

district roundup



KINGSPORT: Birdhouses at St. Luke/St. Mark



BIG STONE GAP: Lenten wreath at Norton



KNOXVILLE: Wesley House's new wheels

NEWS FROM YOUR DISTRICT

Abingdon: Send news and photos to: Editor, *The Call*, P.O. Box 850, Alcoa, TN 37701-0850, thecall@holston.org, fax (865) 690-3162.

Big Stone Gap: Norton UMC marks this season with a Lenten wreath. Similar to an Advent wreath, it's designed with candles, thorns, vines, flowers, and garland. Beginning with Ash Wednesday, a purple candle is lit the first five Sundays of Lent. On Passion (Palm) Sunday, a red candle is lit, and on Easter the white Christ candle is lit. Pastor Ken Taylor says the wreath connects the "sharp and contrasting themes of Jesus' passion, death, resurrection, and ascension."

Chattanooga: A bunch of Knit Wits at Burks UMC are using their needles to show compassion and care for others. Last March, the group committed to making 300 hats to give out on Christmas morning. By Thanksgiving, the Knit Wits had created a total 909 hats, including 607 for Community Kitchen and 42 for soldiers in Afghanistan. Next project: Afghans for Interfaith Hospitality Network families.

Cleveland: Trinity UMC recently surprised their pastor with a Sunday afternoon service celebrating his 50 years in ministry. The congregation also celebrated five years with the Rev. Marvin Howard as their pastor. Several family members came to the celebration.

Johnson City: Sulphur Springs UMC is home to another productive needlework group. The Upper Room Quilters includes 12 women who recently created 48 quilts for Niswonger Children's Hospital in Johnson City and 32 quilts for flood victims in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. "These ladies also collected donations of \$1,200 to help a quilting group at Trinity UMC of Cedar Rapids replenish the needlework supplies they lost in the flood," reports Lynice Broyles.

Kingsport: "What's a Christian?" It's the name of a Wednesday night class for about 20 kids meeting for mission projects, scripture learning, team building, and snacks. The group includes regulars at St. Luke UMC and St. Matthew UMC as well as some neighborhood children and homeless children, according to the Rev. Steph Burkhardt. A favorite project: Building bluebird houses with scrap wood ("any that will hold a nail"). The birdhouses are sold to church members – most recently, to raise money for a Holston member to go to Sudan.

Knoxville: Wesley House Community Center won a \$25,000 grant from the UPS Foundation, enabling the center to buy two nearly new mini-buses. The new rides replaced two 20-year-old vans, according to Richard Gibson, executive director. Wesley House serves city kids in the Mechanicsville, Lonsdale, and Beaumont neighborhoods with educational and social programs. Visit www.wesleyhouse.com.

Maryville: Green Meadow UMC has a new sign that reads, "Welcome, Family Promise of Blount County!" The two groups will be sharing space at the church as designated by a lease and memorandum agreement signed March 8. "May God richly bless our work together," said the Rev. Frank "Buzz" Trexler.

Morristown: Kent Bewley, a member of Asbury (Greeneville) UMC, was inducted in the denomination's Hall of Fame in Philanthropy on March 7. Bewley was recognized for his long service and support of Holston Home for Children. Most recently, Bewley helped Holston Home raise private donations for a \$4.2 million residence hall for boys. The Bewley family also funded the Bewley Center, an eight-apartment residence for women requiring around-the-clock care.

Oak Ridge: Years ago, Concord UMC decided to remain on site rather than relocate for more space. "We've spent the last five years pur-

chasing eight homes to the east of us for expansion property," says Vicki Eleazor, Concord business manager. Four houses were sold to house movers as family homes. Concord is trying to give a fourth house to another family. Three houses have to be demolished because they rest on concrete slabs. To keep the materials from ending up in a landfill, church members stripped the houses of cabinets, fixtures, wood, doors, paneling, trim – any materials that could be used for cabins at Camp Wesley Woods, says Eleazor. "The supplies were stored at a myriad of places until this spring when cabin building begins again."

Tazewell: First Bluefield UMC hosts many international visitors because two of their church members have special connections. Roger Woodrum is a facilitator and driver for the Center for International Understanding (CIU) at Bluefield State College. He also hosts Concord University international students, while church member Joanne Davis hosts many CIU women from overseas. In the last two years, Woodrum and Davis have brought visitors to church from 18 countries: India, Tajikistan, Nepal, Japan, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Bulgaria, Armenia, Malaysia, Georgia, Vietnam, Russia, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Sweden, Korea, Colombia, and Ukraine.

Wytheville: On Feb. 15, the United Methodist Women of Bethel UMC presented a handmade quilt to the Rev. Randolph and Carol Sue Morris with love and appreciation for their ministry.

