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The Call

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HOLSTON CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Holston gears up for annual missions project

Holston Conference will raise \$125,000 to benefit "Helping Hands for Latvia" and collect cornmeal and Bibles for missions in Africa.

The annual spring missions project, always coordinated to conclude by Annual Conference in June, includes a special offering and a hands-on effort.

On May 1 or an alternate date, all congregations are requested to take special offerings to help build a camp, support a home for unwed mothers, and develop church leaders in Latvia.

For the hands-on effort, congregations will be collecting supplies for missions in Liberia and Zimbabwe.

"God has been good to us. Let us imitate God in giving freely to others as God as given to us," Bishop James Swanson said recently. "I want to challenge every member of Holston to offer unto God your finances as a praise offering."

If Holston can raise \$125,000, the funds will be used a help a former Iron

Holston gears, continued on page 7

Asbury sells Wytheville campus

Wytheville office will be deeded to district

MARYVILLE, Tenn. – Asbury Inc. has accepted an offer to sell the Wytheville campus to a health-care company based in Roanoke, Va.

One of four locations of Asbury's retirement community network, Asbury Place at Wytheville will be sold to Smith/Packett Med-Com, officials announced in late February.

At press time, no date had been set for the transaction.

Bernie Bowman, Asbury CEO and president based in Maryville, Tenn., cited financial losses as a reason for the Board of Directors' decision. He also expressed concern for the future of the Wytheville campus and its 243 residents.

"Asbury Place at Wytheville has accumulated financial losses of more than \$1.5 million over the last 15 years," Bowman said in a prepared statement. "When an unsolicited offer came to purchase Asbury Place, the board decided to sell the campus."

Bowman said that the other three Asbury campuses – in Maryville, Johnson City and Kingsport – had subsidized operational and capital expenses for the Wytheville campus. "Selling the property will restore the losses the Asbury corporation has accumulated over the years," he said.

Bowman emphasized that the Wytheville campus and its residents would benefit from the decision. Prior to Smith/Packett's offer, the



Asbury Place at Wytheville will be sold to a for-profit company that can invest in its future, officials say. Smith/Packett will invest \$500,000 in the first year.

Asbury leadership had considered reducing the Wytheville operation to improve its financial health, Bowman said.

"The silver lining is that Smith/Packett is committed to investing in and growing the independent and assisted-living services," said Bowman, referring to living options that are now offered along with nursing care in the preferred retirement

communities. Smith/Packett will invest \$500,000 in the Wytheville facility in the first year, according to the agreement.

"Given Asbury's overall financial status and all the competing needs within the organization, there is no way Asbury could even consider making such an investment," he added.

Asbury sells, continued on page 7

Frye, Travis will join cabinet in June



Randy Frye

Two clergy members from Wytheville District will be appointed as district superintendents this June, Bishop James Swanson announced.

The Rev. Randy Frye, pastor at First Pulaski United Methodist Church, is projected for appointment to the Johnson City District. The Rev. Mike Travis, pastor at Dublin UMC, will become superintendent of the Cleveland District.

Frye and Travis are the first new district superintendents to join the cabinet

under Bishop Swanson's leadership. Swanson became Holston's resident bishop in September 2004.

Both Frye and Travis said they were surprised by Bishop Swanson's telephone calls, offering them district leadership appointments.

Frye, age 48, will follow the Rev. Mahan Archer as superintendent in the Johnson City District. Archer will retire in June, Swanson said.

Frye, Travis will join, continued on page 7



Mike Travis

Transformation

Spiritual weekend for all ages
April 2-3, Lake Junaluska, N.C.

Keynote speaker:
Bishop James Swanson

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<http://transformation.holston.org>
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