

CHARGE CONFERENCE  
SEPTEMBER 25, 2004

The annual Charge Conference of Salem United Methodist Church convened on September 25, 2004, at 3:30 PM. The Rev. Mark Derby, newly appointed District Superintendent, was the presiding officer.

The report packet, prepared by Council Chair Chris Denham, was presented. The packet contained an overview of the church's program and ministry, as well as reports from the treasurer, the pastor, the Board of Trustees, and included as well photographs of some of the year's activities.

The "Responsibility for Members" report was filed. This included the names of persons who have not been attending or giving or who have moved with no forwarding address. This was the first year for this filing.

The SPRC Committee recommended that the Pastor's salary be set at \$26,525.00 with the added benefits of a maximum reimbursable amount of \$3600.00 be set for car allowance and \$500.00 be established for continuing education. Rev. Derby led a discussion of clergy salaries, noting that churches which are unable to meet the Annual Conference minimum for a full time pastor would expect to be supplied by seminary students, Local Pastors, or retirees. There is always a "supply and demand" factor in assigning pastors. Salem is at the point of not being able to pay for a full time pastor but this should be the goal.

The Nominations Committee did not have a report and so the Superintendent authorized the pastor to convene a special Charge Conference for the purpose of electing officers.

Noting the tightness of our budget, Mark asked how many giving units we have. We have 22 giving units. Rev. Derby offered the information that nationally the annual giving for United Methodists is just 2% and that our goal should always be the tithe, i.e., 10%.

The Superintendent led a discussion of evangelism in our community. He mentioned that one of the issues faced by the small church is that many times folks like larger churches because they can worship in anonymity in the latter and little if anything can be expected of them. Rev. Derby urged that Salem be intentionally inclusive of new people. In response to the question of how we get new people he urged cross-cultural, cross-generational events. Susan Denham asked his opinion of the need for and desirability of a contemporary worship format. The Superintendent said that religious sociologists are now suggesting that such services do not draw as many people as has been suggested. Rather, he advocated more flexibility in worship services, that is, use your body parts (standing, sitting, clapping, Amens). He reminded the Conference that worship is engagement with God, enjoyment of God, and expectation of God's involvement. Mark said that he would be glad to meet with us in a strategy session dealing particularly with evangelism. The meeting adjourned at 5 PM.

(Minutes by Carroll Gunkel)