

ST. MATTHEW'S BELLWETHER

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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

I thought it might be appropriate to share with you some of my history. Jane and I grew up in the Methodist Church. Jane grew up on a farm in Robeson County and I spent my formative years in Durham, NC. Jane and I met when we came to Fayetteville to attend Methodist College. In the summer following my freshman year I was appointed as pastor of my first church at age nineteen. I served appointments as a pastor in United Methodist Churches for fifteen years and then fifteen years with the *Methodist Home for Children, in Family Therapy, Family Preservation/Family Support and Church and Community Services.*

Jane and I married in 1966 and are the parents of two grown children; Lisa and John. We are also the proud grandparents of three year old Amanda and one year old Megan. Jane and I have lead *parent, marriage and family enrichment programs* since the early 1970's. We are both graduates of Methodist College. Jane has been a *teacher at J.W. Coon Elementary School* for over twenty years and has been *organist at Raeford UMC* for six years. I earned my *Masters of Divinity* with a specialty in *Christian Education, a Masters in Counseling, and a Doctor of Ministry Degree in marriage and family.* I have ministered as a *Licensed Clinical Social Worker* and a *Certified Family Life Educator* as well as a *certified marriage and family enrichment leader and faculty member of the William Glasser Institute.* I have enjoyed being a presenter and keynote speaker at regional and national conferences for nearly 20 years.

A special joy has been founding or organizing several area ministries through the years, including *The Alms House* in Hope Mills, *CEPHAS: Christian Enrichment and Psychological Health Assurance System at Cumberland Hospital* and *Multicultural Family Resource Partnerships* in Hoke and Sampson Counties. After fifteen years ministry with Methodist Home for Children, in July 2000 I found myself going through a major life transition due to an unexpected change in employment. In a reorganization of MHC, all three persons in the positions of Spiritual Formation, Church & Community were given a termination notice. With the elimination of all ministerial positions, I felt there was little rea-

son to remain on staff since there were no job offers commensurate with my training, credentials or experience. Jane and I decided to create a new life of service built upon my Christian faith and working at those things which are most fulfilling in my life through a new ministry; *THE PEACE.* We realized it would take two or three years to get this ministry going. That is why I was available to be appointed to St. Matthew's/Grace when Reverend Larry Patrick left at the end of January.

I believe the opportunity to serve St. Matthew's/Grace is an ideal place to fulfill what I consider the ministry to which God has called me. If it is God's will, we will share in a joint ministry for longer than the next five months.

Shalom,
Mike

FAYETTEVILLE DISTRICT LAY RALLY SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 2001 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M. METHODIST COLLEGE

The guest speaker will be Rev. Rosemary Brown from Nashville, Tn. Recognition will be given to the churches with the most in attendance. Come and support this event and let's bring back the attendance plaque in our church enrollment category.

Roberta Brown,
District Lay Leader

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RUTH-ETHEL SMITH CIRCLE

Our Circle met on February 14th in the fellowship hall. We had 19 members present. We all brought "Baby Items" for our February project to be taken to "Operation Blessings". Believe me, a blessing was received by the ones who delivered these items. What a joy it is to help the less fortunate. This project will be carried out through March. Then we will turn our focus on something else.

I know there are members of our Church who have thought about or even talked to me about joining our Circle, but hasn't made that final step. We would love to have you come and visit to see just what it is all about.

Our next Circle meeting will be March 14th at 10:30 a.m. in the fellowship hall.

God's Blessings to all,
Catherine Morgan, Chairperson

HELP'N HANDS



I felt truly blessed as the Help'n Hands group sang "Happy Birthday" to me on January 25th. We were having lunch in the Hamont Grill on our way to visit the new Airborne & Special Operations Museum. A happy expectant group was having a good time.

After lunch, we toured every area of the museum that was open. All the men (former G.I.'s and 2nd World War Veterans) were impressed with the displays and pictures of actual scenes and equipment used. It made me thankful for our freedom all over again.

