

# Events & reminders

Activities that Holston planners don't want you to miss!

## March 11-13: Ministers Wives Retreat

Under the theme, "Celebrate Your Blessings!" ministers wives will meet March 11-13 at Oak Tree Lodge in Sevierville, Tenn. Registration begins Thursday from 3-7 p.m. followed by dinner on your own. The retreat concludes Saturday after the 10 a.m. blessing. Contact Mary Ethel Brannock at (423) 638-3380 or brannock3@gmail.com.

## March 12-13: Early Response Training

Persons who wish to participate on Early Response Teams (ERT) following disasters are encouraged to attend training March 12-13 at First Broad Street UMC in Kingsport, Tenn. Friday schedule includes adult first aid, CPR, and AED from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cost is \$30. Call the American Red Cross to register at (423) 378-6700. Saturday schedule includes early response training from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (ERT re-certification from 8 a.m. to noon only.) There is no Saturday charge. Call Dave Henderson at (276) 870-1720.

## March 12-14: Discovery

Discovery is a time for high school youth (grades 9 to 12) to enrich their personal walks with God and explore God's call on their lives into vocational ministry. Registration fee (\$95 after Feb. 24) includes program fees, two nights lodging, Saturday meals, and Sunday breakfast at Camp Wesley Woods in Townsend, Tenn. Call the youth ministry office toll-free at (866) 690-4080.

## March 15: Clergy Women's Gathering

Under the theme, "Dancing With God," clergy women will meet March 15 at First White Pine UMC from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. A \$10 fee includes lunch. Bishop James Swanson will join the group at 1:15 p.m. E-mail maryparson9@gmail.com.

## April 1: Asbury nominations due

The Francis Asbury Award is presented at Annual Conference to a leader in higher education. Nominations are due April 1. Download a nomination form at [http://holston.org/media/about/resource/Francis\\_Asbury\\_Nominatin.pdf](http://holston.org/media/about/resource/Francis_Asbury_Nominatin.pdf) or call the conference office toll-free at (866) 690-4080.

## April 9-11: Clergy marriage retreat

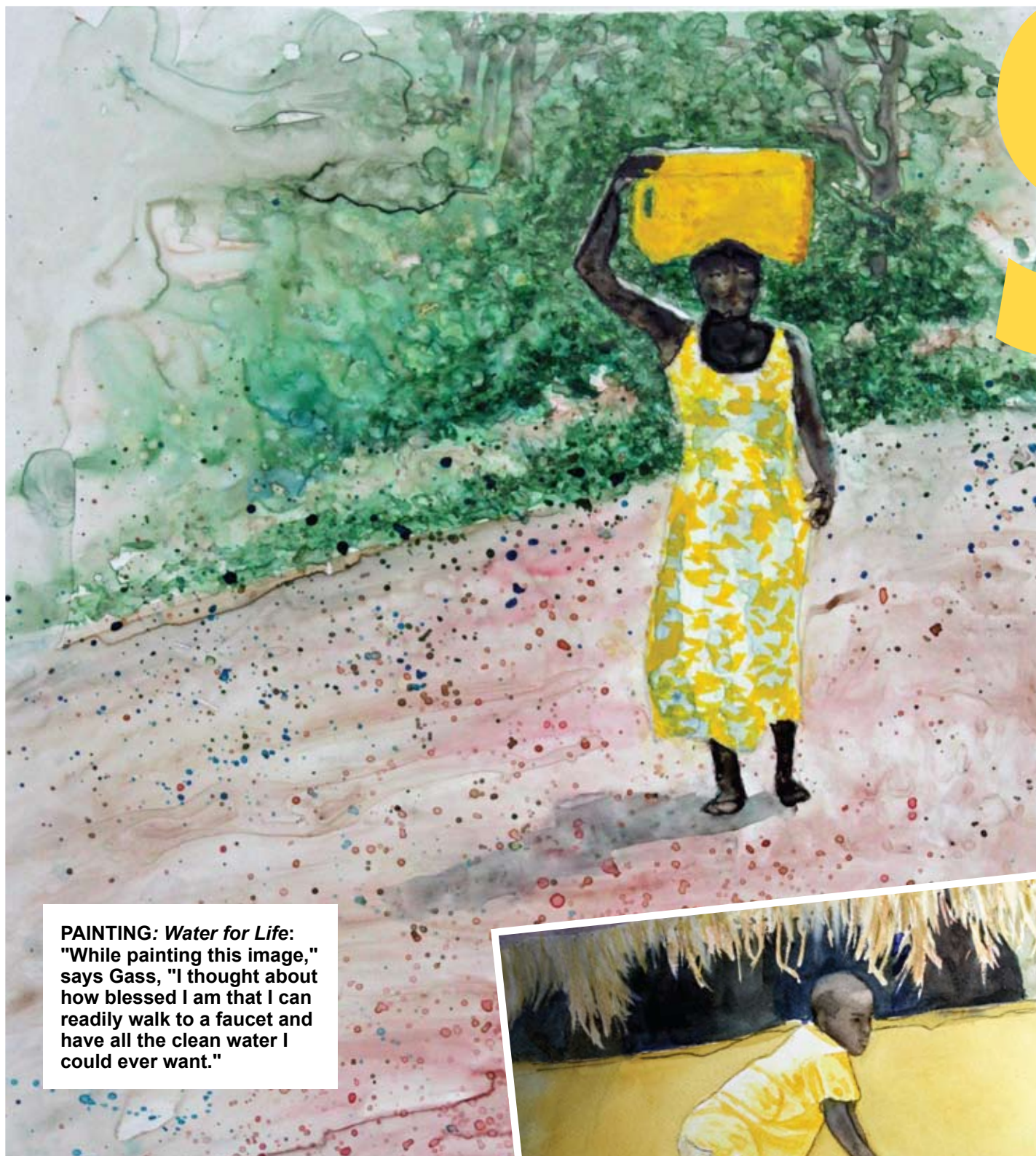
Couples in ministry are invited to the Clergy Marriage Enrichment Retreat April 9-11 at Buffalo Mountain Camp in Jonesborough, Tenn. The retreat is sponsored by the Holston Conference Nurture Ministry Team and Board of Ordained Ministry. The leaders will be Reed and Cathy Shell and Pete and Ginny Rowlett. All costs for housing, meals, and leadership are covered by Holston Annual Conference. Call (865) 966-9776.

