

*“And I will give you shepherds after my own heart,  
who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.”*

JEREMIAH 3: 15 NRSV



### God envisions

bold, passionate, and joyful communities of faith  
where the spiritual hunger to worship God and to serve Christ  
sets disciples on fire  
with Spirit-filled, risk-taking love for all God's children  
until Holston Conference reflects the saving grace  
and redeeming justice of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Adopted, Annual Conference 2006*



### **Holston Conference**

*The United Methodist Church*

P.O. Box 850 • Alcoa, TN 37701

865/690-4080 • FAX 865/690-3162

*www.holston.org*



*A Season of  
Prayer*

*“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying,  
‘Whom shall I send and who will go for us?’”*

ISAIAH6:8A NRSV



## A Season of Prayer

In January and February, a review begins in preparation for the Fixing of the Appointments at Annual Conference in June. In this sense, “fixing” means “setting.” A number of factors arise in the process of review that have to be considered: the desires of the local church, the needs of the conference, and the circumstances in the pastors’ personal and family lives. Discernment of the varying needs of church, pastor, and conference for the effectiveness of ministry is the vital business of the appointment-making process.

Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committees participate in the process. Each minister of the conference has a time of consultation. The Bishop and Cabinet gather the input from each of these, plus the information from retirements, sabbaticals, leaves of absence, departures from ministry, and new pastors. Within all of these factors to consider, clearly the recommendations and decisions need to be undergirded by prayer.

On behalf of all our pastors, the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committees, and the congregations, the Bishop and Cabinet ask our churches and people to use the season of Epiphany as a time of prayer for discernment and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the work of the appointment process. The following is offered as a guide for use either in corporate worship or in personal prayer and devotion.

**Week 1:** January 6-12, 2012  
**Scripture:** Ephesians 4:11-16: “and his gifts were that some should be ...”  
**Reflection:** The whole of ministry in our church and the role of each one.  
**Prayer:** For those in authority in the church, that they may have discernment of God’s purposes and the opportunities to further God’s will, and for each congregation, that they may be faithful to God’s calling.

**Week 2:** January 13-19, 2012  
**Scripture:** Romans 10:14-15: “how are they to hear without a preacher?”  
**Reflection:** Those who are in ministry and those who are hearing a call.  
**Prayer:** For the Lord to raise up pastors to preach Christ and to care for his Church and for that calling to go out in the midst of Resurrection ’12 and in other events for youth.

**Week 3:** January 20-26, 2012  
**Scripture:** Matthew 5:16: “Let your light shine before others ...”  
**Reflection:** The gifts and graces needed to draw people to Christ.  
**Prayer:** For the gifts and graces of all of our pastors in Holston Annual Conference to be used for God’s purposes.

**Week 4:** January 27-February 2, 2012  
**Scripture:** 11 Timothy 1:8-14: “Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord ...”  
**Reflection:** Faithfulness in the call to ministry in every change or circumstance.  
**Prayer:** For the purposes of God to be met in all of the changes that take place and for transitions to go well.

**Week 5:** February 3-9, 2012  
**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 12:9: “My grace is sufficient for you ...”  
**Reflection:** Trust in the midst of unexpected changes.  
**Prayer:** For those pastors, families, and congregations experiencing an unexpected change in pastoral leadership.

**Week 6:** February 10-16, 2012  
**Scripture:** John 14:18-27: “Peace I give to you ...”  
**Reflection:** Preparation for change.  
**Prayer:** For those pastors, families, and congregations who are experiencing the grief of leaving while at the same time anticipating new leadership and new places of service.

**Week 7:** February 17-23, 2012  
**Scripture:** Revelation 1:14-22: “I am standing at the door knocking ...”  
**Reflection:** Commitment to live as bold, passionate, and joyful communities of faith.  
**Prayer:** For renewal within our congregations, that we may be faithful in our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.