

Digest?

This is a mini print version of our regular news. For a free e-news subscription and more news, visit thecalltwo.holston.org.

The Call

Digest

Back page

A pastor from Draper, Va., shares a beautiful Lenten season experience on a snowy night.

April 1, 2013

www.holston.org

Churches get creative for malaria fight

With only nine weeks to go until June 9, the churches and people of Holston Conference are getting more creative in how they raise money for the denominational goal of eradicating malaria.

The Rev. Stephen Yeaney, for example, will probably be bald after Easter Sunday.

"I like to do strange challenges," explained the pastor of **Oakland United Methodist Church in Greenback, Tenn.**

To inspire his congregation to give \$2,000 to the "Imagine No Malaria" campaign by Easter, Yeaney first proposed that he would jump into the nearby marina. However, when a parishioner said the preacher should shave his head instead, church members liked that idea so much that the deal was sealed.

Yeaney is keeping the suspense high by not announcing the total collected so far. "They just have to keep giving and giving," he said. "They have to give by faith."

On Easter Sunday, March 31, the Oakland treasurer will count the total, with each \$10 given representing a life saved from malaria. If the congregation gives \$2,000 or more, Yeaney will not only get a radical haircut. Two hundred or more lives will be saved through the United Methodist Church's multi-faceted mission to eliminate malaria by the end of 2015.

Holston Conference's goal is to raise \$1 million toward that end by June 9-12, when leaders of Holston's 897 churches will meet for Annual Conference at Lake Junaluska, N.C.

As of March 20, Holston had accomplished more than a third of the goal, with \$370,740 collected to save 37,074 lives, according to LeRae Collins, Holston's campaign coordinator. So far, 45 percent of Holston churches have contributed to the conference-wide emphasis.

While Yeaney might be giving his hair for a good cause, others are giving their talents. Before Christmas, Mary Hawkins knitted scarves to help fight the deadly mosquito-borne disease. She sold about 50 scarves, raising \$700 to save 70 lives.

"To save a life with just 10 dollars: It's so simple, so minimal, that everybody ought to be able to do something," says the **Knoxville District** administrative assistant and member at **Kodak United Methodist Church in Kodak, Tenn.** "You can't do nothing."

At **Chilhowie United Methodist Church in Chilhowie, Va.**, 14-year-old Avery Smith created a pizza-baking kit to raise money for Imagine No Malaria.

"He started by giving a speech to the congregation with a timer that went off every 60 seconds," said Smith's pastor, the Rev. Sarah Slack. The timer indicated that every 60 seconds, another person dies from malaria.

Smith then found recipes for four different kinds of pizzas. With the help of his mother, pastor, and fellow youth member Lauren Rhea, Smith then rolled out dough and assembled the toppings.

He sold enough pizza kits to save the lives of 48 brothers and sisters in Africa.

Some pastors decided to get physical for the campaign. The Rev. Wil Cantrell, pastor at **Lebanon Memorial United Methodist Church in Lebanon, Va.**, is training to run the Knoxville Marathon on April 7. His goal is to run 26.2 miles in under four hours. Church members have been challenged to pledge a dollar amount for every minute their pastor comes in under the four-hour mark.

In the **Maryville District**, the Rev. Charles Maynard will be walking and the Rev. Randy Pasqua will be biking for a campaign they call "The Next Mile." The pastors will travel across the district during the week of April 21.

Maynard, Maryville District superintendent, and Pasqua, executive director of Holston Conference Camp and Retreat Ministries, will visit churches during their week-long trek, raising money and awareness for the malaria-smiting mission.

At **Kendricks Creek United Methodist Church in Kingsport, Tenn.**, the Rev. Susan Lankford looked for a way to "put a face" on the life-saving initiative. She chose the youngest member – two-year-old Evie Crow – and brought her before the church.

"This is our precious child," Lankford told the congregation. "If I told you that Evie might die, but \$10 would save her life, who would not pull it out of their pockets?"

To date, Kendricks Creek – a congregation with 90 in average worship attendance – is among the top givers in the Kingsport District, raising \$1,256 for the "Evie Fund." ■



"Evie"

Join in! Make a check out to your local church with "Imagine No Malaria #684" on the memo line or give online at imaginenomalaria.org.

“Hear God’s word and put it into practice”

By RuthAnne Henley

Something wonderful happened at our Bible Study last night.

This Lenten season we are studying the impact of the seven last words of Jesus on the ongoing mission of the Church. We had come to the third saying, “When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, ‘Woman, here is your son,’ and to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother.’” (John 19:26-27a).

I had just suggested that rather than passing off the care of his mother to the system of the world – her next of kin – Jesus had assured that he would continue to care for her personally through the agency of the Church, his Body here on Earth.

We then looked at Luke 8:20-21: “Someone told him, ‘Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you.’ He replied, ‘My mother and brothers are those who hear God’s word and put it into practice.’” We discussed the possibility that those seekers who came to us for legitimate aid were family to Jesus, and by extension, our family. Their care was our responsibility.

I followed with some practical examples of the sort of folk we might need to see as mothers, brothers, and sisters of Jesus. One of the examples I suggested was a cold, hungry, and exhausted man stumbling in off the trail in search of a solid meal and a warm place to rest.



“He was walking through the blowing snow toward a flicker of hope...”

As if on cue we had a knock at the door where we were meeting at Draper United Methodist Church. In came a man who was walking the New River Trail that runs by our building. He was not a leisure hiker. He was one of the many long-term unemployed who have fallen off the national radar, losing their place in society because of our economy’s uncertainty.

He had family several states away and had some hope of employment there. He was walking through the blowing snow toward that flicker of hope when he saw the lights of the church and came in to find a warm place to shelter before facing another night with nothing but a sleeping bag between him and the cruel elements.

I watched in wonder as the message God had shared through me came alive and went to work in the midst of the gathered Church. In a flurry of activity and creative thinking, the man was welcomed, warmed, fed, and appropriately settled for

the night. In the morning he would be on his way to his uncle’s home by a more direct and less strenuous route.

Rather than resenting the intrusion on our time and the tapping of our resources, the Church in the House expressed gratitude to God for allowing us the privilege of caring for this brother. ■

The Rev. RuthAnne G. Henley is pastor of the Draper Circuit in Wytheville District.

UNITED METHODIST BRIEFS

Native American Ministries Sunday, observed this year on April 14, supports Native American ministries in Holston Conference and scholarships for Native Americans attending United Methodist schools. Give by writing a check to your local church with “Native American Ministries Sunday” on the memo line.

Help Lake Junaluska celebrate its centennial with an eve-

ning of storytelling on April 18. “Stories by the Lakeside with Donald Davis” is free and begins at 7:30 p.m. For this and other centennial information, visit lakejunaluska.com/100 or call (828) 452-2881.

The 11th National Gathering of United Methodist Men will be held July 12-14 at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn. To learn more, visit GCUMM.org or contact your Holston UMM president for info about Holston groups attending: Eric Knoefel at ummpres@holstonconference.com or (865) 388-9459. ■

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 ● thecall@holston.org or info@holston.org ● Facebook.Holston.org ● Twitter @TheCall_Holston ● Free e-news: thecalltwo.holston.org