

## THE SOUTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE COUNCIL ON CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES

### **Vision:**

A Church of diverse congregations called, united and sent by Jesus Christ.

### **Purpose:**

“to make disciples for Jesus Christ by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church, all to the glory of God.”

*The Book of Discipline 2004* Page 351, p. 601

### **Process:**

1. commit to focus exclusively on realizing our vision and fulfilling the purpose of the conference
2. identify the needs of congregations, districts and the conference in realizing our vision and purpose
3. mobilize all resources of the conference to equip congregations to make disciples
4. develop a structure that is based on the needs of congregations and the conference; the structure must be fluid enough to meet the changing needs of the congregations and the conference.
5. provide a conference staff that will focus on equipping and connecting congregations for ministry

The Conference Council on Connectional Ministries is excited about its new vision statement, purpose and process because it clearly states that we are a church that mobilizes all our resources to assist congregations in making disciples for Jesus Christ. We have deployed six congregational specialists throughout the districts to assist and equip our local churches, as we seek to realize our vision.

The congregational specialists have been deployed in their assigned districts since October 2, 2006. They have received training in Natural Church Development and in coaching. They have monthly staff meetings and quarterly retreats in order to hone their skills and to be spiritually strengthened.

We have received from pastors and laity positive evaluations of the congregational specialists. “Your efforts are making a real difference. In February our specialist spent the weekend with us leading workshops on Saturday, preaching on Sunday, and attending an evangelism committee meeting after church. Her leadership was effective and her preaching was excellent.” “I think the conference is hearing that the congregational specialists are available for a wide variety of needs in the local church. This is one of the most important new programs of the annual conference that I have seen. It has such a major impact on the life and day-to-day functioning of the local church.”

We have seen the effectiveness of focusing the staff’s energies on local churches and their needs. Therefore, we hope to develop a process to assist boards and agencies to focus their work on equipping and connecting local churches for ministry.

The Conference Council on Connectional ministries is painfully aware of the need for more specialists in order to meet the needs of our local churches; however we are in the process of developing ways to be better stewards of our specialists’ gifts and abilities. We are aware that each specialist is responsible for working with local churches in two districts plus serving as staff liaison to several boards and agencies. The Council on Connectional Ministries has assigned a task force to provide training opportunities for board and committee chairpersons because they will be given greater responsibilities as we continue to provide programs and training events for our local churches.

Natural Church Development is a major tool that is being utilized in our conference and all of our specialists are using it as a component of their ministry with churches. The conference has provided training opportunities in Natural Church Development to all pastors in each district. It is our prayer that we will allow this process to strengthen our local churches as we realize our vision.

*Earline Haywood-Ulmer, Chairperson*