

*Then the Lord said, "Look, I am setting a plumb line among my people Israel; I will spare them no longer."
(Amos 7:8)*

MFSA NCC—The Plumb Line

Volume 2, Issue 1

1st Quarter 2018

The Year in Review

2017 was good a year for the North Carolina Conference chapter of the Methodist Federation for Social Action. We increased our activity and our visibility in the conference and increased awareness about important social justice issues at a time when there are many challenges to social justice on all fronts.

We held the 9th annual Jack Crum Conference on Prophetic Ministry at Jarvis Memorial United Methodist Church in Greenville March 25th. This is the first time we had a held a conference outside of the Triangle area except our lunch at Annual Conference. We felt that we needed to reach the entire conference and move beyond our comfort zone. We picked a challenging topic "Radical Welcome: Learning to live with the Other." It was well received, we had over 80 attendees at the conference and it was an enthusiastic crowd.

In June we held our annual Gayle Felton Love Thy Neighbor Lunch at Annual Conference. We had a packed house to hear the Reverend Vernon Tyson preach. We honored Vernon, his daughter Boo, and Sam Isley with the Gayle Felton Drum Major for Justice Award for work on behalf of LGBTQ inclusion in the



conference. We also honored the Reverend Jennifer Anderson and Calvary United Methodist Church in Durham for their prophetic ministry for LGBTQ inclusion with the Jimmy Creech Award for Prophetic Ministry.

Our year of activity did not end in June as it usually does. In October in partnership with Reconciling United Methodists and Friends NC and Fairmont United Methodist Church we hosted a showing of the documentary film "From Selma to Stonewall: Are We there Yet?" and Reverend Gil Caldwell and Marilyn Bennett were present. It was a well attended event at Fairmont United Methodist Church with over 60 folks in attendance.

Challenging Racism and Islamophobia Workshops

Over the years we have collaborated with other groups to help events. We have worked with the North Carolina Council of Churches, NAACP NC, Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Reconciling United Methodist and Friends NC, and the NC Annual Conference Board of Church and Society. One of our new partners is the Movement to End Racism and Islamophobia (MERI). With the increase in Islamophobic and racist rhetoric we felt this was a worthwhile partnership.

We have approached this partnership by hosting workshops on racism and Islamophobia which were facilitated by MERI. On Saturday, January 27th there was a workshop at Resurrection United Methodist Church in Durham. Then on Saturday March 17th in Raleigh at Fairmont United Methodist Church another workshop was hosted by MFSA NCC with MERI facilitators. Between the two workshops, over 50 people were trained about the issues surrounding Islamophobia and racism and they are often interconnected with other issues of social injustice.



The 10th Annual Jack Crum Conference on Prophetic Ministry

Yes, it is hard to believe that this will be the 10th annual Jack Crum Conference on Prophetic Ministry. The original concept was to take on issues that the institutional church was sometimes afraid to speak with a prophetic voice. Over the last 10 years we have dealt with racism, full inclusion of LGBTQ folks, Islamophobia, child poverty, school diversity, and marriage equality.

This year the issue is economic inequality and the growing income and wealth gap. We look at the issue from those living paycheck to paycheck and look at ways we can speak with a prophetic voice and support policies that will promote an economy that works for all of us. The Reverend Dr. Jennifer Copeland, Executive Director of the North Carolina of Churches, will lead us off in worship in the morning, followed by a panel discussion by Raise Up for 15 and then Gene Nichols, law professor at UNC Chapel Hill and director of poverty research at the law school, and the poverty simulation game. Closing worship will be led by the Reverend T. Anthony Spearman, President of the NAACP NC and the North Carolina Council of Churches.

The cost of the conference is \$25 in advance for adults, \$12.50 for students and \$30 at the door for adults and \$15 for students. Once again we do offer packages:

- Jack Crum Conference and NCCC Critical Issues Seminar - \$40 (NCCC = North Carolina Council of Churches)
- Jack Crum Conference plus MFSA-NC Membership - \$80
- Jack Crum Conference plus Membership plus Gayle Felton Luncheon - \$90
- Jack Crum Conference plus Membership plus Luncheon plus NCCC Seminar - \$110

Conference attendees can go to www.mfsancc.org and pay and register online or can make a check out to **MFSA NC** and mail it to:

MFSA NC
PO Box 18311
Raleigh, NC 27619

