

Lovell appointed to Wesley Leadership Institute

The Rev. Gene Lovell is projected for appointment as part-time director of the Wesley Leadership Institute, Bishop James Swanson has announced. Lovell's appointment is effective July 1. His office will be in the Alcoa Conference Center.

Lovell, 67, is a retired clergy member in Maryville, Tenn. He is a former Tazewell District superintendent who also served as pastor at Colonial Heights UMC and Glen Alpine UMC in the Kingsport District. Lovell retired in 2004.

"I've been to several conference meetings recently, and I didn't recognize a lot of people," said Lovell of his return to active ministry. "I wanted to get back into the mix again, especially get to know the young pastors."

The Wesley Leadership Institute offers continuing education for clergy and laity.



Gene Lovell

Holston begins new disaster response phase

Holston is taking its disaster response efforts to a new level by developing an "early response" team that can mobilize within hours after disaster strikes. Volunteers are invited to participate in one of two training opportunities that will prepare them to (1) respond within 24 hours after a Holston Conference disaster, or (2) respond within 72 hours when disaster strikes outside Holston Conference. Commitments of three to four days are also expected.

"Our priority is Holston Conference, but the Southeastern Jurisdiction Volunteers in Mission may call on us in the future," said the Rev. Paul Hite, disaster response chair for Holston's northern region. Jim Hayes is southern region chair.

The Disaster Response Committee recently downsized from one difficult-to-haul 12-foot disaster-response trailer to two six-foot trailers – one for each region of Holston. One of the trailers will be available for viewing on site at Annual Conference, held June 10-13 at Lake Junaluska, N.C.

Early response training will be offered Saturday, July 28, at the Alcoa Conference Center, and Saturday, Aug. 4, at Pleasant View UMC in Abingdon, Va. Both training sessions begin at 10 a.m. and conclude at 4 p.m. Register through the Connectional Ministries Office at connectionalministries@holston.org or toll-free at (866) 690-4080.

UMM raise funds for military devotions

Denver King, treasurer of the national United Methodist Men Foundation, is leading a Holston Conference effort to help provide one million copies of a historic book of daily devotions to U.S. troops. To date, 250,000 copies have been sent to deployed troops, training centers, and veteran hospitals. An additional 500,000 copies have been sold to individuals.

Thus far, King's efforts within the conference have raised nearly \$4,000 to distribute copies of the 400-page "Strength for Service to God and Country" book to U.S. troops. A United Methodist Communications mailing to Holston congregations last month encouraged members to participate in the fund-raising effort.

"Strength for Service to God and Country" was first published in 1942 after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Distributed in both World War II and the Korean War, the book was nearly forgotten until six years ago when a California Boy Scout saw his dying grandfather reading from a tattered copy of the book. Shortly after Sept. 11, the General Commission on United Methodist Men agreed to support the effort and asked representatives in each conference to lead fund-raising efforts.

"We don't want any young man or woman to go into service without one of these books," said King, a member of Vermont UMC in Kingsport District. For every one \$5 book sold, the United Methodist Men will send two books overseas. Donations will also be accepted. Contact King at dking962@aol.com or (423) 246-7776.

Mayfield celebrates TWC's 150th anniversary

In celebration of Tennessee Wesleyan College's 150th anniversary, Mayfield Dairy Farm's half-gallon cartons of Classic Vanilla ice cream, the company's best-selling flavor, feature a commemorative logo honoring the school's history.

"We are proud to help Tennessee Wesleyan celebrate this important milestone," said Scottie Mayfield, president of Mayfield Dairy Farms. "Our organizations share many years of a strong community partnership, so we look forward to writing more chapters of this history together."

Both Mayfield and Tennessee Wesleyan have enjoyed an ongoing relationship throughout the history of Athens, Tenn., college leaders said.

"A century and a half later, there is much to celebrate and much to reflect upon as we look to the future. We are excited to celebrate our sesquicentennial with our friends and neighbors at Mayfield, and thank them for their kindness and generosity," said Steve Condon, president of Tennessee Wesleyan College.

Tennessee Wesleyan plans to mark its anniversary throughout the year with a variety of events, including a special celebration on Oct. 12-13 surrounding Homecoming activities.



Congregational development: Progress is underway

Thirty new coaches for Natural Church Development were trained April 27-29, preparing the way for the second round of churches to begin the revitalization process. The newest coaches were assigned to about 30 churches in late May and will begin working with those congregations in late summer.



Photo by Annette Spence, The Call

Thirty new coaches for Natural Church Development participate in relaxation activities at the Alcoa Conference Center.

This second round of coaching assignments brings the number of Holston churches involved in the NCD process to about 60, according to the Rev. Richard Edwards, director of congregational development.

Congregations that wish to participate in NCD in the future should "have a conversation" with their district superintendents, said Edwards.

"Not all conferences have trained their district superintendents in NCD, like we have. So all of them are in a good position to help their congregations get the help they need."

In other developments, Lighthouse UMC of Chattanooga District will welcome Bishop James Swanson on June 3 at a consecration service for its first-ever building. Currently led by the Rev. Richard Richter, Lighthouse was started in 2000. In May 2005, Holston Conference paid \$368,000 for 16.79 acres to house the congregation. The church is located off Highway 58, near Ooltewah High School.

Edwards also reports that two signs have been placed on the conference's 22-acre Hardin Valley property in Knoxville, Tenn. The signs were donated by Bob and Mary Slack, members of Fountain City UMC. The Hardin Valley property is slated for the development of a new church. ■