



# Living Waters

Five Rivers District

Volume 9, Issue 7

## Bishop Scott Jones Blog 6/25/12

It wasn't until the fifth Star Wars movie—labeled Episode II—was released in 2002 that I realized there was an added dimension of evil in the Empire's storm troopers. They were all clones. Identical copies of one human being manufactured at a secret base. They were all the same.

The added dimension of evil is the lack of diversity.

God created a world with millions of life forms, and even the human beings created in God's own image are incredibly diverse. Humanity has different races, different sizes, different languages, different gifts, different abilities and different ways of thinking and feeling. God's intention in creation is a wonderful diversity of life.

At the same time, it is God's will that humanity be one in him.

Philippians 2:10-11 holds out the vision that "at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Jesus prayed in John 17 that all of his disciples would be one just as he and the Father are one.

This is rooted in the diversity of the Godhead.

We Christians are unique in proclaiming that the ultimate reality of the universe—the Supreme Being—the one in whom we live and move and have our being—is eternally one God in Three Persons. We proclaim in the Nicene Creed that the Son of God is "eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father." We teach that the Holy Spirit "proceeds from the Father and the Son." God is both a unity and a diverse community.

*One of the best gifts that we, as United Methodists, can offer the world is to model our unity in Christ while embracing our diversity.*

We are a global church as demonstrated by our recent General Conference. We are a body of people who come from different ethnic groups. We are young, old, rich, poor, middle class, American, Russian, Filipino, Zimbabwean and Swiss.

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### Inside this issue:

- *District Calendar*
- *District Prayer Calendar / Clergy Birthdays*
- *Oldest and Youngest Members of Vinland UMC*

### Farmer's Prayer

Lord, bless the land  
You've given me,  
And may I always know  
As I tend each crop and  
creature  
You're the One who  
helps them grow.

Grant me the strength  
and wisdom  
Please protect me from  
harm,  
And thank You  
For Your gracious gift-

The blessing of a farm.

By Robin Fogle

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# JULY 2012

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	31				

*District Office Closed*

## Taking Time to Save Lives!

Every 60 seconds, malaria claims another innocent life in Africa. Malaria is responsible for 655,000 deaths each year, yet it is a preventable, treatable and beatable disease. With your help, we are empowering the people of Africa to overcome malaria's burden through prevention, treatment, communication and education. Learn more about how The United Methodist Church is fighting malaria and find out to get your local congregation involved by visiting [ImagineNoMalaria.org](http://ImagineNoMalaria.org).

If your church is interested in supporting this life-saving ministry, please contact Imagine No Malaria Field Coordinators Brittanie Wilczak ([bwilczak@umcom.org](mailto:bwilczak@umcom.org); 615-742-5109) or Ashley Gish ([agish@umcom.org](mailto:agish@umcom.org); 615-312-3578). We are available to help create a successful, memorable and impactful experience for your congregation. Whether it's providing resources like videos and bulletin inserts to having a speaker come and present, we are here to help.

"God can do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine!" (Ephesians 3:20)...and together we can Imagine No Malaria!

## July Clergy Birthdays

- July 3rd ~ Alex Bruening
- July 6th ~ Karen Jeffcoat
- July 13th ~ Bill Nelson
- July 19th ~ Joel Dunn
- July 23rd ~ Loren Drummond



Martha Smith and her great, great niece Katharine.

*Picture by Elizabeth Hemphill*

## Schedule of Events

- DS is on Renewal leave until July 30th. District Office is open (except for below.)
- July 16th–20th District Office is closed, Marvé at PAUMCS Training.
- August 16th Clergy Meeting  
*Bishop Jones will be joining us.*
- Sept. 8-9th Project Revolution. 5R District Youth Rally
- October 6th All District Event

## District Prayer Calendar

- July 1 Lyndon  
Rev. Loren Drummond
- July 8 Iola Wesley  
Rev. Trudy Kenyon Anderson
- July 15 Moran/Bronson  
Rev. Young-Gil Bahng
- July 22 Lawrence Indian UMC
- July 29 Wellsville  
Rev. Lane Bailey

# *Vinland UMC's Oldest and Youngest*

By Nora Cleland

Most Sunday mornings, the Vinland United Methodist Church's congregation includes a 106 year old member and her four year old great, great niece.

