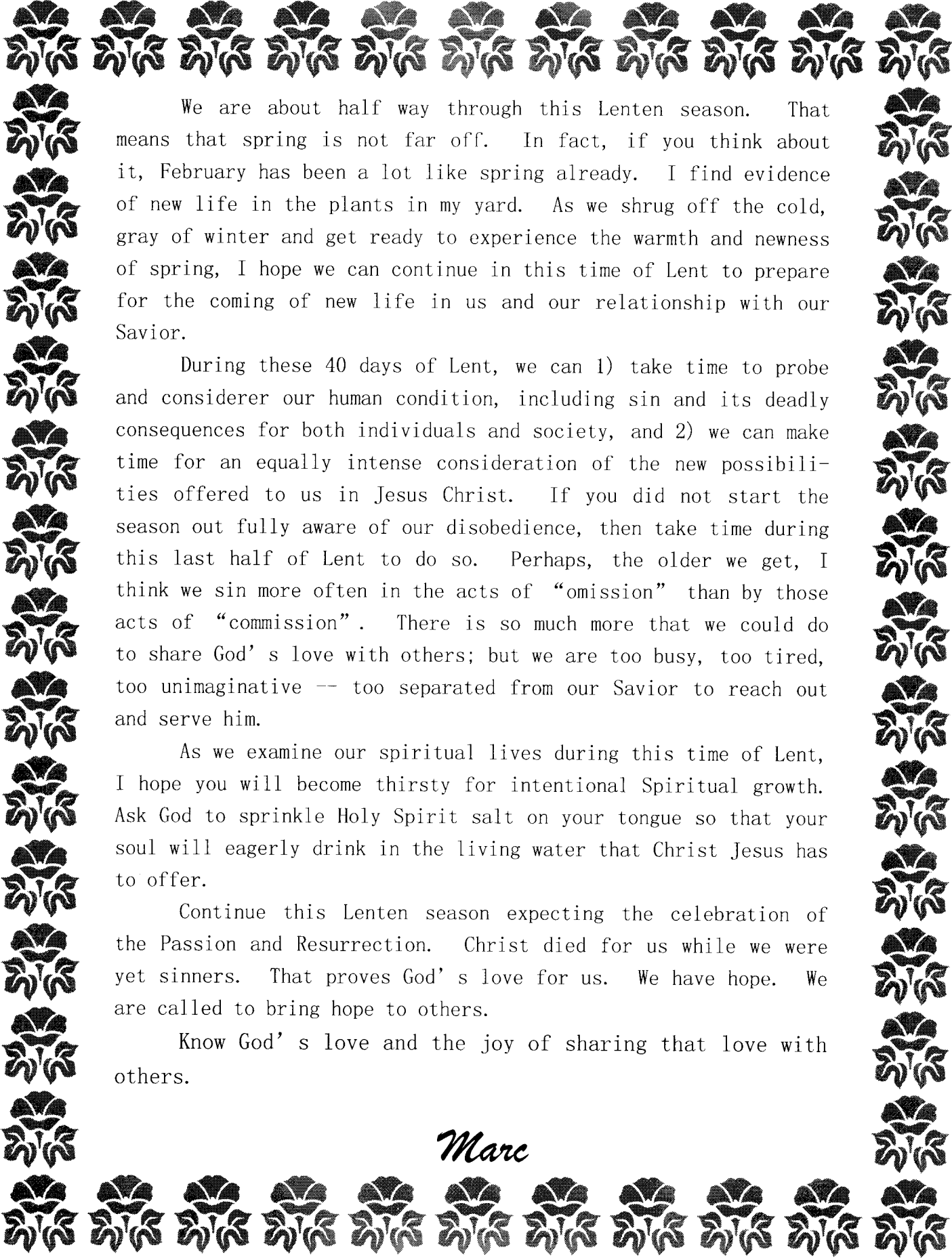


*St. Matthew's*



*A Place to Belong.... A Place to Become....*



We are about half way through this Lenten season. That means that spring is not far off. In fact, if you think about it, February has been a lot like spring already. I find evidence of new life in the plants in my yard. As we shrug off the cold, gray of winter and get ready to experience the warmth and newness of spring, I hope we can continue in this time of Lent to prepare for the coming of new life in us and our relationship with our Savior.

