

March/April
Volume 14, Issue 2

Living Water

A Bi-Monthly Publication of the Five Rivers District

Apportionments 101—Table Talk

Local church statistics (Tables I, II and III of our yearly reports) tell the “numbers” story of our churches.

Table I tells about membership, weekly average attendance, Sunday school, how many groups use our church buildings and some information about our church demographics. This Table also tells about baptisms, professions of faith, deaths, volunteers in mission, and numbers of individuals helped by the ministry of our churches.

Table II tells about local church expenses, programming, apportionment payout, capital expenses and the pastor’s salary package.

Table III is about the income of the church for the year. It helps calculate apportionments—those funds which go from the local church to the ministry of the conference and general church. Apportionments are simply 10% of the church’s income for the year (with a few deductions).

As United Methodist Churches, we are not “stand alone” entities. We are part of a community of believers. Our conviction to pay our “part” is in our UMC doctrine found in our Book of Discipline ¶615.

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**ANNUAL CONFERENCE
IS JUNE 7-10TH**

Bishop:

Ruben Saenz

District Superintendent:

Rev. David Watson

Administrative Assistant/ Newsletter Editor

Marve' Ralston

March 2017

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	

Clergy Birthdays

March

Steve Cole 3/06
 Jada Hodgson 3/31

April

Daniel Norwood 4/13
 Jocelyn Tupper 4/13

April 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	We	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						

March

- Feb. 27-Mar2 Cabinet DS is in Wichita
- March 5 Worship and Evangelism workshop at Overbrook in the afternoon (DS led)
- March 7 District Clergy Meeting at Ottawa 1st, 9 –Noon ~ Todd Seifert (GP Communications Director) is speaking on Multimedia Worship Tools
- March 9 Men's Fellowship at Paola UMC 6:30 p.m. (DS attending)
- March 13-16 Cabinet DS is in Topeka
- March 16 Eudora UMC Church Life Cycle Workshop (DS led)
- March 18 Plum Creek UMM Breakfast 6-9 a.m. (DS attending)
- March 19 DS is preaching at Lawrence Centenary and Linwood
- March 25 District Committee on Ordained Ministry ~ Wellsville UMC
- March 27-30 Cabinet DS is in Wichita

April

- April 2 DS is preaching at Welda and Kincaid Selma
- April 3 District Leadership Team, 6:30 p.m. at Ottawa Trinity Annex
- April 4 St Paul School of Theology DS visits with students
- April 10-12 Cabinet DS is in Topeka
- April 14 Good Friday ~ District and Conference offices closed
- April 19-21 Cabinet DS is in Lincoln, NE
- April 21-22 Connecting Council DS is in Lincoln, NE
- April 24 Aldersgate Village Board of Trustees, DS is in Topeka
- April 30 Ottawa 1st 150th Anniversary. DS Preaches, program in afternoon

District Prayer Calendar

Mar. 5 **Garnett/Greeley**

Rev. Bill Driver

Mar.12 **Colony**

Dorothy Welch

Mar.19 **Redfield/Uniontown**

Rev. Connie McKee

Mar.26 **Lawrence Centenary/Linwood**

Rev. Dan Norwood

April 2 **Ottawa: Trinity/Richter**

Rev. Lori Stevens

April 9 **Fort Scott: First**

Rev. Steve Cole

April 16 **Paola**

Rev. Andrea Beyer

April 23 **Melvern/Quenemo**

Rev. Daekyung Kim

April 30 **Wellsville/Clearfield**

Rev. Kathy Symes

Potato Drop at Susanna Wesley on Saturday, April 8th 9-Noon

Susanna Wesley UMC will once again be the site for a Potato Drop. This is a project of Great Plains United Methodist Men and Society of St. Andrews.

40,000 pounds of potatoes will be delivered to SWUMC and shared with local food pantries and agencies.

In order to be a recipient, we need the church/agency to contact the church (all details are on the flyer).

Once we have promised the 40, 000 pounds to different groups, we will not accept additional requests.

We will have volunteers to load your trucks or trailers.

Come and See what God can do to feed God's people!!!

Potato Drop ~ Susanna Wesley UMC

7433 SW 29th Street

Topeka, KS 66614

For info call Gabby at 785-478-3697

Or swumc@swumc.org

Continued from page one ([Apportionments 101](#))

A very fun place to see where your apportioned money goes is on the GP website:

<http://www.greatplainsumc.org/currentcalculator/2017>

You can plug in your churches name and up will pop a pie chart showing how the money is allocated. In 2016, Five Rivers District increased our apportionment payout percentage from 70% to 76%. That is an accomplishment! Thank you!

There are ten months left in 2017. What if all our churches strove to pay 100% of their apportionments? How creative can our churches get to accomplish this? What could God do with the funds? How would we further see God bless us? Many of our churches already do this. We have several churches that paid above their apportionment to help struggling churches. That is amazing!

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,” says the Lord of hosts. “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.” Malachi 3:10

A Brave New Direction By Marvé Ralston

Lawrence Central United Methodist Church sits in a premium spot in Lawrence, Kansas. The church is located at 1501 Massachusetts. This is a great location for both downtown Lawrence and KU. Several years ago, they began dreaming and moving in a brave new direction.

Their focus was to get the church ready to accommodate the community and not just those inside the church walls. Over the last two years, they have been upgrading and becoming handicapped accessible through use of their churches' foundation funds.

The church formed a Vision Team and began dreaming about the renovation and upgrades under the leadership of Rev. Jay Henderson. Central's Trustee Committee looked at the plans and modified them. The plans were approved by a special Church Conference, led by District Superintendent at that time, Rev. Dennis Ackerman. Work of those teams, created the initiative to begin the building projects.

