



# SOUTHEAST CIRCUIT RIDER edition

Southeast District, 101 N. Kingshighway, Suite 200, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701  
 [573] 334-8723 Fax: [573] 334-3807 E-mail: southeast@ecunet.org  
 Website: <http://www.sedistrictumc.org>

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## Living in the “Exceptions”

I am generally pleased when I hear good theology. Theology is being referred to as how we think about God. I hear good theology when I visit churches and listen to our pastors preach. Sometimes I hear good theology in surprising places.

Recently I heard a good piece of “God thinking” from a sports talk show host. I have absolutely no idea if this fellow is a spiritual person or not. However, he did come up with something that is probably more accurate than what many of us who faithfully attend church can do.

He was talking about an athlete who had been injured, and the doctor would not clear him to play in the game. The player stated he had been “spiritually healed.” The host pointed out the great stories we often hear. There may be the young person who was told they would never walk again who became an all star running back. But for every miraculous example there must be 17,000 that don’t walk. (I am sure he just made up the number.) While listening to this conversation it struck me that people do tend to attempt to make the exceptions the norm.

I personally believe in God’s power to heal and have witnessed a couple of things that could only be attributed to God’s divine intervention. I have seen people experience dramatic conversions to faith in Jesus Christ. I’ve talked to people who knew they heard God speak to them in an audible voice. I believe in God’s miraculous intervention. I rejoice when I see churches experiencing eye-popping growth in a very short time. People point to financial miracles. The list goes on.

Let me make two points in light of all this. First, there are some people who feel condemned when they are not numbered

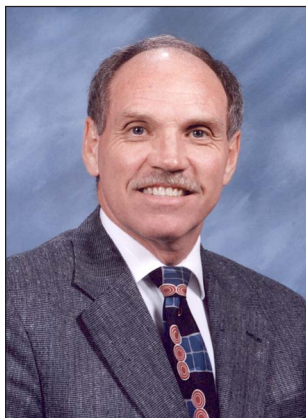
among the exceptions. Secondly, God is not only in the midst of the miraculous, but also in the mundane, every day experiences of life.

Sometimes we rejoice when God heals, but can we not recognize the power and presence of God when many suffer? Some experience dramatic conversions while others (many) discover a gradual awakening of God saving grace. (Read Luke 24 and the Emmaus story.) I have never personally experienced God speaking to me in an audible voice, but I guarantee you God often speaks in a “still, small voice.” Sometimes God intervenes, always God sustains. Faithful ministry joins dynamic growth. The life of faith moves forward.

I am all for exceptions. Find yourself in the middle of one, and it will keep you coming back for more. But I do not despair when God works in my life through, what many consider, less than exceptional ways. It is a joyful thing to acknowledge and recognize the living Lord Jesus Christ being in our relationships with God and others on a regular, daily basis.

When we continue to learn to recognize the Lord day by day in any and all the seemingly small events of the life, we are being poised for His Spirit’s empowering presence. Don’t fret the “big” stuff (the exceptions). Enjoy, celebrate, and rejoice in the on-going relationship you have with Jesus Christ.

Steve  
*Dr. Steve Breon is District Superintendent, Southeast District, Missouri Conference*



## Church collection to benefit service personnel

Grace United Methodist Church has collected more than \$2,000 for a project that will provide long-distance calling cards for military serving overseas. The project began with the Copeland Circle, a UMW group of 17 ladies at Grace UMC. The first \$300 raised for this effort was collected before they even stood up from the table! The Circle challenged the congregation to provide as much as \$1,500 toward the effort. Jerry

Statler first told the Copeland members about the calling cards after he learned of it from his son, a military chaplain. He said we could get the cards at discounted rates, and then we found out through the church that we could get the cards for \$5. The church has collected \$2,129 in all for its project, and the cards will be distributed through a chaplain serving in Fallujah, Iraq, beginning with the lowest ranking soldiers and moving up.

## Lenten Services Scheduled Cape Girardeau Cluster Services

Services begin each Sunday evening at 7:00 PM at the host church, with refreshments following the service.

