

Biblical Benchmarks

Part 2

The Great Commandment

Matthew 22:36-40

“Teacher, which commandment of the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is greatest and first commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

The Great Commission

Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you: And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

2. From God’s vantage point, what would our conference look like if we fully embraced this text?

Discipleship Team and Connectional Table

- We would fully value each local church setting as a mission.
- We would fully value the leadership development of every local pastor (supply, local preacher, associate member, permanent deacon, & elder – Asbury, Candler, Duke, Cof S, et al).
- Pro Active – in the middle of things.
- Switch from Institutional Maintenance to Intentional Ministry focus.
- My priorities would change – more God/others centered.
- My actions would reflect God’s faithfulness.
- Bulging churches – healthy communities.
- Blessings going both directions.
- Less political and less segmented.
- Early church example.
- Inclusive; not judgmental; confrontational; creative; transformational.
- Inclusive of and welcoming everyone. Focused on outreach and mission.
- At “cross purposes” with some cultural values.
- Who is our neighbor? (Good Samaritan parable). We live in our housing communities with people like us. We go to church with people like us. Neighbor is not “other.” What about love our enemy? Alien? Stranger in our land?
- Open, Diverse, listening. Excellent worship, time in prayer, planning, prep, and letting people know about the opportunity – people inside & outside! Hospitality, covenant groups.
- Body of God, Baptism, Church – unity of purpose. Furthering the diversity of function purpose.
- A church that was on fire for God; very evangelistic (in the Baptist sense of the word) reaching out to the community surrounding it and drawing them into eternal life with Christ thru their salvation.

- Filled!
- We could not in-vision the number of increase.
- Growing, spirit filled, mission focused, caring, kind, welcoming, and faithful.
- We would be an obedient church to seek out the neighbor, the lost, the hungry, and those who are least loved.
- Vital piety. Vitality. New quality of clergy relationships.
- Welcoming and seeking of ALL: the lost & found, the least & great; the last & first.
- Many search out and teach the untaught. Go out to find the untaught where they can be found.

Extended Cabinet (March 14, 2005)

- No more Bible study without Biblical living – Goal of Disciple. No more padded pews without filling empty bellies. No more pot luck suppers without feeding the hungry.
- More emphasis on Discipleship then membership. More emphasis on Ministry then order. More emphasis on service then organization.
- Praise of God – greater love & concern for church community, as well as, world community.
- Focused – “Right hub.” Teaching church. Worldwide – global church – bigger vision. Spirituality for sake of world & individual fulfillment. Open hearts, Open minds, Open doors. Beehive of activity – smiles, tears, servant leader.
- We would reach beyond ourselves to widows, orphans, aliens, and general daily life – to people. We would sing out loud! We would live out loud! We would be in more prayer together; more Bible study together.
- Christ centered & focus on – selfless NOT self-centered.
- Diverse – like surrounding community – whole – inclusive – other centered out looking – servant leader – influence of grace and love. Bee hive of activity. Learning in order to serve & feed – smiles, tears, silence, dancing, and laughter. Truly one of Open Hearts, Minds, Doors. Teaching.
- Our churches would be less homo-genius. Our churches would grow and be younger. Spirituality emphasis would be different. Open hearts, open minds, open doors. Teaching church. Servant leaders. Beehive of activity.
- A reflection of God’s glory because God would be seen in my life.
- The people would reflect the church’s community. Beehive of activity. Smiles, tears, dancing groups, Sounds, laughter, crying, music, silence.

Annual Conference 2005

- 1- Focus on lay leadership, i.e. Wesley Institute offering training for laity led by laity; 2- more laity leadership visible at conference and district events i.e. Tuesday afternoon was parade of conference staff; 3 – more ministry with those disenfranchised persons
- First we would intentionally reach persons of all nations and incorporate all into the life of our conference’s ministry. We would place serious emphasis on ministries that develop discipleship in children and youth. We would invest greater resources in ministry where people are actually making decisions about what kind of disciples they are going to be. We would empower ALL persons. Greater connectionalism and shared resources.
- From a laity perspective, God would see gigantic efforts to embrace the downtrodden. However, great strides are still to be made.
- It would be a conference with a strong emphasis and priority, both financially and spiritually, to equip the local churches for ministry and support the individual and personal call by God by allowing a greater/more autonomous use of their resources.
- Wonderful.

- 1- Appointments would be based solely on the basis of the core spirituality and gifts of the clergy and churches and their being complimentary; 2 – Accountability for churches and pastors in covenant with each other to bring about and use gifts (not abuse and ignore); 3 – ministry would be born out of core values and mission of local churches.
- Our conference would grow in leaps and bounds and our churches would grow.
- No level of clergy more significant than the other. Through not only the community but within the conference.
- It would be almost like heaven.
- We would, like Jesus, love all with reckless abandon, without judgment, exactly as they are, before they clean up their act and even before they first believe.
- Many, many folks being born again with the number at Pentecost bring multiplied many times.
- Exciting – fully engaged. Key – teaching them to observe all Jesus commanded – not change to accommodate personal lifestyles and not allowing to choose love in exchange for repentance.
- We would develop a heart for those outside the walls of our local churches. Systems tend to end when they become only concerned about the maintenance of self. I believe this to be the area where our annual conference has failed most to reach those who find themselves beyond the walls.
- Reaching out in our communities, becoming more involved in outreach to missions in local rural areas to inner city areas. Getting to know the needs and then coming up with a plan to get involved. Put less emphasis in growing and planting of large congregations and support the ministries of small churches.
- Our dying urban churches would welcome folks of all races. Our old established churches would welcome people of all ages, especially young adults with children, without threat of losing their power; and our rural churches would welcome the stranger, the new person who hasn't always lived in the community.
- Every church would be glad to pay their apportionments – and more.
- Relationships throughout the conference would be what God wants and intends them to be with Him as well as Brothers and Sisters in Christ.
- God's blessings would be multiplied a thousand times from the blessings I already receive. This includes new membership, increased mission support, tithes, new churches, increased youth participation, etc.
- More focused on God's word and the spirit and making disciples and less focused on organization.
- Like the "Sermon on the Mount"
- That our world would be a better place.
- We would continue celebrating our ministries while we looked for new ministries. Our conference would have more lay people asking to serve on boards and as delegates to the conference out of their desire to fulfill these commandments.
- Barriers are erased. More willing to answer God's call.
- -- All would be participating in missions. – Edifying one another which would create more enthusiasm. – Bringing into the church daily those who really want what we really have.
- First God would be very pleased with us. There would be no need for welfare, government programs. Everyone on this earth would be taken care of through the love that Jesus showed us as he taught us to show our neighbors.
- Little time needed on budget and organizational administration; most on reaching out and ministering; extensive activities with the young and needy.

- Our churches would all be full for every service. Our communities would be recipients of our good works toward all mankind no matter what the need is. We would always serve with love toward all mankind and we would be leading others to Christ's love.
- Churches would be bursting at the seams with increased members and everyone would be united with God's spirit and rejoice in playing a part in God's ministry.
- Growing churches – more ways to minister – more funding – less complacency
- Continue to value relationship (even, and especially, in conflict) –self-soothe; that we would empty self; that we would joyously embrace Christian action (justice, peace, love, hope, etc.)
- More people would attend all meetings
- We would have a meeting hall full of Methodist “doers” rather than sit back and watch others do and then join in. Naturally, God would be pleased with Christians taking action to glorify Him.
- We would be more blessed than we already are.
- I believe that a lot of the issues that tend to divide us would go away and we would be committed to a common cause.
- Removing barriers that prevent us to be as “One with Christ.”
- More emphasis on praise and worship and cultivating that love relationship with God for each individual and increasing emphasis on mission work to make disciples of all nations (including us).
- Breaking down barriers that prevent us to be whole in Jesus Christ.
- A group of His people who have come together to worship Him and to learn more ways to further His Word the world over.
- Like a clean image reflecting the name of our Lord on high.
- Our conference would be larger and people outside the conference would recognize our passion. We would have more and be better disciples.
- Jesus everywhere we went and what we do would reflect Jesus love and life.
- We would be more mission/ministry driven going forward (led by the Holy Spirit) versus feeling (being) in the maintenance mode.
- Driven by the Holy Spirit to act, taking risks to move forward and not just maintaining the programs we already have.
- Special focus on Love to God/love to others. Real heart to help others/change lives. Much greater emphasis on evangelism, witnessing, salvation of sinners and nurturing new converts into the Kingdom of God. Church growth will happen and membership will go up – not down. Churches will be revitalized.
- Spirit filled, freely giving and sharing and less politics with better communication to ALL churches.
- Conference would have to have a lot more people attending and the knowledge to leave here and reach out to a lot more people around the world.
- Our churches would have all the gifts to do outreach all over the world.
- We would be growing in souls brought to Christ and those would be strengthened by our spirit of love and in turn would pass that love on.
- From Matthew 22, our conference would be spending more time with God and their neighbor because time equals love! We also would share with our neighbor about Jesus, make disciples and baptize more people.
- Our churches would come together to worship our Lord on Sunday and then go out into our communities and homes and places of work ready to engage these places for Jesus. We would not be comfortable just in our church with our friends. We would have our Lord's compassion for the lost of the world.

- God would be pleased to see what we have accomplished.
- We would be building more or bigger churches to handle all the people wanting to worship the Lord.
- Instead of disbanding churches we would be building new and larger churches. Our churches would be open to all kinds of people instead of looking for people “just like us.”
- A spirit of holistic evangelism would pervade every ministry, program, and initiative. We would seek to save all people in all ways (spiritually, physically, and emotionally).
- The services and workshops would be filled beyond capacity and when the clergy and delegates return to their respective churches they would share in their great experiences. They would not be so many in need.
- A bright, shining light of love, embracing all, correcting some, but leading the way to fulfillment in Christ.
- Every church would be joyful and enthusiastic. There would be persons of every age and race filling the pews. Every community with a UMC in it would be talking about “What has happened to those Methodists?” and saying, “I’ve got to get me some of that.”
- Conference would be more involved in VIM activities both here and in other countries. We could expand our focus on Hispanic ministries in those areas where needed.
- He could see that His people are truly doing His work here on earth.
- On fire! We would be reaching outside the conference and inside the conference and asking for more to do!
- We would truly have open hearts, open minds, and open doors.
- Very conservative and good
- More Bible study and reaching out to the unchurched, especially the youth and younger adults.
- Clergy and laity would be committed to living out the Great Commandment and The Great Commission. Great numbers of people would be added to our membership. Our monetary resources would be abundant; our spiritual gifts would be abundant to meet the needs of all of our people.
- The building would not hold us for we would shout the walls down!
- Love and generosity would abound and the young adults would feel they had a place in our church.
- A discipling, nurturing, energizing environment.
- Every chair would be filled at all sessions; all monies would be there, for His work in all areas, we would be praising God all day, praying, singing, and showing God’s love. Praying for the lost and having altar calls.
- Make our local neighborhood and our neighbor a priority in evangelism and ministry.
- We would see our churches filling up and new ones being needed. We would be seeing evangelistic services in all our communities. More people involved in full time/part time and lay ministry. Areas of ministry that lack funding would be totally operational. See involvement of the younger age groups that are currently lacking.
- A) A wonderful example of koinonia; B) a light which has overcome the darkness; C) a spring-board for truth – the way – and the life.
- To me, our conference is following God.
- Better attendance, fellowship of these days would be better appreciated.
- Focused more outward than inward. Committed to sharing God’s love to all people and making disciples of Jesus Christ.
- We would feel His love. We would truly open our hearts to all God’s people. We would have church growth. If clergy and church workers truly loved God – they would love their

neighbors and in turn would love God's assignment. Notice no where in these texts does God mention salary or time for His work. We would all be united to His service.

- No one in America or the world would be hurting, hungry, sick or abused. They would all come to know the love of Christ.
- Our conference would not have the needy, homeless, spiritually starved people that we sometimes now have.
- Where the missions budget was the biggest slice of pie and there was not controversy about high administration cost and salaries. Our only aim would be to glorify Him, not ourselves.
- Our churches would be full! We would have to build new church houses rather than close them. Our communities would be more Christ-like. Needs would be met.
- God might see the image of the early Acts church. A truly united church... There would be no zero churches and there would actually be extra money to invest in ministry.
- Focused more on reaching and outreach and strengthen our connection and inclusiveness. Loving and open. I think our conference would look more like it has this year. Stop worrying above "norms" and be open to all people.
- The Harrell Auditorium would be truly running over. We would be sending many more out than we are today to tell the Word if we truly embrace this text.
- In love my neighbor as yourself – I would like for us to work towards getting to know each other and celebrate that knowledge by working and living in harmony as a community. This would mean for me to accept our differences and rejoice in them and not be in conflict. This also ties in to my knowing myself and being in community with others. My life would be at peace!
- We would love and accept all neighbors; including homosexuals, in all aspects of the "church." God said "to all" – "love all" – I do not believe that we accomplish this when we draw lines and leave some out. To embrace our differences and rejoice that we have different strengths.
- It would be putting more money into community than into conference well being.
- No one would be hungry, thirst, naked, lonesome, w/o visits (MW 25:31-46); no one would die w/o Christ (I Tim 2:4); these two scriptures can be summed up w/2 Peter 1:4 "...you may participate in the Divine Nature..." of Christ! When we love God and others and when we make disciples we are participating in God's Divine Nature. Also called Incarnational Ministry.
- I think of our conference as being made up of mostly white, upper income people. The East Tennessee and Southwest Virginia area we serve is part of the Appalachia Mtns. That has some of the nations poorest. Socially, are we loving our neighbors?
- The conference ears and feet would move towards justice in the areas of race, status and needs in our committees.
- We would leave this place filled with desire and spirit to keep alive the above text (Matthew). Be less self-centered. We would reach out to our schools, Boys and Girls Clubs. Go home and fill our life with Bible study.
- We would be a growing church – as we used to be – alive with the purity, presence and peace of the indwelling Christ – who promises us another helper – The Holy Spirit.
- It will be a conference accomplishing God-sized task so only God will get the glory.
- Our conference would look or be very spiritual and loving to all its members.
- Our conference would look like one large body seeking the same goal, striving to bring all lost souls to Christ.

- Loving and concern for the struggling and see that they are loved by the Lord and that we – respect them as His Children. Helping in District and Local church – pastors and people to see the purpose and have the encouragement to keep going.
- It would be the tool for what its responsibilities would be to be a model church and continue its love and concern.
- Heaven! As one body in Christ coming together.
- One accord, please to God.
- Churches and individuals would show God’s love by example – we should be more willing to accept others.
- There would be no families without a home. There would be no one experiencing pain or sorrow alone.
- Churches and their congregations would be effective in spreading God’s Word instead of focusing on trivial issues in the church that are selfish and are insignificant in God’s plan.
- We would truly be full of the Word of God. Other things would be secondary. We would not judge others based on their appearance. We would continue mission work with fervor and encourage new missionaries.
- My family, my church, my life would accomplish a great deal more. As a conference we would accomplish the need set before us.
- Our conference mirrors the individual’s relinquishment of will...after all is said and done we still have a “me first” mentality and way. We must develop the spirit of cooperation instead of competition and that will free us to live in trust and truth. Overall, I think we need to live out of “other’s first” for true freedom.
- Focus and enthusiasm (as described Monday) would be God/other/relationship focused. There would be such a membership influx and resource infusion that truly non-human feats would be achieved.
- We would advocate for the poor, giving to the poor, be continually working with and praying for the oppressed. Our finances would flow to our neighbors in love and we would be continually winning souls to God, not to have a larger church or conference, but to show that we are Christians by our love.
- Representative at conference trainings, Bible studies, and seminars would be larger. The trainings all Biblical and prayerful. Membership would be more diverse – culturally, racially.
- We would do more together as churches to reach out, sharing God’s love and gospel and breaking down barriers. I feel like we compete as churches at times – that the churches themselves may be barriers.
- A community of believers focused on all, not the few.
- I feel we would be opening new churches instead of closing them. We would be growing new members.
- Do more missionary work to reach all people of the World!
- Our churches would be more reflective of their communities.
- We would be passionate and on fire to seek and obey God. Because of the presence of the Spirit we would so love others so that disciples of and like Christ would be made.
- I think our conference goals looks good but if more people in my church would think and visit the conference they would see why I say this. More learning more about Jesus Christ.
- We would have so many resources – both financially and physically – that our problem would be where we employ these resources. If we truly lived out God’s love and commission people would be searching us out to find answers to abundant life. I think there is a great need for our people to accept God’s desire for us to share all that we have. More emphasis as needed on Stewardship of all kinds.

- Our conference would grow because there are still so many barriers that we have to cross.
- A better understanding of the goal, the church, more interest of the church and mankind.
- Not let churches close for lack of interest. Just because the local people lost the vision, the conference shouldn't. Christ is needed most where He is not. The conference could take those churches and begin a new missionary ministry and reclaim what Christ ordained.
- More people would go out to make disciples to all nations and we would love everyone.
- We would be open to all persons, regardless of any differences. We would be the voice of the marginalized in our political and social systems. We would treat each other with respect and love and learn how to disagree without excluding. We would be living the gospel and not simply preaching it.
- We would be more evangelistic.
- I am not fully educated on what the conference "looks like" now. My advice is to simplify those things that are not priorities (the extras) and focus on reaching and serving all people everywhere.
- From God's vantage point, our conference would look devoted and focused on what is truly important (living as God commands) if we fully embraced these texts.
- There would be more involvement in decision making of the clergy who serve the small churches. There would be less judgment passed by the cabinet on individual ministers and more dialogue with them to realize that their assumptions are not always true. Churches would lovingly accept all pastors they receive and help them grow as leaders.
- We would have vital and active ministries in those places where the greatest trouble and challenges exist. We would be relevant to the real world needs of all God's people. Not just theory – practice!
- We would win more people to Jesus Christ, make a difference. Help to move the secular to the scared.
- This place would not be able to hold the people whose lives would be renewed and refreshed as we are filled up to empty ourselves to the people around our jobs & in our homes and churches.
- Our priority in ministry would be reaching those in need and without God – rather than spending so much of our time and energy maintaining the institute.
- All appointments would be open to the fully capable and not limited by race, sex or sexuality. In love, we would be honest with persons "called" but not capable to serve.
- Excitement and joyful and loving and acceptance.
- More evangelism in overseas mission – continue benevolences but increase the gospel message component.
- God would see that we were completely dedicated and filled with the Spirit and know that we would go forward to carry out the commandments.
- The churches would be filled with disciples full of the Holy Spirit.
- We would become like the early church in New Testament times. Greater works would be seen world wide as well as in Holston Conference.
- We would let service to God and people within our influence be central. We would quit trying to do so many things and keep central the love of God and love for others. Our vision would dictate our ministry.
- We would be volunteering to serve in all capacities we are gifted in – we would ask to serve. We would visit, give, witness and say "please give me a big responsibility."
- Churches would be growing in number.

- We would respect diversity in gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, as for differences of opinion we would think and let think. We would be proud of what unique gifts being Methodist means; I have said Methodism is the best kept secret in religion.
- We will focus on Him. It is about Him and our primary concern is to please Him rather than focus on our personal or group agendas. We must look beyond maintenance to reaching out in real ministry to meet needs in Jesus' name. We must teach and preach the Word, introducing people to Christ and to disciple them to maturity.
- Our conference would experience tremendous growth; pastors would have more growth; organizational leaders.
- We would begin to see that it is necessary both to reach out to those who do know Christ and have been battered by the church or its members. We would seek not only the lost but the least.
- Less worried about guarding our turf and boundaries, especially among clergy, less worried about offending if it means loving (sometime love means telling the truth even if it hurts).
- We would truly recognize that to be the church is a difficult dynamic, fulfilling painful, rewarding, transforming experience. We would learn to talk out loud together about hard subjects. We would challenge all of our members to step out (to move, to go, and to do something) in the name of Christ.
- Our conference would be bursting at the seams with a passion for loving our neighbors (as opposed to criticizing) and reaching out to our neighbors across the globe.
- Pastors and laity would be more alert to "hurting" people and how love can be shown to them.
- Our conference would be on fire and doing God's will without reservation. Growing, glowing, making disciples, loving each other with no regard to race, sex, or social standing.
- We would see more people coming to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. More people would be involving in missional and evangelistic outreach.
- Be more vocal about Bible in schools and religion in our society. Church vs. state. We probably think it is a hopeless fight. What does God Word tell us to do here? Not give in.
- God would look down and see the people (clergy and lay) more involved in mission, outreach and evangelism. We would be less interested in who gets the credit for our good works and do everything in God's name. Our clergy would serve more from a "calling" and less as a "vocation."
- It would look good because I try to visit the sick, shut-in and those in the hospital and pray for one another.
- I feel there are some who "just look out for themselves." Many times putting themselves ahead of everyone else. They do not show the energy to do what needs to be done.
- Open completely vented, free of all inhibitions and man-made problems. Going forward united in purpose and attitude.
- We would be intentional, fervent, regular and passionate about reaching across barriers. For example: ministries in neighborhoods of other cultures, merging and cooperative ministries with Caucasian, African-Americans churches including "unity services."
- A high "stand-out" community in harmony with Jesus' teachings – strong and teaching others beyond our boundaries – breaking all barriers.
- The living Word of God; the Body of Christ – wholly connected.
- We would quit playing favorites in appointment making and leadership roles in the conference. The same people should not be in the same positions year after year after year. Nor should the same people be speakers for annual conference services year after year. Share the limelight as well as the responsibilities. The church doesn't exist for a select few.

- We would be more willing to reach out beyond our own church community. We would embrace our far reaching missions and ministries and more.
- Growing, winning rather than losing people.
- Also, more positive, counting of God's promises, more involved in the lives of others, and more loving and less judgmental.
- We would not have problems with genders or race in churches or among us at any session or program. Our conference would be full of the love of Christ Jesus and our fellow Christians.
- It would be great. There would be no need for a business session. God would help us with problems that come up in our conference.
- We would need a larger meeting facility.
- Stronger spirit, more love for our neighbors. We would have a friendlier atmosphere. We need more praise.
- We would do more to teach, equip and challenge pastors and laity to become aggressive agents of the Gospel in all areas – socially and spiritually.
- We would be obeying the commission as Jesus called us. We truly would be moving toward and attaining perfection.
- Greater numbers attendees to hear the Gospel and spread the word throughout their own churches and communities.
- I believe more people would come to our churches – we would be growing instead of declining as a conference. Our witness would be greater – especially with other persons of different backgrounds, cultures, social/economic places.
- Spiritual – enthusiastic – love and concern for everyone.
- Evangelize – encourage churches through education and development reach out to people in their communities.
- Our conference would be more ALIVE and growing. We would be a leader in the Methodist world.
- Our outreach would be to all people. We would be more sharing.
- We would be less concerned with the simple maintenance of our institutions and would boldly step out in faith to show the true love and mercy to the society around us.
- We would be more submissive. There will be questions to answer and work to do but the “yard stick” to measure our actions is in place.
- People would probably move here to participate in a setting of love and respect that would, no doubt, be well publicized.
- The askings would be paid; we would touch many lives for the Lord. The Bishop and staff would be making even the small churches feel important.
- Our diversity would be evident to all. There'd be one dented 1987 Honda Accord parked in the lots for each 2005 Infinity. We'd be black and white and red and yellow and brown – we'd no longer be a church that primarily reaches upper-middle class people.
- We would have more people from different ethnic backgrounds.
- Our churches would be full and running over with all age groups.
- Immersed in God, growth in genuine membership.
- There would be no bickering. Everyone would be inclusive – one of the things – apportionments need no formula if we truly help one another.
- We would work together and support each other.
- I believe our conference would closely look like the early church. I believe the conference would be out winning people to Christ regardless what society says, politicians say, minority groups say, judges or anybody. I believe we, as a conference, could overcome any obstacles if we fully embrace the texts.

