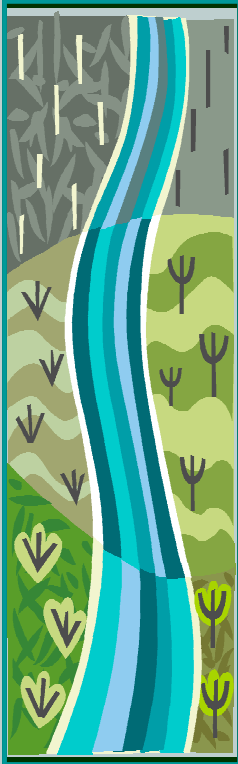


Living Water

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Reflections from Ron

Hello Colleagues and friends,

June is the month of great transitions. We will transition from spring to summer. We will transition from General Conference (those who kept up with all of its going's on and maybe even attended) to Annual Conference. We'll begin the transition process from one annual conference year to another with all of the moves, retirements, changes in life, status and ordinations. Not everyone graduates in May, and so some will make that transition in June, as well as the familiar and expected transitions from single life to married life for some. If the truth is told, I'm not so certain that June will have any more transitions than the month of May or any of the months previous to it.

What remains constant throughout all months is that some of us will have grown. Some of us will have grown spiritually. Some of us will have grown emotionally. Some of us will have grown physically, and some of us will have grown mentally. The process that generated that growth and transition for most of us is that we did it intentionally. The transition came about because we planned for it. We read books, enrolled in classes or attended seminars and workshops. We prayed or studied the Bible more, found our church life more enriching and took steps (a walk to Emmaus, perhaps) to grow closer in our relationship to Jesus Christ. Maybe we worked out to increase our health and have grown more healthy, or have set aside time to reflect on our lives, put some of the old baggage down, and perhaps renew our relationship with others and have grown emotionally. It doesn't matter how we've grown, my guess is that we've done it by taking intentional steps to make it happen. It didn't just happen by osmosis.

As we move into the growth of life and all of the transitions we face, let's not lose sight of our mission to cultivate Christian growth. Christian growth happens when we take intentional steps to insure it. It happens when we have cultivated the proper environment for growth to happen. That means we're constantly preparing our hearts (our will), our minds (how we perceive and think about our lives in Christ), our souls (having made our bodies living sacrifices to the worship of God), and our spirits (that part of us which is God present in us, the Holy Spirit) to be an environment where our living God can abide, and continue growing us closer to Christian perfection.

The good news is — it's not too late to begin. We can begin anew each day cultivating Christian growth in our own lives. And if we cultivate Christian growth in our own lives, won't the Holy realm of God grow as well. Perhaps if we cultivate Christian growth, we might become like a mustard seed.

"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

Agape and shalom

Ron

To Walk Where Jesus Walked

By Louis and Frances Coppoc

Editors note: Louis and Frances are members at Williamsburg UMC. I asked them to share their travel experience with us. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

“We are so grateful to God that we could visit the sites of the Holy Land, and we have a special feeling for the people” who live there.”
Louis and Frances Coppoc

Our tour to the Holy Land in March was comprehensive as we were in the territory of each of the twelve tribes of Israel. Our guide was a walking-talking history book. We wish we could remember more of what he told us. Visiting the site of the Holy Land is truly a blessing and makes the biblical sites come alive as we read the Bible. What a moving experience it is to "walk today where Jesus walked"!



Sea of Galilee

We flew to Amman, Jordan, to begin our trip there. The first day we visited Petra, a city carved out of the living rock of the mountains of southern Jordan. The Edomites, descendants of Esau, whose conflicts with their neighbors are recorded in the Old Testament, resided there and then the Nabataean Arabs who carved and built the city we see today.

