

FOUNDATION

FORUM

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JAMES & AGNES FRANKS *Good and Faithful Servants*

Mary “Agnes” Cureton Franks passed away on February 11, 2009 at age 94, but the legacy she and her husband of 63 years, James S. Franks, Sr., left behind is only the beginning. Back in 1981, the Franks evaluated their lives, loves and blessings and set into motion a plan to demonstrate their faith and make a difference into the future. The Franks met with Ben St. Clair, Executive Director of the Holston Conference Foundation at the suggestion of Tom Lynch to explore ways they might leave a legacy as part of their overall estate plan. Fifteen years later the Franks created a Charitable Remainder Trust through their local bank that named the Holston Conference Foundation as the ultimate beneficiary to manage the proceeds of the trust as an endowment with annual earnings to support First United Methodist Church in Newport, Tennessee; Asbury Retirement Centers; Emory & Henry College, Hiwassee College, Tennessee Wesleyan College; and the ministry of the Foundation as suggested beneficiaries.

James was very active in his local church as well as in the ministries of the Holston Conference. Retired pastor, Tom Lynch, described him as simply “a dependable man who was generous and was willing to work for the greater good.” Former pastor, Chuck Starks, added, “James was a prince of a fellow. He served every leadership position in



Standing: James & Agnes Franks
Seated: James Franks, Jr. (son)

the local church and was a visionary leader of the Newport Utility Systems. He gave of his time, talent, and gifts to his church and community, and also served in many capacities at the Conference level.” He was awarded for his service to Christian higher education and campus ministry with an honorary degree (Human Letters) from Tennessee Wesleyan in 1971.

Agnes was a life-long resident of Newport and an 80-year member of First United Methodist Church, where she served on numerous committees, was president of her Sunday school class, a member of the church’s Frankie Russell Circle and president of the United Methodist Women. She was a legal and executive secretary for 30 years and an active member of the Newport Business Women’s Club and Twentieth Century Club.

The Franks are survived by several nieces, nephews, and cousins, as well as their son, James (Jim) S. Franks, Jr., a senior research scientist, fisheries biologist, and conservationist, who lives in Ocean Springs, Mississippi. Jim added, “Mom and Dad were so proud that they could provide financial assistance to support so many things they cared about in the Conference. They were wonderful folks...and I miss them greatly.” Their lives of service to their church, community, and family, as well as their well planned and executed philanthropic support of the church and its ministries set a marvelous example for us all. Well done you good and faithful servants!



HOPE IN THE FACE OF THE NEW REALITY

The recent failures in the financial markets cannot be ignored. The churches, institutions, and individuals we serve have been shaken. We are all concerned about the market drop and what might happen next, but we must remember who we are and continue to have the courage to “Be the Church”. While The Holston Conference Foundation is not exempt from the turmoil in the marketplace, the need for our “getting and giving” educational services and financial ministry has never been more important. The following points will help us move forward in the face of this new reality:

RESET PRIORITIES

As existing resources have evaporated, the Foundation and all ministries must be more frugal and creative about managing what we have. We must examine every expense and find ways to trim unproductive spending. At the same time, we cannot ignore the GOOD NEWS that people’s giving makes ministry happen and we must be bold enough to ask.

KEEP INVESTING IN THE CORE

We must remember our mission and keep investing in our core values and the things we do best. We bring special skills and services to people, churches, and other ministries. There cannot be a future harvest if we do not continue to prepare the soil and plant the seeds.

COMMUNICATE LIKE CRAZY

In recessions all constituencies weary from the dreary news. We do not have to have all the answers, but we need to be sensitive and honest about conditions while keeping hope alive. Optimism is contagious and the fruit of generosity is joy! We must continue to visit churches and living rooms to share ideas about the ways, means, and opportunities to make a lasting difference.

NEW PROBLEMS AND NEW SOLUTIONS

Our churches, people, and ministries are faced with new problems, so we must be prepared to provide new solutions. We must provide “valued services” with the best possible customer service we can muster. We must be a resource for information and tools to help them make the most of what they have and help them find and examine ways to get more. All churches and ministries need to have and use good stewardship practices.

