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District Roundup

NEWS FROM YOUR DISTRICT



Oak Ridge

ABOVE: Concord youth will sell you the shirts off their backs.



Kingsport

LEFT: Why is a nice Kingsport pastor like Joel Campbell giving "dirty bomb" seminars?

Photo by Earl Carter, The Call

Abingdon: The district is sponsoring an Older Adult Rally at State Street UMC, May 1 at 9 a.m. Cost is \$7 including lunch. The agenda includes worship and workshops. Martha Rowlett will be keynote speaker. For more information, call the Rev. Jane Taylor at (276) 628-4421.

Big Stone Gap: Led by Church & Community Worker Nancy Hobbs, the district is gathering vegetable seeds for hungry families through "Seeds of Bounty" project. The idea was conceived two years ago when Hobbs learned that a local food bank needed bean and corn seeds. "They're the most requested seeds – easy to grow but expensive to buy," she explains. Hobbs enlisted the help of United Methodist Women and Sunday school classes in and outside the district. This year the project will supply seeds to three food banks by May 1, shortly before the last frost. To help, contact Hobbs at (276) 523-0417 or lhobbs@mounet.com.

Chattanooga: The district newsletter reported that Chattanooga church membership increased 78 and worship attendance increased 34 between 2001 and 2002. Meanwhile, Sunday school average attendance dropped 89 and the district paid 85.6 percent of Fair Share apportionments, according to Superintendent Al Bowles. "During 2003 we must make paying 100 percent of our Fair Share a top priority," Bowles told church leaders.

Cleveland: In February, Graysville UMC assisted the community when powerful storms ripped through the area. The church opened its fellowship

hall for three nights, served breakfast and provided blankets and flashlights for families escaping floodwaters. "All the church members are to be commended for their help," says the Rev. Glenn Moseley. **S**

Kingsport: The Rev. Joel Campbell recently relied on his background in nuclear power production to give a "dirty bomb" seminar at St. Matthew UMC. "The officials put us on alert, but they don't tell us what to do," Campbell said. So the former mechanical engineer decided to reach out to the community with practical information about protection from radiation exposure. About 200 people attended, including about 120 who weren't church members. **M**

Knoxville: After completing a Sunday school curriculum on social justice, a senior-high group at Church Street UMC raised more than \$1,000 for the International Justice Mission. "The money raised will help pay caseworker and attorney fees to actually free slaves from the bondage they suffer," says Youth Director Marc Gamble. International Justice Mission helps people in many countries, such as slaves forced into prostitution in India. **L**

Johnson City: On Feb. 9, children from Munsey Memorial UMC presented 80 valentines to Sen. Rusty Crowe. The valentines were part of the conference's recent effort to raise state legislators' awareness of children's issues through valentines made by kids. "Sen. Crowe is a member of Munsey and was happy to receive the valentines from the children of his home church," says Children's Coordinator Trish Patterson. **L**

Maryville: First Alcoa UMC began a third worship service on April 6. Guided by Galatians 6:14, the service begins at 6:14 p.m. and is called (you guessed it) "614." The service is

geared to teens through young adults and is led by First Alcoa's associate pastor, the Rev. Jason Brown. **L**

Morristown: For two years, about 12 women from Trinity Morristown UMC have gathered on Tuesday afternoons to sew and knit. So far, they've made 19 lap quilts to give to visitors at the Veterans Administration hospital and a "huge box" of hats for homeless people, according to organizer Kathy Wooley. Trinity's Rev. David Vaughan, who serves as a police chaplain, also takes quilts out to victims of traffic accidents. **M**

Oak Ridge: Youth at Concord UMC raised more than \$36,000 through Resurrection T-shirt sales this year. Ten percent of proceeds were tithed to Youth Service Fund. The rest will be used to cover expenses for Youth2003 in Knoxville, a youth choir trip to New England, and a 2004 mission trip, according to Youth Director Jane Currin. More than 5,000 shirts were sold with a design that beat out other youth groups in last year's annual contest. **L**

Tazewell: In January, *The Call* reported that members of Virginia Avenue UMC's youth choir from the early 1980s were returning for a reunion. In late February, 18 former youths gathered for an emotional weekend, playing for a Sunday service that lasted nearly two hours. "There was a sweet sorrow to singing those anthems," said the Rev. Mary K. Briggs, a former choir member now serving Chilhowie UMC in Abingdon District. "We felt young again." **M**

Wytheville: On April 19, Holston's first Hispanic chartered congregation will celebrate a new building. Members and supporters will walk from the parent church, West Galax UMC, to the new home of Door of Heaven UMC, also known as *De La Iglesia Puerta Del Cielo Metodista Unida*. Stay tuned. **S**



Tazewell

THEN & NOW: Virginia Avenue welcomes its youth choir back from the early 1980s during a reunion weekend.