Holston Happenings
newsletter
Winter, 2018



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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As we look ahead into 2018, I find myself reflecting on how good God is and wondering about the new opportunities that He has for each of us and the ministry of Holston Home. It is so exciting to see how He will use His family to serve the least of these and reshape young lives for a better future.

On December 14, 2017, Megan changed her name to Logann Campbell when her adoption finalized just before she turned 18 years old. The adoption occurred as she was being cared for by one of our amazing foster families in Virginia. We love these kinds of endings, but I want to back up and share how God took all of the good and all of our human limitations to bring His perfect plan together.

Megan was one of the youth who went to Guatemala on our mission trip in May. She was very mature and a hard worker who quickly volunteered to work with the other adults responsible for all of the meal preparations for our entire trip – certainly one of the most demanding assignments but not one of the coolest or most prominent.



On the very first night one of the pastors from another group gave the nightly devotion. Although his intentions were good, he missed his point and singled out our kids as being different from the other kids. I could tell he didn't intend to communicate what he did, but the toothpaste was out of the tube and there was no way to get it back in. Some feelings were hurt and some new relationships were strained. There we were face to face with our humanness, and let me remind you that this is day NUMBER ONE!

The next day he came to us and apologized through tears for what he said and earnestly explained his intent and how sorry he was that it didn't come out that way. All was quickly forgiven and forgotten as we had an amazing day of serving and experiencing new things with our kids.

From there different leaders brought the devotions each night. By the end of the trip it was this pastor's turn to bring the message again. I must admit that I was a little apprehensive, and then I heard that he wanted to do a foot washing service. My apprehension went into just shy of a panic attack as I imagined the awkwardness of such an intimate experience with a group who had only known each other less than a week, who were dirty and tired from a long day of manual labor, and who were made up of several unchurched teenagers that were already trying to balance the insecurities of adolescence and feeling different. I wished I would have reminded myself how God uses inadequate people in doubtful situations to do incredible things, but I sat there dreading every minute and waiting for the wheels to come off. Instead, it was powerful, it was revealing,

and it was amazing! Our kids were so moved, and afterwards they were crying, hugging, laughing and praising. Only God could have pulled this experience off for us, and He used the least likely guy on the trip to do it.



Meanwhile, Megan was not worshipping with the other kids when it was over. She was sitting by herself quietly crying. One of the staff approached her to see what was wrong, and she opened up her heart saying that she would never have a family. She shared that she had told her foster family that she didn't want to be adopted and that she always just pushed people away. She said that she tried to be perfect so people would like her but that she wouldn't let anyone get too close because they wouldn't like her if they really knew her. The staff didn't know what to say except that she was a kind, smart and beautiful young lady who would likely have her own family one day even if she didn't have one right now. They prayed with her and asked God to fill her heart and to bring her a family according to His perfect plan. She seemed to feel better but it was hard for all of us knowing that she was going through this pain and that she saw herself so differently than the rest of the world.

We came back home and shared Megan's dreams with her foster family. The family prayed about what to do as they were in the process of adopting a sibling set of three young girls which were Megan's foster sisters. A few months later they had planned a huge adoption party for the little girls with their family, friends and Holston staff. Megan was setting up, decorating, and serving refreshments to make her foster sisters' day as special as she could. Near the end of the celebration, the foster dad asked Megan to go and sit with the other girls as he was going to ask her foster sisters to be their daughters and present them with a rose in front of all the guests. Megan resisted and said that this was their day and she just wanted to celebrate it like the other guests. He insisted and she reluctantly complied in all of her discomfort. After he presented the third girl a rose, he still had one left with one final proposal for Megan to be their forever daughter. I couldn't make out her answer from the video because of the squeals and the crying, but I think the embrace I saw meant she accepted.

