



Bookwalter United Methodist Church

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June 4, 2023

Reverend Stephen K. Doyal, Pastor

Bailey Hueser, Choir Director
Todd Spangler, Pianist

Edie Jo Hall, Children's Director
Taylor Stephens, Youth Director

*Sharing God's love with our neighbors,
inviting them to share in the joy of Jesus Christ.*

ARTICLE

As I prepare to leave for Annual Conference, I do so with the knowledge that things are going to look a little different this year. This is because on April 22 at a Special Called Session of the Holston Annual Conference held at Central UMC Knoxville, the requests of 264 churches to leave The United Methodist Church was ratified with a nearly unanimous vote of 859 voting members. This leaves 578 churches remaining in the Holston Conference.

Let me address some of the questions I have been asked regarding this. First, the churches who have left (or "disaffiliated") are no longer part of the United Methodist Church. This may seem obvious, but even some of those churches do not seem to fully appreciate this fact. Special consideration was given to these churches to pay a certain amount of money and leave with their church buildings and properties.

They are no longer under the leadership of our bishop or district superintendents. They will no longer receive pastors appointed to them by the UMC. They are either on their own or may join another denomination such as the newly formed Global Methodist Church. I learned at a clergy meeting last week that several UM pastors have also jumped ship.

About 2/3 of the churches that disaffiliated are smaller congregations with less than 100 members. Conference-wide, this will initially reduce Holston's membership from 148,580 to 117,378. Of the 25 churches in Holston with more than 1,000 members, only two of them are leaving.

Historically, the Methodist family tree has seen this sort of branching off with both parties going on to have successful ministries. I sincerely hope this is the case again.

What does this mean for Bookwalter? For the time being, not much will be different. I am unapologetically a United Methodist pastor and have no intention of changing or leaving. We are still a United Methodist Church in the Tennessee Valley District of the Holston Conference. We may even potentially see some added members since many of the decisions to leave the denomination were not unanimous. In other words, there may be some people looking for a new UM home.

As I have said throughout this process, we will continue to do what we are called to do. This is simply to be in mission and ministry in the Inskip community. That is what we have done before and will continue to do.

Steve

YOUTH NEWS

The youth hosted a Spaghetti Lunch fund-raiser on May 21 and made \$628 toward their trip to Senior High Assembly at Emory and Henry College in Virginia June 26-30. Thanks to everyone who donated and participated and Special Thanks to Chef Rose Baker for all her hard work in the kitchen for our benefit.



A good crowd enjoying Mama Rose's special recipe.



Another satisfied customer

HANDS-ON MISSION

Thanks to your donations, we collected enough to fill 11 food buckets to be sent to Zimbabwe, Africa. Thank you for your mission hearts.



This semi is now headed to Lake Junaluska

RUMMAGE SALE

The Rummage Sale was held June 1-3 thanks to your donations and the hard work of organizing by several folks pictured here. The sale garnered nearly \$2,000!

The proceeds will be going to help fund Camp in the Community which we are going to be hosting the week of July 10-14.

