Holston Happenings
newsletter
Fall, 2022



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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Matthew 18:10-14 – "See to it that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven. What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish."



This is one of my favorite passages because it describes God's heart and how He desires and pursues a relationship with the children in His care and each one of us, regardless of our age or situation. But in case we need more evidence, here goes…

Last year the Lord put a large local trailer park on our hearts and called us to begin going into that community and meeting our neighbors. We met families, prayed for them, provided some winter coats, and began to be the kind of friends we wanted to have in our own lives. This trailer park has a lot of children, and we were led to go and earn the right to be heard as we share the gospel and meet families where they are.

A few weeks before Easter we had some leftover food that a church had given us. Our boys' youth minister, Jack, and some others from our ministry team decided to grab some of our older youth and go deliver it to families in the trailer park. When Jack was leaving with the guys they heard a boy, Jason, crying in the residence. They learned that a younger boy with some intellectual delays had just been admitted and was really scared and sad after being removed from his family. Jack asked the boys to go and meet the young man and encourage him. They gladly did because they could easily remember what that first night was like.

Afterwards they headed out into the community to share some really good leftovers. There was also a missionary that was visiting our campus who went along with the group. He approached Jack and said that he knew what he was about to say might sound weird, but he felt the Lord speak to him about a red trailer. Jack agreed that this did seem unusual but said he didn't know of any red trailer in the neighborhood. They started delivering food to families. In an hour or so the missionary group came across — you guessed it — a red trailer. They were both amazed and excited because they knew it was no coincidence but more of a "God incident."

They knocked on the door and were greeted by some young adults who had clearly been smoking marijuana. The missionary took the lead in sharing why they were there and how God had directed them to their house. Following some awkward silence, our new friends thanked them for coming and offering them food. They then told our team about a family with much more need that lived down the street. Our folks insisted that they let us bless them with some food and thanked them for their concern for their neighbors.

The group then followed their directions and arrived at the next stop on the Lord's treasure map. The lady who answered the door was weeping uncontrollably. They tried to console her and began to explain why they were there, offering to pray for her and her situation. She gathered herself enough to explain that her children had been taken into the state's custody and that she and their father were so scared and grief-stricken that they weren't with them. We prayed for them, gave them food, and invited them to a home church service that we were having in their trailer park on Friday evening. The family was grateful for everything as our group left but were still very broken-hearted.

The next week these parents decided to come to the Friday service and met Jack while they were there. As they shared their story, all the pieces started to fall into place and Jack realized that these parents were Jason's mom and dad. God had orchestrated every step from the giving hearts of the church who donated the food, to the timing of Jason's first night, to the words He spoke to a visiting missionary, to the compassionate hearts of immature adults not following Him, and ultimately to the doorstep of a messy and broken family who was struggling with life's challenges. What a good and amazing Savior we serve!

On one hand I apologize for how long this story is taking but really, I don't. It's so worth it! The family attended an Easter dinner with their son along with all of our kids and some of their families. We gladly shared the gospel that evening and the hope of the resurrection story. Jason continued to thrive in our school and at chapel. Last month he was selected to attend a local church camp where he decided to give his life to the One who gave His life for him first. He couldn't wait to tell everyone, and I was blessed enough to be on his list of people to share it with. Later that week he wanted to be baptized, and our staff went and brought his parents to be a part of that beautiful experience.

Doesn't that sound just like what Jesus described in the parable of the lost sheep? Doesn't it look like leaving the hillside to go and find that one? And don't you think all of heaven rejoiced when Jason was found and brought into the flock? I don't know where you are at this moment of life, but I know that the Father doesn't just love and pursue the children at Holston Home. He is intimately aware and interested in a close childlike relationship with you and me. If we think about it, our story may have a lot of twists and turns as He came to find us. Be encouraged today that He loves you and your family exactly like that.

Thank you for your prayers and gifts that the Lord uses to create these testimonies. We are so grateful and so honored that you would support us in this ministry. Would you pray specifically that Jason's parents will follow Jesus? Would you also pray that a Christian family would come forward to foster Jason while we continue to work with his parents? And then would you pray for all of the Jasons we care for and how God might use you, your family, Sunday school class or small group, and your church to make a difference in the lives of children and their families by supporting Holston Home's ministry?

May God bless you and may His face shine upon you!

In Christ Bradley



Scan this QR (Quick Response) code — it will take you directly to the Online Giving Form on our website (https://gift.holstonhome.org/) where you can conveniently give using a credit card.

Student Success



We recently celebrated Xavier, who enlisted as a Marine, before he left for recruit training.

Xavier lived at Holston Home for almost two years and was such a blessing.

While here he participated in our catering program, worked on the grounds, and even did some theater.

Congratulations, Xavier, on your next step. We're so proud of you!



LAST YEAR:

- **49 of our youth** made professions of faith in Jesus Christ
- **33** were baptized
- **53** participated in missions work



Honor & Memorial Cards for Christmas

As the busy holiday season approaches, if you wish to send a financial gift to Holston Home in honor or in memory of loved ones or friends, we need to receive those gifts by **December 2nd** to allow our Giving staff ample time to create the special cards and mail them so they are received prior to Christmas Day.

