

Living Waters

A monthly publication from Five Rivers District

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

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Reflections From Ron

Hello Colleagues and friends,

It appears to be a recurring theme that our life in Christ is really all about how we live that life. It, at the same time, appears that our life is Christ is experienced in three ways:

1. how we live in relationship to God (loving God)
2. how we live in relationship to ourselves (loving ourselves), and
3. how we live in relationship to each other (loving one another).

How we live in relationship to God is really about fulfilling the Great Commandment to love God with all our hearts, all our minds, all our souls and all our strength. This is loving God with our whole selves; our emotional, mental, physical and spiritual selves (if there is another part of who we are, then we should love God with that part, too). Loving

God in this way is not as easy as writing it or saying it. At times there may be a part of us that is disengaged, distracted, out of tune and out of touch with God. At these times we need to reel ourselves back in and focus on God present with us so that we might be present with God.

Living in relationship to ourselves (loving ourselves) is also about fulfilling the Great Commandment. But, if loving God is difficult, how much harder is it to really love ourselves? We are constantly being bombarded with messages from media and each other that we're never good enough or acceptable as we are. We're constantly told that we are too fat, too sick, too old, to grey, too bald, too short, too unkempt, or too something that doesn't fit a worldly standard of acceptance to really love ourselves as we are. And if we've reached the

level where we can love ourselves, we're sometimes viewed as smug and too self-confident. If we openly display our displeasure with who we are, then we're viewed as suffering from low self-esteem, and faced with yet another sign that we're not good enough.

How we live in relations to each other is also about fulfilling the Great Commandment. We're reminded that Jesus said, "and the second (commandment) is like it, or just as important as the first, that we should love our neighbors as we love ourselves." It seems to me that we're on a cycle of disappointment. If we're having difficulty accepting and loving ourselves, is there any wonder that we can find it so difficult to love others. We seem to always criticize those characteristics in others that we so abhor in and about ourselves.

So, what's the answer? Well maybe the answer is to passionately pursue *cultivating Christian discipleship* in ourselves, first. Perhaps the answer is working on our own spiritual development in a covenant community where we hold each other accountable as go on (spiritually grow on) toward perfection. Perhaps the answer is about our own continued development as disciples of Jesus Christ, so that we can work **Continued pg. 4**

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To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.
Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dr. A D Washington Addresses Baker University Students

Written by Marv e Ralston

Dr. A D Washington, senior pastor of the Asbury Mount Olive United Methodist Church in Topeka, was the keynote speaker at the Baker University's annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration. The service was held at the usual weekly service time of 11:00 A.M. on Thursday, January 24th. Rev. Ira DeSpain was the officiating minister and he welcomed the full sanctuary of students and faculty.

The title of Washington's speech was "Choose to See" from Luke 16: 19-31. She began the message using the scripture about Lazarus and the rich man. After the scripture was read she talked about how the key was that the rich man never really saw Lazarus. "It is a bad feeling not to be recognized," she said. She stressed choosing to see someone that, "doesn't look like you and to include everyone in your walk."

She talked about the importance of everyone, regardless of their educational background. "We all can be great because we all can serve," she stated. "In our differences we see God." "When you commune with me you see God just a little bit closer." One thought that provoked laughter was, "When we understand that it is better to eat stew than pureed, we get it." Those were some of the messages she gave the students. She pointed at someone in the audience and said "you look like you need a carrot; you've been eating too much beef." Her message was met with cheering, smiles, complete quiet and laughter.

Washington talked about the good advice she received from her grandmother. Her grandmother told her to "Go talk to someone that doesn't look like you, smile at someone that doesn't look like you." She stressed unconditional love and accepting one another and not just tolerating them. "Even if we don't understand them, if we look closely we will see we are different too."

After the service the students were invited to a baked potato luncheon served in the basement fellowship hall of the chapel. The Baker University pastor is Rev. Ira DeSpain. He holds services for the students every Thursday at 11:00 a.m. during the academic year. This is an open service. You can find his sermon titles on the Baker website under Campus Ministry.



Bob Ford on Liver Transplant List...Can you help?

One of Kansas East former pastors Bob Ford has been on a transplant list since fall of 2004. Ford inherited a blood condition that caused damage to his liver resulting in his need for a transplant. He has been a Methodist minister for 38 years. He was encouraged to seek a partial liver donor if possible since there is a current shortage of livers available for transplantation. He currently volunteers at the Veteran's Administration in Topeka when he is physically able. His motto while waiting for the transplant has been, "live everyday, celebrate it; do what I can."

The qualifications for becoming a partial donor are as follows: Age 50 or less, Blood type O, Weight less than 180 pounds, Height 5' 8" to 6' 0", Male or Female, Must be in good health. The individual selected as donor will be covered for all expenses associated with the procedure and hospitalization. The volunteer should clear all work related concerns with her or her employer. Recommended recovery is 6 weeks. For any additional information call Bob at 785-312-4184 or Linda Ballinger at 913-980-3831.

