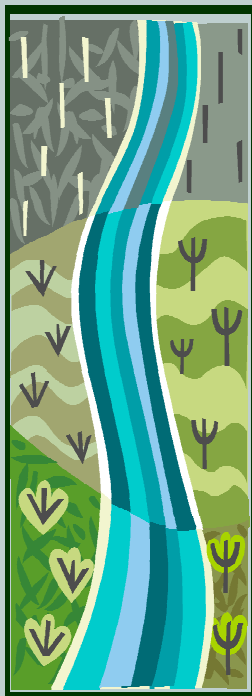


Living Water

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 6

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Reflections From Ron

Hello Colleagues and friends,

I'm a student of the Bible (or at least I try to be). Lately my mind has turned to things related to time and timing. Naturally, I was drawn to the most renowned, oft quoted, most memorable Bible verse about time and timing — the third chapter of Ecclesiastes. And you know how the verses, begin: *For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:*

You have to know that I turned to those verses and read them over and over again in contemplation of this time and this season. I was amazed at their wisdom and their attempt to cover life in all of its complexities. And then I realized that it was missing something. I began to grieve privately — quietly as I read them again. There seemed to be a time for everything; a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; ... there seemed to be a time for almost everything.

My life as a DS has covered about every season there is. I've many memories to remind me of the seasons. I've seen those newly born be baptized into the community of believers. I've seen death visit our colleagues and friends (I think now specifically of Denise Hygh and Madge Fraley, both of Lawrence Centenary). I also think of the dying season of the churches as Maple Grove and LaHarpe have both come to the end of their season of life. I've seen new churches planted and seen old buildings razed as new structures replaced the old ones. I've seen the people of this district weep as they realized their church had burned. I've seen the people of five rivers gather stones to rebuild their structures and then dance at the celebration of re-entry. I've seen communities of faith seeking a vision and a mission for ministry, and yes — I've even seen some people lose heart because their communities seemed to be lying helpless on death's door. I've seen it all (or most of it — and yes, their have even been some who have waged their private wars against the annual conference over issues of insurance — and I've seen some make peace at the opportunity to opt out).

What was missing, you ask? I've been an active participant in its unfolding and yet never realized that this particular part of life wasn't there until now. There was nothing in the Ecclesiastical scripture mentioned about *a time to come and a time to go*. Yet, that's where I find myself in this season. I have served in the position of District Superintendent for eight years now. That's as long as any clergy can serve at one time by discipline. And so, I'm at the end. I came eight years ago and now it's time to go.

This is my last newsletter article to you as your district superintendent. You have supported me and my ministry (and I hope I have supported you and yours) among you on the Five Rivers District for six years and ten months. We have struggled; sometimes together and sometimes against one another. We've worked hard and been able to bear some fruit that will honor our Christ. We've had both victories and failures. Our victories were born of the struggles we went through. When we've failed, we only failed because

Continued on page 6

Meet Rev. Dr. January Kiefer LaCygne/New Lancaster UMC

When did you feel the call to serve as an ordained pastor?

About ten years ago. My previous lives as an art teacher and storyteller opened yet further into praising God and calling people to the throne of Grace.



Did you grow up Methodist?

No. I grew up as a Christian Scientist. Both of my parents were deeply committed Christians – Dad’s family had Lutheran and Catholic roots; and Mom’s Dad was a Moravian Bishop. I treasure the time I spent as a pastor in the AME Church. I believe that there are many paths to authentic communion with the Divine.

Tell us a little about your family, ex. Kids, pets,

I have three magnificent sisters, all on the East Coast. The rest of my family is even more far-flung: Canada, England, Germany, Jamaica (as in the Caribbean). My dog, Happy, makes sure I am not too much of a hermit.

Where do you go or what do you do to relax and get away from it all?

“Its not that I want to get away from it all – but get closer to the Holy One! I am an artist and contemplative at heart. I continually seek the intersection of art.and faith.”

Rev. Dr. January Kiefer

Give an example of a time you felt God especially near.