- If we all go out to spread the word our finances would be better, our membership greater and more love and spirituality shown in our churches.
- We would be more outgoing and more vocal in our beliefs.
- We would be filled with inspiration to go back to our churches with new visions and a desire to use our spiritual gifts.
- Creating connectional ministries within our committees that offer ministries larger than churches are able to offer. This needs to be committees led with conference offering support.
- Would be more concerned about our expression of love for our neighbors by reaching out to community, nation and the world.
- Churches would be full; all askings paid in full; a perfect conference.
- The church would be looking outside of itself instead of having its inward bias.
- Expanding in number of members. Increased services for the community. More involvement with the care of the homeless, the poor and the troubled.
- There would be unit and great power from God to bless this conference and we could reach out to the world 100 fold.
- 1) When we meet we would spend major time rejoicing about progress (not success); 2) Setting higher goals for coming year.
- The conference would be able to not only say and do these things at annual conference, but go back and live the same in our daily lives.
- The conference would spend more time and energy on how to win people to Christ. More time and resources in projects that show God's love for people. We need to feed God's lambs, too much talk, and not enough action.
- Not so political, as a group, not meaning national politics. You can't legislate some things. Churches wanting women pastors will come gradually and gracefully when not forced.
- We would spend more on ministry and less on staff to sound good.
- All barriers of race, color, sex, it would disappear. We would be sharing a great deal more of our individual resources with others.
- I think we do embrace this test – “fully” – the effort is there...we can continue to recruit hands and feet. The labor force is needed.
- It would look like what He expects His whole Kingdom to look like.
- Exclusivity would be non-existent on all levels, from the local church through the cabinet. Our churches would work together sharing resources, staff and ideas to accomplish ministries for young adults, Hispanics, the poor...and rejoice as more come through our doors to receive the welcoming embrace of Christ Himself.
- Our conferences would be united in efforts to reach out. Personal agendas would be set aside. Love and compassion would prevail.
- We would have something worth sharing and be eager to share it. (The love of God and how it changes lives.) Our churches would be filled with true worshipers.
- 1) We would confess that we are afraid “to lose ourselves in order to ____ ourselves” and therefore afraid to acknowledge and confront the issues which divide us (nature and authority of Scripture, inclusiveness/diversity, homosexuality, and embrace our relationship with other faiths – Muslim, Hindu, etc – war/peace, church/state; 2) our congregations would include people who are poor, homeless, in prison, gay/lesbian, Hispanic, etc.
- Perhaps United Methodist are too conservative about our call to witness. We would be more diverse, less focused on what we disagree about and more on what we do agree on.
- Our giving would far exceed apportionments; our membership/baptisms would dramatically increase; our attendance/participation would grow.
- More vital and lively; more open to diversity; more challenging of cultural “norms”

- It would embrace all persons of every race, gender and creed. Churches would spend a significant portion of their wealth outside the local church.
- The Kingdom of God.
- We would truly become open hearts, open minds, and open doors. Placing all who have been ordained in places of ministry.
- The conference would reflect the confidence that we will continue to change our outlook and guidance that our leaders will follow the path God lays out for us.
- See mission beyond those seated in pews.
- There would be many more young adults accepting the call to ministry. Our young adults are not in attendance or stepping forward enough. Local churches need to elect young adults as their representatives to annual conference. Too many very old members.
- Only God know what we would look like but it surely looks more like the Kingdom of God.
- We would spend less time on organizational issues, committee meetings and less money on organization and direct move of these efforts to helping people.
- We would be fully committed Christians.
- Funds would flow – to support missions, schools, new churches. People would be motivated to take up Christian service in teaching and ministry.
- There would be more Christians. There wouldn't be need to ask for money. We would grow in Spirit and numbers.
- It would be better understood
- We would look less like an institution and more like a movement. Maybe we would train folks to disciple. Maybe we would count baptisms rather than membership and teachers rather than staff.
- Open to all; making disciples would be #1 priority of churches and conference; missions/outreach would explode.
- We would move beyond the homosexual issue. Quit looking at a person's sexual orientation, but see their gifts for service and ministry.
- More justice; more women in leadership; more Christians (not necessarily just United Methodists); fewer problems with our finances, jealousy, lack of vision, ethics.
- Worship would be full of joy. Doors and hearts would really be open to anyone as a member or pastor. Congregations would be growing. Churches would cooperate in ministries (it is impractical to think every church can do every type of ministry.) Every member would be involved in ministry.
- We would be more in “one accord,” loving each other genuinely, not vying for power, not being “territorial,” but seeking and following through on what God wants – the result would be more resources for ministry, leading to greater ministry.
- We would be working harder to help the disadvantaged and down trodden overcome their situation. We would work with them, encourage them and help give them the tools to lead a more fulfilling Christ-like life.
- Our churches would be growing by leaps and bounds.
- We would all be doing more of the things I said in question 1*. We would be committing much more of our time and resources to spreading the gospel throughout the world. (*Question 1 read: I would be doing more to help others physically and with their spiritual growth in Christ. I would feel more urgency in trying to help non-Christians become Christians.)
- There would be no gender issues with women appointments.
- We would see love in action in all that we do; for the Great Commission is the action part of the Great Commandment. The very definition of love would be what we do.

- We would have no poor, no need to take older persons to nursing homes. The pastor would never feel unloved but prayed for and the conference would have spiritual growth and there would not be just a few people given special attention. All ministers should be given a fair living wage instead of the system we have now. The church needs to identify who we really are.
- One accord, loving each other.
- Our numbers would grow.
- Less selfish aims, less protective, reactionary comments/actions. More support/creativity. More variety and comfort in inclusive action/leadership. There must be consistent consequences for those reported for sexual misconduct. (Despite status/gender). Clergy unfit for pulpit MUST BE addressed. Not swept under the rug. How can we reach our mission ignoring obvious sickness? (Sometimes laziness)
- 1) Full inclusion in our churches by race and gender; 2) More “hands on” activity around meeting the needs of the unchurched and disadvantaged; 3) More intentional instruction in evangelism.
- Reaching out to the lost; more spiritual and Bible study.
- We would stop criticizing each other and love one another. We could not keep our mouths shut about what God has done.
- It would be more diverse, reaching its arms further out and drawing more into the body.
- More emphasis would be involved in mission and evangelism of all people both locally and throughout the world.
- Our conference would be an example for all Christians to follow. We would be changing our area and the world.
- All barriers that are hindering the spreading of His Good News would be eliminated.
- We would spend more of our energy meeting needs. We would have a stronger, louder, more consistent voice proclaiming our intolerance for war and injustice.
- God would see a people of faith working to offer God’s redemptive love and grace to the whole person – economic, mental, spiritual, especially person who live on the margin of society.
- We would be growing – would be less concerned with rules and more concerned with ruling with love.
- Stronger emphasis on mission and outreach. A lot of our money is focused on salary, building, etc. More focus would be on sending out. Stronger emphases on helping people discern the call.
- It would be open to all talents and grace of persons to build the Kingdom on earth; it would spend itself on the needs of others; it would tell the truth, be transparent, ask for forgiveness and receive forgiveness; it will celebrate often what God is enabling us to be and do; it would do something differently; resourcing would be mutual at all levels of conferences; it would be a trustworthy place.
- Outreach to the world would be enormous.
- Churches would be vibrant and alive; lay people and clergy would be working in partnership with each other to seek and serve the lost. We would not dwell on the minor things that don’t matter. We would be united in heart and mind, centered in our core values.
- We would remain in fellowship with each other, our communities and the world as we struggle to see what God would have our church be and how to respond to the hard issues of our day (each time) (e.g. homosexuality.)
- A diamond in the rough; an awesome and amazing thing to see.

- Women and other ministries would be equal and treated fairly. As stated earlier, women are still finding obstacles in our churches.
- It would truly be what the Methodist Church is striving to be – a church – a conference with open hearts – open minds – open doors – a place Jesus would approve of.
- More compassionate, will to take risks and calling one another to accountability. We would be challenging each other to identify who are the forgotten, ignored, the marginalized in our communities. Reach out to them. We would do so with the passionate, transforming love of Christ.
- There wouldn't be room enough for it.
- Our conference embraces the text very well with striving to meet the needs of people world wide but we need to do more.
- We would reflect the racial/gender/age in conference membership that we see in the population of our states – NC & VA
- Women pastor's in the conference. As well as, different ethnic pastors as well.
- Christ like – living out “open hearts, open minds, open doors.”
- Our conference would be experiencing growth in all areas and among all age groups. We all would be growing in our faith to the point of overflowing and spilling out to all those around us...
- Our conference would truly and openly embrace all those who profess the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the validity of the Bible. Our church doors would be open to all regardless of race, sex, dress, etc.
- Many, many would stand on the authority of the scripture in all things. This would result in action – in changed lives.
- Rather than being inwardly and institutionally focused, every local church congregation would focus their energies beyond the church walls. The Church is people.
- Evangelism would not have to be a separate committee – it would be the major part of everything we do.
- We would open our conference committee to diversity. The same people would not continue to perpetuate their same agendas and their same buddies year after year after year.
- People loving one another in the midst of radical differences, and saving our resources for the good of all.
- We would live in true community. Basking in the love and grace of God to the great joy of God so that our love and compassion spilled forth to our neighbors, our friends, our enemies, and all the world.
- Our conference would be 100% different!!!
- Our churches would be more intentional about reaching out to others, and not be such a “closed” society of believers. We would loose the “family chapel” mentality in many of our churches. We would be adding people to the family and rejoicing in those additions not bemoaning our losses. We would be an extension of Christ and do what He has done and not operate like a multi-level business.
- 1) We probably would not spend conference time ridiculing other denominations like the conference secretary did this year and Rev. Carter did last year. We are better than that! 2) There would be an enlivened laity and clergy; 3) There would be healthy churches; 4) Changing the very _____
- We would be growing beyond the imagination. We would be reaching out to others in need for more than we already do.
- More love shown for least and lowliest. More challenge for missions. More emphasis on evangelism and outreach to the unchurched!

- Our conference would be a most powerful force that could change and influence the whole world if we would only embrace this text throughout the week instead of on Sunday!
- The conference would encourage all the churches and church people to show more sensitivity to the needs of other people.
- This place would not hold all the people.
- We would be a huge, diverse group sharing the love of Jesus with every person who would hear, embracing the unloved and “unlovable,” as well as those who are “just like us.”
- None would be overlooked from ones who need to accept Christ, those who are new Christians, (every age) t those who need to continually grow to those who may be hearing God’s call but don’t recognize it or to the highest levels of servant hood, pastors, D.S., Bishops, etc...all adequately supported and fed. Our size would grow; ministries would grow, etc...
- Everything would be full and overflowing. Our churches, our projects, our offerings, our missions, and we would effectively and diversely minister to all God’s people.
- We would be passionate!
- Joyful and faithful disciples, trained and equipped, reaching out and welcoming others in the name of Christ. Teaching and baptizing with minds and hearts of Christ – our example and our Lord.
- Faithful disciples, diligently seeking all that unites, Christ and His will, us in ministry rather than focusing on the things that separate us (competition, jealousy).
- Our conference will not be able to meet all together! We would be able to concentrate on God’s will and plan for us rather than spending time on what needs to be done and spend time doing what needs to be done.
- It would be larger and include all our neighbors.
- More outreach in our neighborhoods to schools, other groups not connected to the church, lead to growth.
- This building would be full.
- I think more time would be spent in fellowship activities drawing in all members and less time spent on business matters.
- More of the same “mission” with larger scope – reaching and upholding human dignity and diversity and acceptance/tolerance.
- In some respects the defining walls of our conference and other loving groups to be broken down to work as one unit for God rather than working independently. (This won’t happen as we need for group acceptance – identity – look what we did.)
- As Bishop Watson pointed out, we could do so, so much that we can’t fully realize if we only embraced this text, churches would grow but best of all, SOULS would be claimed and reclaimed. Let it be, Lord!
- We would be involved in less talking and more action.
- God would be pleased – we would have money to fully fund our missions – there would not need to be discussions on apportionments as all churches would give freely what was needed. New churches started instead of disbanding.
- While very diverse in character, one common thread (accepting and loving God and others) would bind together. Primary focus would be on winning and retaining souls for Christ. There would be far less emphasis on process, governance and far greater emphasis in results.
- Overflowing!
- A different world.
- We would love and serve all with whom we come in contact and would never be satisfied with where we are.

- Awesome! The Bishop would be hard pressed to gather us all in for a business session.
- We would be outside the “box” of our congregations – supporting ministries that are not necessarily United Methodist but that reach people where they are – we tend to stress what the UMC is doing! More ecumenical – more cooperation with other denominations.
- 1. Prejudices against women clergy would diminish. 2. We would welcome a true itinerary. 3. We would overpay our apportionments. 4. We would work more zealously for peace, elimination of hunger and other illnesses.
- 1) A focus on worship – to enliven and deepen the gathering of the community of faith. 2) An intentional effort to embody the faith that is shaped, informed, enriched and driven by that worship – which is a relationship with the living God.
- I think, over-all, God would be pleased – but there would be areas for improvements – areas of cultural acceptance, both of diversity of races and socio-economic status.
- There would be no limit to any part including money.
- The world would be touched in every area with the true love of God. Salvation would come to all. We would be spiritually closer to God and each other. No limits.
- Conference would grow tremendously.
- --Developing and providing vibrant worship and spiritual growth. --Planting new churches in stronger areas of growth. --Continuing to reach the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and in prison.
- Vivacious – more active.
- Less worry and time devoted to outer appearance and more love, outreach and helping hands/encouragement to others.
- --Enthusiasm for initiating the “help program” that this conference already has in place. –I believe that we would experience growth.
- “Disciples” that are prepared to go out into the world and spread the Word.
- We would be reaching out to and embracing all people remembering that we are all God’s children. All pulpits would be open regardless of race or sex. We would see beyond our doctrinal differences to our unity in the love of Christ. We would be eager to be about ministry amidst complacency.
- One that would strive to the fullest to see that every soul possible would be sought in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- We would have to find a larger meeting place! We would not be concerned about budget problems or membership numbers!
- All missions of conference would be fully supported. All churches large and small would be growing, the gospel of Jesus Christ would be preached, taught, and practiced throughout the conference; there would not be enough seats in Stuart to accommodate everyone who wanted to attend. Love would flow and grow.
- Romans 1:24-28; We would not let these people be in leadership – our church would be growing instead of declining. A “firm” stand to be taken.
- We would be evangelizing energetically and passionately and would have our churches packed with those who are on fire with love for God and their neighbors.
- I feel God is saying to us as a conference, well done, good and faithful servants. The conference as a whole is “walking the walk” and “talking the talk”. Now, through visioning can we go outside of the square, even more, and let people know what we are doing! Can we be enthused about God’s Word and His work?
- All God-oriented, first and foremost, within the conference! We have too many churches within that need help. Love all of them so they can better be prepared to go and reach out! Encourage and equip!

- Be reaching out to people that are troubled and telling them they need Christ in their life.
- Our conference would be one where, because we all would embrace these truths, pastors would serve joyfully. Churches would receive and embrace them willingly, souls would be added to the Kingdom, such that no church would close and new ones would be added.
- If God's love was fully involved, preachers would care more for going where God calls and money and benefits not put ahead of God's mission. We are forgetting the Scriptures. Put names in a hat and draw out names when pastor's wanted or need to be moved.
- We would experience unprecedented growth in all our churches.
- 1) Women accepted to our pulpits AND in the local, district, and conference leadership. 2) Medium sized churches with great caring for each other.
- We "the conference" would look like Jesus. More time, hands on, selecting with the down and out – going to them not expecting them to come to us.
- All churches and all individuals would be so engaged to God's mankind that all people would be in harmony with God.
- We would see our numbers increase, our caring increase, and change the behavior of all whom we come in contact with.
- Like one big happy, shouting revival!
- We would be constantly encouraging one another to love God and others with our whole hearts, and constantly reaching out to others to help them grow toward Christ and in Christ. We would listen carefully to the needs of local churches and pastors, and provide tools and direction to help them accomplish their mission of making disciples.
- It would be the most successful group of churches ever. All churches would be filled and overflowing.
- We would all be more involved with being a minister of the Word, more acceptance of others.
- A body that couldn't be stopped!
- Many would be led to Christ, no longer would Holston Conference have declining membership. Our world would be changed.
- A burning bush that starts to consume all the area around it until the entire globe is aglow with the light. A burning bush situated first over Holston Conference area and then spreads all around the world (picture).
- More professions of faith and growth.
- Our churches would be full; our nation would be a more loving nation.
- We would do more ministries to and with the hurting and the poor. We would be more intentional and do better jobs of helping members grow in a loving relationship with God and faithful discipleship.
- We would be more diverse in color and gender. We would be more mission minded, locally and globally. We would be increasing in numbers, persons, and financially. Our love for each other would be more visible.
- We would also be looked upon as fulfilling our mission and truly being God's people being guided by the Holy Spirit to do the ministry God wants us to be about rather than our own agenda.
- We would be able to fulfill all of our missions. We would have willing workers.
- Holston Conference would be experiencing a greater depth of God's miraculous power and His Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit would be a fire that could not be contained or quenched.
- We would be on fire for God and would be a growing church in the service of Christ.
- We would be fully utilizing all people (men and women) for our ministries.
- We would have more hospitals, schools, and resources throughout the US and abroad that would equip and empower. But most important – we would better understand that as disciples,

Jesus also sent us to lay hands on the sick, open eyes, ears and hearts and allow the Holy Spirit to baptize, fill and empower us individually to “get up off our seat” and “find our ticket.”

- --Each church welcoming ALL, each person knowing and actively engaged in their gifts to edify (build-up) the church. –More people – more churches; no more of “I can’t/we’re unable/we have never don’t it that way before.”
- We would grow – more people would get saved, adding to our number. We would have 100% spirit filled pastors to lead and guide the flock. You’ll have a more difficult task of making disciples with some of the pastors we have.
- We would be adding more members rather than losing them.
- The Spirit of God would be moving in everybody’s life. Like that day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4). Our conference would be a place of revival (Ps 85:5)
- Our conference would be much more diverse and representative of different ages, race, and gender if we remove the barriers and really loved others. We would also be able to do more because we would have more people and resources. And our conference would just shine and fill the area with the love of Christ. We would be more willing to take risk.
- A more vigorous, committed group of Christians working hard to try to alleviate the suffering in this world which is “in the most” – pushed in by those who bombard our culture with immorality in films, media, anti-Christian forces, weak attempts at what is better.
- A spiritually moved one – highly motivated.
- Heaven on earth! No trouble, etc. Spiritual movement.
- Its leadership would be outstanding in giving and teaching others.
- Christianity at its best.
- The Kingdom of God on earth.
- It should look more like Mother Theresa’s organization.
- A conference of true disciples.
- There would probably be some changes.
- In the Great Commission we see these action verbs: go, baptize, and teach. To whom? All nations.
- Pay salaries and benefits for conference evangelists; train all clergy and laity in how to witness so persons become disciples; clergy meetings would be time of growing in love with each other and with God.
- Better.
- I believe we would be bursting at the seams. Not only would attendance increase but so would membership. Mission work could continue both within our conference and abroad.
- More love for each other; more people being won to Christ; more earnestness in church about church membership.
- Our conference would show its love for everyone by helping out those in need no matter whom or where they are. It would include equal opportunities for each person regardless of race, gender, etc.
- There would be much more love and caring for each church.
- The growth would be phenomenal! If each member took this to heart you could not build a building large enough to hold the crowd. We would be seen as truly being Christians in all we say, but especially in all we do!
- We would see an increase instead of decline. If we studied this our church schools would grow, become disciples of the Word, and truly become people of the Book!
- Heaven on earth.
- Loving, caring, harmonious group caring for each other and actively going out and making disciples of others.

- It would appear to be trying and working at it. There have been times when the conference has focused and given time to discussing and trying to act on “business”. Now it seems to be focusing on spiritual ideas.
- Growing. Agents of social change. Less impoverished. Hopeful.
- Encourage participation in and send persons to the 5-Day Academy for Spiritual Formation offered by The Upper Room. Prayer – more, more, more, more, more.
- Growing in God fully.
- Seeing the need of our spiritual gifts, apportionments.
- Like the Disciples, God sent out to apply “The Great Commandment.”
- We would value evangelism and discipling. Must realize that you cannot effectively disciple anyone who has accepted Christ – we would use all means to communicate the Gospel – make it relevant and fresh to post moderns. No worship WPRS!
- This year, out of the past three, is very close. More five minute stretch breaks to limit so much movement in the auditorium – a definite distraction! (Just a technical note: consider writing in PowerPoint in a very dark font – NOT white – difficult to see unless at the front.)
- Much like it looks today – we would be in the world sharing Christ’s love and preparing people to share God’s Word and Truth.
- Not as involved with ritual but actually going out and doing. Our conference would have energy to care for more local people and support happily those who have the talents to do His work abroad. Would pray before action and know God’s word and use as a guide.
- We will usher in the new and recognize from our past these principles. Still useful significant and vital to our growth in Christian faith, corporate and private in life.
- Be a whole lot of preachers (preachers are only ones who can baptize?) Sharing of wealth and excess to all!!! Churches will stop closing doors.
- Excited, empowered, inclusive yet holding all accountable.
- We would be more loving, more caring. We would do more visiting and we would fill up our churches and build others. We would focus more on those that need love the most.
- We would be reaching out in love to all people of every walk of life to let them know that God has created them for a very special purpose – to be a part of His Holy community here on earth.
- Our conference would grow in all ways because we would be so full of love and the Holy Spirit that people would want to be a part of this fellowship.
- Growth in local church – which would include growth in the conference. More outreach, more spirit filled lives.
- Committed to my God and fellowman.
- In the conference, the membership and facilities would be overwhelming in regards to participation in service and evangelism.
- We would stand as One Voice and One Heart – dissention and doubt would not exist.
- We would have to build a much larger building with air conditioning.
- Our conference would look like what God intended for Eden to be!
- There would be no feelings of being “left behind.” The Stuart Auditorium would be overflowing with love.
- The conference would be like Christ’s image/walking, teaching and preaching as God would do. Loving each other, winning others to Christ. We will glorify Christ. Seeking God’s Word.
- Women clergy as well as clergy of color would be welcomed as pastors in all our churches. Church membership would be up because people of diverse ethnicity would be invited and welcome. Souls would be won for Christ – because we would truly “care” and love.

- The conference would pray without ceasing; give its time and talents locally and abroad, love the unloved and church the unchurched. Conference would have more non-oily viewpoints. Nurture our own congregation.
- All churches would be full and overflowing.
- Churches that refuse minorities (Black, Hispanic, women) from pasturing them. Church would do better. There would be a greater diversity within the conference. People would stoop giving lip service and give actual Christ like service to each other.
- Be truly “open” with itinerary. Reach out to all who hurt, no matter where they live or in whatever condition.
- A place where you would be very close to the Holy Spirit and place of loving, kindness, and a fellowship we have probably never experienced.
- 1) No conference churches would be closed as announced this morning; 2) No need to worry about fair share being paid; 3) Conference would be announcing opening of new churches and/or extensions added on to existing churches to accommodate the overflow of people.
- We would look like Jesus to the hurting and lost people in our area. God would know that His people – the ones He loves – are being cared for by the ones who have been so richly blessed.
- I would hope that God would see an arm of His disciples using all that they have been blessed with to extend the reality of God’s blessings for all and of God’s love for all. We would spend less time on money and more on mission.
- Our churches would be steadily growing within all age groups: diversity and inclusiveness would be non-issues.
- If we fully embraced these texts, our pastors would not be so concerned with “moving on to the next appointment.” They would focus on leading the church where they are. Our laity would be more spiritual as well. The church would, as a result, grow spiritually and in number.
- More inclusive of all persons; respect of all persons being created in the image of God; color-blindness and gender blindness in appointment making; resources being freed up to underwrite missional needs.
- We would be active in determining where our Lord was at work in the community and world, and we would join Him there. We seem to be threatened by the Holy Spirit as United Methodists. We are not the ink, we are the quills or pens.
- The conference would be to the glory of God and all churches would only have one congregation – that being of one mind without color, race or difference in doctrine.
- Oh – the numbers would sky rocket. Our churches would be busy with teaching. Souls would be saved. Something we seem to have forgotten. Prayers would be answered.
- We would be on FIRE for the Lord in all areas of the conference – thus this conference would be full of new believers who would also be on FIRE.
- The conference is nothing more than a composite of neighbors so the same as above applies. (#1 My life would show love for God and my neighbor in all that I do; I would show that love for neighbor is not just a convenient thing. I would know that I cannot say and mean that I can love God and not my neighbor.)
- We would be effective and powerful.
- This conference would be blessed beyond any words I could use to describe it. God would lift this conference up as a light to the world to make a difference.
- The conference would finally live up to the slogan “open hearts, open minds, open doors.” Right now, that proves false because in many cases if you look different, or are homosexual, you are not welcomed.
- Sharing success stories of spiritual growth.

