



## MISSION TRIP



Shortly after one of those “milestone birthdays” early in February, I joined ten individuals for a mission trip to Kenya. We helped construct a church and school in a remote area called *Maua*. The mission is a collaborated effort of WMSUMC, Christ United Methodist, and Wesley Memorial United Methodist in High Point.

While in Maua, one full day was taken to visit four schools and help administer de-worming medicine for children. All eleven participated with two student nurses from the Maua Methodist Hospital. On the remaining workdays, six of us worked on the construction of the church and school. The other five, including our four nurses, worked in local clinics and the hospital.

As I was preparing for this mission, our daughter, Sharon, asked if my recent birthday had provided the impetus for traveling 8,000 miles to an area totally foreign to me and doing rather grueling physical work (In other words, what was I trying to prove). In reality, due to working full-time for most of my adult life, I finally had the time and freedom to do this. While still fortunate to enjoy good health, there is no time like the present! (Unless I am mistaken, four of our eleven, including me, qualify as seniors depending on the criteria you use to determine that status.)

Our building team was joined by a local team headed by the foreman, Mbougwa. We loaded sand on wheelbarrows, moved large rocks, mixed gravel, sand and cement for the masonry work. As we took breaks for water or a peanut butter sandwich for lunch, we found times to gather and get to know each other a bit better. Under a ramada, constructed of dried cornstalks, we found respite from the 84° temperature and the direct sunrays at the equator.

During one of these breaks, Mbougwa and I talked about family, children, grandchildren’s ages and what they do. At 47, he has three children, ages 11, 14, and 17. When he learned my age he seemed a bit surprised. “Women of our age in Kenya are usually stooped way over and somewhat crippled.” I remembered that our team members had learned, during our orientation session, the average life span for Kenyans is 50 for men and 51 for women.

There are many special memories and stories I carry with me from my two weeks in Kenya—a warm and welcoming spirit of the people; the visit to an AIDS orphanage where I held a toddler orphaned by the disease; the lush flora and fauna of the region; the Christian fellowship felt in our group of eleven; the Communion service led by Bishop Mischek; and Kakane, who spoke the liturgy in English, then prayed a blessing in his native Swahili the morning we were leaving.

I am grateful for having had this experience. When others converse with me and state how we “helped” those people far away in Africa, I can assure them that we benefited more than anyone, whether, young, old, or middle-aged.

—Faye Ellison

## SALLIE WARD

Sallie Ward was recently honored as a 50-year member at the 92nd annual conference of the N. C. Family and Consumer Science Association on March 5-7, at Wrightsville Beach, N. C. She continues her work with the Guilford County Association; when asked what she enjoys about it, she said, “Touching lives, making things happen, and making a difference.”

Sallie, a very active member at West Market, is a member of the Asbury-Covenant Sunday School Class, serves on the Older Adult Ministry Team as Chair of the S.E.N.I.O.R.S. Intergenerational Committee, and serves on the Children’s Ministry Team. This year will be Sallie’s 38th year working with Vacation Bible School. UMW Circle #4 appreciates her phone calls to members. She touches the lives of children and adults, is involved in making things happen and certainly is making a difference in our church.



Congratulations, Sallie!

## OLDER AMERICANS MONTH 2010

May is Older Americans Month—a tradition dating back to 1963, to honor the legacies and ongoing contributions of older Americans and support them as they enter the next stage in life. This year’s Older Americans

Month theme—*Age Strong! Live Long!*—recognizes the diversity and vitality of today’s older Americans who span three generations.

Older Americans have lived through wars and hard times, as well as periods of unprecedented prosperity. They pioneered new technologies in

medicine, communications, and industry while spearheading a cultural revolution that won equal rights for minorities, women, and disabled Americans. These remarkable achievements demonstrate the strength and character of older Americans, and underscore the debt of gratitude we owe to the generations that have given our society so much.



*AgeStrong! LiveLong!*

(continued on the back)

However, the contributions of older Americans are not in the past. Older Americans are living longer and are more active than ever before; they are spending more time making significant contributions in their communities through civic and volunteer opportunities and are a core component of service delivery to seniors—embodying and modeling the drive to *Age Strong! Live Long!* Their energy and commitment remind all Americans—not just senior citizens and their caregivers—to do their part to enhance the quality of life for older generations.

— Mary Belle Gilbert

### COVINGTON TO CONCLUDE SPEAKER SERIES



The final “Dinner and a Speaker” for this year will be held on **Friday, June 4**. The featured speaker will be our own Howard Covington, whose topic will be, “Making History: How Writers Reconstruct the Past.”

Howard was born in Concord, NC, but grew up out-of-state, returning in 1968 to take a position with the *Charlotte Observer*. He moved to Greensboro in 1980 and worked for the *News & Record* for several years. Since then, he has devoted himself to writing books mostly about North Carolinians who lived in the 20th century, Terry Sanford, A. J. Fletcher, and Jesse Helms, to name a few. In addition to the years he served as a newspaper reporter and editor, Howard has written more than 20 biographies and corporate histories.

He will talk to us about how historians and writers use interviews, letters, documents, newspaper accounts, photographs and other material to create history and biography.

Howard and his wife, Gloria, joined WMSUMC in 1981 and have been active members, teaching and serving on various committees. They have three grandchildren who live in Kentucky and Raleigh.

“Dinner and a Speaker” is sponsored by the Education Committee of S.E.N.I.O.R.S., one of the groups of the Older Adult Council at WMC. The event will be held in the Gathering Space, from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Cost is \$10.00. Please make reservations and payments to Jeanne Shepherd (275-4587) no later than Monday, May 31st.

The series has been highly successful this year, with good attendance at all the dinners, a good response to all the speakers— Bill Wilson of the AARP, the Rev. Belton Joyner, and Holly Stevens. The Education Committee is currently at work finding speakers to extend the series from fall of 2010 to 2011. If you have suggestions, call Grey Wood, Chair of the committee.

—Ethel Glenn

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### WISDOM & GRACE CONFERENCE August 9-12, 2010



#### “Reaching Up, Reaching Out— Our Call to Spirituality and Mission.”

Be energized and inspired by outstanding speakers and workshop leaders, enjoy the beauty of Lake Junaluska, meet folks from all over the southeast, share time with friends, enjoy planned recreation, hum along and tap your feet with virtuoso ragtime pianist, Ethan Uslan, on Wednesday Night, and hear the Junaluska Singers Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.

### TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS

WMSUMC participates in two city-wide transportation programs.

(1) **SENIOR WHEELS**, managed by Thorpe Jones (292-4195), provides medical transportation on the 4th Thursday of each month and needs more drivers.

(2) **SHEPHERD’S WHEELS** managed by our Shepherd’s Center (378-0766), provides a variety of non-

medical rides (groceries, hair care, drugs, banking, etc.) five days a week. You can volunteer “as available” or for specific weekdays or half days.

You will be advised on all trips two or three days ahead and

can refuse when you have a conflict. The need is great this month. SCG had to turn down 11 requests. Call to learn specifics and **GIVE SOMEONE A LIFT**.

—Jim Weikel



### FRIENDSHIP CLUB

**Friendship Club**, an open group that meets monthly at 11:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall 3, September through May, invites you to come and enjoy good fellowship, a good program, and lunch. **Cost of lunch is \$5. Reservations are required.**

On **Monday, May 24th**, Faye Ellison, Chairperson of the West Market Arts Committee, will present a pro-



gram tour of West Market Art. In the past two years we have enjoyed two art program tours, yet there is more to see and learn.

There are new acquisitions plus other special art that we have not toured. Join us for an interesting session. **Reservations are required by May 18th.**