During these 40 days of Lent, we can 1) take time to probe and consider our human condition, including sin and its deadly consequences for both individuals and society, and 2) we can make time for an equally intense consideration of the new possibilities offered to us in Jesus Christ. If you did not start the season out fully aware of our disobedience, then take time during this last half of Lent to do so. Perhaps, the older we get, I think we sin more often in the acts of "omission" than by those acts of "commission". There is so much more that we could do to share God's love with others; but we are too busy, too tired, too unimaginative -- too separated from our Savior to reach out and serve him.

As we examine our spiritual lives during this time of Lent, I hope you will become thirsty for intentional Spiritual growth. Ask God to sprinkle Holy Spirit salt on your tongue so that your soul will eagerly drink in the living water that Christ Jesus has to offer.

Continue this Lenten season expecting the celebration of the Passion and Resurrection. Christ died for us while we were yet sinners. That proves God's love for us. We have hope. We are called to bring hope to others.

Know God's love and the joy of sharing that love with others.

*Marc*

# KNOW THE GOD YOU PRAY TO

## March 1-8

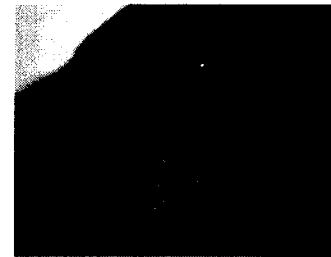
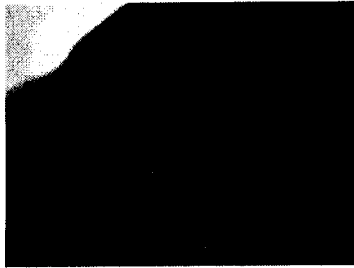
*Psalm 143*  
*Deuteronomy 30. 15-20*  
*Joshua 24. 14-28*  
*Hebrews 2. 1-18*  
*Philemon 8-21*  
*Colossians 3. 1-17*  
*Romans 12*  
*1 Samuel 16. 1-13*

## March 9-15

*Psalm 32*  
*Matthew 11. 2-19*  
*1 Corinthians 15. 1-28*  
*Romans 1. 1-7, 16-17*  
*Isaiah 25. 1-9*  
*Colossians 3. 1-17*  
*Romans 8. 31-39*  
*Acts 14. 19-28*  
*1 Peter 2. 21-25*  
*2 Corinthians 1. 3-11*  
*Isaiah 53. 1-6*  
*Isaiah 53. 7-9*  
*Isaiah 53-10-12*

## March 23-31

*Psalm 23*  
*John 12. 1-11*  
*Ezekiel 37. 1-14*  
*John 13. 21-38*  
*Mark 14. 12-26*  
*John 18-19*  
*John 21. 1-14*  
*Acts 10. 34-43*  
*Colossians 3. 1-4*



## Basic Christian Affirmation

From

## The United Methodist Book of Discipline

We share the Christian belief that God's redemptive love is realized in human life by the activity of the Holy Spirit, both in personal experience and in the community of believers. This community is the church, which the Spirit has brought into existence for the healing of the nations.

Through faith in Jesus Christ we are forgiven, reconciled to God, and transformed as people of the new covenant.

