

**church development:**

By John Ripley



# Why plant new churches?

At the Bishop's Conference on Starting New Congregations (Jan. 24-25 in Gatlinburg), Steve Compton, director of church development in the North Carolina Conference, outlined "six compelling reasons to plant new churches."

**1. Newcomers are more likely to join new churches than existing churches.**

In part this is because people like to be in on the ground floor of something new and exciting. They don't have to worry about "who's running things around here" or figure out whose seat they're sitting on.

**2. Existing churches are moved toward renewal by the presence of new churches in their communities.**

I like the story of the pastor who said at her staff meeting, "Tell me what the new church on the edge town is doing." There is a sense that new churches are the research and development arm for existing churches.

**3. Old denominations are renewed as the percentage of new churches among them increase.**

"Why don't we try a new worship service?" "We have been here a long time, but maybe we need to look at the way we do things." "Didn't I hear someone say last week that if you do things the way you have always done them, you will get the same results you always got?"

**4. New churches are more likely than existing churches to be open to all kinds of people.**

New churches attract a variety of folks who tend to be representative of the larger community.

**5. New churches are more likely than existing churches to receive pastors who are women**

or whose cultural background, race, ethnicity or nationality differs from that of the majority membership. One presenter told of a new church that was started by a 67-year-old grandmother!

**6. New churches find it easier than existing churches to live out new approaches to mission and ministry**

(such as overnight hospitality for the homeless or contemporary worship). There is less of a tie to traditional ways of doing ministry. Since they never did it before, the new congregation is free to innovate rather than to say, "Well, it worked last year. Let's do it the same way this year."

For the first seven years of my life I worshipped at Ebenezer Church in Greene County where Bishop Asbury dedicated the first building on April 27, 1795. Now I am working to help start new congregations with the dream and hope that they will be as faithful to proclaiming the message of God's love (John 10:10) to future generations as our ancestors were in the past.

*The Rev. Ripley is the conference's director of new church development, available at (865) 690-4080 or johnripley@holston.org. ■*



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▲ Steve Compton, director of church development in the North Carolina Conference, speaks at the recent "Bishop's Conference on Starting New Congregations."

**in memoriam:****Edward Cochran**

**KNOXVILLE, Tenn.** — Edward Foy Cochran, 85, died Jan. 28, 2002, at his residence. He was a retired Holston Conference pastor, having served Jefferson City Sunrise and Pruitt Hill/Tates Chapel United Methodist churches, among others. The Rev. Cochran is survived by wife Dorothy; daughters, Jacqueline C. Williams of Ohio, and Darlisa; sons Michael and Jonald (Alberta); seven grandchildren; and two great grandchildren. Funeral services were held Jan. 31 at Lennon-Seney UMC with the Rev. Daniel Taylor Jr. officiating. Interment was at Highland South Cemetery on Feb. 1. ■

**Opal Insko**

**WILMORE, Ky.** — Opal Ruth Insko, 82, died Jan. 26, 2002. She is survived by her husband, retired Holston pastor the Rev. Emmit Insko; two daughters, Aretha Ellen Sims; Marilyn Ruth Brown; one son, Samuel Emmit Insko; one sister, Esther Athlee Brewer; five brothers, Charles Vice; Wensel Vice; Gene Vice; Kelly Vice; Roy Gayle Vice; 12 grandchildren; and nine great grandchildren. Funeral services were held Jan. 29 at Clark Chapel, Wilmore UMC, with interment on Jan. 30 at Hillsboro Cemetery. Memorial gifts may be made to Wilmore Kentucky Community Center, 335 E. Main Street, Wilmore, KY 40390. ■

**calendar:****Denman applications due Feb. 28**

The Denman Evangelism Award is presented to a lay member and to a clergy member in recognition for effective efforts in making disciples for Jesus Christ. The awards are presented by the conference Witness Team at Annual Conference 2002. Nomination forms are available at district offices. Completed forms should be mailed by Feb. 28 to the Rev. Sandra Johnson, 2484 North Briar Court, Chattanooga, TN 37406. ■

**Transformation registration due March 1**

Transformation, the Holston Board of Laity's spiritual growth and training weekend, will be held April 6-7 in Lake Junaluska, N.C. Leading the event is the Rev. Stephen Ayers of Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green, Ky., and the Rev. Jason Roe, youth director at Seymour UMC, Maryville District. Nursery and children's activities will be provided. Registration deadline is March 1. For information, contact your district office or district lay leader, or call Holston Lay Leader Bob Lockaby at (423) 756-5171 or (423) 344-7361. ■

**Snapshot:**

**SAN DIEGO** — Gathering around a baptismal font, nine Holston Conference clergymen were among the 1,185 ministers recently attending the 2002 International Clergywomen's Consultation in San Diego. "One of the worship services focused on baptismal renewal," says the Rev. Mary Briggs, associate pastor at First Marion UMC. "Each participant was asked to bring two ounces of water from home." The water was poured together into the font and into bowls used for the renewal service. Pictured from left to right: Carol Wilson, Kathie Wilson-Parker, Lisa Stone, Stella Roberts, Lauri Jo Cranford, Becky Stephens, Jane Taylor, Beverly Robinette, and Mary Briggs. Bishop Ray Chamberlain also attended the five-day event.

