

# Living Water



A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE FIVE RIVERS DISTRICT

Volume 11, Issue 6

June 2015

## From Your District Superintendent

*“Finally, brothers and sisters, good-bye”*  
2 Corinthians 13:11(Common English Bible)

Just so it is clear, the “finally” in the above passage means “the last thing,” not “at last!” Paul intended it as his parting message, not as an expression of his joy in getting out of town. So, I too intend it as I share this parting article with you.

Finally my friends, I say good-bye to you as the Five Rivers District Superintendent. It has been almost always a joyful experience of working with the churches and pastors of the district. There are so many faithful people in this district seeking to serve Jesus Christ and to share the Good News with those around them. The laity of this district are full of faith and willing to give of themselves for the sake of the Gospel. The pastors are likewise dedicated and faithful to the call to serve in the church. The work of ministry has never been more challenging for the church in this nation. There are so many things, issues, pressures, and divisions in the nation and the in the church, that making disciples of Jesus Christ, sometimes gets pushed off of the front burner. It is our job to assure the this does not happen, where we are doing ministry. No matter what, our ministry is to share Jesus with others. My prayer is that each of you will keep this in the front of your hearts and minds are you go about being the church.

When I started as superintendent six years ago, I told the pastors of the district that I was here to support them and the churches, in order to help them be the best that they can be. I also told them that when it came down to it, I would make the decisions that I believed where in the best interest of our mission of making disciples. That is what I have attempted to do in my time with you. Have I always gotten it right? No. For those times when I failed or made mistakes, I ask your forgiveness. But I feel very confident that together we got it right the vast majority of the time. John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, encouraged us to move on to perfection. By this he meant that we should be open to and seek after the guidance of God’s Holy Spirit, in order to be as close in God’s will as we can be. Such is the journey of those who seek after Christ. Let your goal be, to be made whole in Christ, and to do his will. If we all do so, the decisions that come from us will be good, loving, and made with God’s will in mind.

Now I will close this note with words from Paul in Second Corinthians that close the section of scripture that opened with the passage sited above.

*“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”*  
2 Corinthians 13:13 (Common English Bible)

In Christ,

Dennis

POSTAL RATE HAS INCREASED

POSTCARD RATE IS NOW .35

THE 2ND AND ALL ADDITIONAL  
OUNCES HAVE GONE FROM .21  
TO .22

MILEAGE RATE FOR 2015

57.5 CENTS FOR ALL BUSINESS  
MILEAGE

23. CENTS FOR ALL MILEAGE FOR  
MEDICAL OR MOVING

14 CENTS IN THE SERVICE OF ALL  
CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS.

[WWW.IRS.GOV](http://WWW.IRS.GOV)

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**Bishop of the Great Plains  
Scott Jones**

**Five Rivers District  
Superintendent  
Rev. Dr. Dennis  
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**Newsletter Editor/Admn.  
Assistant  
Marvé Ralston**

## Living Water

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# June 2015

Su	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i>
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<i>21</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>28</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>30</i>				

- June 7th ~ Ackerman's Reception at Ottawa 1st, all are invited to this come and go event from 4-5:30 p.m.
- June 10-13th Annual Conference at Wichita. All are encouraged to register by June 2nd. [www.greatplains.org/annual-conference](http://www.greatplains.org/annual-conference)
- June 10-13th District Office will be closed
- June 17-19 Extended Cabinet Retreat
- June 21 Father's Day

### Reception for Dennis Ackerman and Family ~

You are invited to a reception for Rev. Dennis Ackerman and his family as they prepare to move to Manhattan. The event will be **4 to 5:30 p.m., Sunday, June 7th**, at First UMC in Ottawa.

Dennis is completing his term as Five Rivers District Superintendent and preparing to pastor College Avenue UMC in Manhattan, KS. We will miss his leadership in our district, and we wish him well in his new appointment.

Refreshments will be provided. Knowing that Dennis is an airplane buff, event planners have a "flying" theme in mind for the event.

You may leave gifts and notes on a card and money tree. If you are not sure you can attend or want to anonymously contribute in advance, send checks (made out to Paola United Methodist Church) to Rev. Jim Hopwood, Paola UMC, 209 S. Silver St., Paola, KS 66071

### 5R Prayer Calendar

June 7	Plum Creek UMC Jada Hodgson
June 14	Hiattville UMC Don Flanner
June 21	Williamsburg UMC Libby Oberdorf
June 28	Baker University Kevin Hopkins

### Clergy Birthday

June 11th                      Walter Marsella

You are cordially invited to the  
Celebration of Appointment Service  
In honor of  
the Rev. David Watson  
Five Rivers District Superintendent  
Sunday, July 12th, 2015  
4 PM

Ottawa 1st UMC  
203 E 4th  
Ottawa, KS 66067

A reception will follow the service

Please share this invitation via newsletter or other announcement with your church family. All clergy and laity of the Five Rivers District are welcome to attend

### **Acknowledgement of Moving and Retiring Pastors in 5R as of May 31st**

The following pastors are either retiring or moving to another charge in the Great Plains Conference. We thank them for their service and wish them well in their new endeavors.

