# The Call

November 19, 2004

HOLSTON CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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## Thanksgiving Testimony:

## When she needed the church, Logan's Chapel was there

By Annette Bender

MARYVILLE, Tenn. – Behind the counter of a mom-and-pop grocery store in a small community, you learn to read people pretty well, says Bill Clabough.

"You see people that you think are hurting, and you hope the church can provide comfort and stability for them," he says.

When Clabough invited Pam Denton to church for the first time, she laughed it off, like most of his customers do whenever the invitation is extended.

"That's a pretty typical response," says Clabough's wife, Judy.

But both Bill and Judy could tell that the polite woman with the long blonde hair "had issues." They remember her as a person who seemed to work hard, who lived in an old house with a spouse who didn't seem to work much.

They didn't yet know the depths of pain and abuse she had suffered in the past, or the violent night she would experience months later, on Dec. 11, 2003.



Photos by Annette Bender, The Co

With her congregation's help, Pam Denton is recovering from a marriage that ended violently last December: "It's their love, support and faith that have gotten me through."

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### A Day in the Life

www.holston.org

Tennesseeans are

facing a serious health

cant repercussions for

Visit www.holston.org/

links for additional infor-

mation on this subject,

as well as some ways to express your opinion.

Inside

**Racism Forum** 

Holston members are

encouraged to attend a

conference-wide forum

at Gray United Methodist Church on Nov. 20.

tenncarecrisis to find

care and fiscal crisis

that will have signifi-

the poor and disadvantaged in the state.

TennCare Crisis

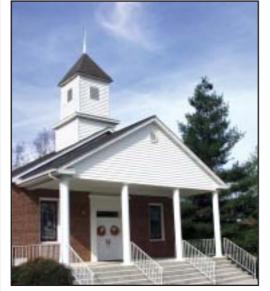
Holston's Church and-Community Workers are – daily, quietly – serving the needy in both urban and rural areas.

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### **Mission Update**

The conference mission team arrives in India, while supplies donated by churches last summer arrive in Africa.

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Logan's Chapel UMC: "The greatest resource a church has is extending itself in love," says Pastor Ann Robins.

"We never tried to overdo it, but we kept asking her to visit," says Judy.

One day, Judy pleaded with her, "Pam, just come one time, and if you don't like it, you don't have to come back."

"She kept putting me off," says Judy.
"To tell you the truth, I never thought we'd get her there."

Pam Denton, now 49, used to live across the street from Logan's Chapel United Methodist Church. The church bells woke her up on Sunday mornings, a source of irritation for a woman who admittedly often drank too much on Saturday nights.

"I'm thinking, 'All right, people, get over yourselves. There are people in this neighborhood who are trying to sleep," says Denton.

She's smiling – probably at the irony that as the newly appointed lay leader for Logan's Chapel, she is now on the other side of those church bells.

Two years ago, when Denton walked into Logan's Chapel, it was her first time in a United Methodist church – her first time in any church for more than 10 years. She is originally from Tucson, Ariz., where she spent a childhood in the Roman Catholic Church and raised four children in the Mormon Church.

She left the Mormon Church in 1991, the year she divorced her first husband. A church leader called her into his office and told her she had to "find a way" to

Logan's Chapel was there, continued on page 7