

Florida UCC Women's Miami-Dade/Monroe County Region

Annual Meeting - February 6, 2010

On Saturday February 6, 2010 the Miami-Dade/Monroe County Region of the Florida United Church of Christ Woman, held its Annual Meeting at First Church of North Miami. Rev. As-Saalam prepared a wonderful service for our women. We began with our Regional Representative, Patsy McDowell welcoming everyone and teaching us an uplifting worship song "I Want To Be More Like You". That really set the tone for our time together.

After Rev. As-Saalam welcomed us to her church, the Gospel Choir of the Church of The Open Door further feed our spirits with the first of their three selections. We were next inspired by a beautifully led interactive Bible Study that was facilitated by Rev. Lavern Goforth which centered on our Spiritual Health.

And then there was our speaker for the day, Pastor Vanessee Burns from Carter Tabernacle CME Church in Orlando, Florida. During our time with Pastor Burns we discovered affirmations of our Mary and Martha selves and were given some directions on how to discern the will of God for our lives and how to learn about our gifts so that we can be more effectively used by God to win souls to his kingdom. Pastor Burns used Luke 10:38-42; John 15: 5-8; Romans 12: 1-8; Genesis 17: 15-17 to remind us what the gifts are, what they are meant to be, and that we are never too old to be God's instrument.

What an amazing time we had in and of the Lord God. Our spirits were fed, renewed and exceedingly blessed. Those that were unable to attend the meeting really missed a special time in the company of like minded Christian women.

During the business portion of our meeting we were informed about what the different churches represented had been about during the past year. Here are some of things the various churches are doing:

Christ Congregational (Cindy Ketzal) – They have adopted and are partnering with the Homestead Community in support of Charibel Foster Children.

Church of the Open Door (Dory Lingo) – Women's Retreat 3rd weekend in October, Harvest Fest in November, Women's Choir, Christmas Party for children in JMH, Divas Exercise Class, Puttin' On The Ritz-Christmas Dinner/Dance, Jazz Breakfast March 13, Valentine's Day Dance February 13, Drop off site for Haiti Relief

Coral Gables (Edith Matthews) – Prayer Shawls for anyone needing prayer, Quilts for the boys at Bay Point Boys School.

First Church of North Miami (Rev. As-Saalam) – Haiti Hearts for sale proceeds to go to the Haitian Relief efforts; Rummage Sale February 13 from 8am until 2 pm; Exercise Class for seniors every Tues, Wed. and Fri from 9-10; Collecting baby items for JMH; Collecting camping gear; and have to date raised \$500 for Haitian Relief .

Miami Lakes (Carolyn Furlough) – 2nd year in the theme "Let's make A Difference in our Church, Community, and World" ; the women have raised

\$2200 for their Deacon Fund; Held 2 garage sales; Donated \$300 to Miami Rescue Mission; Helping to build 2 schools in Honduras; Collect Food for the Poor; Work with Seabirds at Pelican Harbor; and held their 2nd English Tea.

Church By-The-Sea – Holds monthly luncheon usually on the 2nd Tuesday of the month during the season which is October thru May. The funds raised from the luncheons usually go to support the organization from that Speaker represents. The next luncheon is scheduled for March 9 at the Surf Club \$25 per person all are welcomed.

Sunset Congregational (Linda Diaz) – Adopted Leisure City Elementary for Christmas and provided 1804 gifts and goody bags for the children; Held a Blue Christmas Service for those who may not be quite in the Christmas spirit; In May held their 3rd Annual First Responders Recognition Service; beginning the end of February will hold Alpha USA Course.

Rev. Bill Koch, our Regional Conference Minister was also in attendance and gave us an update on Conference wide activities:

Florida Conference Annual Meeting – April 30 thru May 1 in Naples, Fla.;

Boundary Training for Clergy was held;

Church Vitality & Clergy Enrichment Seminars facilitated by Mark Burrows;

Conference leadership is need of some officers and forms for nomination were distributed;

Ft. Pierce celebrated its 25 years;

Church in Ministry authorizing Ministry for church and clergy;

Financial giving Seminar is scheduled for Feb. 28 in Jensen Beach with Don Hall;

Conference Meeting on March 12 in Orlando;

Workshop in Church Growth facilitator is Paul Nickerson is scheduled for March 15

Friday Feb. 12 at 6:30 pm film in preparation for Sacred Conversation on

Race at First Church of North Miami; Sacred Conversation will also be

Feb. 13 at First Church of North Miami and will be facilitated by Rev.

Karen Thompson

February 20 there will be a Financial Numbers Workshop held at

Plymouth Congregational

In January the Youth held “Walking on the Water” at Key Biscayne

Community Church and was led by the Regional Youth Minister, Sheila

Guillame; Peace River Canoe is scheduled for March 5-7; and in April the

Youth will host its first Confirmation retreat at Coral Gables

Congregational Youth Center.

The Florida United Church of Christ President, Bunny Gruntler honored us with her presence and brought us news on what we (Fla. UCC Women) are doing:

All women who are members of a United Church of Christ church are members of the Florida United Church of Christ Women, regardless of whether they are members of a Women's Fellowship or a Circle.

Our Annual Conference is scheduled for June 11 – 13 in Sebring, Fla., our theme for this year is "Gathering At Miriam's Well", Churches are asked to bring displays of their Community Outreach and empty pill bottles;

In The Company of Women is scheduled for Oct 23 at Sun City Center;

The Southern Regional Conference has asked Florida to host in 2011 but we are asking another region to host because of all of our activities planned during that time;

Fla. UCC Women are hosting the Luncheon at the Florida Conference in Naples;

Reading for Renewal Lists for the 2010 – 2011 year is available;

Forms for reporting the readers for 2009 – 2010 are now available as well as forms for nominating "Lay Woman of the Year". We are asking each church to nominate a well deserving woman of their congregation.

After all of that wonderful information was given, we enjoyed a delicious lunch prepared by the Women of First Church of North Miami. We were truly blessed with a well received and spiritually uplifting meeting. 2011 Annual Meeting will be at Christ Congregational Church, don't miss it.

See You There!!!!

Patsy McDowell

Miami-Dade/Monroe County Representative, Fla. UCC Women