



There's a Place for You  
at Virginia Avenue!

# The Pastor's Connexion

A PUBLICATION OF REVEREND TERRY GOODMAN

Wednesday February 28, 2007



I hope that by now you have taken the opportunity to read some of my [daily Lenten Reflections at my blog](#). According to the site, about 1300 persons have read the devotions since I began posting them on Ash Wednesday.

Writing them has become almost a

devotional time for me. It takes about three hours to compose a weeks worth of reflections. Since you are getting this email, I assume the you have been reading the online version. I have been printing a few printed copies and it seems as if these are being well read also.

I have decided that this project will continue onward, at least up until Pentecost. At that point I will re-evaluate and see if it still provides growth opportunities for me and those of you that are reading either the online or print versions.

To help me make that decision, please let me know in the next month whether or

not you have been reading the reflections and whether or not you would like to continue reading them. To continue on through the summer will require some careful planning on my part. If I can get enough done in advance, I might be able to make the print version available on a monthly basis. So be in prayer for this act of love and devotion on my part.

—tdg

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## Natural Church Development Update

I have met with the coaches assigned to our church for the Natural Church Development (NCD) Process. The lead coach will be the Reverend Kathy Hale from Riner, Virginia. The assistant coach will be the Reverend David Brannock from Richlands, Virginia.

We have worked out the following timeline. During the month of April, I will be giving a small 28 page booklet to the leaders of the church and asking them to read it. The booklet explains the Natural Church Develop-

ment Process. In May, I will call the leaders of the church to a special meal at the church and then ask them to spend about 30 minutes answering a computer scored questionnaire. The results from this questionnaire will become the basis for our ongoing involvement in the NCD process. The coaches will help us determine the area of our church life and ministry that needs the greatest attention.

Over the next year, we will work on strengthening that particular area. The eventual

outcome is a healthier and more balance church. This is not an overnight or quick fix scheme. Rather, this will require us to look long and hard at how we do certain aspects of our ministry and then seek to change, add to, or maybe even stop doing some of the things we do so that we might become a stronger and more vibrant church.

I need each of you to begin praying earnestly that God will use this process to bring us into His will and make us effective ministers.

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# The Pastor's Connexion



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(User name and Password Required to access this portion of the site. Contact pastor to have one assigned.)

## Do you have a prayer request?

If you have a prayer request that you would like to have sent directly to the pastor, please click on the link below and complete the form and then submit it. The request will be sent to Rev. Goodman.

[Please pray for...](#)

(Not Yet Fully Functional)

Natural Church Development is a process by which we will learn more about our church and its ministries. It is not a canned program where you follow a process from step one to step two, to step three. Rather it is an ongoing evaluation that allows a church the chance to address areas of weakness in its ministry and strengthen those areas.

NCD is based upon data that is collected and then compared to data that has been collected on more than 45,000 churches of all sizes, denominations, and worship styles, and nationalities. Based upon analysis of this data, it has been determined that there are eight quality characteristics that are shared by growing churches. The NCD process will compare our church on these eight scales and give us an idea of areas that we can improve to make our church a stronger witness for the Kingdom of God.

The eight characteristics are:

- Empowering Leadership
- Gift-Oriented Ministry
- Passionate Spirituality
- Functional Structures
- Inspiring Worship
- Holistic Small Groups
- Need Oriented Evangelism
- Loving Relationships

Once we determine what is called our minimum factor (the area in which we have the lowest score) we will then meet with our NCD coaches and discuss ways to increase our minimum factor. Studies have shown that increasing the minimum factor typically increases other areas of church life and ministry as well.

We determine what our minimum factor is by asking 30 of our church members to complete a questionnaire that is then scored and returned to us. These 30 people will answer questions based on how they see and understand the ministry and life of our church. They will represent a broad cross section of our congregation.

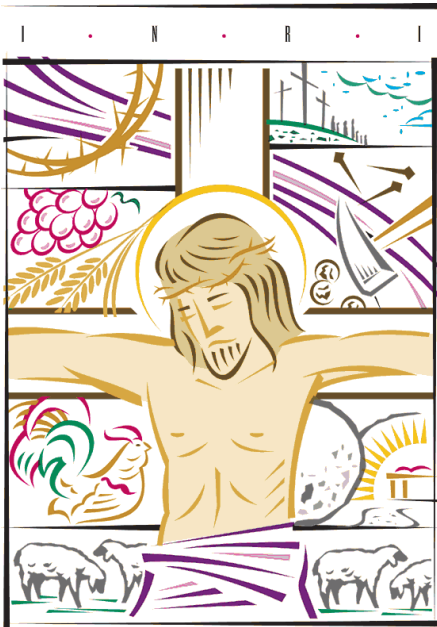
Once the tests are scored the NCD coaches will meet with the 30 and explain the results to them. From that 30, we will then create a Church Health Team that will be charged with working with the coaches to strengthen the minimum factor over the next 6-9 months. Again, this is not a canned program with fixed steps to follow. Each church will have to deal with its own minimum factor and find ways to change, delete or add ministries to make the minimum factor stronger.

