

“I predict that when the story of Holston Conference is written, Bishop Swanson will be remembered as the most beloved bishop in its history.”

– Bishop Ray Chamberlain, in a special letter to Holston on page 5

Bishop James Swanson assigned

to Holston Area

By Annette Bender

A district superintendent from South Georgia – who once pastored a church that grew from 12 in average worship attendance to 525 – has been assigned to lead Holston Conference for the next four years.

James Swanson, age 54, was elected bishop by the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference of the United Methodist Church on July 14. He was assigned to the Holston Area and immediately consecrated with five other newly elected bishops during a service on July 17.

Endorsed by the South Georgia Conference, Swanson received 349 of 556 votes cast on the fourth ballot. He was the third bishop to be elected on the first day of the conference in Lake Junaluska, N.C.

Members of the Holston delegation – numbering 32 among 556 total Southeastern Jurisdictional delegates – said they favored Swanson as their new episcopal leader before a committee made it official.

“Our delegation has pretty much been of one mind that he was our first choice,” said the Rev. Dan Taylor, delegate and Big Stone Gap District superintendent.

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Photo by Annette Bender, The Call

Following his consecration on July 17 at Lake Junaluska Assembly, Bishop James Swanson and his wife, Delphine, are preparing for a new ministry in Holston.

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Replacing Dindy Taylor, the Rev. Charles Lippse will lead the Cleveland District as superintendent.

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Photo by Annette Bender, The Call

As delegates applaud, the newly elected Dindy Taylor embraces Brenda Carroll before being escorted to the stage by Bishop Ray Chamberlain (far right).

Dindy Taylor elected bishop on historic 34th ballot

By Annette Bender

At lunchtime on the day she was elected bishop of the United Methodist Church, Dindy Taylor told her fellow delegates they could stop voting for her. It didn't look like she would win.

“I told the delegation I loved them, and I thanked them for their support,” Taylor said of the meeting in Memorial Chapel on July 16. “Then we all had a good cry.” But Taylor did not withdraw

“I didn't do anything strategic ... I was just trying to be faithful to what God wanted me to do.”

– Mary Virginia “Dindy” Taylor, on the morning after her election to the episcopacy

from the election, although many other candidates with trailing numbers did, including Holston's own Jerry Russell. On the afternoon after Taylor's announcement

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