## April 11-13: Jubilation

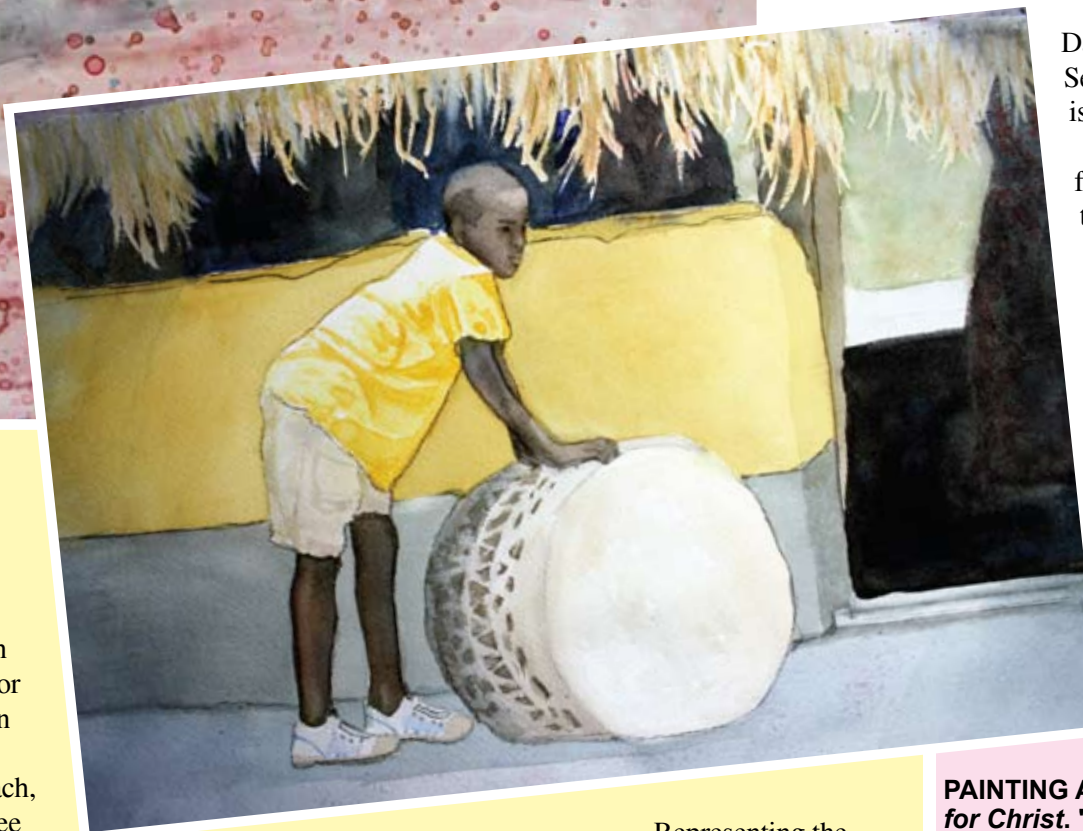
Under the theme, "Living Abundantly," adults age 55 and older are invited to the 10th annual Jubilation at MeadowView Conference and Resort Center in Kingsport, Tenn. Worship will be led by Bishop Mary Virginia Taylor. Bishop James Swanson will give the keynote address. Call Bob Bostick toll-free at (866) 690-4080 or e-mail [bobbostick@holston.org](mailto:bobbostick@holston.org).