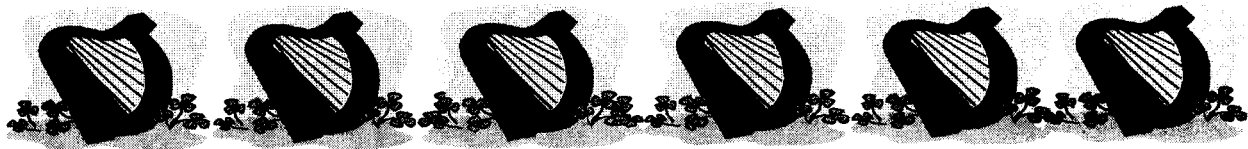
"Life in the Spirit" involves diligent use of the means of grace such as praying, fasting, attending upon the sacraments, and inward searching in solitude. It also encompasses the communal life of the church in worship, mission,



## Why Lincoln Stood

When it came time for the pastoral prayer at the church Abraham Lincoln attended, the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, in Washington, D.C., the president stood up. Because most of the worshipers remained seated, someone asked the president why he stood. The president responded, "When my generals come into the Oval Office, they stand for their commander-in-chief. Isn't it proper then, that I stand for my commander-in-chief?"

From the Newsletter



Leonardo Da Vinci could write with one hand and draw with the other at the same time.



Most lipstick contains fish scales.



"Pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks."  
(Philippians 4:6)

*Thank You Lord!*



Anything is possible. We are limited only by what we can vision.  
"I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me."  
(Philippians 4. 13)

**With God  
nothing  
shall be  
impossible**  
Luke 1:37

*Send down Your heavenly grace into my soul to enable me to worship and serve you as I ought. Enable me to believe in you, to reverence you, and to love you with all my heart, mind, soul and strength, so I may honor your holy name and Word and serve you truly today and all the days of my life. Amen.*

John Wesley

## SHAREHOUSE MINISTRY

In addition to feeding those around the world who battle starvation on a day-to-day basis, Operation Sharehouse was created due to lag time in shipping food and supplies overseas in the event of an emergency.

Operation Sharehouse was created because of slow response times in the event of an emergency overseas. It would take the United States up to three months to respond to a crisis overseas, for example. The goal of Operation Sharehouse is to have a Sharehouse on every continent, each one never falling short of 5-10 million servings of food. This way, should an emergency occur, food will be in close proximity, enabling a much quicker response.

It is also a goal of this ministry to feed God's children. Among several methods of distribution, Stop Hunger Now is most focused on instituting a school lunch program in impoverished nations. Studies have shown that hunger can be cut in half in 10 years by sending children to school. In addition to motivating children to go to school in order to eat, studies have shown that having girls attend school on a regular basis will help decrease the birthrate from 6% to 2.9%. This will help slow population growth and decrease famine in the long run.

For 2007, the goal was to package more than 2 million meals. We can make a difference. Our goal for St. Matthews is to package 10,000 meals during a work session on April 12<sup>th</sup> beginning at 9 a.m. Everyone is invited and welcome to participate, from small children to the elderly. Volunteer work for Operation Sharehouse is not physically taxing and mainly consists of pouring a scoop of food into a large funnel.

If you live out of town, or will be unable to volunteer on April 12<sup>th</sup> you can still be a part of this ministry by putting \$0.20 aside each time you eat a meal. We will need to provide \$2,000 to support replenishing of food supplies, shipping, and distribution costs. Finish your Lenten season with intentional giving of your time, your prayers and your gifts to this ministry that serves even the least of God's children.

While reflecting on the Lenten season, I asked myself; "What did Jesus do when he went into the desert?" As I was researching this question to find a "good theological" answer, I came across this article. Please read this because it answers the question better than I can. This is an excerpt from a book, *Small Surrenders* written by Emilie Griffin.

That is what Jesus does when he goes into the desert. He puts himself completely in God's hands. In Matthew's Gospel we read: *Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished.* (My first thought: don't try this at home.) By exposing himself to hunger Jesus opens himself up to assaults from the Devil. But he isn't just performing daredevil stunts. He makes a deliberate surrender of the will, a spiritual exercise.

