

# Joint Watch Night at Simpson-Gillespie

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**December 31**  
Rev. Walter Pegues, and Simpson-Gillespie United Methodist Church and Rev. Bernard Ingram, and New Emmanuel Congregational United Church of Christ will hold their annual joint New Year's Watch Night Service at 11 p.m. at Simpson-Gillespie United Methodist Church, 3545 Beatties Ford Road. Ingram will deliver the message. Breakfast served immediately following service. For information, or directions call: (704) 399-2717

• The Park Ministries celebrates milestones of 2006 and what's ahead for the New Year with its first Watch Night service as owner of the Charlotte Merchandise Mart. A jubilant worship service featuring music, dance, video presentations and preaching, Watch Night at The Park will give visitors a glimpse into the church's vision for the Merchandise Mart. The service will allow the church to consolidate its traditional Watch Night program from three services into one, transforming

## Va. parishes split with church

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who cast ballots in the last week supported cutting ties with The Episcopal Church, parish leaders said. Six other Virginia parishes are voting this month whether to leave.

The Truro and Falls Church break is likely to spark a lengthy, expensive legal fight over the historic properties, which are worth millions of dollars.

The Episcopal Church, the U.S. wing of global Anglicanism, has been under pressure from traditionalists at home and abroad since the 2003 consecration of the first openly gay bishop, V. Gene Robinson of New Hampshire.

Theological conservatives are a minority within the 2.2 million-member U.S. denomination, but their protests have had an impact.

Episcopal researchers estimate that at least one-third of the nearly 115,000 people who left the denomination from 2003 to 2005 did so because of parish conflicts over Robinson.

Seven of 100 U.S. Episcopal dioceses have threatened to break from the denomination, but have so far stayed put. The closest any have come to leaving was a vote earlier this month in the Diocese of San Joaquin, in Fresno, Calif., endorsing a first step toward seceding. But the diocese must take a second vote next year before they can formalize a split.

The state of the 77 million-member Anglican Communion is far worse. Most overseas Anglicans believe gay relationships violate Scripture and contend liberal interpretation of the Bible should not be accepted.

Struggling to hold the communion together, Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, the Anglican spiritual leader, has said that the communion may have to create a two-tier system of membership, with branches that ordain partnered gays given a lesser status.

Akinola is among the conservatives who aren't waiting for a negotiated solution.

Under Anglican tradition, his move into Episcopal territory amounts to an invasion. Archbishops agree not to plant churches outside the borders of their own regional churches.

Canon Kenneth Kearon, secretary general of the Anglican Communion, said that the archbishop of Canterbury has not "indicated any support" for the mission.

On the Net:  
The Falls Church:  
[www.thefallschurch.org](http://www.thefallschurch.org)

Liberty Hall into a 5,000-seat sanctuary for the evening.

**January 9**  
The Women's Initiative Network Chapter Meeting will be held at the Hampton Inn and Suites, SouthPark at 6 p.m. The speaker will be Deirdre Davison.

The topic is Accountability: The Missing Key to Unlock Your Goals. Cost: \$25 members \$35. Guests before 12/31. Add \$10 after early bird deadline.

Register at [www.womensinet.com](http://www.womensinet.com). For more information call (704) 541-0277.

**January 13**  
The University of Tennessee at Martin choral ensembles and the clarinet choir will perform a concert of diverse, engaging and exciting music as they tour throughout the Southeastern Coastal region of the United States. Selections from the program include the music of Aaron

Copland, W.A. Mozart, Benjamin Britten, Eric Whitacre and Moses Hogan. The ensembles are led by Dr. Mark Simmons, UT Martin director of choral activities, and Dr. Amy Parks Simmons, UT Martin assistant professor of woodwind studies.

The UT Martin Department of Music has 100 students majoring in music with 13 full-time faculty members. The choral ensembles tour yearly and the January tour

in 2007 will take them to Myers Park Presbyterian Church. All performances are at 7:30 p.m. The concerts are free and open to the public.

**January 20**  
Steele Creek AME Zion Church located at 1500 Shopton Road will sponsor a Four Season Tea fundraiser from 2-4 p.m. Tickets are \$6.

Please call 704-523-6552 for additional information or to purchase tickets.

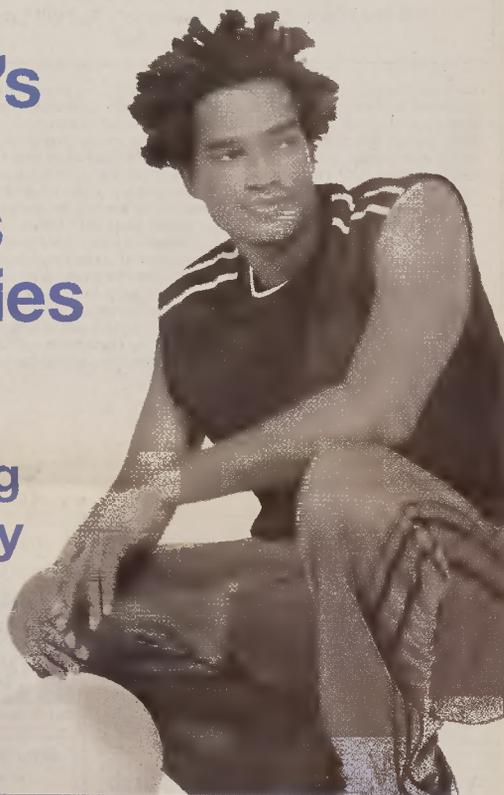
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