

# The WINE

*The newsletter of Soddy United Methodist Church*



## 2024 Holston annual conference highlights and some thoughts on General Conference

Holston Annual Conference was held at Lake Junaluska from June 9th – 12th. Here are some highlights from the conference:

- ★ The annual conference mission offerings for Holston's camping ministries and Wesley Foundations totaled \$205,581.
- ★ There were 4,909 "Hands-on Mission Kits" collected across the nine districts of Holston. The Scenic South district had a goal of 400 food buckets. We collected 712!
- ★ The Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) presented a revised 2024 budget of \$7.18 million, reflecting a \$1 million decrease from the budget previously approved. A 2025 budget of \$6.78 million was approved. In addition, the annual conference approved a proposed 5% cut in district superintendent salaries, setting them at \$102,112 annually.
- ★ The annual memorial service celebrated the lives and ministries of 52 clergy and clergy spouses, all deceased within the last year.
- ★ A total of 29 clergy retired, representing a total of 664 years of service.
- ★ Three new lay delegates to Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference were

*continued*

## ***From Pastor Todd, continued***

elected by lay members. Laura McLean, Lori Sluder, and Ben Smith will fill the open seats on the delegation.

- ★ There was one deaconess, six provisional elders, and one provisional deacon commissioned for service. Eight local pastors were licensed, and 12 new elders were ordained.
- ★ This year marks the bicentennial of Holston Conference. The Tuesday evening worship service celebrated this 200-year milestone with six bishops present: Debra Wallace-Padgett (current Holston bishop), Dindy Taylor and James Swanson (former Holston bishops), and bishops who are natives of Holston (David Graves, Kenneth Carder, Richard Looney). Each shared reflections of how they were shaped for ministry and leadership through Holston Conference along with history lessons, memories, scripture readings, and prayer.
- ★ The Cabinet Report from the District Superintendents brought resolutions for the merger of two churches (Cokesbury satellite campus and Wesley Memorial in Johnson City), and for the closure of 12 churches.

In the wake of the decisions at General Conference, questions remain among United Methodists regarding disaffiliation. I can say that, according to our district superintendent Mickey Rainwater, the Holston Conference Trustees are working on a process to accommodate churches that still wish to disaffiliate from the denomination. As highlighted at last year's annual conference, Holston is committed to developing a fair, non-punitive and grace-filled exit strategy for those congregations that find it no longer tenable to remain United Methodists. It's my understanding that the Holston Conference Trustees will soon have a procedure in place for this.

And while I'm on the subject of General Conference, let me reiterate that the decisions made there do not impact the way we worship and serve together. We'll continue with our ministries and activities as we have in the past. I recognize that some of you may have strong feelings about the General Conference's recent decisions, and I respect whatever position you hold. However, changing the language in the *Book of Discipline* about human sexuality doesn't change who we welcome into worship, how we serve the community, how we conduct our meetings, or how we witness for Christ. We're still Soddy United Methodist Church.

Let me also say that I know some of you are probably struggling with what you give in the offering on Sunday mornings (or through other giving) in light of General Conference decisions. You're trying to reconcile giving to a denomination that supports certain positions that you disagree with. It's a very real—and a very understandable—position. Of course, each of us must honor his or her conscious and faith. But let me offer the following for your consideration.

Take a look at the picture on the next page.

As you can see, for every dollar that you place in the offering plate on Sunday morning, **84¢ stays in the local church.** *That means the majority of your giving is put to use right here at Soddy UMC.*

***continued***

## From Pastor Todd, continued

This pays for our ministries, work areas, outreach and worship. This keeps the lights, heat and air conditioning on. It pays for our insurance, supplies, maintenance and upkeep, and yes, my salary. From that same dollar, slightly less than 12.5¢ goes to Holston Conference and Jurisdictional Conference for ministries, missions and administration. Less than 3.5¢ of that dollar makes it to the General Church.



As I said, each of us must follow our hearts when it comes to what and how we give. But I felt it important to remind us that the vast majority of our giving remains right here within our church. Not giving, withholding, or designating our giving harms Soddy UMC far more than it does the annual conference or General Church. Does the denomination put some of our tithes toward things we disagree with? Of course. That's always been the case and likely won't be changing any time soon. The only thing that we can control is what and how we give.

It all belongs to God. He's entrusted our wealth and resources to us but we don't "own" them. When we put our check or envelope in the plate, we're recognizing and acknowledging the One who owns it all. We're building our spiritual muscles. And we're trusting in God to use his money as he knows best. Let him worry about what happens to it! Ours is to give with glad and joyful hearts.

~Pastor Todd



**Pastor Todd will be leaving after worship on Sunday, July 7 to visit his parents in Virginia. He will return on Monday, July 15. If you have any special needs during that time, please contact Cindy Cunnyngam.**



The Communications Team is preparing a new directory for the congregation. *This will not involve any family photos, only a list of personal information.* Throughout July and August, forms will be available in each pew for you to fill out with the information you want shown in the directory. You only need to fill this form out once. The team will begin assembling the directory in September.

