

# ST. MATTHEW'S BELLWETHER

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## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

### ARE YOU BUSY?

Satan called a worldwide convention. In his opening address to his evil angels, he said, "We can't keep the Christians from going to church. We can't keep them from reading their Bibles and knowing the truth. We can't even keep them from forming an intimate, abiding relationship experience with Christ. Once they gain that connection with Jesus, our power over them is broken. So, let them go to their churches; let them have their conservative lifestyles, but steal their time so they can't gain that relationship with Jesus Christ."

"This is what I want you to do, angels. Distract them from gaining hold of their Savior and maintaining that vital connection throughout their day!" "How shall we do this?" shouted his angels. Keep them busy in the nonessentials of life and invent innumerable schemes to occupy their minds," he answered. "Tempt them to spend, spend, spend and borrow, borrow, borrow. "Persuade the wives to go to work for long hours and the husbands to work 6-7 days each week, 10-12 hours a day, so they can afford their empty lifestyles. Keep them from spending time with their children. As their family fragments, soon their home will offer no escape from the pressures of work! Over stimulate their minds so that they cannot hear that still, small voice. Entice them to play the radio or cassette player whenever they drive; to keep the TV, VCR, CDs and their PCs going constantly in their home. And see to it that every store and restaurant in the world plays non-biblical music constantly. This will jam their minds and break that union with Christ. Fill the coffee tables with magazines and newspapers. Pound their minds with the news 24 hours a day. Invade their driving moments with billboards. Flood their mailboxes with junk mail, mail order catalogs, sweepstakes and every kind of newsletter and promotional offering free products, services and false hopes. Keep skinny, beautiful models on the magazines so the husbands will believe that external beauty is what's important, and they'll become dissatisfied with their wives. That will fragment those families quickly! Even in their recreation, let them be excessive. Have them return from their recreation exhausted, disquieted and unprepared for the coming week. Don't let them go out in nature to reflect on God's wonders. Send them to amusement parks, sporting events, concerts and movies instead. Keep them busy, busy, busy! And when they meet for spiritual fellowship, involve them in gossip and small talk so that they leave with troubled consciences and unsettled emotions. Go ahead, seek power from Jesus. Soon they will be working in their own strength, sacrificing their health and family for the good of

the cause. It will work! It will work!

It was quite a convention. The evil angels went eagerly to their assignments, causing Christians everywhere to get more busy and more rushed, going here and there.



I guess the question is: Has the devil been successful at his scheme?

You be the judge! Does busy mean **B-eing U-nder S-atan's Y-oke???**

Your Pastor,  
Larry

## COLD WEATHER EMERGENCIES

Well, we made it through tornado season, flood season, and hurricane season. Now it's the **COLD SEASON** and we must be prepared for yet another weather scenario of ice, snow, and cold temps. These events create more problems and require additional planning and preparations.

Let's start with **HEAT**. We have to stay warm. We must keep our houses warm. To do this we utilize our central heating systems, heat pumps, gas packs, oil furnace, fireplace, electric heaters, space heaters, and kerosene heaters. Each of these systems have their own requirements for safe operation. Be sure you read all operating instructions carefully. When using electric, space and kerosene heaters ensure nothing is placed too close. A good rule of thumb is 24-36 inches away from the heater. If your home system uses oil or L.P. Gas, be sure your tank is maintained and filled on a regular basis. Have you had your chimney checked this year? It needs to be inspected and cleaned on a regular basis. Have you installed a carbon monoxide detector in your home? If you use gas or oil heating systems this is a must. Stay warm, but safe.

Don't travel on icy roads. Again, if the pizza delivery truck can't get to you, you don't need to be out there either. As with other emergency preparations and utilizing your emergency checklist, you should have everything you need at home now.

Snow and ice on trees create additional problems. As either accumulates on limbs they eventually will break off and fall. Telephone, cable and power lines are the victims of these limbs and usually end up on the ground. Leave them alone! You don't know which is which and you don't want to light up your life.

Plan ahead! Listen to the local weather people on radio or television. Sometimes their guess is better than yours. If there is a chance of something coming in, get ready for it now, not later. Supply and stock your needs at home; food, water, medicines, first aid kit, batteries for lights and radio. Have someone to check in with a family member or neighbor. And when it happens, check on your neighbors, especially the elderly or disabled.

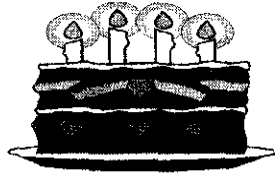
Again, stay warm, but stay safe!