Our next meeting will be March 22 at 11:00 a.m. We will have a Covered Dish Lunch. Plans for our "Play" are in place and we will need you. So, please come.

Eva Smith, Adult Coordinator

*Count your garden
by the flowers,
Never by the leaves
that fall;
Count your days
by golden hours,
Don't remember clouds at all.
Count your nights
by stars not shadows,
Count your years
with smiles, not tears,
Count your blessings,
not your troubles,
Count your age
by friends, not year!*



Thanks again to everyone who works and donates to the Thrift Shop. We have been able to provide to the following:

1. Emergency Fund
2. Church Power Bill
3. Purchased Vertical Blinds for the Administrative Offices & Library (Check them out, they really look great from the outside as well as inside.)
4. Better Health of Cumberland County
5. Community Services
6. Bibles for St. Matthew's Teen Bible Study
7. Books & Materials for the Hearing-Impaired Classes at Mary McArthur School

We appreciate and look forward to your help to continue to make the Thrift Shop a success.

**HALF-PRICE SALE
FEBRUARY 27 - MARCH 10, 2001
COME SHOP!**

Lee Anna Sproul,
Chairperson

CARD MINISTRY

The Card Ministry is continuing to pray, sign cards, and eat every Wednesday from 5:00 - 6:30 p.m. at the Pizza Palace across from our church. Please join us if you can and assist us in this ministry...more hands make lighter work.

We are in particular need of "Thinking of You" cards. Thanks to the Thrift Shop and other individuals who help finance this ministry. Rarely a week goes by that someone doesn't share how much being remembered with a card and a prayer meant to them.



NIGHT OWLS CIRCLE

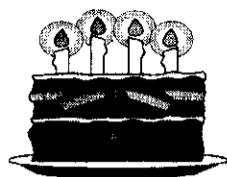
A big "Thank You" to Roberta Brown for leading our February 8th meeting. It was decided that our March project would be to buy turbans for the ladies being treated at the Cancer Center. Please remember to bring an offering for this project at our next meeting on March 8th. Our hostess will be Lorene Biggs and the program will be presented by Linda Webb.

We want to take this opportunity to thank the Methodist Men for an outstanding Valentine Dinner. We appreciate you!

Rebecca Ramirez,
President

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1	Charles Lucas
3	Stephanie Brackett
6	Gina Keller
8	Rick Webb
12	Dale Mitchell Jean Brown
13	Ginger Sessoms
19	Amber Webb
23	Nicholas Norton
24	Wayne Hager Harold Taylor
27	DeAnn Trevathan
29	Carolyn Davis Jay Jordan
31	Brandi Makarov



**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY
EVERYONE!**

"THE SEEKERS"

Our new Adult Sunday School Class began on February 11th. Attendance was quality. We now look forward to quantity. Please take 45 minutes to examine this new group. We keep praying that your heart will be touched, and we'd love to have you join us. If you are not already in a Sunday School Class, please give it a chance. We meet in the Choir Room from 9:45 - 10:30 a.m.

ONE-BY-ONE

Praise the Lord!!! School students' grades are coming up. We are seeing terrific attitudes towards learning from second grade through adult. It is wonderful to see our 16 students and teachers learning together.

We have a very special praise for Joe Bledsoe, whose move in his Christian life and his devotion to his student has brought to **ONE-BY-ONE** an unrestricted use grant from Citigroup Foundation. We all will benefit from the efforts of this one leap of faith. Each of our teachers is a lamb of the Lord, and each is bringing untold goodness into the lives of so many. Thank you all!

Third Session will end March 26. Again, feel free to visit on Monday night from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. We are here to serve the Lord, our church, and the community **ONE-BY-ONE**.

In the Love of Christ,
Amy



SPECIAL OFFERINGS

DONATIONS GIVEN TO:

- ◆ **Emergency Fund**
 - from the Sunday Morning Bible Study
 - from the Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle
 - from Betty Priest
- ◆ **Memorial Fund in memory of Dorothy Spakes' brother-in-law by the Sunday Morning Bible Study Class**
- ◆ **Power Bill from the Thrift Shop**
- ◆ **One-By-One from Citigroup Foundation**

ATTENTION!!

