

Living Water

A Monthly Publication of the



FIVE RIVERS DISTRICT

Volume 10, Issue 8

August 2013

From Your District Superintendent

I am on the threshold of a two week vacation. My family and I have been looking forward to “hitting the road” for a few weeks now. Time away is very important for all of us. I hope that you are planning to step back from your work and get some time away if you have not already done so this summer.

As a look toward the fall I am making preparations for the activities that come with the season. The clergy consultation schedule is pretty well set. Pastors, if you have not yet gotten on the schedule, please call Marvé to find a time to have your annual meeting with me.

Also, I have developed a Church Conference schedule. Marvé is contacting host churches to assure that the dates chosen will work. Conferences will begin on October 20 and continue through December 15. Again this year conferences will be held on Sunday afternoons at 3pm and 5pm. And on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 7pm. In some cases I will meet with the church/charge PPR committee to touch base. In settings where the pastor is in the first year of service, I plan to definitely meet with the PPR committee.

The Cabinet has been working to streamline the paperwork needed for the Church Conferences. With the transition to the Great Plains Annual Conference coming on January 1, 2014, we are also trying to move all seventeen districts in Nebraska and Kansas to the same format. So, there will be new forms that accomplish the needed work and information sharing intended for Church Conferences. Our hope is that the forms will be easier and more useful.

The focus on vital congregations will continue as we support one another in the process of helping congregations be aware of and implement goals for ministry. We are in the business of making disciples for Jesus Christ. We can help each other share the Good News of God’s love and grace. Together we can make a big difference in the lives of people.

Now, I am going to forget this Church conference stuff for a couple of weeks while the family and I enjoy some time away. My colleagues on the Kansas East Cabinet are on call. Please contact Marvé at the District Office if you have a need.

In Christ.

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5R District Events:

- July 28th-Aug. 11th ~ District Superintendent and family will be on vacation. District Office will be open. Please continue to call/e-mail with questions and we will redirect you if the answers can't be given by the admn. assistant.
- Aug. 3rd ~ Early Response Training, Lawrence 1st 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Recertification 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. More info at below link.
www.kansaseast.org/console/files/oEvent_Calendar_EUXQLB/ERT_8-3-13_BPRQUP6C.pdf
- Aug. 10th ~ Bishop Jones introduces his new study guide: A Wesleyan Way, A Faith That Matters a 2 hour webinar. More info at this link.
www.greatplainsumc.org/pages/detail/431.
- Aug. 22nd-24th ~ Uniting Conference ~ Salina, KS Aug. 22nd-24th District Office will be closed while we attend.
<https://gp-reg.brtaapp.com/UnitingConferenceRegistration>

September Save the Dates:

- Sept. 5th ~ Clergy Meeting at Ottawa 1st, 9 a.m. to noon
- Sept. 7th-8th ~ **Project Revolution** ~ Five Rivers District Youth Rally at Lawrence 1st UMC West Campus **Flyer is attached**, registration is online at www.5riversds.com/463145 **Please post this at your church.**
- Sept. 14th ~ All District Work Day, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. beginning at Garnett UMC
 Registration form and flyer will be out next week.



Pictured above:
Sign up table by the Coffel Family.

Proceeds were donated to help with the costs of the Blue Mound Independence Day Celebration

The Amazing GRACE

a Blue Mound Community event sponsored by *Blue Mound UMC* and held July 6th.



RJ Beckmon
winner of the Women's 5K.
(below)



5K Award Winners and 1 mile Fun Run participants. (below)



District Prayer Calendar

Aug. 4	Iola Calvary/Salem Rev. Gene McIntosh
Aug. 11	Wesley KU Campus Ministry Rev. Kara Eidson
Aug. 18	Baker Campus Ministry Rev. Ira DeSpain
Aug. 25	Garnett/Greeley Pastor Bill Driver

Clergy Birthdays

Joni Raymond	August 14th
Kate Carpenter	August 15th
Bill Driver	August 16th
Marti McDougal	August 28th

"Let gratitude be the pillow upon which you say your nightly prayer. And let faith be the bridge you build to overcome evil and welcome good."

~ Maya Angelou



Old-Fashion *Tent Revival* held by *Vinland UMC* “*Well worth repeating,*” said Margaret Barnes the planning chairperson for the July 7th

New Life Assembly participating in Vinland UMC’s Camp Meeting (left)

