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COFFEE DRAWS CONGREGATION TO CONTEMPORARY SERVICE STEVE CONE AND HIS TEAM AT JAMESTOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CALL THE SERVICE CAPPUCCINO AND CHRIST.

Steve Cone and his team are always looking for ways to improve what they are doing. So when his church, Jamestown Presbyterian, decided a new name and theme was needed for its contemporary worship service, "coffee" immediately became the buzz word.

"It's a drawing card," said Cone, chairman of the church's contemporary worship ministry team.

Cone and his team did some checking, discovered they could purchase the popular Starbuck's Coffee from a local vendor and started offering the coffee during the contemporary service this past fall.

In a little area called the HeBrews Cafe, the coffee, along with juice and hot chocolate for the children and a few food items, is served. The service is held in the church's Christian Life Center at 9 a.m. each Sunday.

Cone and the team also came up with a new name for the service - Cappuccino and Christ.

"We thought the name was catchy and a bit on the edge," Cone said with a laugh! "We felt strongly that making these changes would attract members of the community."

It appears he was right.

Prior to the changes, the church had an average of about 100 people in its contemporary service. Now the average is about 140.

Cone doesn't take all the credit for the increase.

"We also have to commend all the other committees who have played a part in this," he said. "This service is just one of the things that generated that increase."

He also attributes the success to the church's new senior minister, Bob Sharman, who came to the church in July 2003.

"He's full of energy and great, new ideas," Cone said.

Bouncing credit back, Sharman said he believes much of the success of the service is because of Cone and his work.

"He's a leader, knows how to get to the point and knows how to gently but steadily guide people," Sharman said. "He has great patience, is absolutely reliable, and he's a fine man."

The contemporary service not only has brought in new people from the community but also has attracted some members from the traditional service. Cone, who sings in the choir in the traditional service, enjoys attending

both worship services.

It has rejuvenated the worship lives of many in our congregation and reached beyond," Sharman said. "It's a tremendous invitational."

As chairman of the contemporary worship ministry team, Cone helped start the church's contemporary service 21/2 years ago.

"Initially, the idea was to provide a worship service more attractive to those in the community not currently active in a church," Cone aid. "We also did it to offer a variety of worship styles to our own congregation."

The location for the service is different - a gymnasium area called the Christian Life Center, and the dress and atmosphere is more casual.

A praise band called Decided loudly plays contemporary Christian music.

Cone is quick to note, though, that the church's focus is unchanged.

"We're not changing the message, but putting that message in a new style that can be more inviting and easier to understand," Cone said. "Even though we do things different, the focus is on worship and Jesus Christ."

As for the future, the wheels are always turning in Cone's mind. Projection equipment was recently added to the contemporary service so that the words to the praise songs and scripture verses could be easily displayed. Cone also hopes to add video clips to enhance the service, to use more skits and drama to put an emphasis on the message and to add liturgical dance.

"It's all intended to reinforce the message and make our worship more vital," he said. "I think it allows some individuals to offer the worship of God in a style that's comfortable for a lot of people, people who might not be as comfortable in a traditional setting."

A former Southern Baptist, Cone became Presbyterian after he and his wife, Patty, were married. In the past 25 years, he has been a member of three Presbyterian churches and has been involved in the worship ministry in each.

A member at Jamestown Presbyterian since 1996, Cone is a church elder and has trained as a Stephen Minister. He explained the Stephen Ministry as an interdenominational program that provides a caring person for congregation members who have a special need.

"It's a one-on-one relationship, being a consistent, caring friend," he said.

Cone said he loves his church and the opportunities he has there to serve God.

"Being at this church allows me the opportunity to worship; it offers me fellowship with friends and fellow believers; it offers me the opportunity to serve people."

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Caption:
JENNIFER ATKINS BROWN/ News & Record
Steve Cone

Memo:
FAITH PERSONALITY

Steve Cone

Activity: An elder and member of Jamestown Presbyterian Church since 1996, Steve Cone is chairman of the contemporary worship ministry team. He has worked the past few years to make the church's contemporary worship service more successful, which included helping initiate a Cappuccino and Christ coffee theme.

Education: A native of Charleston, S.C., Cone received a bachelor's degree in business administration from Furman University. He is manager of personal lines for Southern Guaranty Insurance Co. In his leisure time, Cone enjoys tennis, golf and spending time with his family.

Family: A Jamestown resident, Cone is married to Patty Cone, who works in the guidance office at Ragsdale High. They have two sons: Jason, a freshman at Appalachian State University, and David, a sophomore at Southwest High.

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