HOPE AROUND THE CORNER

All recessions end and this one is no different. Going back to 1926, the S&P 500 posted 24 years of negative returns and 59 years of positive returns. During that same timeframe, the average Bull (up) Market lasts 32 months, while the average Bear (down) Market lasts only 11 months. We are now about 17 months into this downturn. While we have no ability to predict the future, this historical perspective reinforces a reason to believe better days are ahead. Though it is hard to be upbeat about a recession, it does present us and the entire church an opportunity to serve and lead. Doing the right things well in hard times takes courage and skill. Our future and the ministries we serve depend on how we manage and what we do right now!

SET THE EXAMPLE...OPEN THE DOOR

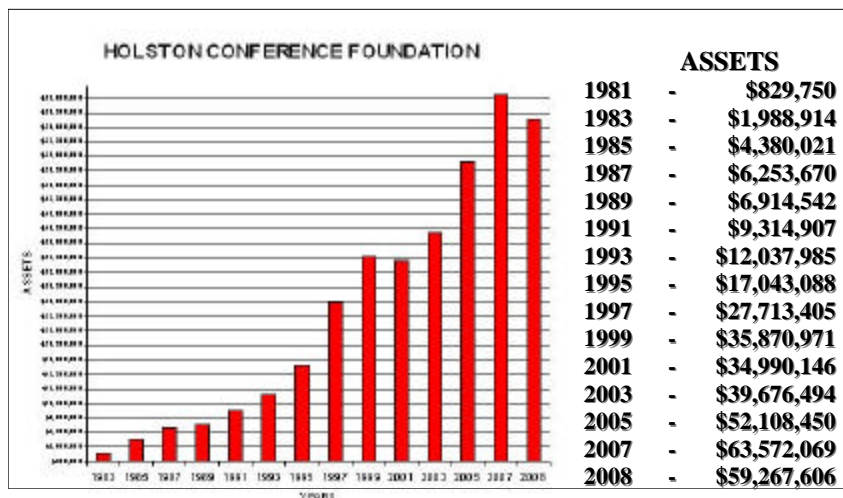
More than ever we need bold leadership from our clergy and laity to set the tone and the example for others to follow. Invite us into your church to help educate others about giving and leaving a legacy. Get your own affairs in order and consider your own opportunities to make a lasting difference. Explore the materials and tools we offer to assist committees and churches with endowment creation or policies on spending and investing special purpose funds. We are at your service, but we need you to remain faithful and help open the door!

– Roger Redding, Executive Director

In early March, I wrote this article, *HOPE IN THE FACE OF THE NEW REALITY* to our board, to the churches we serve, and to myself as a reminder that while the Foundation is not in control of the financial markets, we are responsible for fulfilling our mission and ministry to the church. Since March 9, the S&P 500 is up nearly 40% from its low point and is back in positive territory for 2009. The sky really is not falling! Even with the steep decline of 2008, the average annual return of the S&P 500 since 1926 is still 9.4%. While we are not saying that everything is rosy (there are always ebbs and flows in the markets), it suddenly feels safe to exhale. Opportunities abound and now is the perfect time to be looking ahead and a great time to “be the Church”!

PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS

While 2008 was certainly a challenge due to the decline in the financial markets, the Foundation also celebrated several joys! We opened 29 new accounts, added \$3.7 million in new funds and distributed \$3.3 million back to churches through income distributions, grants, etc. While total assets fell 6.7% during the year to \$59,267,606 on December 31, 2008, the Foundation passed Wisconsin, Michigan, and Missouri to move up three places from 14 to be the 11th largest Conference Foundation in United Methodism.



Our board and our staff are committed to excellence and we hope you will call on us if we might be of service.

