Holston Happenings
newsletter

Summer 2024



Providing Hope and Healing
for a Brighter Future...

A publication of
Holston Home for Children

From the President



HOLSTON HOME'S MISSION:
Holston 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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You may remember that we purchased a food truck that we named "Taste and See..." based on Psalm 34:8 which says, "Taste and see that the Lord is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!" Our bigger goal with this effort has always been more about going to at risk neighborhoods and engaging new friends in authentic relationships that allow us to share the good news of the gospel and real hope for their family's challenges.

During one of our grocery distributions at the Boys and Girls Club, a team member named Christi met a young single mother, named Ashely. Ashely had learned that we would be supplying groceries and stopped by the food truck while picking up her daughters after work. Unfortunately, we had just handed out our last bag. Ashely was disappointed because she was counting on the groceries to help her get through December's demands to feed her family — her and her three daughters. Thankfully, we had more groceries at The Rock, and Christi told her that she could deliver them to her house that evening.

Ashely's family was so friendly and welcoming when she arrived, and they invited Christi to stay and have a girls night. Everyone had a wonderful time. In fact, Ashely invited Christi to attend the Whoville Christmas celebration in Jonesborough with her children on Saturday, and Christi gladly accepted.

Christi attends The Rock church at Holston Home and naturally invited Ashely and her children to join her the next day. I was filling in for our pastor that morning, and I shared about the story of Lazarus. I recounted how Jesus had called Lazarus out of his grave into more life. I went on to share that the Lord calls unbelievers out of their graves and into new life in Him but that the story doesn't stop there. He is constantly calling all of us as His disciples to leave the hindrances of this world that seek to entomb us. He calls us to more life, closer life, and abundant life in Him this side of the grave and this side of heaven. After church, Ashely told Christi that the message was for her because she hadn't been to church since she was a child. Since then, she and her girls have been attending church with us. She told Christi that she and her daughters had not experienced the support of a church and its congregation before. Christi and she are continuing to grow in their relationship and are investing in each other's lives weekly over lunch.



"I got a great friend out of it (meeting Christi through the food truck ministry) and I'm slowly finding God again," Ashely said. "I don't really have friends and I haven't had a friend like you (Christi) in a long time..."

Ashely had her first baby when she was only 16 years old and never had a chance to learn how to drive. She still has not learned how to drive nine years later, primarily because she has not been able to find two people available at the same time to watch her children and to teach her. She has always wanted to learn to drive and get her driver's license. As you can imagine the fact that she has not held a license has affected her ability to have a long-term job and has made her daily life more challenging because

Donor Spotlight



Jim and Ann Wallace have been married for 42 years and live in Knoxville where Jim is a partner for over 50 years in Wallace Real Estate. Ann is retired from teaching and is a community volunteer. The Wallaces are sweet friends, and we are excited to share their story.

How They Connected with Holston Home's Ministry:

Ann's first exposure to Holston Home came through her parents, Jack & Sue Rountree, who heard about HHC's mission focus at Bearden United Methodist Church in Knoxville back in the 1960s. Ann's mother had a great love for children and often stated that her heart was burdened for children who were orphans. Upon her mother's death, HHC was chosen as a recipient of memorial donations in Sue Rountree's memory.

Another entirely different connection came in 1974. At that time Ann started college at the University of Tennessee and the family decided to donate their beloved quarter horse, Sam, as the very first horse in the budding equestrian program. Over the next few years, Ann often visited to ride and care for Sam.

What Excites Them About Holston Home:

HHC strives to fill the needs of those they serve whether they are pre-school children, children/youth in grades K-12, adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities, young men who are 16½-21 years old in transition to adulthood, or adult women in need of addiction recovery. "HHC serves Jesus Christ and their clients daily in fostering hope and healing to prepare them to live the fulfilling adult lives that God intended for them," they said.

One program they are especially excited about is Recovering Hearts which formed due to an increasing need for women to receive help who are struggling with addiction. The end goal is to free ladies from this bondage and reunite healthy mothers with their children, the couple highlighted.

Why They Support Holston Home:

Jim and Ann choose to financially support the mission of HHC because it is providing crucial support to youth, adults, and families that desperately need the hope and healing of Jesus. "The administrators and staff truly act as the hands and feet of Jesus to those in crisis," they said.

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she has either had to work where she could walk or where she knew someone that she could ride with.

Holston Home is now helping Ashely with driving lessons and childcare, and she will be able to get her driver's license soon! We also plan to help secure a reliable car for her and her three little girls.

We are honored that the Lord would call her out of her grave and trust her and her beautiful family to be ministered to by an incredible lady like Christi and the Holston Home family. We are thrilled that we can call Ashely our friend and have the privilege to love and help her family.

Thank you for supporting this ministry that is helping children and families grow closer to Jesus. You are making a lasting impact that you may never fully know. Your support gives us the resources to invest in the lives of Ashely and her little girls as well as 300+ kids and families on any given day. I pray blessings for you and your families and I pray that you and I will continue to hear the Savior's voice and keep experiencing more life with Him — it is absolutely who we were created to be!

In Christ,



Sam's Story

Sometimes a youth's excitement to be at Holston Home is incredibly contagious to other youth and our staff which is true of Sam who is a blessing to everyone he meets, and he tells anyone who will listen how happy he is to be here!

Sam is a cheerful 14 year old young man who recently came to us. His sweet and personable nature would make you think he has never had a difficult day in his life. However, Sam has faced significant challenges. He moved to middle Tennessee several years ago from another state with his parents and siblings. Unfortunately, during this time, his dad went to prison for abusing children and mom was left to care for five children on her own. Mom developed serious health problems which left her unable to properly care for them.