February 2008

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

					1	2
3	4	5	6 <i>Ash Wed.</i>	7	8	9
		Appointive/Extended Cabinet DS In Wichita				
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
		Appointive Cabinet DS In Wichita				
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
		Appointive Cabinet DS In Wichita				<i>Global Mission Experience</i>
24	25	26	27	28	29	
	Appointive Cabinet DS In Wichita					

Save This Date: April 5th District Conference *Information coming soon*

Great News From Eudora UMC

Sunday February 3rd, 2008

Super Bowl Sunday

New York!

New England!

New Church!

The real super Sunday Celebration!

The First Worship in our new Building!

Open House 9:00 a.m. Refreshments and Tours (No Sunday School)

Children's Scavenger Hunt 9:30 a.m.

Combined Worship Service 10:00 a.m.

Soup Supper 11:30 a.m. Provided by Martha's Circle

Don't miss all the fun, food and fellowship

Regional Youth Event

Sunday, February 17th at 4:00 p.m.

Where: Overbrook UMC

1001 N. Maple

Overbrook, KS

Church: 785-665-7345

For more information,

please contact Jennifer Stukeley 785-733-2165

Save This Date:

March 14th-15th for
"Boot Camp" Leadership
training for District Council
of Youth Ministries.
See the **Youth Section** in
the district website for
contacts.

Events and Available Resources taken from the Communiqué, a publication of the Kansas East Conference www.kansaseast.org.

Youth Service Fund

In the Kansas East Conference, February is declared Youth Service Fund (YSF) month. Churches are encouraged to help their youth raise money for this fund that is run by youth and supports ministries of youth close at home and around the world.

Go to www.kansaseast.org, then ministry, then youth, to read about the Youth Service Fund and download a brochure that can be duplicated for distribution in your church and an application that youth in your congregation may use to apply for funds from the Youth Service Fund to support a ministry in which they are participating.

Global Mission experience: Global Village

Don't miss the "Global Village" at the Global Mission Experience on Feb. 23 at the Countryside UMC in Topeka. Booths featuring our missions around the world will surround us as we eat in Countryside's "Celebration Center."

Please note the registration deadline is Feb. 8th. While morning "walk-ins" will be accepted, the caterer will only prepare food for those registered by Feb. 8th.

To register online go to <https://umcdata.com/index.cfm>?
Click on the Event Registration button on the upper left hand corner. Then select Global Mission Experience to register.

Hunger grants available

A portion of the funds raised at the Bishop's Round-Up for Hunger is now being made available to food pantries within the Kansas East Conference.

Apply for a grant at <http://tinyurl.com/37965d> Applications are due by April 1st

Healthy Congregation Awards

The United Methodist Health Ministry Fund annually awards congregations that have ministries that span three key dimensions of health: physical, mental/emotional and social health.

Go to www.healthfund.org/hc07/intro.php to read about the program and obtain application forms. *Please note* that no application will be accepted until you talk to them first and are given the go-ahead to start the application process. They have certain criteria that must to be met to qualify and they will help you through the process.

Application deadline is March 1st.

Local Church Energy Audits

The 2007 Kansas East Annual Conference voted that each local church and agency of the Kansas East Conference complete an energy audit of their buildings. The links below lead to audit materials that may be helpful. They were contributed from Church and Society member Marcia Toler of Bristol Hill UMC in KC.

Home Energy Saver: <http://hes.lbl.gov/>

The Environmental Protection Agency of the US government provides a good manual with lots of information and checklists at the back:

www.gipl.org/pdf/Action_steps/EnergyStarGuideCongregations.pdf

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (broader than just energy usage) provides a much shorter manual but with a more extensive checklist at the back:

www.elca.org/advocacy/enviroennet/envaudit.pdf

The Episcopal Diocese of Alabama's audit may be simplest in approach and for some churches may be where they should start:

www.stewardsforcreation.org/audit.pdf

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: fiverivers@embarqmail.com
DS: 5riversds@embarqmail.com

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

Mission Statement: To cultivate Christian discipleship and strengthen the connection of United Methodist Churches in the Five Rivers District

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

Ron's message (continued from page one.)

together as God's people —

to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.

Agape and Shalom
Ron

District Prayer Calendar

<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>Pastor</u>
February 3rd	Camp Chippewa	Howard Sudduth
February 10th	Lawrence 1st	Tom Brady Barb Clinger
February 17th	Ottawa Trinity	Ralph Jarboe Charlotte Raby
February 24th	Garnett	Bill Schmeling

Clergy Birthdays

February 3rd	Rev. Connie McKee Smith	Iola Trinity UMC
February 28th	Rev. Ji Seok Ju	Lawrence Centenary- Linwood