

Living Water

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE FIVE RIVERS DISTRICT UMC

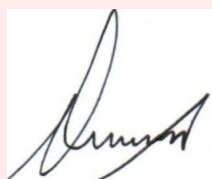
From Your District Superintendent

I hope that my clergy colleagues from the District had as good a time as I did at the Combined Clergy Session in Topeka last week. It was great to see old friends and meet new ones as we shared time with pastors from Kansas and Nebraska. The worship was exciting, the information shared by Brian McLaren was insightful and challenging, and the fellowship was renewing. It was also helpful to have opportunity to hear more about the “One Conference” question being proposed by the Transition Team. I realize that there are many questions regarding this possibility that remain unanswered. Some questions need to be addressed, others cannot be addressed until a new conference is formed, if indeed, we decide to do so.

Coming out of last week’s gathering, I was left with a continued need to pray about our future. While that is always a good idea for people of faith, it seems especially true for us over the next few months as we seek God’s guidance into the decision which God desires of us regarding this question of one conference. I am challenging myself to keep a focus on this question: “What is in the best interest of the mission of the UMC in Nebraska and Kansas?” It is fair and expected that we will each ask ourselves, “How will this impact me?” I ask this question and you ask this question. But we need to keep the priority of the faith first in any such consideration. So, how can we be most effective in making disciples of Jesus Christ? What choice among the possibilities before us will enhance our work toward this goal?

I am not offering an answer to any of these questions. What I want to convey is my hope that we will keep focused on the mission and will seek God’s guidance toward that end. So, please join me in praying for discernment as we continue our conversation about one conference.

In Christ,



Dennis L. Ackerman

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- January 22nd the postal rate for the first ounce of a letter size envelope increased .01 to .45 with additional ounces at .20 (no change)
- First class flats (large envelopes) increased from .88 to .90 with additional ounces at .20 (no change)
- Postcard rate went from .29 to .32

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Do You Have An Anxious Church?

By Marv e Ralston

On Saturday, January 7th, Bill Selby taught a seminar for Five Rivers District titled “Anxious Times Call for Non Anxious Leaders.”

Bill Selby has been providing resources for clergy, church leaders, congregations and organizations since 1999. He formed The Center for Pastoral Effectiveness of The Rockies. His background includes engineering, education, and the United Methodist pastoral ministry.

At the seminar, Selby explained that anxiety is a real threat anytime anything new is presented or ventured. It can literally tear a church into factions. He went on to explain that the source of anxiety and how effectively dealing with it is a skill we are capable of developing. Finally, Selby taught that we are called to provide leadership to guide our churches through the inevitable changes that must take place.

“Anxiety begins in our family of origin”, began Selby.

Much of how we react to a situation comes from our family of origin. After growing up, anxiety is often carried over to other areas of our lives. When this happens, anxiety continues to wreak havoc on our biological family, church family, church staff, workplace relationships and friendships.

“You need to be willing to say I, when the crowd is saying we.”

“Anxiety is contagious,” Selby continued. In any of these groups, dynamics are ripe to give the most power to the most anxious.

“Anxiety can be like a virus within a system,” said Selby, “ It can hook us into making decisions quickly without waiting to evaluate the situation carefully. It takes nerve to stay strong in the face of anxiety. We need to be separate yet connected to those with anxiety.”

Rev. Bill Selby

When we are working in an organization, there are actually three families at work according to Selby. There is the personal family of origin, the coworker families, and the family of the organization. All three influences are interacting and bringing differences and concerns into the group.

“If you want a healthy church,” stressed Selby, “You have to deal with differences. “

“You need to be willing to say I, when the crowd is saying we.”

Selby went on to explain how we can become a differentiated leader. Self differentiation is defining self and staying in connection. This type of leader knows where their responsibilities end and another’s begin.

“A differentiated leader needs to have a clear vision for themselves and their responsibilities. They need to be clear with their core values. When we get anxious, it’s about us. Something in our background,” recounted Selby.

“Being a differentiated leader is not just being nice. It’s not being coercive. Leaders must lead.”



Selby noted, “When there is no leadership, those more dominant lead out of anxiety.”

Selby also educated us on a framework for understanding the brain, called The Triune Brain. There are three centers we work out of; the Reptilian, Mammalian, and Cortex. The Reptilian is the most primitive. It is similar to the id in Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic theory of personality. It is our survival center and mostly causes unconscious behavior. The mammalian is our emotional center. This is the “feeling” part. The Cortex is where we hope to work out of. This is our

“thinking” center.

Selby finished the seminar by explaining that there will be anxiety in most all groups that are working toward change. Learn to expect it and realize that much of it might not even be about this situation. Be a differentiated leader with a vision that is clear to all and be willing to wait for the answers. Throughout the seminar, Selby stressed we work on being a non-anxious leading presence and to seek out those people who are non-anxious as well, to add to our groups for balance.

Bill Selby will be holding another Center for Pastoral Effectiveness for clergy and lay leadership beginning August 1-3. The Center process includes six three-day seminars spread over eighteen months. The Center will be meeting at Tall Oaks Retreat Center in Linwood, KS.

You can contact Bill at integrity4u@comcast.net or visit his website at www.pastoraleffectiveness.org

“If you want to have a healthy church, you have to deal with differences.”

Rev. Bill Selby



Another Way To Minister by Marvé Ralston

Eudora UMC's mission statement is: We are living into God's dream of a community that welcomes everyone, grows spiritually and serves others. OPEN HEARTS, OPEN MINDS, OPEN DOORS. It was out of that statement that one of their newest ministries was born.

