

## outreach:



**Makeshift Memorial:** Passerby have created a memorial to victims of the Sept. 11 World Trade Center attack along this chain-link fence outside "ground zero" in New York.

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## Holston minister reaches out to suffering New Yorkers

While Americans struggled with shock and fear the day after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, a Holston minister drove to New York to offer comfort to a fallen city.

The Rev. Jerry Everly, ETSU Wesley Foundation director, spent Sept. 12-16 ministering to New Yorkers at Marble Collegiate Church. From his post in midtown Manhattan, he saw smoke billowing from the hole in the cityscape where the World Trade Center towers previously stood.

"It was like seeing a beautiful woman with two front teeth missing," he said. "It was just eerie."

On the morning of Sept. 12, Everly was enjoying "quiet time" at his Johnson City home when he felt an urgent need to go where he knew people were suffering. Having served as an associate pastor at Marble Collegiate from 1983 to 1990, he thought his former church could use the extra help.

"I pictured the church with the doors open, people praying," he said. "I knew how chaotic it would be for the pastors."

After calling his former senior pastor, Everly was packed and ready to go within four hours. Lara Lundy, an East Tennessee State University student, asked to go along and help where she could. The two took off just after noon.

Carolyn Everly, a clinical social worker who works with her husband at Munsey Counseling Center, said she had "mixed emotions" about his decision to go.

"I had this personal need for him to stay here, because when something like this happens, we all want to connect with those we love," she said. "But I also wanted him to go because he felt he needed to. It was my own inner conflict."

Over the next days, Everly would comfort and pray with many New Yorkers who felt devastated by their losses. Wearing robes so passersby would immediately identify them as clergy, Everly and his colleagues spent most of their days standing outside the church on Fifth Avenue.

"Several people just shook my hand and said, 'I want to thank you for being out where people can see you,'" he said.

One man came by in a hard hat and said, "I'm going down [to the disaster site]. Do you have a prayer for me?"

Another person asked Everly to pray for a roommate who had been missing since the terrorist attacks. A crying woman confessed that she had escaped from the World Trade Center. "I don't know what I'm supposed to do," she said. "God saved me, and I don't know why."



**Jerry Everly**

Sept. 16. About 2,000 worshippers attended a service that usually attracts 1,200.

At one point during his visit, Everly went to the command post set up for families and friends to report missing persons. He intended to offer his services as a counselor. What he found was "chaos."

"It was hot and crowded, with about four or five TVs set up and lines that went around three sides of the building." When he finally located the right line to stand in, he was handed several forms to fill out before his counseling services could be considered. Everly gave up and went back to the church. "I was already where I was supposed to be."

Back safely in Tennessee, Everly now tells his story at Munsey Memorial UMC and its counseling center. In a program he calls "Being at Ground Zero: Dealing with Emotions," the minister draws on his experiences in a suffering city, using the same advice he offered to its victims:

"Love as many people as you can, as deeply as you can, as long as you can." ■

## feature:

By Annette Bender

## Graphic designer hired to improve *The Call*

Don't be surprised if *The Call* starts to look better in the near future. Not only does this issue mark the first independently published edition of the Holston Conference's official newspaper, there's also a new graphic designer onboard.



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Dion Dykes Sr., an award-winning designer from Newport, Tenn., and long-time member of Woodlawn UMC, will work part-time for *The Call*. He comes to the conference with years of experience in newspaper/magazine design and in the United Methodist Church.

Production manager of the *Newport Plain Talk* since 1995, Dykes and his team twice won 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the University of Tennessee Press Association's "makeup and appearance" contest for newspapers in its division.

He's also a former staff member of United Methodist Publishing House in Nashville, where he worked on church curriculum from 1985 to 1990. Dykes was the original designer of the publication, *Teacher in the Church Today*.

The great-grandson of Holston minister Rev. Percy Dykes and son of Newport Mayor Roland Dykes Jr., Dion and his family have attended Woodlawn for generations.

"They are a great religious family, from the great-grandpa on down," said the Rev. E.O. Cole, Woodlawn's current pastor. Located in the Morristown District, Woodlawn's average worship attendance is 50.

As a graphic design student at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville in the early 1980s, Dykes painted a 50-foot mural for his church depicting the Sermon on the Mount. "I just thought it would be a great image for the pulpit," said Dykes, age 39. He graduated from UT in 1985 with a bachelor's degree in fine arts.

Every two weeks, Dykes will travel from Newport to the conference's Knoxville-based communications office to design *The Call* in one evening. A new look for the conference newspaper is planned in the near future.

Dykes is married to Mary Lynn Thomas-Dykes and has two children, Chelsey Dinéa, 10, and Dion II, 9. He said he was "excited" about his new responsibilities and "wants to do the best job I can for the church."

"I look at this as a contribution I can make to the United Methodist Church, using my God-given talents," he said. "I enjoy designing so much, I can't imagine anything else I would rather do. It's my life." ■



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