

Welcome Kevin Hershberger!

It's a pleasure to welcome Kevin Hershberger as our new Director of Worship Arts, beginning July 1! Kevin brings both a width and depth of experience to our mission of training new disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

A graduate of Oral Roberts University with a major in Music Education and an emphasis in vocal performance, Kevin comes to us following a fourteen year run as the choir director and staff musician at one of our United Methodist Churches in the area where he directed the adult choir, administered three children's choirs, directed the bell choir and collaborated with children's choir directors and youth staff on seasonal programs and drama ministries throughout the year.

Kevin is also active in the musical theatre scene in the area. Most recently, when Kevin Bogan, the Music Director at the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection, was selected to direct *Children of Eden* at Shawnee Mission Theatre in the Park, he chose Kevin Hershberger to direct the music and conduct for the production.

As with many musicians, Kevin also has a "day job," he is a certified wine specialist for Hy-Vee Wine and Spirits and serves as a supervisor to other employees.

Kevin will be at the piano and leading music this coming Sunday, July 7. We look forward to serving Christ with Kevin here at Blue Ridge Blvd. and 51st Street!

Blue Ridge Boulevard
United Methodist Church

The Home Envoy

July 2, 2013

Volume 58, Issue 7

Missionary Movement

Some time back there was a series of three movies on the theme "back to the future." In many ways that phrase, "back to the future," applies to churches today, including Blue Ridge Blvd. UMC. When we look back to the earliest years of our story we see a missionary movement so effective that over the first few centuries of its existence entire empires were faced with the question, "How do we respond to the Christian movement?" Many people believe that this is also the future for Christians.

In those days we were known for loving behavior so powerful that people outside the movement just couldn't understand it...until they experienced it. When people personally experienced the love of God through followers of Jesus it changed their lives for good, eternally. This was our missionary movement of the early centuries following Jesus.

Today we're charged in the Bible and by votes within our church to be missionaries. Our mission is about having people experience God's love through us, just as it was the mission of the early Jesus followers.

We know from recent research that if we walked fifteen minutes in any direction (about a mile) and we drew a circle around the church using that distance there would be about 9,000 people we could influence with God's love. We also understand that about seven out of every ten of those folks would not be active in a ministry. While many of them would be in their 40s or younger, there would also be a significant number of children and people in what were once called "the golden years." It's that group, about 6,300 people of all ages, who are our mission field.

That's a lot of people! It makes me wonder if I shouldn't go by "lead missionary" instead of "lead pastor." What comes to your mind when you think like someone in the early days of our movement?

Grace and peace,

Barry Freese, Lead Pastor

Sing and Play On!

Although often said, it is absolutely true that no words can express the overwhelming outpouring of love in the morning services and afternoon reception for Debbie and I on our retirement day, June 2. A huge thank you must first go to Dwight and Charlotte Robinson, Elaine & Gary Sidebottom and Dona Meyer for coordinating and implementing the reception and the publicity. I know that since January they spent hours and hours to make the day such a special one. Beyond those names, I am not going to personally mention anyone else because there are so many I know of (and probably many more I don't) that someone would surely be accidentally omitted: those who worked at the reception; those who helped me carry many boxes of accumulated files from home to church; those who helped me file and sort at church; those who gave your time and talents to practice for the morning services; the youth who traveled from all over to sing in the surprise choir--the list goes on. Rest assured that I know who you are, those who saw you know who you are, and most importantly, God knows who you are! All is gratefully appreciated. The most meaningful acts are the words, e-mails and cards of love and gratitude. Please know the feelings are most ardently reciprocated by all my family. A portion of the generous love offering I received will go to some charities dear to my heart. ***The Gloria Mengel Fund—for the 15-year old daughter of an Independence church musician and composer suffering the effects of brain cancer. ***The World Wildlife Fund—the leading organization in wildlife conservation. ***Arts in Prison—an Overland Park organization using the arts to inspire positive change in the incarcerated, including the East Hill Singers, a group which matches imprisoned singers with volunteers and uses choral singing to build self-esteem and hope for the future. As Jesus said in Matthew 18:20, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." How blessed my family has been to be gathered together at Blue Ridge UMC for the past 44 years with so great a cloud of witnesses, and Christ in the middle. Sing and play on!
- *Peace, love and blessings, Linda Mann*

A Day to Remember!

