

# J. REPORTS OF DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS

## 1. Seven Rivers District

This was a very busy year in the 7 Rivers for pastoral changes. We begin with Mike Lawson moving from Methow Valley to Lewiston Id: Orchards and Shalom Agatarap moving from Ellensburg to Seattle: Blaine Memorial, Associate. Mike Nickerson, retired elder from Rocky Mountain Conference and Joshua Mikelson, a Presbyterian elder, served us well as interims for Wenatchee First and Ephrata respectively. We are grateful for their service. Mike will be returning to Rocky Mountain to serve as interim to Aspen UMC.

Two of our district pastors will move into retired relationship. Derel Olsen from Toppenish and White Swan. Derel will continue to serve White Swan ½ time in retired status. Edward Branham from West Highlands UMC will also move into retirement. Alan Oppelaar moved into disability status, pending decision from Board of Pensions. 7 Rivers also saw Dennis Evans a Presbyterian elder who served Kahlotus for 19 years move to Desert Aire Presbyterian.

The district witnessed seven churches change pastors. Elders joining us are Joanne and John Coleman-Campbell who move from Tacoma District and will serve as co-pastors at Wenatchee First UMC and Hubert Rigor, from the Central Philippine Conference who will serve Connell UMC. Donald Ford, an Associate Member from Rocky Mountain Conference, will join us to serve Methow Valley UMC ½ time. We also have several local licensed pastors serving. Jen Stuart from Southwest Texas Annual Conference will serve Ellensburg UMC, our own Wendy Riddle will serve Cashmere UMC, and Sam Geyer will serve Kahlotus UMC. New licensed pastors, Eli and Sarahi Martinez will serve Toppenish: New Harvest in their new church start status. Susan Griggs will serve Wenatchee First Hispanic and Joshua Mikelson, Presbyterian elder, will serve West Highlands UMC as interim for the next year.

We also need to thank Rev. Johann Neethling for stepping into Connell UMC in March and serving as interim till June 30<sup>th</sup>. Gratitude also goes out to layperson Sue Magrath who stepped into the pulpit at Cashmere UMC and served the congregation until June 30<sup>th</sup>.

We said good-bye to District Lay Leader Wendie Hansen of Yakima Wesley UMC and welcomed incoming District Lay Leader Karen Fisher. Karen joins us from Wenatchee First UMC.

The District Office closed and physically moved to the Annual Conference offices in Des Moines. We said good-bye to Deb Schroeder who served us well for many years. Deb was able to procure a full-time position at the Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital. We welcomed Skylar Bihl as our new Administrator in November. Skylar will serve both the 7 Rivers District as well as Tacoma District.

### Items of Note...

- 7 Rivers hosted the annual Orders Retreat at Wenatchee First in September.
- 7 Rivers held two “Clergy Day Apart” events in November as we moved into the Advent season. Both were attended by various clergy and facilitated by Sue Magrath.
- Seventeen pastors met for a retreat weekend at Grunewald Guild outside of Leavenworth. The retreat was entitled Dreamscape: Awaken the Voice. Sue Magrath facilitated and the clergy found their voices.
- Fifteen laity met for a laity retreat held at Lazy F. The retreat was planned and facilitated by a wonderful group of laity. The retreat was entitled Dreamscape: Unleash the Voice of the Church. It was well received and laity are looking forward to another retreat next year.
- Toppenish: New Harvest UMC is now part of a new church start. Eli and Sarahi Martinez will be the new local licensed pastors.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Rev. Juli Reinholz*

## **2. Vancouver District Report**

Pastoral changes in the VSD this year included those departing the district: James Murphy (Ridgefield: Community to Covington: Cornerstone) and Golden Neal (Washougal to Honorable Location).

The District welcomes Meredith Gudger-Raines, an elder from the West Virginia Annual Conference who comes to serve Ridgefield: Community UMC. Meredith and husband Christopher are appointed across conference lines with Christopher serving in the Oregon Idaho Annual Conference. The cross-conference appointment with a clergy couple is the first of its kind in our Greater Northwest Episcopal area and is a sign of the cooperative ministries that we in the Vancouver area can be leaders and innovators in.

The district also welcomes Tom Tucker out of retirement to serve  $\frac{3}{4}$  time at Washougal UMC; Peggy Dement who comes to Kalama after serving at Tacoma: Fern Hill. Transfers within the district include Jim McGinnis who moves from Kalama to  $\frac{1}{4}$  time Vancouver First: Associate.

District Happenings...

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual District Softball League was held with 6 teams participating. After a grueling competition, Mill Plain was crowned the champion.
- District Clergy Welcome and Bar-b-que on September 2.
- The District Academy was held September 5 at Longview UMC. Our keynote speaker was Dr. Jack Levison, professor of Old Testament at Seattle Pacific University. Around 50 people were in attendance.
- District Clergy Christmas gathering on December 14.
- Vancouver District Leaders Training held on March 15. The north location was Chehalis UMC with around 80 clergy and laity in attendance, and the south location was Vancouver Heights UMC with around 40 clergy and laity in attendance.
- Annual District Youth Retreat held March 7- 9 at Ocean Shores.

Other happenings, we said good-bye to Willis Williams who retired as the Director of Ocean Park Camp and hello to new director Brandon Scheer and his family. The chair of the search committee was Betsy Hemphill at Orchard UMC. Thanks to her and the entire committee on their hard work.

Also Lay Speakers classes were held in October, January, March and May. Carolyn Fox is the District Coordinator of Lay Speaking. Graduates of the advanced class included Ken and Kathy Olson, from Ocean Park UMC.

Our churches continue to do the good work of ministry and strive towards vitality in 2013-2014. Our apportionment figures showed a 5% increase from 2012-2013 to come in at 94.51%. Great work to all our church as we are showing signs of vitality from all the hard work and faithfulness of our laity and clergy! Looking forward to a better 2014-15.

Respectfully submitted,

*Rev. David Nieda*