— Will J. Pugh
Foundation President



PERFORMANCE UPDATE

In the three months since early March, the S&P 500 stock index has been on a tear rising nearly 40% from its March 9, 2009 low. While confidence in the stock market is still fragile, we are certainly pleased and relieved to see positive territory and year-to-date gains. At the end of June, the Foundation's EQUITY GROWTH FUND was up 5% YTD (benchmark 3.28%) and the BALANCED GROWTH FUND was up 3.78% (benchmark 1.87%).

The Foundation's Investment Committee has spent many hours

this year reviewing our strategies and options, particularly related to our income-oriented holdings. While last years flight to quality gave us excellent performance through the U.S. Treasury bonds in our INTERMEDIATE INCOME FUND (up 8.75% in 2008, -.64% YTD) and the SHORT-TERM INCOME FUND (up 5.31% in 2008, up .08% YTD) finding safe and dependable yields in 2009 with rates at historic lows has presented a challenge. This year we have liquidated our individual treasury bonds to harvest gains and redeployed

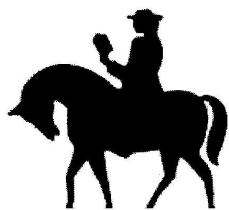
those income assets into a mix of bond funds to add diversification and increase yield. We hope these prudent moves will serve our churches and ministries well.

While the Foundation board continually updates and reviews our performance and the strategies for each fund offering, we remain committed to our core stewardship values through diversification, low cost and service intertwined with the social principles of the church.

—David Goodson
Investment Committee Chair

Programs, options, or performance updates for Trustees, Finance Committee, Endowment Committee, and other leaders are available. If you have questions or are just curious about what we do or the options we offer...just ask. Check out our website www.holston.org/foundation or call us at (865) 690-8124.

THE CIRCUIT RIDERS SOCIETY



During the Holston Annual Conference, the Foundation announced the creation of *The Circuit Riders Society* as a means of encouraging and recognizing individuals whose philanthropic plans and eternal generosity will support and enhance ongoing ministries of the church. Over the next two years we will make a concerted effort to educate donors and friends about the opportunity and will enroll those interested in following through as founding members.

Circuit Riders Society members are people who have felt God tugging at their heartstrings to make a lasting difference and have acted to leave a legacy through their estate plan, created an endowment, or made a significant current gift to support the ongoing ministry of their church, institution, agency or other missional need in the Holston area that is held or managed through the Foundation. All that will be required to join is a copy of appropriate documentation and/or a signed statement describing the gift and its purpose.

The circuit riders of old were Christ-centered, enthusiastic, hard-working individuals who gave their all to spread the gospel and spread Methodism across the American wilderness. Many would travel large circuits, most frequently by horseback with few of even the necessities of life, let alone any of the luxuries. Their mission was to move the church out to where the people were, no matter the physical demands or hardships thus the circuit rider became the key person in the growth of the church. The future was in their hands — now it is in yours!

WHY BECOME A CIRCUIT RIDER?

Circuit Riders will receive recognition by being included in special mailings and gatherings and will be listed on a plaque to be hung in the Holston Conference Center. A special member's certificate, pin, or other items might also be developed to help promote membership. More important than any reward is the example Circuit Riders set for others and the contentment and joy they experience from knowing that they have made a lasting difference.

The Apostle Paul in his letter to Timothy said it this way...

"Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life." 1 TIMOTHY 6:18-19

We invite you to contact the Foundation to confidentially discuss your plans and the many ways and options to leave a lasting legacy and to become a founding member of the *Circuit Riders Society*.

HOW CAN I JOIN?

Simply fill out this form and return it or write or e-mail us with the same information. We also would be glad to listen to your plans or questions over the phone or make a personal visit to help you explore the many planning options.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

___ I/We want to be a founding member of *The Circuit Riders Society*.

___ I/We have included OR ___ I/We intend to include the Foundation in my/our plans through a:

☐ Will

☐ Trust

☐ IRA/Retirement Plan

☐ Life Insurance

☐ Current Gift

☐ Creation of an Endowment

☐ Other: _____

to benefit the following church, ministry, program, purposes etc.: _____

___ Please contact me about creating a named endowment or special purpose fund.

___ Please contact me about planning options or how my gift(s) might make a lasting difference.

___ Please contact me about: _____

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

\$TEWARDSHIP MATTERS



BILL KILDAY
Director of Stewardship

Except for the Kingdom of God, Jesus talked more about money than any other subject. More than about sin, faith, grace, prayer or even love.

