



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 • 2008 Session • June 14, 2008



Bishop Weaver makes a slam dunk to kick off the Nothing But Nets District Challenge.

SHARE YOUR VISION: Contribute to the Conference Visioning Table process! Share your vision for the Conference and our churches on the Feedback Wall outside the Chapel.



\$6.3 MILLION FOR KEY MINISTRY
Marion Grant shared with the conference the great success of the "Together for Tomorrow" campaign. 6.3 million dollars have been received to date. Local churches have received more than \$2.2 million of those funds for new and creative ministries, while the balance will fund a variety of mission and ministry efforts in our conference and beyond:

- Congregational development (\$2.2M);
- Camps and Retreat ministries (in excess of \$2M);
- Pastoral retirement (\$4.3M);
- Over \$200,000 to the international covenants of conference with West Angola and Nicaragua.

Netted Together in Faith & Mission

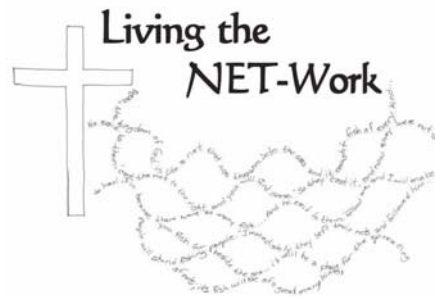
The 2008 Session of the New England Annual Conference swung into action on Friday morning to rhythmic melodies led by Mitch Thomas and the conference music team, with special guest singing duo, Erroll and Kay Leslie. Conference members then appropriately joined in singing "Together We Serve." The first part of the service also included a celebration of our connection in the faith, shared by conference liturgical dancers who were adorned in colorful scarves and lifting fishnets, highlighting the Conference theme of *Living the NET-Work*.

Conference nets were full—with loads of levity—and spirits were high at the opening session of this year's Annual Conference on this sunny Friday morning. "Dagnet" character Bishop Peter "Joe Friday" Weaver, and "drag-netters," Bonnie Marden (Conference Choreographer) and Oscar Harrell (conference Lay Leader), along with net-entangled cabinet members lifted us with

laughter. Together they humorously embodied the opening worship theme, "Nothing But Nets," as well as the theme of the whole conference, "Living the Net-Work."

The worship celebration continued in a lighthearted and creative manner as the theme continued through a "District DragNet," with each District sharing highlights of the life-giving ministries and mission happening around the

Conference. From the big net of the Northern District, to the talking mosquito of the Tri-State District and the big "Swedish Fish" of the Mid-Maine District, to the butterfly net of the CT-Western Mass District, the basketball net of the Hope District, the winners at the badminton net from the Central Mass. District, the hair net of the RISEM District, and finally the "fish-net" stockings that got the New Hampshire District dancing, all the District reports strung conference members together in a web of laughter while celebrating our connectional ministries.



Conference Actions for Friday, June 13, 2008

Resolution 204, to support the Conference focusing on fulfilling the Global Aids Fund commitment of \$1 per member by the end of 2008 was passed.

Resolution 210 was passed, calling on New England United Methodists to work toward the elimination of the Adoption/Orphan crisis—there are over 150 million orphans in the world today.

CFA presented the budget, which will be voted on during the Sunday session of Annual Conference.

In Brief

Musical guest Kate Campbell entertained Conference members on Friday evening with her clever lyrics and charming musical style, along with her delightful down-home stories and witty perspective on living a life of faith.

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HONORING OUR RETIREES:

The Friday evening celebration continued with Retirees reflections, which ranged from deeply moving stories that moved us to tears, to delightful stories of the lighter side of lives lived in faith and service to Christ.

Those retiring in 2008 include:

- Jonathan Almond
- Raymond Anderson
- Arlene Bodge
- Norm Boulay
- Michael Davis
- William McClain
- Gary Nettleton
- Linda Peabody
- Lucille Richard
- Marilyn Robb
- Junie Shepherdson
- Nancy Smith
- Steve Stolle
- David Svenson
- Patricia Thompson
- Joyce Whetstone

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The offering during Opening Worship raised \$30,574 for Nothing But Nets. That's more than 3,000 nets!

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The SpiritNET Daily News from Annual Conference. Articles by Michael Stotts and Alexx Wood. Photos by Alexx Wood. See all the daily news reports at www.neumc.org/AC08news.

“Push out” to deeper waters

As Bishop Peter D. Weaver began his morning message, it was with hand signals, making a cross with his index fingers, and then connecting all his fingers—representing the church “and all the people”—our connection, he says. “It’s a living network of faith.”

“Show us *your* nets,” he said, “nets connecting us around our communities and around the world ...like the nets being made in Angola, that some in this conference connected with this January.” Then, showing slides of that mission journey, the Bishop called the conference to “allow your spirit to be drawn into connection, net-working with God’s people.” With his rousing homily the Bishop called all conference members to see the net as the connection . The Bishop celebrated our global network which is the Church-- which John Wesley called the 'connexion.' Noting that early English spelling, he called on the conference to “Use your fingers and make an “x” ...We are living the network!” he proclaimed, a network of Christ’s love for the world.

Sharing the gospel reading of the fishermen disciples with their overflowing nets, and Christ’s call to them to fish for men and women, the Bishop called that experience of



Jesus’ disciples “nothing short of a miracle” just as are the ministries of our United Methodist Churches in New England, and our mission work in places like Angola. They are ministries through which we dare to be partners, he said, in order to “push out” into the deep waters of our global community, serving its needs, and rejoicing in our relationship—our connection in Christ—with our global community.

The Bishop spoke of the miracles of the mission in Angola—like the pastor who had had no pay but said, “once you have Christ, you have everything.” With that in our hearts he invited us to go deeper into discipleship—not just a toe or two—but into the depth of faith. “Let’s dare to push out a little deeper, because God in Christ is there to go with us!”

Dupee: “Could it be that simple?”

ZEIGLER PREACHER AWARD

Rev. Eric Dupee



Ziegler Preacher Rev. Eric Dupee challenged Conference members on Friday night to imagine what our ministry would be like if we put aside our ‘perfectly crafted mission statements’, and just focused on loving God and loving others. Look at Jesus’ ministry, he says. “No building, no programs, just Jesus, teaching and caring for the needs of the people around him...Could it be that easy? Could it be that Jesus makes it look easy because it *is* easy? Love God, Love others. How’s that for a mission statement?”