

# THE ABINGDON ADVOCATE

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Remember to say, "Thank you."

On October 24, 2011, the day before her 84<sup>th</sup> birthday, my mother called me to thank me for the gift my husband, Leon, hand delivered three days before her birthday. My first thought was to say, "Momma you don't need to thank me," but then I remembered what my parents had taught us as children – always say thank you when someone does something nice for you, and say "you're welcome" when someone thanks you for doing good. So, my immediate response was, "You're welcome."

The next day- her birthday- mom called again to say thank you, again. This time she was not thanking me for the gift but for the card that accompanied the gift. Her words were, "Oh, this card is so sweet. Thank you." I must admit it was a very lovely card with wording most appropriate for my mother. The card, written in first person present tense, spoke of the evidence of a Mother's love: her presence, patience, forgiveness, support, words of encouragement, and the sacrifices mother made for [me] her family. Struggling to hold back the tears that were misting my eyes I said, "You're welcome. I love you, and thank you for the sacrifices that you made for me [and those other children]. Mom laughed and said she was going to tell those other children what I had said.

When I was a child I did not fully appreciate the love and what I now know to be sacrifices of my parents. Even the tough love expressed as discipline [of those other children, of course]. Now that I am a parent I have a different perspective on parenthood and the accompanying love that thinks nothing of denying self for the good of your children.

It was watching my mother live out her love for her eight children that helped me get a better glimpse of God's love for humanity. That ever-present love which expressed itself in the ultimate sacrifice

As we approach the Thanksgiving [holiday] season I hope that you will remember to say thank you not only to family and friends who love you and have done nice things for you, but also say thank you to the Lord God who is the giver of every good and perfect gift and who made the ultimate sacrifice for you and me. In fact, let's declare every day a day of thanksgiving for all that the Lord has done. Let's begin and end each day with "thank you, Lord."

Psalm 100

John 3:16

James 1:17

Thank you and you're welcome-

*Sandra*



# Vital Congregations

Abingdon District  
Day of Discipleship Training

*A Response to the Call to Action  
Equipping and Empowering Christian Principled Leaders*

*The mission of The United Methodist Church is to "Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." (Matt 28:18-20 & Matt 22:36-40)*

*Engaged Disciples in mission and outreach ∞ Gifted, empowered and equipped lay leadership ∞ Effective inspired and equipped clergy leadership ∞ Small group ministries ∞ Strong Children and Youth Ministry*



Date: Sunday November 20, 2012

Time: 2 pm

(worship time 3:50 pm—Bishop

Swanson preaching)

Place: Pleasant View UMC

Abingdon, VA

## Workshops

*(beginning at 2:15 pm)*

- ❖ Equipping and Empowering Christian Principled Leaders for Laity and Clergy led by Bishop James E. Swanson, Sr.
- ❖ Equipping and Empowering SPRC members led by Rev. Sandra Johnson, District Superintendent
- ❖ Equipping and Empowering Church Treasurers and Financial Secretaries led by John Tate, Holston Conference Treasurer

Please pre-register for your desired workshop by emailing the district office [abdlist@holston.org](mailto:abdlist@holston.org) and providing your name, church affiliation, and the name of the workshop you plan to attend by November 15<sup>th</sup>. This will allow us to adequately prepare handouts, seating, etc.

## AN UPDATE CONCERNING BETTYE

As many people of the Abingdon District already know, our district administrative assistant Bettye Duncan discovered a few weeks ago that she has a brain tumor. Since then, she has traveled to Pittsburgh to have the tumor mapped, and she will soon begin a rigorous course of treatment including radiation and chemotherapy. I know that you will continue to surround Bettye and her husband Allen with your love and prayers.

Because of this health crisis, Bettye will retire effective October 31. In the near future, the district superintendency committee will cooperate with District Superintendent Sandra Johnson to ensure that the people of the Abingdon District have an opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation to Bettye Duncan for her years of faithful and effective service.

Until then, the superintendency committee has the important task of identifying our next district administrative assistant. The ideal candidate for this full-time position has mature faith, excellent written and oral communication skills, and proficiency with computer and other office equipment. To apply, send a résumé to Reverend Sandra Johnson at [abdists@holston.org](mailto:abdists@holston.org) and cc Jonathan Jonas at [jjonas@marionfumc.org](mailto:jjonas@marionfumc.org), or mail a résumé to Abingdon District, P.O. Box 263, Abingdon, VA 24212.

### God Still Richly Blesses When We Give

God instructed us to give unto others as we would have others give to us. Our church mission is: Families of God Helping Other Families. With this, God has so richly blessed us with many talents and abilities to reach out to so many, in so many different ways whenever the need arises. We never seem to run short of talents or the ability to help, when opportunities arise and needs are before us, that we as a church step forward and satisfy the needs of the less fortunate.