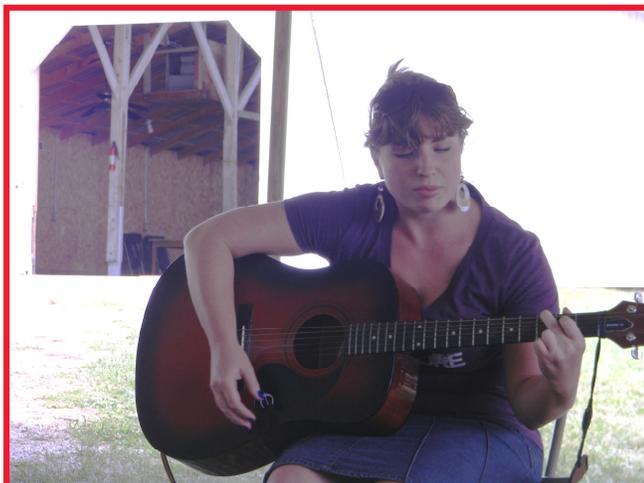
The “old-fashion” *Tent Revival* held by Vinland UMC on July 7th, began in a planning committee with the suggestion for a “preaching slam” for local congregations. We were surprised at Annual Conference when the first worship session turned out to be a preview of what we planned.

It was a community endeavor as the tent was borrowed from Assumption Catholic Church in Baldwin, some of the costumes were provided by Baldwin FUMC, and the local Vinland Fair Board (many VUMC members) prepped the fairgrounds. Attendance and participation included; New Life Assembly from Baldwin, Lighthouse Baptist from Baldwin, Native American from Haskell and Centenary UMC in Lawrence. Music, preaching, monologue, witness and prayer was shared informally with relaxed fellowship, games for kids and summer food treats.

Planning chairperson, Margaret Barnes said later; “participation was greater than anticipated, attendance less than hoped for and the event well worth repeating.”



Photo journalism for the event by Elizabeth Hemphill





Mound City Community Garden

By Pastor Dallas Peterson

The community garden was the result of an idea presented at a MCUMC Vision team meeting in January.

We sent in for a grant from Kansas State, got it, and we were on our way.

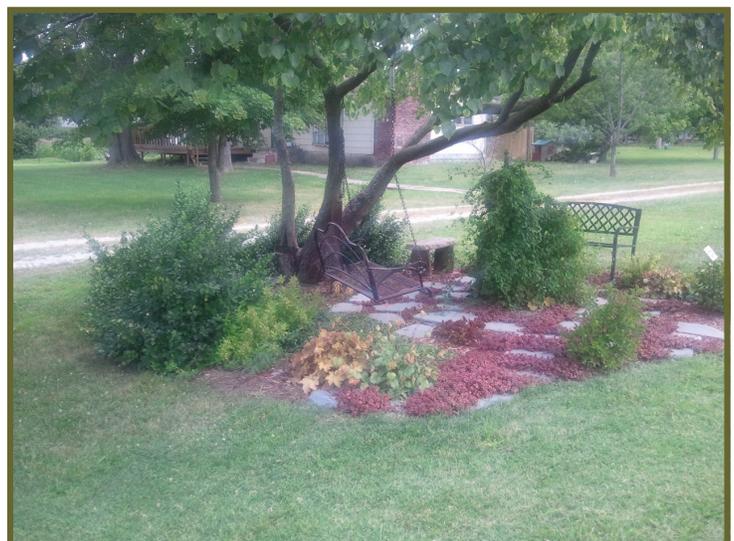
Three ladies on the team were driving forces behind it, Rhonda McGown, Judy Houtman and Melody Leavitt, and then a lot of help from many including our Fearless Followers youth.

We have a commodities program that gives food to those in need and we are making garden produce a part of that. Also those who help in the garden can get produce, as well as our church members who need it. The garden has already been bountiful, and we expect much more from it in coming weeks.

One cool thing, some kids in the neighborhood who haven't attended church have taken quite an interest in what's going on, and have been helping in the garden. They have also become active with our youth, so it's a neat way of opening doors to kids who haven't been involved in church.

Name of the garden: *The Feed My Sheep Garden.*

The memorial prayer garden came about three years ago after Helen Barnes lost her husband. His memorial fund, as well as others including my mom's, went toward purchasing plants, swing, bench, etc. and has been a favorite place for people to go and sit for awhile praying and contemplating.





Worden UMC's Old Time Service

On July 7 Worden UMC worshipped outside on the grass...God blessed it with great weather and over 200 people attending the service. The Pastor rode in on a sorrel mule and the service began with guitar, mandolin, banjo, and the voices of the Praise Team and congregation singing old Gospel songs. Pastor Bud preached about the 70 disciples Jesus sent out and how we too, are sent by Him to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with all. At the end of the service three were baptized by immersion in a stock tank the church keeps for that purpose and all adjourned to a great pot-luck meal. AMEN!



Photo journalism by Kay Kugler



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The Sermon By Marvé Ralston

How many times have you complained or heard someone complain about a pastor's sermon, or more specifically *your* pastor's sermon?