- It would be like a flower garden with peace and tranquility.
- There would be acceptance and concern for all races, ages and groups in ministry and care.
- Like we were putting ourselves last and others first. Love for each other.
- Be sending more aid to need peoples, more missionaries to tell the world of God's love for them starting here and spreading to the ends of the earth.
- It would become alive. Membership would grow. The world would become a better world.
- Our conference is (me). I am a part of the whole and question #1 answers this. (#1 My life would be full of love and understanding, I would be a true ambassador of spreading the love of Jesus. Not wear Jesus on Sunday only. ☺)
- Churches wouldn't be closing down and we would be building more. Be more careful of what we say and do.
- As a large group we can do more using different gifts.
- More sense, similar to above answer but collectively I feel that our conference can more fully embrace the "orders" because of our various gifts and graces.
- Everybody respecting everybody else's experience with God's love and direction.
- More diverse. There would be more NON-white, middle/upper middle class people and there would be a more diverse age class. We would also reach out and leave our comfort zones.
- Holston Conference would be do dedicated to God's work that it could accomplish what at the present time, seems impossible. People working together in their belief. As one in Jesus would be the fulfillment of this text.
- He might see our conference doing what is our commission of working together to further strengthen not only His Kingdom, but also our tiny but important place in it.
- We would be doing the work of God and not just talking about it. Do we really understand sacrifice and self denial, Jesus was talking about?
- We would be using our resources for other people than ourselves.
- More hands on mission work – especially at the local level – our "neighbors" need to see the Methodist church live the faith. Often, our mission is writing a check – we need to be more visible.
- Moving out of "comfort zones" into the spiritual needs of our communities. Bring missions – food, clothing, heat, medical concerns, poor, etc. issues – back to the local communities of the conference. Make our local church places of outreach and "hands on" help.
- A growing, worshipping community in which all would be invited to participate.
- We would truly be fulfilling what He wants us to do. Fantastic, full apportionments paid so all missions would be funded...
- Our conference would look like the world. We look now like a nice, affluent, mildly integrated suburb. It grieves my heart to hear Stella Roberts talk about the exclusivity of churches towards women. We need to be opened up and emptied out and refilled.
- Matt 22 Wow! We would be living out the love verses as found in I Corin. 13:4b-8. Matt 28 We would live out this great commission without thinking.
- Holston Conference would be "on fire." IT would be filled with God's spirit and all churches would be filled and overflowing with Christians committing their lives to making the world a better place...a place of justice and compassion. Churches would be thriving not just surviving.
- We would truly be an open conference, embracing all of God's creation. The grace, love, and hope of God would reach into all situations and harsh judgment of one another would cease. God's love would be shed abroad (around) and each of God's creation, regardless of creed, race, social status, economic status, or political persuasion would be welcome at God's table.

- We would be united in our vision of serving God. Bringing God's Word to our neighbors – not enclosed within our own church boundaries. We would be accomplishing God-sized goals.
- Similarly to no 1: We would not be so homogenous in terms of class, race, ethnicity, etc., because the only commonality we would need would be Christ.
- Our growth and outreach would be immeasurable.
- More openness, willingness to go out or reach out to more people. More faithful.
- It would look like a HOUSE AFIRE!
- We would focus less on paperwork and political maneuvering and focus more on making Disciples. This may mean pastors staying at appointments longer, forcing the pastor and the church to work together to solve conflict. Allow pastors to develop lasting relationships where real discipleship takes place. Real dialogue between clergy and laity.
- Christ has come again!
- There would not be church closings. Decision making wouldn't be as much of a struggle. Fair Share giving would be 100%.
- It would be fully active in the communities of our region. Helping the poor and needy. It would make sure people of all economic and social levels are welcome and active in our churches.
- We would treat everyone equal and stop jockeying for places of importance to ourselves. Instead of me we would say you.
- I think we would be willing to take Godly risks as we seek to live out the God-shaped, God-sized vision that is just waiting for us...we would be willing to do anything for God!
- A growing conference with all our ministry needs bring filled and an outreach to all of the world. With the needs of all filled.
- Like the early church – generous to all, selling our possessions (land, buildings, including church buildings), meeting in common places, focused on helping the poor become self-sufficient (not just giving money and perpetuating dependency), caring for the less fortunate as members of our family.
- Larger and better attendance.
- Love and fellowship, rejoicing.
- Our churches would be growing rather than shrinking.
- We would be concerned more about ministries than about budgets. There would be no time at annual conference to talk about “business” because all our time would be spent rejoicing over all the many ministry reports.
- As a conference we would be providing food, clothing and shelter to all those in need. Under the banner of the UMC. Food pantries would have no limits. Unsold clothing from rummage sales would be collected and distributed as needed. Home repair and rebuilding programs would make Habitat for Humanity look small. Response to these physical signs of Christ's love would draw many to be a part of our conference through professions of faith in Christ.
- We would be busy workers in God's kingdom. We would treat others with love, kindness, mercy, and compassion. God would be glorified in all we do. Selfishness and pettiness would not be present. We would be happy, loving, reaching out to help others.
- Our churches would have more young adults and youth attending and participating.
- Be more inclusive of race and gender. Continue our mission outreach...and increase!
- Not everyone takes a life surrendered to God seriously. We easily get caught up in business. Extra burdens get put on others whose lives are lived for God because others are not serving their function in the Body of Christ.

- Holston Conference would be seen as an organization which was working for the betterment of individuals. It would not be working for climbing the ladder of “success”. As individuals who make up the conference, it would not always be necessary for us to be the dominant force in every activity.
- Certainly inclusive, i.e. cabinet report this a.m.; more open to various lifestyles.
- We would worship as one seeing our worship experience on Sunday morning as a connected experience with every other church in the conference. We would lift each other up and hold ourselves accountable to God’s call in our communal lives taking up the cross in our communities, seeking out the least, the lost, and the last, that they might share in God’s love.
- Our conference would be growing in all aspects of ministry and spiritually. Our conference would also reflect the diversity of the region: race, class, gender and various age groups.
- Our congregations would be diverse, racially, economically, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, rich, poor and there would be self-confessed sinners on every pew, people of every age and persuasion.
- As an African American, our conference, would really demonstrate the true meaning of “diversity” and pastor’s would not be afraid to challenge their congregations to change their prejudice “concepts.”
- More diverse and open to all without judging. More local churches would be reaching out on a personal level to people in their neighborhoods, meeting the needs of all, regardless of race, finance, health, or age.
- Words can not describe the difference I feel we, as a church, will make. There are so many elderly and young people looking.
- All God’s people throughout Holston Conference would be followers, disciples to other conference people throughout the world if genuine love, God’s love, is being exercised daily.
- We would be a body of disciples caring not for our own individual wants and needs, but one in which the needs of our families, communities, nation and the world are met with love and humility. Looking not at the outward appearance but the inner.
- We would, first of all, be colorblind, meaning color would mean nothing when such things as appointments take place. The same could be said about male and female. I think the Bishop and Cabinet need to appoint women even if the church receiving her objects – let them learn to love her. This means the Bishop, Cabinet and other clergy will give support to her. We would see a net increase in membership each year.
- Same as #1, only bigger. (#1 It would blow His mind. My life would not only have its purpose, my life would fulfill its purpose.)
- By conference officials – good. For 2000 guests, who knows?
- Our conference would look like a sea of wide-awake faces, large, eager eyes, set with love and determination to go home and spread the gospel more potently than ever before.
- If we embraced this text in our conference, there would be as much love and compassion that we would have no poverty. There would be no trouble getting along in churches. We would not be petty. We would give great leadership.
- It would be filled with committed Christians doing the work of Christ. Inclusive in all areas – diligently seeking God’s vision for all.
- A mirror of God’s will, He would see and feel that He was well pleased.
- Earnestly striving, but far to go. Need more complete involvement by greater number.
- Challenged, pursued, blessed.
- Everyone would be more like they were seeing each person as someone they would like to see more of, to get to know and love.

- In the face of controversy, solutions would be peacefully accomplished. We would have sufficient resources to minister, both on a conference level and in the local church.
- Taking the Gospel out to a world that is in deep need of His love. It is easier to give material things rather than time and hope. Love one another rather than position for power and prestige or favors from earthly powers.
- We would all be embracing a Christ like life and making sure our conference was a vision toward God.
- We need to have representative from different races and nationalities.
- Starting new churches and to reach those who are not being reached by our existing churches.
- Training, support in areas listed in visioning study for pastors and congregations.
- Generous, aggressive.
- JESUS!! “The character of...”
- The conference would be trying to extend itself beyond all boundaries.
- The conference would look like the “church!” Jars of clay that is imperfect but contains the very Kingdom of God.
- A conference without off stage arguing and bickering.
- We would all reflect Jesus. It would reflect the Kingdom of Heaven.
- Much of the politics would go away. Preachers would preach and workers would serve mindless of financial support – salary or positions.
- This building could not hold all the people. Our churches would have 2-3-4 times the membership they have now.
- We would be more loving and nurturing of others – our neighbors – in our churches and in our programs. We would be focused more on listening for God’s voice, in prayer and study of His Word. We would move closer to the challenge of open hearts, open minds and open doors in our congregations.
- Our conference would look like what God intended His church to be. Loving, respectful of one another in harmony. Loving God first.
- A larger, stronger membership. Make disciples for Jesus Christ.
- We would be a builder of hundreds, maybe thousands, of Habitat Homes. We’d be mentors/ministers for victims of child abuse and drug addiction. We’d be involved with our youth in extending our arms to the unloved, unchurched, poor, youth and children.
- We would be a consistent conference in our spiritual walk with God.
- Our conference, internally, would be free of racial, cultural and gender bias. We would be fully committed to carrying the message to the world. We would be doing more to “equip the saints” for service. We would be committed to making full use of the resources of the local church.
- The Body of Christ.
- Our churches would be full because of love and persons knowing what the grace and peace Jesus gives through us.
- We would be excited about God – not have Him neatly packaged in a box, but, we would see Him as He is, Holy and Worthy of our praise. Then see ourselves as we really are – unable to do anything without God’s Spirit, but able to do anything when open to God working through us.
- To provide quality opportunities to be in community for honest dialogue, discernment and education on the hard issues of the faith (heart, mind and hands). Be a tune and relevant to our culture while being faithful to Gospel and doctrine.

- 1) Clergy and churches would be matched based on gift, graces and maturity levels not tenure and salary range. 2) Churches would unite, not compete, for membership. 3) All people in the community would be welcome into the faith.
- We would be more open. If you look back at the stats given of the churches that still won't accept women in the pulpit, how can we our love for neighbor's when we can't show love for our sisters in the church?
- Churches would be unable to hold all the people because of all the outreach to neighbors.
- Our conference would look and feel like a giant ball of fire of love for all.
- We would not be just sending kits to other countries but would also emphasize our own around us.
- Like the church Jesus commanded us to be. We would be not only a great beacon to the world but also a great magnet strongly attracting everyone searching for meaning, acceptance and hope.
- There would be more people coming to Christ. The churches would be full and running over.
- All churches would be filled with believers – standing room only! No problems with the day to day tasks – those would be taken care of.
- We would be bursting at the seams! We would be able to support ourselves and our mission to God. We would no longer be exclusive to women, races, disabled, etc...
- We would narrow the focus and concentrate on making disciples. There would be some programs cut that would allow us to focus on what is most important. Less is more.
- Unified, externally and mission focused.
- We would be in ministry with our Hispanic neighbors and our communities in making them welcome.
- As a people, we would reflect the brightness of Jesus to and in the world.
- We would be even more diverse than we are.
- We would invest more focus/time/energy/money on ministries in which the neighbor is loved – especially the “least”/marginal and especially long range love which empowers and not just short range charity. And we would invest more in discipling the people reached, especially to overcome their own additions/idolatries to materialism, esteem, partiality, etc.
- God only knows! Must be what Heaven is like...
- God's chosen church.
- It would be a group of ministers and laity going about God's work, sharing our love for Him and His promise of life.
- It would be spirit led and the programs of the church would run a much smoother course.
- We would stop being concerned about building brick and mortar. We would stop focusing on congregations as individuals as we brought the Kingdom of God into our conference. Strong churches would truly support struggling ones and we would work side by side in our communities instead of doing our own thing.
- There would be more unity and teamwork to God's mission by clergy and laity. God calls men and women to ministry not mankind! God calls all to action (laity and clergy) as ambassadors of His Word and His love and outreach.
- There would be no churches that had to close their doors. More women accepted in the churches.
- Concern for all areas (geographic) seek to reach and retain youth, young adults and young families.
- God would love it! That's all God wants from us – love of God and love for each other. If we focused in on that idea of love and going out with authority to teach and baptize, we would be

doing God's will. Sometimes our conference gets so bogged down in details etc.; we forget what we are called to in its simplicity.

- We would streamline our “infrastructure” to be able to bring more resources to bear in loving our neighbors – fewer building projects, fewer districts in order to reach more people. Too much tied up in buildings and not enough in people.
- Less resistance to change, less conflict. Seeking God's way, not our way. More of this sort of Bible study, group discussion.
- Caring for all people, living out God's commandments.
- We would be vibrant, alive and growing.
- The conference would also be filled with activity to show love to others.
- The conference would be alive with opportunities for service of all sorts. A principal problem of the conference would be dealing with the overwhelming number of people anxious to be involved in service.
- Our churches would be growing not only with membership, but with outreach problems for every segment and every age of society.
- We would look outward, finding ways to promote Christian works throughout local, regional and world. We could become a formidable unit, with strengths that would amaze us to do God's work. More love – less gripe.
- The conference more mission oriented at home and over seas. But the mission would address the cause of iniquities rather than “treating” the results. We have resources the world needs to know how God would distribute them. It needs to address unethical practices, business practices, demonstrating God's love.
- We would work harder about moving our churches into the communities where our neighbors are not disciples. We need concrete mechanisms to encourage outward ministries. We do a lot with nurture, some with mission, and little with witness.
- If we really loved as God and loved Him – all would be equal both inside and outside our churches. We would have no discontinued churches because we would strive to make all churches healthy. Larger congregations would foster smaller congregations to become more vital.
- We have the resources in the conference to accomplish anything God wants us to do. We just need to give back to God what He has loaned us.
- The conference would be growing and bursting at the seams.
- Everyone's gifts and graces would be accepted by all persons.
- A changed conference, active, involved. Reaching out, new churches, growing churches.
- Completely where He wants us to be, or there along time ago.
- The conference would be even more open to people of different backgrounds and lifestyles. To make disciples we must first make them welcome.
- Our membership would increase – not decrease. We would not be closing churches, but we would be establishing new churches.
- A servant conference, less institutional and responsive to communal needs in outpost ministries.
- Grown from as is to great proportions.
- God would see an overabundant conference with all churches at capacity, and 0 churches discontinuing. “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.”
- We would not ask, “What will the church do for me?” We would not exist to maintain an institution or a set of rules. We would have no “pew potatoes.” Community oriented, not individualistic, faith. Our own lives would be far less selfish. We would be fearless (perfect love casts out fear). Quit play favorites in conference roles.

- We would expend far less of our resources on buildings, salaries, and programs for our present members and instead devote those resources to gaining new members for Christ's church.
- More responses would be needed in program that demonstrated love of neighbor and making of disciples than anything else. The laity would be encouraged to learn that reaching others is not just the work of the pastors.
- We would be a force for the world to reckon with. Peace would reign supreme and people would forsake all outside influences and start being the influence. We can not embrace God and let wars rage without condemning them.
- The conference would be more involved with people rather than things.
- More nurturing for pastors and community assistance.
- A unified and forceful movement spreading the Good News to all people without any prejudice or thought of self.
- We would have compassion for all people. We would be more evangelistic, winning souls for Christ, then teaching them and nurturing them.
- We would be fulfilling God's will, commandment, commission and vision.
- We would appear to be His chosen people.
- Strong, active reaching to our communities by "thinking out of the box." Praying for God's vision to be ours. Submissive to doing whatever it takes to proclaim salvation. Discipling.
- Our conference would love it's congregations by teaching the truth in love about race, gender (including female pastoral leadership) ageism and disability. Every church refusing a woman for pastor should be required to take a class on how to interpret scripture.
- We would all be in one accord.
- Even better than it now is. Greater things would be accomplished.
- It would not be losing members; we would be paying the Fair Share; we would be surely love our neighbor as ourselves; (we are the conference.)
- 1) All apportionment would be paid; 2) We would have the resources and capability to reach out to those in our local communities who speak a different language; 3) all pastors would be welcomed at all churches; 4) our churches would get up off their tickets and move for God.
- The children (people) that He envisioned when He first created man. (He is our god and we are His people.)
- More concerned for the lost, downtrodden and unchurched. More awareness of our responsibility.
- We would have our church doors open all the time inviting our neighbors to hear the Word of God at anytime. We would be accepting of all persons to our individual churches, no matter what their intentions.
- Our churches would be full of people from all conditions of life no matter how different from the majority.
- Our churches would be full; our members growing in spirit; and our pastors preaching with power, in the name of Jesus.
- Our outreach and impact would multiply and felt throughout the world.
- Crowded. Passionate and enthusiastic!
- We would be winning new people to Christ.
- Our conference would seek to spend as much on outreach to those who are in need as it spends in maintaining its own members and activities at telling the people within our geographic boundaries about Jesus and God's love would become our first priority.
- Our conference would be actively involved in outreach programs. We would help meet basic needs of others – (build homes, provide food, love). Show others the light of Jesus. Provide more programs to help families/single mother's day care centers, after school programs, etc.

- I feel the conference would have more churches growing and beginning to reach out into their communities as never before. Particularly with the Matthew 28 text there would be more congregations willing to embrace change.
- All too often our neighbor is white, middle class, and financially solvent. We must vision, strategize, and commit the human and financial resources at our great church to the evangelism of the poor; not for the purpose of patronizing them; but to empower them in Christ.
- All appointment barriers would be broken. We would truly have open hearts, open minds, open doors. We would be changing culture instead of culture changing the church.
- It would be a well-lighted city on a hill, the inviting soft light in a warm kitchen to a cold and weary traveler.
- Clergy morale would be consistently positive and much more we would be mutually supportive. We as a conference would stop our futile 40 year fixation with whether we had gains or losses as has been the focus, our target loss. Instead, we would focus on how we were offering the love of Jesus, worshiping in spirit and truth, and testifying to Jesus in our acts and words.
- We would always have before us the questions, “Who is my neighbor?” 1) Seeing our neighbors – looking for them; 2) getting to know our neighbors – learning from them, about them; 3) servicing our neighbors – loving them, living among them and sharing in Christ’s life.
- We would have more events and ministries in the neighborhood around our local churches and not be so focused on ourselves. Our work would be less around conference and Methodist centers and more where people are. Where God is in the places where church people generally now are not. We would be seeking the lost sheep.
- Different.
- Worship would be central to our spirituality and fellowship. We would not be bickering over issues that divide us. We would be focused on reaching out to people to whom love is a stranger. We would put all stereotypes behind us. We would focus on action in the world, de-emphasizing our focus on our buildings and “worldly” achievements.
- Our conference would have many more churches, churches with many more members and ages and colors. Every member of every church would have a connection outside the church – a mission, an outreach – a story to tell of God working thru him/her while blessing/increasing him/her.
- More consciences. Better.
- We would look like a people “on fire” for Jesus. His light would shine in our faces and our flame would kindle a fire in others because they would want what we have!
- God would see a conference which loved without limits and who strive greatly for the Kingdom. The conference would have to search for new ways to share all the resources available to it.
- Holston Conference would, in all things and by all measures, be the UM conference as the model for the Great Commission and the Great Commandment. We would be in a constant “ready” state of discernment to carry out God’s vision with the commandment and the commission and carry this into action in all programs, in all local churches, so that every person on earth would know God’s love.
- Church membership would be as large as it was in the 40’s – 60’s as Methodist. We are not reaching the unsaved around us.
- It is hard to imagine what it would be like – it would be a God-sized vision for sure. I would imagine we would have resources (human and financial) to do things we never dreamed we could do.
- We would be more loving and caring about our communities and the world.

- Barriers would be torn down. Heaven is the limit. Hunger, homeless, sickness could be removed.
- Our conference would be open to all people regardless of wealth, race or power. We would seek to bring all into the Kingdom and would not have enough churches or pastors to hold them!
- It would be a microcosm of the world, which would be fully evangelized.
- --Become more externally focused; --become less concerned about how the church can serve us and more about how we can serve (example of some of the group presentation asking for a greater role)
- Service rooted in spirituality – a better understanding of how necessary the two are – they are commanded by God – not optional.
- We would be winning more souls for Christ, establishing new churches, new ministries instead of closing churches and selling the property.
- Those who are able to love would be God’s instruments in loving even the unloving among us. Barriers are broken down in our willingness to drop our own agendas and allow God to work through us. But too often various factions hold their own agendas sacred as if they were the divine calling.
- --More energy, resources and time invested in serving others, spreading the gospel than in our own needs. –Stronger sense of our deep connectedness and working for the common good. – Stronger sense of our purpose and that we have something to offer a broken world.
- We would be vital, growing, and rejoicing in each other’s ministries.
- We would bring more to God’s kingdom, nurturing to others. Bible study.
- On fire! Jesus said, “John came to baptize you with water, I came to baptize you with the spirit and with fire!” Our annual conference doesn’t worship!
- A much smaller portion of our wealth would be retained. We would be mission focused and fully evangelistically engaged. We would hold the line on Biblically based life and practices.
- It would change the way “success” is defined and evaluated. The questions would become, “Have I loved God?” “Have I loved my neighbors?” “How does what I am doing express love for God...love for neighbor?”
- We would be going beyond our financial goals and be able to reach out in love to all mission fields.
- There would be no need to discuss money.
- I think Wesley really modeled this through His “works of piety” and “works of mercy”. If we focused on emulating the above in relevant ways to our present contexts, we will “observe (obey) all that I (Jesus) have commanded you.”
- There would be less politics involved in the decisions made for our churches. There would be more concern for the individuals who need to hear God’s Word through us.
- The conference would dramatically reduce its beauracy and take much of the money it spends on it and return it to the communities. The conference should be much better stewards of conference funds.
- Strong leadership and commitment but failure to fully embrace diversity.
- No criticizing other church members; no feat that we are doing thing on our own; visitors would feel extremely welcome; no yelling at each other at church council meetings.
- No congregation would ever be idle. Our groups would be bursting at the seams. All would know who we are and all in our communities would hear the message of Jesus Christ in us and through us. Holston would catch fire and burn like a magnificent flame.
- We would be disciples making disciples, making disciples...

- A celebration of God and world, church and community. Coordination of efforts to bring healing and wholeness to persons and to the land, to society and its structures.
- All people in our community and state, nation and countries would be hearing about the gospel.
- It would look like the early church – which uses a movement (the way), not an institution.
- “You have My vision in the Word. What will you do with it? Why are you waiting?”
- 1) We would have not problems in meeting our fair share apportionments; 2) the small churches having a problem could be strengthened by giving more leadership and encouragement – spiritually and financially. In other words – our conference sometimes over look the small churches.
- A) Growing in membership numbers and average attendees (worship and Sunday school); B) growing in number (big and small) churches; C) Shift from emphasis of nurturing to evangelism.
- I’m afraid He would see a very different group of people than what we are. What He sees would not be a minor image of what we are as a body.
- Our churches would need to be relevant in their geographical neighborhood, regardless of ethnic and socio-economic make-up. The conference would support pastors who lead congregations in exciting, challenging and controversial directions – too often they are labeled “troublemakers” and moved. Also, there would be more cooperative ministry efforts. More of our smaller churches need to pool resources.
- 1) Fewer government programs for people in need, our church would identify and provide help for those in need; 2) We would have a bold initiative to reverse the continual decline in our membership, and find new, more relevant ways to reach people and show them what God and His church have to offer; 3) We would have exciting classes for helping people begin to mature in their faith.
- Our conference would be reaching out to the communities around our churches and bringing them into our churches and loving them. We would not be afraid if people were different from ourselves.
- We would grow in God’s grace. The world would be a better place to live in.
- Numerical and spiritual growth with a greater financial contribution to peace and justice ministries and social issues.
- Our love for the world would be clearly seen by our involvement in ministries here and abroad.
- It would be vastly different that I envision God having a view of heaven on earth.
- Personal agendas set aside. No one looking out for what is best for themselves. More concern for doing God’s work and reaching God’s people than climbing the conference ladder. Growth instead of decline.
- 1) Massive resignations! Many conference pastors and leaders would surrender their entitled positions; 2) Servant hood would be common.
- There would be less bickering, squabbling and positioning amongst the lay and the clergy. We would seek the best for each other and each church. We would see all churches winning people to Christ – our conference would grow as never before!
- Glorifying, unifying, and satisfying. I would hope it would look like the community in Acts 4. Praying, worshipping, fellowshiping, serving, living out the commitment to Christ, breaking down barriers, healing needs, changing the world.
- Holston Conference would be growing. Its love would spread far beyond our geographic region. Neighbors, near and far, would know us as a firm foundation that supports and sustains all people regardless of race, gender, locale, financial background, place of birth, age.

