



The BLUE Review

May 2015

LEADERSHIP CHANGES AT BLUE RIDGE CHURCH

PASTOR BARRY FREESE will begin a new appointment at McMurry UMC in the Claycomo area of Kansas City, MO, June 28th. His last Sunday at BRC will be June 21st. A potluck dinner will follow worship that day to recognize his work at BRC.

PASTOR JAN BOND will begin a part-time staff position at First UMC in Blue Springs, MO, on June 28th. (This is not an appointed position). Her last Sunday at BRC will be June 21st. A potluck dinner will follow worship that day to recognize her work at BRC.

THE DR. REV. TEX SAMPLE will begin as part-time pastor at BRC beginning June 28th. Tex is an elder in the UMC and was Professor Emeritus of Church and Society at The Saint Paul School of Theology for 32 years. He has published 12 books and is a freelance lecturer and speaker in North America and overseas. A reception to welcome him and his wife, Peggy, will be held after worship on June 28th. A message from Pastor Sample is included.



PROFILE IN LEADERSHIP

SANDY McCONNELL

United Methodist Women President &
Lay Member of the Annual Conference

The Lay member of annual conference shall be a professing member of the congregation for at least 2 years and an active participant for at least 4 years. This person shall report the actions of the annual conference to the congregation within 3 months of the close of the annual conference session. UM Book of Discipline, ¶ 251.2

Sandy, her husband, Roger, and their grandchildren started attending Blue Ridge Church (BRC) in 1998. Throughout those seventeen years she has participated in many areas of church life including serving as a Trustee, an Offering Counter, a member of the Staff Parish committee and attending the MO Annual United Methodist Church (UMC) Conference as the Lay Member from BRC twice, including this year. As a lay member to the annual conference, she will attend all meetings, worship services and activities of the conference and has voting privileges representing Blue Ridge Church. The annual conference is June 5-8 in Springfield, MO. Sandy will return to report to the congregation on the actions of the annual conference.

Sandy joined United Methodist Women (UMW) soon after she arrived and her life has been enriched by this relationship, learning a great deal about mission work. The first UMW began as a group of 8 women and members now total 800,000 worldwide. It is one of the largest women's organizations in the world. Sandy is currently President of the Blue Ridge Church UMW Unit, the secretary of the Heartland District UMW and secretary of the MO Conference UMW. If you would like to know more about UMW and how they serve God, contact Sandy at sandysown@hotmail.com

Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.

President John F. Kennedy

Join Us Sunday!

8:00 AM

Encouragement
Small Group (Adult)

8:45 AM

Good Samaritan (Adult)
Covenant Class (Adult)

9:00 AM

Builder's Class (Adult)

Youth Sunday School
Blue Room, Lower Level

Children's Sunday School
4 yrs.-5th Grade, Beatitudes

10:00 AM

Worship



Thank You, Good-Bye and God Bless

For the rest of my days I'll praise God and witness to the renewal of my spirit which God accomplished here at Blue Ridge Blvd. United Methodist Church. This will be an eternal memory of my time here as that time comes to an end on Sunday, June 21.

When Sara and I are united again I will share with her my gratitude for the grace and kindness provided by God's people through this ministry. I think she knows already, yet I'm confident she'll listen, regardless, because that's the kind of marriage we had.

'Safe to say I've come to understand a bit more how change includes loss. We grieve what we lose. Blue Ridge Church is, like so many other parts of our world, going through changes. I know some of you mourn what Blue Ridge Church used to be.

Yet not everything has changed. Most of all God is God. Still. Remember, as Christians, we believe that our future will be better than our past, or our present. I know you will believe me when I say that these words have a distinct quality as we all go through transitions.

Down in the deepest part of my spirit, I know that the future is God's. God is love. And death cannot destroy love. The evidence of this is that the spirit in Blue Ridge Church is changing, growing more Christ-like!

Many of you are experiencing personally the work of the Holy Spirit that encourages and teaches what we need to know. I see love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control growing among us! Guests have witnessed to me to me about these changes, as well. This is a huge win for the Lord!

