



2008 Home for Christmas/Watch Night

The North Texas Conference *Igniting Ministry* Team is announcing its most extensive *Home for Christmas/Watch Night* campaign to support local churches in their inviting and welcoming efforts during the days and weeks before Christmas, the time of year when non-churched persons are most open to going to church, especially on Christmas Eve.

Now in its eleventh year, this annual Advent/Christmas campaign invests conference resources and time to make sure that people are aware that The People of the United Methodist Church in North Texas are waiting for them with open hearts, open minds and open doors.

“The goal is to have high visibility for North Texas United Methodist churches as a hopeful, positive option during a season that may be not so merry for thousands and thousands of people, many of whom have no church to call home during this time when people need the love of Christ and one another more than ever,” says NTC Director of Communications Dr. Joan G. LaBarr.

The 2009 campaign is expected to reach some three million households in the 20-county NTC region through newspaper advertising, radio commercials and billboards. The newspaper advertising will target publications in key market areas of each district, the radio will be focused on the Greater Dallas metro area, and the billboards will be primarily in the three northern districts. Circulation figures for the newspaper buy total more than one million, and many of these papers will be read by multiple persons, Dr. LaBarr explains.

“Our Radio schedules alone include 205 over the air spots, plus a minimum of 264 online spots on the radio websites and banners on those radio station websites. We project that the schedule will reach nearly 550,000 people in the target demographics. In the billboard placements, we are looking at a minimum daily estimated traffic count around 100,000. Projecting that number over the course of 30 days shows a staggering number of cars that will pass by the boards,” she notes.

Another highlight of the campaign is the creation of two new designs for local church 2008 Advent/Christmas inviting and welcoming campaigns. “The Wonder of Christmas” features three young children whose faces communicate anticipation and expectation of the season. “Hope for the World” puts the emphasis on the Christ Child, in a photograph of a strikingly evocative Nativity Scene from Mexico.

Both designs are available in the array of complimentary oversize postcards offered to NTC churches to customize for their particular uses through NTC *Igniting Ministry*. Any other *Home for Christmas or Watch Night* designs will also be available for churches to select. All are available for viewing on the www.thecrouchingroup.com website, which may also be accessed from the www.ntcumc.org website home page.

The paper mache nativity scene in “Hope for the World” was handcrafted in Mexico, likely in a coastal area, as indicated by the seashell gifts of the Magi. The collection was on loan from Bethlehem in Denton County, a private collection of over 2,600 depictions of the birth of Jesus. Owner Judy Klein is organist and a 42-year member of Blue Mound UMC, Denton.

The media campaign components of *Home for Christmas/Watch Night* will once again include advertising of Christmas Eve Candlelight and other special Christmas week and Watch Night New Year’s Eve services in area newspapers, including the zoned editions of the Dallas Morning News. District Offices are being provided forms for churches to indicate their service times. Dec. 1 is deadline for submitting this information to District Offices.

Newspaper advertising is scheduled for: The Denton Record Chronicle, Wichita Falls Times Record News, Sherman Democrat, Sulphur Springs news Telegram, Paris News, Wise County Sunday Messenger and All Around Wise, Terrell Tribune, Cooke County Weekly, Greenville Herald and Commerce Journal, Dallas weekly, Dallas Morning News, Mabank group (including Mabank Monitor, Kernes Tribune, Malakoff News and Lake Area Leader), Bowie News, Mt. Vernon Herald, Jacksboro Gazette, Star Suburban Newspapers and the Dallas Observer.

Radio purchases will include WRR (101.1 FM), KTCK (The Ticket – 1310 AM), KVIL (103.7 FM), KMKI (Radio Disney – 620 AM), and Radio One urban stations, KBFB (The Beat – 97.9 FM) and KSOC (KSoul – 94.5 FM).

The billboards will feature the design from “The Wonder of Christmas,” with placements in: Sherman-McKinney, Paris-Sulphur Springs and Wichita Falls.

In addition to the complimentary cards, churches may purchase other promotional items at special rates, including customized yard signs (deadline Nov. 15). Custom banners and non-customized yard signs may be ordered as late as Dec. 10.

For more information or consultation on *Home for Christmas/Watch Night* materials and campaign ideas, contact Tim Crouch or Ron Ray at 888-211-0273 or e-mail: tim@thecrouchgroup.com or ron@thecrouchgroup.com.

Deadlines for ordering the oversize postcards, allocated to churches at one and one half times their average worship attendance as recorded in the 2008 Journal, are Nov. 21 for orders shipped to District Offices. Churches may opt to have cards shipped to their address to have them customized at their own expense. The Crouch Group indicates that imprint orders may be accepted as late as Nov. 21, but it is highly advisable to have these orders in as early as possible.

For more information on the NTC *Home for Christmas/Watch Night* emphasis or for a consultation for a local church campaign, contact Dr. Joan LaBarr at 972-526-5036, 800-969-8201, or e-mail: labarr@ntcumc.org.



To view postcard designs and place orders, log on to:
www.thecrouchgroup.com