

St. Matthew's 26 Challenge

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Jesus said, "When you did it to one of these my brethren, you did it unto me." Matt. 25:40

Volume II

MAY 2002

Issue 5

Several people have asked for a summary of the Bible study on the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12) we had during Lent. I believe these teachings of Jesus outline the Christian way of life for dealing with our every day challenges. You might say they are Be-Attitudes for Christian living. Each Be-Attitude builds on the strength and foundation of the one before it, in order that we rise to even higher levels of spirituality.

As Christians, we are often called upon by our Lord to be different from worldly people. Our attitudes, responses and behaviors are to reflect the life of Christ. When we face challenges, hardships and even persecution because we choose to live the Christian life, Jesus tells us how to respond.

First we must recognize our personal spiritual poverty. Our human spirit is too weak to handle life's challenges alone. We need to rely on the inner strength of the Holy Spirit. Therefore the first beatitude tells us. 3 *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* If we truly belong to the kingdom of God when we recognize our spiritual poverty and put our complete trust in God.

This will naturally lead us to mourn for our own sins and the sins of the world. Our God wanted us to live in a world without sin and pain, but our will is weak. 4 *"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."* If we mourn our own sins and the sins of the world, we will be comforted by a loving and forgiving God. We can feel a true sense of sorrow for what is wrong in our lives and the world around us we will be comforted by our God.

When we look at ourselves and the world from God's perspective it is a humbling experience. When we are willing to take the position of quite strength in life's situations rather than choosing force and aggressiveness to get what we want we identify with our Lord and Savior. Jesus says, 5 *"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."* In our world this does not appear to be true, from God's point of view we will be the real survivors.

When we humble ourselves before God, we realize we must rely on God's way of doing things rather than our natural way or the way of the world. We must have a consuming desire to do the will of God. 6 *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."* Reminds us that we must want to please God as much as a starving person wants food or a person dying

of thirst wants water. Then God will satisfy our deepest longings.

After feeding on the Word and drinking in the power of the Spirit we are equipped for a wonderful ministry of showing others the heart of the Christian life. We can demonstrate God's goodness in our actions with others. 7 *"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."* is God's promise that we reap what we sow.

Only when we have demonstrated mercy in our relationships with others can we approach God with a pure heart and a clear conscience. We live a life that always seeks to do right in God's sight and confess openly what we do wrong. 8 *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."* Is a promise that only when God makes us pure through forgiveness can we come into his presence.

With hearts purified by God we are then able to bring a new quality of life to others: Shalom. Peace is more than the absence of conflict. It is the best life has to offer, completeness, and fulfillment. That equips us to be peacemakers wherever we go. 9 *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."* We truly become God's children when we help others find the peace of God.

In the kind of world in which we live being a peacemaker can be difficult and even dangerous. People are not always ready to respond to the call of Christ. Therefore, he said, 10 *"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* 11 *"Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account."* 12 *Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for some men persecuted the prophets who were before you."* How do we deal with this attitude?

There is only one way. We start all over again by realizing our poverty of spirit, our need to mourn, be meek, hunger and thirst for righteousness, show mercy and have a pure heart. Then we can dare to be peacemakers once again. These Be-Attitudes are the traits that show we are Christians rather than just religious people.

*Shalom,
Mike*



The Thrift Shop made the following contributions...

...*Bears* were given to Social Services to be used for Prevention of Child Abuse

...*Evening Gowns* were given to the Drama Dept. at Fayetteville State University

Other gifts were given to the *Emergency Fund, Samaritans Purse, Care Clinic, Better Health of Cumberland County, Church*

Birthday Card Ministry, and Church Power Bill.

With Summer Vacations coming up, we are especially in need of extra help. If you can give or your time to volunteer, please call Lee Anna Sproul (425-7302), Mary Schneider (425-8863), or Adella Pray (864-1207).

Lee Anna Sproul, Chairperson

Mary Schneider, Co-Chairperson

ONE-BY-ONE

We give thanks to the Lord for what has been accomplished this year! **ONE-BY-ONE** has gone through many changes in growth, and we have been through many transitions. Our teachers and students have met and conquered many challenges. When we have been down, God has pulled us up. When we have been up, God has reminded us that He is still in charge. This has been a very unique year. Next month, we will share our end-of-year report with you

Recently, we had to say, "So long" to two very special teachers. **Linda Strickland** and **Bob Pray** helped begin the program, and each stayed with us for four years of wonderful service. They have proved what dedication and service to the Lord can do. Their students have been very fortunate. Linda and Bob, **thank you** for being our anchors.

