

Bishop's Perspective

'Help the Preacher, Lord'

That was my prayer, "Help the preacher, Lord. Help him to preach well. To offer good news. To be authentic. To touch hearts. To challenge minds."

At the time, I was a college student, helping to start a congregation. I visited dozens of homes, inviting people to our new church.

Pray earnestly that your pastor will offer visitors the Bread of Life and lead them into God's holy presence.

I will always remember that Sunday when a family I had visited came to worship. They took up a whole row of chairs! I welcomed and introduced

them to others. I longed for them to experience an inviting congregation. I yearned for them to sense God's awesome presence throughout the service.

I found myself praying like I never had before. I prayed for the choir, I prayed for the nursery attendants, and I prayed for the pastor. Prayer shifted my focus from wanting the preacher to satisfy my needs to meeting the needs of strangers. I became "other oriented" rather than self-oriented.

The more we invest in bringing people into our worshipping community, the more we care about them. But I urge you to care equally for the visitor who comes because of an Igniting Ministry TV ad or radio spot. Welcome them as guests who have been nudged by the Holy Spirit to

attend. We have a sacred responsibility to do everything we can to help them be at home among us.

In addition to your hospitality, I implore you to pray for our guests. Pray earnestly that your pastor will offer visitors the Bread of Life and lead them into God's holy presence. Pray your guests will be spiritually convicted and challenged, and yes, changed by God's grace rather than merely entertained. The stakes are high. Eternally high!

Grace and peace,

Ray W. Chamberlain Jr.
Resident Bishop



Photo by A.S. Bender/The Call

Sacred Grounds couldn't recover from a "summer slump," says owner Linda Tillman.

No more chicken salad: Sacred Grounds closes

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — Known for its box lunches served at countless meetings and seminars, Sacred Grounds Café in the Cokesbury Center was scheduled to permanently close its doors for business on Sept. 7.

Owner Linda Tillman, who said she was "heartbroken" over the decision, attributed the store's closing to financial and employment issues.

"If we could have broken even, we could have made it," she said. "I never expected to make a lot of money from this. I never even paid myself a salary. I looked at it more as a ministry, as a service."

But a "summer slump," coupled with difficulty in finding long-term employees, caused Tillman and her husband, Cary Tillman, to give up the fight. The café opened in December 1999.

A Knoxville-based company will offer soft-serve ice cream, shaved ice and coffee in the same space this fall, but gone will be Tillman's homemade chicken salad and panini sandwiches that kept Holston ministers, conference staff and nearby car dealers coming back for more.

"Some months, business was very good. May was my best month ever," Tillman said, estimating that 50 percent of revenue came from catering. "Right before Annual Conference there were a lot of meetings and a lot of orders."

Holston Conference Foundation Director Roger Redding, whose office is in the Cokesbury Center, said he was "surprised and saddened" by the news. "It was a marvelous convenience, wonderful food, and a real asset to everyone who visited the facility."

Tillman, a Cokesbury UMC member, said she will continue to cater under the Sacred Grounds name. She's also considering a return to her former occupation, nursing, after a rest.

TV ads

Continued from front page.

aimed at non-members. The site allows individuals to find information about the church in simple language. They can also locate the church nearest them or a church where they may be moving.

The campaign, authorized by the church's top legislative body in May 2000, is much more than television ads. Local churches are using billboards, newspaper ads, radio spots, banners, and everything from hats to T-shirts, to supplement what is done nationally. Nationwide, the church's General Conference has authorized about \$20 million for the four-year campaign, and local churches and annual conferences are providing additional financial support.

How to welcome people genuinely was not left to chance or past methods. More than 20,000 people took special training and returned to their churches to share what they had learned.

"The campaign has been a catalyst for local congregations to engage in discussion about how they welcome newcomers," said the Rev. Steven Horswill-Johnston, Igniting Ministry director. "Not every church will become expert at welcoming, but many are making efforts to walk in the shoes of

newcomers and to understand how they see and experience church."

The United Methodist Church is the second-largest Protestant denomination in the United States, with 36,000 congregations and 8.4 million members. Another million-plus members are in Europe, Africa and Asia.

Horswill-Johnston said he hopes the mass media ad campaign will appeal to people the church isn't reaching in other ways. "Television is the language of the people," he said, "the kind of people we are seeking to bring into relationship with Christ through our United Methodist congregations."

For the campaign, he and his colleagues at United Methodist Communications in Nashville, Tenn., working with advertising and research agencies, have developed 14 television ads, 34 radio ads, and more than 200 pieces of non-broadcast advertising. The campaign will continue during the Christmas, Easter and back-to-school seasons in successive years.

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In Memoriam

Henry Nelson Horton

DUBLIN, Va. — Henry Nelson Horton, 81, of Dublin, died Aug. 25, 2001, at New River Valley Medical Center, Radford. He was a retired Holston pastor who had served as district superintendent and as a chaplain at Asbury Center of Birdmont Manor in Wytheville.

The Rev. Horton is survived by wife Eileen Yeatts Horton, Dublin; two sons, Henry Roy Horton, Knoxville; William Joseph Yeatts Horton, Dublin; five daughters, Karen Guinn, Dandridge; Ruth Johnson, Collinsville; Cathy Price, Asheville, N.C.; Susan Spencer, Black Mountain, N.C.; Lisa Brown, Leicester, N.C.; 18 grandchildren; and 11 great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Aug. 27 at Dublin UMC with the Rev. Mike Travis and the Rev. Randy Martin officiating. Interment followed in New Dublin Presbyterian Church Cemetery.

Rosamond O. Stoner

LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN, Ga. — Rosamond O. "Jack" Stoner, 87, died June 4, 2001, at a local hospital. He was a retired Holston pastor who had served several churches in the Chattanooga District including Slygo Valley, Morganville, and Welch's Chapel.

The Rev. Stoner is survived by two sisters, Betty Pittman, Atlanta, and Alma Zach, Hallandale Beach, Fla.; and nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held June 7 in the South Crest Chapel of Lane Funeral Home with the Rev. Glenn Smith officiating.

The Exchange

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — Christ UMC, a growing 780-member church, seeks a **part-time youth director** (grades 6-12) or a **full-time children's and youth director**. Salary commensurate with education and experience. Call (865) 922-1412, fax (865) 922-2890, or email jjjustice@juno.com.

The Call seeks **photographers** — both professional and wanna-bes — for occasional small assignments in your area. If you have a good camera and a good eye, contact: Annette Bender, Editor, phone (865) 690-4080, or AnnetteBender@holston.org



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What's Your Size?

The Call uses the following symbols to identify articles about small, medium or large churches:

- ☉ Churches with average 85 or fewer in principle weekly worship service(s)
- ☺ Average 86 to 225 in worship service(s)
- ☻ Average 226 or more in worship service(s)

Reminder

Calendar orders due Sept. 29

Remember to order 2002 Holston Conference program calendars for your church leaders! Calendars are \$6 each, plus \$2 shipping. Send your check, made out "Holston Conference," along with name and mailing address to: Holston Conference Program Calendar, P.O. Box 2506, Johnson City, TN 37605.