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Our District Mission is to cultivate Christian discipleship and strengthen the connection of the United Methodist Church in the Five Rivers District

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Reflections From Ron

Hello Colleagues and friends,

Change is a word that sometimes causes us to go through some changes. Sometimes we resist. Sometimes we hesitate. Sometimes we welcome them. Sometimes we avoid them. Sometimes we deny them and at other times we accept them. But whatever the situation we find ourselves in, we will find ourselves in a constant state of change. Sometimes the change is from worse to better. Sometimes the change is from better to worse. None of that matters. The reality is that change is a constant in our lives.

We are now entering the time of our Christian year when we are about to celebrate the greatest change that our lives will ever remember. We will recall once again this change that God has provided where we go from death to life; from mortality to immortality; from being ene-

mies of God to becoming friends with our Creator. All of this is accomplished, not because of Jesus' death — that was a part of the change — but because of His resurrection, that change from death to life. We who have been buried with him have also been raised to new life with him in that transition. We, who have died to a worldly life, have also been born to a spiritual life that places us in a significant relationship with the eternal. It's a relationship that, until Christ had been raised, we would not have entertained. A corpse could not have given us the security of God's promise. But the change of resurrection reminds us of the certainty of God's promise and the faithfulness of God's Word.

Of course, we all know this! And I admit this at the risk of being found guilty of just providing an article for the newsletter. However, the fact that we are liv-

ing into this changed existence also means that we are not dead. We, too, are alive with Christ and in Christ. The question is, "Has our discipleship in Christ continued to grow or have we become stagnant in our discipleship? Are we cultivating our Christian discipleship, nurturing it, caring for it and tending to it carefully, or are we allowing it to do whatever things do when they are left to their own devices?"

The mission of the Five Rivers District is to cultivate Christian Discipleship? Our question is how can we help you, local churches and pastors, do that? There are some ideas out there and some significant possibilities for ministry if we do. We are committed to this mission, and look forward to the time when we can say, "Mission accomplished!"

Agape and shalom,
Ron

Communities Lenten Evening Worship Successful

Pastor Connie Cox who pastors Mildred and Elsmore churches shared with us about the Iola Ministerial Alliance that she participates in over Lenten season. There are currently six pastors within her community that band together to have evening services. They rotate which church they hold the services in each Sunday evening. They also exchange pulpits with the other pastors. An offering is taken for a chosen community mission. They have raised money for different community causes each year. This year they are raising funds for a local food pantry. Their average attendance is 100 people.

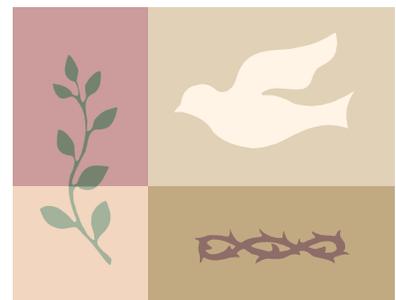
Pastor Cox said the services offer people a chance to see how others in their community worship and feel more connected with the Christian community. Through this alliance, their church was able to receive an organ that was donated and delivered by another church. Pastor Cox calls this a gift from God for her small church and its members. After the Lenten season is over the pastors typically meet for lunch to discuss the successes of the season and how to better plan for the following year. What a great way to have a good turnout for Sunday evening church as well as help the community.

"If Christ is risen, nothing else matters. And if Christ is not risen -- nothing else matters."

Jaroslav Jan Pelikan (17 December 1923 – 13 May 2006)

Five Rivers District Prayer Calendar

April 1	Camp Chippewa Rev. Howard Sudduth and Camp Staff
April 8	Lawrence Indian UMC Rev. Julienne Judd
April 15	Wesley KU Ministries Creighton and Nikki Alexander
April 22	Overbrook Rev. Kathleen Ketchell Ferris
April 29	Burlington Rev. David Livingston



APRIL 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Palm Sunday	2	3	4 Cabinet Meeting	5	6	7
8 Easter Day	9	10 Cabinet Meeting	11	12 UMW Spring Evening Meeting Paola	13	14 UMW Spring Saturday Meeting Overbrook
15	16	17 Cabinet Meeting	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 Cabinet Meeting	26	27	28 District Conference
29	30	Cabinet Meeting				

Louisburg UMC Construction in Progress

By Marvé Ralston

Thanks to the planning, prayers and much strategic work of members, previous pastors and Rev. Donna VotEAU of the Louisburg UMC, a new church is being constructed. Twenty-plus years ago, the plans began for a new church. Although they have changed and been reworked, there has always been hope that this day would come.

In the last two years since Rev. VotEAU has been appointed to Louisburg, much progress has been made both in the new building and the existing church. Rev. Donna VotEAU proudly gave a tour of the new church grounds and the steel joist structure that is going up. Although the steel beams only arrived last Thursday, it is a daily work in progress. Several members drove up while we were there to check the progress and marvel at how fast the “basic bones” of the building were going up. One member wondered if it could be going up too fast. Rev. VotEAU assured him that the contractors were merely taking advantage of this wonderful weather.

The property chosen is on a bluff that covers 9.8 acres. The building has been placed on the new site with the best possible utilization of the property for future expansion. All the roof materials are on site and we were given a peek at the environmentally pleasing color scheme chosen. The corner stone from the previous church as well as a new corner stone will be placed on either side of the overhanging entry drive. There are plans for a playground and outdoor contemplative areas. An outside columbarium utilizing a granite bench with niches for cremains, a reflection area and memorial garden have been included in the ongoing plans.

Since the old church building was sold last year, they have had the opportunity to rent the building and continue to hold services and utilize office space at the existing church. Rev. VotEAU still encouraged the Sunday School teachers to paint and decorate Sunday School classrooms during the remaining time they have been in the building. This classroom ownership has added to the excitement of the Sunday School program and greatly increased the participation of children in the program. Rev. VotEAU’s words of wisdom for her congregation were, “When God knows we have a church to put in a building, we will have another building to house our church.”

A for sale sign is up again and the hope is that they will be in the new property before the church is sold. Pending no complications, they have been given a late summer, early fall occupation date. Rev. VotEAU plans to hold the churches sunrise service at the new church. She finds humor in the fact that Resurrection Sunday will be at the resurrection site of the new church.

Please keep Rev. VotEAU and her congregation at Louisburg in our prayers as they move forward May God richly bless and use this new church and the community it will benefit. You may view progress and find more information about the Louisburg church at Louisburgumc.org.



“Peace is a daily, a weekly, a monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly **building** new structures.”

~ [John Fitzgerald Kennedy](#) quotes ([American](#) 35th US [President](#) (1961-63), [1917-1963](#))

New site and building for Louisburg UMC



Rev. Donna VotEAU in front of the new building for Louisburg

“When God knows we have a church to put in a building, we will have another building to house our church.”

Rev. Donna VotEAU



Five Rivers Birthdays

- | | |
|------------|------------------|
| April 7th | Ed English |
| April 8th | Priscilla Davies |
| April 8th | Terry Bullock |
| April 9th | Ralph Jarboe |
| April 25th | Debbie Dick |



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District Superintendent: Rev. Ron King
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Rev. Voteau plans to hold the churches sunrise service at the new church. She finds humor in the fact that Resurrection Sunday will be at the resurrection site of the new church.