"Words cannot express my gratitude for the musicians and dancers who came together to make a joyful noise to the Lord on June 2nd. Many thanks also to those who planned, served, and attended the reception that afternoon. I am deeply honored by your generosity. It was truly a day I will always remember."

- *Debbie Keeton*

Golden Key Luncheon

Thursday, July 11, at noon
in the Dining Room

Guests are always welcome.

Pot Luck Luncheon
(bring your favorite dish!)

Entertainment: Rob McHenry, playing and singing
a variety of favorite songs.

Come join us, you'll be glad you did!

Everyone is Invited:

Visioning Workshop

Everyone is invited to a Visioning Workshop on Saturday, July 20, 2013, from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Visioning is the process of arriving at our understanding of God's preferred future for this ministry. What does God's preferred future look like? Who will be here? What will be happening? What will be the result? This is your chance to prayerfully help shape the future of God's work here.



This visioning workshop is a part of our Healthy Church Initiative process. It will be led by our church coach, Kay Kotan.

Summer Lunch Program

The summer lunch program started on July 1, and goes through August 14. I am very grateful for the response of the 18 people who have offered to pick up the lunches and deliver them to the area where the children can receive a lunch meal during the time when they do not get school lunches. They will get a variety of sandwiches, fruit, chips or pretzels and I believe a cookie or so, as well as a choice of chocolate or white milk.

The delivery team starts by picking up the pre-made lunches and milk in the provided cooler from the Raytown Christian Church at 6108 Blue Ridge Boulevard where they will also be given a sign to place by either their car or near the shelter house where they will distribute the lunches to the children. The children have been told to listen for the honking of the car horn, which is the signal that the lunches have arrived. The volunteers will return to the Christian Church where they leave the cooler and the sign for the next days volunteers.

We will be serving at Kenagy Park located at 79th and Raytown Road by the large shelter. This is a new site this year, and we are not sure how many children will be there, but the thought is that it will grow each year. Our target for starting is 15, but we hope for more if there is a greater need in the area. I do have a need for a few spots during that time as we need at least 2 adults to be there. It will be a good opportunity to feed hungry children, and to share a smile and have a little conversation with them also.

If you have questions, please call Sue Klotz at 373-2237.

Beautifying BRUMC

A Huge Thank You to Wes and Bonnie Houglund for sharing their time and talent in beautifying the walk way between the church and Hobbs hall.

There really are flowers over there!



Take a look and give them a pat on the back. There is still plenty left to do! If you have some time to spare and would like to spruce up the church yard,

contact the church office. Be a part of making us the showcase on Blue Ridge Boulevard!

Youth News

Anne Norton - Youth Director
816-353-1325
anorton@blueridgechurch.org

Mission Trips

At the publication date of the July Envoy our team of 9 adults and 8 youth will be well into our 2nd week in Guatemala. Your thoughts and prayers are cherished as we serve in Central America. Stay tuned for our team report in the August Home Envoy.

Two weeks after we return from Guatemala, 6 adult sponsors and 24 youth will be traveling to Colorado Springs, CO to work on the mountain doing fire restoration work in the forest. As some of you may know, Colorado Springs was in the news again recently with more wildfires. Please keep the people of Colorado Springs in your prayers as well as our team.

- In Service, Anne Norton, Youth Director

Say "Thank-You" to Our Visitors

We are currently forming a team to make sure our visitors feel welcomed at our church. We will go to their home on Sunday afternoon (but not go inside), thank them for visiting and drop off a small gift from the church. It will take only a few minutes for you to do this once a month. If you can help, please contact Joan Raymond at (816) 379-0473 or joan-raymond@att.net.