Additionally, Sam experienced developmental delays and physical problems with his feet that made walking difficult. Sam's mom homeschooled all the children and kept them isolated from others. Sam was often a target for bullies because of his enthusiastic personality and unsteady walk, but this never seemed to discourage him. Sam craved social contact and would run away from home to get out and meet people.

Sam's mother eventually sent him to live with his godparents. But he was very unhappy there and again felt isolated, so he ran away. This led to Sam's arrival at Holston Home. Interestingly, he was only supposed to live at Holston for a brief period, but he made it clear shortly after arriving that he loved it here! He reported to staff that he felt safe and loved and was making friends. Nobody bullied him at Holston Home!

Sam expressed how grateful he was that God brought him to Holston Home and asked for everyone to pray for him that he could stay long term. In fact, Sam told staff that one night he prayed to God that he could stay at Holston Home. He said this was the first time he had prayed in a long time because he was not sure God was listening. The next morning, we learned that Sam would not be leaving. Of course, he was thrilled!

Since that day, we have taken Sam on adventures including a three-story ropes course, hiking in the mountains, eating at a variety of restaurants, and going on a week-long camping trip where he tried his first ever S'more. More are planned this summer including a beach trip. Sam is making straight A's, at River Academy and enjoys education. We have taken Sam to an orthopedist who recommended surgery for his feet, and we are encouraging him to overcome his fear of doctors and have the surgery.

Thank you for helping to impact youth like Sam who are experiencing hope and healing for a brighter future because of the love of Jesus through the ministry of Holston Home!



HOW CAN I HELP?

- **BECOME A FOSTER PARENT.** The need is overwhelming, and the families are few. Would you prayerfully consider caring for a young person in need of a loving Christian family?
- **BECOME A MENTOR.** Spend at least 1 hour each week investing in the life of a child.
- **Give an In-Kind Gift.** We are always in need of school supplies, canvases for art projects (5"x7" and 8"x10" sizes), and household items such as towels and wash cloths. Visit our website for specific needs.
- **Give a gift from a Will or Trust** or from a **Donor-Advised Fund (DAF)**

Please call Susan at 423-787-8753 if you're interested in supporting Holston Home for any of these needs.

Student Success



Grady Barefield was born the second child to a stay-at-home mother and a military man rising in his career and working for the United States Veterans Administration (VA). Shortly after a career advancement that took his family from living nearby at the VA in Johnson City to the VA in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, his father experienced a heart attack and passed away. This event led Grady's mother, with three boys, to return to Johnson City in search of family assistance. Finding little help, she eventually realized that her lack of education and work history would hamper her ability to raise her children.

At the age of four, Grady and his brothers became children of the welfare system. His older brother and he resided at Holston Home in Greeneville. His baby brother went into a foster to adopt situation and was adopted shortly afterwards. Grady and his brother lived at Holston Home until they aged out of the system after high school graduation. Grady's junior and senior years in high school were spent in a foster family environment.

"I am an example of the fact that some children require the assistance of others during the vulnerable years of their childhood, whether it be from a change in a family situation due to health issues or death, or due to abuse or neglect caused by mental health problems, addiction, or other situations," said Grady.

Grady graduated from Greeneville High School (GHS) in 1961 and was a determined athlete and student. He lettered for four years in both football and track and was the first freshman to earn a starting position on the varsity football team. He was Vice President of his Senior Class and Vice President of the GHS Letter Club the same year.

A brief enrollment in college was followed by enlisting into the United States Army. His military service in the Army was followed by service in the Army Reserve. He has also been a member of the American Legion TN Post #64 and the Greene County Honor Guard primarily as Chaplain. Grady spent 35 years working for Sprint Telephone as a Central Office Technician before retiring in 2004.

For a quarter-century he has served area Veterans, including helping to establish the Greene County Veterans Association with the goal to provide a rightful place to honor all Greene County Veterans serving at peace time and at war. Grady serves as President and Chairman of the Greeneville Veterans Memorial Park. Every Christmas season he helps with laying a wreath at each military grave site at Andrew Johnson State Park and participates in the dedication service.

Grady has a strong Christian faith, is a devoted family man, and stays active in the interests of his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. He married Brenda Hope in 1964 and they had two children, Christine and Bill. Later, after Brenda passed away, Grady married Margaret Cottrell Thomas, who raised a daughter and two sons. Margaret passed away in 1999.

Grady joined the Holston Home Board of Trustees in 2023. "I hope due to my past need for Holston Home as a child, I could now have the opportunity to serve those most vulnerable, the young children in our community that like I once did, need support," he explained.



Listed below are prayer requests some of our youth have publicly shared. Please pray with us.

- Pray for my uncle that has cancer. Also pray the Lord brings me a foster home.
- Pray for me to control my anger. I am thankful for being at Holston and getting the help I need.
- I am thankful that I am at a good place. Pray for me because I am struggling with how long it is taking to be able to go home.
- Pray for me because I am struggling with the desire to use drugs again.
- I am thankful for God's gift of second chances. Pray for me as I am struggling with being happy and having a good attitude.
- Pray for my mom to quit her addiction and get me back and that my dad gets out of prison.

Holston Home for Children
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To protect the privacy of our youth, photographs of children in this publication may or may not represent actual youth residing here.

Next 5th Sunday is June 30, 2024

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Thank You to our wonderful **Friends of Children** sponsors this past year. We appreciate your giving and generous hearts. You have been a blessing to the young people who we are called to serve.

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