Yet, studies have shown that somewhere between 65% and 75% of our pastors are given no formal instruction in the area of financial stewardship or church financial management.

We at the Holston Conference Foundation are trying to address this issue. In 2008, after we encouraged the invitation of The Reverend Michael Reeves to address our minister's convocation, we decided to send some of our promising pastors to Plano, Texas for a Clergy Leader's conference led by Rev. Reeves and the staff of St. Andrews United Methodist Church. We begged, borrowed and "finagled" funds to make this trip possible and sent eighteen pastors for this two-day training experience.

The results were gratifying. A two-page document listing the positive comments of the participants indicate dramatic learning took place. One participant wrote, *"I came to realize that financial leadership was a 'block' for me. I gained new confidence about talking about money with my congregation and other clergy."* Another said, *"I sincerely believe this experience will be one of the foundational points of my ministry."* Other comments are these. *"When I came back home the folks here can tell I've been energized and they are excited about what might unfold as a result of this workshop."* *"The workshop helped to increase my conviction regarding the importance of stewardship, and the confidence to help me effectively communicate that importance to my congregation."*

"It has given me confirmation and confidence to take authority as the pastoral leader of a congregation."

"It was filled with much information and inspiration for what can happen in the life of a church when financial stewardship is treated as a deeply spiritual issue."

"I feel like I am further along on my way to becoming more fully and faithfully the pastor God has called me to be and that the church needs me to be." And there were others, too many to list.

The eighteen pastors who went to Plano in 2008 were:

Aldana Allen	John Brewster	Charles Ensminger	Don Hanshew	Amy Rollins	Walter Weikel
James Bennington	Michelle Buckles	Troy Forrester	Bradley Hyde	Darryll Rasnake	Carol Wilson
Bobby Black	Wil Cantrell	David Graybeal	Nathan Malone	Will Shewey	David Woody

The workshop was such a success we could not stop there. Now, we are again begging, borrowing and finagling funds to send another group to Plano. Our recruits for 2009 are:

David Brannock	Dennis Flaughner	Kim Goddard	Adam McKee	Ann Robins	Brian Taylor
Tony Brown	Mark Flynn	David Henderson	Catherine Nance	Walt Simmerman	Ramon Torres
Ron Fisher	Jason Gattis	Lloyd Jones	Mickey Rainwater	Mike Sluder	Larry Trotter

They will go to Plano October 7-9 and hopefully return as inspired as the first group.

We held a reunion of the 2008 Plano group and heard many stories of how the experience is helping these ministers work more effectively in all areas of church leadership, and especially in the area of church finances. Many suggestions are now on our plate for future implementation.

GOT GENEROSITY?

Generosity is one of the nine fruits of the spirit. It is a spiritual virtue gained from joyful gratitude for what God has done for us. True generosity comes from the understanding that God owns everything and the desire to use the resources God has entrusted to us in a manner that would please God. To learn more about how to become a more generous person or how to inspire generosity in your church, we invite you to visit www.generosity.holston.org for the Holston Conference Foundation and the Holston Conference Stewardship Team. You will find many resources, ideas, tools, and links to inspire and equip you and your church.

CliffsNotes



CLIFF AMOS

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.

PHILIPPIANS 1:3

A HEART TO HELP

It is always a good time of the year to deliver checks to churches who have been awarded grants from the Foundation's MARGARET GRIZZELL LOVING TRUST. Just a few weeks ago I was asked to deliver a check to Community United Methodist Church in Kingsport and to teach the Sunday school class and preach the morning message.

I met so many nice folks in the Bible Study. While teaching, several came through (because it was near the kitchen!) with different casserole dishes covered in aluminum foil, salad bowls, desserts, and lots of home cooking specialties. I knew we were in for a delicious banquet after church.