- All inclusive. Focus on the needs of others and become more committed to fulfilling them and nurturing them.
- There would be true open itinerancy; there would be a fellowship of believers that was inclusive, including race, gender and faith. We would be acceptive of other religions as they express their belief in their God.
- We would be loving and on fire for the cause of Christ. We would be seeking souls to bring them to the love of Christ, no matter the size of the church, every one is important.
- --Would deploy groups in every district to identify major community needs and to work strategically and with district prayer vigil discernment to ‘hear’ how to garnet resources (people/\$\$) to address needs; --would work to move beyond image that church happens only when people come to us. New paradigm – go to them and set up “church” where they are!
- We would grow in all areas of service and see the results as never before: (not just on paper) – “not – build prayer barns”, ONLY
- Our conference would be a much closer conference, filled with love and instead of churches being closed, even more churches would be opening.
- Cooperative efforts in service. Equipping to be with those not in churches. Work on spiritual disciplines/worship/all the means of grace, including skills in working when we disagree.
- Be more committed to making disciples. Hold pastors and laity responsible for fulfilling this Scripture.
- More people would be experiencing a relationship with God. Lives would be fuller. Miraculous things would be happening in the conference. Lives would be changed; we would be proclaiming justice and peace. Diversity would be the norm rather than rare.
- We would not have to see any churches closing and have to do any voting to make things happen. Everything would be in peace.
- Like the very love of God Himself – everyone at peace, living is the joy of the Lord. Less strife in churches, churches closing, more total acceptance of our “other” brothers and sisters in Christ.
- We would not have churches refusing to be led by women pastors. There would be no churches bring closed. We would accept into our congregations and and all of those who come. We would be reaching out even more than we are to the community. The larger churches would help those that are smaller, with physical needs.
- Many more people regular in worship attendance and giving much more to the work of the church.
- We would be churches who love God through passionate worship, prayer and discipleship growth/training. We would reach out to the unchurched in our communities and around the world with love and hands that reach out to meet physical needs and hearts that long to meet spiritual needs.
- 1) A conference where all clergy were valued by churches regardless of gender or race; 2) a conference where all churches focus outward, not inward.
- Conference love for Jesus would radiate in all staff, pastors, laity and a revival would break out. Holy Spirit would move mightily. Souls saved, lives transformed.
- We would have no hungry in the world and no homeless people and we would be drawing more people into the church and have more people saved and our conference would grow.
- We would understand that the church exists mainly for those people who are not yet a part of it. We would not spend so much time “oiling the machinery.” We would understand that we are called to help God “make all things NEW.”
- No agencies or initiatives would be short of resources.
- There would be more harmony in the cities and government.

- An end to sexism/churches would embrace female pastors.
- Would be better children of God and spend more time with Him. A better chance of saving people.
- Ditto as above since the conference starts with us. (#1 I would be more responsible to the needs of others. I would be more tolerant of people that I perceive as different from me. I would definitely be a better husband, father and friend; a better, more disciplined, disciple of Christ.
- Church buildings would be empty on Sunday mornings because people would be going out into the community and telling others about Jesus. Well, maybe not empty, but we need to take seriously the word GO. Too often we emphasize the word COME. I don't see that in the text. God wants us out and about 24/7/365 not settled and comfy on Sunday morning.
- Follow His commandments, serve faithfully, tithe regularly, criticize less, pray more, praise and be thankful constantly.
- Stress the importance of continue discipline in the church's I feel that so many UMC have been showing-up for church, learning, and leaving it all at church. Not going into the world. Then I feel that they have accomplished nothing.
- Great: full of God's love.
- Each person here would truly embrace the commandment by loving God more dearly and by loving others better and each person responsible has truly embraced this text.
- I think we would spend less time and money enlarging already – large edifices and, instead, feed the hungry; clothe the poor; house the homeless; serve the children, the ill and the elderly. We would not be concerned with our image and our publicity, but more with our service.
- Appointments would be a function of disciple making and spirituality. How do we measure discipleship? We would leave some places like Wesley – we would go to the people. WE would be advocates for the poor.
- Those without the family could look at the Holston family and see Jesus. A visible sign that results from obedience to His commands.
- We would be an inclusive group that was truly concerned about the least, the last and the lost.
- Help break down barriers – to help make our conference more reflective of God's love.
- This could change the world.
- We would not be closed to any of any background, race, gender, sexual orientation – we would be less judgmental and more forgiving. We would cooperate with each other and support all those in ministry wherever they went. We would be more willing to share our faith with others.
- We would be less inwardly focused, breaking out of our “Christian Ghetto” and more outwardly focused. We would be extending our heart, mind and soul to God, and likewise our neighbor. Quite honestly, a less ingrown conference. It is a telling thing that “evangelistic passion” was number 7 on our core values list...
- We would collectively study God's Word for discernment, and then prioritize an outwardly focused commitment to spread God's love, letting God's agape love and spiritually fruits work through us, to an every-increasing number of people.
- I think we would need a lot of larger churches. People would want to be a part.
- More dynamic, unapologetic to the world for witnessing the teachings and person of Christ, we would grow instead of decrease year after year, more righteous instead of entertaining “worldly” morality. We would love each other as God loves us.
- We would reach more people for Christ by sharing our faith.
- If I did everything in the conference I am supposed to do it would be so much better.

- There would be cohesiveness among God’s servants. We would support each other and love each other as God loves us. Reaching out to the unsaved to make Christians of those who don’t know Him.
- Loving acceptance by our churches of all persons, no exceptions, including those appointed as their pastors; barriers of race, gender, age would be abolished.
- The conference would be stronger. We would (each person) move far beyond where we are in love of all people. The love of God thru each believer would become stronger than any obstacle there is, and the main one is often love of self in a way that prevents the best that could be achieved thru embracing the text. Matt 28, we would get out of our churches – off the pews – out of committees and get out to the people wherever that is.
- Same as #1 (#1 Everything I did, thought or said would be done in love. I would rely on God only and be an example to others to want to come to God.)
- It would not be a question of who could be ordained. There would not be huge barriers for those of other sexual orientations. Our priorities would shift from keeping people out to swinging wide the doors in service and in love. Challenge congregations to MOVE!
- We would be more inclusive and reach out to the broken.
- We would be a community of people committed to sharing each others struggles and joys. A community in which together we’d live out our love for all God’s people, working for all to express not only a personal relationship with Jesus but a strong connection to one another in our communal witness to the world.
- Find ways to engage the poor in the Christian faith and greatly expand our Hispanic ministries.
- Each individual would be valued – treated justly, extended mercy and interaction of persons would be done with humility. One on one as well as in our daily contacts. Wherever we are – in all our relationships – God’s will done on earth as it is in heaven.
- Our churches would be in a constant state of growth. Both in attendance, membership and spiritual growth. Meeting the needs of people where they are.
- We would be building new churches everyday not closing them. We would have more people coming to Christ.
- Conference, clergy, and laity would be first equipped to “teach”(ing) them!” Every person would be mentioned through a covenant (i.e. praxis) regarding baptism (justification) thru Holy Communion (sanctification); this is love of God and neighbor.
- We would be bathed in the fire and power of the Holy Spirit.
- A fully committed unit seeking to meet all the needs of the people in the Holston area and in other geographical locations of special needs as well as we are able. (No limitations or boundaries.)
- 1) Our conference membership would go up; 2) There would be no or little money problems; 3) Conflicts would decrease; 4) We would spend more time in “ministry”; 5) More people would be entering into full-time ministry.
- Acceptance of others inclusively.
- Constant work/growth.
- We would be about the work of our Father in Heaven, building faith in our brothers instead of building buildings to house and come the numbers of our churches. We would fill the existing churches that have only 50 attendees and serve the neighborhoods around them instead of moving to the county with the elite.
- The conference would be able to really reach out across the barriers of race, gender, and economic status. We would be known for not only our stances on morality and justice but as a church where truly everyone is welcomed and ministered to.

- Our conference would be a shining example to the region and world of God's love. We could change our area to be spirit-filled. People from around the world look toward this region as inspiring lives to God.
- If Holston Conference was following this verse, our conference would be great. We still have racism, so love is not expressed through its members. We have come a long way but we have a long, long way to go to carry out this verse from Matt.
- The conference would embrace women, all racial groups and show love, outreach and commitment to all humanity. And we would feel comfortable expressing what we really feel, see and know.
- It is difficult to relate scriptures to conference. The conference would have more members, more confessions of faith, significant positive growth, more revenue and more than \$82,000 in offering to Latvia.
- There would not be enough seats in Stuart Auditorium to hold all of the attendees to annual conference. All of the pews in our churches would be filled.
- If our churches and people love as God commands our churches would grow in number and spiritually.
- Growing in attendance and membership, more inclusive in congregational demographics and pastoral. Higher percentage of churches meeting conference benchmarks – i.e. fair share, five star, etc.
- Our conference would reflect the values of God's kingdom, working to bring comfort to the poor, freeing the oppressed, bringing healing to the hurting and embracing justice/unity the true meaning of Shalom.
- We would rally believe we had something good to offer to those we invite to church, rather than feeling what they might encounter at our churches.
- More of the same TRULY open hearts, minds, door to a much great degree. Seeking God's justice for the oppressed (poor, imprisoned, mentally ill) and setting the captives free – evangelism and salvation.
- We would be more active as a presence in each community – youth programs meet need where they are – the “success” of mega-churches be their small-town counterparts) lack the depth that is the foundation of Methodism.
- I am so proud when I hear the committee and team reports at annual conference. Holston is doing many great and wonderful things! But we have such a long way to go as we work towards perfection. Our work in the conference is endless and must be more complete during our own tenure of service. We must strive to do more for others. We must promote a continual and close walk with God and then put into action love and service to all of God's creativeness.
- Greater belief, more will to care and visit, less timidity more courage and enthusiasm. Would be a growing conference.
- Joy – God would be glad as He was when Holy Spirit rested on His Son.
- We would be reaching out to all people in our areas. Accepting each other as we are, not just seeking those that are like us. We could do wonders in mission areas because God would bless our conference if we embraced this text. Our churches would be filled to capacity if we truly had outreach in our communities.
- Churches would be full of eager and passionate person who would wait on the Lord for instruction and then not be hesitant to carry out the Lord's direction. The church would be a more passionate church and less concerned with appearances.
- We would make urgent, bold steps to use every gift God has given us to serve God by reaching out to the people/communities around us with loving and compassionate services.
- Better stewardship – greater vision and commitment. People asking “How do” instead of saying “not possible.”

- We would spend less time on maintenance issues and more time trying to find a place for everyone to be in ministry. Prayer would be more important than pensions.
- Enthused, passionate disciples being used by God to draw others to Himself. An invigorated body of Christ seeing “thousands being saved daily.”
- The people and the church would commit everything they have and do the work of the church and its surrounding people in the world with the exception of our daily living expenses.
- It would be busy.
- See #1 (#1 –I would stand out, radically in this culture; --I wouldn’t look like a good, loyal American citizen (the Lord is God, alone); --I might not fit into most churches.
- We would choose to be more demanding of ourselves to be exemplary of Christ’s commandments.
- It would look less like the encroaching culture and more like early Methodism.
- There would be no problem with funding ministries! God would open the gates, and bless the conference beyond belief. We would focus on what is best for the church as a whole. Ministry to children.
- We would have less bureaucracy and fewer “hoops” to jump through, and more community transforming, point-of-impact ministry; we would let go of old traditions and habits; we would quit trying to maintain institutions, please people and “look good on paper”, and focus on radical discipleship.
- We would never, as a conference, lose that hunger or thirst for righteousness and truly be open to the “full” leading and empowering of His Holy Spirit in every church in our conference. Then we could be more God directed than man directed.
- We could not hold the amount of people in this building. There would be many more saints here.
- We would not be lost, but would be leading others.
- God’s body could be more connect and lively than it is. If we tried harder, there could be more diversity. As in more people and race than just Caucasian.
- There would be more evangelistic emphasis and less ritual. More time for the Holy Spirit to break in and take over. Give the Holy Spirit the “Authority” to break in on us – we need reviving in a visible way.
- Our conference already shows many signs of embracing these texts. However, we still have some disharmony or class distinction between degrees of ordained persons, laity & clergy compete, guests and delegates see things differently – all are not treated as equals.
- All churches in the AC would embrace women pastors. We would be a lighthouse of love and hope to all. All children would have access to affordable healthcare and feel loved/know Jesus.
- It would look like heaven. No classism, no special treatment for anyone but special treatment given to all. Example: all the pastors are still all pastors regardless to where they are in the process if they are serving a church.
- The conference would be more inclusive, especially of the very small, local, poorly endowed rural churches. Since many of those parishioners are poorly educated & passed over by American society generally special efforts are needed to educate and include them.
- All of the “politics” and egos would disappear. We would spend less time patting each other on the back and more time teaching (like we have this year), praising God for all He has done, and brainstorming about new ministries.
- Numerical growth, more emphasis on “them” rather than “us.”
- Happy, joyful, worshipful place – full of his love and learning about Him – Prayer and teaching.
- Enormous with Christians practicing in like means as Jesus commands.

- We would be absolutely inclusive and accepting – truly open. We would be contagiously joyful.
- More members, more money, inclusive, more real love in churches. Would be working with the poor at home and abroad – make more disciples.
- The Conference could seek to better serve the newer Christians, teaching them, encouraging them to keep working toward their goal (and finding out what these goals are) and extending this into the future.
- Our conference sometimes isolates people that would like to be used in proclaiming God’s name. If we really practice these passages, we would first of all use people of all ages and backgrounds and allow them to share ideas and methods of bringing people into God’s Kingdom. In other words we need to practice more love for each other and the world.
- We would see our churches reaching people who are unchurched. The church would then be a nurturing center.
- He would not recognize us as Holston Annual Conference. He would only see The Church, because as Bishop Watson so eloquently stated. We ought to be in “the barrier-breaking business,” and denominations are barriers. Having said that, we might achieve this through our efforts as United Methodists. The church in Acts had Unity of Purpose and because of this the needs were met. This is what God would see from His vantage point, the needs of the needy being met, through the collective sacrifice of the Church.
- More diverse, more caring-serving.
- We would give more of our money & efforts to those unlike us – we would accept differently viewpoints. We would commit finances as individuals and churches to put our ministry into practice.
- We all would be improved teachers in God’s word.
- There would be no more hunger or strife in the world because people would be more giving and we could take care of the whole world. The churches would all grow because everyone would be bringing more people.
- More attention to love, faith, and spirituality and less on the day-to-day “business” of operating the conference and its various appendages. In my view, we often get too wrapped up in the latter, even as we are occasionally moved toward the former.
- First – all people would be accepted and listened to for understanding. A not only person’s of other races but homosexuals and women. We would take greater risks in bringing about the kingdom – concentration on Gospels/Jesus as the true way to live giving actual examples of really living as Jesus – our pastor, Alan Ashworth, truly models a Christ-like life from his outlook and use of money – all the way to food.
- There would be no question or need for apportionments – everyone would give freely out of love for others – not for money. Perhaps pastors would be allowed to stay with a church longer because those that did not love could not get their way.
- The conference would gladly spend itself in every area as expressing love for God. No selfish advantage, no survivalist-spending without regard to those willingly making changes as needed.
- The Kingdom of God.
- Growth, more focus on saving souls and less focus on “politics” of the Methodist church. We would be embracing the focus to save the lost.
- Promote spiritual vitality & health among laity and clergy. Emphasis on discipleship rather than church membership.
- We’d risk more. We’d have less security and more freedom to act. We’d give away most of what we have.

- Risk takers. More open to the leading of God's spirit.
- A welcome fountain for dry & thirsty souls.
- We would be doing the things God commends us to do therefore witnessing our faith to those who do not know God as we do.
- Very strong.
- Would be the greatest Christian organization on earth. I think it is.
- We would be a Bible reading, praying people who were searching for God's work being done and what should be done.
- A lot more passion & outreach and consequently a lot more challenges to our existing faith – straining relationships and hopefully resulting in growth – both on individuals lives and in the number & size of congregations.
- Each congregation adopted the great commandment as 1st priority and the result would be the great commission as our clear and constant mission.
- We would tear down barriers. We would not get involved in petty discussions about doctrine. We are all functioning sinners. We would not be a self righteous denomination.
- Growth of action – type opportunities thru the local church. Purpose driven congregations. Lay leadership & ministry empowered in local situations. Local, regional, world-wide mission/outreach as our growth.
- Love God as I love others in Word and deed. Sharing Jesus' love by offering bread for the body and living bread – Jesus for the soul. This is done by claiming the world as our parish. Reaching out in forming new church fellowship (new church). Keeping mission high in life of Conference & Local Church.
- The conference would be completely together, with representation of all ethnic groups of the area.
- A conference that has accepted his call learned from his word and has directed itself to be his people on earth. God would see a growing conference.
- We would truly be a place with “open hearts, open minds, open doors.” The slogan would be alive and represented in the lines of the Holston Conference.
- The true church of Jesus Christ. A loving, caring, working, effective body of believers who are totally faithful to our calling & commission.
- If we embrace this vision our churches would be so full of people that the buildings could not hold them. There would be more new preachers coming in than retiring – a world wide awaking to God.
- There would be less prejudice – our doors and hearts would truly be open to all. I do believe we love our God completely, but not all our neighbors. There would be no fear of failure in anything God visualizes for us.
- There would be no room for people who come in. There would be no church closings. There would be not enough ministers. There would be no psychological evaluations. Wow, Jesus would be literally seen in our midst. Psalm 23 would be real. It would stand up from black and white letters to reality!!!
- All conference askings would be paid without problems because people would tithe and less time would have to spend on money.
- Full of love and activity striving to make a better understanding and interaction among our people.
- More balanced, we tend to focus on ½ of each text. We love God, but we ignore neighbor. We baptize, but don't teach or obey. Our vision is on ourselves. Our vision is on ourselves. God's vision is the redemption of creation, not just “making disciples.” Our visioning focus on the Mission in The Discipline. But we have neglected the purpose of the church. Our vision must

grow from our purpose as the church (1) maintenance of worship, (2) edification of believers = “making disciples”, (3) redemption of creation. Our vision as a church and conference, if true to God’s plan of salvation, extends far beyond our congregations, or personal faith, our church, or even our species. God seeks the redemption of all creation. If our vision does not extend to the horizon, seeing all as blessed and very good, then we are myopic and self-centered. Our hope and vision extends to all heaven and earth because God’s creation extends there.

- To develop pastors & lay people who will work toward providing spiritual leadership and understanding to and for all conference members. To provide the opportunity for all members to become the best representative of God that is humanly possible.
- Peter’s first sermon after Pentecost, many would be added daily!
- Less friction in some churches. Increased membership in churches. Fewer financial problems. More loving, understanding people.
- There wouldn’t be enough room for all the people.
- We would be growing because of intentional outreach to the unchurched. We would “leave the building” and take the word of God to the world. We would have smaller, personal bible study sessions and worship time to show the world the “joy” of worshipping God.
- All programs and work areas would be fully funded both by money and people needed to implement. More go and tell – less come and see.
- Holston Conference would “turn the world upside down.” Our people, our nation, our world would please Him.
- The conference name would be a guiding light for all.
- Very loving and caring. We would be out in the surrounding community spreading the Gospel.
- Our conference would grow to unbelievable numbers. These would be people from every walk of life – those that so much of the time are not noticed because they are offensive to us in the past.
- We would not have churches disbanding nor would we have 50 churches without pastors. We would be acting as the whole complete body of Christ as truly one head of that body. Love would be so apparent that we would be gaining large numbers of new members. The young adults would want to be a part of one body.
- Our churches would be full! We would be loving and nurturing all visitors, not just those people already in our congregations. I would not have heard cuss words at Divine Rhythm and Connection 2005! I believe it would be most helpful to reduce & even eliminate multiple point charges. Having worship services ever other Sunday make it almost impossible to remain effective, spiritual, and committed by the entire congregations. Our pastors with three plus churches cannot do what they need to do to make this vision real!
- In most areas of our ministries we do a pretty good job.
- Our portion of God’s church would look like the early Christian church where as it is described in Acts, we love each other, support each other, fellowship and love community together and devote ourselves to hearing and teaching God’s word and in prayer.
- Our Conference would be reaching out to ALL persons on this earth to tell and show them God’s love and share God’s grace and forgiveness of our sins.
- We would not have racial issues. We would embrace women ministers. We would make our top priority winning souls to Jesus Christ.
- He would see growth in the churches, the conference, the world in souls saved for the kingdom.
- We would have the ability to keep all churches open no matter how small. We would have more participants in the wonderful conference event, both youth and older population.

- Not only would we be serving other nations but our churches would be challenged to volunteer help and finances to local organizations who feed the hungry!!! And doing other neighborly things.
- More concern about saving souls & less concern with business meetings. More freedom to worship and less rigidity in our services, more praising God for the great things he's doing & less responsive readings. We should be saying prayers from our hearts and not written prayers that are just read. More concern over smaller areas.
- If we worked from God's vantage point, we would leave personal things behind and work as he has commanded us to do: Go and teach the gospel to non-Christians.
- Sincere listening for the voice of God.
- We would be a body of individuals who depended upon God to lead us through the Holy Spirit. We would be a body that seriously prayed without ceasing. We would exemplify "Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors."
- A place with lots of happy people.
- We would accept all of God's people and their calling. Women would be accepted in every church as called persons of God. We still judge people by race, gender, and creed. The conference should change this.
- Helping people in need even more.
- All people would be treated and loved equally no matter what they looked like, how big or small their church was, or what state they were from. There would be little or no division from quarrels or misunderstandings. Souls would be won for Jesus Christ!
- There would be fewer tiny churches that are divided by families and race. Larger churches would be planting and helping other congregations.
- A light fisted group when it comes to helping others. Many, like myself, would look like cowards – afraid to offend when offering Christ to others.
- There would be centers for mission in all communities where people who love Jesus could show their love for others by providing for their needs. Primarily leading people to be changed by God's love, respecting all persons, seeking to show the way.
- People in need would be receiving more help than they do. We would be bringing more people into our flocks.
- We could overcome many problems of today and problems we will be facing in the future.
- The conference would thrive – no jealousies, no bitterness, etc. Think about the statements this a.m. about women in the pulpit – if they were called by God – who are we to judge. Through controversy we must listen to others before passing judgments – even though we have differences, we still should show respect and love.
- Ministers and laity would be partners in ministry – praying, worshipping, and caring for all to accomplish what is stated in # 1. (# 1 – It would be a life of continuous prayers, studying God's word and applying it in all of my relationships – plus new relationships with other people would be sought so that they could meet Christ. It would be a life of praise to God – worship and thanksgiving for His gift of grace.
- We would be working for God and would be working together for the glory of God. There would be less bickering with each other and more cooperation.
- I believe that if we have any selfish interest as a conference – it would be removed.
- He would be pleased with our commitment and dedication to his command (wouldn't that be wonderful).
- I am afraid we do not love all nations and neighbors as ourselves. Wow – what a conference this would be, if we followed this commandment and oh! What we could accomplish.

- It wouldn't look like Sodom and Gomorrah as it is allowing churches and some preachers to embrace non Biblical practices. We would go to the Bible for answers to our problems on non-Biblical practices. Conference leaders would live and preach God's word. Conference would offer opportunities for growth and train disciples to go forth.
- We would show love and support for all people not just those in our church or particular Social Circle. We would spend more time teaching all people about the plan of salvation.
- Truly open itinerancy would be real. Everything we do would be measured as an act of love and compassion to those outside the Body of Christ. We would focus upon those not with us in every action and seek to bring them into the church.
- United in Christ through His spirit – of one mind and accord in our desire to “Be with Jesus,” “Be like Jesus,” and “Be for Jesus.” The glory of God would be visible in us and His presence would be consistently experienced by us.
- We would be less anxious to share good news. Our success, love of God and one another.
- Give more training – more open to assignment opportunities for minorities.
- We, too, would be reaching out more because all members would be involved in God's word – more people would be saved. More persons would be loved and cared for by Christians. More people would be taught about God's love and be given skills for living a more fulfilling life.
- Focus more on outreach, both local and worldwide). Emphasize the importance of commitment.
- There wouldn't be any material at the Terrace that my children said were about gays and they wouldn't have to worry about that in our conference or our church.
- We would be a people who treated every person like they were God's beloved child. We would spare no expense to make sure everyone knows of God. Grant love and offer of the relationship all money, time, and effort. Free church camp. Free Christian college education.
- Every pastor and laity leader partner and participate in learning together how to effectively lead the church and grow in love with God and neighbor. Women pastors would be welcomed in any of our churches. Congregations would be composed of diverse persons committed to love, serve, discern, and reach out to the community and world.
- Our conference would look like one who lived and empowered all persons fro ministry. We would stop managing and start leading the way to God's vision for us. We would cease to maintain without taking divinely given risks for God. We would also learn to celebrate the present while working toward the future. We are inspired not driven.
- We would have strong relationships with God. God would be truly blessed.
- We truly would have open hearts, open minds, and open doors. We would be a much more diverse group. All would feel welcome in our churches and would see God through us. If we really lived out these scriptures, we wouldn't be closing churches in dying neighborhoods – we would be building new churches.
- We would be on fire, ready to work together – male and female, black and white – ready to dig in, dig down and do the work of God – making a difference in lives, loving people into the kingdom, even perhaps especially, people who are not like ourselves.
- Churches would be bulging in membership and service to others. God would be happy with our enthusiasm and obedience.
- If our churches and people love as God commanded, our churches would grow in number and spirituality.
- The answer to 1 would also be for 2 only in a more collective way. We as children have to learn to play in the same sand box with a caring and sharing love.
- We would have a profound and very apparent impact on our communities in the areas of poverty, race relations and education.

