

# district roundup



**ABINGDON:** Shady Grove loads 2 1/2 tons of food



**CHATTANOOGA:** Tyner gives tax relief



**MARYVILLE:** Wesley Woods hosts the Watoto Choir

## NEWS FROM YOUR DISTRICT

**Abingdon:** Shady Grove UMC decided to do something for the community on Maundy Thursday. “When we celebrate the Lord’s Supper, it seems appropriate to also break bread with the community,” says Pastor Donald Smith. The congregation publicized a food giveaway with flyers, then purchased two and a half tons of food from Second Harvest. About 40 volunteers helped distribute the food to 130 needy families who lined up across the parking lot, Smith says.

**Big Stone Gap:** When members at Rye Cove UMC heard that a community member was suffering from terminal cancer, they knew that a gospel singing would help raise money for the medical expenses. “People around here love gospel, and they love praising the Lord,” says Linda Dockery. Pastor Ray Dockery asked singers from area churches to come sing at Rye Cove UMC, and \$3,000 was raised in one night. An additional \$2,000 has been contributed since, says Linda Dockery.

**Chattanooga:** Led by Bob Alexander, Tyner UMC has helped people with their tax returns for many years. The AARP refers senior citizens to Tyner, but others have learned about the ministry through word of mouth. Church volunteers are trained, appointments are made, and Tyner is Tax Central from mid-March to April 15. This spring, about 600 taxpayers received assistance, reports the Rev. Robert Haskins.

**Cleveland:** Trousdale School, a school for adults with developmental disabilities, recently outgrew its facilities. Asbury UMC offered to lease its unused gym and classrooms, and the school relocated to the church in October 2007. The 20 students learn how to cook, manage finances, use computers, and other skills to help them become more independent, says Pastor Tim Paul. “This has been a blessing to our financially [struggling] church. But most of all, the students have energized us.”

**Johnson City:** In February 2007, Cedar Grove UMC opened “Shepherd’s Outreach,” a ministry for serving the homeless and needy with food,

clothing, and other assistance. Within three weeks, the ministry had outgrown the original classroom and expanded into two more classrooms, the pastor’s study, and a hallway. Since then, numerous families have been served, 12 new members have joined the church, and Sunday school attendance has increased from 60 to 70, according to the district newsletter.

**Kingsport:** Each year for the past five years, Rock Springs UMC has invited area youth to a food-and-music fest called Refiner’s Fire. Rock Springs has only four youth, but they were able to gather 100 youth from Ketron Memorial, Cassidy, Colonial Heights, Vermont, and other churches, according to Pastor Joey Manis. Praise music was provided by the Cokesbury UMC youth band, and Cokesbury Youth Director Brent Ronald served as preacher.

**Knoxville:** The youth at Clapp’s Chapel UMC bag groceries at Corryton Food Pantry the first Wednesday of each month. In observance of “Mission Madness Month” in April (a CCYM project), the students decided to raise money for the pantry. On a Friday night, 15 youth from Clapp’s Chapel joined with six more from nearby Victory Baptist Church. They baked cookies, cupcakes, and brownies and made posters. One of the youth brought his guitar – “basically a perfect youth night,” says youth leader Stacy Steele. “We hit the IGA the next morning and sold everything for \$425.”

**Maryville:** The staff at Camp Wesley Woods hosted the Watoto’s Children’s Choir #29 for two days in March. “Watoto is a community in Uganda that takes children orphaned by HIV/AIDS and war and puts them in a home with a mother,” reports Kelly Milligan. The children sang for the staff, and the staff took the children on a mountain hike to the waterfall.

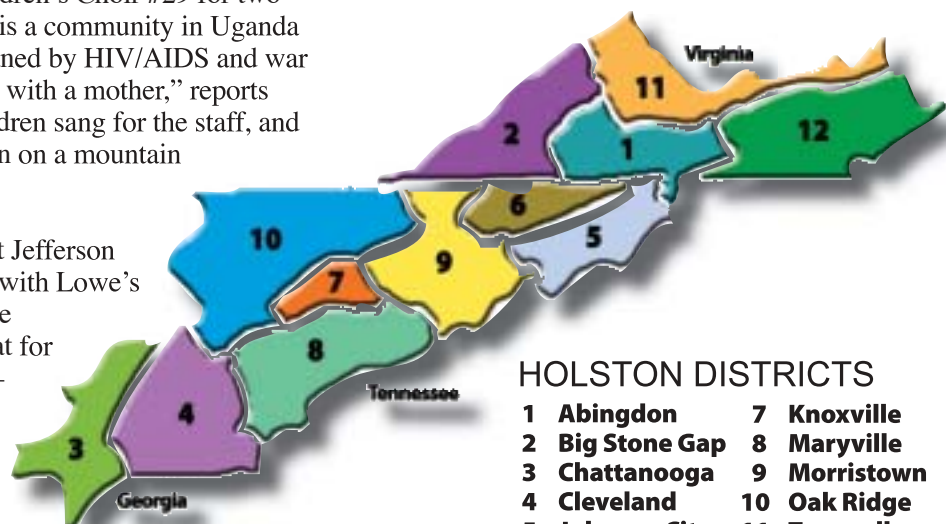
**Morristown:** First Jefferson City UMC is partnering with Lowe’s to create a Vacation Bible School benefiting Habitat for Humanity. Church workers will teach children about Christian service using a construction metaphor, while Lowe’s will provide

safety goggles, work aprons, projects, and supplies. An offering during the May 27-30 event will go for Habitat for Humanity, reports Wendy O’Neal. The curriculum, “Under Construction,” is available at <http://www.helwys.com/uc/index2.htm>.

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

**Tazewell:** The Ol’ Geezers started out five years ago as a Bible study at First Christ UMC for three older men who just wanted to know more about the Bible. Soon, attendance had increased to 25 and included Baptist, Pentecostal, and Church of Christ members. An Ol’ Geezers Gospel Choir was started and was asked to sing at funerals, church and community events. To date, they’ve raised \$10,000 for community needs, and the Ol’ Geezers have even started doing service projects such as building handicapped ramps and picking up trash. “With the Lord’s help, we are trying to make a difference, and it shows no signs of stopping,” reports Pastor Carlos Hess.

**Wytheville:** Asbury UMC sits on Cripple Creek in the Cedar Springs community of Wythe County. In 2005, worship attendance had dwindled to 12. But with a new pastor, a new pianist, and a renewed spirit, attendance hasn’t dropped below 30 since Palm Sunday, reports Adam Linkous. On Easter Sunday, it was 44. Asbury is led by the Rev. Ginny Tompkins.



### HOLSTON DISTRICTS

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