Holston Happenings
newsletter
Winter, 2017



Providing Hope
and Healing for a Brighter Future...

A publication of
Holston United Methodist
Home for Children

From the President



HOLSTON HOME'S MISSION:

Holston United Methodist Home for Children provides hope and healing for a brighter future by sharing the love of Jesus with children and families struggling with life's challenges.

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I hope you and your families had a blessed and Merry Christmas. Thank you for helping to make Christmas at Holston UM Home amazing. There were so many special events, parties, lights and smiles on kids' faces. It was a celebration fit for The King!

I have several special memories from Christmas that I want to take into 2017. In particular one stands out for me. As many of us were inviting our neighbors to be a part of our Christmas festivities, Nick and I were walking back to campus talking and laughing by ourselves. I knew that he had run away from group homes where he had lived before, so I asked him if he liked it here. He said that he did, and I asked him why. He first said, "Because we do a lot of fun things!" but as we walked on, he thought for a minute, and then he said something a little unusual. "The people here pay attention," he responded. I asked him what he meant, and he said that staff are always around and checking on them, which he liked. He quickly moved on to another topic, and we enjoyed the rest of our walk home.



Nick paid our staff, volunteers, and our donors an incredible compliment that day. Whether they show it by anger, outbursts, withdrawing, or attention-seeking behavior, our kids are longing to feel like they matter to someone and that someone sees them as special and worth getting to know.

Through the years I have seen our youth from toddlers to young adults believe a lie that, "they don't matter." They hear this when a parent walks out or chooses a boyfriend, girlfriend, or an addiction instead of them. They feel it when a teacher or coach lights up around the high-performing kid while taking a deep breath to mask their disappointment or frustration with them. Perhaps, most heart-breaking, is when they are alone with themselves trying to make sense of all the hurts. Satan, the great liar and destroyer, whispers something like, "And you know you don't matter because God didn't care enough to do anything about it either."

The child finds himself at Holston United Methodist Home for Children. And it's as if God clears His throat to interrupt this lie and get His child's attention to say, "It will be OK and I've got some people I want you to meet." They see caring people who work with them and hear about people who pray for them and who give financially so that they can experience good things. Nick said it best, "People here pay attention." For Nick, who is five foot nothing, it may be paying attention to make sure no one is picking on him; for Rob it may be Ms. Ella's serving "Rob's Chicken Alfredo" using his own recipe; for our preschoolers it may be Ms. Joyce's making them their own scrapbook with their pictures all through it; and for kids at Christmas it may be parties, sweets, gifts and living at a place that is lit up so bright you can see it from the space station. Regardless of the example, youth hear the truth that their Heavenly Father loves them as much as any kiddo on this planet, and He uses a whole family of His people to prove it. In 2017 my prayer is to see more young people realize that they matter because of the work we do. I am so privileged to serve with people like you who pay attention -- thank you and I pray God's best for you and your family in the new year!

In Christ,



Bradley S. Williams

P.S. Our fundraising revenue is at its lowest point in the first few months of the year. Would you consider making a gift in honor or in memory of someone who "paid attention" and helped you become the person you are today? Not only does your donation help our ministry but it is a wonderful way to appreciate the special people in your life.

Paying it Forward

A college campus can be a lonely place over the holidays when most students pack up their cars and head home for Christmas. Twenty-seven years ago Freda Davis, Holston Home's Director of Residential Services, was a student at Tusculum College with no place to go for Christmas dinner. When her friend Ronnie heard this, he invited her to have dinner at his aunt's house with the rest of his family. "Ms. Gudger (Ronnie's aunt) invited me into her home and fed me Christmas dinner and treated me like I was her own family," said Freda. Little did she know that God would weave this moment into a much bigger and more beautiful tapestry than she could have imagined.

Fast-forward to this past Christmas season as students from Holston Home were inviting neighbors to attend a Christmas event for the community. Some staff and youth were greeted at the door by a kind elderly woman. After talking for a while, the group offered assistance with some home repairs through HUMHC's Community Service Project team. They took her name and number promising someone would be in touch. Freda went on the follow up visit. "I went to see her and knew instantly that this had to be the same Ms. Gudger. I remembered what she had done for me many years ago, and I was so moved and grateful that God had brought me back around to her in a time that she had a need," Freda said.



Holston Home's Freda Davis (left) reunited with Ms. Gudger (right) after twenty-seven years.

Over the last several weeks youth from Holston Home have been visiting with Ms. Gudger and helping with several repairs in her home. "She likes to have company and talk to the youth," Freda explained. "One of the boys spent a lot of time just talking with her. I think that is just as valuable as the repair work they are helping her complete. Sometimes having a little company and knowing that someone cares is the most important thing. I believe that is often why God puts us in the path of others."

"I am so grateful to God for bringing the young people here to help me out," Ms. Gudger said. God is using the Community Service Project team in a remarkable way. Ms. Gudger is one of many individuals who have been blessed by the giving hearts of these students

Freda believes that God had a special plan for this sweet reunion. "God placed me here twenty-seven years ago when I needed a little company and someone who cared. I believe that Ms. Gudger now needs the same thing that I needed so long ago. Our youth need this too. I believe that when we are in need, God provides. He is faithful to provide to us and often He will provide through us."