- A true love of our neighbor by example.
- We would see a more inclusiveness. Bring all clergy and laity together.
- Ministers would preach the gospel and teach the Bible and lead people into a relationship with Jesus Christ.

4. In what areas is God crying out for us to respond with urgency, risk-taking faith, and long-term obedience?

Discipleship Team and Connectional Table

- We must take authority to stand up for Christian values that are not defined by political parties.
- Warm-hearted people concerned for poverty, outcast, etc.
- Put feet to prayers.
- Stand against economic exploitation of people in Appal. Area (such as child killed by rock near town of Appalachia, VA, from illegal mountain top removal mine).
- Drug Abuse Ministries (Recovery).
- What we are NOT getting done or doing in the world.
- “Love Me,” “Seek Me” don’t reduce me to 1 among many! Why does God have to compete for our time and energy?
- Share what you have received – don’t shame about what you don’t have – even if been part of the church institution all your life.
- Whole community that we have abandoned. Systemic places, that causes poverty. Health care.
- Bridging the gap between “moral values” and “morality in society.”
- To really discover our deepest spiritual longings.
- Are willing to sacrifice ourselves & comfort for justice issues. Addressing social structures that impoverish people. Resource and training our local churches. To be diverse and be able to struggle in it and talk about it and grow in our faith, respect, and love of God and each other and to become a diverse, inclusive fellowship that reaches out.
- Try something different to reach someone different. Pressed to do what believers (core values) to be in and outside the church body of Christ -- 1 Cor 12:22.
- Reaching the unlovely, the working poor, the apartment and trailer dwellers as well as the suburbanites who have no church.
- In all of the text.
- Evangelism, justice.
- Children, homeless, ministry to men.
- Confront the local church with its selfishness.
- Equality. Stop talking about ministry – start doing ministry (walk the walk).
- Stewardship, Hispanic Ministry, Poverty, Children. How are we just preserving an institution?
- Acceptance of others not like us. Caring for the needy.
- Hispanic ministry by those who cannot speak Spanish. Prison ministry among the world’s throws away. Adding the numbers in the church daily – members.

Extended Cabinet (March 14, 2005)

- Embrace our open doors, hearts, and minds – let it define us in spite of the critics. Distinguish us.
- War-torn areas, areas unaware of God’s good news in Jesus Christ.
- Children, youth, young adults, poor, hungry, sick, imprisoned. Where we’re seeing exclusiveness rather than inclusiveness. Peace process. Tolerance for different points of view/ethnic groups. Violence. Justice for workers. Challenging young persons & women to hear call.
- Peace process around world – Middle East. Women & Ethnic diversity. Call to Spirituality & Lay/Clergy partnerships in leadership of church.

- Care for: poor, hungry, sick, prisoners. Social neglect by government & society. Leadership: help young people “hear the call” to ministry.
- Culture – connection with marginal & each other – salvation as an end when it is a gift – God is not a means to an end – forgiveness doesn’t imply any consequences. Be inclusive. Peace makers. Practice tolerance. Anti-violence. Challenge young people to hear the call. Justice for workers. Poverty.
- Mission field. Hungry, sick, jail. Practicing tolerance. Justice for workers. Violence. Young adults.
- Feeding the truly hungry and other such issues where God’s children are neglected. If they see and feel God’s love they will want to be disciples.
- Efforts to make peace; justice for workers; available healthcare; economic development.

Annual Conference 2005

- In reaching out to Hispanics, the poor, the addicts, etc.
- Embracing our young, new ministers – nurture and support them as they grow in ministry. Reaching youth and young adults.
- Making disciples of our young people in our churches; seeking converts in our community.
- Stepping out in sin cursed world and proclaiming Jesus as our Savior.
- Giving unselfishly of our time and energy; be inclusive in all areas of concern.
- Deeper levels of commitment – time, talent, resources and energy.
- Youth, young parents, family devotion.
- Loving Him with all our hearts, knocking on doors and telling people that don’t attend church about God and His love for them. Telling them “God is with you always, He will never leave you or forsake you. Leading youth to know Christ. Encouraging young adults to take part more often in our churches.
- Care for local homeless, oppressed, poor, sick, disadvantaged, addicted, victims of abuse and neglect.
- A) There are so many man-made barriers yet to break that divide us, even today; B) forgiveness in all our loving; C) bring reconciliation to the nations of the world.
- To be committed to seeking God’s vision. As a conference we need a common, overall vision. We need to step out in faith and identify how God wants us to really grow.
- Seek the non-church people.
- Poverty, world peace, a stronger commitment to help one another.
- Implement loving methods for ineffective pastors to find other vocations in the world and other ministries in the church. Hold churches accountable for receiving new disciples/members on profession of faith.
- To get all to love one another. Why can’t people love one another? The biggest problem is TIME. Why don’t people allow God time in their day? Why do pastors feel they are too busy to have Sunday evening service?
- There are children and youth in America who goes to bed nightly hungry, without a warm home or clothes and shoes and no opportunity to know the love of Christ.
- To feed and cloth those in need – the homeless, those making life changing decisions and spiritual lacking.
- These “cries” are coming from within our churches. For those willing to allow God to lead them. I see their job as monumental. Our core values are weak within so many churches. The importance of the teaching the Word and the Truth has given way having the “word and truth” watered down. I talk about finding ways to teach our children. The creative and fun ways to reach them is giving way to less time in preparation for “real Bible teaching.” We have time

to prepare a quick fun lesson, but the one in preparation is not taking the time to prepare them to really teach to “meat” of the lesson. God’s Word is not gray. It is black and white. In churches we see more grey than anything. (This isn’t for children – but for adults.) The commitment is lacking. Again, for those willing to be led – it is an uphill battle, but not impossible.

- Sharing our faith and reaching out to all peoples.
- We have to find a way to help our small member churches maintain quality of worship and opportunity to benefit and grow, being vital to the lives of its members.
- We need to reach out to the folks the world has tossed aside – the poor, the sick, and those in prison.
- Calling the youth to Him through our churches. Reaching inside the prison walls into prisoner’s hearts, helping their families, and making change within the authorities to enable us to do so.
- In the missionary work and the outreach to those unchurched. Also, the children who need us.
- We must reach out to young adults of all socio-economic and lifestyle categories. We must meet them where they are and invite them into Kingdom living.
- The unchurched in our communities with programs that are not in keeping with “the way we have always done it”. Accepting people where they are and then showing Jesus to them.
- We must be more of a witness. We should be more willing to show others how Christ affects our lives, bring others to worship with us.
- Probably missions work, both locally and foreign.
- God is crying out for us to reach out to the single parents, the teens who are looking to drugs and sex for satisfaction. Reach out to prisons. I feel God speaks to each one of us to reach people around us to be aware of the hurting. To take time to form relationships. We each have a passion that God has given us. God needs all of us to find our passions.
- Preach Jesus, is the only way, more often. Encourage fasting, praying and study of God’s word more. Time management, what is important in life.
- Help individual church members understand basic important in reaching out to the unchurched and often unnoticed of our world. More teaching and activities in God’s word within the church instead of programming the worlds programs.
- In our trust that God will provide all our needs.
- Living our life for God each and everyday to be ready to meet Him in prayer to keep our faith strong.
- Seek and save the lost and minister to the needy wherever needed. Assure that ministers are also “pastors”.
- Evangelistic Passion will move from #7 to #2 or #3 with #1-Love as #1. Greater focus on Discipleship. Sharing our faith intentionally. Every church recording persons saved and baptized. Decline in Holston will stop and membership and attendance will be up!
- 1) Young adults, single and married; 2) Shut-ins and others not being reached in our own communities.
- 1) The marginalized in community; 2) young adults both single and adults married beginning church services – they will come to and respond to.
- Win the lost at any cost. In our witness and commitment to Jesus Christ.
- By reaching out to people who are in true need of Jesus Christ. Rather than inviting people who already go to church or who know Jesus Christ, we must reach out to those who do not know Jesus Christ; we must reach out to those who are obviously and openly living in sin with urgent risk-taking faith.
- Evangelical, being an example to others living in holiness and love.

- Understanding other cultures, speaking out to spread His Word and stressing daily prayers and Bible study.
- Communication to the local churches that the Holston Conference officials really care for the Body of Christ.
- Witnessing, offering more Bible study for all age groups and applying it to daily life, making disciples (in our local churches) and in mission areas.
- Youth and young adult teaching winning these souls for Jesus Christ.
- Reaching the unchurched.
- In caring for the elderly. The needy and all our work with children and youth.
- With my church's youth ministry and with the Holston Conference as a whole. They are our future church leaders we must not forget them and to fully train their leaders – “lest they become discouraged...”
- Commitment to the church, tithing and to witness to more people, especially the youth and children.
- --Healthcare; --racism; --Latino Ministry; --poverty; --rural life.
- 1) taking risk by speaking up and “looking” like a goofball; 2) stop instead of just walking past; 3) truly engage in relationships – not just going thru motions; 4) know we are all and are always Disciples for the Kingdom.
- To pray for guidance and strength to love and help our neighbors and act upon the opportunities God asks us to do to serve others through the use of every means He gives us to use.
- To be receptive to all peoples and their needs, and excite them as a Child of God and by doing so we would meet the needs of all in our church from the youngest to the oldest.
- --Those countries that are not “free”; --consistent faithful “giving” by us so blessed especially in the USA; --set “example” for world in USA
- Reaching the unchurched
- Love; Mission at home then extended
- Fields of poverty; unchurched
- As an annual conference we are not upholding our Social Principles. When will we celebrate efforts to bring about justice on issues regarding Labor and Peace? When will we get behind living wage efforts?
- To share the word of God to all the people we come in contact with. Let them know the love of God.
- Spreading the “word” to all nations!
- Looks like we could reach a lot of people by starting new churches or revitalizing small, struggling churches. We should borrow the method the Baptist churches use. A core group from a large church would commit at least five years to go to a small church or start a new church. They would have people committed to attending, teaching Sunday School and other programs in place, so that when invited people do attend. They have a functioning church to belong to. The large church that sent the core group would also commit to assist financially, if necessary, to support a full time pastor and other programs for growth of a vital congregation with outreach.
- To redirect ourselves, individually, as churches, district, conferences and as a whole body to His Word and spreading His Word without dilution.
- Capture, nurture and love the children = our churches future. We need to stop judging and be more forgiving in our hearts. Words alone mean nothing without your heart in the right place. Expanded outreach and mission programs.

- I believe God in calling the church to respond through a genuine commitment to Jesus and each other.
- 1) Giving; 2) be urgent about winning people to Christ.
- In older established churches, where congregations have to realize “it’s not about us (those inside the church),” but those outside the walls “it is about them.” How do we change, risk in order to reach them. As quickly as we are losing our young-adults and children – we must do it differently, and do so quickly.
- Instead of seeing to the needs within our churches, look to what is outside our church and in our community. Risking rejection and maybe making some of our members uncomfortable, but allowing them to grow and stretch their faith.
- God is calling Holston to reach out to those outcasts among us including the poor, recovery programs for those whose lives may be far from God. But we as an annual conference need to begin reaching those whom Jesus reached. The love that we value so strongly cannot be love only for others who are like us that would be easy and the calling of God is not.
- Urgency – back to the Bible as the main source of all our teaching and for our leaders and ministers to embrace all of the Bible not only parts they agree with.
- With hearts full of His love, compassion and obedience, being witnesses of our salvation experience.
- Reaching out to all others and accepting them just as they are. Viewing them as having unsurpassable worth and value.
- Really commit ourselves to go.
- Seeking to embrace the clergy from all levels. Clergy must become more accepting of lower status.
- Risk taking faith – getting out of our comfort zone, bringing people to Christ – being a disciple.
- Racism in the appointment system. Snubbing of African-Americans at conference event by white members.
- Prayer.
- To meet people where God is wanting us to meet them spiritually in their lives in the areas of worship, discipleship and baptism. This would require letting go of some of our traditional, or even high theological beliefs, in order to “meet people where they are.”
- Race issues: Black, Hispanic, Asian; Homosexual issues: our current approach – love the sinner, hate the sin – needs to be strengthened; young adults – what a fertile field to be plowed; older adults – elder care, assisted living.
- Hispanic Ministry (or ministry with all races in our midst); supporting and expanding ministry with children; young adult ministry.
- Bible study that leads to hospitality and justice; ministry with persons living with HIV/AIDS increased; racism; sexism; homophobia.
- The children who need to know Christ and His love before the world teaches them different. Reach them while they are impressionable (Kairos) prison to break walls of rejection to feel God’s love.
- The children! The older adults! The World!
- At risk children, social issues of justice.
- Acceptance of women as clergy; stronger emphasis on communion and our inclusive nature of the church; being dependent on God and independence of society.
- Through our missionary work in “telling the nations” and taking care of our “children” and our obedience to our church.

- For understanding in the local church with each other, for open-mindedness to others. To embrace all, not be exclusive. All are welcome. To understand our gifts and use them in harmony with each other.
- Helping our members when in crisis. Collaborate with local counselors. Helping people close to home. For ex: homelessness. Risk taking faith – loving all and saying what we think and feel instead of going with the majority voice. Take a risk and welcome all. More worship and study focus at conference. It has been great this year. Long term – mission trips and supporting them and our youth. More focus on Communion.
- Homeless, hungry, the neglected, the abused and the unchurched.
- 1) (I Tim 2:4) So no one will die w/o Christ (salvation); 2) (John 10:10) We can enjoy an abundant life (wholeness); 3) (John 10:28) To fill heaven (eternity); 4) (I Cor 13:13) In the mean time... (gifts) – sending out. --- I ask my congregation, “When you are dead, and I have your funeral, what do you want me to say about you?” I want them to answer, - I have salvation, - I lived a “whole” life, - I am in Heaven, -and, before I went I had faith, hope and love.
- 1) Elderly; 2) Those with disability; 3) those without health care; 4) youth that are unchurched; 5) inadequate housing in our area.
- To start up new churches in vital growth areas in our conference.
- The world is in great need of all Christians sharing love through our actions, our prayers especially, our gifts of time and finances. Beginning at our home church and community.
- Prayer, Bible study, reaching out, following up the weak and wandering with love, compassion and encouragement and a new birth of New Testament evangelism.
- To follow Jesus’ life and how He loved and ministered to people through obedience to the Word of God! Without worrying about popularity or how much we know from the head but what we have learned in our hearts.
- God is crying out for us to respond with all of these when He puts challenges in our way.
- He wants us to show our love for Him by obeying His second commandment by loving our neighbor.
- Reaching out to the lost, despondent and troubled people and all in need.
- To go.
- That our lives would be an example of all that our love and duties would be to our fellow man and God’s creation.
- That marriage is between one man and one woman.
- In the areas of youth – for they are our future; the area of homosexual’s leading the church – God’s law and Word is clear!
- Teach – witness to others of our faith and show God’s love thru our own lives.
- Look at the news, crime and violence. God is crying out for this to stop!
- Christians need to have a God centered spiritual formation and use this foundation (Biblical truth) to stand up and resist the secular movement that is evident in the world today. We can’t let our moral values based on Biblical truths to be obliterated.
- Reaching out to the poor, the homeless, to those who feel they have nothing to live for. There are many people who want something greater than themselves to believe in but they don’t know how.
- Prepare more for leadership.
- We must become radical in seeking to know God in Christ. We must be passionate in seeing the fullness of Christ formed in all. The number 1 characteristic of the life of Christ is agape love that we must be filled with and share with others.
- Sharing our testimony with persons in non-threatening manner.

- Bringing more young people into the church.
- Being good witnesses for Jesus Christ – being committed to obeying the Scriptures.
- Nothing urgent but long term obedience most certainly. He is urging us to go ahead with risk in that we plan our life and depend on God to help us carry out our plans to live a Godly life.
- Ministry at our workplace – willingness to talk to co-workers about Jesus and our church. Also, willingness to go out to do ministry with strangers. Go in love to people in need – with no expectation of attendance or membership – just interest in their life and their soul because of Jesus love for them.
- Open eyes to see opportunities to reach out excitedly to others (strangers and neighbors) in acceptance and love.
- Openness.
- The risk in this country now is to stand against government sanctioned evil and unthinking patriotism and to fight against unthinking selfishness and the disregard of the poor, displaced or anybody that is different – i.e. to start for freedom.
- One on one evangelism in the local church and surrounding neighbors; one on one evangelism in the place of work; one on one evangelism in the world wide ministry of Jesus Christ.
- We need to look more like God’s world and less like the world. This will take courage and the will to follow even if we are scorned.
- Children and families at risk, domestic abuse, substance abuse, HIV/AIDs ministry, ministry of compassion to and with homosexual persons, ministry to and with those living in poverty and those who are unemployed or underemployed.
- To help those who are addicted to drugs, both prescription and street drugs. To meet the needs of our young people (young adults). To develop worship opportunities that meet the needs of our young adults in all our churches, not just our big station churches.
- We need to reach out to the impoverished, those who struggle in whatever way and those who are outcast. We need to truly be open and welcoming to all.
- Homeless, hungry, sick (AIDS epidemic).
- To everyday people that are not in church. We are to shy to tell people about becoming a Christian.
- Speaking/acting in the political arena with a prophetic voice, esp. with regard to our understanding of peace and economic justice; looking seriously at the rising poverty in our country and worldwide; continue to look at the exclusive nature of the church (race, economic status, sexual orientation)
- To love our neighbors as ourselves; go teach; Bible study
- Standing in love, in support of His word not wavering to the world. Also, reaching out to others, feeding and teaching them God’s love and law.
- More of an effort to get more people to receive Christ, at whatever the cost it may take.
- The world is changing and many young people and adults have fallen away – God is crying out with urgency for us to reach this group (+ the children!)
- God is crying out for us to see the hurting in the world and to take His love to them. I think He is also asking us to confirm to the Gospel and not to the world. The Church as a whole has been too quick to conform rather than to challenge society – to sacrifice our beliefs.
- Pray for the last. Have more time to visit sick and shut-in. Have Bible study.
- To take in church outside by our actions – we need to be involved in our schools, our towns and our communities.
- More missions to reach all people of the world.
- With the decrease of the young adult group, I feel He wants us to be more receptive to new ideas, services, and programs targeting this age group.

- For our churches to go beyond our doors and touch those in our communities starting with those who live/work next to the church.
- To teach all Christians to minister and share their faith. To help them experience doing this in a way they realize God is with them and God is in the sharing to all people (scary though it may be).
- #1 Bible Study – speaking/teaching @ local level. Areas of mental health issues, homeless, caregivers for Alzheimer’s, drug/alcohol abuse, sexual abuse – deviate behavior, sexual immorality, elderly abuse.
- We are called to be where sinners are showing that there is a way out of sin though the love of Jesus Christ. We must go where the needs are greatest.
- Senior care, unchurched, societal evolution – i.e. social issues – marriage, faith.
- Teaching us all how to be a family together. How to live out our faith in the church, in the neighborhood and at home. In Acts their home mirrored their new faith they experienced in the temple.
- We do not share Jesus Christ and invite others to know Him; it is a risk to go out to the “least;” to believe lives can be changed; never give up on God’s power to save!
- Young adults not in church.
- Be Methodist not that we are better but unique; to love one another, to be less self focused and more other focused. To trust that if we are obedient in all things He will provide the rest. We cannot choose (i.e. selective about) who we “make disciples” God has called us to reach out to all.
- Making disciples, strengthening the church for making disciples; equipping pastor and leaders to guide the churches and agencies in reaching people for Christ.
- The poor and the elderly (not just the inner-city). The children. The youth – getting them back and letting them be a part of the action, not just onlookers told to sit down and shut up.
- To the poor, the rural areas, to fold in prison, to SWVA counties impacted by prescription drug abuse and methamphetamines manufacturing and abuse.
- We need to stand with authority and make a place at the table – and in our conference and in our churches – for all of God’s children. We have to find ways to talk to the world we are trying to reach for Christ and more importantly – to listen. Perhaps we can learn a language or languages in which we can better communicate and be heard.
- We as a church need to get to know people better, and develop activities and programs that help them deal with their needs.
- Our neighbors (the unchurched); taking a stand on moral and world issues.
- In high crime-low income areas and prisons and jails. In working with unsaved neighbors – co-workers and family bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ to them.
- Forget about racism for all is God’s people
- In the world situation since 9/11 and the tsunami this year and wars around the world, should we not take a stand. In our towns, should we not be more active. It seems to me, we are letting everything become gray instead of black and white. Is the Church really different than the world?
- Turn focus to people who oppose us and not just to people who are in need of help.
- Reach out to those who are engaged in gay lifestyles. Leadership – spiritual formation.
- With children, teens and people who have problems such as drugs, marital problems, elder care.
- Love and care for all the ones it is hard to love – in the church and in the community. A need to turn stressful situations over to God.
- Concerns for victims of AIDS in Africa – more direct involvement in other areas.

- Matthew 22:36-40
- To reach out to our neighbors who have not become a part of the community.
- Homeless; marriage as a commitment (lifelong) between a man and a woman; hunger; health care; understanding that there may be other paths to God than the one we have chosen.
- To take God with you in your daily life as you leave His house and spread the Good News without shame but with pride. Encourage Bible study for younger age. Unity of prayer in all churches.
- Move more into the community in my individual effort.
- The mission field at home and abroad. The down and out. Teens and children.
- To communicate by example how God cares for people. Too much of our resources are used to promote and continue the organization – we pay too much and get too little!
- 1) Soul saving; 2) Nurturing the saved in His Word; 3) Nurturing those who need to be saved.
- DO IT!
- God’s crying as He sees His people not loving each other. Also, He sees us not living the Word in all phases of our lives.
- Tenn-Care cuttings need help; drug rehabilitations; street and homeless need care and understanding; strengthening families.
- Seeking and working for peace and justice for all; making disciples.
- Young adult ministries for the 10-30 year old group. Bursting with energy, compassion and resources to “inner city” – and the poorer in our conferences. Teaching them and making them disciples. Corralling our children, giving them the love of Christ, and raising them up to Christ-like lives.
- We have many good programs now, but we still need to reach out to more people of different ethnic backgrounds to suit what we offer appeals to them.
- Children and youth with parents on drugs, etc. Youth and young adults to understand that God’s standards and morals do not change.
- Support and involvement in mission.
- Helping those in need ministering to those who may not have advantages we have. Giving our time for all.
- For us to win souls.
- Changing societies views that anything goes. This applies to all the listed areas. I believe it will take a lot of risk in our faith to bring these changes to society and there is an urgency because of the way things are going. It will take long-term obedience to the Word of God and a steadfast commitment because it will be slow going.
- Our faith, love and building up our churches.
- We need to stand up and speak out about the teachings of God. We need to stand up for our faith.
- By loving our neighbors as yourself!
- Love the unlovable.
- We are so busy trying to bail water and repair our slowly sinking ship; we don’t realize that we need to simply build a new one!
- Our church needs to focus on the immediate area around the facility (2 to 3 mile radius).
- Share the love of God with others and introduce others to God’s saving grace, moving past barriers.
- We need to make our love and commitment to discipleship; we need and would touch people spiritually and physically, people would come to help love and help the needed.
- God is crying out for help in the poor urban areas of our cities and the poor in the rural areas of our conference.

