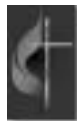


Web Update

● Youth2003 organizers have been using Holston's virtual meeting room space, connecting leaders across the country. Reserve your space for meetings and save travel expenses. Contact Interactive Media Specialist Donna Hankins at dhankins@holston.org or (865) 690-4080.

● Want to attend a conference-wide web ministry training event? United Methodist Communications is offering this training with select conferences on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact Hankins, above.

The Call



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What's your size?

The Call uses the following symbols to identify articles about small, medium or large churches:

S = Churches with average 85 or fewer in principle weekly worship service(s)

M = Average 86 to 225 in worship service(s)

L = Average 226 or more in worship service(s)

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Bishop's Perspective

By Ray W. Chamberlain Jr.

Let's get a grip on reality



It is early morning. The moon hangs gracefully in the open sky. The stars sparkle in the gray-black dawning. It is serene. Peaceful. Calm. All is well.

Or, is it? The media reports the war is raging in Iraq. Nothing serene, peaceful or calm there.

This is precisely where we live out our lives: between chaos and cosmos, disorder and order, despair and hope, the dysfunctional and the healthy. How we live out that tension defines our faith.

Jesus was always the clear-eyed realist. He recognized his rejection. He heard the harsh

judgment made against him. He understood the demons of oppression and selfishness. But he lived out of a hope in God's future. That hopefulness didn't alter the reality but did give him purposefulness and focus.

As Christians, we are not people of simple, sentimental, humanistic optimism. We don't live in denial about our own faithlessness or that of our churches. We don't assume "all is well" because we manage to keep our church doors open. We don't dare believe "all is well" just because we enjoy the fellowship within our cozy groups while our communities and world goes to hell.

As congregations we are called to wakefulness – to a consciousness of our situation. Are we making disciples? Are we sending out followers of Christ to reflect the faith in homes, offices and voting booths? Are we making a difference in our communities? Are we giving our people the stories, language, and traditions of our faith? What is our response as Christians to violence and needless deaths because of greed and war?

We never easily arrive at the conclusion that "all is well." It has to do with more than full moons and glorious sunsets. It has to do with more than good fellowship or growing membership in our churches.

It has to do with coming to grips with realities about our lives, churches, communities and world. Then we must dare to trust God with our future – dare to partner with God in creating cosmos out of chaos. It is then that we can look out on a war-ravaged day and say with authenticity, "All is well," because the world is ultimately in God's hands.

Now, that is faith. And it is a faith that must be practiced! ■

Annual Conference

In preparation for the 2003 Holston Annual Conference, June 8-11, at Lake Junaluska, N.C.:

● **Audiovisual materials** – All audiovisual presentation needs must be communicated to Donna Hankins, interactive media specialist, by May 1. This includes hymn selections, video, audio, and PowerPoint needs. Send requests to Hankins at (865) 690-4080 or dhankins@holston.org.

● **Exhibits & displays** – A tent, located between the chapel and Stuart Auditorium, will be provided for exhibits and displays at no charge. Send requests for space to Anne Travis, director of connectional ministries, at (865) 690-4080 or AnneTravis@holston.org. Deadline is May 15, but note that space is limited and will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis. ■

Reading List

What books are lying on the nightstands of these district superintendents?

● Brenda Carroll

Abingdon District

"*Fusion Leadership: Unlocking the Subtle Forces That Change People and Organizations*," by Richard L. Daft and Robert H. Lengel

● Dennie Humphreys

Big Stone Gap District

"*The King of Torts*," by John Grisham

● Gordon Ridenour

Oak Ridge District

"*Affirmations of a Dissenter*," by Joseph C. Sprague



In Memoriam

Caleb Lilly

BLUEFIELD, Va.– Caleb Lilly, 84, died at his home on March 19, 2003. He was a retired Holston minister who had served Bluefield Parish and Wytheville Parish, among other churches. The Rev. Lilly is survived by his wife, Eunice Lilly; three daughters, Sandra Lilly of Bluefield, Shelby Campbell of Bluefield, and Patricia Jones of Macon, Ga.; one stepdaughter, Veronica Favors of Blacksburg, Va.; two stepsons, Percy Trent of Port Hueneme, Calif., and Eric Trent of Bluefield; four grandchildren; three stepgrandchildren; seven great grandchildren; eleven brothers; and several nieces and nephews. Funeral services were held March 24 at John Stewart UMC with the Rev. Eugene Nedbitt, the Rev. William Spencer, and the Rev. Michael Bratton officiating. Burial followed at Restlawn Memorial Gardens. ■