The next day, we crossed the Jordan and visited Beth Shan where the bod-

ies of Saul and his sons had been fastened to a wall after the Philistines had slain Saul's sons and Saul had taken his own life. The valiant men of Jabesh-gilead rescued the bodies, burned them at Jabesh, and buried their bones under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh. Toward the end of the day, we were on a boat, built on the plan of boats in Jesus' time, although it was powered with a quiet motor. The Sea of Galilee was tranquil at the time, and we enjoyed singing hymns. What a peaceful time! Although at some sites there may be questions about what actually happened there, we have no doubt about the location of the Sea of Galilee and what transpired there.

It is difficult to imagine what Nazareth must have been like in the times of Jesus although the streets are still narrow, and the hills are the same. We did walk down a narrow cobblestone street between carpenter shops where Joseph and Jesus probably worked in Joseph's shop. Mary's well, housed in the Church of the Annunciation, is still fed by a spring from ancient times. It supplied the water for the village. The church is one of the largest Christian sanctuaries in the Middle East.

We visited the site (Cana of Galilee) of Jesus' first miracle, turning the water into wine. In 1998 when we visited this church for the first time, all of our group, which included many Methodist ministers and parishioners from this area, repeated our marriage vows at this meaningful site.

We enjoyed seeing the headwaters of the Jordan and also the place where John the Baptist probably baptized Jesus, not the commercial spot where people are baptized today. We did have over twenty of our group baptized at the site where preparations have been made for that purpose.



Headwaters of Jordan

There is a beautiful church on the Mount of Beatitudes, the site where Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount, which includes the Beatitudes. The church was built by the Franciscans in 1937.

In Capernaum, where Jesus spent about twenty months and which was his second home after Nazareth, we saw the remains of a synagogue and Peter's mother-in-law's home. Jesus taught at the synagogue in Capernaum. He performed several miracles there--delivered a man of an unclean spirit, healed Peter's mother-in-law, healed the centurion's servant and the palsied man who was let down through the roof, raised Jarius' daughter from the dead, healed the woman who had an issue of blood, and healed two blind men among other miracles.

Although Bethlehem is currently under Palestinian authority, we did get to visit the Church of the Nativity where Jesus' birth place is designated. The outside aspect of the church is austere and resembles a medieval fortress. The basilica has the shape of a cross. Fragments of mosaics from the 4th century church were discovered in 1936. A silver star marks the spot where Jesus was born. The Holy Manger lies to the right. We did have a little trouble obtaining permission to leave Bethlehem. We were refused permission to leave where we had entered, and our bus driver hurriedly drove to another entrance where we were able to leave to get back into Israeli territory.



Capernaum



Gethsemane

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Standing on the Mount of Olives, we had a fantastic view of Old Jerusalem. There, Jesus ascended into heaven, foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and taught his disciples the Lord's Prayer. Jesus came there often for meditation and prayer. At the foot of the Mount of Olives lies the Garden of Gethsemane. Possibly the same olive trees exist there today. Some botanists claim the trees may be 3,000 years old! This Garden is where Jesus on His last night underwent the most sorrowful hour of His passion, choosing to suffer and die on the cross, taking upon Himself the sins of all mankind. What a poignant experience to be there!

In a museum in Jerusalem, we were able to view bits and pieces of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Earlier, we had been in Qumran, the vicinity of the caves where the Scrolls had been found.



Western Wall

We walked the narrow streets of Jerusalem, lined with shops on each side. We visited the Western Wall, walked part of the Via Dolorosa, and visited the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which some people claim was built over Golgotha, the place of the crucifixion and the tomb where the body of Jesus was laid.

To us, a more plausible place of the Crucifixion and entombment was outside the Damascus Gate. The rocky hill resembles a human skull, and the presence of a nearby rock-hewn tomb believed to be first century, helps strengthen this idea. The Garden Tomb gives a clear picture of what the place of Crucifixion and

burial of Jesus must have looked like at the time of Jesus. We were privileged to have communion in the Garden which is beautifully maintained by a British group of volunteers.