Dan Eberhardt,  
Disaster Response



## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

2	Adella Pray
	Karie Bridgeman
3	Dan Eberhardt
	Rebecca Ramirez
4	Kenneth Shackelford
6	Betty Patrick
7	Phil Ogden
8	Amy Eberhardt
10	Jackie Ashworth
12	Robyn Shields
13	Jay Thompson
14	Nate Unruch
16	Heather Shackelford
17	Francy Hawkins
18	Donna Royal
19	Mary Roth
20	Richard Howell
	Meghann Dominic
21	Carol Chapman
25	Lorene Biggs
30	Marie Strub
	Mary Couch, Jr.
	Virginia Bachelor



**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY  
EVERYONE**

## ONE-BY-ONE

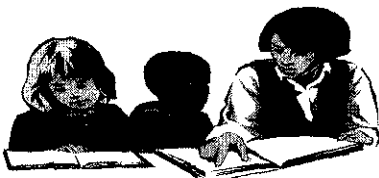
December will bring a close to the Second Session of ONE-BY-ONE. We were able to add two students to our tutoring/reading program this session. Currently, we serve 16 students. Grades have begun to show marked improvement among our school students. Our adults are learning by leaps and bounds. God bless each one who is helping in this wonderful mission. We still have space for more students, but we always need more teachers. As was projected, as we have added adults, we now provide child care service. We truly are reaching the community.

The schedule for Third Session will appear in the January Bellwether. Again, we will try to give six weeks of help for each student per report card period. We are beginning to receive some very positive feedback from parents, schools and the surrounding area. Several of our school-aged students and families are more pleased with results from St. Matthew's than from private or commercial tutoring services. The schools are most emphatic in that they see not only academic improvement, but also self-esteem and over-all attitudes are much better. All of our accolades attribute the successes to the commitment and the love given by our teachers.

## MERRY CHRISTMAS!

God bless you all,

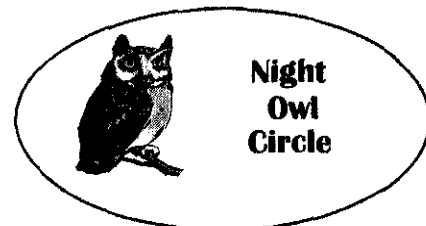
Amy



## SPECIAL OFFERINGS

### DONATIONS GIVEN TO:

- ◆ **Emergency Fund...**
  - ... from William & Gertrude Schultz
  - ... from the United Methodist Women
  - ... from the Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle
  - ... in honor of Mary Sue Grady's birthday from her Secret Prayer Partner
  - ... in memory of Fran Lynn & Millie Sessoms by the Night Owls Circle
  - ... in honor of Gudrun Arnold's birthday by her Secret Prayer Partner
  - ... in honor of Irma Evan's birthday by her Secret Pal
  - ... to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Alma Griffin from Betty & Dudley Maxwell
  - ... in honor of Catherine Morgan from the Boyd Snyder Class
- ◆ **Memorial Fund in memory of**
  - ... Millie Sessoms from Becky Robertson
  - ... Millie Sessoms from Ruth Caldwell
  - ... Millie Sessoms from Cliff & Catherine Morgan
  - ... Millie Sessoms & in honor of Julie Agnew by the Boyd Snyder Class
  - ... Alma Griffin by Charles & Ruby Lucas
  - ... Alma Griffin by Mr. & Mrs. Joe C. Kirven
  - ... James S. Parker by Doris P. Brooks
- ◆ **Music Fund from Phyllis Jordan**
- ◆ **Power Bill from The Thrift Shop**
- ◆ **Maintenance Fund from Perry Smith & in memory of Alma Griffin from Eva Smith**
- ◆ **St. Matthew's from Montclair Homemakers Extension Club**



The Night Owls Circle is finishing up this year with a bang. We participated in the "Operation Christmas Child" shoeboxes, bought Turbans for the Cancer Center, and provided Socks and Toiletry Items for Elderlodge during the month of November.

We have adopted four people from Elderlodge for our Christmas Project and ask that gifts for them be brought to our December Meeting on the 14th.

We will be meeting at Roberta Brown's home at 6:30 p.m. Please remember to bring a "Covered Dish" and something for your "Secret Prayer Partner".

Rebecca Ramirez,  
Vice President



We made the following contributions...