# Upcoming Birthdays!

## July

- 1 Hazel Grace Gardener  
Rod Musgrave
- 7 Kyle Anderson
- 8 Vicki Hardesty
- 10 Patsy Irwin
- 11 Mike Anderson  
Trudy Harper
- 15 Arnie Stulce
- 21 Tripp Mullins
- 24 Virginia Gill  
Thomas Wood  
Ron Jordan
- 26 Paige Hendrix  
Preston Hendrix



## August

- 3 Gerald Lewis
- 11 Gene Elliott
- 12 Ann Reahard
- 13 Paul Ed Parrott  
Brynlie Dotson
- 16 Brody Dotson  
Linda Reagan
- 17 Michelle Musgrave
- 18 Elena Mullins
- 20 Kristen Woodall
- 21 JoAnne Posey
- 26 Allison Ellis



# Upcoming wedding anniversaries!

## July

- 14 Gerald & Nancy Lewis
- 17 Joseph & Marti Hendrix
- 29 Sid & Vivian Parrott



## August

- 1 Carlos & Barbara Wilson
- 2 Paul Ed & Suzanne Parrott
- 14 Skip & Martha Sheeks  
Robert & Patti Dennis
- 25 Kay & Vicki Hardesty



**In lieu of Vacation Bible School, the Children's Ministry Team is planning a one-day event on Saturday morning, August 10. Please contact Kathryn Mullins to see how you can help!**



**Tuesday, July 2**

Marthas & Marys Bible study

**Thursday, July 4th**

**INDEPENDENCE DAY**

**Sunday, July 7th**

**SERMON SERIES: OUR METHODIST DNA**

*"A Brand Plucked From The Fire"*

**PASTOR TODD WILL BE VISITING HIS PARENTS IN VIRGINIA JULY 7th - 15th.**

*If you have any special needs during this time, please contact Cindy Cunnyngham.*

**Tuesday, July 9th**

Marthas & Marys Bible study

**Thursday, July 11**

Choir practice

**Sunday, July 14th**

*"Preaching After You're Dead"*

**GUEST SPEAKER CINDY CUNNYNGHAM**

**Tuesday, July 16th**

Marthas & Marys Bible study

*United Women of Faith*

**Thursday, July 18th**

Choir practice

**Sunday, July 21st**

**GUEST SPEAKER**

**PASTOR ANTHONY HAMMOND**

**Tuesday, July 23rd**

Marthas & Marys Bible study

**Thursday, July 25th**

Choir practice

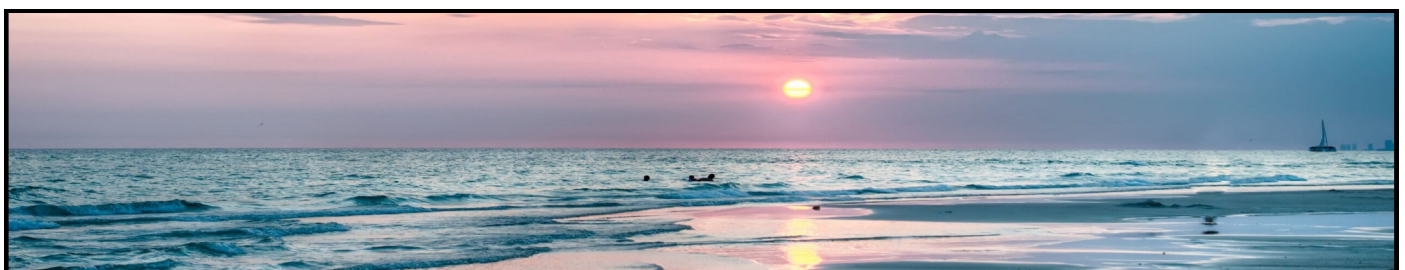
**Sunday, July 28th**

**SERMON SERIES: OUR METHODIST DNA**

*"This Evening Our Little Society Began"*

**Tuesday, July 30th**

Marthas & Marys Bible study





# AUGUST

**Thursday, August 1st**

Choir practice

**Sunday, August 4th**

**SERMON SERIES: OUR METHODIST DNA**  
*"An Outward Sign Of Inward Grace"*

**Tuesday, August 6th**

Marthas & Marys Bible study

**Thursday, August 8th**

Choir practice

**Saturday, August 10th**

**Children's Ministry Team**  
**VBS alternative**

**Sunday, August 11th**

**SERMON SERIES: OUR METHODIST DNA**  
*"It Is A Present Salvation"*  
**ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD meeting**

**Tuesday, August 13th**

Marthas & Marys Bible study

**Thursday, August 15th**

Choir practice

**Sunday, August 18th**

**SERMON SERIES: OUR METHODIST DNA**  
*"His Grace Free In All"*

**Tuesday, August 20th**

Marthas & Marys Bible study

**Thursday, August 22nd**

Choir practice

**Sunday, August 25th**

**SERMON SERIES: OUR METHODIST DNA**  
*"An Inward Impression On The Soul"*

**Tuesday, August 27th**

Marthas & Marys Bible study

**Thursday, August 29th**

Choir practice

**BACK  
SCHOOL**