Once we have been working on this for about a year, we will take another of the questionnaires and see what our scores are in comparison to the first round. Hopefully, the minimum factor from the first round will no longer be then minimum

factor and we will have another area on which we can focus our time, energy, and efforts for another year.

As you can see from this example, the word process is perhaps the key word that we need to focus upon. Once the process begins, our task will be to continually re-evaluate our church and its ministry and life so that we are always seeking to improve that area in which we show the most need for improvement. As we focus on this task, I believe that things will begin to happen in the life of the church. I believe that NCD can add an energy to our church and its ministries and lead us closer to the model that God would have for the church.

I hope that you can begin to see this same vision. I hope and pray that you will support the NCD process as we begin to unroll it in the months that lie ahead of us. If you have any questions, I would be more than glad to talk with you about the process and where we are in it. One date that you need to put on your calendar is Wednesday night May 2, 2007. I will be asking the 30 persons that will be completing the questionnaire to be present at the church on this night for a meal. Following the meal, we will spend about 30 minutes completing the questionnaire. Please be in prayer for this process and those that will be involved in it.



### Holy Week 2007

As Holy Week approaches, I pray that you will be present with us for a series of very special worship events.

We begin with Palm Sunday (April 1st) on this day we remember the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem. He was hailed by the crowds as the Anointed one. We know that in just a few days, though, the crowds would turn upon him.

Following the worship service, we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for our First Sunday luncheon.

On Sunday night April 1st, immediately following our Administrative Board meeting (7:00 p.m.) we will have a Palm/Passion Sunday vesper service in the Prayer Chapel. This service will be similar to the one that was held on Ash Wednesday. We'll light the candles and have time for prayer and scripture reading.

Beginning on Monday April 2nd, we will have noon time Worship and Luncheons sponsored by the Ministerial Association. The service will be held at the Bluefield First UMC. Everyone is invited to attend these services that will run through Friday.

I will be leading the worship and singing at the service on Tuesday. I have also been asked to preach at the

Bluefield, West Virginia Ministerial Association Holy Week services to be held at the Trinity UMC on Wednesday of Holy Week. This is also a noon time service.

On Wednesday night of Holy Week we will have another vesper service that begins at 6:30 p.m. in the Prayer Chapel at the church. I hope you can also be present at this service. It should last about 30 minutes.

On Thursday of Holy Week, we will once again gather for worship at 7:00 p.m. At this service, three things will happen. We will have an opportunity to wash one another's feet as a sign of our humble servant hood. We will celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The Choir will perform a song from their upcoming Easter cantata, *Behold the Lamb*.

On Good Friday, the Bluefield Ministerial Association invites everyone to come to a Community Good Friday Service at 7:00 p.m. at the Ebenezer United Methodist Church.

On Saturday, both the Macedonia UMC and the Virginia Avenue UMC will hold their annual Easter Egg Hunts. The Macedonia hunt will begin at 11:00 a.m. The Virginia Avenue hunt will begin at 1:00 p.m. At Virginia Avenue, we will service hot dogs, chips, cookies and a drink to the children.

As Sunday morning approaches, you are invited to attend an Easter Sunrise Service at the Macedonia UMC. The service will begin at 7:30 a.m. Following the service, around 8:15 a.m., we will celebrate Easter with a breakfast at the in the fellowship hall. Bring along a favorite breakfast treat to share with everyone in attendance.

We will bring our Easter celebration to a close at the 11:00 a.m. worship service at the Virginia Avenue UMC. We will have traditional worship and the choir will present its Easter cantata, *Behold the Lamb*.

As you can see, it is going to be a very busy week of worship and activities. I hope that you will be able to participate in as many of these activities and events as possible.



[The Pastor's Blog](#)

[RevTDG's favorites on del.icio.us](#)

### Recommended Sites:

(Please note that neither I nor the church has control of the content on these sites.)