DISASTER RECOVERY TEAMS NEEDED

I'm sure you are familiar by now with the words "HURRICANE FLOYD". We have heard them over and over for the past eighteen months. It was a major disaster for North Carolina and for so many living in the Eastern part of our state. The North Carolina Conference United Methodist Church Disaster Recovery Ministries is hard at work coordinating and assisting in all aspects of helping the affected folks put their lives back together. The amount of work still need is staggering.

To that end we are asking for your time, knowledge, skills, strong back, and heart in joining the continuing relief effort. St. Matthew's UMC organizations have generously donated monies and supplies since the devastating storm ripped the area. Recovery Teams are now needed to continue the efforts. Skills in specific areas are desired, but not required. Anyone licensed in a specific skill area such as general contractor, electrical, plumbing, carpentry, heat/air conditioning, and roofing, are highly desired.

Work duration on site would be entirely up to the team. Limited housing is available for teams spending more than one day at a cost of \$5.00 per person per night. All teams are responsible for preparing their own meals. There are many other requirements and responsibilities that are important for your health and welfare while participating in this effort. If you are interested, please plan on attending a meeting on Thursday, March 15, 2001 at 7:00 p.m. in the church fellowship hall.

Volunteering is a humbling experience, a satisfaction knowing that someone has it a little better because you gave of yourself. Volunteering is sharing talents God has given you. Come and share with people less fortunate than you, whatever your talents.

Dan Eberhardt,
Disaster Response

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Only ten months remaining to accomplish our goals as United Methodist Women in 2001. Circles have been discussing plans for the Bazaar including helping the United Methodist Men with their Barbecue Sale...keep thinking! We must finalize our plans for the Lenten Booklets at our March meeting...be in prayer! Continue to make references to our United Methodist Women Directories for upcoming dates and obligations. Will we have a "Mother's Day Booklet"? It's up to you.

LOOKING AHEAD:

MARCH 2 — World Day of Prayer (date corrected from February Bellwether)

5 — United Methodist Women General Meeting, 7:00 pm "Call to Prayer and Self Denial" program by Dorothy Taylor (bring Soup or Sandwiches, drinks provided)

17 — Spiritual Day Apart at Cokesbury UMC in Stedman, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

APRIL — Lenten "Card" Sale

2-4 — Methodist Home for Children Fundraising with Food Lion Vouchers

MAY — Mother/Daughter Banquet
Mother's Day Bulletin?

OCTOBER — Fall Bazaar

Allow me to share my testimony of just how good God is to me even in the smallest things I need/want. As you know, I've never claimed to know anything about cooking, much less share one of "my good recipes" with you as Bet did in the past. So one of my failures as your new UMW President was going to be no recipes. Then I was blessed with a trip to NCCAT (North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching) back in January at which I was served some of the most appetizing dishes. Our group asked for some recipes, and to our delight they were more than happy to share them with us. So God in His infinite wisdom had "delivered me" again. Enjoy!!

Mary Rozier,
UMW President

RECIPE OF THE MONTH "SPAGHETTI SAUCE" (James' Recipe)



5 lbs Ground Beef	1 can Tomato Puree
1 can Tomato Juice	1 can Tomato Filets
1 Onion chopped	1/2 cup Garlic
1 cup Sugar	1 tbsp Basil
1 tbsp Oregano	3 green peppers, chopped
1/4 cup Italian Seasoning	Salt & Pepper to taste

Brown meat and set aside.
Saute onions, peppers and garlic in oil.
Add remaining ingredients and simmer.
Remove part of the sauce for the vegetarians.
Add ground beef to remaining sauce and simmer
for a while longer.

Yield: 40 servings.