Open Hearts Preschool officially opened in the fall of 2011. They currently have 24 children/families enrolled. Four teachers were hired, as well as Becky Sullivan their director.

At Open Hearts Preschool, good introduction to what is done in God's house happens. Eudora's Pastor, Michael Tomson-DeGreeff has Chapel Time with the preschoolers and staff at least twice a month. The classes have prayer before snack. Church activities are promoted to the preschool families and they are invited personally to participate. Eight families with children attending are church members. Several families have begun attending Sunday worship and two have joined the church through this outreach.



Two years ago Open Hearts Preschool was just a dream of Rev. Michael Tomson-DeGreeff and the chair of the Children's Ministries, Kristine Lawhorn. A task force took shape which eventually "morphed" into the Preschool Advisory Board. This board currently includes church members, the director, and two parents of children attending the preschool. The current chair of the board, Shanda Hurla, has been instrumental in hiring the preschool staff, raising money, advertising and launching the preschool.

They received direction and advice from Diane Karpowitz, the Preschool Director at the West Campus of Lawrence First UMC. Tomson-DeGreeff noted, "The connection at work."

Their new building was originally designed with children's ministries in mind. They put a lot of thought into the size of the rooms, the placement and layout of bathrooms, a fenced in play ground with commercial equipment and laundry facilities. This was done with the hope of a state licensed preschool being a possibility up the road.

There are currently two classrooms used for the preschool program with a capacity of ten children each. The program is mornings only at this time. They have more available classrooms and plans to expand the program.

At this point, the preschool does not make a financial contribution to the church. Their main goal was to provide a safe and nurturing Christian environment for preschool children. In the future, they expect that the preschool may be able to make financial contributions to the church and help offset expenses.

Eudora UMC is welcoming, growing and serving in their community as inspired by their mission statement. This is further evidenced by their hard work to create their new preschool program, Open Hearts Preschool.

Pictures were taken by *Connie Meyers*: photographer, church member and leader of Eudora's Communication team.



February 2012

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			

- February 7th Clergy Meeting at Ottawa 1st ~ 9 to Noon
- February 13th Extended Cabinet, DS is in Wichita
- February 14-15th Appointive Cabinet, DS is in Wichita
- February 15th Nominations Committee
- February 16th District Leadership Team ~ Wellsville 7 p.m.
- February 20-21st Appointive Cabinet, DS is in Wichita
- February 25th Connecting with the Haiti Global Missions Experience 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.
Olathe Grace UMC
Registration on KE website.
- February 27-28th Appointive Cabinet, DS is in Wichita



Possible Growth Opportunities

Biblical Leadership Training

You are invited to join Flint Hills District for a biblical leadership training event on February 11th, from 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. This will be held at Manhattan: First UMC, 612 Poyntz Ave, Manhattan, KS 66502-6041.

Join the Flint Hills District as they welcome Ron Alexander faculty member of the Kansas Leadership Center. Ron directs and facilitates a range of community development programs and initiatives throughout Kansas. He will help us learn more about what it is to be a leader in Kansas. His work for the past 25 years has focused on promoting the healthy development of children, families and communities and the expansion of civic leadership.

Special Guest will be Bishop Ann Sherer-Simpson of the Nebraska Annual Conference, who will share with us some of her experience as an effective, experienced and trusted leader within the United Methodist Church. She is committed to the churches mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. She believes, "As Christ followers we move out into the world doing the healing, preaching, teaching, loving, caring, justice seeking, culture transforming work of God."

Register online by February 4th on the KE website.

http://www.kansaseast.org/console/files/oFiles_Library_XZXLCZ/2012_Leadership_brochure_HXAJC5HH.pdf

Cost is 20.00

District Church Prayer Calendar

Feb. 5	Plum Creek Pastor Beth Hodgson
Feb.12	Louisburg Rev. Donna Voteau
Feb.19	Burlington Rev. Pat Buss
Feb.26	Hiattville Pastor Joni Raymond

"God does nothing except in response to believing prayer." ~ John Wesley

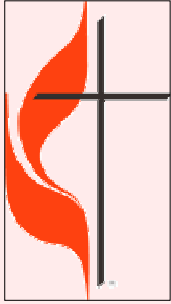
Clergy Birthdays

February

J C Kelley	February 8th
Jacob Cloud	February 24th

March

Barbara Clinger	March 2nd
Patrick Buss	March 13th
Donna Voteau	March 21st
Beth Hodgson	March 21st
Jim Hopwood	March 23rd
Charles Russell	March 25th
Jada Hodgson	March 31st



Cultivating Christian Discipleship

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About Us

Five Rivers District is a geographical and administrative subdivision of the Kansas East Conference. The boundaries of the district have been determined by the Bishop after consultation with the district superintendents. A district consists of all the pastoral charges within its boundaries. Five Rivers District is currently under the supervision of Rev. Dr. Dennis Ackerman.

Primary duties of this administration and office relate to overseeing and supporting the work of the local churches, including presiding at Charge or Church Conferences, and supervising the work of the pastors, including participation with the Bishop in the making of appointments.



Pictures were taken by *Connie Meyers*: photographer, church member and leader of Eudora's Communication team.

But Jesus said "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14

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**Open Hearts Preschool ~ A Ministry of
Eudora United Methodist Church lead by
Rev. Michael Tomson-DeGreeff.**

