

## Digest?

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# The Call

## Digest

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Under new leadership, Jubilee Project is still trying to make a difference in one of Tennessee's poorest counties.

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## Gatlinburg retreats raise \$60,700 to fight malaria

In three different events over three consecutive weekends, Holston Conference raised \$60,700 to fight malaria and shared the gospel with nearly 12,200 people.

Resurrection, the 28-year-old winter youth retreat, was held Jan. 18-20 and Jan. 25-27 at Gatlinburg Convention Center in Gatlinburg, Tenn.. About 11,000 teenagers and counselors gave \$56,000 to Imagine No Malaria.

On the heels of the first weekend of Resurrection, organizers introduced the first-ever "Rez Kidz" for families. The Jan. 20-21 event, also at Gatlinburg Convention Center, attracted about 600 children and parents and raised \$1,300 for Imagine No Malaria.

On Feb. 1-3, the 12-year-old event for young adults, Divine Rhythm, returned after a few years in Pigeon Forge to its original home at W.L. Mills Auditorium, next door to the convention center. About 570 participants, most ages 18 to 35, gave an offering of \$3,400 to fight malaria.

Based on the Imagine No Malaria campaign promise, "\$10 saves a life," the cumulative offerings will save 6,070 lives in

Africa through prevention and education efforts, Holston leaders said. The total will help Holston meet its goal of saving 100,000 lives (raising \$1 million) by June 2013.

Speaking at this year's Resurrection was the Rev. Lisa Yebuah, pastor of inviting ministries at Edenton Street United Methodist Church in Raleigh, N.C. Yebuah, age 36, who also spoke at Divine Rhythm 2007, talked to teenagers about putting on the clothes of Christ, being imitators of Christ, and leaving the old behind for the new.

She tied her message to Imagine No Malaria, encouraging youth to "believe all things are possible" with God and to have pride in the United Methodist denomination.

"If I had a jersey that said, 'Woot, woot, I'm United Methodist,' I would wear it every day," she said. "We have a God who would not choose to have human-size dreams but God-size dreams."

Yebuah explained that Holston's contributions toward Imagine No Malaria would help the denomination fulfill a dream to eradicate malaria by the end of 2015.

"Imagine No Malaria. Until you have held a feverish child whose life will not be saved, you will never understand how beautiful those three words sound," she said.

Throughout the weekend, Yebuah spoke to youth about trusting God to help them change for better, no matter their obstacles or situations.

"If you can believe that malaria can be eradicated by Dec. 31, 2013, then you also need to believe that God can do anything in your life," she said.

The Rev. Olu Brown, speaker at Divine Rhythm, also encouraged his listeners to trust God, to step up to "the edge" and jump without fear in order to live the life that's waiting.

Worship at Divine Rhythm was led by Casey Darnell and his band from Atlanta. Worship at Resurrection was led by The City Harmonic from Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

Youth from St. Elmo United Methodist Church in Chattanooga were the winners of this year's Resurrection T-shirt design contest. Designed by Caitlin (the pastor's daughter), the shirts were popular and earned a total \$44,000 in profits.

"This is huge for our church," said Becky Myatt. After a 10 percent tithe to Youth Service Fund, the youth group will use their earnings for a mission trip and possibly for a new church sign to accompany the new church building.

St. Elmo was partially destroyed by fire in 2009. ■



Bishop Mary Virginia Taylor congratulates Resurrection participants for saving lives through Imagine No Malaria in Gatlinburg on Jan. 27.

# Jubilee Project still trying to help the poor

**W**hile many churches are raising money to dig wells in Africa, Jubilee Project wants to bring clean water to poor families in Hancock County, Tenn.

In fact, “access to clean water” is one of the five basic needs Jubilee Project is tackling under a new set of core values and leadership. The other prioritized needs in this part of central Appalachia, hemmed in by the Clinch and Powell Mountains, are food security, shelter, health, self-worth and love.

“When you try to tell people from the outside that there are so many homes here without running water, they can’t grasp it,” says Heidi Taylor, Jubilee office manager in Sneedville, Tenn. “That doesn’t happen in America.”

Twenty-two years after it was founded, Jubilee Project is still trying to make a difference in one of Tennessee’s poorest counties. Thirty-two percent of Hancock County residents live below the poverty level compared with 17 percent statewide, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Hancock’s unemployment rate last year was 12.2 percent, compared to 8.7 percent across the state, according to the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

“We want to let people know what is going on out their backyard,” says the Rev. Allen Karnes, Jubilee’s executive director since June 2012.

In the past year, Jubilee Project has helped 13 families get clean water into their homes by putting in infiltration systems, replacing pumps, or digging wells, Taylor said.

Taylor tears up when she remembers helping three little brothers who were removed from a dilapidated home by the county social services. When she gave the little boys clean clothes, toothbrushes and toothpaste, they were incredulous and grateful.

“We take for granted the everyday luxuries – going into your bathroom and turning on the water, brushing your teeth, having clean underwear and socks,” she said. “We try not just to help the people that everybody helps, but the people who fall through the cracks.”

With the help of churches, Jubilee still hands out large amounts of food and supplies. Last year, the organization distributed 11,498 pounds of food, 515 emergency food boxes, 1,000 Thanksgiving meals, 1,350 Christmas gifts, and 366 backpacks with school supplies.

Working with nearby Overhome Clothing Center, Jubilee served more than 4,100 people with free clothing in 2012. With a continued emphasis on building self-esteem for area teenagers, Jubilee fitted 350 with donated prom dresses or tuxedos last year.

A newer program, Bread of Life, provides fresh hot meals to the homebound. Five days each week, Utermoehlen prepares and delivers meals to about 20 homes, driving 100 miles daily on rural, rough roads.

Replacing the 17-year old van is on the needs list, says Taylor. When Jubilee rounded up eight youth for a Holston Conference spiritual retreat in Gatlinburg last month, a Morristown volunteer had to drive them because the van was deemed unsafe.

Jubilee also wants to increase the number of summer work-camp teams. “We have some regulars, and we want some new ones to come in and see what Appalachia is like, because it’s a whole different lifestyle here,” Taylor said.

Work-camp volunteers are invited to come to lead home repair, sports camps, vacation bible school, and cooking classes for the community.

Donations may be sent to: Jubilee Project, 197 N. Jockey Street, Sneedville, TN 37869. For more information, contact (423) 733-4195 or jubileeprojectsneedville@gmail.com. ■

## HOLSTON BRIEFS

**Know a high-school student who might be hearing God’s call to ministry?** “Discovery” is an opportunity for youth to explore their callings with others. This year’s retreat is March 22-24 at Camp Wesley Woods near Townsend, Tenn. Contact Youth Ministries at (865) 690-4080 or lauralambert@holston.org.

**Caring for God’s Creation**, a conference that helps members of faith communities learn how to take better care of the earth, will be held April 3-7 at Lake Junaluska Conference Center in Lake Junaluska, N.C. Call 800-222-4930 for more information. Holston’s Creation Care Team is offering scholarships for the event. Application deadline is March 15. Contact Brenda Haymore at mollismom40@comcast.net for more information. ■

**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