

Shepherd to Shepherd

"Stand and shepherd His flock in the strength of the Lord" Micah 5:4

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Pastors' Newsletter

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Eddie Estep

District Superintendent

- *Christlike Disciples*
- *Holiness Pastors*
- *Missional Churches*



From My Heart to Yours

CLERGY STEROID USE ALLEGED

(One Danger of a Truly "Relevant" Church)

It has recently come to my attention that there may be some pastors on our district using ministry-enhancing steroids. For several months now there have been widely-circulated but unsubstantiated reports of pastors injecting themselves with unknown substances. The majority of these reports were made by church secretaries and custodians.

Information has come to me regarding pastors who ten years ago had difficulty baptizing normal-size adults, but who can now baptize three hefty men at once. I am also aware of instances of pastors who just five years ago were preaching from UltraThin NIVs, but who are now taking their texts from 15-pound Communion-display Bibles while holding them in one hand. There are also reports of pastors whose "burden-bearing capacities" have increased four-fold over the last couple of years, and these are pastors who are in their 40s and 50s!

Other indications of potential steroid use have been attributed to statistics from pastors' reports indicating a tripling of pastoral calls made from one church year

to the next. One pastor is reputed to now be able to discern when his members are in the hospital before being called and informed of the same (this to the chagrin of parishioners who love to criticize him for not visiting members in the hospital, but who refuse to notify him that they are there). I ask you, does this sound like supernatural empowerment or steroid enhancement?

Please know that the South Carolina District Church of the Nazarene takes these reports seriously. I pledge to you that this stain upon the reputation of South Carolina Nazarene ministers will be eradicated.

I will be recommending that the District Advisory Board consider impaneling a blue-ribbon commission to study this problem. Should it be proven that certain pastors have been using steroids, we will be forced to go back to prior-year district journals and place asterisks beside the significant statistical increases.

(Please excuse me this little bit of fun. After last month's article on "Expectations," I thought some comic relief might be in order. Actually, I was going to make this a special April Fool's article, but I couldn't wait that long to publish it! I assure you the rest of this newsletter is legitimate.)

Eddie Estep
District Pastor

Bits-N-Pieces

PRAYER REQUESTS: Hubert Richardson (Batesburg, chemotherapy treatments); Chaplain Steve Survance (deployed to Ecuador), John Powell (Orangeburg First, non-cancerous throat tumor), LaNora Smith (song evangelist, Winnsboro, injured in a fall), Ed Kessler (Charleston Cross Community, upcoming surgery).

A SC District Pastors' Prayer Summit will be held at the campground, February 25-26. All ministers are welcome to attend. Registrations have been sent to each pastor.

Pastor Tim Haynes (Spartanburg First) recently underwent an excellent pastoral review.

Eric Kessler (Charleston Cross Community PK) has received a Presidential Scholarship (full ride) from College of Charleston.

Dr. Steve Callis has resigned as pastor of Lexington Shepherd, after 11 years of service. Rev. Bob Albert has been appointed Interim Pastor at Lexington Shepherd, beginning March 2.

The Regional Prayer Summit for the Southeast (TNU) Region will be held May 28–30, 2008, on the campus of Trevecca Nazarene University. All ministers and spouses are welcome. Online registration information can be found at: www.nazarenepastor.org

A Discipleship Summit is being held in Nashville, TN, on March 8, 2008. Go to www.discipleship.nazarene.org to register your ministry leaders (ministerial and lay).

We are hearing of a renewed emphasis on prayer from several churches and pastors.

Nazarenes Les and Leslie Parrott will be presenting a marriage seminar, "Becoming Soul Mates," at Mt. Horeb United Methodist Church, Lexington, on Saturday, March 1, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. For information: <http://www.mthorebumc.com/>.

A district pastors' Centennial Sunday training day is scheduled for April 12, in Columbia. Each pastor will receive a complimentary Centennial kit with sermons, worship service ideas, resources for children and youth, CD, DVDs, and more. Centennial Celebration Sunday will take place October 5, 2008.

Your Opinion Counts

The question last issue, "What is the biggest blessing associated with being a pastor?" received the following thoughtful responses:

"In response to your question concerning "biggest blessings" - Surely to be able to speak, to study the scriptures, to represent, to promote the Kingdom of God, to urge people to respond to God's invitation - to know that God is making His appeal through me has to be way up there."
- Brent Walker (Myrtle Beach)

"There are a number of things that are a blessing but I think seeing sinners come to Christ would have to be the greatest. To see humankind transformed by the power of God when all else has failed, there is no greater blessing. I am praying now that this will happen to some of the good people in my congregation. Please pray with me that this will happen."
- T.W. Mitchell (Ashwood)

The question for next issue: "What are you 'giving up' for Lent?" Please forward your responses to eddieestep@scnazdist.net and I will list selected responses in the next issue.