Jericho, which lies in the Jordan Valley, is under Palestinian authority. Jericho is considered the oldest city in the world. We visited the Spring of Elisha. There were leeches in the rushing water, and we learned that a shepherd leads his sheep to calm water because in rushing water, the leeches would get into the nostrils of the sheep. Elisha sweetened the water of one of Jericho's springs by casting a handful of salt into it. It is believed that Jesus was in Jericho on several occasions. Also, Jericho is where Zacchaeus climbed the sycamore tree to see Jesus. There is wonderful fruit in Jericho.

We were so impressed with the agriculture in Israel and the ability to make every drop of water count. The rows of plants are "tented" so that evaporation occurs during the day, making the water accumulate on the inside top of the "tent." Then the condensed water is released during the night when the temperatures drop, thus watering the plants. There is very little overhead irrigation because too much water is lost that way. In the ten years between our trips to Israel, we noticed that there was much more agriculture, much more green this time.

Visiting Israel is the trip of a lifetime for a Christian. We are so grateful to God that we could visit the sites of the Holy Land, and we have a special feeling for the people who live there.

Frances and Louis Coppoc



Jerusalem

Current Standing Rules and Guidelines for Clergy Continuing Education, Formation and Spiritual Formation in the Kansas East Annual Conference.

Taken from the booklet created last year by the, "Continuing Education Resource Task Force, a group of ten Kansas Area clergy and formed by the strategic plan adopted by both Kansas Conferences in 2006.

Continuing Education and Spiritual Growth for clergy is addressed under Section XIII."Evaluation for Continuing Formation for Full Members and Local Pastors, " page 254-256, The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church 2004. Clergy develop their continuing education plans in consultation with their District Superintendent and Staff Parish Relations Committee. This plan is reported annually through the District. The District superintendent shall also ask the local church to describe its provision for time and financial support of continuing education, formation and spiritual growth.

The following guidelines shall be considered a conference-wide guideline for clergy of local churches, Pastor/Parish Relations Committees and the District Superintendents:

All clergy not attending seminary or Course of Study are required to attend continuing education events and have Continuing Education Units (CEUs). The Kansas East Annual conference leaves it to the Pastor and Pastor-Parish Relation Committee to "come to an agreement by which the pastor may be away from the parish some additional time to upgrade his/her own professional skills through continuing education. The minimum requirement shall be two Continuing Education Units (CEUs) per year." *Each (CEU) represents ten (10) contact hours in a structured learning environment.*

Both Annual Conferences see time away for Continuing Education as separate from the 30 day including-four-Sundays guidelines for full time vacation.

For the detailed guidelines such as part-time, probationers attending "residency," and so on, these are the recommendations taken from the Kansas East 2005 Annual Conference Journal, p. 350-351, .5 under the Standing Rules, "Pastor and Local Church Relations."

Vacation and Time Away from the Charge

A pastor under full-time appointment shall receive four weeks vacation with pay during each conference year. The dates for these four weeks are to be set by the pastor in consultation with the Staff/Pastor –Parish Relations Chairpersons to insure pastoral care during the pastor's absence. Part-time pastors' vacations will be negotiated with the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. The pastor and Staff/Pastor Relations Committee shall come to an agreement by which the pastor may be away from the parish some additional time:

- a. To upgrade his/her own professional skills through continuing education. The minimum requirement shall be two Continuing Education Units (CEUs) per year.
- b. To work beyond the local church in district or conference activities such as camps, institutes, conference committees, conference institutions, etc.
- c. To receive not less than one day away from the church business each week. The district superintendent shall, in conducting the charge conference, at the time of receiving a salary recommendation, also receive a statement of the vacation policy and the above mentioned items from the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee.

Vacation for part-time is quarter time = 1 week including one Sunday, half-time = 2 weeks including two Sundays, three-quarter time = 3 weeks including three Sundays.

See page 7 for suggestions for meeting Continuing Education requirements.

June 2008

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					

June 2nd District office closed

June 4th-7th Kansas East Conference at Baker University, Baldwin City, KS

June 12th Five Rivers District Leadership Team Meeting at Ottawa 1st, 7:00 p.m.