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>HOST CHURCH</u>                                                                                      | <u>GUEST PREACHER</u> |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| February 13 | Zion UMC, Gordonville<br>Special Music: Missy Montgomery (Chaffee UMC)                                  | Rev. Marty Blakey     |
| February 20 | Hobbs Chapel, Cape Girardeau<br>Special Music: Benton/Oran Youth Choir                                  | Rev. Jack Martin      |
| February 27 | Marble Hill UMC<br>Special Music: Marble Hill Church Choir                                              | Dr. Clayton Smith     |
| March 6     | Sedgewickville UMC<br>Special Music: Wesley House Praise Team                                           | Rev. Mike Eighmy      |
| March 13    | Maple UMC<br>Special Music: Puppets and Choir from Hobbs Chapel UMC                                     | Rev. Susan Hoyle      |
| March 20    | Centenary UMC, Cape Girardeau<br>Special Music: New McKendree Youth Band with the Centenary Summit Band | Dr. Steve Breon       |

## Kennett Cluster Services

Services begin each Sunday evening at 4:00 PM at the host church.

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>HOST CHURCH</u>                | <u>GUEST PREACHER</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| February 13 | First UMC, Kennett                | Rev. Mike Hargraves   |
| February 20 | First UMC, Hayti                  | Rev. Billy Fox        |
| February 27 | First UMC, Senath                 | Dr. Steve Breon       |
| March 6     | Cooter UMC                        | Rev. Barron Willer    |
| March 13    | Faith UMC, Kennett                | Rev. Sue Cabbage      |
| March 20    | Eastwood Memorial, Caruthersville | Rev. Paul Lanning     |

## Poplar Bluff Cluster Service

Service begins at 7:00 PM

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>HOST CHURCH</u>    | <u>GUEST PREACHER</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| March 13    | Grace UMC, Greenville | Dr. Steve Breon       |

Annual Southeast District Youth Lock-In at the Southeast Rec Center

**Explosion**

**February 18-19**

**10:30 PM to 5 AM**

Cost is \$10 per youth (All 6th thru 12 graders invited to attend!)

Each youth must bring:

- 6th - 8th graders                      2 liter bottle of soda
- 9th & 10th graders                      Sweets
- 11 & 12th graders                      Snacks

Youth must be accompanied by 1 adult for every 6 youth.

All adults MUST be Safe Sanctuary certified, or attend training offered during the Explosion.

# of youth, and names of adults attending are due to Alecia Fischer, District Youth Coordinator by Noon on February 14.

For registration form, Health form, Climbing Wall participation agreement, and more information, go to [www.sedistrictumc.org/Youth](http://www.sedistrictumc.org/Youth) or call the Southeast District office, 573-334-8723.

## Hispanic Ministries Update

We started the New Year (2005) with many blessings coming from God to those in the Jesus es el Camino United Methodist Church.

The Christmas service was very nice, and included a play through which the brothers shared the true meaning of Christmas: to give the best gift to Jesus, the offering of one's whole heart and whole life as a present to God.

Then on Christmas Day, December 25, we had the "Worship Service of Lights." We remembered the origin of the service, and a call to let the light of Christ shine through us as Christians in the middle of, not only our Hispanic community, but in the middle of other cultures as well. During the service, the sight of the church leaders showing the lit candles was very interesting.

On January 1, we had a Covenant Service. More than 70 men, women, and children made a covenant with God. In the center of the sanctuary, a table was adorned with objects and colors from our Hispanic countries. We sang happily and celebrated Holy Communion, sealing this covenant with the bread and the wine, as emblems of the Body and Blood

of Jesus Christ, in a new pact to work together for God's Kingdom in the year of 2005.

We are also pleased that in the month of January, the services have reached 99 people in attendance! We are also beginning the second cycle of the School of Ministries, with the attendance of 17 people that are willing to work for the Lord as leaders in this church's ministries. Our vision for this coming 2005-2006 is to "cast the nets" (as in John 21:6). We cast the nets and now that we have leaders by my side, we will fish abundantly (Luke 5:4).

We would like to thank the churches, people, and district pastors for the donations from which we were able to bring joy to thirty-five families with a gift on Christmas. We continue to encourage you to support this ministry with your offerings and donations that will help our church to develop and grow.

You are continually in our prayers, that God may bless you.

