

## CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION

The development of new congregations and the revitalization of existing churches is always a part of the mission of Holston Conference.

In our efforts to revitalize churches there are three components: salary support for pastors, salary support for staff to help churches grow, and providing resources through consulting, Natural Church Development, MissionInsite, and other tools assist local congregations to not only define their mission field but discover ways to be in ministry in their community.

The following churches have been awarded grants by the committee this year: First, Christ, Second, Lennon-Senney—Tennessee Valley District; St. John, Seymour, Green Meadow—Smoky Mountain District; Community—Appalachian District; Panther Springs, First-Newport—Mountain View District; First-Whitwell, St. Mark—Scenic South District; Bluff City, First-Johnson City—Three Rivers District. These churches that received grants have unique settings, which have wonderful opportunities to advance the Kingdom using all of the criteria mentioned above.

Over the past two years our Annual Conference has been engaged in developing a mission and ministry center at The Connexion in Sevierville, Tennessee led by the Reverend Jason Roe, Angela Lee, and the Reverend Bruce Adams. There will be a presentation at the pre-conference briefings in each district and at the meeting of the Annual Conference at Lake Junaluska on June 10-13. It is our prayer that when you arrive at Annual Conference you will have the information you need to make an informed decision.

The most significant ministry opportunity at The Connexion to date is the El Ministerio del Espiritu Santo led by the Reverend Susana Lopez. This growing congregation will have a permanent home at The Connexion when the pavilion is turned into a worship/ministry center. The congregation has the funds to do this work.

The mission component that is underway at The Connexion is the rebuilding of the houses lost in the November 2016 wildfires. Led by Holston Conference and Appalachia Service Project this mission is headquartered at The Connexion. The larger warehouse building is the depot for supplies needed for this mission effort.

The Connexion includes: 49.2 acres at 1250 Middle Creek Road, Sevierville, TN; main building 41,998 square feet with a 700 seat auditorium; 2 warehouses: 4k sq. ft. and 2k sq. ft.; sound and media equipment, furniture, and fixtures.

On June 30, 2018 the remaining purchase price will be \$5,000,000. The terms with Citizens National Bank of Sevierville are as follows: \$1M down and \$4M financed at 5% interest amortized over 30 years with the note due in 10 years.

The operation costs for The Connexion in 2017 were \$167,399. The mortgage payment to service the loan of \$4M will be \$257,671 for an annual expense of \$425,070. How do we fund it?

The Builders Club has been receiving funds for new church projects for nearly 40 years. The Builders Club has on deposit at the Holston Conference Foundation over \$4.9M. The million dollars for the down payment will be taken from these funds that can only be used for new projects. For the first 2 years we will use interest on the Builders Club endowment of approximately \$3M that will generate \$210,000, and the remaining amount of \$215,070 will be raised through renting the auditorium as a venue to groups other than Holston Conference groups.

A conservative estimate of what can be generated during the first year is 30 weeks at \$8,000 a week totaling \$240,000, which would total \$450,000 a year. As we grow this ministry it will be able to fund itself, but in the meantime we have the resources to establish The Connexion as a mission/ministry center of the Holston Conference.

We ask that you prayerfully consider this opportunity for Holston Conference. The Connexion is within 32 miles of the geographic center of our conference. It will serve Sevier County, it will serve the people of Holston Conference, it will serve the Southeast Region, and it will impact the world!

Respectfully submitted,

~ *The Committee on Congregational Development and Revitalization*

~ *Becky Hall, Chairperson*

~ *Rusty Taylor, Director*