I'm thankful that Bishop Schnase is appointing the Rev. Dr. Tex Sample as your next pastor. Tex is a very special servant of Christ.

May the love of Christ, the word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit be with you now and forever.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Barry



ASCENSION SUNDAY, MAY 17

Forty days after the resurrection, Jesus and His disciples went to Mount Olivet, near Jerusalem. There, Jesus promised His followers that they would soon receive the Holy Spirit, and He instructed them to remain in Jerusalem until the Spirit had come. Then Jesus blessed them, and as He gave the blessing, He began to ascend into heaven. The account of Jesus' ascension is found in Luke and Acts. It is plain from Scripture that Jesus' ascension was a literal, bodily return to heaven. He rose from the ground gradually and visibly, observed by many intent onlookers. As the disciples strained to catch a last glimpse of Jesus, a cloud hid Him from their view, and two angels appeared and promised Christ's return "in just the same way that you have watched Him go". The Ascension clearly marked the end of Christ's ministry on earth after completing all the Father had designed for Him to accomplish. Jesus could once again enjoy His heavenly glory as he prepared a place for His followers. Jesus' ascension marks the beginning of the time in which the Church actively communicates the message of Jesus to bring many to faith who will live with Christ for eternity in the place He has prepared for us. (www.compellingtruth.org)



Greetings from Pastor Tex Sample

Dear members and friends of the Blue Ridge United Methodist Church,

I am delighted to be appointed to serve as your new pastor. I recently visited the church building, and was impressed by how well you have taken care of it. It is an excellent facility from which to launch the mission and ministry of the church.

I met recently with a few of you when District Superintendent Kendall Waller introduced me at a meeting with your board. I look forward very much to meeting the rest of you and getting to know you.

If you are willing I would like to set up some times at church in which any of you who would like can come for a visit and get acquainted. I particularly like to do one-on-ones to learn more about each person.

As some of you know, I taught at Saint Paul School of Theology for many years. During that time I was always active in a local church. I have served on boards and committees and taught Sunday School. While living in Phoenix, Arizona, for thirteen years, I was very active in the Asbury AMC and served as Chair of the Stewardship Committee for six of those years. So I also have some background in budgeting and stewardship campaigns in the local church.

Over the course of my career I studied dozens of local churches to help them assess their situation and direction for mission. Out of this background I will encourage us to take a look at our community and its possibilities for new avenues of outreach and ministry.

I hear a great deal about the commitment of those of you who are there. This excites me and motivates me to work with you in the building up of the congregation and its mission.

I am also interested in the church meeting my wife, Peggy. She sang professionally in the church for twenty years, was active in community theater for more than a decade, and is now an artist who work in water media. She is the love of my life.

May God bless our work together.

Grace and Peace,

Tex Sample



DAY OF PENTECOST, MAY 24

Pentecost is considered the birth of the church. In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit came upon over 100 people in the upper room who were gathered together on the Day of Pentecost, a Jewish holy day that takes place 50 days after Passover. This means the gathering was nine days after the Ascension of Jesus. Peter preached a message of salvation in the resurrected Jesus to people visiting from 15 people groups. The people heard the disciples and understood them in their own language. The emphasis on Pentecost Sunday is a focus on the Holy Spirit and His role in the lives of people today. In addition, this is often a time of emphasis on the fruit of the Spirit found in Galatians 5:22-23. Also associated with Pentecost is a celebration of the spiritual gifts given to believers in Christ by the Holy Spirit's power. The Bible discusses several spiritual gifts in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4. Every believer has at least one gift. Further, the Holy Spirit's coming at Pentecost marked the beginning of the expansion of Christianity, beginning at Jerusalem and spreading to the ends of the earth. (www.compellingtruth.org)



Twelve of us gathered for the fourth council meeting of 2015. So many things come up in the spring – the grass, the flowers, the weeds, annual church conference (not that it can be compared to weeds). This busy season opens our eyes to the new life and changes coming into our human and spiritual worlds. The Council considered the scripture in 2 Cor. 3:18 that relates our transformation into the Lord's image which comes from the Spirit and other scripture that cautions us to not deceive ourselves in our worldly wisdom but to become "fools" so that we may become wise. We find it so easy to talk about worldly things and so difficult to talk about our souls and discipleship. The Council took time to explore the hindrances and what we could do to improve that within our group.

