

# district roundup



**WYTHEVILLE:** Mt. Pleasant youth say, "Give peace a chance"



**KNOXVILLE:** Hillcrest fest



**CLEVELAND:** Wesley Memorial hangs it up

## NEWS FROM YOUR DISTRICT

**Abingdon:** For the second year, Anderson Street UMC hosted a Back-to-School block party, attended by about 100 children and parents. The congregation donated school supplies and refreshments. The local police, fire, and health departments also had representatives. Pastor Barbara Clark says the block party is a ministry created from the federal Weed and Seed program for high-crime areas. Anderson Street is host church for Weed and Seed meetings.

**Big Stone Gap:** In July, Norton UMC established a Sunday morning worship for long-term residents of Mountain View Regional Medical Center. Previously, services were only offered during the week, with a variety of leaders. "Routine and familiarity are important for folks with memory issues," says Pastor Ken Norton. So each Sunday, about five church members come to the hospital to assist the preacher and join in a 10 a.m. worship. About 13 to 14 residents attend. Two or three are always dressed in their "Sunday best," and one regular participant – who seemed unresponsive before – recently surprised everyone by accepting an offer to lead the group in prayer. "She prayed one of the most meaningful prayers I have ever heard," Norton said.

**Chattanooga:** Jo Cross is a retired elementary school teacher who settled in the Chattanooga area with her husband, Tom, a retired Air Force pilot. Last June, the couple attended Annual Conference as lay members for Mt. Crest UMC. There, Cross saw a video about a lay ministry directed by a woman in a wheelchair. She elbowed her husband. "God's showing me that needing a cane and walker is no excuse for not answering his call," she whispered. In September, Cross opened the "Center of Hope" at Mt. Crest. Each Monday, she will lead her congregation in offering Bible study, free GED classes, and "care packs" for whatever the community needs.

**Cleveland:** Twenty-one members of Wesley Memorial (Etowah) UMC spent a Saturday volunteering at Union Gospel Mission in Chattanooga. They prepared lunch for residents, joined them for the meal, then prepared the next day's meals in advance. Church members also served in Union Gospel's thrift store.

The day trip offered a mission opportunity to volunteers (ranging from age 7 to 70) who couldn't participate in the church's week-long summer mission trip, according to the Rev. Todd Kingrea.

**Johnson City:** Fairview UMC just completed a \$200,000 fundraising campaign for new construction. The Rev. Rae Mullins, who served as fundraising consultant, made this one request: When the campaign is complete, please consider making a gift to Holston Home for Children. On Sept. 29, the church council met to consider the appropriate gift. Pastor Chuck Griffin was overjoyed and proud when his members voted unanimously to give a tithe of their harvest – \$20,000 – to Holston Home's new residence hall. "God's grace is abundant," says Griffin, "and the more we share it, the more God pours out."

**Kingsport:** 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.

**Knoxville:** Hillcrest UMC hosted the second annual South Haven Community Day at Maynard Glenn Park in south Knoxville. About 600 showed up for free rides, games, music, and carnival food. Hourly prize giveaways included \$25 gas cards, food baskets, a TV, and DVD player. Pastor Pat Polis says the event raises the church's visibility and helps parishioners make new friends.

**Maryville:** Liz Watson, a member at Logan's Chapel UMC, has created more than 300 quilts for the infants and children of Haven House, a shelter for battered women in Maryville. Watson also makes quilts for Holston Home for Children and victims of house fires. "Each of Liz's quilts has a place where the new owner can put his or her name in permanent marker," says the Rev. Kim Isley. "For a child who has little to call his or her own, the quilts are comforting as well as beautiful."

**Morristown:** First Morristown UMC hosted a community block party on Nov. 2. Attractions included clowns, magicians, inflatable games, live music, a

cakewalk, and food. "Everything was free," reports Robyn Wilson. "New toiletries and gently-used coats were given to folks as well as prizes like \$200 Wal-Mart gift cards to offset the rising cost of fuel and food." The event was attended by about 400 people, including members of Rivers of Living Water Hispanic ministry and Bethel UMC.

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**Tazewell:** Ginger Belle the goat had a critical mission as mascot for Vacation Bible School at Shady Grove UMC. Ginger Belle helped the children focus on the goal of giving an offering sufficient to buy a goat for Heifer International Project. Ginger Belle achieved her mission and then some, reports Pastor Jack Jenkins. The kids raised enough money to buy three goats and two flocks of chickens for needy families overseas.

**Wytheville:** The youth of Mt. Pleasant UMC celebrated International Day of Peace on Sept. 21 by creating and dedicating a Peace Pole on church property. They sanded and stained a 4 x 4 post, then painted "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in four languages. They chose English, Spanish, Hebrew, and an Ethiopian language, because they are sponsoring a young boy in Ethiopia. The youth then led the Sept. 21 worship service, inviting the congregation to come outside and gather around the pole to pray. Mt. Pleasant is led by the Rev. Joe Mack Taylor. ■

