

## Digest?

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# The Call

## Digest

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Bishop Taylor calls Holston Conference churches to pray for peace in South Sudan.

January 15, 2014

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## Church building sold to homeless agency

**KNOXVILLE, Tenn.** – One year after a Knoxville congregation voted to close their church, the building and property were sold to an interfaith organization that helps homeless families.

Family Promise of Knoxville closed on the purchase of the former West View United Methodist Church and received the key to the building from the Knoxville District of Holston Conference on Dec. 12.

“It turned out to be a win-win for both groups,” said the Rev. Nathan Malone, Knoxville District superintendent. “Family Promise is getting a building and property that increases their space many times over, and the Knoxville District of the United Methodist Church is receiving funds with which new ministries can begin.”

Located about five miles west of downtown Knoxville on Middlebrook Pike, the former West View United Methodist Church will serve as a day center for homeless families.

Through a network of 38 Knoxville churches, Family Promise helps families with children stay together until they can find a new home. Churches take turns hosting families overnight for week-long stays, according to Mary Thomson LeMense, executive director.

During daytime hours, the families return to the Family Promise headquarters, where staff members assist them in finding employment and a place to live, while school-age children attend regular classes.

“The services provided by Family Promise are very much in line with the ministry of the United Methodist Church,” Malone said.

Family Promise of Knoxville is one of more than 170 Family Promise affiliates in 41 states. The Knoxville day center was previously housed in the 1,100-square-foot Harley House owned by the Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Bearden.

At 3,000 square feet, the new day center is almost three times larger, allowing Family Promise to double the number of families it serves at one time from four to eight, LeMense said. The new day center’s name is West View Sanctuary.

“We feel the name honors the history of the neighborhood and the former use of the space as a church,” LeMense told the Knoxville News Sentinel. “It will serve as a sanctuary for our families.”

“We continue to have a presence for this community,



The Rev. Nathan Malone (left) presents the key to the former West View Church to Mary LeMense of Family Promise.

with churches within three miles on either side of this location along Middlebrook Pike,” Malone said.

The Knoxville District received \$150,000 for the sale of the building property, Malone said, which will be used for “revitalizing ministry in the inner city.”

Throughout 2013, Family Promise of Knoxville provided temporary shelter and meals to 22 families, including 36 children. Since the Knoxville program started in 2005, Family Promise has helped a total 165 families, according to the organization’s website.

United Methodist congregations participating in the Knoxville network include Bearden, Ebenezer, First Farragut, Fountain City, Trinity, Church Street, Grigsby Chapel, First Knoxville, Middlebrook Pike, and Rutherford Memorial.

Holston congregations also support Family Promise networks in Chattanooga, Maryville-Alcoa, Kingsport, Johnson City, and Bristol. ■

# Bishop Taylor calls churches to pray for peace in South Sudan

January 8, 2014

*Dear Members of the Holston United Methodist family,*

You are dearly loved by God and called to be God's people. Grace to you and peace from God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am writing to ask you as the covenant community of faith to join together and pray for our brothers and sisters in South Sudan. Right now, the situation in South Sudan is critical. Although peace negotiations are being attempted, the fighting in parts of the country continues. Too many have been killed. Precious, innocent people have been displaced from their homes and are fleeing to safety.

The Holston Conference has been in ministry with the people of South Sudan since 2006. During this time, God has worked mightily, and we have witnessed numerous miracles as so many lives have been touched and transformed.

Your generosity has provided clean water, built churches, supported education, assisted with healthcare, provided

Grace Home for 26 vulnerable children, and so much more. Through your gifts and presence, you have been a source of strength, encouragement and hope.

Now the peace and progress of the last several years is threatened. As darkness appears to be progressing, it is critical that the light of Jesus Christ continues to shine brightly through the witness of the Church.

In view of this new reality and in consultation with the General Board of Global Ministries, Fred and Libby Dearing, and the South Sudan Advisory Team, I ask the people of the Holston Conference to join me in a time of fervent and deliberate prayer. Beginning right now, please hold our brothers and sisters of South Sudan in your heart and pray for stability, unity and peace.

As we pray, I am confident that God who began this good work through you will be faithful to complete it.

*Grace and peace,*  
**Dindy Taylor**  
**Resident Bishop**

## HOLSTON CALENDAR

**Resurrection/ Jan. 17-19, 24-26:** About 11,000 youth and counselors are expected to attend Holston's annual winter spiritual weekend at Gatlinburg Convention Center in Gatlinburg, Tenn. For weekend coverage, visit [Facebook.Holston.org](http://Facebook.Holston.org).

**Human Relations Sunday/ Jan. 19:** One of six Special Sundays in the United Methodist Church, offerings taken on Human Relations Day strengthen social justice and work with at-risk youth in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Give by writing a check to your local church with "Human Relations Sunday" on the memo line, or visit [UMCgiving.org](http://UMCgiving.org).

**Divine Rhythm/ Jan. 31-Feb. 2:** About 600 young adults (ages 18-35) are expected to attend Holston's annual winter spiritual weekend at Mills Auditorium in Gatlinburg, Tenn. Visit [DivineRhythm.com](http://DivineRhythm.com) or call the Young Adult Ministries office at (865) 690-4080.

**Aging & Ministry in the 21st Century/ March 1:** For older adults or for people who minister to older adults, this program helps individuals or churches reach the largest age-segment of the United Methodist Church. Register by contacting Karen Wright at [karenwright@holston.org](mailto:karenwright@holston.org) or (865) 690-4080.

**LEAD Kids Children's Ministry Conference/ March 7-8:** For children's ministry workers, this seminar will be held at Fountain City United Methodist Church in Knoxville, Tenn. The speaker is Rev. Leanne Hadley, founder of First Steps Spirituality Center, Colorado Springs, Colo. Register by contacting Karen Wright at [karenwright@holston.org](mailto:karenwright@holston.org) or (865) 690-4080.

**Evangelism Conference/ March 14-15:** Speaker: Jorge Acavedo. Location: Cokesbury United Methodist Church, Knoxville, Tenn. More info to come soon, or call (865) 690-4080. ■

**The Call** is the news source for Holston Conference. ● The Holston Conference of the United Methodist Church includes 897 churches in east Tennessee, southwest Virginia, and north Georgia. ● Our resident bishop is Mary Virginia Taylor. ● Our executive assistant is the Rev. Carol Wilson. ● Our office address is P.O. Box 850, 217 South Rankin Road, Alcoa, TN 37701. ● (865) 690-4080 ● [www.Holston.org](http://www.Holston.org) ● [thecall@holston.org](mailto:thecall@holston.org) or [info@holston.org](mailto:info@holston.org) ● [Facebook.Holston.org](http://Facebook.Holston.org) ● Twitter @TheCall\_Holston ● Free e-news: [thecalltwo.holston.org](http://thecalltwo.holston.org)