The little rural church has been privileged to have Martha Smith as an active member since her first years in the early 1900s, and as the years have passed many of her family's descendants, including four-year-old Katharine Hemphill. The two of them constitute the oldest and youngest church members.

In her autobiography she reports that she joined the Vinland Presbyterian Church at the age of 11 and started teaching the Beginners class when she was 16. Later the Presbyterian Church merged with the Vinland Methodist Church and she continued teaching.

"I taught nursery through junior high and became the Methodist Church's Children's Superintendent," she recalls. "I have memories of people, now deceased, who used to greet me as 'their Sunday School teacher' and frequently recalled their fond memories of Sunday school class sessions."

Other older members of the Vinland Church remember that in her youth Martha taught a class of elementary school students in a small room in the church's belfry. Some of the little boys would become restless and wanted to run up and down the stairs, so Martha would sit on the top step with her legs extended across the stairway to keep them corralled.

"I taught the same class of youngsters for years until they grew to be taller than I am." Martha recalled. Martha is 5'2". "Then I decided it was time to let someone else teach that class."

From early adulthood on she was active in the Methodist women's group, presenting programs, devotionals and helping with mission projects. One member recalls that when she first began to attend the Vinland church in 1973, she remembered Martha coming to the women's meetings.

"As the meeting started, Martha would reach in her bag and bring out a light bulb, next a sock. Then she slipped the bulb into the sock and started mending the sock. I always thought she was doing two things at once, filling her soul with the lesson and keeping her husband and son in socks."

But Martha's interest in missions began early in her life, and by the 1940s she was presenting a Mission Minute weekly during the church services. Her presentations, always short but to the point, were taken from the prayer calendar and from Methodist literature.

Her friend, Darlene Hart, who has helped Martha clean her house for nearly 30 years, explains: "Planning for Mission Minute – she would sit with her feet on the bed and lean back against the head board. She was surrounded by magazines, Response, etc., to work up the current Mission Minute. She would write it out on a small piece of paper so it would fit in her purse. She wrote in small letters. If she ran out of room she would write sideways or on the back to finish her thought. Some of the messages were longer than others but she did a good job."

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### *Continued from pg 1 ~ Bishop Jones Blog*

***Our unity as a people is based on our discipleship. We are baptized, redeemed and committed followers of Jesus Christ.***

We do not always agree on every issue, but we are united in the beliefs in our doctrinal statements, united in our mission to serve Christ by making disciples to transform the world and united in a covenant community with a common discipline.

Our world sees too much violent division. We see too much partisan, political bickering. We see too much disrespect for those who disagree with us. We see too much hatred, racism and sexism.

At our best, we United Methodists are practicing living together as a missional community, reaching out to those who are different and embracing them as brothers and sisters.

This is not always easy, and we do not always do it well.

However, our deepest commitments and our best selves always point to a unified, diverse body of sisters and brothers in the Lord.

### **Martha Smith Continued from pg 3**

Martha continued the Mission Minute every Sunday until she was well past 102 years of age, when she asked to be relieved of the duty because of poor eye sight and hearing.

The church membership wanted to continue the mission minute, but renamed it Martha's Mission Minute. Every Sunday some church member presents Martha's Mission Minute.

Attending church is not easy for Martha these days. She says that as Christians we should attend church. She still comes to church, maybe not every Sunday, but when she gets up early enough to get dressed and eat a little breakfast she comes to church. That means she has to get out of bed by 5 or 6 o'clock.

But she still enjoys church. It has been noted that when the congregation sings the Doxology, she holds her head up and looks skyward, as if she is singing to God.

***Psalms 71: 17-18 Oh God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have showed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.***