



- 1 Abingdon
- 2 Big Stone Gap
- 3 Chattanooga
- 4 Cleveland
- 5 Johnson City
- 6 Kingsport
- 7 Knoxville
- 8 Maryville
- 9 Morristown
- 10 Oak Ridge
- 11 Tazewell
- 12 Wytheville

District Roundup

NEWS FROM YOUR DISTRICT



Colonial Height's Wayne Watson (center) is *not* an armchair quarterback.

Abingdon: First Marion UMC hopes that a four-day spiritual event, Reach 2004, will attract the unchurched. Musical groups include James Ward (yes, from Resurrections past) and James Rogers (of Pigeon Forge fame). Speakers include Bill Irwin, "the only blind person to have completed the 2,168-mile Appalachian Trail." Marion High School's 1,000-seat auditorium has been secured, and 5,000 brochures were printed for parishioners to distribute. For information about the May 9-12 event, visit www.reach2004.org. **L**

Big Stone Gap: Gate City UMC recently celebrated four Christian dates over one weekend. The "Key Event" goal: "To get beyond the commercialism of the season and focus on Christ," says Pastor Dale Wyrick. Members decorated for each holiday, beginning with Christmas and a meal on Saturday night, March 6. Sunday morning was devoted to breakfast, Good Friday, Easter and lunch – in that order. On Sunday night, the congregation marked Pentecost with pizza and worship. Guest preacher: Charles Harrison of First Rogersville UMC, Kingsport District. **M**

Chattanooga: In his "state of the church" letter, McKendree UMC's Rev. Terry Goodman challenged his congregation with statistics and thoughtful questions. According to the Department of Transportation, 5,950 vehicles – about 9,000 people – pass the church everyday, Goodman reported. "Could we have an impact on their lives if we had a more creative way to communicate with them?" he asked, suggesting a scrolling electronic billboard. He also pointed out that Jasper, Tenn., will host the 11-year-old Little League World Series this July. Of the 2,000 people who will come, "how can we minister to them?" Goodman asked. "This is an opportunity we cannot let pass by." **S**

Cleveland: A team from Wesley Memorial UMC traveled to Ghana Feb. 29-March 13. They took supplies to an orphanage with more than 60 children. Among the travelers: Senior Pastor Robert Haskins and Associate Todd Kingrea. **L**

Johnson City: Piney Flats UMC recently created a new community clothes closet. Pastor Laura Rasor says the Sprouts, a 4th and 5th grade covenant group, were looking for a new ministry. A social worker within the congregation noted that local children in the schools needed clothes, and the closet idea took off. Parishioners finished off the top floor of the new family life center, clothes were collected, and the closet opened in February. The Sprouts are regular volunteers, Rasor says. **M**

Kingsport: Wayne Watson of Colonial Heights UMC was honored by an NFL team for his volunteer work. Nominated by Pastor Robert Smith, Watson received the "2003 Parade/Tennessee Titans Community Quarterback Award" for 12 years of youth ministry. The church won \$10,000 on Watson's behalf, designating \$500 for Holston Home for Children, \$500 for St. Jude's Hospital in Memphis, and the rest for youth mission trips to St. John's Island. **L**



Cedar Bluff and First Richlands team up for kids.



Sulphur Springs packs the (brand new) house.

Knoxville: Youth at Cokesbury UMC recently filled up small plastic tubs with detergent. Then they visited 10 laundromats, offering free soap to customers. The tubs were labeled, "Want to unload some dirty laundry?" with scripture from Isaiah 1:18 and 1 Peter 5:7. "Some of our kids had never been in a laundromat before," says Youth Director Brent Ronald. "It wasn't about promoting the church as much as it was about teaching our kids to see others first and just trying to love people." **L**

Maryville: More than 550 Maryville-area church members attended the district's annual missions fair, held Feb. 29 at Fairview UMC. Holston's Bishop Ray Chamberlain preached, while Kenya's Bishop Lawi Imathiu made a special appearance. More than 60 exhibitors were on hand to promote their missions.

Morristown: After fire destroyed Sulphur Springs UMC last summer, the community pulled together to rebuild. On March 14, parishioners and guests packed the new sanctuary for a dedication service. Cars lined the country road leading to the new building, where Sulphur Springs Pastor Paul Miracle and District Superintendent Richard Patterson acknowledged several churches and individuals for contributing to the effort. Also attending: former pastors Charles Davis and A.C. Cobble. **S**

Oak Ridge: Norris UMC has a "book corner" in its food pantry. Children of the 100 families who visit the pantry monthly take home two or three books, according to organizer Sue Mason. Church members donate the books. **M**

Tazewell: For three years, Cedar Bluff UMC and First Richlands UMC have joined their children's and youth ministries. Cedar Bluff Pastor Jack Jenkins says the two churches complement each other with their strengths. Together, they draw 50-60 elementary kids for the Pioneer Club and more than 30 teenagers for youth (which they call the CIA – Christians in Action). "We're Methodist, we're supposed to do connectional things," says Jenkins. Besides splitting the youth pastor's salary, the congregations find they have a bigger volunteer pool. **S, M**

Wytheville: The conference's Volunteer Labor Program helped build Door of Heaven UMC in Galax and renovated Slaughter's Chapel UMC in Draper. Now volunteers are renovating Mt. Airy UMC near Radford and constructing a new fellowship hall at Ebenezer UMC of the Spring Valley Circuit. **S**