If your list of names and addresses is lengthy (3 or more), please consider the amount of time and postage charges it will cost Holston Home and help us steward your gift and the gifts of others well.

If you prefer, we would be glad to provide a supply of cards and envelopes so you can prepare and mail them personally.



Our staff is few in number and we greatly appreciate you helping us honor your holiday intentions.

Thank you for your help!

VEHICLE DONATION PROGRAM

We are excited to introduce this program to our giving platform as a new way to support the children. This program will serve as an opportunity to help our older youth with a first vehicle or perhaps replace an aging agency vehicle that our counseling staff uses when providing counseling in the child's home across East TN and Southwest Virginia. Additionally, as there is no way to anticipate what kind of need or response this opportunity may create, we will reserve the right to sell surplus vehicles with proceeds going back into the ministry and helping offset the cost of providing care to so many young people. As times are challenging for so many people and nonprofits, beginning a Vehicle Donation Program could be an attractive opportunity for you to help further Holston Home's mission, while receiving valuable tax credit for your gift. Do you have a vehicle in good working order that you are not using that you would consider donating to support the work of Holston Home for Children? If so, we'd love to talk with you about the possibility!



Donor Spotlight



Helen McClaren grew up in Jefferson City then went to college and pharmacy school in west Tennessee. She has worked as a pharmacist for almost 50 years – a profession she pursued after working as a "soda jerk" in a drug store as a high school student.

As Holston Home's Ambassador at Shady Grove United Methodist Church in Dandridge, Tennessee, Helen has served for more than a decade in this role and handles publicity for Fifth Sunday Offerings. She is grateful for Holston Home's Christian mission, ministry, and values.

Helen has served on multiple mission trips to countries in Central America. Her favorite hobbies are hiking, walking, and mowing the yard. She spends the rest of her free time helping at church and visiting her church's shut ins.

We recently caught up with Helen to learn more about her relationship with Holston Home for Children and here is an excerpt from our conversations.

Holston Home for Children (HHC): How did you first connect with Holston Home?

Helen: My first recollection of Holston Home was as a child; my parents took us to visit the Greeneville campus. They were faithful supporters. My parents were great role models. I learned from an early age that generosity isn't just about helping financially or materially: it starts with making time to share yourself with others.

HHC: You visited (again) a few years ago. What was your impression?

Helen: We took a group of junior high students to paint fences as a mission project. I found the campus to be beautiful and inviting. But I was most impressed by the caring staff, teachers, and caregivers working with the children.

HHC: Why do you choose to support Holston Home?

Helen: I support Holston Home because I believe in their ministry. I love the success stories of the children; I believe every child deserves a chance for a better life.

Shop At AmazonSmile

Shop at **smile.amazon.com** and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases to Holston Home at no cost to you. This opportunity is available year-round but could be an especially effective (and easy!) way to give during the upcoming Christmas shopping season!

WAYS TO SUPPORT

- **4x4 TRUCK.** We are in need of a ½ ton or larger four wheel drive truck, something similar to a Ford F-150, Chevy 1500, or Tahoe/Suburban.
- **PERSONAL HYGIENE ITEMS.** These items are always in high demand. For a more comprehensive list, visit HolstonHome.org/wish-list-in-kind-giving
- **SCHOOL SUPPLIES** such as art supplies, mechanical pencils, erasers, Sharpie markers, colored pens and pencils, Clorox wipes, facial tissues.
- **BECOME A MENTOR.** Spend at least one hour a week and invest in a child's life.
- **BECOME A FOSTER OR ADOPTIVE PARENT.** The need is great and the families are few. Would you prayerfully consider caring for a young person in need of a loving family?

For more information, please call Susan at 423-787-8753.

Holston United Methodist
Home for Children
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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 October 30, 2022

A Glimpse of History

The stated purpose of Holston Orphanage, at its inception, was to *"Care for, train, and educate the helpless, neglected children, orphaned or otherwise, of the territory comprised of the Holston Conference..."* Mrs. Wiley's staff and volunteers provided whatever class instruction was needed, but that soon became an overwhelming task.

Matrons and secretaries doubled as teachers and were demanding a salary increase. On August 31, 1916, the board voted to send all school-age children to Greeneville City Schools. This apparently did not work out, presumably because such a large number of students taxed the workload of available teachers and the facilities. After only two days, the Greeneville Board of Education proposed to pay the orphanage if the "manager" (later called the Superintendent) would agree to maintain a school at the orphanage.



In 1917, children above the fourth grade were sent to public school. By 1918, an agreement was reached between the Greeneville Board of Education and the orphanage for the city to provide teachers for the orphanage elementary classes on campus and high school students attended public schools or Hiwassee College, which, at that time, was both a high school and a two-year college. This agreement held for many years.

Visit us online **www.holstonhome.org** as well as on Facebook and Instagram

When the move was made to the "new campus" in 1954 and the student population was reduced to 60, all of the children attended public school.

In the late 1960's, the Holston Home staff realized that emotional and behavioral problems of children in care were increasing and many children were having difficulty learning in the public school setting. Special classes were established on campus which provided intensive, skilled instruction in reading, writing, math and study skills. This concept of helping children with academic deficits eventually evolved into our current on campus Christian school, River Academy.

–Eva Grey Hutchins