About half of our teachers are teens from our church and others. They are "naturals." The best gift from them has been their ability to do anything at all that will help the program to grow. Such smiles and willingness to help is truly a Godsend. These young people have no concept of "give up." We are so proud of them!

All of our teachers have been steadfast and true to the mission and goals of **ONE-BY-ONE**. Each one is terrific. **Thanks** go to them for being a strong foundation.

If you have never been directly involved with this program, you've missed a great deal. Those who have say that it has changed their lives so much. Helping to open a student's mind to greater learning is a gift from God.

With the Love of Christ,
Amy



UNITED METHODIST MEN

The UMM met Sunday, April 21st for its regular monthly meeting and fellowship. **Jason** and **Randy Caldwell** prepared a delicious breakfast of **Steak, Hash Browns, Eggs & Toast.**

A devotion of "**Don't Hang on to A Dead Branch**" was informative and gave us food for thought.

There was information relating to the "**Chicken Dinner**" given to the men. **J.A. Sessoms** was again top ticket salesman with sales of around **100** tickets. Without men like J.A., there would not be any success on any fund-raiser. Thanks again, J.A.!

Other business discussed was purchasing two 8 ft. Picnic Tables to be used at the rear of the fellowship hall. They can be used for Sunday School Classes on nice days, as well as any other event.

Our "**Spring Church Family Picnic**" will be Saturday, May 18th. Our concern was the return of Doug Stone. I hope he will be home by then. There will be **Games & Fellowship** beginning at 2:00 p.m. and we will eat at 5:00 p.m. There will be **Hot Dogs & Hamburgers** with all the trimmings and **Home-made Ice Cream.** We are accepting donations of all types such as Rolls, Slaw, Onions, etc. We have the Weiners & Ground Beef for the Hot Dogs & Hamburgers.

The best part will be "**Mother's Day**". The men will conduct the 11:00 Worship Service. All men will be asked to fill the Choir, so be ready for a surprise. There are a couple more surprises on that day, so plan to attend.

Last, but not least, the UMM are working two Saturdays a month in the **Thrift Shop.** Making a few sales and meeting new people.

We are going to prepare a "**Father's Day Booklet**" again this year. When filling out your request form, **PLEASE PRINT** and indicate **MEMORY** or **HONOR.**

Respectfully,
Troy Willoughby

A SPECIAL NEWS REPORT:

On Friday, April 12th the **Frayed & Frazzled Flock, UM Men & UM Women** held a "**Fried Chicken Dinner**" for the Emergency Fund. The Kitchen staff was headed by **Dawn Stone** with **Shannon Gibson, Ruth Kanc, Lola Smith,** and **Ashley & Reena Stone.** **Dan Eberhardt & Fred Rozier** operated the Drive - Thru Station. This was a well organized operation. **J.A. Sessoms** was commended and recognized as the #1 ticket seller. J.A. sold **102** of the 400 tickets sold. **Many thanks, J.A.** For those who helped with ticket sales, we appreciate your efforts. Our total profits were approximately **\$1200.00.** This is just a news item to let you know what is happening at your St. Matthew's Church.

Thanks again!
Troy Willoughby

MAY



BIRTHDAYS

1-Mae Roberson
2-Jamie Alexander
9-Perry Smith
10-Mary Couch
12-April Lewis
14-Nick Unruh
-Heather Strub
15-Ashton Scruggs

16-Maria Strickland
18-Dawn Stone
-Angie Norton
19-Connie Williams
20-Dorothy Spakes
27-Robert Parker
29-Julie Griffin
30-Doris Miles

HELP'N HANDS

As "Older Mother's" in the church and our time for lots of service is coming to a close, we want to say to all the young Mother's "**We Salute You**" and "**Thank You**" for all your service and for giving us all the beautiful children for us to love. "**Happy Mother's Day**"!

Our Senior Group had a day of pleasure as we toured the **Botanical Gardens** and enjoyed a picnic. It's a beautiful place.

Eva Smith, Leader
Charles Lucas, Co-Leader

SEIZE THE MOMENT

Life has a way of accelerating as we get older. The days grow shorter and the list of promises to ourselves get longer. One morning we awaken and all we have to show for our lives is "I'm going to", "I plan on it" and "someday when things are settled down a bit." When anyone calls my "seize the moment friend", she is open to adventure and available for trips. She keeps an open mind on new ideas. Her enthusiasm is contagious.

