Holston Happenings
newsletter

Spring, 2016



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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Running from the police was just one of the things Jackson was running from when he arrived at Holston Home. After breaking into several vehicles in his hometown, our admission team saw something in him that compelled them to take a chance on this 17 year old young man with a wide-eyed little boy inside.

Although Jackson wasn't running from the police any longer, he was still running from the pain of several tough circumstances: his parents' divorce and addictions, the fatal shooting of his brother, and a long-standing battle with bulimia. Evading arrest was easier than eluding the relentless pursuit of these assailants from his past, and they all caught up with him once he was here. There were many difficult days initially, including outbursts, sleeplessness, and purging meals.

Mrs. Carmichael started praying for this young man and waging her own relentless pursuit of him -- except she was armed with the love of the Beginning and the End. It didn't take long for Jackson to stop running from his hurts and start running to the Light.

Jackson asked Jesus to set him free and make him new, and He did just that. Jackson wanted to be baptized, and he wanted to start this new walk by letting us all see that wide-eyed little boy that Jesus had been longing to release. Because he had never given school much of his time, his only path for graduating at his age was a GED. Although no one in his family had ever graduated, Mrs. Carmichael, and many others at Holston Home said, "So what? It's a new day and you're a new man!"

Last week Jackson far exceeded the passing score required, and he got his GED. He has decided to start studying for the ACT because he wants to go to college. Yesterday he attended court on his previous charges. He stood tall taking responsibility for his past decisions, telling of his new achievements, and sharing his dreams which include staying at Holston Home for as long as he can to finish college. The judge thought that was a pretty good idea too!



Paul writes, "Therefore if Jackson is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold new things have come." 2 Corinthians 5:17 NASB (with a small adaptation!). I rejoice that Jackson is new and that, as believers, we are new too, and that joy never gets old.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our age old approach of loving kids enough to share Jesus and His hope so that He can make them and their futures brand new. Please continue to pray for Jackson, our children, their families, and our caring team. We are so dependent on your prayers and financial support to do what we do – Thank you!

In Christ,

Bradley S. Williams

New Life

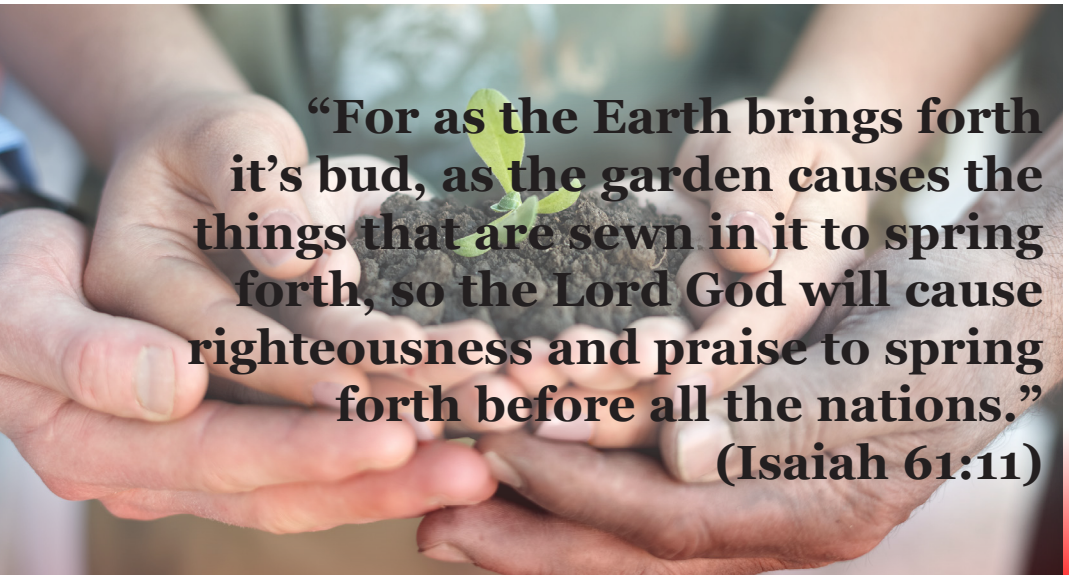
New life is springing up all around Holston Home. The flowers are in full bloom while the hearts of young people are also being transformed daily. It is amazing to see God's story of redemption played out in the physical world around us. What was cold, dark, and hopeless has been given over to life and glorious light.



Christopher knows, all too well, about the darkness that comes when all hope is lost. At four years old, the only light he knew was the dim glow of meth being manufactured in his home. When he was placed in foster care through Holston Home, it was no surprise that he was terrified of adults, couldn't speak in full sentences, and desperately wanted to be left alone. Christopher needed a family to warm his heart, plant the seed of unconditional love, and give him hope. His foster family was committed to do exactly that.

Over time, Christopher's icy exterior began to thaw. Love had entered in, and like the warmth of the sun to a flower, it was causing his heart to change. Over time he learned to return the love that was being freely given to him and even talk about the way he felt inside. Devoted to caring for this young boy, his foster family officially adopted him.

"For as the Earth brings forth it's bud, as the garden causes the things that are sewn in it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:11) Christopher is one, of many children, at Holston Home who is experiencing the loveliness of spring. It is a blessing to see the mission of Christ, "to give fullness of life," played out in the hearts of precious children, like Christopher, who simply need the light of God's son, and a loving environment encouraging them to grow.



