

Living Waters

A monthly publication from Five Rivers District

**Five Rivers
District Office**
809 Seventh Street #1
P.O. Box 565
Baldwin, KS 66006

Volume 3, Issue 12

December 2007

Reflections From Ron

Hello Colleagues
and friends,

And now's the time — now is the time for us to begin thinking, I mean really thinking about Christ. It's not new to us. Each year at this time we raise the awareness level of each other about what time of year it is. We recognize just how quickly this year has gone by. We realize how much is still to be done as we pull up to the end of the year. We begin, in some ways, to recognize that a new year is upon us. And we celebrate, without a doubt, that Christmas, only days away is our time to recognize and celebrate God's gift to us in the form of a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. Some of us will, for a season anyway, dare to be

nicer, kinder, and gentler with each other. Some of us will recognize, (*somewhat as an afterthought*) that this is how it should be all year long; a constant remembering of who Jesus is to us all.

And so, the stage is set! The stage that can launch each of us onto a deeper journey of growth in our own Christian faith — to learn more about this Jesus that we say we love, and whom we proclaim loves us. This is an opportunity to learn about more than just the babe in the manger (*that is and was just the delivery of the package*) but an opportunity for us to wrap our brains around the awesome devotion that even the baby Jesus deserved. It's an opportunity for us to

remind ourselves of the worship ascribed to him that was fitting and proper.

This is an opportunity to ramp up our own devotion and worship to match that of the heavenly hosts of angels singing, and giving thanks for this great gift given to us. For unto us a child is born — unto us a Son is given, authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.

As we sing the songs of the season, may it be with us that each verse reinforces our faith in the one that is and was and is to come again. As we retell and rehear the story of His marvelous birth, may it be with us that we are reminded again and

again that ***“with God, nothing shall be impossible.”*** May we find in this season of His birth a rebirth of our own that compels us to be more holy, more reverent, and more like Him. These can be acts of true growth in our Christian discipleship.

Agape, Shalom and
Christmas Blessings in
His name,
Ron



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Create Your Future Today – Benefits and Pension Seminar helpful

On November 13th, pensions and benefits coordinator Carol Fusaro held an annual seminar to help clergy plan for their future. It began with Lisa Kile from the Social Security Administration explaining differences between retiring at 62 and 65. She explained that it would take 12 years at the higher rate (normal retirement) for most of us to make up the financial difference of retiring early. She gave general retirement information regarding the social security administration benefits. You can receive information and apply for your social security benefits at [www..socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov). or call 1-800-772-1213.

Lee Sankey, Director of Stewardship Services from the



Lee Sankey

United Methodist Foundation gave an informative talk about where the majority of our population stand regarding saving, spending and giving. He started with informing that the majority of us spend 1.22 for every dollar earned. The average American overspends. It is not just those

in the lower income bracket who spend above their means, there are bankruptcies filed at all income brackets. He explained that where there is no vision for financial planning, financial bondage occurs.

Sankey gave some very specific steps to take. He suggested taking a financial inventory of what is currently being spent over a three month period on everything. He talked about financial goal setting, spending plans, emergency savings, short term and long term financial goals. He suggested savings tips such as automatic withdraw for savings, putting all raises into savings, saving all irregular checks, tax refunds, etc. Lee Sankey facilitates Good Sense teacher training and there are other programs available to help train stewardship through the foundation. Contact Lee Sankey at 888-453-8405 or e-mail at lsankey@KAUMF.org.

Paula Whitbeck, Conference Liaison from the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits worked with Carol Fusaro to explain clergy pension plans and benefits.

Carol handed out a binder to all attending that could hold pertinent retirement information. It included a living will declaration form and many helpful

forms to record personal information. Fusaro said there was a



Paula Whitbeck

push towards health, taking vacations, using days off and self-care. Clergy are encouraged to take the online health assessment. There is money given back to the conference if enough people take it. She reminded clergy to make sure their beneficiary forms were all up to date. We have some in the district office or you can request them from the Conference office at 1-877-972-9111. She gave out laminated cards with all the HealthFlex benefits numbers on them. We currently have six in our office to give out or you can request them from the conference at the above number until they are out of them. The next seminar is tentatively planned for spring 2008.



Carol Fusaro

December 2007

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

						<p><i>1</i> World Aids Day Observance</p>
<p><i>2</i> CC for Lawrence 1st Ottawa 1st Wellsville Eudora</p>	<p><i>3</i> CC for Louisburg 7 PM</p>	<p><i>4</i> Cabinet In Wichita 10-3 CC for Union- town-Redfield 7 PM</p>	<p><i>5</i> CC for Lawrence: Centenary- Linwood 7 PM</p>	<p><i>6</i> CC for Edgerton 7 PM</p>	<p><i>7</i></p>	<p><i>8</i> District Clergy Christmas Event 10 AM-2 PM Ottawa 1st</p>
<p><i>9</i> CC for Iola Wesley-Neosho Falls Gridley-Turkey Creek-LeRoy Wav.-Prairie View</p>	<p><i>10</i> CC for Parker-Beagle- Fontana 7 PM</p>	<p><i>11</i> District Leader- ship Meeting 7 PM Ottawa 1st Parlor</p>	<p><i>12</i> CC for Iola: Calvary- Salem</p>	<p><i>13</i> CC for Ft. Scott: St. Johns- Hammond-W. Liberty 7 PM</p>	<p><i>14</i></p>	<p><i>15</i> Bishop's Ex- tended Cabinet Christmas Party 11 AM-2 PM</p>
<p><i>16</i> CC for Lyndon Overbrook Worden</p>	<p><i>17</i> Book Club Meet- ing at Garnett 11:30 AM-1:00 PM</p>	<p>DS Vacation Dec. 18th - Jan. 3rd</p>				
<p><i>23</i></p>	<p><i>24</i> Christmas Eve</p> <p>District Office Closed</p>	<p><i>25</i> Christmas Day</p>	<p><i>26</i></p>	<p><i>27</i></p>	<p><i>28</i></p>	<p><i>29</i></p>
<p><i>30</i></p>	<p><i>31</i> Watch Night</p> <p>District Office Closed</p>	<p><i>1</i> January</p>				

Five Rivers District Office

The United Methodist Church
809 Seventh, #1
P.O. Box 565
Baldwin City, KS 66006-0565

Phone: 785-594-4804
Fax: 785-594-4820
E-mail: fiveivers@embarqmail.com
DS: 5riversds@embarqmail.com

Kansas Bishop: Dr. Scott Jones
District Superintendent:
Rev. Ronald King
Admn. Assistant, Newsletter
Marvé Ralston

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

District Prayer Calendar

	Church	Pastor
Dec. 2	Melvorn-Quenemo	Duane Kessler
Dec. 9	Waverly-Prairie View	Karel Ramsey
Dec. 16	Edgerton	Gayla Rapp
Dec. 23	Osawatomie-Lane	Gary Gooding
Dec. 30	Richter	Terry Bullock

Clergy Birthdays

Marcia Eaton	December 9th
Andrew Smith	December 9th
Vida Huens	December 11th
Dallas Peterson	December 21st