

LIVING WATER

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FIVE RIVERS DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

Presence Is Fuel for Spiritual Life

By: [Bishop Scott Jones](#) On 3/14/2012

Dying congregations essentially tell their members, "It doesn't really matter how you live or practice your faith."

Growing congregations expect a lot from their members.

On the surface that seems crazy. Who wants to join a group where the price of belonging is so high?

The answer to this mystery lies in the very nature of God, the Church and salvation. God created humanity with a particular purpose in mind—to love him with heart, soul and mind and to love our neighbors as ourselves (Matthew 22:34-40).

Yet, we are like sheep that have gone astray, following our own ways rather than God's. How do we get back on track?

Grace.

God's forgiving love accepts us as we are, brings us back to relationship with God and then shapes us to become the kind of people we were and are intended to be. Everything hinges on a life of grace where we stay connected to God and allow God to help us grow up to be mature Christians.

That journey from sin to new life to being a mature Christian is the way of salvation, and it is a set of practices where individuals and groups of people experience God's grace and grow toward the goal. That spiritual life involves being caught up in God's saving purposes for the world as well because being saved means allowing ourselves to be used by God for accomplishing God's purposes.

How do we stay in touch with God's grace? We practice the means of grace. One of the chief means is weekly worship. *Continued on page 4*

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April 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Schedule of Events

- April 2nd-April 9th District Office closed for Marvé's vacation and Good Friday holiday.
- April 4th-5th Appointive Cabinet
DS is in Wichita
- April 6th Good Friday all
District Offices and KE
Conference office are closed.
- **April 8th Easter Sunday**
- April 9-11 Appointive Cabinet
DS is in Wichita
- April 12th Clergy Meeting
at Ottawa 1st, 9-Noon
- April 16th Appointive Cabinet
DS is in Wichita
- April 19th Leadership Team
Worden UMC 7-8:30 p.m.

Christian Creative Writing Workshop

Pastor Larry Bowyer will lead a creative writing workshop at Forest Park Conference and Retreat Center in Topeka, KS on May 5th. The workshop will be held in Hickory Hall from 9:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. The registration fee of \$35 includes all materials and lunch.

Register online on the KE website ~ link below:

http://www.kansaseast.org/events/detail_ke/4181

or call 913-721-2793

Kansas East Annual Conference ~ June 6-9

Leawood: Church of the Resurrection UMC

13720 Roe Blvd

Leawood, KS 66224-3588

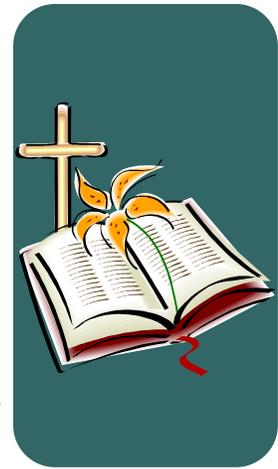
For more Events see the Kansas East

How Current Are Your Church Membership Records?

Are you keeping proper records for your local church membership by the requirements of the *United Methodist Church Discipline*?

¶230 Membership Records—1. Each church shall accurately maintain a membership record for each baptized or professing member including:

- a. the person’s name, date of birth, address, place of birth, date of baptism, officiating pastor, and sponsors;
 - b. date of confirmation/profession of faith, officiating pastor, and sponsors;
 - c. if transferred from another church, date of reception, sending church, and receiving pastor;
 - d. if transferred to another church, date of transfer, receiving church, and address of receiving church;
 - e. date of removal or withdrawal and reason;
 - f. date of death, date and place of funeral/memorial, place of burial, and officiating pastor.
2. Annually, names of professing members to be removed by charge conference action shall be reported to the charge conference
¶228.2.b.4
3. Constituency Roll, containing the names and addresses of such persons as are not members of the church concerned, including unbaptized children, youth and adults whose names are not on the membership record, and other nonmembers from whom the local church has pastoral responsibility,



Permanent Church Membership Records:

The basic membership records in each local church shall consist of: a permanent church register and a card index, a loose-leaf book, or a membership record on an electronic information system. (see ¶245)

District Prayer Calendar

April 1	Williamsburg Pastor Billy Hughes
April 8	Lawrence 1st Rev. Tom Brady Rev. Mitch Todd
April 15	Garnett, Greeley Rev. Richard Fitzgerald
April 22	Ottawa 1st Rev. J C Kelley
April 29	Vinland Rev. Nick Woods

April Birthdays	
Trudy Kenyon Anderson	April 7th
Ed English	April 7th
Daniel Norwood	April 13th



Five Rivers District

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Continued from page 1 ~ Presence is Fuel for Spiritual Life by Kansas Bishop Scott Jones

I want to shout this from the rooftop: Every Christian should worship God in a gathered community of faith every week. No exceptions.

We need to teach people that they need the grace of God, and the chief means of grace is to worship. If they are sick, they should worship online or through the television. If they are traveling, they should find the nearest church and worship there. If it is a normal Sunday and they are home, they should make sure that worship is built into their weekend plan. Whatever it takes, make sure you get some of that grace of God in a worship service every week.

There are several reasons for this.

First, Jesus told us, “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them” (Matthew 18:20). Before each of my sermons, I acknowledge the Holy Spirit’s presence, and then I ask that I might have the eyes to see the Holy Spirit and the ears to hear God’s word.

Second, Christianity is a team sport. John Wesley said that there is no such thing as solitary Christianity. My sisters and brothers in the faith need me, and I need them. Gathering together for worship—as well as fellowship and service—strengthens all of us.

Third, worship changes me and gives me new priorities for the future. I need the support of others who had the same experience to use the grace that I have been given.

When people enter the United Methodist way of salvation as baptized believers, we ask them to commit to prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. The presence part of that promise is important, and we need to teach people so. Then, we need to help them keep their promises. That is how we love each other well.