Poetry Corner

Former Holston Student writes:

Born five weeks early,
To a mother age fifteen,
No air in my lungs,
My heartbeat astray,

Grew up in the projects,
Watched the struggle each day,
My mom worked nonstop,
She had bills to pay,

I wanted her home,
No way she could stay,
If only she knew why,
Could I have avoided the pain?

Beat by my stepfather,
Mentally abused each day,
His personal punching bag,
I could not get away,

He told me no one loved me,
I believed him more each day,
An anger grew inside me,
It came out in destructive ways,

I destroyed my toys,
I tried to run away,
I stood up on the roof and jumped off
I didn't want to feel the pain,

My grandfather caught me,
He saved my life that day,
Took me home with him,
Where I finally felt safe,

Years later he passed away,
When we moved to Tennessee,
Life just wasn't the same,

The abuse came back,
But wasn't here to stay,
I found a place called Holston,
Where I finally was safe,

I was full of anger,
hostility and rage,
Many years to heal,
Learning to channel the pain,

With the help of my new family,
I felt love and learned a new way.

Holston Highlights



Easter

The students and staff at Holston Home celebrated Easter in a very special way this year. Everyone gathered in the Chapel for a time of worship. Students contributed through music, drama, and even poetry. Many youth have had the opportunity to meet Jesus for the first time during their stay at Holston Home. The new joy, found only in Christ and his work on the cross, lit up the faces in the room.

Baptisms

Many students have made decisions to follow Christ over the last few months. Excited to tell the world about their new faith, these new brothers and sisters in Christ asked to be baptized. While it has been too cold to hold baptisms at the creek near campus, a local church has been gracious to offer their facilities. As spring brings fresh life and a burst



of warm weather, we look forward to heading back down to the creek where hundreds of children from Holston Home have been "raised to walk in newness of life."

Beacon School

Beacon school is in full bloom as students gear up for graduation, prom, and the many year-end activities that make this such an exciting time of year.



Board Meeting

Newly appointed chairman of the board, Jeffrey Monson, led the first board meeting in 2016 earlier this spring. Holston Home is blessed by the incredible men and women that make this mission possible.

Overcoming Fears

The Adventure Based Counseling (ABC) program at Holston Home means a great deal to students, like Henry, who are learning to overcome fears and face challenges they never thought they could handle. On his first trip to the barn, Henry was extremely intimidated by the horses that towered over him. However, he chose to brave the challenge and during his time at HUMHC he learned to catch, halter, groom, saddle, and best of all, ride a horse. His favorite horse, Mary Anne, became a dear friend. Like many of the youth at Holston Home, Henry struggled with anger and depression. "My time with Mary Anne is what gets me through the week," said Henry. The ABC instructors have been so encouraged by the transformation that takes place as Henry's burdens melt away when he enters the barn. He now uses these skills to lead and cheer on other students as they face their own fears.



For more highlights...
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Making a Difference

Dear Ambassadors,

The children of Holston United Methodist Home for Children are better off today because of friends like you who take the message of The Epistle of James very seriously as you work hard to make your church aware of the needs of these "orphans of the living."

When I think of the gifts that are given to Holston Home, I am reminded of the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000. There really wasn't enough to feed everyone, but when Jesus blessed the gift of loaves and fishes, there was enough to do



the job. That's how God blesses Fifth Sunday offerings. Every gift, combined with all other gifts, blessed by God, can help a lot of children who look to the church in times of crises.

Please make sure your church participates in the May Fifth Sunday offering. For promotional materials, contact Nancy Presley at 423-787-8726 or call me at 423-787-8723.

Thank you for all you do. May God richly bless you and may you experience the abundance of His love as you continue to serve the children at Holston Home.

In the Name of the Good Shepherd,

Rev. Charles A. Hutchins
Director of Church Relations

"Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress..." (James 1:27)

5th Sunday Offering May 29, 2016

Ways You Can Help!

Guatemala Mission Trip
Sponsor a student serving on the Guatemala mission team.

Community Service Projects
Make it possible for our young people to serve their community.

Library Renovations
Help us give the gift of reading.

Graduation
Offer hope for a brighter future.

For more information on all of these giving opportunities, please contact Nicole Rader at (423)-787-8753 or nicolerader@holstonhome.org

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.

A Glimpse Of History

Today when we need food or clothing, we make a trip to the local supermarket or department store. It has not always been so!

I remember when people had large gardens and orchards, sufficient to feed their families during the summer and preserve enough to last through the winter months. Clothing – everything from shirts and dresses to undergarments – was sewn, usually by the mother or the older girls in the home.



In that scenario, try to imagine what it must have been like to provide food and clothing for the hundreds of children who lived at Holston Orphanage. The boys who worked on the farm, usually with one man to supervise and help them, worked a garden to grow vegetables and cared for an orchard to provide fruit. They had to depend on the generosity of people across East Tennessee and Southwest Virginia to share the produce from their gardens, their chickens, and eggs. All of the children helped can or otherwise preserve enough to get through the winter months. Area merchants brought flour, meal, and other staples. A dairy herd was kept, and the boys milked the cows.

Girls learned early how to sew and made much of the clothing worn by the children. It was part of the matrons' responsibilities to teach the girls to sew, cook, and clean. There were very few adults working at the orphanage and the children had to carry the load.



As if gardening, canning and sewing weren't enough to keep the children busy when they weren't in school, the superintendent reported in 1915 that they were also "cutting cord wood, posts, sawing lumber off the new land, and making brick as well as running the farm. (*Haven in the Hills*). Whenever a new building was needed the bricks were made by the boys.

There was no shortage of work, and I imagine that when evening came, there was no problem getting the children to go to bed.

~Eva Grey Hutchins