The committee moved into first phase in 2015. The lift and handicapped upgrades completed in 2016.

Original to the church was a long concrete ramp up to the church front entry; it was steep and not close to the parking lot. It was not truly accessible for anyone trying to navigate the ramp independently.

The handicapped accessibility was a primary concern. In order to add a lift or elevator, they would need to reconfigure the back entry space, to allow room for a handicapped accessible lift. The lift selected, utilizes Plexiglas, and has no ceiling. The result is a less claustrophobic feel. The lift holds up to 750 pounds, an individual in a wheel chair and another person comfortably. They also installed handicapped door openers on both the east and west entry doors.

Original to the main floor was a women's restroom space, which included a small waiting room. They were able to use that space to create two spaces. One is a woman's restroom with several stalls. The other is a nice sized handicapped accessible restroom; which is also available to families with several small children and has a changing station installed for infants.

Downstairs they did extensive work in the original fellowship hall. They renovated the plaster walls with drywall, put in new ceiling, painted and installed commercial carpet squares. Everything looks fresh, clean, with no musty smell, like older church basements often have.

AARP Tax-Aide is temporarily using this space to provide free tax preparation, and counseling for Senior Citizens that qualify for assistance. Their program was home-based in the Lawrence Senior Center, which is under renovation. They began work there in January and will continue through tax season.

The church through their Bell Choir director, Becky Harris, became aware of a great deal on a whole set of bells. The church was able to purchase them. This has been a wonderful addition to the Central UMC Hand bell Choir.

Along with the basement renovation was the conversion of a closet and storage area for housing the bells.

Another exciting program that has taken off is the weekly meeting/practice of the Lawrence Community Bell Choir. The group also use the newly renovated fellowship hall and the churches bells, to practice once a week. They gave their first concert last fall. They have dreams of a children's bell choir in the future as well.

Sunday afternoons, the church is utilized, by Rev. Daekyung Kim (Melvern/Quenemo UMC) who leads worship for a small Korean congregation that meet in the church Parlor.

There is a Woman's Watercolor art class, sponsored by the Lawrence Welcome Club, held once a month. <http://www.welcomecluboflawrence.com/>

They have also opened up several rooms for offices for Family Promise to handle their paperwork and schedule meetings. Family Promise houses homeless families during evenings in local churches, and provides supervision, direction and meals while they are in transition. <http://lawrencefamilypromise.org/about-us/>

These are opportunities for folks to see the church as a very welcoming place. Perhaps that is a good start for anyone that does not currently, or has never attended church.



Pastor Piet Knetsch
Lawrence Central UMC



Basement Fellowship Hall



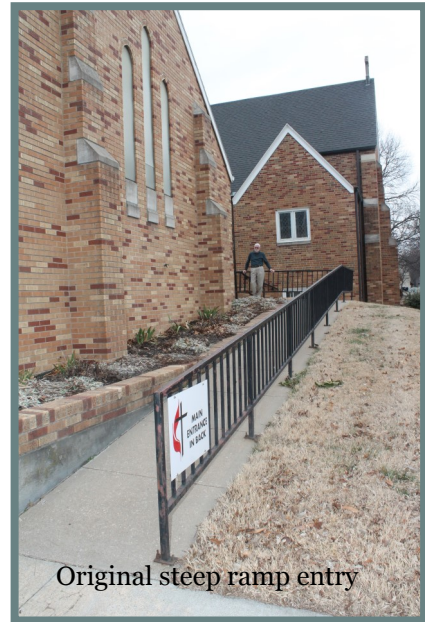
New Bell Choir Storage



New Lift



New Handicapped Restroom



Original steep ramp entry

Thinking Outside the Box

By David Wasserfallen ~ 5R Lay Servant Director

A number of years ago we, in the former Kansas East Conference, were fortunate enough to have Rev. Emmanuel Cleaver preach at Annual Conference. His topic was "Thinking Outside the Box".

I'll never forget how he ended his sermon. He said ". . . and our founder was so far outside the box that **he wouldn't even stay in his own grave!**"

In John Wesley's quadrilateral, he gave primacy to the scripture component.

It makes me think . . .

From what I read in the Gospels, Jesus didn't have any worries that the carpet in the sanctuary was old and worn. He wasn't concerned about the repairs that the church bus needed. Paying the utilities weren't on his radar screen . . .

Jesus didn't stay in "his own place" and wait for people to come to him . . . he went out to them (and there is a rumor that John Wesley did that too).

Jesus was concerned about the **people**, those that were hurting, those that were poor or sick or disabled, those that had problems. He spent a great deal of his time helping those people.

His "sermons" were short and to the point--not a one that's recorded in the Gospels would take more than about 5 minutes to deliver. (He founded what I call the "Triple S school of preaching". I.E.: have a point, **S**ay it, **S**hut up and **S**it down.)

His focus was on people and their relationship, a) with God; and b) with each other.

He left us with a few, clear guidelines: 1) Love God; 2) Love your neighbor; 3) Go and make disciples of all the world.

Yes, there are the practicalities of this world that we have to deal with. The problem seems to be that we tend to focus too much on them, quite often when we should be paying attention elsewhere.

Jesus focused on people.

The challenge for us today, both as Lay Servants and as Christians, is to "think outside of the box" --the way that Jesus did. To go where the people are, to help them deal with their troubles, to deal with them where **they** are, and not to insist that they do things OUR way. To love them, in other words.



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