[Holston Annual Conference](#)

[The Official United Methodist Site](#)

[The Upper Room](#)

[Sacred Space](#)

*online devotional*

[Screenit.com](#)

If you are looking for reviews of recently released movies and DVD's check out this site. You don't have to join. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click on NO THANKS.

## Church's future depends on developing leaders, bishop says

Oct. 12, 2004

By Linda Green\*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMNS)-The lack of leadership in the United Methodist Church is the top issue facing the denomination in the 21st century, says a retired bishop.

Bishop Joseph Pennel of Franklin, Tenn. told the governing members of the United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry that the church is at a critical point because of the absence of strong, spiritual leaders. "Leadership determines the path and pathos of an institution and organization," he said.

"Every congregation deserves spiritual leaders," he said. "... We need leaders today who are concerned about more than institution maintenance. We need leaders who are more concerned about faith than maintaining the status quo. We need leaders today who are nailed to the historic faith, which brought the United Methodist Church into being."

The board is the church's program agency for educational, institutional and ministerial leadership. Its mission is to lead the denomination in the recruitment, preparation, nurture, education and support of Christian leaders, both lay and clergy, for the mission of Christ in the world.

Jesus did not reject the past but was informed by it and lived out of it, Pennel told the board's directors. Christ understood the context in which he was to give leadership, the bishop said. Christian leaders must be like Jesus by being counterculture leaders and understanding that if they lead out of their convictions, others will reject them, he said.

The Rev. Jerome King del Pino, top staff executive of the board, said the issue of leadership arises at a critical juncture for the denomination because the church "is experiencing, if not a crisis, (then a) deep ambivalence and confusion about the kind of leadership it needs in the years ahead." Del Pino related the uncertainty about the nature of leadership in the church to seismic shifts in the global village-religiously, technologically, politically, socially and economically.

"The responsibilities of the United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry in the areas of call, preparation, support and accountability for persons in ordained, diaconal and licensed ministry, and its oversight of campus ministry and institutions of higher education, are areas of passion for me," said Bishop Gregory Palmer, the newly elected president of the board. "The church and the culture(s) have no greater need than well-prepared Christian leaders. The United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry is this church's agency at the critical nexus to assist the church in this area," he said.

Palmer challenged the board members to perform their duties well because "we cannot afford to be guilty of the sin of low expectation, with regard to developing leadership for a global church."

Del Pino described three leadership characteristics that the United Methodist Church needs as he laid out a "vision of global leaders for a global church."

The first characteristic of such a leader is that of being a guardian of the connection, he said. The leader does not abandon the ideal of a global church that is diverse in hues, languages, cultures and traditions. He said global leaders take seriously the view of Methodism's founder, John Wesley, that the world was his parish, and because the church is changing faces, such leaders are not "prompt(ed) to trim their vision to the local, the familiar and the domestic."

A global leader also bears a renewed vision of the church, Del Pino said. The leader envisions a church that recovers its Methodist heritage without "self-interested denominational navel gazing or anxious preoccupation with its own survival." Leaders with renewed vision embrace the purpose for which the Methodist movement was founded, he said. "From the beginning, Methodism existed not for its own sake but for the sake of a larger catholicity."

He asked what would happen if United Methodists recovered the Methodist ethos of nurturing disciples "bent on living not for themselves but for the larger good of God's kingdom," and were not driven by a desire for institutional maintenance and management.

A third characteristic of a global leader for a global church is that of advocating for a learned leadership. This leader, Del Pino said, calls for a renewal of the union of reason and vital piety, intellectual excellence and holiness of heart and life. "Global leaders for a global church uncompromisingly and unapologetically advocate for educated and educating leaders," he said. They strive for a "new public space, where issues that define our mission and ministry can be raised, debated and resolved beyond the categories, dichotomies, and labels that now hold the conversation captive."

Global leaders embrace Wesley's vision of providing education to everyone, especially the poor and underserved. Methodists, historically, have thought of education as a tool for individual empowerment and social improvement and providing education to all has been an issue of justice, he said. Global leaders for a global church "envision an education pipeline that stretches around the world, training leaders with the spiritual, moral and intellectual wherewithal to lead the church and the society in the midst of profound change."

The Pastor's Connexion is a publication of the Reverend Terry Goodman and designed for the friends and members of his churches. The Connexion is published at least monthly. However, occasionally it is published twice a month. For more information, please contact Reverend Goodman.

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