## May 27: Wells for Sudan Golf Tourney

Golfers are invited to the first "Wells for Sudan Golf Tournament," to be held at Crockett Ridge Golf Course in Kingsport, Tenn. The host will be Bishop James Swanson. The tournament is a project of the Kingsley-Hermon United Methodist churches; all proceeds will fund new wells in Yei, Sudan. The event begins with lunch at 11:45 a.m. Visit [wellsforsudan.holston.org](http://wellsforsudan.holston.org) or contact Joe Barbers at 423-360-0754 or [jhbarbers@embarqmail.com](mailto:jhbarbers@embarqmail.com). ■



**PAINTING: Water for Life:** "While painting this image," says Gass, "I thought about how blessed I am that I can readily walk to a faucet and have all the clean water I could ever want."



**PAINTING ABOVE – Drum Roll for Christ.** "This child is rolling a drum to worship where there will be prayers, scriptures, praises, music, and dancing to and for Our Lord," Gass explains.

**PAINTING AT RIGHT – Dust to Dust.** The image "reminded me that we can find beauty in things as simple as a homemade broom," Gass blogs.



# Sudan Art Blog

Paintings promote relationship and ministry with east Africa



Gass



Crews

Two artists are using their gifts to celebrate the beauty of south Sudan while giving support to a ministry shared by Holston Conference and the East Africa Conference.

Carolyn Gass, formerly of Middlebrook Pike United Methodist Church, and Bobbie Crews, a member at Concord UMC, are each painting scenes from Yei, Sudan, based on photos supplied by mission volunteers who traveled there. As each watercolor is completed, the artists post digital versions online, along with personal explanations of how the paintings were inspired.

The project is simply called "Sudan Art Blog" and is viewable at [www.sudanartblog.holston.org](http://www.sudanartblog.holston.org).

Since Jan. 17, seven paintings have been created and more are coming as Holston approaches Annual Conference in June, said Gass. The artists are discussing with conference staff how to best use the art as missions fundraisers. The current idea is to create prints, posters, and notecards based on the paintings, then auction off the originals just before or at Annual Conference.

Perhaps just as important as fundraising is the love that can be shared through the art, Gass said.

"We want to lift up Sudan through our paintings because our art is a gift to us from God," she said. "It is the way God has given us to share his word with others ... and we hope the images will bring Sudan closer to everyone's hearts."

Gass and Crews are friends, although for the last few years Gass and husband Dave have lived near Washington, D.C., while attending Wesley Theological Seminary. Gass recently completed her master's degree in religion and arts and is currently serving as artist-in-residence at Wesley.

Last June, Gass was commissioned as a provisionary deacon at Annual Conference. She's now waiting for her husband to complete his master's in divinity this coming June. The couple plans to return and serve in their home conference.

A long-time artist in the Knoxville area, Gass won the Dogwood Arts Festival print in 1992. She led a hospitality workshop at Ministers Convocation on welcoming (and non-welcoming) church design and architecture.

Crews is known in Knoxville for her chalkboard art at Aubrey's restaurants and murals at businesses and schools.

The Sudan Art Blog paintings may also be viewed on the "Hope for Children of Sudan" page on Facebook. ■

# Summit addresses suffering in Sudan

**KINGSPORT, Tenn. (UMNS)**— A March 11-12 summit will bring United Methodists from around the world together to discuss the urgent needs in Sudan.

United Methodists who want to learn more about ongoing work in south Sudan – while sharing knowledge and resources – are invited to "come to the table," said Danny Howe, chair of Holston's Missions Ministry Team and missions director for the summit's host church, First Broad Street United Methodist Church.

"There is so much more work to do than we could have ever imagined," Howe said. "We need to operate in our full capacity as United Methodists to unify our efforts to eliminate hardship and bring hope to our brothers and sisters in south Sudan."

Since signing a covenant partnership with the East Africa

Conference in 2008, Holston has raised more than \$627,000 for the region. The conference has provided medical care, dug three wells, built part of a school, funded clergy salaries and training, sent nine mission teams, sent supplies and appointed two clergy members to live and work in Sudan for two years.

The Sudan Summit on March 11-12 will build on those accomplishments, Howe said.

A "Lightin' Charlie" benefit concert on March 11 will raise money to dig wells in Sudan. Clean water is the top request of the Sudanese people encountered by Holston, as well as by the East Africa Conference and the Board of Global Ministries, Howe said.

"When you begin to provide clean water and rural hygiene, suddenly you've taken a big chunk out of the

needs for medical care," he said.

Holston set a goal of digging 19 wells within two years and recently sent \$50,000 to Sudan for the first five, according to Anne Travis, Holston director of connectional ministries.

Speakers at the event will include Tom Omach, field officer for the United Methodist Committee on Relief in Yei, Sudan, where Holston has based its mission work since 2006.

The former top executive of UMCOR, the Rev. Sam Dixon, had been scheduled as a speaker. Dixon was trapped and later died from injuries during the Jan. 12 earthquake in Haiti. The Rev. Jim Gulley, an UMCOR consultant, will take Dixon's place. Gulley was trapped with Dixon, but was rescued after 55 hours.