



inside: like a river

Lynn Gobble of Cleveland District (left) loads supplies for Holston's annual "hands on" mission project for Africa – the largest effort ever.

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lake lore

Lake Junaluska Conference and Retreat Center bounces back after the "Hearts on Fire" controversy of last fall.

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dr. noseworthy

The winner of the Francis Asbury Award lunches on lasagna and talks about the future of Hiwassee College.

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The Call



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Bold, Passionate, Joyful

Annual Conference lifts up the bold past, debates passionately over current issues, then heads joyfully into the future

By Annette Spence

The Holston Annual Conference theme – "Courageous Past, Bold Future" – was borrowed from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to help Holston recognize the 50th anniversary of full clergy rights for women.

Yet, during the June 11-14 gathering of 1,900 clergy and lay members representing 912 churches in east Tennessee, southwest Virginia, and north Georgia, it was evident that "Courageous Past, Bold Future" also proclaimed something about Holston.

With Bishop James Swanson presiding, the conference adopted a "bold, passionate, and joyful" vision statement, based on prayerful responses gathered from members of the 2005 conference. Following the vote was a time of celebration and the singing of "Be Thou Our Vision."

"Thank you for singing as if the Lord touched your hearts," Swanson said. "And now the work really begins with this vision statement."

This summer, Swanson will empower the Connectional Table to develop an action plan for the conference to live out the statement, conference leaders have said.

During Monday's celebra-



Photo by Eric Glass, Holston Conference staff

Bishop James Swanson calls to order the 2006 session of the Holston Annual Conference in Stuart Auditorium.



Photo by Annette Spence, The Call

Demonstrating a youth hospitality project (and the message on their T-shirts), Abby Compton "greets" Joe LeSage. Both are Conference Council on Youth Ministry members.



Photo by Annette Spence, The Call

The Rev. Linda Wright and the Rev. Tony Collins tally votes following a debate on a resolution "affirming laws defending marriage."

tion of Holston ministries, an offering of \$94,494 was collected for an Alaskan mission led by Church and Community Worker Fran Lynch, a daughter of Holston.

In the conference's largest "hands-on" mission project ever, 6,728 kits containing food, clothing, sewing, school, and medical supplies were blessed and dispatched to missions in Liberia and Zimbabwe. (See related story on page 8.)

An additional \$43,853 was collected for "Change for Children," benefiting children's ministries in Africa as well as within Holston boundaries.

During a Sunday-night service celebrating the 50th anniversary of full clergy rights for women, 152 of Holston's living clergywomen were lifted up, as well as many deceased. The conference stood and applauded Bishop Mary Virginia Taylor, resident bishop of the South Carolina Conference, who preached, "Remember Me." Elected in 2004, Bishop Taylor is a native of Holston and a former Cleveland District superintendent.

"I'm overwhelmed with emotion," Taylor said. "As I look out and see your faces,

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