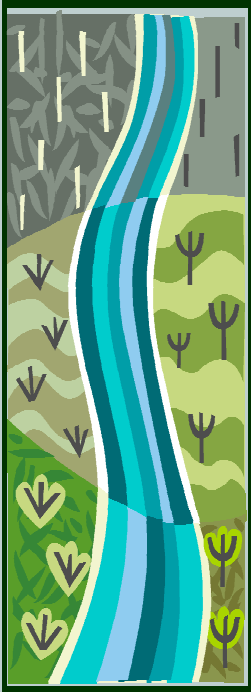


Living Water

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 4

APRIL 2008



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Reflections From Ron

Hello Colleagues and friends,

The Resurrection is a refreshing concept in every way in our lives. We find renewal, second chances, new beginnings, opportunities and challenges. What an exciting time of our Christian season. I guess then that the butterfly is an appropriate representation of the metamorphosis of change.

Our Five Rivers District is called to resurrection and change. We have been called to a renewal of what it means to be a district. We have several opportunities facing us. Several new beginnings are on the horizon. There will be second chances given to us — chances to do better, reach higher, and go farther. We might even dare to “*s-t-r-a-i-n*” for the high prize of the calling in Jesus Christ. In our resurrection, we are invited to look at things anew. One of the new things we will be visiting again and again is what it means as local churches and as a district to live into our newly revised mission statement. The change is subtle but significant. We have transitioned from a district that cultivates Christian discipleship to one that is cultivating Christian growth.

In my Spirit, heart and mind and soul, I believe that this is what God has always intended for our district, and yes even the Church of Jesus Christ. We are to be about the mission of growing — as individuals, as communities of faith, as connec-tional bodies of the church that cut across local church, district, conference, juris-dictional and national boundaries. We are called to be about the mission of cultivat-ing Christian growth. Growth: that small intangible thing that is sometimes negligi-ble but measurable nonetheless. I’m reminded of my grandchildren as they stood, each of them with their backs against the wall, *s-t-r-a-i-n-i-n-g* to be another half inch taller than they were before, just to prove that they were growing. What if in the culture of our local churches we displayed the same anticipation of growth cou-pled with the dissatisfaction of being exactly where we were the last time we were against the wall.

What would it mean for all Christian people in United Methodist Churches of the Five Rivers District if we backed up against the wall of God’s expectations and anticipations for us and strained to see if we had grown spiritually with our stewardship, with our participation in the life of the church, with our service to oth-ers and our love of neighbor? What would it mean if we took seriously the call of God upon us to bear fruit in the name of Jesus? What would it mean for our District, our local churches and the individuals called the church if we all began cultivating Christian growth as a discipline of our faith? Only the individual can answer for themselves what it means.

There will be ample opportunities for each of us to be challenged in our growth. As your district superintendent, I only invite you to come and grow with us. Agape and shalom,
Ron

Holy People, Holy Space, Holy Time

That was the theme of the Five Rivers District Conference held Saturday, March 29th at Ottawa 1st UMC. The morning presentation was given by Rev. January Kiefer. There were around 90 people in attendance including our invited guests from Kiefer's former congregation, St. Mark's African Methodist Episcopal Church, Topeka, Kansas.

The oldest of four daughters born to immigrant parents, Rev. Kiefer was raised overseas in Vienna, Austria. She spent several years in the Southwestern United States and on the East Coast before settling in the Midwest. She holds a Master of Fine Arts from Syracuse University New York and a Master of Theological Studies from Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis. She is a candidate for a Doctor of Ministry in Arts and Theology through Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington D.C.

Rev. Kiefer led us in a worship service that culminated with communion at the altar. There was symbolic washing of hands and the altar tables were dressed in white. Two guests from St. Mark's AMEC helped give the sacrament and although both were stalwart members of their congregation, it was the first time they had done so. In their church only the Elder is allowed to give the sacrament of communion. This was a good teaching moment to reflect on the differences, as well as the likenesses between our Methodist denominations.

After worship, Rev. Kiefer led a presentation that centered on a case study in which the traditional and innovative roles and rituals of the altar are shown to enhance the experience of God's transformative Love in a small African Methodist Episcopal Church congregation.

She used her experience at her former church to help write her thesis for her doctorate; *The Altar: Tradition and Transformation*. Rev. Kiefer is currently an ordained elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church working towards transfer and full membership as an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church. She is now serving the LaCygne and New Lancaster Methodist Churches.

Kiefer showed a power point presentation of her former congregation and how they had dressed the altar using the colors and symbols for different events and church seasons. They began by embracing both the tradition and "New Life." There has to be some continuity because if everything is new we cannot handle it, she said. She asked thought provoking questions to help when planning for the services.

"How is God going to greet me?"

"Will I recognize God and open my eyes?"