Here are some highlights of the business of the Council:

In our Conference Update, we discussed the pastoral changes affecting Blue Ridge that will be announced and that Pastor-Parish relations would be handling the logistics of announcements and receptions. On a positive note, we shared statistics from "Vital Statistics", a Methodist data collection service, about the health of Blue Ridge as far as attendance is concerned. Our average attendance at the end of 2014 was 108 and has continued at that level through the first months of 2015.

In Mission-focused activities, our Kids on a Mission continue to venture into the mission field by hosting a "dog party" at a nearby dog park and balloon fun for kids at nearby Colman-Livengood Park in Raytown. For each event the emphasis simply presented us as a group from Blue Ridge Church with contact information for the

church. Also discussed during this time were the many ways the women of Blue Ridge have participated in UMW circles and service events for the community such as REAP, Spofford, Prayer Shawl and Della Lamb.

In the area of Policies, we labor to consider the balance between confidentiality and the desire to include people in our prayers. We also continue to consider the ways we distribute church information to friends, members and prospective members. Much of today's communication is electronic, but there are still folks that appreciate getting a card or a letter in the mail.

Trustees reported continued work on roof repair/ replacement (still no simple solution), backflow preventer maintenance (who knew we had them?), Google internet service (part of a bigger upgrade issue), and the Youth House sale (proceeding via church conference). The issue of who contracts for lawn mowing wasn't a Council issue, but it caused a flurry of activity among Trustees and staff when the grass started waving in the wind.

Endowments had no changes to report. Funds are available for projects. Groups simply need to provide a letter requesting funds and their proposed use for them.

Pastor/Parish has had and will have a busy April-May-June with pastoral appointment and receptions to handle. By this publication, we will have announced Pastor Barry's next appointment to McMurray United Methodist and Tex Sample as the next pastor for Blue Ridge. Pastor Barry's last Sunday is June 21 and Rev. Sample will begin June 28.

Generosity reviewed the Giving and Expenses for March. In total, we took in \$2,000 more in contributions than planned and we also spent less than planned. We continued to contribute towards Apportionments at 12% of income received and contributed \$1,048 for One Great Hour of Sharing. The Council authorized Generosity to contribute \$25-50 to Project Graduation for Raytown High since this was outside our Spending Plan.

Our Next meeting will be May 12 at 6:30 p.m.

- Brad Teachman, Council Chairperson



The Church Conference held on Monday, May 11, 2015, approved the sale of the property at 12105 E. 50th Terr. Closing will proceed with the property being purchased as is by M & V Holdings, LLC for \$53,000.00. The house was purchased in the 1970's and the previous owner allowed to reside in the home. After the death of Mrs. Stakebake, the house became the residence for the church custodian/caretakers. In 2007 it became the Youth House.

A MIGHTY OAK TRANSFORMED



The United Methodist Women recently took a short road trip to see the “tree-stump creation” of Pastor Paul Bond. Paul has been a UMC pastor for 47 years but has many other talents, as well. He has created a statue of Jesus out of a 7 ft. tree stump in the front yard of the home that he shares with his wife, Pastor Jan Bond, a UMC pastor of 34 years, as well. We were fortunate to not only view the statue, but were able to talk with the creator and see some of his other work.