As we think about this beautiful story and the countless others that God has scripted at Holston Home since 1895, I pray that we are encouraged to see how God uses each person, flaws and all, to make amazing differences in lives, including our own. As you have been faithful in your prayers and gifts for this ministry, you are a key player in these stories too. We don't have to be perfect just perfectly willing for God to use us. I am so thankful for you and your willingness to serve such a vital role in this mission. I pray God's very best for you and your families in 2018!

Bradley

"After that, he poured water into a basin, and began to wash his disciples' feet...Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you."

John 13:5, 14-15

Lights, Camera, SMILE

Christmas lights shined brightly across Holston Home's charming campus in December. Sounds of joy and appreciation resounded through the rolling hills like a sweet choir. It was your kindness and generosity that brought smiles like these to the faces of precious children!

Indeed, the Christmas season was busy and fun – campus lighting event, door decorating and Christmas tree decorating contests, Christmas parties, Santa Train community outreach, and an agency worship service. Every present got wrapped. Every stocking was filled. Every tummy was fed. Every pair of ears heard the name of Jesus. And every child had a Christmas to warmly remember, thanks to ***you***!

























Making a Difference

Dear Ambassadors,

Help us get the word out about Holston Home's ministry. Fifth Sunday offerings are an essential part of this ministry.

As we approach each Fifth Sunday and begin preparation of the promotional materials, my first thought are of the ambassadors and pastors in every local church who are so important in the ministry to children, youth, and families. **YOU** are the vital link between the children and your church members. The next Fifth Sunday is April 29th.

This check list will assist your congregation in helping Holston Home.

❑ **Now:** Find out all you can about Holston Home and make sure Church Relations at Holston Home has a way to contact you.



❑ **A month before Fifth Sunday:** Make sure Fifth Sunday materials are received from Holston Home.

❑ **A week before Fifth Sunday:** Prepare your church for the Fifth Sunday Offering. Display the poster that reads "Next Sunday is Fifth Sunday" in a prominent place. Remind your congregation of the offering and how it helps the children.

❑ **On Fifth Sunday:** Help coordinate disribution of bulletin inserts and envelopes.

❑ **All year long:** Remember that you can invite special speakers to supply the pulpit or to speak at fellowship occasions or UMW or UMM meetings. Keep Holston Home in mind for Advance Special projects.

❑ **Every day:** Pray for the children.

"I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you." (Philippians 1:3-4)

Call Rev. Charles Hutchins if you have questions: 423-638-4171, 423-416-4592 or 800-628-2986.

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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Home for Children
P.O. Box 188
Greeneville, TN 37744

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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 29, 2018

Helping Children Become All That God Intended

Some people reach the age of retirement and quit doing anything productive. Others begin new careers when they reach that hallmark.

Holston Home is the result of one woman's accomplishments at an age when she could have sat down in her rocking chair and rested for the rest of her life. Mrs. Elizabeth Wiley became a widow at age 58 (considered young nowadays but in 1895 was "late in life"). She knew that God still had plans for her and she accepted the challenge God gave her to make a home for orphaned and destitute children.



America was experiencing a severe financial depression in those years, but Mrs. Wiley didn't let that stand in her way. She felt that God was calling her to make a difference in the lives of needy children, and she responded. With only the meager estate left by her minister/college professor husband, she gathered around her a group of people who were willing to follow her leadership and establish an orphanage.

Her college friend, Martha Johnson, daughter of President Andrew Johnson, located 21 acres of land in Greeneville with an unfinished large house, and with no staff, no furniture, and no supplies, she began providing a home for five children. She was willing to become mother, teacher, housekeeper, cook, and more to the children who needed a home. The children came in such numbers that more buildings were soon needed and she had to recruit helpers. Often it was whoever brought children who stayed for a while and helped her. She sought financial help from her many friends throughout the Methodist Churches of the Holston Conference.

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

Mrs. Wiley could never have imagined how her ministry would impact thousands of children and families. She was willing to let God use her to make a difference in the lives of children, and in the process of helping children, the lives of many adults were also touched. What was begun 122 years ago continues to give children and families opportunities to become all that God intended them to be.

–Eva Gray Hutchins