Jesus is placing himself in the Father's hands. The time Jesus spends in the wilderness is a time of preparation. It is a kind of training. Jesus has a larger mission to fulfill, a ministry, a life's work. He is preparing himself for a larger call. When we go into the wilderness with Jesus our motive is similar, surrendering ourselves as a kind of preparation. But how can we compare our little Lents to the walk Jesus takes in the wilderness? Of course the gap is huge between our holiness and his. We can hardly say our own names in his presence. But Jesus doesn't notice this gap, or he seems to overlook it. The huge divide between our lives and his is a gap he is constantly closing. He wants us to come into the wilderness with him, if only just to observe at first. "Watch how I do this," he seems to be saying. "Notice these steps, this maneuver." Practice, he is telling us. Practice, and you'll improve, without even knowing it. Practice.



1st – Charles Lucas

13th – Ginger Sessoms

14th – Reverend Marc Werner

17th – Robin Bodnar

24th – Harold Taylor  
Wayne Hager

26th – Sherrie Leggett

29th – Carolyn Davis

31st – Brandi Makarov

9th – In honor of Robert and Skeeter  
Parker's 40th Anniversary

16th – Griffins for Brandi's wedding

30th – In memory of Mrs. Rhonda S. Wilson  
and by Ruth Caldwell. Honor of Jesse and  
Jayden Caldwell



**CIRCLE WILL MEET MARCH 12TH, 2008 AT  
11 O'CLOCK. IT WILL BE A SHORT MEET-  
ING. MISSION THIS MONTH SHARE, IN  
MEMORY JULIE AGNEW. LUNCH WILL BE  
AT SAMMIO'S ON RAEFORD ROAD. PLEASE  
TRY AND COME.**

**RUTH/ETHEL SMITH CIRCLE  
LOLA SMITH, CHAIRPERSON**





The UMM met 0830 am on Sunday 17 Feb 08. Pastor Marc gave the invocation, and thanked everyone for joining in for Breakfast and being involved in such a great part of The UMM met 0830 am on Sunday 17 Feb 08. Pastor Marc gave the invocation, and thanked everyone for joining in for Breakfast and being involved in such a great part of ministry at St. Matthews'. (there were 24 present) Andy and Brad thanks for a wonderful breakfast, it was delicious and plentiful. Troy W., Dave N., and James D., has volunteered to make breakfast next month, thanks guys.

After our great breakfast, Calvin gave the devotion :*"A HEALTHY BODY"* Ephesians 4: 1-16 Thanks Calvin for the great devotional, we appreciate you and say thanks for all the time you dedicate to bring us the "message" each meeting.

**\*REMEMBER: "We are all one body. We must live and obey appropriately. "**

We hope to see all the men of the church at our next meeting, which will be Sunday, 16 Mar 08 at 0830 am. Bring a friend, neighbor, co-worker or even a stranger to share in a great breakfast and fun fellowship.

Just a reminder, we welcome the men of the church (member or not) to join us for United Methodist Men each month, even if it has been awhile since we have seen you, come, fellowship and break bread (or biscuit) with the other men of the church.

President Andy Hewitt opened the meeting by welcoming everyone.

The minutes were read and approved from last month. The treasurer, Troy Willoughby gave the financial report and went over the income/expenditures regarding the UMM account. The report was approved. Thanks, Troy for keeping the UMM in "Check".

#### **New Business:**

Andy asked the UMM if we would consider purchasing "Strength thru Ministry" booklets to hand out to service members as a token of support from our church. After discussion, this idea be tabled until a future meeting. More information is available, just contact Andy and he will gladly assist you.

A motion was made to send "Merci" \$200.00 towards support of ministry. Frank B, seconded the motion, the motion passed. *Merci helps with disasters all over the world and provides invaluable support/resources in time of need. A great ministry to support and helping with community/world outreach.*

#### **Old Business:**

UMM Lifetime membership ballots were collected and counted, (drum roll please) the WINNER is a very much deserving member of the UMM, Mr. Calvin Rome. Calvin will receive a Life Membership Award, the award includes an Attractive Lifetime Certificate, Life Membership Card and a gold Life Membership Pin. Calvin, congratulations, as we all have agreed, you are very deserving of this award, thanks for all you do, not only for the UMM but for the "Whole Body" as well. Thanks again and way to go!!!!