There were many themes chosen for the altar installations. Some of them were Keeping Sabbath, Fellowship, Studying Scripture, Witness and Welcome. A continuing theme was to create an atmosphere that draws people toward Christ through the Holy Spirit using sacred symbols, colors and objects.

A love offering was taken up for district missionaries Joe and Shirley Edgerton who are currently serving the people in La Gonave, Haiti. In the afternoon a short business meeting was held. The Wesley Share Plan for apportion-



"The altar at St. Mark's AMEC dressed for Ash Wednesday."

ments was explained, certificates for those churches paying 100% of their apportionment were handed out and the District Officers for 2008 approved. Richard Croll the District Lay Leader and District Leadership Team member from Burlington UMC led the closing litany. The Rev. Ronald King, District Superintendent, gave the closing benediction and sending forth.

Donations for Joe and Shirley Edgerton's ministry in Haiti can be made to Advance Special

#982465-6

Add Edgerton in the memo line

Central UMC

1501 Mass

Lawrence, KS 66044

There is a short 3 minute DVD with the Edgerton's speaking available to help with fund raising. You can request it from the District Office at 785-594-4804.

Congratulations to these churches for paying 100% of their 2007 apportionments

Baldwin Ives Chapel

Beagle

Big Creek

Blue Mound

Burlington

Colony

Edgerton

Elsmore

Fontana

Fort Scott First

Fort Scott St. John

Fulton

Garnett

Greeley

Hammond

Hiattville

Humboldt

Iola Calvary

Iola Trinity

Iola Wesley

Kincaid Selma

LaCygne

Lane

Lawrence First

Centenary

LeRoy

Mapleton

Melvern

Michigan Valley

Mildred

Mound City

New Lancaster

Osawatomie

Ottawa Trinity

Overbrook

Union Chapel

Parker

Plum Creek

Pomona

Prairie View

Prescott

Princeton

Quenemo

Redfield

UM Community Church of Richmond

Richter

Salem

Turkey Creek

Uniontown

Vassar

Vinland

Welda

West Liberty

Waverly

Williamsburg

Worden

April 2008

| 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 | | | |

- April 1-2 Appointive Cabinet DS in Wichita
- April 3rd PAUMCS Sprint Meeting at Lawrence 1st
- April 5th District Committee on Ordained Ministry 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
- April 8-9 Appointive Cabinet DS in Wichita
- April 11-12 **Healthy Congregations** annual Retreat at Rock Springs 4-H Center
Register online at www.healthfund.org
- April 12th District **UMW** Spring District Meeting 2008 "Through Jesus Christ"
Speaker: Mary Lou Reece wife of Bishop Scott Jones
- April 12th Recertification of Sexual Ethics in KC
- April 14th Marvé vacation day
- April 15th Extended Cabinet
- April 16-17 Appointive Cabinet DS in Wichita
- April 19th **UMM** 2008 Spiritual Rally at Lawrence 1st West Campus 785-379-9828 John Reimer for details.
- April 23rd Wesley KU Board Meeting
- April 23- May 2nd General Conference (Fort Worth, TX)
- May 3rd **Pre-Conference Briefing 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Garnett UMC**
- April 28th **District Clergy Meeting** (place to be determined) 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Safe and Sacred Training Events Offered In April

April 6th Lawrence First UMC (downtown location)
946 Vermont St.
Lawrence, KS 66044
Time 12:15 p.m. in room 203
Contact Rachel Wegener to register at
785-841-7500, ext. 102 or Rachel@fumclawrence

April 9th Lawrence First UMC (West Campus)
867 Hwy. 40
Lawrence, KS 66049
Time 6:30 p.m.
Contact Rachel Wegener to register at
785-841-7500, ext. 102 or Rachel@fumclawrence

April 17th Worden UMC
294 East 900 Rd.
Baldwin, KS 66006
Time 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.
Contact Annette Wren to register
785-594-7598



Clergy Birthdays



| | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| Edward English | April 7th |
| Trudy Kenyon Anderson | April 7th |
| Terry Bullock | April 8th |
| Ralph Jarboe | April 9th |
| Deborah Dick | April 25th |

District Prayer Calendar

| | |
|------------|-------------------------------------|
| April 6th | Williamsburg Pastor Billy Hughes |
| April 13th | Baldwin First Rev. Pam Morrison |
| April 20th | Worden Rev. Dale Lewis |
| April 27th | Yates Center Pastor Jan Justice |

Five Rivers District

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District Superintendent: Rev. Ronald King
Administrative Assistant, Newsletter editor
Marvé Ralston

**We're on the web at
www.fiveriversdistrict.com**



Rev. Kiefer dresses the altar for Communion at First United Methodist Church, Ottawa, in preparation for District Conference. Photo thanks to Joyce Sergent