAGE AWARD

An annual award, "The Local Church Heritage Award," was established in 1988 to be given to the church most diligent in preserving its heritage during the year. The award to be given at the 2007 Annual Conference session is for the calendar year 2006. The first criterion is that the church celebrate a significant anniversary or other significant historical event in a special way during the year. Following is the list of six criteria a church should meet:

1. During 2006 the Church celebrated in a special way its anniversary, marked the graves of Methodist ministers in the church cemetery, was placed on a state or national historic register, or celebrated other significant historical events related to the church or general Methodism.
2. Church has a copy of the form "Historical Information on Churches" on file in the Conference Depository. If you do not have this form, contact the Archivist, Mary Ann Pickard (e-mail <archives@huntingdon.edu> or phone 334-833-4413) for a copy of this form.
3. Church has submitted the "Local Church Update" form for the calendar year 2006 to its annual Charge Conference. If your church did not receive this form, contact the Archivist, Mary Ann Pickard (e-mail: <archives@huntingdon.edu> or phone: 334-833-4413) to get one.
4. Church has an Historian and a Committee on Records. In small churches the Committee on Records may be a committee of one or two.
5. Church has a written or updated its church history, has submitted annual "Local Church Update" forms to its charge conferences, has written annual supplements to its church history, or has kept a scrapbook.
6. Church has a designated place for storing its archives and artifacts. Ideally this should be a room or large closet meeting archival standards that can be locked for security reasons. In some cases it may be necessary to find some other place in the community designated as an official depository where the records can be stored safely and be accessible.

## Older Adult Assembly April 24-26 Blue Lake

Join us on a "Land Cruise" at Oakwood Lodge, Blue Lake with Cruise Directors Terri Francis and Marti Patterson. Terri and Marti have planned for you an exciting cruise bound for exotic destinations.

They offer an incredible array of onboard activities such as enrichment series, championship games, inspiring spiritual adventures, and sensational evening entertainment in multiple venues. Because of the unique and revolutionary land design of the "SS Blue Lake," you will enjoy these remarkable amenities plus the warm, intimate ambience of a small vessel. This will be a cruise of a lifetime at only a fraction of the cost of a real cruise. This opportunity is sponsored by the Alabama West Florida Conference Older Adult Task Force.



ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE  
BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES  
DIVISION OF HEALTH & RELIEF Presents  
EMPOWERING MINISTRIES OF HEALTH

Saturday, April 19, 2008  
8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Cokesbury United Methodist Church  
Pensacola, Florida

**SPEAKERS INCLUDE**  
**Patricia Maygar, RN, MPH**  
(Executive Secretary Health & Welfare)  
**Rev. Luanne Wages-Smith**  
(Board of Pension and Health Benefits Wellness Forum)  
Contact Guthrie Childs, RN  
251-342-0781  
email: [gchilds@zebra.net](mailto:gchilds@zebra.net)  
Julie Terrell, RN  
850-478-9489  
email: [cdt230@aol.com](mailto:cdt230@aol.com)

*"ALL CLERGY, ALL LAITY WELCOME"*





## Radicalcommunity

**Dream it! Build it! Live it!**

**Birmingham Southern College Session**

**Sunday, April 13, 2008**

**Norton Campus Center**

**Come and join us!**

**Bring your friends!**

**On campus, and at no cost!**

**For an afternoon of faith exploration and life transformation!**

**For more information and to make reservations call church relations at 205-226-4864 or 800-523-5793, ext 4864.**



**2008**

## Spring Fling April 25 -27

Spring Fling is a retreat weekend for Jr. and Sr. High students hosted by the Alabama-West Conference of the United Methodist Church. It is three days of diving into God's Word, worshiping with hundreds of your closest friends, chilling out and having a blast at the World's Most Beautiful Beaches. The event will be held at Shalimar Retreat Center in Panama City Beach, FL .

This year's speaker, Joe Peabody, is an "in-demand" speaker and an expert on young adult culture. He is a 15-year youth ministry veteran, an Elder in the UMC and is the pastor of a new church start in Forsyth County, GA. Music will be provided by Jonny Diaz who is a nationally known Christian recording artist. Only 24 years old, he has released three albums that have sold more than 15,000 copies.

You may register on line by going to the Conference website at [www.awfumc.org](http://www.awfumc.org) and go to April 25th on the conference calendar; click on the link for **Spring Fling**. You will find there links to register on line, to the event's schedule and also to the medical authorization form that each group **MUST** present upon arrival. The cost is \$119 per person (includes lodging, meals, and programming). T-shirts will be available at a cost of \$5. If you have other questions you may contact Rev. Nathan Attwood at [nathan@awfumc.org](mailto:nathan@awfumc.org) or 888-873-3127.



