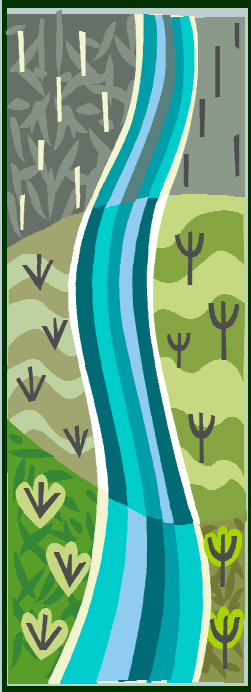


Living Water

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 4

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Reflections From Ron

Hello Colleagues and friends,

As you have probably realized, my articles for the newsletter have primarily been directed toward encouraging the pursuit of our district mission of *"Cultivating Christian growth"*. At times it may seem that the message is redundant, especially when you hear the same theme over and over again. And, I have to admit, each month it feels a little bit like preaching to the choir.

The mission statement for our district is barely four years old. And, to be honest, it's hard to tell just how passionately people are engaged with the mission. Yet, there is a connection to the condition we find ourselves in and the disconnection from our district mission. This disconnection may even be related to what some perceive as the failing mission of Christ's church. Let me see if I can be clearer and maybe you'll understand why cultivating Christian growth is a constant theme of encouragement.

One of the realities of life in our churches is that we could do better. The transformation survey helps us to understand that, as well as the Tables I, II, and III reports. They contain data that, for all practical purposes, measures our growth and health. What is clear is that when we observe the data — similar to a doctor doing a diagnostic test — we find that our growth has been stunted. For instance, a church that reflects a membership of 300 hundred only has about 1/3 of the members attend. Of the 1/3 that are recorded as attending, less than half of those are involved in Sunday school or other ministries in the life of the church. That means that 2/3's of our church (more than half) have stopped growing, some have even atrophied (withered) and are not involved in spiritual rehabilitation to get any better.

These are the reasons that our mission is so important. By cultivating Christian growth in our local churches, we seize the opportunity to make some proactive changes in the lives of our congregation. By cultivating Christian growth, we take to responsibility to prevent death by indifference and spiritual starvation. By cultivating Christian growth we open up the possibility for a more fruitful future, where our churches are growing stronger, expanding the love of Christ, and making the love of Christ known everywhere in the Five Rivers District. In short we reach at least three goals with one effort. We come closer to achieving God's vision for our district — *"making the love of Christ known everywhere in the Five Rivers District"*. We come closer to achieving the mission of the United Methodist Church — *"Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."* And, we can reach our annual conference vision — *"to have United Methodist people and churches spiritually alive and growing."* And we do it all by **"Cultivating Christian growth"** in the churches on the Five Rivers District.

As we look at what it means in this season where we celebrate the resurrection of our Christ, imagine the possibilities ...

Agape and shalom,
Ron

Wise and Compassionate Ways to Help



The Theme for this Spring Meeting of the PAUMCS (Professional Association of the United Methodist Church Secretaries) was **Security in the Church**. A large part of it was devoted to wise and compassionate ways to help the poor. It began with a short clip from a workshop DVD given by Beth Lindsay Templeton who has written a book called **Loving Our Neighbor ..** Templeton also gives workshops with the title, **Helping Others Servant or Sucker** – a workshop for church groups, community organizations, and others to learn to make wise and compassionate decisions for helping people in poverty.

She began by stressing having a policy within your church about dealing with what types of help you will give to those in poverty. This tied in perfectly with our afternoon workshop by Rev. Gary Winget on Dealing With Difficult People Having a Difficult Time. There was also training on personal safety at home and in the work place by the Salina police department.



Some things that were discussed regarding personal safety and work related safety in the church.

They recommended during non church service and event hours; securing all the doors into the church except one so you are aware of anyone who enters and no one catches you off guard.

Know who all have keys and make sure they know to keep the doors locked after them.

In some cases, if you are the only one alone in the church for periods of time you should keep your office door locked.



Have a key word that you can use with your pastor or another church member when you are alone and facing a difficult person at work. For example, one secretary uses the word **Reverend** to refer to her pastor and let people know she needs someone to come to the office immediately.

When dealing with an angry person, keep your voice low and calm. Give them several good choices of dealing with the situation. Let them know the consequences.

He recommends keeping pepper spray and knowing how to use it. You need to realize that if you use it in the wind it could blow back into your own face.

There is strength and safety in numbers. You are safer when there is at least one other person present. That is also true of course with jogging,

Wise and Compassionate Ways to Help Continued from page 2

shopping, and most anything you do.

Any one thing you do to make yourself safer decreases the odds of something bad happening to you by 90%.