During the past year, our church has been quite involved with many avenues of outreach to church members as well as community neighbors. Many volunteer hours as well as much financial assistance has been given to Camp Ahistadi, our District Camp, as two mission projects, involving both youth and adults in eight different communities in Washington County Virginia and Johnson County Tennessee, were conducted. Our church has also sponsored food distributions, sent out food/flood buckets, weekly gives food products to Faith In Action, sent youth to Resurrection and many other youth related activities as well as conducting a spirit filled Bible School. The ladies of the church (the Helping Hands group) have been involved in the lives of many of our church and community families, assisting them in spiritual needs as well as physical and financial needs. The men of the church were quite involved in the reconstruction of a home destroyed by the April tornado and many other home community projects. Our church also sponsors Mary's Lunch Box at Meadowview Elementary which provides food for children on weekends and during the summer.

Thru all of these various efforts, we have been blessed to give and even more blessed in what we have received. God still richly blesses when we give to his people in need.

Michael Hagy  
Lay Leader  
Shady Grove United Methodist Church

# Upcoming Events

- November 6     **Daylight Savings Time Ends**  
*Set your clocks back one hour before you go to bed Saturday night*
- November 6-8   Marvin Howard Revival, Lebanon
- November 7     Youth workers (volunteer and paid) meet for lunch at Cracker Barrel at Exit 7 (Bristol, VA) at noon
- November 8     District Ministers' Meeting at Carvasso UMC beginning at 10 am  
John Tate will discuss insurance changes and Jan Butler will present Materials for small groups  
Evening Meeting at District office at 7 pm
- November 19    Camp Ahistadi closing for season, noon District Camping Committee
- November 20    **District Day of Discipleship**  
2 pm Pleasant View UMC
- November 23-25 District Office closed for Thanksgiving

In order to avoid scheduling conflicts of district events, please email [abdlist@holston.org](mailto:abdlist@holston.org) or call the district office (276) 628-4421 with dates to be placed on our District calendar. Local churches may also submit special events for inclusion. Thank you.

## A Reminder

As you may know, Vietnam is the Missions focus for 2012. Bishop Swanson has asked that we obtain as many names and contact information of Vietnam-Era Vets as possible so that he can personally contact them about this mission focus.

Pastors and secretaries are reminded to submit this information to the district office as soon as possible.

Thanks for your assistance !



## SAVE THE DATE!

- March 2-3, 2012    **March Forth For Children**  
Cokesbury UMC
- March 24, 2012    **Abingdon District Lay Speaker Training**  
Pleasant View UMC
- March 24, 2012    **Abingdon District UMW Day Apart**  
Addilynn UMC
- April 22-24, 2012   **Jubilation**  
**A Joy Filled Life**  
Meadowview Resort  
Kingsport, TN

## Holston Conference wide

### CREATION CARE WORKSHOP

with Rev. Pat Watkins, VA Conference

Sunday, November 13 2-4p.m. St. Mark UMC – Knoxville

Tuesday, November 15 6:30-8:30p.m. 1st Cleveland UMC Cleveland

Sunday, November 20 3-5p.m. St. Paul UMC – Wytheville  
(Dist. Day of Training)



## In The Middle of Nowhere

I am currently in my ninth year as pastor of North Keywood Circuit. This has been my first and only appointment, and God has blessed us greatly on this two point charge. We have recently taken in six new members into our family, which gives us a total of sixty-nine in a little over eight years, and we pray for more! We do not have huge facilities, we are not located in a perfect setting, and we have had the police called on us twice for inadequate parking; however, we are growing in faith and numbers. I would love to write about dynamic preaching, beautiful prayers, or great theological discussions that are taken place at North Keywood, but remember I am the pastor. Instead, both churches, Blackwell Chapel and Mahanaim, work together in our community, and church buildings, with the same goal to offer Christ. We have individuals who do acts of kindness without recognition, as a group we are big on benevolence, and people of prayer who build relationships all for the glory of God.

Individuals and families have come for the programs, sampled good food, stirred apple butter, played softball, tried volleyball, sang songs, asked for assistance, participated in Bible studies, and had a good time; however, they have stayed because they experience Jesus. We have a variety of ages working in our churches; for instance, at our recent apple butter making most of the youth and young at heart carried the burden, but when we feed a family in the community who unexpectedly was dealing with death, and was not a member of our church, the individuals who are not in school or employed provided the care and labor. I tell the congregations that I serve we are in the middle of nowhere. I hope they are never offended by the comment, but I want everyone to understand that Christ is the reason. We are located in the middle of nowhere, which is somewhere that we assemble, worship, and follow the risen Savior. Jesus Christ is the one who changes places like Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Calvary to become relevant. And the same Jesus makes North Keywood relevant and takes us to new places.

Yours in Christ,  
Scott Spence, Pastor of North Keywood UMC