\*\*\*Just a reminder, If you didn't give Troy your UMM Membership dues (\$30.00) you have to mail them yourself. Address/Info is available on the UMM Board. Having all Chartered members help show how strong we the UMM of the church and community really are, please, if you haven't, send your dues as soon as possible, thanks.

Andy welcomes new and old ideas alike, if you need to speak with Andy you may call him at 910-323-4444.

March Communion members: Bill & Maria Stackhouse—Dave Norris—Scotty Clyde—Raymond Gray—Troy Willoughby—Calvin Rome

Thanks UMM for volunteering for this great ministry, the feedback that is being received in regards to the Communion Ministry is overwhelmingly positive and it brings the UMM great joy in being able to provide this ministry) If you know of anyone who would like to take part in this ministry, please contact Calvin Rome or the church office.

March Ushers: Raymond Gray—Bill Stackhouse—Cliff Morgan—Lee Mayle—Head Usher

Please check out the UMM Board located in the front hallway for valuable information, upcoming events and member information.

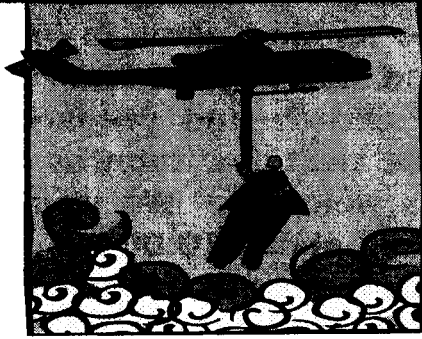
# **FAYETTEVILLE DISTRICT LAY RALLY**

**SUNDAY, MARCH 2, 2008**

**3 – 5 P.M.**

**CAMP GROUND UMC**

The Fayetteville District Lay Rally promises a great message, a great spirit of fellowship and outstanding music! Bring a bus load to Camp Ground UMC on March 2, 2008, at 3:00 p.m. The Rev. Dr. Sam Dixon is preaching, and we are blessed to welcome him "home" to North Carolina on that special day. The Lay Rally coincides with the annual observance of One Great Hour of Sharing which benefits the operating budget of UMCOR, and Sam Dixon is the newly appointed Executive Director of UMCOR. During the Lay Rally scholarships will be awarded to two high school seniors, churches that qualify as Rainbow Covenant churches will be recognized, and the Lay Ministry of the Year will be named.

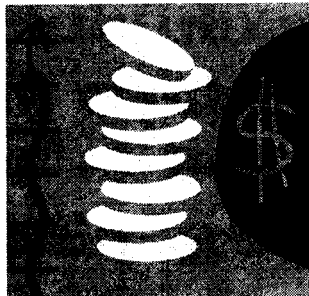


## MERCI

The North Carolina Conference is home to a one-of-a-kind ministry that emerged during the crisis of a flood. The need for a warehouse for building supplies, tools, flood buckets and food preparation equipment led to MERCI, the Marion Edwards Recovery Center Initiative, located in Goldsboro.

Since the 1997 development of MERCI when the mission was disaster relief and recovery, the leaders and volunteers have branched out to other missions, including the building of homes for qualifying low-income families, and the summer "mission camps" for high school students. The ministries are many and varied, and the NCC is recognized all over the country for this outstanding center of mercy and love. Financial support for MERCI has been great during times of crisis but very limited in other times. MERCI faces hard decisions about staffing and even the continuation of the mission.

Every district has been asked to help with a one-time gift or project to benefit MERCI, to restore some of the operating funds necessary to keep MERCI viable. Some local churches in the Fayetteville District have conducted fundraisers for MERCI. Our district has an opportunity to help MERCI on April 5, 2008, at the annual Son Run in Wrightsville Beach. Please invite members of your congregation to join you for the Son Run on April 5. This 5K run (3.1 mi.) is a flat course in a beautiful part of our state, and most of the registration cost is your donation to MERCI. If you run, you receive the benefit of cardio-activity, and the satisfaction of helping MERCI. Registration information will be coming to you soon.