...\$500.00 to the **Methodist Home for Children**

...\$160.00 for 10 **Share** boxes of food for Thanksgiving

...\$124.00 for **Advent Children's Program**

...\$150.00 to the **Care Clinic**

...\$500.00 to **Samaritan's Purse**

...\$100.00 to **Better Health of Cumberland County**

...**Emergency Fund**

...**New furniture** for the Pastor's Study

...**New refrigerator** for the Thrift Shop

...donated items to **Grace Baptist Church** for Christmas in Maxton, NC

We will have a **1/2 PRICE SALE** December 5 - 16. Stop by and see us!

Lee Anna Sproul,  
Chairperson

## HELP'N HANDS



The Senior Group met Thursday, November 16th in the fellowship hall. We had a great time together. Our group is growing and we are thankful for each one that comes. Our senior citizens have many talents to share with each other and with the church. We made some plans for the next couple of months, and have a lot in store for our church.

After singing and rejoicing, we enjoyed a delicious *fish fry lunch* prepared by Perry and Eva Smith and then played *Bingo*. We all enjoyed that because it keeps our mind and eyes sharp since the caller is rather fast. Won't you join us? We have a place reserved just for you.

We **will not** meet in December. Our next meeting will be **January 25, 2001**.

Eva Smith,  
Coordinator

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

On Sunday, December 17th at 2:00 p.m., **The Young Disciples Club** will present "*Everywhere, Everywhere Christmas Tonight*." The children are creating their own original puppets. There will be a **Christmas Party** for the children after the program. Everyone is invited!



Thank you to everyone who made the "Harvest Dinner" a complete success. Thanks to those who set-up the tables and chairs, the ladies who cooked the Turkeys and Hams provided by the United Methodist Men, and to all the special people who set-up the food and pitched in to help clean up. (Too many to name for fear I might leave someone out). Everyone pulled together like a family for the glory of God and brought us together for a wonderful time of fellowship, good food, and Thanksgiving while praising our Lord and Savior. A special thanks to the Children who set up the tables and chairs. You were all on your best behavior, and I am very proud of each one of you. Thank You To Everyone!!

Lorri Shackelford



## UNITED METHODIST MEN

St. Matthew's UMMen met Sunday, November 19th at 7:30 a.m. for a delicious breakfast and fellowship. There were 18 men present; a much better attendance than October. One lady came by and was enticed to have breakfast with us. I think she enjoyed the Country Ham, Eggs, & Grits, as well as the Fruit Cup. We also had Biscuits, Oatmeal & Jam which she passed up. Sorry, the other men missed this meal. Our business began with Rev. Patrick and the interest of a Retreat at Camp Rockfish. This will be scheduled after the first of the year. All men present seemed to like the idea. It will be a time to enjoy fellowship and rededication to your walk with God. We hope to have all the men come with us for a great time in sharing. Our Thrift Shop workers for November were Bob Probst and Jack Spakes. Thanks men for your time and efforts. November 18th was a big day in sales, and I know the Thrift Shop appreciated it. One of the Youth Directors came to the Methodist Men and had a request. Guess what? She needed a Santa! We sure have a supply of candidates in our group. It took about 30 seconds to get a volunteer. I will not say who it is, but if you come to the Children's Program, you can guess with the children. Thanks, J.A.! Our Head Usher for December is Raymond Gray. If you are approached to help Raymond or any other Head Usher, please say yes. We sure could use a few new faces. Men, if you would, all you have to say is "I WILL HELP". Volunteering seems to be a thing of the past, but it is still accepted. Our next meeting will be December 17th at 7:30 a.m. Matt Jamison will prepare our meal. His meal will be as great as it has been in the past. It's good to have Matt back from his assignment. Come out on December 17th and show your support to the new officers. President-Dale Mitchell, Vice President-Doug Stone, Secretary-Matt Jamison & Treasurer-Lyle Spidle. Before I close, I must report that the Harvest Day Turkeys & Hams were provided by the UMMen. Also a donation was made to the Emergency Fund. Our funds are getting low because we had no Barbecue Sale this year, but there are some programs in the works. More about that later. Don't know what to do with that leftover Turkey & Ham? Mary Stanley has the answer. Here is her recipe:

Troy Willoughby, President

### Ham & Swiss Casserole

8 oz med. Noodles (Cook & Drain)	2 cup cooked Ham
2 cup shredded Swiss Cheese	1 cup Sour Cream
1 cup Cream of Celery Soup (undiluted)	1/2 cup onion (chopped)
1/2 cup Green Pepper (chopped)	

Layer in a greased 9X13 baking dish 1/3 Noodles, Ham & Cheese. In a small bowl combine Soup, Sour Cream, Peppers & Onions. Spread half over layer & repeat. Bake uncovered at 350 degrees 40-45 minutes. Serves 8 women or 6 men.