Rev. Jose L. Zamora  
and the members of Jesus es el Camino

## La Croix's 2005 Concert Series is proud to present Nicole C. Mullen

Nicole is like Aretha Franklin and Tracy Chapman rolled into one. Her talent and energy will amaze you! A live show with Nicole is just that: LIVE! One minute her dancers are throwing it down and getting the crowd involved, and the next minute they are moved to tears with intimate songs like the Dove award winning "On My Knees" and powerful ballads such as "Redeemer" and "When I Call on Jesus." Her most recent release entitled *Everyday People* has brought Nicole even deeper into superstar talent territory. Nicole C. Mullen will move you – guaranteed. This is a concert event you do not want to miss!

Tickets are on sale now and at \$17 each. (Seating is general admission.) Call La Croix Church for details at 573-339-0203 or visit our website at [www.lacroixchurch.org](http://www.lacroixchurch.org).

February 17, 7:00 PM



## Volunteers In Mission Team Leader Training Workshop Saturday, March 12, 2005 Centenary UMC in Cape Girardeau

8:30 - Registration  
9 AM to 4 PM - Workshop  
Cost: \$25

This VIM team leader workshop will train individuals in the responsibilities of being a VIM Team Leader, finding a project, recruiting, fund-raising, building a budget, internet and other VIM resources, and telling the story.

- Fee Includes VIM Team Leader Manual and materials.
- Lunch will be provided

Registration Deadline: March 7, 2005

## Hi-Tech Baptism, All in the Family

On Sunday, January 30, 2005, Rev. Jerry Willer (grandfather) and Rev. Barron Willer (uncle) officiated at the baptism of Joshua Cole Juenger. Joshua's parents and siblings are members of the Faith UMC in House Springs. Rebecca is the pianist at Faith UMC. The pastor of Faith UMC is the Rev. Paula Eschenbrenner who is also the mother of Kim, Rev. Barron Willer's wife.

When Rebecca asked her dad if he would baptize Joshua, Jerry said yes, he would, if Faith UMC could be involved. Arrangements

Send registration and fee payable to OCM-VIM to:

Barbara Stone  
Office of Creative Ministries  
3009 David Drive  
Columbia, MO 65202

A total of 2 Continuing Education Units (CEU's) are offered by St. Paul School of Theology for the combination of Volunteer in Mission Team Leader workshop participation AND for leading a VIM team.



## Lay Speaker Training scheduled for February 26, 2005 at Grace UMC in Cape Girardeau

Training Schedule:

|                 |                                                     |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 8:30 AM         | Registration                                        |
| 9:00 AM         | Opening Worship                                     |
| 9:35 - Noon     | Training Session I & II<br>Basic & Advanced courses |
| Noon            | Lunch                                               |
| 12:45 - 5:00 PM | Training Session 3 - 5                              |

### Basic Training (Cost \$25)

Includes:

- Called By God* - led by Linda Lanning
- Called to Witness and Teach* - led by Rev. Kent Wilfong
- Called to Lead Worship* - led by Rev. Susan Marner-Sides
- Called to Leadership & Service* - led by Adelaide Parsons
- Called to Grow in Faith* - led by Rev. Mike Eighmy

### Advanced Training (Cost \$35)

- Lay Speakers Preach* - led by Rev. Robert Bullock
- or
- Lay Speakers Grow Spiritually Through Daily Discipline* - led by Rev. Peggy Eschelmann



Registration forms available on  
the Southeast District website:  
[www.sedistrictumc.org](http://www.sedistrictumc.org)

## Organists needed

Part-time organist position available for church worship services and choir accompaniment. If interested, please send resume to: Grace United Methodist Church, 521 Caruthers, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

The Wesley United Methodist Church in Fruitland is looking for a musician to play either piano or organ for one weekly Sunday morning worship services. This is a part-time, paid position. If interested, please contact Rev. Kevin Cawley at 573-243-5948

## Cookbooks for sale

Malden UMC has created a beautiful cookbook in honor of the 135th birthday of United Methodist Women. There are 350 wonderful recipes and the cover is a beautiful oil painting by Dottie Phelps, president of the Malden UMW. Price of the book is \$20 + shipping.

To purchase one of these cookbooks, contact Malden UMC by calling 573-276-4642, or email:  
[maldenum@newwavecomm.net](mailto:maldenum@newwavecomm.net).



Rev. Jerry Willer, his daughter Rebecca, grandson Joshua and son-in-law Erin Juenger, and his son Rev. Barron Willer.