Holston Highlights

Christmas





Holston Home's campus was transformed into a Winter Wonderland once again this year. Between Christmas parties, tree decorating, and opening presents, the students and staff at HUMHC also found time to reach out to the community and remember the real reason for the season.

Graduation

"The one thing we have in common is our weaknesses," declared Ella Price in her encouraging words to our six December graduates. "However, 'a wound is a place that lets light in,' and those cracks and flaws will also let your brilliance out!" Many of our students come to Beacon School behind in their studies. Life's circumstances rarely allow for the support a child needs to succeed academically. Each one of these students went above and beyond to receive their diploma on December 15th. They faced their weaknesses and allowed



light to shine through. We are so proud of their hard work and great accomplishment.

Resurrection 2017

Holston Home took 23 students to join thousands of young people for "Resurrection" in Pigeon Forge, TN. The event is hosted by the youth ministry of the Holston Conference of the United Methodist Church and gives teenagers the chance to worship and grow closer to "the God of the Resurrection."



During the conference, the students laughed, worshiped, and had deep conversations about life, faith, and their personal testimonies. "The speaker was truly inspiring, calling all the young people to a strong level of commitment to their faith," said Abel Carrico, director of Christian Life at HUMHC. "After one service, the guys told me they wanted to live out their faith 100%, not just half way."

"Watching our young men among 6,000 other youth was inspirational," declared Nicole Carrico, Abel's wife and Holston's Equine Specialist. "They loved every person that was "different" than themselves, prayed with each other constantly, and also prayed for people that we met in Gatlinburg."

Between stirring worship and messages, playing putt-putt in Gatlinburg, deeply moving conversations during car rides and an overall lack of sleep, the accompanying staff witnessed quite a transformation in many of the youth. "Our prayer was that they would not just have a "good time" at Resurrection, but that they would truly be changed and feel the love of Christ," said Abel. "The Lord went above and beyond everything we asked and imagined."

On Sunday morning during chapel, two students boldly shared the stories and words of encouragement they felt the Lord wanted them to share with their friends at Holston Home. Over 15 youth came forward, on their own accord, to pray at the altar while many of their friends came up to pray with them.

Making a Difference

Dear Ambassadors,

There is no better way for us to express our love to Christ than to care for His "little ones." All children need to know the love of Christ, which only the church can show them. When children have suffered from abuse, abandonment, and neglect, they especially need to know that Jesus loves them.

During the first half of this school year, dozens of children showed growth in their Christian life, education, and general discipline. You can be sure



that every effort is made to develop the potential God has given each of these young people. As they are cared for in their homes, helped to learn in school, and invited to participate in worship, they have opportunities to know hope, love, and trust. They need your prayers!

Thank you for the work you are doing as ambassador for Holston Home in your church. Thank you for your faithfulness in putting up posters, assisting with stuffing bulletin inserts, and reminding your pastor to use the bulletin messages. Keep up the good work and let us know how we can be helpful to you.

In Christ's name,

Rev. Charles A. Hutchins
Director of Church Relations
and Estate Planning
James 1:27

Wills and Bequests

Dear friends of Holston Home:

- ☐ Please send me information about "Wills and Bequests."
- ☐ Please contact me about a personal visit.
- ☐ I have provided for the Children's Home in my will or other estate-planning document.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email _____

Mail to: Holston United Methodist Home for Children
Attention: Development
P.O. Box 188
Greeneville, TN 37744

For more information and help with your Estate Planning please call us at (800) 628-2986

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To protect the privacy of youngsters in our care, photographs of children in this publication may or may not represent actual youth residing here.

Next 5th Sunday is April 30, 2017

A Glimpse Of History

A missionary came to Holston Orphanage in 1923. She had graduated from Scarritt Bible and Training School and was consecrated by the Board of Missions of the Methodist church as a home missionary. That meant that she would work for the church anywhere she was sent within the United States, and she did not get to make the decision as to where she would go.



Miss Belle Hennen was 44 years old when she began her mission work as a matron (later called houseparent), and she remained until her death in 1954 at the age of 73. As did all other houseparents, she worked 24-hour days and 7-day weeks. She found real joy in "mending overalls and dresses, darning hose, washing faces and hands, combing hair, caring for the sick, and teaching the boys and girls how to make beds, sweep mop, and dust." She also found joy in "trying, through precept and example, to instill truths that will build character and help these children to grow into Christian men and women."

For more history...
Visit us online!
www.holstonhome.org
or
www.facebook.com/HolstonHome.FCA/

"Miss Belle," as she was affectionately called by children and staff, was known for her gentle yet stern manner and her loving kindness toward everyone. She was the model for all other houseparents because of her love for the children and her untiring service.

Houseparents are now called "counselors" and they no longer work 24/7. They still care for children who have suffered hurt, abandonment, neglect and abuse. There is still joy to be found in helping to build character and helping the children grow into Christian men and women.

- Eva Gray Hutchins