Rev. Dennis Ackerman from 5R District Superintendent to College Avenue UMC (see pg 2 for reception invitation)

Rev. Russell Anderson from Yates Center and Neosho Falls UMC to Grand Island Trinity UMC (NE)

Rev. Trudy Kenyon-Anderson from Iola: Wesley to Grand Island First Faith UMC (NE)

Rev. Lane Bailey from Wellsville and Clearfield UMC to Plattsmouth UMC (NE)

Rev. Alex Bruening from Melvern/Quenemo to First UMC, Jesup (IA)

Rev. Barb Clinger from Ottawa: Trinity/Union Chapel UMC to Shawnee Heights UMC

Rev. Bruce Draper from Edgerton UMC to Bristol Hill UMC

Rev. Jim Hopwood retiring from Paola UMC

Rev. Gene McIntosh retiring from Iola: Calvary/Salem

Rev. Libby Oberdorf from Williamsburg UMC to Wathena/Troy UMC

Rev. Kim Serio from Parker/Beagle/Fontana UMC to Hutchinson Faith UMC

***These pastors are staying in our district but moving to new charges or realignments:***

Rev. Kathy Symes from Pomona/Vassar UMC to Wellsville/Clearfield UMC

Rev. Lori Stevens from Richter UMC to Ottawa: Trinity/Richter UMC

Pastor Jada Hodgson from Princeton to Princeton/Plum Creek UMC

You can find appointment listings on the GP website at this link:

<http://www.greatplainsumc.org/appointments>

# Living Water

## Godly Men Serve Where Needed ~ by Marvé Ralston

Since this is June, and Father's Day is June 21<sup>st</sup>, it seemed like a great time to invite men to step up to the plate, and consider helping with children and youth ministry.

It is a given that Sunday school programs are no longer standard programming within our churches. After reading several online articles about why there are not more men in children's ministry, I found some interesting snippets of information.

- More than one third of all children currently born in the US are born to single moms.
- In most churches, there is a shortage of Sunday school teachers, childcare and youth volunteers and workers are predominantly women.
- At about 4<sup>th</sup> grade many boys drop out of Sunday school. Why is this?

In Five Rivers District, of those that responded to having a Sunday School program or youth group, 18% of those teaching/helping are male. That is plausible but I think we can do better.

I have been co-teaching Sunday school with a young (as compared to me) father, Brad Peterson. He is the person that first got me thinking about why we don't have more men helping teach because he is so good at it. We, along with another woman, co-teach 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders.

I'll let you read what Brad had to say about his experiences teaching Sunday school and why he does it.

"I have been involved in Sunday school/ religion classes since I was very young. I grew up in the Catholic Church and my sister and I would always be present for Wednesday night religion class.

My mom was the coordinator and was responsible for ordering all the books and getting adults to teach these religion classes. I can remember clearly as she struggled to get people to help teach. In the end she would always have enough teachers, but that left an impression on me from an early stage.



Bradley and Kristen Peterson and family

I attended college at Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville, MO.

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This is where I was first involved in teaching Sunday school. It was a great experience as I was teaching 4th and 5th graders. I really enjoyed the experience and could tell that I was making an impact.

Fast forward about 10 years and I now am involved in the Methodist Church in Baldwin City, KS. I have a wife (Kristin) and two children (Ali and Blake).

My wife and I decided when we were married that we would be involved in the church and we decided to attend the Methodist Church. I have really enjoyed the family atmosphere of the church and the members of the church have always been welcoming to all of us.

About 3 years ago I was reading in the bulletin that they were looking for individuals to help teach Sunday school. I spoke with the coordinator Shelly Todd and from our conversation I could tell that this was something that I wanted to do. I also wanted to do it because I could remember my mom trying to find teachers and I wanted to help out.

I do think it is important to be a role model and what better way to be a role model than to be a Sunday School teacher. There are 3 male Sunday school teachers including myself that teach in our Church and I think that is a great thing. From my experience through the years most Sunday school teachers were female, but I believe male members of the church should also get involved early in a child's experience with Sunday school.

I have really enjoyed my time teaching and it has been just as beneficial to me as it is for the children. I am excited to continue teaching through the years and hope to make an impact.

Finally, I believe in mission work but I had never been comfortable in that area. To me, teaching Sunday school is really mission work and it is something that I believe God has called me to do."

Brad is a father, you don't have to be a father to be good with children, but being one should make you even more interested in making a difference in their Christian education. There are many ways you might consider volunteering; bible school, Sunday school, youth group, children's sermons on Sunday or helping with the Five Rivers District annual youth rally, Project Revolution.

We all have a responsibility and take a pledge to help disciple the children of our local churches. This is a very hands on way to go about that. Is this any less important than coaching or serving in some capacity in leadership within the church? Maybe you missed out while your own children were young and now you have more time to help. You could make a difference.

Continued on page 6



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## ***Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. (NKJV)***

### ***Continued from page 5***

All members in the UMC that work with children, youth and adults with disabilities need to be Safe Gatherings certified. This is a fairly simple process and you can go to this link on the Great Plains website to do this online.

[www.greatplainsumc.org/safegatherings](http://www.greatplainsumc.org/safegatherings)

It is o.k. if you are not a bible scholar, I promise you will learn something every week through the children's bible stories. Most curriculum is very intentional about how to teach and offers lots of resources. Most churches have two teachers in every classroom so you should have someone to help and take turns lead teaching with.

I would like to continue sharing stories like this. If you know someone that is making a difference in your church or you have an exciting new ministry. Please share their story with us.

Links to read more:

<http://www.coffeewithdad.com/2012/09/men-leading-childrens-ministry>

<http://childrensministry.com/articles/real-men-do-teach>

[http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200103/052\\_encourag\\_male.cfm](http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200103/052_encourag_male.cfm)