Women's Book Club

The Blue Ridge Women's Book Club will be meeting Tuesday, July 9, at 7:00 pm in the Library. The book they will be discussing is entitled "Death Comes to Pemberly" by P. D. James. The discussion, conversation and review will be led by Charlotte Robinson. All are welcome!

Break Time

Would you like a break from care giving? Bring your loved one to the church on Monday's from 9:30 am to 2:00 pm. Hot meal is served at noon. Try it out! For information call Dianne Morris at 353-3155.

Raytown Emergency Assistance Program

It will soon be time to get the area school children ready with the supplies they need to start the next year. REAP barrels will be at Blue Ridge to gather paper, pencils, pens, protractors, rulers, calculators and all the other things requested by the schools. We will have a list on the barrels and at the welcome center for you to use as a guide. There is a tax free weekend on August 3-5, 2013, that can help with purchases.

The barrels will be delivered on July 25 and will be here until August 11th to fill, so every child will get the materials they need. There is also an opportunity to help each child receive a new pair of shoes to start school by donating cash to REAP to purchase them. The amount needed is usually around \$40.00 and the new backpacks will be filled with shoes and school supplies in August.

Our barrels will be emptied at intervals during that time, so don't be discouraged with an empty barrel. We may have called to have supplies picked up so they can start sorting, and we can continue to fill them. If you are like me, you may be helping out your own family or even neighborhood friends, so pick up a little extra when you are shopping and add them to our barrels. All children feel better about having the new things to start school, and it helps them fit in with all the others as well. I well remember how proud I was with my new shoes at the beginning of school, so let's see if we can put some smiles on the faces of the school children again this year.

- Thank you, Sue Klotz

Editor's Choice - Words for Consideration

The Meeting Place

If prayer stands as the place where God and human beings meet, then I must learn about prayer. Most of my struggles in the Christian life circle around the same two themes: why God doesn't act the way we want God to, and why I don't act the way God wants me to. Prayer is the precise point where those themes converge.

- Philip Yancey

DE-FEET HUNGER - 5k WALK / RUN

Save the Date:
Saturday,
September 7th!



The Heartland Central District of the UMC is holding a Kansas City wide 5K "De-Feet Hunger" Fun Walk/Run to raise money for Harvesters. This will be followed by a day of inviting the whole community to pack lunches for those in need to support Harvesters. Each week 66,000 people in our area receive food from Harvesters. Nearly half of those served are children. All proceeds from this event will go to Harvesters. Volunteer to help with set-up, participate in the run, or help pack lunches. All ages welcomed!

Watch the Sunday Envoy
and video screen
for more information
or visit

www.hcdistrictumc.org

to volunteer
or register.



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Check out our website for more information -
www.blueridgechurch.org

Service Times:

Sunday mornings 9:00 and 10:30

Pastors:

Barry Freese, lead pastor
barry@blueridgechurch.org
direct: 816-835-2545

The article deadline for the next issue is July 25.

Mark your Calendars:

- Monday, July 1, 12:00 noon, Summer Lunch Delivery Program begins and runs thru August 14.
- Sunday, July 7, Pantry Sunday
- Tuesday, July 9, 7:00pm, Library, Women's Book Club
- Thursday, July 18, 10:00 am, Library, women's Bible Study and Issues Group
- Saturday, July 20, 9:00am - 1:00pm, Visioning Workshop
- Sunday, July 21-27, Youth and their sponsors leave for Mission Trip to Colorado Springs, Colorado
- Thursday, July 25, REAP barrels delivered to church for collection of school supplies.

Church Family News

We feel so blessed, and we want to thank all who offered prayers, made phone calls and visits during the time we were both in the hospital and in rehab. We are both getting stronger every day and we both hope to be in church very soon.

- Arlene and Karl Welch

Vacation Bible School Big Success

A big thank you to all of the donors and volunteers who helped make Vacation Bible School a success. I think the kids enjoyed their week full of fun and learning! I really appreciate the continuous overflowing support I receive for the Children's Ministry from the congregation. Thanks again for you do!

- Love, Samantha and the Children of BRUMC