Every Sunday, your pastor spends time preparing the weekly sermon for your church audience. They are supposed to be receiving 4 weeks of vacation (including Sunday Worship) a year. That still leaves 48 Sundays of sermons they are responsible for. (Kansas East Annual Conference, The Journal, 2012)

I used to take all those sermons for granted. That is before working in the district office for the last ten years. I now have a better idea of how busy a pastor's life can be. Consider that it takes the average pastor 10-18 hours a week to prepare a sermon. (Ranier, 2013)

Sermon preparation might begin with the lectionary scripture they are to include, and possibly use as a theme for the sermon. They use information gleaned from training events, peer support and interaction, books and magazines read, the internet, stories told or lived out, pictures, songs or hymns, the Bible (imagine that), and many sources that are online and possibly specific for sermon preparation. The list is endless and I'm sure I'm leaving sources out.

And lest you feel squirmy in your seat some Sunday because you feel the pastor has singled you out for some issue you have mutually discussed, he/she might have heard through the grapevine, or an area you haven't discussed but are having issues with lately. Rest assured, they are working within a framework and have been given advice and training not to do that. If you are like me, God seems to speak directly to you many Sundays through your pastor, scripture, hymns, testimony or even after church in fellowship. It is no coincidence that the sermons and worship speak directly to each one of us; it's the Holy Spirit at work.

Consider that their target audience is *us*. Then consider that many of *us* are not always in church each Sunday and might be on vacation, traveling to see family, sleeping in, working, sick or dealing with family emergencies, an endless list of reasons and excuses. Pastors never know *exactly* who their target audience might be.

Now let's consider what might also happen in the life of your pastor during the week. A parishioner might get sick and possibly end up in the hospital making trips to the hospital necessary. They might be spending a great deal of time visiting shut-ins, nursing homes or praying with parishioners and/or their family members who are having surgery, sick, in need of counseling or prayer. There are social events, meetings, prayer groups, funerals, weddings, baptisms, phone calls and e-mails for direct and immediate counseling or advice given, peer interaction in the form of district meetings, conference meetings, clergy prayer or social groups, camps, Institute and other things too numerous to cover here.

Then there is the fact that your pastor is also human, with their own families of origin and possibly family members, including children/grandchildren living with them. They might have aging parents they are caretakers of, siblings needing their help, children still at home needing their immediate attention. They might have physical ailments themselves such as depression (yes, it is common in clergy who spend their whole lives listening to others problems and might feel completely alone regarding their own issues). (Contreras-Byrd, 2013)

They must deal with all of the above and many things I'm sure I haven't mentioned, and come up with a witty, well versed, politically correct, biblical, intellectual and heart rendering sermon for us all while we may or may not be there this week. Get my point? *I'm talking to myself on this one too.*

I have not addressed the pastors that are part-time and rely on other jobs for the majority of their income and benefits. I am sure they are very good at multi-tasking. God must surely give them insight on the job, regarding sermon materials. We are very thankful for our part-time and student pastors as well.

So I am thinking pastors must be pretty tuned into God. I have even talked to pastors and asked the question, have you ever completely changed your sermon some morning because God gave you a different direction to take the message? My reply, from several of my clergy friends was, yes. Now I suppose you are wondering where I'm going with this?

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The Sermon ~ Continued from pg. 7

Church attendance is important. As Christ's disciples, we need the fellowship of other believers to keep us on track. We need a message from God's word and in particular, one put together by *our* pastor to help get us through another week.

We should be praying for our pastor (insert your pastors name here, or better yet pray for all the pastors of our district), our District Superintendent (Rev. Dr. Dennis Ackerman), our Bishop (Scott Jones, soon to be Bishop of the Great Plains Conference) and all those that have been placed in positions to guide us in our faith journey. Let's not forget their family members who might not even have "signed up" to be a part of the ministry, but are there none-the-less.

What a blessing it is to know "they" are there in times of trouble and joy. Let's be supportive; thankful to God for sending them, pray for them and their families and continually ask God's blessing and protection on their lives. This is always important but even more so, as we move forward into 2014, and the newly created Conference of the Great Plains, which will encompass Kansas West, Kansas East and Nebraska.

Resources:

Contreras-Byrd, R. D. (2013, March 19). *allchristiannews.com/why50-of-all-pastors-are-divorced-70-are-depressed/*. Retrieved July 15, 2013, from allchristiannews.com: <http://allchristiannews.com/why-50-of-pastors-are-divorced-70-are-depressed/>

Ranier, T. S. (2013, June 22). *http://thomrainer.com/2013/06/22/how-much-time-do-pastors-spend-preparing-a-sermon/*. Retrieved July 15, 2013, from Thomranier.com: <http://thomrainer.com/2013/06/22/how-much-time-do-pastors-spend-preparing-a-sermon/>

2012 Annual Journal, Kansas East Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church (KE Journal pg. 399 #5).

Additional Reading I found:

<http://www.ligonier.org/blog/5-ways-to-pray-for-your-pastor/>

<http://www.reviveourhearts.com/articles/31-days-of-praying-for-your-pastor/>