God is keenly palpable whenever I am immersed in the creative process and when I am engaging others in experiencing and expressing Holy Spirit. Whenever I work with others in using the arts to create sacred space and ceremony for individual and communal health and healing, I know God is praised, and my own heart sings! I particularly love doing workshops for women on “Grief and Grace.” The natural world is also profoundly important to me – in both her wilderness and gardened aspects

Do you have a favorite hymn? Lots of them are favorites. I particularly love the Spirituals.

Also: Lift Every Voice and Sing, Lord of the Dance, Love Divine All Loves Excelling...

Where do you go or what do you do to relax and get away from it all?

Its not that I want to get away from it all – but get closer to the Holy One! I am an artist and contemplative at heart. I continually seek the intersection of art and faith. Singing, canoeing, walking, creating order and beauty in my home and life, feasting with friends and family, reading poetry with a dear one - all feed my spirit well. At the moment I’m reacquainting myself with Celtic Christianity and am beginning to play around with calligraphy

Favorite food, book, and color.

Too many to note.

Continued from page 2, Rev. Dr. Kiefer

Name three people that have influenced your life for the good. This can be anyone from John Wesley to a friend or family member. Howard Thurman. Faith Ringgold. Creek Charlie.

Of Possible Interest to You:

United Methodist Web site opens church doors

The United Methodist Church has launched a new awareness campaign that is allowing people to think about church, not as a building but as a doorway to service to the world.

A new Web site, www.10thousanddoors.org, focuses on people ages 18-34. It uses doors, each opening to a new way to connect to the church, to help reach new people, help people rethink church and provide new thought to who United Methodists are and what they do as a church.

'The Source' event to become online offering

Because of declining economic conditions in the United States, Young People's Ministries of the United Methodist Board of Discipleship is shifting its regional leader development program called "The Source" to a free online offering.

The change will provide an avenue for the content of "The Source" events to be available to a much wider audience.

Find out more at www.gbod.org/youngpeople.

Lay speaking training, June 19-20

You are invited to explore your call to lay speaking ministry. The June Seminar will feature the Basic Course, and two advanced courses. Rev. January Kiefer will lead a seminar on preaching that you won't want to miss. Jada Hodgson will bring a course on storytelling. We look forward to seeing you at Center of Grace in Olathe June 19-20.

For more information, visit www.kansaseast.org/event_detail.asp?PKValue=2826.

'Focus 2009' conference, July 21-24

"Focus 2009," the quadrennial conference for those in ministry for children, will be July 21-24 in Indianapolis, Ind. The conference will feature innovative workshops, unique worship experiences, inspiring and dynamic speakers, a resource center and activities for children and youth.

Adult registration is \$290, if received by May 31, or \$330 after that date. Additional prices, more information and online registration are available at www.gbod.org/ministries/children/focus2009, or call Melanie Gordon toll-free at 877-899-2780 ext. 1762.

Safe and Sacred Space Training offered at Parker UMC

Parker UMC is sponsoring a Safe and Sacred Space training event:

When: Sunday, June 7th

Time: 1:00 PM

Workbook and necessary forms should be downloaded from the Kansas East website and filled out in advance.

Where: Parker Church is located at 403 W. Kimble St.

Please call Sue Swonger the instructor at 913-755-2791 home, 913-731-1963 cell or Edward English the pastor 913-432-4934 home, 913-731-0888 cell to register or ask any questions.