The statue is hard to miss when you get close to the house. At one time there was a beautiful, tall oak tree in the yard, but as it goes with time, it had to be taken down as it was diseased. Paul’s only request of the folks who removed the tree was that they leave a 7 foot stump. He had a vision of creating a life-size wood carving of Jesus that would inspire people as they drove on the very busy street in front of the house. He began work soon after the tree was taken down in 2013. On Easter Sunday this year, he completed the project with the final

word of the scripture at the base of the statue, *“Come to me all who are weary and heaven laden and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)*

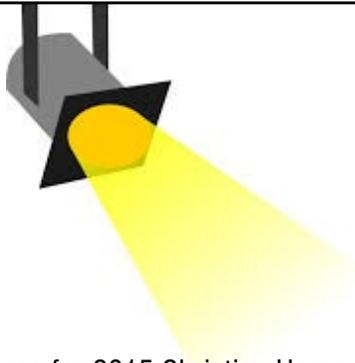
Many passersby seem to find that it helps to stop and sit for a while and perhaps they leave with a lighter burden, a bit of hope they needed or comfort they were seeking. A little while back Paul found that someone had left a small coin offering of twenty-seven cents on the base of the stump that Jesus stands on. Some people stop to talk, if they see someone outside, many leave a note and some knock on the door to see if they can talk with the creator. Many of the notes indicate that someone was touched by what they saw and even thank Paul for helping them in a difficult time, or even finding or renewing their journey with Christ. Some cars stay at the curb for a while, just looking at it and perhaps praying or just admiring the work. I can imagine in a quiet neighborhood, a silence and sense of peace and comfort there for a weary soul.

We were invited in to see his woodworking tools and more of his creations. Some of the tools were so worn they had to be replaced. He has kept a few of the broken pieces to show people like us. There were several of his creations that he let us hold to view, but the one that touched my heart the most was a beautifully finished walnut piece of his first child’s hand (Justin) holding onto Paul’s hand. There were many pieces that were not as polished, but all well done with a “rustic” but beautiful feel to them. I wondered if he ever ran out of wood, but Jan was quick to say that he has plenty of wood to work with, just needs to find the time to start another project. They shared some treats with us, and then we all went out to share a meal to finish out our time together. All in all, a wonderful time and a chance to see something that was beautifully made by a simple man with a vision and some tools. *By Sue Klotz*



TRINITY SUNDAY, MAY 31

Trinity Sunday is one of the few celebrations of the Christian Year that commemorates a reality and doctrine rather than an event or person. On Trinity Sunday we remember and honor the eternal God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Trinity Sunday is celebrated the Sunday after Pentecost, and lasts only one day, which is symbolic of the unity of the Trinity. The Trinity is one of the most fascinating - and controversial - Christian dogmas (beliefs). The Trinity is a mystery. By mystery we do not mean a riddle, but rather the Trinity is a reality above our human comprehension that we may begin to grasp, but ultimately must know through worship, symbol, and faith. Therefore we believe that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are somehow distinct from one another (not divided though), yet completely united in will and essence. For example, colors can stand alone, but they can also be blended to create a new color. (www.churchyear.net)



SPOTLIGHT ON: CHRISTIAN HOME MONTH

Families: Many Forms, Common Faith! Called to Justice

The theme for 2015 Christian Home Month is Families: Called to Justice. In the book of Amos we read, "...let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream." (Amos 5:24, NRSV) Those words are both thrilling and terrifying. What is the justice we seek? How do we experience God's justice? What do we see in the world around us that calls for God's justice? And as families, what does it mean to be called to justice? For Christians, probably the simplest way to look at God's justice is God's desire for all to be treated as God would treat them.

Think for a minute of what you know about the injustices in our world today. Here are some of the questions related to justice:

- Where is justice at school when children who are different in some way are bullied by others?
- Where is justice for those who have been abused and cannot face their abusers?
- Where is justice when there are those who work hard each day and do not have enough to support their family?
- Where is justice when older adults who can no longer care for themselves suffer at the hands of caregivers?
- Where is justice when those seeking freedom in a new land are ignored or vilified?
- Where is justice when loved ones are randomly shot and killed in street violence?

These questions call upon all of us who claim the name Christian to examine our ways of living, participate in the study of scripture, and to practice justice in our homes, our churches, our schools, our workplaces, and our

communities. We believe you can begin by observing Christian Home Month, using the suggestions here to strengthen your home as a place for living justly, and designating a day of prayer to pray that all families might be places of love, peace, justice, and hope.

