



By Annette Bender

Newspaper strives to reach more church members

The Call, Holston's official newspaper, is mailed to about 5,500 subscribers every two weeks. Additional readers access the online version of the newspaper at www.holston.org/thecall.

Most readers of *The Call* are clergy members and church leaders such as Annual Conference lay representatives and council on ministries chairpersons. These people need to know what's happening in Holston on a daily basis: news from the bishop, continuing education opportunities, ministry success stories, apportionment updates.

But what of the 168,121 members of Holston's 925 local churches? Wouldn't they also be inspired by stories about how Change for Children donations help needy kids here and overseas? Couldn't they benefit from information about the next workshops on preventing child abuse or promoting stewardship? Isn't it a good time for them to get to know our new bishop, who will ultimately guide the mission and ministry of their own churches?

Because *The Call* strives to provide the spark and know-how to get church members out of their pews and into the mission fields, the communications staff is offering two incentives to get more newspapers out to our congregations.

1. Order in bulk

The Call costs \$15 for a one-year subscription including 26 issues. For churches that will buy issues in bulk for their members, subscription prices are dramatically reduced.

Order 50 copies

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• \$300 for 12 months (26 issues)
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Order 100 copies

• \$200 for six months (13 issues)
74% savings

• \$350 for 12 months (26 issues)
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2. Order for your new members

When people join the church, they have questions about the greater church – its ministries, structure and beliefs. A one-year subscription to *The Call* is a thoughtful way for local churches to welcome new members in while providing a handy educational resource.

For more information about new-member or bulk-order subscriptions, contact Annette Bender at thecall@holston.org or (865) 690-4080. ■

Wings

By Bishop James Edward Swanson Sr.



Stop, look around, invite them in

In my travels throughout our conference, many of you have asked about JaNaé and Joshua's transition into their new home and school. Delphine and I want to thank you for your concern and express our deepest gratitude for the wonderful way you have helped them experience your warm welcome. You have made this transition so easy because of your genuine concern and love for the kids and us.

When I think of this being "Open House Month" for the United Methodist Church, I cannot help but hope that visitors to our churches throughout Holston are experiencing this same hospitality. We have come to know – in the short time we have been here – the real spirit of "open hearts, open minds, open doors."

While I am aware that I have certain advantages as your new bishop, I encourage you to welcome everyone into your hearts, fellowship and worship with the same spirit we have experienced. I also encourage you to find every way possible to invite not only your visitors but also people in your communities to become a part of your spiritual families.

When you arrive at your church this Sunday, I want you to pause a few minutes before you enter the doors of your church buildings. Look around at the community surrounding your place of worship. I want you to notice: Are there people passing by or washing cars? Are there children playing? Are there any folks who you have not intentionally extended an open heart, open mind, or open door? Will you do it?

And if perhaps you can't move from the door of your church to extend that invitation, I want to pray for you:

Lord, strengthen my sister or my brother. Help us to extend ourselves to others even as you have extended yourself to us. And give us the assurance that you have gone before us so that our invitation, extended in love, may be met with loving acceptance of our words and, most of all, of us.

Amen. ■

Want to learn more about what's on Bishop Swanson's mind? Visit "Bishop's Blog," a new Holston web feature, with notes from Swanson regarding his vision for our conference. Go to <http://bishopsblog.holston.org>.



Bishop Swanson meets with the Rev. Gordon Ridenour, his executive assistant, in the Knoxville episcopal office on Sept. 10.



The Call

www.holston.org

Serving 925 churches in east Tennessee, southwest Virginia, and north Georgia

USPS 020-295

Published Biweekly by

Holston Conference

of the United Methodist Church

9915 Kingston Pike, Suite C, Knoxville, TN 37922
Telephone (865) 690-4080 Fax (865) 690-3162

Periodical Postage Paid At
Knoxville, Tennessee

Postmaster: Send address changes to:
The Call, P.O. Box 32939
Knoxville, TN 37930-2939

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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)

Got something to say?

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