June 17th - 21st Bishop's Week at Mt. Sequoyah, AR

June 20th - 21st Lay Speaking Ministry Seminar

June 25th Incubator meeting in Wichita

June 30th DCOM Executive Committee Meeting

Continuing Education Opportunities

Check out www.BeADisciple.com at Southwestern college. This online center for learning is through the Bishop Richard and Julie Wilkes Institute for Discipleship. CEU availability varies with course offering.

Here are their June listings:

Crowning “Prince Caspian”: An Evangelism and Discipleship Growth Opportunity-June 2-13, 2008, cost is \$95.00.

The Disney film version of the second installment of C.S. Lewis classic “The Chronicles of Narnia” premiered as a summer blockbuster in mid-May.

This workshop will; 1) familiarize participants with the original literary work; 2) offer creative ideas for church and ministry events based around the new film’s release; 3) explore media and merchandising pertaining to “Prince Caspian;” and 4) suggest ways to both include un-reached people and grow disciples.

By the end of this workshop with IFD instructor Gary Olson, participants should have a set of plans that will introduce and celebrate “Prince Caspian” through outreach and or discipleship events customized for the ministry setting they serve. Participants will need a copy of C.S. Lewis “Prince Caspian.”

Moving Towards Health & Wholeness-Resiliency Skills Workshop-June 9-20, 2008-\$30 (limited time for pilot trial)

The goal of this ten day course is to empower disciples of Jesus Christ with enhanced health knowledge, skills and connections. We will tap into the wisdom of experts and each other as we look to the vision of the future we want to create for our health and wholeness. We will share strategies with each other for dealing with common roadblocks along the journey of being effective, healthy team members for Christ.

As a result we will be:

1. more resilient to the strain of the many stressors of this earthly life.
2. Healthier in body-mind-and spirit,

Continued on page 8

Clergy Birthdays

Gayla Rapp	June 7th
Bill Schmeling	June 8th
Charlotte Raby	June 11th
Nick Woods	June 20th
Duane Kessler	June 25th

District Prayer Calendar

June 1	LaCygne-New Lancaster Rev. January Kiefer
June 8	Burlington Rev. David Livingston
June 15	Humboldt-Big Creek Rev. Debbie Dick
June 22	Pleasanton-Prescott Pastor David Elmore
June 29	Vinland Rev. Nick Wood

Five Rivers District

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1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

Website: www.fiveriversdistrict.com

Kansas East Website: www.kansaseast.org

Kansas Bishop: Dr. Scott Jones

District Superintendent: Rev. Ron King

Admn. Assistant, Newsletter Editor: Marvé Ralston

Continuing Education continued from page 7

3. an improved culture of support for healthy disciples of Jesus Christ, and
4. Better mentors and models for believers and non-believers.

The instructor for this workshop is Helen Stucky Risdon, a parish nurse and certified well-coach. As this workshop is a pilot trial for offering wellness coaching to Christian disciples online, this instructor is offering the first session at a reduced workshop fee.

“The Tie that Binds”: An Online Book Discussion-June 16-30, 2008 \$35.00

This workshop will be an online book discussion about this newly released book, *The Tie that binds: Connecting with God, the Church, and the World*, by UM Bishop Richard Wilke, the co-author of *Disciple Bible Study*.

“Blest be the tie that binds Our hearts in Christian love.”

Excerpts from the cover:

“Whether or not the words of this hymn are familiar to you, the notion behind them and this book is one of connectedness and community.”

“Grounding his discussion in biblical background and Wesleyan roots, Wilke attempts to rouse the church to follow the command of Jesus to Go...and make disciples. The issue, he says, is not merely religion; it is salvation. The task is no less than drawing people of all ages, nationalities, backgrounds, and philosophical persuasions to the One who said, I come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly. And the method is to connect” with one another in the church, with children and youth, with the un-churched, with the Savior.” Send any questions about these online classes to Lisa at beadisciple@स्कans.edu.