## FFF NEWS

After a busy end to '07, we are looking forward to making plans in '08. Book Club met at JK's Deli this past Saturday and had a great time of fellowship. Afterwards, some of us went to the church and prepared chicken casserole to share. Our schedule for the next few months is listed below. Anyone who would like to come is welcome. We would enjoy having you. We meet at JK's Deli at 8:30, then about 10:00 we go to the church to cook. You can join us for either one or both, whichever interest you.

March 29<sup>th</sup> ----- SABRINA  
by Lori Wick


April 26<sup>th</sup> ----- True Valor  
by Dee Henderson

May 31<sup>st</sup> ----- Dawn's Light  
by Teri Blackstock

June 28<sup>th</sup> ----- Every Other Sunday  
by Karen Kingsbury



**Mini Church for children 4, 5,  
and 6 years old starts March 2.  
Anyone interested in helping  
with this ministry, please call  
Melanie Jones at 867-5442.**



## MISSION TO ALABAMA

The Fayetteville District will send a mission team to Alabama to continue rebuilding after the hurricane season of 2005, when Katrina brought widespread damage to the Gulf region. Please contact Mike Hale, Mission Secretary of the Fayetteville District, for details of this April mission.

The Gulf States continue to need our prayers and our service. They were hit recently by tornadoes. UMCOR is on the scene now helping with recovery from the storms.

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Hello to all! Another month has flown by! Easter is right around the corner, and the Outreach committee is busy preparing for the annual Easter Egg Hunt. The Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Saturday, March 22. We have already begun accepting candy from the congregation to fill the Easter eggs, but we still need more candy. If you would like to donate candy, there is a designated box in the hallway. We are accepting all candy except chocolate or anything that may melt. We are also looking for people to help with the Easter Egg Hunt. It consists of duties as simple as monitoring the coloring contest, helping with games, and helping the children find Easter eggs. There is a sign up sheet located in the hall for those who would like to volunteer their time at the Easter Egg Hunt. I would like to thank everyone who has already signed-up to help or who have donated candy.

The Outreach committee will be placing our Easter events and services in the local newspapers. This way, the community will be aware of our events and maybe we can reach a few of our non-Christian neighbors. Be looking for St. Matthew's in the newspaper!

As we are halfway through this Lenten season, think about what you can "take on" instead of what to "give up". Maybe it is "taking on" the ministry of helping with the Easter Egg Hunt, or "taking on" a Sunday to help in the nursery, or maybe "taking on" a day to visit one of our shut-in church members. What ever your "take on" ministry is, fill your heart with the Lord and he will do the rest! Have a great Easter holiday and may the Lord bless you!

Amanda Call

# MARCH 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 Sunday School 9:45am Worship Service 11am	3 UMW 6:15pm	4 Prayer Ministry 6pm Worship 6:30pm Bible Study 7:15pm Disciple 7:15pm	5 Card Ministry 5pm Disciple 6pm Choir Practice 7:30pm	6	7 World Day of Prayer	8
9 Daylight Savings Time	10 Council Bible Study 6:30pm	11 Prayer Ministry 6pm Worship 6:30pm Bible Study 7:15pm Disciple 7:15pm	12 Card Ministry 5pm Disciple 6pm Choir Practice 7:30pm	13 Night Owls 7pm	14	15
16 Palm Sunday	17 St. Patrick's Day Nurture 6:30pm	18 Prayer Ministry 6pm Worship 6:30pm Bible Study 7:15pm Disciple 7:15pm	19 Card Ministry 5pm Disciple 6pm Choir Practice 7:30pm	20 First Day of Spring Maundy Thursday Service 7pm	21 Good Friday Good Friday Service 7pm	22 Easter Egg Hunt 2pm
23 Easter Sunday Sunrise Service 7am	24 Easter Monday	25 Prayer Ministry 6pm Worship 6:30pm Bible Study 7:15pm Disciple 7:15pm	26 Card Ministry 5pm Disciple 6pm Choir Practice 7:30pm	27	28	29 Spiritual Day Apart FFF Book Club
30	31					