In an emergency situation, you can dial 911 and not hang up and the police will come out. You don't need to say anything.

Never give out cash, it puts you in immediate risk. It creates a place anyone can come for cash.

Think about having the police come out to talk to church members about personal as well as church safety.

A copy of an outreach ministry policy and intake form given to us by Rev. Gary Winget has been e-mailed to your pastor as a starting point of reference if you are interested.

Fashion Meets Faith

When: April 3rd-4th

Where: Topeka: Susanna Wesley

7433 SW 29th UMC

Topeka, KS 66614



Fashion Meets Faith is an event that will not only feature trendy clothes and beauty tips, but will highlight inner beauty and embracing the way God sees women. Fashion Expert Shari Braendel is flying in from the east coast to lead workshops on faith and beauty.

The message of the show is that women can look and feel more stylish, no matter their size or shape, without lowering their standards. Women will discover how to identify and dress their body types, use the color palette for their skin tones, enhance their natural assets and honor God with modesty and style.

What Not to Wear: Teen Edition - Friday, April 3

Teens will learn "what guys really think" and the five Bs of style. Sweet treats are included with ticket cost. This event is perfect for a girls' night out or a mother-daughter date.

Doors open at 6:00 for color analysis and makeup demos, show 7:00-10:00

Ticket cost: \$10 in advance, \$14 at door

Download a flier for the 'What Not to Wear: Teen Edition' event on the Kansas East website at www.kansaseast.org (more schedule on page 5)

April 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 Palm Sunday	6	7	8	9	10 Good Friday	11
12 Easter	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

April 1

April Fools Day-Marvé (Admn. Asst.) turns 50 yikes,
District Office closed

April 1

Appointive Cabinet, DS in Wichita

April 4

District Conference, Louisburg UMC, 9:00 AM-3:30 PM

UMW Spring Meeting, Lawrence 1st West Campus

UMM Conference, Worden UMC

April 7-8

Appointive Cabinet, DS in Wichita

April 10

Good Friday

April 12

Easter Sunday

April 14

Extended Cabinet, DS in Wichita

April 15-16

Appointive Cabinet, DS in Wichita

April 23-24

Appointive Cabinet, DS in Wichita

April 25

Preaching Workshop, Garnett UMC

April 28-29

Appointive Cabinet, DS in Wichita

May 2

Pre-Conference Briefing Ottawa 1st, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

May 3

Garnett UMC 125th Anniversary

May 20-22

Kansas West Annual Conference

June 3-6

Kansas East Annual Conference

Fashion Meets Faith continued from page 3

“As to matters of dress, I would recommend one never to be first
in the fashion nor the last out of it.”

John Wesley (Interesting....)



Girlfriends' Guide to Glamour - Saturday, April 4

Adult women will learn how to accessorize and how to “look like a million” without spending one. Lunch is included in the ticket cost.

Doors open at 9:00 for color analysis and makeup demos, show 10:00-2:00

Ticket cost \$12 in advance, \$16 at door

Download a flier for the 'Girlfriends Guide to Glamour' event at www.kansaseast.org

Combo tickets (for both events): \$18 in advance, \$25 if purchased Friday night

Both days include a chance at door prizes, free makeup demonstrations, music and worship. Bring your daughters, sisters, church groups and BFFs! Visit www.swumc.org for ticket info.

To learn more about Shari Braendel, visit www.fashionmeetsfaith.com.

This event is coordinated by Jayna McFarland from First UMC in Topeka and LeAnn Medley from Susanna Wesley UMC.

Clergy Birthdays



District Prayer Calendar

		April 5th	Overbrook Kathleen Whitmore
		April 12	St. John's-Hammond- West Liberty Vida Williams
Edward English	April 7th		
Trudy Kenyon Anderson	April 7th		
Terry Bullock	April 8th	April 19	Fort Scott First Paul Babcock
Deborah Dick	April 25th	April 26	Pomona-Vassar Kathleen Symes

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District Superintendent: Rev. Ronald King

Administrative Assistant, Newsletter editor

Marvé Ralston

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

Real Women's Conference - Living My Life Like It's Golden

Starts: 4/24/2009

Ends: 4/25/2009

Location: Topeka: Asbury-Mount Olive UMC

Address: 1196 SW Buchanan St

City: Topeka

State: KS

Zip: 66604-1159

Attention Great Women of Kansas,

It is the 21st century and we are producing, creating, and accepting all that we are in this awesome universe.

Real Women's 2009 conference will assist you in that life transformation and spiritual insight.

This conference is for every woman, no matter where you come from or what you have been through.

So get ready to live your life like its golden because it's your time. We will see you at the Real Women's Conference April 24 & 25, 2009.

For information: amo@amo.kscoxmail.com or call 785-232-6801