By Janice Shaw Crouse

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL SUGGESTIONS

Talk together in the family about what is justice.

Sort through clothing and belongings. Give these items to clothing shelters.

Take the word JUSTICE and create an acrostic—using each letter of the word, list words or phrases that become a prayer.

Plan a family day for helping others.

Set aside a family game night at least once a month.

Borrow enough hymnals from your church so that each family member has one. Find songs about justice. Sing those you know.

Establish a *Family Covenant for Living Justly* with the basis of the covenant being the promise of love, forgiveness, acceptance, truthfulness, growth and witness. This leads to living justly in the family.



United
Methodist
Women

Evening Circle	First Monday
Unit Meeting	Second Wednesday
Priscilla Circle	Third Wednesday
Ruth Circle	Third Thursday
Mission Team	Fourth Wednesday
Connecting Hands	Fourth Wednesday

For more information, please contact:
Sandy McConnell at 816.224.4603 or
sandysown@hotmail.com

ONGOING EVENTS

REAP Pantry 1st Sunday
Prayer Shawl Ministry, Every Tuesday, 10 am
Women's Bible Study, 1st & 3rd Thursday, 10 am
Hartman Breakfast, 1st Thursday at Ginger's, 8 am
Council, 2nd Tuesday, 6:30 pm
Book Club, 2nd Tuesday, 7 pm
Golden Key, 2nd Thursday at Noon
Grief Care, 3rd Wednesday at 10 am

Special Days and Holidays

May 17: Ascension Sunday
May 24: Day of Pentecost
May 25: Memorial Day
May 31: Trinity Sunday
June 5-8: MO Annual Conference
June 21: Barry and Jan's last Sunday
Potluck dinner after worship
June 28: Pastor Sample's first Sunday
Reception after worship

Please join us for a
Retirement Celebration

Honoring Rev. Dr. Steve Cox

Celebrating 41 years serving the United Methodist Church

Saturday, May 30th from 3:30 – 5:00 pm

Worship Service starts at 4:00 pm and Reception Immediately Proceeding

First United Methodist Church of Blue Springs
301 SW Woods Chapel, Blue Springs, MO 64015

RSVP to Northwest District Office at
megan@northwestdistrictumc.org
(816) 429-6638



Going Green? Exactly what does that mean? We can all find out on June 1st what the "power of one" means. Every action has consequences on other humans and on the earth. Become aware of the outcome of your actions, reduce your impact on others, and walk lightly on the earth. Consider these practices to be a spiritual discipline. More information to come.



BRC BOOK CLUB **2nd Tuesday of Each Month**

The books for June and July are listed below along with the person leading the discussion. Everyone is welcome. For more info, contact Charlotte Robinson at crobin1935@aol.com or 816.353.4946.

June 9: *The Real Jane Austin* by Paula Byrne
Led by Jane Wilkes

July 14: *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd
Led by Lisa Schwarzkopf



Blue Ridge Boulevard
United Methodist Church
5055 Blue Ridge Boulevard
Kansas City, MO 64133



Sunday, June 21st

Farewell Potluck Lunch for
Pastor Barry and Pastor Jan
Following Worship
Basket for cards will be available for each.

Blue Ridge Blvd. United Methodist Church
5055 Blue Ridge Blvd., Kansas City, MO 64133
www.BlueRidgeChurch.org
Tuesday - Thursday 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

Pastor Barry Freese

barry@blueridgechurch.org
Direct: 816-835-2545

Pastor Jan Bond

j007@comcast.net,
Direct: 417-229-1930

Kevin Hershberger, Director of Worship Arts
KevinHershberger@blueridgechurch.org

Sarah Jarvis, Financial Secretary
sjarvis@blueridgechurch.org

Peggy Simpson, Church Secretary
Church Office: 816-353-1435
Church Fax: 816-353-8770
churchadmin@blueridgechurch.org



Sunday, June 28th

Reception for
Pastor Tex Sample
and wife, Peggy
Following Worship