Mrs. Faye Jones showed me the area designated for the new food pantry that would be stocked by the generosity of the Loving grant. She was so excited anticipating all the local church people living with a stone throw of the church that needed help.

The worship service was buzzing with excitement. The Rev. Charles Kilbourne introduced the guest speaker and after a few rousing songs, offering, and prayers for the concerned, I preached a sermon entitled "Extravagant". It was about the generosity of those in the past (like Mrs. Loving) and those present who can plan to make a difference in the life of their church by tithing and leaving a legacy through their estate plans. The congregation listened well. After the last song and benediction, Mrs. Frances Stedham, and her 15-year-old daughter, Samantha, asked to say something and made their way down the aisle to the front of the church. "I have four kids and make \$800 a month and get \$600 in food stamps and often times it's just not enough. I come down to your food pantry and they have never turned me away. When I had no

food for my children, you came through," Mrs. Stedham said. With tears streaming down her face, she thanked that church over and over again. Then daughter, Samantha, tried to speak and also started crying. "We really didn't have anything and would have gone without food if it wasn't for this church," Samantha said.

Tears of joy flowed in the church because of the generosity of others. We could see the difference in their faces! Praise the Lord for those who give so others can receive. Everyone should be entitled to enough



Pictured left to right:

*Faye Jones, Rev. Cliff Amos, Miranda Stedham,
Frances Stedham, Samantha Stedham, and
Rev. Charles Kilbourne*

food to feed their children. The grants given through the Margaret Loving Trust are an investment in the future of our churches. Community UMC is investing the one thing that's going to Heaven...People!

— Cliff Amos
Director of Gift Planning

The complete list of 2009 recipients for Loving Grants, Redwine Grants, and other awards are listed on our website. If you would like to explore the creation of an endowment or other planned gifts to support your local church or another area of ministry, please give us a call.

GIVING HOPE IN SUDAN

Over the past year or so the Foundation has been involved with several special people and churches who have generously stepped forward in faith to dig three water wells and three water springs to help anchor the growing and flourishing ministries in and around Yei, Sudan. The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) estimates that 4,000 people are served by these wells, according to Danny Howe, Holston Missions Team leader. "They provide clean water, but they also substantiate our medical work," Howe added.

Last year we were contacted by an anonymous couple from First Morristown United Methodist Church. They had enjoyed a successful and happy life and had done quite well financially. They also loved their former pastor and his wife. They had



Doug & Mary Jane Smith

read and heard about the Conference initiatives in Sudan and asked if it were possible to pay to have a well dug in honor of Doug & Mary Jane Smith. Doug and Mary Jane were stunned by the gesture and deeply touched by the generosity. While the



Sudan well dug in honor of Doug & Mary Jane Smith.

well was not completed before Mary Jane's death on September 10, 2008, she was excited about the progress and the hope that the well's waters would provide.

Today, because a couple loved a pastor and his wife, water is flowing . . . praise God!

We celebrated this well at Annual Conference and were moved by the blessings and well wishes aimed at The Reverends Buford (Boo) and Phyllis Hankins, who by now will have arrived in Sudan. "Boo" is appointed to serve for two years as a "transitional" district superintendent in Yei. They will be faced, no doubt, with many needs and opportunities and will need our continued prayers and financial support.

Boo estimated that we may need 15 more wells to support the churches in the surrounding areas, but we will know more on what is needed and what is possible in the days and months ahead. Current estimates are that each well may cost \$10,000-\$12,000, but the Hankins will serve as our eyes and ears to help determine the most efficient and economical options. God did not make us in Holston to be timid, but he has blessed us with a spirit of giving and hearts and hands for service.

Special gifts designated toward our well digging ministry or for the orphanage project in southern Sudan may be directed to the Foundation to support these special needs. Make checks payable to the **Holston Conference Foundation** and indicate "Sudan Wells" or other specifications in the memo section or in an attached note.

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love, and of self-discipline.

2 TIMOTHY 1:6



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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny."

— CHARLES READE

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