

# Way to go! Way to give!

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Holston Conference

Youth Ministries



**“My future is so bright,” he says. “I haven’t lost anything, I’ve gained everything.”**

Mike Davis was released from a juvenile detention center on the same day that his church group was scheduled to leave for Resurrection, a large Holston Conference youth gathering in Gatlinburg, Tenn.

Mike didn’t think he would get to go, but his church friends were waiting for him. So Mike jumped in the van and the youth group from First United Methodist Church of Jefferson City was off for an adventure.

That was a year ago. Today, Mike is 18 years old and excited about his future. He not only went to Resurrection last year, he also attended two other Holston youth gatherings: Discovery for high-school students exploring a call to ministry, and Youth Assembly, a summer spiritual retreat.

“I got in with the wrong crowd,” Mike says, explaining his years of teenage struggle. The oldest of five children, Mike had to move six times in three years, living with his mother or grandmother. It made it tough for him to stay in school and stay in church.

“I was blaming God for all my problems,” he says.

In 2012, at the age of 16, Mike was charged with robbery and sentenced to 9 ½ months in a juvenile center. All he could think about was getting out, getting a job, and getting back to his church in Jefferson City.

Continued on back

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When he finally joined his youth group for Resurrection in January 2013, it was an emotional, wonderful weekend. “Everything was so overwhelming,” he says. “I bawled my eyes out. I felt like sharing everything. They made me feel like family.”

Mike got a job at a fast-food restaurant and stayed close to his youth group. When his church sent him to Discovery and Assembly, he became close friends with youth from other churches and shared his story. He discovered that when he talks, people listen. “When I pray out loud, everybody cries,” he says.

Mike also discovered that he wants to be a youth pastor someday: “I’ve been through everything they’re going through,” he says. “I can speak to youth about poverty and the ghetto.”

By giving to their local churches, people in Holston support the ministries that help promising young men like Mike Davis find their way.

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Thank you, Holston Conference. You’ll never know how many lives you’ve changed.

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