Thanks Mary, sounds great!



**UNITED  
METHODIST  
WOMEN**  
*December*

Greetings to all and **Merry "Christ" mas**. I hope for each of you a wonderful holiday season and much peace for the **New Year**.

What a blessed year we have had in the United Methodist Women's organization. It would take more space than I have available on this page to list all the wonderful, missional projects of the *Ruth-Ethel Smith*, and the *Night Owl Circle* and then our unit as a whole. Through hard work and dedication of these women, many "needy" lives have been touched.

In addition to all the constructed work times given, many of our ladies have given many hours that have not been recognized; I thank them for all they continue to do.

*Catherine Morgan* is the circle leader of the *Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle*; Catherine is a wonderful example of good-christian leadership that keeps her group focused on the Lord and His will.

*Candice Wagoner* was the circle leader for the *Night Owls* from January through May and *Rebecca Ramirez* took over for the remainder of the year. Each lady brought with them a new perspective and new ideas for the circle.

I would like to thank all ladies for giving me great support while I have been your UMW President. Every project or event that I brought before you has been accepted and supported. Thank you also to our Church family for their continued support of our missions.

*Mary Rozier* will become your new president *January 1, 2001*, and I know she will receive the same good support as given to me. Continue to read her article in the newsletter for upcoming dates to be aware of and also, information concerning projects that the unit will be sponsoring.

Don't forget our Decenter 4th **General Christmas** meeting, 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. The meal will be *finger foods* - drink will be provided. We will have a "*fun-brain-teaser*", *short business meeting*, *door prizes*, and *much fun*. Please make every effort to attend this celebration.

Our *January General Meeting* will be held *January 8th* at 7:00 p.m. - covered dish meal; please attend this event to kick-off the *New Year* right.

Again, thanks for a great two years.

Betty Patrick,  
UMW President

**BET'S PECAN PIE**

**PREPARE:**

2 Small Unbaked Pie Crusts  
Place 1 Cup Chopped Pecans in each pie crust

**MIX TOGETHER IN A BOWL:**

3/4 cup Regular Sugar  
3 Tablespoons Self-Rising Flour  
5 Eggs

**THEN ADD:**

1 Whole Bottle Clear Karo Syrup (no substitute)  
3 Tablespoons Melted Oleo

(After mixing all ingredients together well, pour evenly into the two pie crusts. Bake at 425 degrees for 10 minutes, then reduce heat to 325 degrees until set. Pie is ready when middle jiggles slightly.)



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
3 Jesus Birthday Party – 9:45am (Ages 3-10) UMW Officer Training Session – 2:30pm	4 UMW Christmas Party & One-By-One – 7:00pm	5 Prayer Group-7pm Council on Ministries – 7:30pm	6 Card Ministry – 5:00pm WNA & Bible Study-6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	7 Grace Bible Study – 7pm	1 8	2 Grace UMC Breakfast – 8:00am 9 Acolyte Christmas Pizza Party – 1:pm	<b>EVERY SUNDAY SCHEDULE:</b>
10 Administrative Board Mtg. – 4:00pm Christmas Musical – 7:00pm	11 One-By-One-7pm	12 Prayer Group-7pm	13 Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle – 10:30am Card Ministry-5:00pm WNA & Bible Study-6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	14 Night Owls Circle at Roberta's – 6:30pm Grace Bible Study – 7pm	15	16 Meghann Dominic 16th Birthday Party	<b>8:30AM EARLY WORSHIP SERVICE (NO) NURSERY PROVIDED</b>
17 UM Men Breakfast-7:30pm Children's Christmas Program – 2:00pm	18 One-By-One-7pm	19 Prayer Group-7pm	20 Home Extensions – 9:30am NO Card Ministry NO WNA & Bible Study NO Choir Practice	21 NO Grace Bible Study	22	23	<b>9:45AM SUNDAY SCHOOL (ALL AGES)</b>
24 Christmas Eve Service – 6:00 pm	25 CHRISTMAS DAY HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS	26 NO Prayer Group	27 < DORIS	28 NO Grace Bible Study	29 WORKS →	30	<b>11:00AM WORSHIP SERVICE (NURSERY PROVIDED)</b>
31							