- Local church; community; family.
- Bible study/devotions
- Reaching the lost; nurturing/discipling them to grow; every Christian winning others to the faith.
- To feed the hungry and needy.
- The poor, the oppressed, and the injustice in our society.
- We have declined long enough. God, I feel, wants us to be revived by His Spirit if we will be open to it.
- Witness – Outreach – Commitment – follow through. I think we need to nurture our new converts more. We need to be more fully equipped ourselves, put on the whole armor of God.
- To testify to others so that everyone knows our Savior.
- In the community; in church; in homes.
- To be more inclusive and not divide the conference. Let all 12 districts be equal. Don't let there be a feeling of some being left out or looked down upon.
- Reaching out to bring God's love to others.
- Lift up Jesus rather than politics.
- 1) Winning souls for Christ; 2) Helping the helpless and hopeless; 3) Stamp out racism and gender bashing in our conference.
- Love, support, encouragement for our (struggling) clergy.
- Strengthening ties between churches, both Methodist and other denominations.
- Telling the "story" or calling others to join "us" in our churches. Standing firm in Methodist traditions but adapting our services in the local church to combine something for all. Continue to advertise – use television. Have our Bishops appear regularly with powerful "punch line" sermonettes. Share heads of boards and agencies visit the local churches to speak – not dull long statistics but "why should our funds go here and there). More cabinet members, the Bishop and Methodist board members to community gatherings so all members may feel the connection and meet the leaders, etc. We are sometimes voices in the wilderness – in our local churches and districts. Come see us! Inspire us!
- Reaching out to sinners, unchurched, drug addicts, children affected by drugs, parents in prison.
- Crossing cultural and race boundaries in earnest to win souls.
- 1) In the inner city and in the recovery community; 2) as well as in welcoming the stranger – mission in the world that is becoming less and less Christian; 3) becoming the church of the future – reaching out to those who have been hurt by the church – welcoming seekers.
- Total commitment to obey His Word as we can be a witness in our communities. God's Word is the way. We should not have ideas that come for self-oriented interpretation of God's Word. We will lose if we continue the way we are choosing at this time.
- Yes, mission fields national – local – willingness to those participating. Carry out things which make or help us grow spiritually.
- -- Stop trying to give pastors \$\$ raises during appointment cabinet and Bishop could put people where gifts and graces are best used; -- Need to weed out incompetent clergy and gracefully move them on to other vocations; -- Churches growing and that have potential need to be matched w/churches that are growing. Churches that consistently choose to never change/grow/reach out need to have appointment pastors who do not want to try new things. These appt. need to be made without considering salary; – Clergy discipline for inappropriate sexual activity needs to be stricter. Far too many churches are suffering; – Churches who qualify for "clergy killing" status would be held accountable – I suggest a visit and overlook by Gary Mauldin (like Reynolds UMC, Bristol). Then a standard or goal to reach during a

reasonable time line. If goal is not met, this church is put on the “list” of churches that receive a new seasoned pastor every year; – Young and new pastors are never sent to a clergy killing church – we have lost too many bright out of box thinkers; – Our church is in great need of leadership – people who are willing to personally sacrifice to bld. Conference. So many times people ‘politic’ to get positions with great power and BIG SALARYS for their promotion – not promotion of Christ; -- I want conference leaders who are spiritual people no matter gender, race, age. We need prayer people and great listeners in leadership positions; -- Ever noticed the “young” people on the fast track in our conference ARE mostly 1) white 2)tall 3)male?; -- We need a salary cap and up the starting salary for newcomers.

- Our church’s community (1 mile radius): (Gray UMC and each church) I feel our church’s call to be to those God’s placed right under our noses! I can’t seem to get funding though.
- 1) Caring for those whom others don’t want to care for; 2) spiritual justice in our communities; 3) using our God-given talents bravely and confidently.
- Making disciples.
- The mission field both at home and the whole earth.
- In young adult ministries
- Urgently need to learn and understand better peoples of differently races, religious cultures.
- We just need to love all people regardless of race, religion, even if we have trouble understanding their religion.
- Find ways to connect with the unchurched (non-churchy ways) Matthew 25 ministries; multi-ethnic commitment.
- Anywhere that people are lost.
- To begin to address political issues. Not just feeding the poor but seeing our nation’s budget as a moral document. Stop letting the voice of fear and prejudice speak for “all” Christians.
- 1) Prison/justice system/restorative justice. 2) Define/redefine “moral” values in nation/world/community so our church offers a broader (more accurate?) picture of God’s mercy and grace (i.e. not zealots like “Christian conservatives)
- To be truly more open minded – work with congregations who seem to have prejudices. Organize congregations and districts to reach out and make disciples more intentional training and mentoring.
- Make disciples! We need to be empowered to be bold enough to share our testimonies – we sometimes get too caught up in the administration (necessary, of course) and life itself.
- Involving our youth in our churches. We need to continually reach out to the youth if the United Methodist Church is going to be able to continue our mission in the future.
- He is wanting us to grow spiritually and to be helping others to do the same.
- Evangelizing the world.
- Teachers and bring more people to church.
- More youth and young adults active.
- Justice and peace and to move our neighbors – all of them.
- The poor, the sick, the lonely, the unchurched. They are all around us and around our churches. Yet, they are invisible to us. We should be saving souls! Growing!
- We have not been fully committed servants of God and need to respond to His message.
- Ways to reach children and youth with interesting and motivating programs. Provide a vision of a future with value.
- The poor, the unsaved. Support and send missionaries. Reach the people that don’t know God.
- Get out of Iraq!
- Hunger, repression, war, etc.

- To minister to those who took their vows of membership and we never see them and they don't support the church financially.
- Less dollars for military; more for friendship and nurture in the world community.
- The need for churches to work together (interdenominational) to create one church for God.
- Critical social issues and racial/gender inequality, response to the poor issues of war and peace. Challenging "Culture Faith".
- 1) Evangelism; 2) Women's Ministry – accepting/embracing/women as leaders; 3) Addressing issues of poverty, race and injustice; 4) doctrinal clarity.
- There will always be those in dire need. As Jesus taught, our attention should be to the down-trodden, poverty-stricken – those on the fringes.
- Strong, personal relationship and willingness to share God's love, especially with youth.
- To provide "safe" places to nurture our future (children). Those foundations are crucial for tomorrow...we must turn the drug/crime mentality around and install morality. You cannot legislate morality, it must be from within.
- To truly be the Gospel. To love thy neighbor full. To share our love and resources. To live as one family irregardless of race, color, gender or social status. To celebrate the "God" given gifts among us.
- To change our morals and values.
- I think we need to look at the needs of the society around us and not settle for some "cookie-cutter" programs that someone has developed for somewhere else. EX: family ministries, for clergy and laity to work together, in unison, not be in competition with other clergy and with each other.
- To those in our church community area, to young people. To stand on issues in our country the way God wants us to stand. Christians need to speak out on various issues and not let the minority ideals dictate the direction of our nation.
- More outspoken on social issues – taking the lead in inclusive actions. More training opportunities provided for lay persons in local church leading to evangelism.
- 1) The mean spiritedness of some members of our churches. 2) The inequity of life that exists in our churches. 3) Apathy – at all levels. 4) Our fear that somehow diverting opinions and groups will destroy the church.
- To be more inclusive in allowing some who are not deemed acceptable by us and yet called by God to serve in ministry. To welcome the poor – to set up more ministries for those addicted and abused. To operate in the open and not seek to keep secrets.
- To not be satisfied Christians. So many are doing the easy, comfortable things – not willing to trust God to "change sides" of the boat. The church would not be about us, but about God.
- 1) Interpersonal witness – encouraging, nurturing and developing Christian disciples; both within the church membership and to those who are not believers. The pastors and church leaders must model this. 2) Lay Development (?) – empower the laity; close the gap between laity and clergy. 3) Ministry to young people, esp. ages 18 – 30.
- Justice issues – He needs the churches to correctly identify the true God, to the world.
- To love and show Jesus with those that society considers unlovable both here in America and throughout the world. We truly need to take Jesus to those who hate us, disagree with us and those we dislike. We need to be more involved in reaching out to those who are without Christ in their lives (those next door to each of us). Then we need to help those people grow in their faith.
- To be open to both female and male clergy and leadership – both very young and very old. To open our hearts and minds and doors to all of the children of God – to go to those not pleasant to see.

- A noticeable awareness of clergy becoming open to others and with laity.
- Evangelism of all age groups (children to elderly) sharing the Good News with all people on a personal relationship level.
- Sharing our wealth to reach 3rd world countries for God. Building schools preaching the gospel, building churches and training ministers thru the Word.
- Give God first place in your heart.
- Willingness to share our faith in an intentional, caring and personal way. We have turned away from sharing genuine current testimony to our living faith. We must also find ways to connect with children and older people trapped in poverty. We must help churches identify “where Samaria is” in their locality – where are places we feel uncomfortable – where we don’t want to go – where people may not like us.
- It would truly be what the Methodist Church is striving to be – a church – a conference with open hearts – open minds – open doors – a place Jesus would approve of.
- We need to work to stop or change the direction of the war in Iraq. Our government needs to work to change their policies.
- Hospitality and outreach, but really all areas the church needs to be strong in all areas and we are perfect in no areas.
- I think God is crying out for a response of love to teach the other in the body of believers on all the topics that us. It is hard for the unsaved to be attracted to Jesus when we do not love each other in our church, our denomination, others.
- Outreach; moving beyond the “serve us” mentality and truly reaching the once church and lost of Christ. Move beyond simply paying lip service to the mission of the UMC “to make disciples of Jesus Christ.”
- Children, teaching them these concepts. Community within our reach.
- God is crying out to our comfort levels and familiarity of place to get up and go to the outer edges to offer Christ to others. To sit at table with other faiths for dialogue, mutual respect and aid; to advocate policies in the public arena that help people achieve their potential with dignity; to partner/collaborate with other faith entities for peace with justice at home and abroad; to accept all persons of talents and grace for ministry and mission in the church; to partner/collaborate with faith and secular entities to clean up and conserve the environment; to worship and participate in Holy Communion more than we do now.
- Doing whatever we can to build people up. To show people that He is Christ. Especially in areas of poverty, addiction, war, crime, and abuse. To our young people and children.
- Hungry, sick, those who don’t experience God’s love, those shunned by society and the church.
- Hispanic ministry, prison ministries, families bring evicted from homes.
- I think it is urgent that our conference cry out and work for peace in the world, particularly for an end to the war in Iraq. Love will end or defeat evil far more quickly than a gun.
- In evangelism, saving souls for Christ, as evidenced by our continuing decline in membership despite our emphasis of “by all means, win some” for the past few years.
- 1) Acceptance of all persons; 2) seeks to establish justice for all – peace for the entire world; 3) Seek justice for all persons.
- How are advance specials decided on? I work with ministries that have applied for these and been rejected – I realize not everyone could be accepted – and God has blessed one of these anyway – but there are times when we need to look beyond our UMC. Seeking the lost leads us to where people are – and they are NOT within the walls of our churches.
- Standing up for what we as Christians believe. To stand firm on our faith. Exercise our love, sharing our faith. Exercise! Exercise! Walk daily with the Lord!!

- Seek the least and lost and offer them Christ.
- When I greet ungrateful people and my response to them.
- The homeless and the unchurched in our communities.
- The unchurched, those without Christ who have barriers keeping them from Christ. Tradition bound congregations need to change into loving, outreaching fellowship of believers.
- To provide basic housing, food and education which all people deserve.
- We need to be a power for peace in the world – to affect public policies.
- Claiming and reclaiming souls; providing teaching to our children in Holy churches. Outreach to unchurched in our communities.
- To help in areas and countries where human life is totally unimportant. Stand up for human rights.
- Get involved in sharing His love with all.
- Help those who are in such great need – such as Tsunami Relief and other ministries.
- Prisons, schools, homeless, hunger, drug-abuse. Change from what we are doing to follow what God blessing today in our community, nation and world.
- To love all His people as we would love ourselves.
- The “undesirables.” We want to deal with just the “pretty” but God is calling us to make and accept everyone as desirable!! We (I) must step out and embrace this call.
- Drawing clergy into shared (group) Spiritual Formation, not focusing on how we have fallen short, but on our common and desperate need to be connected in the Spirit! We are organized in a great system that, unfortunately, encourages competition between isolation of its clergy. We must submit ourselves to a common role of spiritual disciplines so that we can be about God’s work together!
- Spiritual disciplines, community building, stewardship, (service, calling) as well as, financial.
- God wants us living out our faith with each other. The various faith communities (denominations) need to learn to speak the same language.
- Young adult and children’s ministry. They are the future of the church. Less than 10% between the ages of 12-30 attend the Methodist churches. Aren’t we missing something here? We are a church of mature people.
- Not to leave anyone out. Reports yesterday went from young adult, 18 to 30, then to Older Adult, 55 and up. What happened to the 31 to 54 group? This group has a lot of issues and needs representation.
- Poverty, violence, unchurched, unloved, lost and suffering.
- Study His Word more fully.
- Response to genocide by speaking out and encouraging others to respond.
- In and around our church community within a mile radius. With our youth and Sunday school programs which is lacking in our churches.
- --Children; --working poor; --under churched; --those hurt by the church; --So many people know just enough about church and church people to be turned off. We need to reach out with authentic compassion and really help. Help with concrete assistance, hope/salvation that comes from Christ.
- In the areas of leadership in our church, our nation and the world.
- Putting more programs in place to attract young people; have more programs to incorporate the middle age groups. To me this is a very important age group because a lot of these people have teenagers and don’t know how to deal with their problems.
- Protect our children; feed our hungry, care for our sick. Sound familiar? We can always do more outside our church walls.
- Be more vocal; show our faith more; act out our faith; be more open and commitment.

- Planting new churches – risking and reaching out beyond ourselves and our own church.
- We need to reach out to those in our local church community.
- Commit ourselves totally.
- Saving souls and helping souls to stay faithful.
- The moral values of our society – morals that to us don't seem Christian seem to be the accepted way.
- Open pulpits, racial equality, common unity amidst diversity and doctrinal differences to overcome complacency and apathy.
- In our young people to become Disciples for Him. Nurture in Christian living, read our Bibles and praying. Take time to listen to Him.
- In our communities – not only with Him, but also in commitment to “by all means win some!” Our voices need to be loud and clear as we proclaim God's grace and love!
- Continue to improve the quality of the pastoral minister to minor groups – we would all learn Spanish and Korean. Provide love and support to ministers so they don't become cynical. Need to support missions so no one is left out!
- Our bad publicity we are getting through media is not helping the situation. This is God's way of telling us where we are wrong to let these people be in leadership. We must pray for these people.
- Bringing the unchurched to God. Reaching out to the unlovable – poor, disadvantaged, homeless, elderly, hungry.
- There are a lot of people in our communities who are hurting, seeking, lacking direction and lonely. I see this especially with older adults and children.
- Families, children, the attack of Satan is great in this area. We must help them with spiritual counseling, accountability. Don't soft pedal sin; we must be more bold – with Holy Spirit wisdom. Wonder how many professions of faith we have had in Holston this past year?
- Stop being afraid of His power. Reach beyond self. Be intentional and creative; reaching the unreachable can only be done when the Body of Christ embrace 1 Peter 2:9, I am a Holy sinful priest saved by grace and sent to live in His wonderful light!
- Africa – more in Africa – we need to be in Sudan. Jesus said, “the poor will be with you always” and yet I think He sheds tears for the number of poor, malnourished children in the US. We need to take seriously the President current view point and utilize the window and step through the door to provide assistance (not just give away but knowledge, skills and resources) to the poor. God expects us to be prepared to enter “go and make disciples” in the Middle East.
- We are no longer reaching young adults both couples and singles in the church. We are becoming a church of mainly older adults.
- Creativeness guided by the Holy Spirit to gear worship services to committed and attract young adults. We need desperately to have programs and worship that speaks the language of our younger people.
- Helping others, at home and abroad, growing His church and reaching children and youth.
- Loving those outside the church as much as we do those inside the church, or even the church building. Caring that people not go to hell (a living hell here and in the hereafter.)
- I see God crying out for us to give more love as a nation and in our personal life.
- More spirituality, telling the story of Jesus to those who don't know him, whether in church or not. Saying no to weaknesses and temptations.
- The starving people in Africa, women who are still imprisoned by patriarchal control, reaching out to stop abortion – which is the taking of the lives of our future children. Gladly and boldly

going out 2X2 to witness to our faith – we would have a giving away of anything in our homes that hinders us or we are not using. We cannot go into the world empty handed.

- Evangelism, outreach, more commitment.
- To depend on Him and turn everything over to Him.
- Teaching and helping in all areas of life.
- Evangelism, involvement in schools.
- Youth, children and young adults! We have failed to communicate the Gospel effectively with the young. We need to care enough to learn the language and share the Gospel!
- 1) Evangelism; 2) Connecting with youth of the church and community; 3) More missions and love for fellow countries.
- In Iraq, in Afghan, in war areas, how little we do to help our soldiers and their families. In high risk poverty areas how little love is shown? These two areas need our special attention.
- By working with the down trodden, drug abused prisoners, and homeless people.
- Being intentional in speaking prophetically to our culture. How do we go there and not reflect the culture but reflect Christ?
- To reach out to all those in the community where we live and serve. To bring them into our churches and include them in our daily lives.
- Don't delay – the harvest is white.
- In the areas of youth/children's ministries, young adult ministries, nurturing of new pastors, support of small churches
- Trying to get more people in church.
- Young adult ministry focus, the church is dying due to age of members (more lay leadership).
- We need to keep our vision on the Words of God and not on the Words of man. The church needs to remove itself from politics and work on the true needs of God's world. Use our resource to fight hunger and poverty rather than the right or wrong of sexual orientation and other worldly affairs! It is not our place to judge.
- In all areas.
- To strive to bring others, particularly non-churched people, closer to Him.
- More allegiance in winning people in the local church. More seriousness in Christian nurturing.
- Youth of America; getting more men involved within the church; African AIDS epidemic; social and racial issues; making local churches see beyond their doors to the larger picture.
- Give 100% of district and conference askings; use laity and clergy meetings to explore how to be obedient to the Great Commission and Commandment.
- Go – make disciples, baptizing, and teaching.
- Reaching the unsaved, unloved and social outcasts.
- We need to work harder to get souls changed.
- More inter-denominational cooperation and focus on saving the unchurched.
- Yes, in the Middle East and Africa (Sub Saharan). Understand ourselves better. Go into inner cities.
- Economic differences.
- Commitment, loving all.
- Youth and young adults – LOCAL MISSIONS
- To make disciples of others, reaching out to the unchurched.
- Everywhere – babies, children, youth, young and older adults, nursing homes.
- Mission areas – Red Bird, etc.
- Replace goodness for evil; love where there is hatred; strong conviction where there is apathy. Put His love and teaching into action.

- 1) To be more understanding and inclusive at all levels of the church and conference; 2) To reach out more in areas in this country that the UM church is not currently present (suburban to urban; city to county); 3) To start churches in areas in the world (similar to Latvia).
- Allowing the Holy Spirit to take control; forgetting about ourselves and trust on God.
- To bring in more people to know Christ.
- Urgency → diversity in race and age; Risk-taking faith → breaking out of the tradition and embracing the changes that God calls us to; Long-term obedience → at reaching and keeping all age groups.
- To more fully fund the conference's colleges so that they may carry out their missions.
- Simply, to reach out to our neighbors, keeping in mind Jesus' teaching, that means people that we are not drawn to or are very appealing to us.
- With areas we don't understand and with people we don't understand – i.e. HIV people, unsaved people, to help them see God.
- To our neighbors in every community to share the Gospel with others and give them hope.
- Not only love God but be open with that love. Take the risk of outwardly showing that love to all. Constantly grow in my faith to teach. In and out of our physical church.
- We need to become more like servants – from the Bishop on down to the newest member.
- In being a light so others can see Jesus in us and to witness every opportunity.
- Care for children of single parents; support of young adults: single and married.
- Obedient to Him and His love, and have the faith.
- Meaningful worship and meaningful mission to attract others by what we do.
- I think he is crying out for us to reach out to those who are rejected and hurting. Those who feel that God's love does not apply to them. He is asking us to love everyone unconditionally, no matter what.
- To reach out to the youth – fight drug addiction, alcoholism and develop a youth ministry in the communities that have youth looking for something to do – no matter how small the community.
- Evangelism, it takes a risk-taking person to step out and tell others about Christ.
- A loving neighbor and Him.
- With our youth.
- Soul saved; our youth; our children; how to get families to come.
- Awareness/a longing to share my faith with others. With the area of communication, need for something greater than wealth and material things. The need for discipleship and the well-being of our fellow brothers to Him. He wants to see all saved and in churches.
- Get outside the walls! We are dying in here! If one has difficulty accepting that, then take a look at the demographics. Bishop Watson was very much on target when he referenced the story from Fulgram's book about "sitting on the ticket."
- Perhaps a greater willingness to allow churches to "die" so that resurrection can take place; do we need greater boldness to allow churches, or even encourage churches, to close – note: not celebrate closing but if a congregation is functionally deceased, why should we fool ourselves by keeping them on life-support?
- More leadership from our clergy is needed. "Where there is no vision the people perish." Where there is no leadership, there is no vision. Spirituality is mandatory to lead the church of Jesus Christ! End short term appointments. "We are sitting on the ticket!" To be successful in discipleship we need spiritual leadership and continuity of programs. Momentum, continuity, etc. are lost when pastors move on to their next appointment. We "decapitate" ourselves every time we move pastors. More leadership is needed from District Superintendents as well. We must hold all accountable. Sometimes moves are needed. But,

why is it that low productivity is not tolerated in any business except the business of our Lord? Was John Wesley and Frances Asbury satisfied with low productivity?

- Towards those not just dying from HIV/AIDS, but now living with it; in our dialogue with the worldly culture – i.e. “alternative lifestyles”. Towards the “least” in our communities – the prisons, the homeless, the abused and neglected people in our neighborhoods.
- We are called into the homes of the people who make up our communities. Only by soul-changing, heart-changing, faith-giving action that produces people committed to Christ will the direction of our society turn to caring for and about each other.
- I believe we must reach out to our young people – particularly those who have not grown up in the church and have no knowledge of the availability of God’s saving grace, love and peace.
- 1) Children in US who have never heard the name Jesus spoken; 2) 18-30 year olds who are too busy or else don’t see the need to go to church.
- Be faithful, obedient and reach out to all persons by our teachings and examples so that they might become followers of the Word.
- Churches “open” to any person “called of God” to be its pastor (no matter race or gender).
- To be more diligent when delivering the Word. To love more.
- Include all races, gender and sexual orientation in ourselves.
- Acceptance of all clergy persons; acceptance of all peoples as members of our congregation; to be willing to get our hands dirty as we seek to truly reach out (& often down) to bring the least, the last, the lost, and the left out to Christ.
- Reaching out to the lost in our homes and in our communities and families.
- To share our faith with others and to be bold for God.
- There is a bountiful harvest out there but the harvesters are too few!
- More programs for young people, to get them back in church and spirit filled.
- We must witness whenever and wherever we are. If we as Christians allow our ‘rights’ to be stifled or thrown out then we are failing God. Allowing prayer, pledge, 10 Commandments to be destroyed – must be addressed and the place to start is with ME. I must be strong in my faith and as a part of His church, exercise my faith in conjunction with my fellow Christians. Through this body of the Holston Conference.
- Personal contact with people of need.
- We address many issues but with greater commitment and support much greater things can be accomplished.
- Loss of members and commitment – seeking but not finding the leadership – to lead them to “God”.
- We need to love others and let them know who Jesus is and what He means in our lives if we are obedient to His teachings. Reach out to those hungry, lost and hurting and show them love – esp. God’s love.
- There are hurting people in our communities who need the hope that only God can give.
- Those that are ill and work with my Hospice patients. Spreading the Word.
- Breaking down racial barriers – the need for all to know Christ – realize living out these Scriptures is a life-time commitment not just a short period of time or convenience.
- Help the poor/needy/abused/hungry/health/prison bars/shut-ins/elderly.
- Nearly every area of conference, district and local church ministries. “Race must not matter, but God is what matters.”
- Less ritual and formality; more doing. More meetings that are spent on how to accomplish. (As this vision workshop is starting to show! Great job!) Energy to actual outreach instead of church rhetoric.