United

**United Methodist  
Children's Home**  
*Alabama and West Florida*

**Methodist Children's Home  
Baypines District Spring Banquet  
April 15, 2008**

**Andalusia First United Methodist Church  
5:30 Gathering ~ 6:00 Dinner**

**Steven R. Hubbard  
President & CEO  
Guest Speaker**

**Reservations Deadline: April 14, 2008**

**E-mail: [kkyzar@gmail.com](mailto:kkyzar@gmail.com)**

**Call: Andalusia FUMC @ 334-222-5018**



**May 23 –May 26**  
**Faith Family Fellowship**

The weekend will have the following national award winning recording artists Mark Harris and Kirk Sullivan, both formerly with “4 Him”, The Burchfield Brothers of Nashville, Tennessee, Eddie Middleton, former lead singer with “New Song”, and Alicia Williamson Garcia, national recording artist, and teacher and vocalist for “Women of Faith”. All of these artists will be in concert throughout the weekend.

Special guest speaker will be Jeremiah Castille, former University of Alabama/ NFL player and currently with Jeremiah Castille Foundation. Other speakers will be Dr. Fred Wolfe, former minister at Cottage Hill Baptist Church, Mobile, and founder and minister of Luke 4:18 of Mobile. The Rev. Brad McClain, associate minister Dauphin Way Methodist Church of Mobile, teacher, counselor and author will speak, and also, Dr. Abercrombie, national speaker, author, and counselor from Fairhope.

There will be a tour of the USS Battleship Alabama and Aircraft Pavilion with a USO Show featuring a fish fry dinner on Sunday. This will be a complete late afternoon and evening program filled with fun and surprises.

All of the catered meals, Friday evening through Monday morning, and Battleship tour are included in the cost of \$130, as well as all concerts and programs.

On Saturday afternoon and Sunday afternoon, free time activities are being offered, such as, kayaking, canoeing, pontoon boat trips to Graving Island or an Indian mound, Hovercraft tour, delta airboat express, tour of Historic Blakeley, and many other fun things in which to participate in during the weekend. The cost will be \$155 after March 31.

There has not been a Christian singles event of this magnitude in the Baldwin and Mobile County area before. The event is being sponsored by Faith Family Fellowship and The Eastern Shore Christian Singles. For more information, go to [www.faithfamilyonline.com](http://www.faithfamilyonline.com) or call 251-626-1379.



Luke 6:38

I'm sure I'm not the only one to think of this, but perhaps a version of what we are placing in our April church newsletter could be used by other churches. In place of "building fund," if not needed, they could substitute UMCOR or whatever:

As most of you know, the Federal government will give all taxpayers (you MUST file a return for 2007 to qualify) a tax rebate of \$600 per adult. This presents an opportunity to help us turn the corner on our finances. If every church member TITHES their rebate, that would be approximately 380 (active adults) times \$60 = \$22,800! But an even better idea: why not "round up" the tithes on this "mailbox money"? Give God \$100 of your rebate, keep \$500 for yourself (pay down those credit cards and save money for future stewardship!). That could conceivably raise 38,000 "extra" dollars for God's ministry at "Name of Church" UMC! If you've never been a tither, there's never been an easier time to start than when you receive money that is a "bonus" to your usual budget/income. And if you are a person who regretted having never made a pledge to the building fund, you may feel called to donate your entire rebate. Strangely enough, doing so could help you pay less taxes for next year.

**BEGINNING EXPERIENCE WEEKEND**

The next Beginning Experience weekend will be April 11-13 at Beckwith Lodge on Weeks Bay. Beginning Experience is a weekend program for single adults who have suffered a loss through death or divorce. It is a peer ministry which is provided by other adults who have been through the same losses and through this program. For further information, go to [www.beginningexperiencemobile.org](http://www.beginningexperiencemobile.org) or call Billy Dossett at 251-406-1128.

# *Baypines District Calendar*

## *April*

- 3** Baypines District Committee on Ordained Ministry, Spanish Fort UMC  
Sexual Ethics Seminar, Camden UMC
- 9** AWFC Leadership Training,  
Cokesbury UMC, Pensacola
- 10-13** Pastors' Licensing School, Blue Lake
- 12** Baypines District UMW Spiritual Retreat  
Bay Minette First UMC 10:00 AM
- 15** District UM Children's Home  
Spring Appreciation Banquet  
Andalusia First 5:30 PM
- 19** Health Ministries Seminar  
Cokesbury UMC, Pensacola
- 23-May 2** General Conference  
Fort Worth Texas

## *May*

- 9** Deadline to register for Huntingdon College housing for Annual Conference
- 15** Pastor's Meeting  
Bay Minette First 11:00 AM
- 17** District Orientation for Annual Conference  
Atmore First 11:00-1:00
- 31** UM Children's Home Charity Softball Tournament

## *June*

- 1** Annual Conference  
Frazer Memorial  
Montgomery, AL
- 19** Leadership Council Meeting  
District Office

The  
Baypines District  
Network

The United Methodist Church  
Baypines District Office

P.O. Box 1711  
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Bay Minette, Alabama 36507

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*Annual Conference June 1-4, 2008*  
*Frazer Memorial,*  
*Montgomery, AL*



**Fort Worth, Texas**  
**Apr. 23–May 2, 2008**