UNITED METHODIST MEN

The United Methodist Men met on Sunday, February 18th at 8:30 a.m. We previously met at 7:30 a.m., but the new meeting time was refreshing as it allowed us to make a transition straight to our Sunday School Class. We had 23 men in attendance and all enjoyed a wonderful breakfast prepared by Wayne. As with all the meetings, we enjoyed good fellowship and discussed the past, present, and future of the UMM activities.

We started with a review of what had happened since our last meeting. Just a week prior, the men gathered at Camp Rockfish to share a day of retreat and to come together in Bible Study, Testimony and Fellowship. The Retreat went really well, and many of the men were delighted to come to know one another and our new Pastor. We look forward to these retreats as a chance to advance ourselves spiritually, and will endeavor to get together again soon.

The conversation quickly shifted to the Sweetheart Banquet. It was to be held that evening and last minute preparations were being made to ensure its success. A special **thank you** goes out to all the folks that helped Troy in organizing the banquet this year. What a tremendous job! Well, a good banquet can't be had unless the food is right. Lynwood cooked his signature series steaks to everyone's delight. Rumor had it you could smell the steaks from Raeford Road. **Thanks** to Lynwood and all the folks that helped him prepare a delicious dinner...surely you are the front runner to repeat this next year!

During the meeting Dan stood up to announce that our help would be needed **Down East**. As fast as time flies, it's easy to forget that the folks Down East are still in a shambles after Hurricane Floyd. Some folks go down for a week or two, but were going to volunteer for a single day. The State and United Methodist Churches are in charge of the scheduling and they are filled up until July. When I receive a date I will be sure to announce it. If you have the time to volunteer, it would be greatly appreciated and would reflect the generosity which has become the hallmark of our church. Please see any of the Ushers if you are interested.

The 7th of April has been designated as the Easter "clean-up" day for the men. Dale Mitchell took it upon himself to rake up 10 bags of leaves recently. As he was raking, he happened to come upon Easter Eggs from years past. We will be cleaning the church yard to enhance the beauty of the grounds and to make way for the blossoming flowers of Spring. With a week before Easter the yard will prove a beautiful setting for this years Easter Egg Hunt.

Speaking of the church grounds, many of you may have noticed that the church sign has been moved closer to the church. The flowers are still in place and will be moved to surround the sign once again soon. The move was necessary to comply with the State and PWC as they begin to break ground for the expansion of Hope Mills Road. Also, Lynwood wanted to thank Hank, Harry, and all the other folks that have helped maintain the property behind the church. These men have helped replace doors, knobs, heating/air conditioning and now it looks as though the home at 203 is in shape to the point a deposit can be made. **Thanks Men!**

The annual Barbecue Sale has traditionally been planned and conducted by the Methodist Men. Dale was approached recently about having the United Methodist Women play a greater role in it, and sharing the profits among both groups in a way to advance both parties within the church. Lynwood made a motion to include the Methodist Women and it was met with overwhelming support. The details on the consolidated Barbecue Sale will be worked out to ensure the greatest amount of success and to make our Methodist Church truly **UNITED** in this cause.

The Methodist Men are truly thankful for all the folks that have volunteered their time and resources to advance our church. If you would like to participate by volunteering, please see one of our Ushers. Just a little piece of your time can made a big difference in someone's life and most importantly your own. Our next UMMen's meeting will be held on March 18th at 8:30 a.m. Troy Willoughby and Dale Mitchell will be cooking a delicious breakfast, so why not come on out and enjoy a great time.

Matt Jamison,
UMM Secretary

Why should I give...

Why should I give my hard-earned money to the church? Well, there are some obvious answers, such as:

...The church cannot operate without money to pay the pastor, staff and routine operating expenses, such as building maintenance and utilities. Did you know that the church's electric bill for the each of the last two months has been over \$1300.00? The trustees, under the leadership of Lynwood Griffin, are doing an admirable job of trying to get these kinds of expenses under control. They have moved thermostats, conducted a total inspection of the heating and cooling system and made necessary repairs. And **yes**, the expenses of the church increase each year just as your living expenses increase each year. Utility costs, insurance costs, staff salary...the costs of everything increases. So, there is a necessary increase in the church budget to cover these expenses. Are you giving the same amount to the church that you have been giving for many years? Have your earnings increased over the years? Have you prayerfully considered increasing your giving?