- He wants us to uphold moral issues! I have to say that I'm very disappointed to see a gay and lesbian booth at Terrace. Yesterday, I read the Book of Discipline on this issue and feel that it suggests that this is not an accepted lifestyle. Why are we encouraging this at conference? Why is Tex _____ speaking at one of our colleges? Maybe I'm way off base with this activity. This is heavy on my heart. I am not sure how it needs to be addressed, but personally, I do not feel this lifestyle should be encouraged and accepted in our churches or conference. Reach out in love to the people; accept them; but not the lifestyle. I am praying that God would make it clear to us how we should go forward on this issue. What does God expect not society?
- "Living dead" on the pews; enthusiasm (contagious) in the local church – especially the small and rural congregations; immediately involve each person in a church has a task on ministry – beyond "pew sitting" – especially seek out youth and the unchurched and the "de-churched."
- 1) Evangelism – we've forgotten how! We need God's power here in great abandonment to enable us to lead the unchurched to Christ. 2) Must empower the laity – pastor's job is to equip not to do the ministry. We should minimize the distinction between clergy and laity – "Laos" – there is just one people of God – clergy and laity. Ministry is a function not an office or order.
- Find ways to bring young people back into the church. They are the future of the church.
- Keeping out children (16-21) active in our church.
- Stewardship Education a la Bill Kilday – needs constant front burner status!! "Justice" appears to be undervalued in our conference save by a few but isn't it equal to spirituality in the eyes of God?
- Socially – politically.
- Commitment and giving time to spiritual growth.
- To reach out to those different from us. Those with different ideas, etc. To have more commitment.
- To step out of our comfort zones; to put legs to our prayers; to become doers and not just hearers; there is a world that needs love and needs to be shown love; must be committed disciples.
- More like evangelists. Those who are abused, especially youth and aged, aids victims. Renewal of Holy Spirit in Church.
- Ministry with post-high school people! There is practically nothing (all things considered) being done for this age group in the local church.
- Faith sharing all over the world. Open more mission trip possibilities all over the conference.
- We're too inward looking. He wants us to reach out to help others however we can, personally and as a group. We are to go and make disciples, after all-emphasis on GO – we can't wait for people to find us – we have to find them.
- Youth and school system
- In outreach so that the body of Christ may grow in Holston and in the strengthening of relationships that the body may be strong.
- 1) Making disciples; 2) Discussing theological differences; 3) Loving those around us; 4) Long-term appointments; 5) Pay based on years served and not position (I am 29). I should make less than those who have served less than me!!; 6) Reach out to the young adult age.
- --Poverty/crime in inner-city; --victims of war; --standing up of family; standing for policies which reduce abortion rates.
- Personal life, in financial aspects and to do more for His church on this earth.
- Local missionary work; specifically our family, our friends, our fellow workers; our social life; our spiritual life.

- There seems to be a deep need wherever I go to reach children and youth who never in their lives have entered a church or heard the gospel in any meaningful way.
- How do we lead our children to seek God’s plan and vision, as an individual and disciple of Christ?
- Freedom to be God’s people in the realm of Methodism that God has called on (we are United Methodists, not the winds of blowing times.) To reach out to, to assist the great social needs and concerns of our day i.e. healthcare, quality of life concerns.
- God is calling us to outreach to neighbors close to us – those neighbors who are far away. We are to reach out with compassion, acceptance, and justice. Africa is a country that is crying out for assistance.
- Identify those persons who have been shut out, such as gays (the lepers of today) and to those persons who are unable to enter into the fellowship of the church. Truly be open hearted, minded and open doors.
- God is crying out for changed hearts Micah 6:8 –our young adults I see this in my own church; --the men, women and children addicted to drugs; --the abused. All are crying out for justice and mercy.
- Get out of our personal “me, mine” attitude – mission work here and abroad. Keeping our constitutional rights of freedom of religion – uphold strong Christian values and not succumbed to morality and assist those that are in the morally wrong.
- Inclusiveness – Galatians, “No male or female”...but one in Christ. (Racial inclusiveness, as well.)
- Health issues for local communities. Small ministry groups.
- There are several issues facing society as a whole and the churches need to be a leader in developing solutions (of course, led by God) – example TennCare – elder day care – job losses.
- On behalf of poor children, on behalf of the chronically ill.
- “By all means, win some” share the message; be consistent in our faith, and as good as our word.
- Speaking out with conviction about the necessity of hearing and accepting the good news offered and available to everyone.
- To become disciples and to make disciples of those people we come in contact with.
- To bring more people into the churches. Especially the children, young people, etc.
- Areas of bringing congregations together to live in harmony with each other and to do God’s work – not what we want for ourselves. Reach out to little children, youth and everyone to have a vision of God.
- Unchurched – poverty and desperate people, who have not heard or need God in their life.
- Reaching children.
- To follow His words more closely in all that is done.
- To follow Biblical teachings in judicial council decisions without extraneous persuasions.
- Cultivation of children and youth in commitment; the existence of the Kingdom depends on them.
- Universal, world-wide caring, nurturing, ministry and communicating with our world neighbors.
- One area I see in particular is the urgency to the needs of young adults, 18-30, nurture and lead them to Christ. Getting to know them spiritually and leading them to a long term life of obedience to Him.

- Pray, make Him #1 in our lives. Therefore, there would be no troubles. Trust in Him and live it out. Lead persons to commit their lives to God. Welcome and gather people into the church. Nurture person to Christian living – by being an example.
- I feel God is crying out in full volume saying, “Go to those whom no one wants, who no church member has time for, especially the poor who do exist, to young adults who don’t have time to study the Bible. God is saying, “Believe! I am real! I am coming back soon! Prepare the way! Drop everything else – live my word as I am the Word! Time is short!”
- The Great Commandment(s).
- We (United Methodist) need to risk respectability in order to tell people about Jesus.
- Everywhere from the inner-city to the rural community. Remember, methamphetamine is a drug problem in rural areas like other drugs are in the inner city. It may mean being bold in changing styles of worship. May mean opening buildings for meth. users such as AA, etc.
- Control of personal finances and impact our families. The growth of personal escapes (gambling, drugs, and alcohol) needs to be strongly addressed.
- Racial justice issues, stewardship, work on faithful disciples throughout the world – start at our community level.
- Working on the lack of young people and in our understanding of what they are looking for and at the same time we need to continue nurturing out older members.
- Unity between our churches; opening people’s hearts wit actions and commitment so few are willing to commit themselves. Cross-generational acceptance of ideas. Making conference available to all (currently cost prohibitive.)
- Reaching out to the unloving, those that are different than we are. Some of our doctrine still leaves many barriers. Spiritual deodorant is required!!
- PUT CHRIST INTIMACY INTO THE CONFERENCE. Stop the lying – pull the covers off piety. Dismantling racism and bigotry. There is no excuse to hate another person. So many people need help to survive economically – they need food, clothes, shoes, shelter, and deodorant, soap, soap powder. FERVANT WORSHIP – UNINHIBITED WORSHIP.
- God is crying out for us to reach generation X and Y. These young adults need ministry programs that will meet their needs. These young people are having children that are not going to church or may not even know the name of Christ. This is a great urgency need.
- Working with those in jail and their families. Stepping out of our comfort zone and seeking to do God’s work in our communities. Look at the problems of our community - opportunities for creative witness, outreach, and mission.
- In the area of justice for all – poor – health insurance, aid to the hungry, homeless.
- He is crying out to us to make contributions to educational and spiritual work, especially on the mission fields where there are few opportunities for the population. I interpret God’s call to say that God is appreciative of our efforts to educate the people to help themselves and others.
- To surrender our life and trust it is in His hands.
- Full support of persons in mission. Hold “making disciples” as our primary focus. Wesley: “We have nothing to do but win souls.”
- We need to reach out to others and be more inviting to others. We need to be better stewards for God through our ministries to strengthen our families inside the church as well as those in the community.
- Missions throughout the world. Peace, not war. Love, not hate. We need to take a more active stand against the war in Iraq. We need to be more active in preaching the Word, sharing the gospel, evangelizing.
- He is crying out for us to serve others, and truly sacrifice our time, wealth, ego, etc.

- As a conference, we should accept and love each other. We should embrace as strength, not as a weakness, our diversity in church size, worship styles, political views, ethnic origins, etc.
- 1) Discipleship or outreach and caring for poor; 2) Risk of being rejected for sharing faith, 3) long-term obedience – obey God forever, lead a life that represents God to others.
- Work together through our differences.
- Child abuse, poverty, family support. Teaching and preaching the Bible to ALL.
- To fulfill the commandments of God and to work on fulfilling the Great Commission.
- In activities of youth (all ages). In bringing unity to all races, creeds and cultures.
- To reach out to others.
- Helping the people in our communities with problems. Poor need food, clothing. Drugs? Alcoholism?
- The poor, hungry, lost and those in prisons.
- Growth of our churches. Closeness in our communities.
- Let's get the question of homosexuality and women's role settled. All are equal!
- God is calling for reckless abandonment of our own lives and wills. God is calling us to truly have open hearts and open doors. Also, as the church, God is crying out for us to be worthy reflections of God's self.
- Programs in outreach need to be started.
- Love enough to spend the time in making TRUE DISCIPLES.
- Up-grade colleges – they are struggling. Young adults are so important – why not first class?
- Evangelism, holiness, the church is worldly and liberal. We need Wesleyan – scriptural holiness.
- I believe God would have us settle the issue of the primacy of Scripture – and settle some of the issues that are bogging us down. We would begin to join disciple making and soul winning with the helping ministries we do well.
- Living and teaching of the Gospels. Loving and reaching out to those who are forgotten.
- Helping children and youth; more Bible study – planned times for group discussion, visioning.
- Migrant workers; inner city; rural poverty; child care; after school care; mentally challenged; older adults.
- Urgency – the loss of membership in churches; to renew where there is stagnation and obstinacy in churches. Urgency – need for ways to keep young adults in church. Need to help people be equipped to reach out to others even here in US – not US & abroad.
- Mental illnesses of clergy and laity; Women in the church; Drug problems of communities; recognizing the pain of the congregation; maturity and growth in spirituality.
- He is asking us to forget “self” and to step out for those around us and listen to the cries of the people for the minister.
- Society and our youth are looking for answers to life's questions. We must RESPOND with GOD'S LOVE!!! Along with preaching the Word in truth and mission outreach in our communities.
- To begin to love each other and not be in competition with each other. We only attempt growing or sustaining our local churches instead of doing God sized work in communities. We need to risk keeping our little flocks together and start bringing our flocks together to truly be in ministry together. Breaking barriers that exist between our own local congregations.
- To be more aware of the cry of the youth. If there is not much direction at home for these kids, be more of a person they can talk to and give them over to God's help along with yours.
- In response to the needs of youth and respond to social problems.
- To love everyone no matter whom they are, or how they chose to live. To love unconditionally.

- The commission to love our neighbor as ourselves.
- Addressing, with bold openness and inviting diverse conversation, difficult challenges to our faithfulness and spiritual growth, including the growing health insurance crisis, materialism and apathy toward poverty in our churches, open discernment on sexuality.
- To love our neighbors as ourselves!
- Spirituality.
- See that all have health care; wiping out hunger; ministry with children, youth, the aged (more than we are already doing).
- The once-churched-how do we reach those who have been alienated?; Inviting people to church – How do we reach the unchurched? Not just the “typical” church member; – Sending forth – How do we equip people to be ministers and not just recipients of nurture.
- What we our doing now. Helping the local church to hear and respond to God’s vision uniquely and individually.
- Sharing God’s love, bringing all persons to know the love of Christ and providing for our needy (children, orphans, widows, sick, poor). Commitment!!!!
- To love each other and to step up and do what it takes to get the word out that we want to help and to make life on earth as full feeling as it can be. That we are here to help each other.
- In virtually all areas, we must strive to reach more young adults and consequently young families.
- He is asking us to reach out to the young people. To nurture them and make them become more aware of God’s presence. That we really do care what happens to them.
- Our families and church, our community and life in general.
- Missions not only in local community, but also the world. Making disciples of others.
- I think we are still short as a church in reaching areas in the community that is not the most favorable areas. I am not sure the conference is doing a lot to promote that openly. To be totally hones, I am not sure we are doing it as United Methodists.
- Children and youth ministry in the local community and local church level.
- Being “headlights” in visionary, effective (lay and pastoral) leadership. Being innovative in bring/inviting persons to be participating members of local UMC’s. Reverse the numerical decline while expecting excellence in nurture, outreach and witness.
- To tell others about Jesus, not be afraid of new ways to do things in church, to love one another no matter what we look like or what our backgrounds are; as a conference, encourage each one to reach one for Christ.
- Maintaining relationships once in church and conference.
- Violence, war, drugs and morality.
- This issue of war and peace – keeping measures. Long-term commitment to relieving suffering and hunger, particularly for children.
- To listen to His speaking to us through prayer, meditation and obedience.
- Homelessness; child abuse; drug addiction.
- 1) Young adults – most churches don’t have a Sunday School class; 2) Poor children or unsupervised youth in rural communities – every school needs help in some way or another. 3) Migrant Hispanic children in Holston are excluded from sports teams, summer reading programs for lack of knowing or temporary status.
- Inner city and Hispanic communities which are growing, campus work, reforming prisons, helping single parents. Joining Him where He is already at work and going beyond.
- To reach out to all non-believers and unsaved persons. Because no one is to be left out of God’s grace, and His Kingdom.

- To love God so much that we can't help but love our neighbor, and evangelistic work in our community and world.
- I feel our churches, as a whole, do not evangelize the way they should. I find a lot of people are "scared" to witness to their neighbors. A lot of people have a desire for witness, but think someone else should do it. (Maybe the pastor.)
- Acceptance of others and providing love unconditionally –
- Open mind, open heart, open doors – vision statement for our churches.
- We would be, in areas we now consider, the people beneath us.
- Work for peace! Love our neighbor! Let people know we worship a loving God that does not condone war for any reason.
- Inclusiveness in appointed, a great emphasis on evangelism and outreach.
- Reach out to the homeless, the mentally ill, the sinners, the drug addicts. Bring them into the fold and save their souls.
- Discipleship, charity, a stronger stand against sin in government and all points in life. I.E. what's on TV, behavior of people in sports and at sports events. Missionary support to loving the Word of God and a better way of life to those around the world. Also, to show our love (Christian) to others.
- Outreach to the least and lost, concern for those not "like us." Realization – the world's opinion doesn't matter, God through Jesus, gives us authority. Love and support for struggling clergy.
- Our community. Church people get in comfort zones and just talk to their friends. If we could be the flesh and bones of God's love to all, then we could get something accomplished.
- In our daily lives, responding to the needs of others.
- Dependency classes. Jail and prison ministry – after care for women.
- --To learn more of His Word and what it can do for us and the country; --To show others His love and salvation.
- Youth revival.
- --Young adults and teenagers; --All those hurting and in need.
- Evangelism, inviting people to Christ. End the divisive spirit in our country, community, and family.
- To reach out to all persons – no matter the circumstances.
- Wars among religions, countries, terrorism, and politics. Reconciliation among faiths of the world.
- Love and caring for one another.
- We must address the plight of the needy that surround us. We must minister with them. Not to them.
- Reach out to the people who are losing touch with the Christian faith. Each generation moves farther from God. We need more corporate action with witness/outreach instead of depending on individual effort.
- Crime, terrorism, hunger, poverty, medical care, distribution of wealth, and trying to become acceptable to the world. We need to affect the culture. Not the culture affects the church!
- More support of the Church by our time and with our money.
- To reach the underprivileged – to reach kids and youth and adults not necessarily underprivileged but those in "normal" middle class families.
- Witness to others in the workplace.
- We need to reach out wherever we as individuals, churches, as a conference see needs.
- Morality.
- To reach out to the needy and care what happens to our area and the world.

- To live out our mission statement – open hearts, open minds and open doors. Going beyond our local church and into the community.
- We must live – think, love and act – like Christians. We must be more than members of an organization. We must be a part of a living, dynamic community of people who follow Christ. So the world can really see a positive difference. If we don't live it, we can't change a thing if we are not different.
- Youth and children's ministry – visitation from pastors "one on one" time to know the needs of individual and congregations. Divorce recovery, Hispanic communities since they are growing. Meeting the needs and loving those in need and less fortunate.
- Broken families, families and children broken by divorce. The "unchurched."
- In the reaching out to outcasts in our conference and society. AIDS victims, ethnic minorities, the poor, homosexuals, and all those who feel left out.
- We need to be more intentional in sharing our faith in the world. Our lives need to show through our actions, that we live for Christ!
- Deeper commitment, more openness.
- To young adults. New churches that reach people where they are (like Jesus did). The churches may look and sound different than our "traditional" churches do.
- Calling us to give up our quest for affluency. Calling us to give to God our money for the purpose of ministering to the poor and oppressed. Calling us to give up our "worldly busyness" so as to devote more time to God, God's people, and the ministry of justice, mercy and humbleness. To step out in ministry without having to know our "guaranteed" results.
- We like to talk about loving our neighbor but we don't seem to do a very good job of it.
- We need to be with the single parents, with those struggling with living, drug addicts and dealers, visiting jails. Need to be in neighborhoods. Helping young adults and middle aged adults learn how to live God filled, God directed lives now.
- The poor among us, and to respond with more than just lip-service and handouts of money, but of genuine involvement – getting out of our comfort zones and being more like Paul (Galatians 2:10)
- Caring for aids victims, disease ridden, starving, drug abusers, children, aged.
- To be faithful in our stewardship – money, time, talents, etc. To be change agents in our world. To be champions for the oppressed/abused in our society.
- The evangelism of the poor. Jesus said, "Blessed re the poor, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." It is their kingdom, not ours. God is looking for the church that will give the Kingdom back to the poor.
- God is crying out for us to reach the unchurched. He cries out for there to be peace with justice. He cries out for us to practice a faith not shaped by only culture but a faith bringing a new spirit to the culture.
- He is crying out for us to respond in trust. We need to help the families who are struggling (childcare, single moms).
- To respond to the crisis in health care in this country by developing a church based program of provision of health care to those who do not have it. To increase our ministry within the overburdened and growing prison system in this country. Sharing God's love and the message of Jesus in both these ways.
- Tithing
- Witnessing for Jesus. Building disciples. Impacting the world. It is time to stretch our faith. Hebrews 11:6
- In our everyday life – 24/7.

- To reach out to those who are in need especially where it is difficult or uncomfortable. To do these things in person not just by giving money.
- There are millions, perhaps billions of people living in poverty in our neighborhoods, our cities, across our land, and most importantly, throughout our world who are in DESPERATE need of our help.
- Hunger, mission to high risk areas, and willingness to serve Christ.
- To love one another (1st John 3:16) by accepting all, no matter what.
- Faithfulness to our commitments – especially apportionments. Continued ministry to those who speak different languages and those left behind by society (at home and abroad).
- Care of the homeless, at home as well as foreign lands.
- Crime (solutions), disease (cures), poverty, abortion, abuse of children, women, men. Evangelism is of utmost importance. True Christianity will cure many evils. Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ.
- 1) Radical shift in the office of D.S. to be a true “pastor pastorium” and nurturer/teacher of the mission of the local churches in each district. 2) More cooperative ministry (like youth groups shared among churches). 3) Either moving to a salary system like the British Methodists or being honest about itinerancy and going to a modified call system like Episcopalians or Lutherans. I realize this would take change in the General Church/Discipline. But jealousy and ladder climbing have so poisoned clergy relationships that all aspects of our life together are truly shackled. There is a huge disparity from minimum salary for an elder (\$33,822) for 2006 to top salaries in the conference well over \$100,000. I am blessed to have a very good salary, but the disparity turns what was once a missional vehicle to a “career ladder” (itinerancy). If we are serious about itinerancy, we are talking about a concept never intended to operate on merit but on having all things in common and each receiving by grace as needed. It is okay if we have to say we are too far removed from the Book of Acts to be communal with resources. But if we are unwilling to accept that biblical ideal, we need to say honestly that we are a market based economy, and not pretend to be what we are not, at least then there is no need to blame anybody for where pastors are. #1 and #3 on my list, I firmly believe are the elephants in the room we do not speak about in public.
- Ministry to the poor, reaching out for those who are seeking, Hispanic ministries, connection with brothers and sisters of the faith across denominational lines.
- Churches being more open to outsiders; greater acceptance of woman preachers.
- Missions, outreach, seeking the lost in all areas.
- In our colleges and high schools, missions in other countries, and in our country where there are so many who need to know God’s love.
- 1) Faithfully – preach and teach the Word. Our vision of God will be skewed if it is not drawn from the teachings of scripture – if our vision of God is skewed...everything else will be skewed. As Bishop Watson said, “The scripture is our ticket...” We need to then demonstrate, model, show the Love of God through Good Works. Ephesians 2:10 and Matthew 5:16. Radical, outrageous acts of ministries of love. We need to be a “go and do” church (see above scriptures!) not a “come and see” church. Steve Sjogren, servant evangelism, has many practical ideas for churches to begin. We live the story and we share the story.
- Reaching out to the lost.
- To regain our spirit – to reach out to the unchurched.
- --Starting to have higher expectations for ourselves – and accountability; --reaching out in our neighborhoods to share love and faith in traditional and creative ways.

- Third world evangelism/elimination of hunger. Family violence and poverty here - “project” ministries, racial/ethnic relationships worldwide and in local churches, especially southern rural churches.
- Planting contemporary churches to reach next generation. Our annual conference is colored gray. We are 20-30 years behind the conferences around us!
- Love of neighbors, helping others, faith in God, sharing with others.
- Meet people where they are. Risk getting out of our church walls and meet the “real” people in the world. Not only poor but the corporate folks – the rich.
- Prison ministries; crisis in health care; working to truly be a church with open hearts, open minds, open doors; finding our real security in God.
- To put to rest in-fighting (sometimes it is in silence), sometimes open hostility which touches many areas of our life as a church and distracts us from our call to use all whom God gifts to call to God’s mission of making/nurturing disciples.
- More outreach programs – equipping the saints of our churches to go and make disciples, teaching and leading people to the knowledge of and baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- A passion for spiritual transformation – waiting on Him but readily responding as He leads. We live it; we serve, because the Holy Spirit dwells in us. The response flows out of the relationship with Him.
- Education of basic Bible teachings and what is required for us as Christians; slum areas and areas of natural disasters; areas where people are being tortured; youth and older folks
- In areas where children are suffering and Christians are being tortured and killed because of their faith, while the church remains too silent.
- Reach into the inner city and across racial lines to the least, the lost and the lonely – some inside the church and some outside.
- Hunger; sickness; love of God and neighbors.
- 1) Reaching teens/young adults who were in church, but drop out; 2) Finding new ways to reach people by offering classes, programs, etc. that address the needs and concerns they have.
- Ministry with the poor and lower middle class; Ministry with at-risk children and teens (much to the dismay of church members...unfortunately)
- Overcoming prejudices and preconceived hang ups.
- A) Reduce emphasis of clergy in our conference structure (i.e. 1 clergy and 5 lay persons – not 1 to 1). We need to be truly “lay led”... B) Our General Assembly (and conference) actually do something actively rather than passively (i.e. we presently are satisfied with the status quo). C) Look at our growing churches and use their way of growing in our dying churches.
- 1) In helping those who are addicted to drugs; 2) Helping the unprivileged to have a better way of life.
- Homeless, sick, hungry, despondent.
- In reaching the LOST! We have whole generations who do not know God nor do they think they ever need God! We must not forget who we are! A movement of God to share Jesus.
- Mission trips, local communities in need, getting Bibles to other countries, sharing God’s love through gift-giving and supplies needed for schools and churches in other countries who are hungry for the Word.
- Trailer courts of poverty, ritzy homes of affluence – both with problems of addiction to drugs and alcohol. Dead and dying churches.
- Race relations in small, rural churches who are starting to be impacted by people moving into the area. Especially blacks and Hispanics.

- 1) In the area of His message and spreading it in written, spoken and acting out of His Word. Simple but profound. It sounds “small” but if effects are revolutionary. All areas of life are part of the target and will unfold when we love, work with each other.
- I think if we installed Celebrate/Recovery programs in each Methodist church and got God to open hearts that are hardened to others hurts, habits and hang-ups. We are not perfect yet! May we with God’s grace someday reach that goal.
- Abortion as murder to the unborn, the church must reverse “Roe vs. Wade” court decision.
- Youth leadership. Help, guidance and caring for the elderly.
- Go forth and trust God in everything we do.
- Racial harmony, overcoming tradition. Leadership development with pastors. Many pastors lack confidence.
- To reach outside the walls of the church. Especially among the more affluent who often are the most desperate for Christ.
- 1) Through prayer and Bible study to become more aware of God’s call, presence and demands upon our lives. 2) Knowing this to reach out to all people with the gospel and with tangible expressions of God’s love and grace.
- Find some way to help people who aren’t interested in God’s way, especially children and families and absent fathers.
- More community outreach. The church needs to once again become a central part of the community. It should be drawing in those who are lost and seeking through its open doors. They need to see and feel our love and openness not judgment. Then we can lead them to God’s forgiveness and love. We then need to teach, mentor and hold up, this person to strengthen their spiritual growth.
- To those drug and alcohol abuser in our community – for the abusers themselves and to their families. To love and accept our brothers and sisters in Christ – leading them to a knowledge and understanding of God in Christ.
- To continue to reach out to the less fortunate.
- Reaching out to increase diversity. Being truly open to all people. Truly be working to live out open minds, open hearts, open doors. We don’t welcome all – period. I believe God is crying out for us to reach out to all God’s people!
- Taking the Gospel to those in need.
- Moving beyond maintenance to mission – can we work cooperatively to impact our inner cities, to partner our smaller congregations to reach their communities, to see each other as brothers/sisters in Christ rather than competition. To move from “going to church” to “being” the church for the world? Not just strengthening church but growing in discipleship. Using one Wesleyan tradition to engage our culture in conversations of faith.
- God keeps calling out to us to go – to go and make disciples. He fills us up with His Word so that we will share with others.
- Love, care, and share: 1. spiritually, 2. servicing others, 3. sharing the experience as taught “pass what we profess”.
- --New paradigms of taking church to where people are – build community where they are and then bring them to fellowship of on-site church as they have desire/need; --learn to operate more on principles of abundance not scarcity; trust God for the God-sized occurrences; -- Affirmation of God’s ability to work through a variety of people/places to get the job done! – Learn/distinct initiatives to teach our people how to share their faith with others; --strong small group initiative in each church and start throughout the community.
- To reach out to the poor and those who are not in the church.