June 2009

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 3-6
June 14

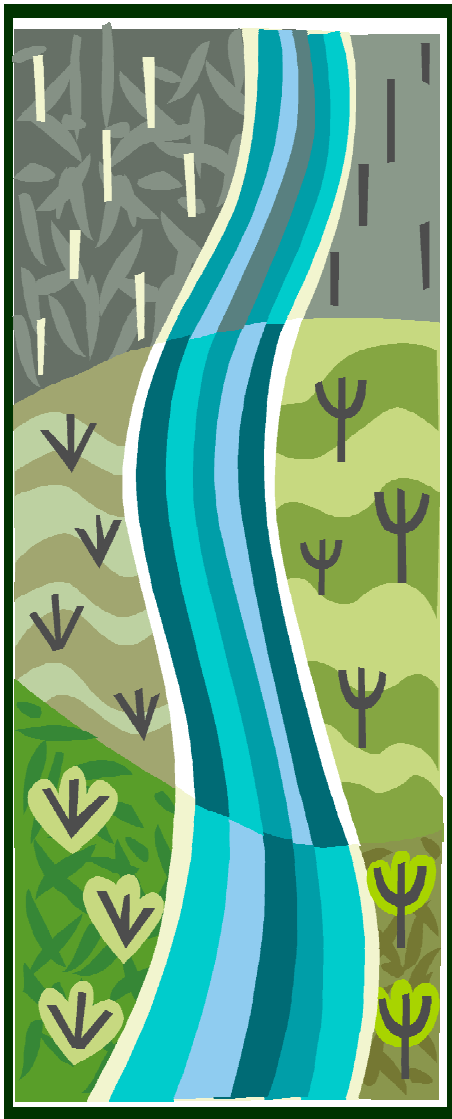
Kansas East Annual Conference, Baker University Campus
Rev. Ronald L. King's Going Away Reception
 Garnett UMC
 124 W. Oak
 Garnett, KS
 3-5 PM

June 14-22
June 19-20

Rev. Ronald King DS on vacation
Lay Speaking Training
 Olathe Center of Grace
 520 South Harrison
 Olathe, KS
 Register by June 10th
 Jada Hodgson legalbgl@micoks.net

June 21
June 24-27

Father's Day
 Bishop's Week at Mt. Sequoyah, Fayetteville, Arkansas



**You're invited to a going
away
reception for
Rev. Ronald L. King**

Date: Sunday, June 14th

Time: 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM

**Place: Garnett UMC
124 W. Oak
Garnett, KS**

Doug McIntosh will be collecting any monetary love gifts you wish to give Rev. King. Please send by June 3rd.

You can mail them to him at:
Doug McIntosh
310 Kallock
Richmond, KS 66080

Love gifts and cards will be given to Rev. King at the reception.

**Clergy
Birthdays**

June

Gayla Rapp	6/07
Kara Eidson	6/09
Charlotte Raby	6/11
Nick Woods	6/20
David Livingston	6/26

District Prayer Calendar

June 7	Moran Bronson David Shrum
June 14	Elsmore/Mildred Connie Cox
June 21	Uniontown/Redfield Joel Dunn
June 26	Ottawa Trinity Barb Clinger

Five Rivers District

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

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District Superintendent: Rev. Ronald King

Administrative Assistant, Newsletter editor:

Marvé Ralston

Continued from page 1 Reflections from Ron

we dared to try. So, there's no shame in our failure. Our failures came as a result of us being faithful to our mission to cultivate Christian growth. As I leave, I want to celebrate your faithfulness as a people of God and of our Christ. I pray that God will continue to be with you as you cultivate your Christian growth and trust God knowing as Paul said to Timothy and I say to you:

for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him. (2 Timothy 1:12)

Agape and shalom,

Ron

Book Review: by Marvé Ralston

Never Give Up by Joyce Meyer

I highly recommend this book. It is scriptural as well as inspirational for anyone facing a struggle. Meyer uses examples of almost fifty individuals who pursued their goals without giving up.

Using birds as her primary examples she compares a chicken to an eagle. She goes on to add Magpie, Kookaburra, Vulture, Parrots and Cockatoos, Cuckoo, Peacock, Pelican, Canary and Crow Christians. Her model always goes back to eagles as she explains how they leave the nest; thoughtfully choose a spouse; mate for life; carefully create their nest; encourage their young to fly at the right time and how they pull maintenance on themselves by making time for renewal as they reach a certain stage in their maturity.

"When the eagle goes into renewal process he plucks out all 7000 feathers one by one. He bathes in the cool stream to wash away years of parasites, dirt, etc. Then he is ready for regrowth which takes about 40 days as he basks in the sunshine."

Near the end, Meyer uses Joel 2:25-26 as inspiration for staying the course.

"And I will restore or replace for you the years that the locust has eaten – the hopping locust, the stripping locust, the crawling locust, My great army which I sent among you. And you shall eat in plenty and be satisfied and praise the name of the Lord, your God, Who has dealt wondrously with you. And My people shall never be put to shame."