...When we joined the United Methodist Church, we promised to "faithfully participate in its ministries by our prayers, our presence, our gifts and our service." Giving of our monetary resources is a form of ministry. When we don't give to support the ministries of the church, we put a greater burden on the rest of the body of Christ. We have special ministries at St. Matthew's, such as the Food Pantry and Emergency Fund, but we are part of the United Methodist Church, a global church with global ministries. Christ tells us to minister to the whole world not just locally.¹ Did you know that we have a Fayetteville District work fund and an annual Conference apportionment for which we have commitments? When churches pool their resources they can accomplish greater things than when attempted individually. The District work fund is a fair share monetary commitment going toward ministries in the Fayetteville District. The annual Conference apportionment is a fair share monetary commitment requested of each church to be used to administer the United Methodist Church and conduct global ministries. Last year St. Matthew's UMC fell short in meeting its budget and as a result fell short in paying our fair share of the conference apportionment.

But a more important aspect of giving is that giving is a reflection of our maturity in the faith and our spiritual relationship with the Father.

...All that we have is from God, even our very breath², and he only asks for a small portion to be returned to him. This is a theme that runs throughout the Bible from the first offering presented by Cain and Abel through the Mosaic Laws, the Old Testament prophets, Jesus' teachings in the Gospels, and the Apostolic letters. This is not because God needs our offerings. He can accomplish His will with or without our giving. **It is a test of our obedience to the will of God.** Just as our earthly father's heart is touched by a loving, obedient child, our Heavenly Father blesses his loving, obedient children.

I believe there are at least three spiritual levels in giving: child, adolescent and adult. As a child, we are new to the faith and do not understand the importance of giving in our faith journey. We want to please the Father but sometimes displease Him out of ignorance. We need to be taught. As an adolescent, we desire the blessing of the Father and know what will please Him but we are often rebellious and selfish. Often when we give we give grudgingly. As an adult or at maturity, we know what pleases the Father and desire to be obedient to the Father's will. We give freely and willingly. The Bible tells us that God loves a cheerful giver³. At what level of giving are you?

There are several places in the Bible where we are cautioned not to try to tempt or test the Lord. But in at least one case we are invited to put God to the test, Malachi 3:10:

"Bring the full tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house; and thereby **put me to the test**, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing."

Take this invitation to put God to the test in your faith journey.

CALVIN ROME
FINANCIAL SECRETARY

¹ Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18

² Genesis 2:6-8; Acts 17:24-26

³ 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
					WORLD DAY OF PRAYER	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Youth Choir Practice – 3:00 pm	UMW General Mtg. & One-By-One-7:00pm	Prayer Group-7pm	Card Ministry-5pm WNA & Bible Study-6:30pm Choir Practice-7:30pm	Night Owl Circle – 7pm		Pastor & Lay Leader Training at St. Pauls UMC in Goldsboro – 10am
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	One-By-One-7pm	Prayer Group-7pm	Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle – 10:30am			UMW Spiritual Day Apart at Cokesbury UMC – 9am-1pm
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
UM Men's Breakfast – 8:30am	One-By-One-7pm	Prayer Group-7pm	Home Extensions-9:30am	Disaster Recovery Team Mtg. – 7:00 pm		District Lay Rally Methodist College 10am – 12pm Sparr/Fowler Wedding – 2:00pm Reception in F.H.
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	Last 3 rd Session of One-By-One-7pm	Prayer Group-7pm	Card Ministry-5pm WNA & Bible Study-6:30pm Choir Practice-7:30pm		Sparr/Fowler Wedding Rehearsal – 6:00pm	

EVERY SUNDAY SCHEDULE:

9:45AM SUNDAY SCHOOL (ALL AGES)

11:00AM WORSHIP SERVICE (NURSERY PROVIDED)