- Inclusiveness – clergy being courageous enough to fulfill their ordination vows even though it might now be the popular thing to do. Laity accepting their responsibility as ministers.
- Outreach – in our own homes, in our neighborhoods, communities, regions and in all the world. Sharing our abundant resources and our wealth with others both near and far.
- I believe God is calling for us to answer the growing need of the Hispanic population in East Tennessee-Southwest Virginia and North Georgia. The Hispanic population is continuing to increase and I believe there is a sense of urgency to address those needs. Why could we not appoint Hispanic ministers to larger churches to help start new congregations in strategic locations?
- Reaching the lost! Making the hard decisions to close, merge and discipline churches who refuse to grow and work with churches that are in constant conflict. We need to get back to Wesley and get back to preaching the Gospel!!
- Saving the denomination and saving souls should not be mutually exclusive! Or, you may just record the conference is perfect in everyway and this generation of leaders have nothing to repent – if you believe it. The Vision 2000 workshops really helped us turn the corner and become an effective conference – right? I do not think we are desperate enough to really change fully, radically. I am afraid this generation of leaders will consume the shrinking resources of the church while pronouncing to the rest of us our need to trust them as they lead us around and around the wilderness. Next year we will be serving more manna and quail. Bon Appetite!
- Truly listening to God and not put our own agendas on the table. Not just lip service but action. If we nurture Christians then we wouldn't be in decline.
- In our very young adults. They need to see more people living what they preach.
- To bringing young adults back into the church, ministering to them in preparation of them taking leadership roles in the future...
- To extend, offer, God's love to people all over the world by sharing our material blessings, by being compassionate with each other, because we experience God's love we can share and tell others of its reality in our own personal lives.
- Poor, black, and Hispanics. Requires a flexibility of spirit and organization and worship styles. If we are too white and middle class to do it (God help us!), can we partner with others who can do it? Salvation Army, for example.
- Working for Peace with Justice – locally (in our life together as local churches) and globally where respect and tolerance for those who are different from us are too often absent. Also, each local church responding faithfully to our fair share responsibility as acknowledged of stewardship as a spiritual discipline.
- To reach beyond the safety of our comfort zones to bring the message of Christ's love.
- We keep talking about the Kingdom of God – we must live into it through praying with our lives – we must understand that all of who we are belongs to God and reflects the love of God.
- Issues of: racial, gender, money, environmental, health.
- Far beyond our congregations into the social life, spiritual life, and physical life of all places. It would need assessment.
- Revitalize small membership churches, children in poverty, young adults, older adults, prison ministry, and ministry to and with the poor, people of non-faith, working for peace with justice. Full payment of fair share by all churches. Cease our obsessing over the issue of gay/lesbian inclusion in ministry.
- Outreach, nurturing, love, obedience to the spirit, giving of ourselves and our finances.
- In our churches.
- Ministry to the elderly. Ministry to strengthen the local church with faith development.

- To stand on Jesus and I feel that we try to be so like the world and do not set ourselves apart for fear of being too counter cultural. I think our young people are watching to see if and how really important Jesus and His commands are to us. To meet the needs of the increasingly substance abusing culture. Yes, but when do we put action plans into action. I think all the words the vision team can put on paper will not help us. It is a waste of people and monetary resources. To reach youth for Christ. To deal with the poverty needs in our conference.
- The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Now is the time of salvation. Too many hungry, abused people, neglected in the world.
- 1) Find the unchurched to God by being more outwardly focused; 2) Take more care of our aging population.
- There are prophets in our midst who are reminding us that we must “evangelize or we will fossilize” – not just as a denomination, but as a faith. “Christianity is only one generation away from extinction.” Do we have ears to hear, and a will to act? Or will we be content to preach to an ever-dwindling choir?
- I think we have to open to ideas of worship – we somehow feel threatened by how other people seek God. If we are closed in worship we are closed in fellowship.
- To third world and communist countries whose people haven’t heard of God and they have so much hunger. We need to heed these scriptures.
- Methodist Men’s groups – we have so much to do!!!
- In building inclusive relationships that stand for a church with open hearts, open minds, open doors.
- Mark 2:1-12: Jesus first told the paralytic his sins are forgiven (invisible). Next. He told the man to pick up his bed and GO (visible). Vision – make disciples, welcome sinners to join the family of sinners saved by Grace. Action – go out; seek the lost; nurture each other to Christ likeness.
- Close down ministries that no longer function. Churches with less than 25 in worship served by lay speaker pastors. Implement Schwartz’s Natural Church Development.
- The inner city, the schools (particularly at risk children), abused people, both children and adults; and I believe we must infuse our churches with the enthusiasm that our faith requires. This will ultimately lead to His Kingdom on earth.
- Long term obedience.
- People are so good.
- JUST GO, He will provide every encounter, every turn in the road. IT may not be on your map that you laid out, but it will be for an encounter that God has sent you to. I have experienced it...time after time and on...
- To accept women as preachers. To aid children at risk.
- Servant evangelism – they won’t know how much we care until we show them how much we care.
- Mission work in areas that we might feel uncomfortable, threatened (security), unworthy.
- The re-examining of the Scriptures so that the teachings are historically as well as spiritually correct.
- We are not called to save the UM church. We are called to save the world. We have to define “effective ministry” in terms of transformation rather than in terms of people of institutional success.
- To stop talking and begin being. Clergy must come together, we are called to proclaim the Kingdom that God is and will build, not build private efforts.

- Dare to preach, live, teach and impact. What the Holy Spirit is instructing. We need to be demonstrating the power of the Word and our obedience to that Word. Submission and obedience and death to self.
- Becoming a fully integrated body – in race (more inclusive in each congregation to incorporate Asian, Hispanic, gays, emotionally or physically challenged). To meet needs of the unchurched. Doing all we do in the name of Christ.
- Street corners, crack house, speaking to at least one person everyday of our life about God!!!
- In having greater love and respect and not jealousy among our clergy members. That we make the main thing (these Scriptures) the main thing we focus as we carry out a rich ministry in His name and to His glory.
- Our ordination structure is too complicated with unbiblical, man-made traditions (i.e. too many titles, pigeonholes, etc.) allow for one ordination, not all the subsets we currently have (deacon, local pastor, associate, etc.) Allow changes to be made which connect people with authentic community and ministry – not just trying to get them to “join the club”; stop allowing people to control/dictate what the church can or can’t do; we should not be afraid to allow the church to go forward simply because complainers and dream-stealers don’t want it.; put the laity into ministry! A pastor’s biblical job description is Ephesians 4:11-13, not to be a lapdog or gopher for unmotivated, selfish consumer Christians. Quit expecting pastors to do every task imaginable. Begin emphasizing spiritual gifts! The UM church is absolutely terrible in recognizing and using spiritual gifts. Stop fretting over growth – focus on being obedient to our mission. God will take care of the growth. We must let God be God. We must let the Holy Spirit guide what we do instead of being anchored to old ways of thinking.
- Outreach, missions, honoring scripture as all truth, tithing, listening to God – obeying Him.
- To please God by being the Church rather than pleasing our milieu and jeopardizing your Methodist heritage.
- Stand against war; stand against oppression; serious, academic, intellectual work – solid theologically.
- Witnessing to others and being there and helping others.
- Both above listed areas (monasteries, church missions to foreign countries, etc.) in all areas of the world for now and all time to come.
- Sharing our stories and the gospel story. There is a hurting world out there that needs the love and grace of Jesus Christ!
- Right where our churches are located. God is already at work we just need to join in. We have a story to tell and we need to tell it.
- Social concerns i.e. poverty and hunger – acceptance of people who are “different” from us. Deeper commitment to “real” values of life.
- A willingness to honestly examine the ministries, churches, staff positions, pastors that are not accomplishing this embodiment of urgency and boldness for discipleship/service/worship/outreach.
- Missions, prisons and families affected by this, single parent home (in the literature given out in our packets there were all kinds of activities, etc. for all age groups except for middle age singles – I do not believe we are not faithfully nurturing its group as well as we could. I am part of this group and have been frustrated with the church’s response to this situation.), children, Bible in the Sunday school for children and young people.
- Salvation of His people. Being faithful to bring His Word to those who are lost.
- He is with us.
- Concern for people enough to visit and witness, put legs on prayers. Go beyond worship and talking to ourselves.

- 1) God calls us to justice and fairness! From Dr. Stella Robert's report this morning, I am saddened to hear that we are failing in the area of acceptance for all. 2) We must win as many as possible for Jesus Christ! We must follow the Great Commission and share the Good News!!
- To define ourselves as Wesleyan in the way we establish our roles in our community.
- Struggling FOR PEACE in our world – for justice with race issues, poverty – economic issues, gender issues, conflict resolution and all based on our spirituality. Spiritual fruits – FAITH AND LOVE
- Racial Reconciliation; intention de-segregation of our churches – done in a manner that builds up – not breaks down; learning conflict management and how to “speak the truth in love.”; promoting supportive and accountable Christian Community through small groups; promoting simplistic God-centered living in the midst of our fast-paced complex world.
- Nurturing within our communities to a world that is lost (drugs, broken families); dealing with injustice, intolerance, violence. **Please note:** The 4 top “core values” listed by our conference could easily be perceived (and thus only used) as an inward relationship with God/Christ, but could just as easily not be perceived in the urgent importance of reaching outside of ourselves to others. Inward growth is important to accomplish outward relationship and evangelism. But the ultimate mission of the church must still be our focus when utilizing those core values.
- Family support – especially young, single parent and those parents working families – with parenting and financial management matters. A response to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission is a continuing need for leadership and followership development. Just as Jesus taught, we must teach. We appear to deliberately do more with clergy than with laity. Here we need more balance.
- There are people in my present 3-point charge who are dead (but not buried) and they run their churches the same way. When they retired from their earthly job, they retired from their heavenly duties also. I am being challenged already by my new appointment.
- Youth and the impoverished in US and world. World peace that is accomplished by love and not the terror of war.
- I believe that God is calling us to be our brother's keeper as we look at areas of our own country and the world where hunger and disease are rampant.
- 1) Inclusive in the conference; 2) open itinerancy; 3) bring in more pastors, exchange from over conferences; 4) dedicated leadership; 5) all relationships must be loving; 6) follow the discipline.
- Our country is in crisis and the church must step up in areas where our government either will not or cannot. Outreach and social justice are key areas the church must address.
- To educate and heal the disease of hatred, racism, sexism, and homophobia. To proclaim a prophetic word on our consumer obsessed society. To help the poor and disenfranchised to not only subsidize but feel like valued and vital members.
- Missions and soul saving.
- I feel like Stella Roberts brought to our attention this morning that we need to mend the churches that do not accept women pastors.
- 1) Aid to foreign countries; 2) Giving up our secular jobs and doing full-time ministry; 3) less money spent on ourselves.
- Mission Work
- I believe God is calling and pulling this conference to become more like a family welcoming more from our young adults and youth. He is also calling us to take care of our older adults and children as well.
- Urgent needs in the local church: (1) Be willing to reach out. Invite and include new comers. (2) There is no reason why we cannot pay our “askings” God is not poor. All the resources of

heaven are available to us. Take the risk of faith & believe God by making a “Faith Promise” for more than we’ve given before.

- God is beseeching us to accept all his children and look for opportunities to do his work at home in our churches as well as throughout the world. Missions are the answer God is imploring us to stress in our churches – we must share God and his word.
- Healthy lifestyles, health education, disease prevention. We are God’s temple – widespread education – follow Jesus – he gave us examples of how to treat/respond to all.
- Appointment making. Being inclusive really in every area of the church from Holston Credit Union to Conference staff. Really wait on the spirit and be lead by him. Stop acting and be real. Love was the number 1 response but it’s not being lived out in our lives. If churches are still refusing to accept women, people of color, handicapped, etc. It sounds good but how about living it out! I believe the Lord would have Holston to work on how to love one another, how to break down walls that keep us from loving. We know that’s what we’re supposed to do but we’re not doing it maybe because we don’t know how. Show us!
- The conference would appear multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and classless.
- Our day in, day out commitment to making new disciples. This means not being “Sunday” Christians and loving the unlovable. (As our speaker said today – “How we disagree says more than how we agree.”)
- Hispanic ministry, Outreach to the marginalized. Excellence in worship – bringing people into the presence of God.
- Obedience to his commands – loving God totally, loving our neighbors as our self and making disciples – Teaching everyone to observe all the commandments.
- Outreach ministries.
- Poverty, racial injustice, abuse, speaking out against war, violence, oppression, discipleship.
- God is crying out for us to love and serve all who are hurting, those who are addicted to drugs, live in broken homes and communities. God wants us to lead by example, showing the world that greed is not God’s will.
- To seek out the needy – countries with Aids, including the U.S. – make more intense opportunities for ministry, Bible study, etc.
- “Making disciples” = teaching us how to witness better – how to ascertain who the lost and crying are, going beyond our comfort zones such as prisons, halfway houses, drug abuse centers, counseling centers, etc. Discover a lot where these people are.
- Evangelism. We need to reach people and bring them into God’s Kingdom. When we gain people into the Kingdom the churches and conference will be blessed and all other programs will become a reality.
- Our commitment to Christ needs to show in all areas of our lives – everywhere, no exceptions.
- Acceptance of all persons. War and peace. Hunger, adoption, sex abuse, marriage, and drug abuse.
- We must reach the underserved in our communities. Connect with the unchurched in (use methods – whatever it takes to find the neediest areas). Music, worship style – we must be disciplined in order to be effective witnesses.
- We see many area’s where we need God’s word. To help these areas such as health, will take new solutions. Outreach is important.
- If we put God first in our life and obey Him no matter what, having faith that He will provide, we would be more charitable and generous with missions and giving to good causes.
- I’m not exactly sure how to answer this. In my opinion, we must re-examine the scriptures in new ways, to see what parts are time-bound and what parts are timeless. Are parts of the

scripture simply wrong? Am I still a Methodist? As the grandson and great-grandson of Methodist preachers, I'd like to think so.

- Peace making. Poor here and abroad. Drugs, etc.
- In everything – creating a united vision for our conference and our world. For Christians – to live as they should and bring others to Christ.
- Vital churches – evangelism in their communities. Sending missionaries beyond their borders.
- Actually living the Christian life. Purity, holiness, no difference between the Sunday morning persona and any other persona. I imagine God gets tired of being embarrassed by Christians who don't act Christ-like.
- Evangelism and discipling. Discipling of new church members – new Christians.
- Need for Conference & churches to reach a new generation of disciples. Nurture and teach people about discipleship, not just church membership. What are the budgetary priorities of our Conference?
- I'll pray about it.
- Church revitalization, willingness to change, to let go – so God can do what needs doing, trust one another, stewards of earth's resources and especially money – need to live in a spirit of generosity.
- Reliance on Him and less reliance on manipulative politics.
- Be obedient to his call, serve others and love one another. Long term obedience will come naturally if we answer the call to serve God.
- Outreach to the poor and needy at home and abroad.
- To be a servant to the poor.
- Work with children & youth, those who are spiritually lost & physically and mentally needy. At home and around the world. The helpless, homeless, hungry & all the rest of us who need to be brought closer to God. Bringing people to Christ.
- To carry the love of God outside the church walls, into our communities to people in need of grace. Specific areas are two numerous to list.
- Faithful stewardship that fully funds our many opportunities to make a difference in the lives of others in Jesus' name.
- To be more involved with the least of us. Both at the local, conference, and national/world level.
- Do we dare host an Alpha Conf.? Within the bounds of Holston? Do we dare have Rick Warren lead a Purpose Driven Training seminar at minister's convocation? Give us the tools to go and grow.
- Offer Christ as answer to human need. Peace of heart, peace of community. Equipping laity, allowing laity freedom to do ministry – let the response be an “us” united together.
- That the local churches commit to and act out the above scriptures.
- Love our neighbors (next door & around the world). Get involved in programs and activities of help.
- Open itinerancy, commitment to making new disciples in every local church.
- Reaching out to the uncaring & the marginalized. Going into places where the lost abide and ministering to them.
- To bring about change in our church – new leadership in the church – new ideas to reach the young – especially young adults. To become more spirit filled church – work with youth and older members of congregation to meet their needs.
- With neighborhood & community, as ours has so much violence and crime. We need to take care of our children!!

- Reaching to the social outcast, neighbors who are rich and unreachable because of their prestige and fear on our part. Get the church out of the building where it belongs in “us” and to “them.” Have confidence in Jesus that what He says is definite and true.
- More or greater commitment to children & youth of our church and community – esp. in neighborhood of church.
- Take care of the less fortunate.
- Open hearts: compassion and love for all. Open minds: teaching scripture and tradition to all, not just clergy. Open doors: welcome the outcast, and move out into the world.
- In helping people in our community to find God’s will and plan for them. To assist these people to see what participating in a church will let them develop into a caring self-denying person.
- Reaching the lost!
- Caring for others. Spreading gospel so as to promote world peace.
- To help the people with their understanding of the world. That it is ever changing, but still the same word.
- Taking Christ’s love to the streets. We are always one generation away from losing Christianity. If we don’t pass it on, who will?
- Homeless hungry, people who don’t know about God’s love.
- Speak out for more spiritual activities in home church and in District.
- Willing, eager witness of our individual faith in Christ. By word and actions in community – focus on encouraging each United Methodist individual to be an open door. Have an open mind & display an open heart.
- Bring war to an end and embrace justice throughout the world.
- The run of the mill “average people” around us. We need to look at that segment that is unnoticed because they are not “poor,” “bad,” etc. Yet not neglect any of those. It may need to start with us (the church) – we need to be enthused!
- We would be standing up to our government for our rights as Christians and not let them be continually stripped away. We would demand Christian leaders.
- Reach: All the lost in the world. All those moving away from believing what the Bible says is not really true. Those with non-biblical morals.
- Break down all barriers to win men, women, boy and girls to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- Helping all of our church members to become free of the restraints that they have placed on themselves which inhibit their sharing the gospel & God’s love with persons that they do not know, that they know only casually or that they are in contact with in work or as neighbors.
- The church is losing members who are the good, middle class, educated people. We need to find ways to reclaim them and others as well. We must all be His disciples in our world.
- To stop prejudices in racial issues and women in ministry. To lead folks to Christ. To vision and actually follow God’s will for our Conference in order of our priorities.
- To reach the unchurched. To witness to others. To present the gospel to the unsaved. For revival in all our local churches and the world.
- Reaching out to those who if you will, “live on the other side of the tracks” – reach both here and abroad as they are our neighbors.
- Next door neighbors – local areas – food, compassion, and love – any kind of assistance that’s needed – we’re letting the elderly waste away in homes – no love, no sharing of our faith which some still have!
- To reach the younger generation. Without youth in our churches, they are dying a slow death. To do something with the charge system, it is so hard not having worship every Sunday, it’s

hard to attract people to our congregations, people want more! But a lot of the bigger Methodist churches in our area are formal and not involving.

- God is crying out for the great need of campus ministries, to prison ministries. Also trying to reach our youth whose families are not Christian oriented.
- Churches giving more support of campus ministries and prison ministries. Reach youth whose families are not Christian.
- Love our neighbors, far & near. Oppose man's inhumanity to man. The decline of values as witnessed through different forms of abuse (elderly, spousal, child, drugs, and alcohol).
- Reaching out to the world to provide opportunities for employment, healthcare, food and non-threatening actions.
- In matters of faith, love, justice, God is calling as to take the risk of failing some can see the vision of God. Risk taking does not mean success it means trust.
- Bringing more people into our church and more youth to Christ.
- Appointments – pastors and churches be more receptive of each other.
- Multi-racial churches and appointments.
- Making disciples. Giving to less fortunate. Loving the unlovely. Giving ourselves, wholly to his work. Serving whole heartedly.
- I think God is calling us to community based ministry (through our local churches, to children, families in crisis, for churches to be places of safety, acceptance and love extended to all.
- Evangelism. Not giving enough to people who need help in our own country. Providing means for people to respond to this need without feeling offended.
- Chemical dependent men/women. Youth/children. Single persons (single parents).
- Care for all people, missions, and outreach – a priority.
- To be purposeful – externally and mission focused. Evangelistic passion – lead others to Christ.
- God wants us to work together to become a strong church – to work to lead more people to Christ.
- I feel God would want us to be more faithful showing his love, truly caring for our fellow man.
- Reaching out to others in our community to help share Jesus' love to all and also our extended community.
- To reach others, especially the influx of Hispanic. To fully accept others.
- Morals, family life, missions in communities by offering the word to children, parents, singles – to all. Lazy disciples, accountability, lazy preachers, lack of responsibility for others, lack of caring, lack of going out, visiting. Not standing on the scriptures about social issues – abortion, politics, homosexuality, loss of respect for parents, lack of workers.
- Reaching out to those different from us. Prisoners, Hispanics, and people from other countries now living in our communities. Witnessing, teaching, and sharing.
- Break down barriers we have between us accepting all fully and equally – everywhere finance = to evangelism. Those who refuse to accept and welcome – receive extra focus until they evidence change of heart or refusal to change, then we leave them in prayer.
- To become a people of prayer (with notable exceptions, we are not). To challenge lovingly those whose faith has been torn from biblical grounding by the human arrogance of modernism and vain philosophies. To see “clergy” and “laity” as all priests/ministers together, the former part of the equipping the latter. What I mean here is our need to reverse a tendency to create clergy as OT priesthood.
- The poor. Those different from ourselves.
- Poor areas of Conference.
- Caring for children and teaching them about God's love.

- We must try harder to reach the youth. Reclaim the family values, and impress upon all God's children the necessity to be active in God's work, not just passively attending services. "Don't just sit there, do something."
- Stand up for sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman!!! And the holiness of the pulpit – no gay ministries!! And the life of our unborn children!! (zero tolerance).
- Evangelism, one pastor for every congregation, free church camp. Stop settling for what we can do and seek to aim for what God is calling us to do.
- Opening our eyes to spaces where oppresses and down trodden are hungry for love and God. When people walk thru our door – meeting and opening our hearts to them. Children's ministries – after school programs, partnerships with clergy/laity in leadership development initiatives. Coaching development, new empowering leadership programs.
- We need to respond by opening our hearts more so to one another. There is enough ministry to share. There are no great or small ministries. All need to be acknowledged for positive growth. Open the circle of Holston so that we may fully grow and build God's kingdom.
- Missions, all forms of ministry.
- He wants us to reach out to those around us, especially those who are often forgotten. He is also calling us to work on justice and peace for all people.
- With inner city populations, where hope is scarce, and with the poor everywhere. We must rescue our cities!
- Outreach and Evangelism – (Missions and "Go Tell").
- With churches going out into the lost and dying world to witness for Him at work, at church, in everyplace we go – do not be ashamed.
- To be less human and more true story and spiritual.
- Poverty, homosexuality, Christ's teaching to those who do not know Him.
- Evangelism, reaching out to bring others to Christ. To teach our children so they can be our greatest evangelists.
- 1) Pump finances and experienced leadership into "potential" ; 2) Enhance the clergy; 3) Enhance the laity; --fund sabbaticals and require them; -- get experienced leadership in Wesley Institute that could plan a comprehensive long-term enrichment; --preventative love and teaching/training in family/finances.
- Are we listening? Am I listening? Believing God will lead us.
- To be a more evangelistic church. Look ahead to see growth. The Christian walk is risky business.
- To saved the 10,000 people placed in prisons in Virginia every year.