Now go on and have a nice day! Do something you want to, not something on your "should do list". You better slow down. Don't dance so fast. The music won't last. When you run so fast to get there, you miss half the fun. Life is not a race. Take it slower. Hear the music before the song is over.



SPECIAL OFFERINGS

- ◆ EMERGENCY FUND
 - from God's Teens for families with children
 - from the Sunday Morning Bible Study Class
 - from the Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle
 - from Paul & Jewel Sharpe
- ◆ POWER BILL from the Thrift Shop
- ◆ VBS from the United Methodist Women

HEAVENS VERY SPECIAL CHILD

A meeting was held quite far from earth.

"It's time again for another birth."

Said the angels to the Lord above.

This special child will need much love.

His progress may seem very slow.

Accomplishments he may not show.

And he'll require extra care.

From the folks he meets down there.

He may not run, laugh or play.

His thoughts may seem far away.

In many ways he won't adapt,
And he'll be known as handicapped.

So let's be careful where he's sent,

We want his life to be content.

Please, Lord find the parents who

Will do a special job for you.

They will not realize right away

The leading role they'll be asked to play.

But with this child sent from above,

Comes stronger faith and richer love.

And soon they'll know the privilege given,

In caring for this gift from heaven.

Their precious charge, so meek and mild,
Is heaven's very special child.

-Author Unknown-

GOD'S TEENS

We are a busy group! We continue to study the Bible. Each week, we have time for silent meditation (prayer). We are planning a skit to be presented later. We have contributed to the **Emergency Fund** each month since December. Not long ago, we were able to see what some of our gifts have done. Seeing what small children have to suffer and what God's love can do to help has made us very happy that we are **GOD'S TEENS!**



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Final reminder...the **deadline** for submitting names to be placed in the "Mother's Day Booklet" is **today, April 28th**. Don't miss out!

We regretfully announce that Barbara Thompson resigned as Leader of the Night Owls Circle to move to Louisburg, but we are also rejoicing that Shirley Dominie has agreed to become the new Leader. **Thanks, Barbara and Shirley!**

Our **District UMW** has several important dates in the near future including a **Racial Justice Workshop, Spiritual Enrichment Retreat at Louisburg College, Annual Conference and School of Christian Mission**. See dates below, or for more details stop by the UMW Bulletin Board between the office and library doors and read the letter from our District President, Alice M. Smith.

We have received an invitation to a "**UMW RETREAT**" at **Camp Rockfish** to be held **Friday & Saturday, August 9-10**. Approximate cost is **\$75.00** for Double-Occupancy per person. Let's think about this "**get-away**". It will be sponsored by **Cumberland UMW**. The goal is just to "**unwind**, and enjoy other UM Women's company and hear a great speaker on Saturday night.

We are looking forward to being together for our annual "**Mother-Daughter Banquet**" on **Saturday, May 4th at 6:00 p.m.** in our fellowship hall. It's a **Covered-Dish Meal**, so bring your Mother/Daughter(s) and your favorite dish for great fun and fellowship. We need volunteers to set-up and to clean-up. If you can help decorate, please meet at the church Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m.

Please continue your prayers for our mission.

Mary Rozier, UMW President

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Saturday, May 4—Mother/Daughter Banquet, 6:00 p.m. (Decorate 10:00 a.m.)
- Saturday, May 11—District Racial Justice Workshop
- Friday & Saturday—Spiritual Enrichment Retreat
- Sunday, June 2—Shower for Christy Barber hosted by the Night Owls Circle, 2:00-4:00 p.m. in fellowship hall
- Monday, June 3—United Methodist Women General Mtg., 7:00 p.m. (Salad Supper)
- Friday-Monday, June 7-10—Annual Conference
- Sunday, June 16—United Methodist Women lead Father's Day Worship Service, 11:00 a.m.
- Friday & Saturday, October 11-12—Fall Bazaar

RECIPES OF THE MONTH

PEANUT BUTTER DELIGHTS

2 Cups Sugar 1/2 Cup Milk
 1 tsp. Vanilla 3 Cups Oats
 1 Stick Margarine
 3 Tbsp. Cocoa
 1/2 Cup Peanut Butter

Mix sugar, milk, cocoa & margarine in a pan. Stir until mixture boils. Boil one minute. Add the remaining ingredients in the order listed & mix thoroughly. Mixture will be hot, so use a long wooden spoon. Drop large or small spoonfuls onto waxed paper and let cool. Enjoy!

MONKEY CAKE

3 Cans of Biscuits
 1 Cup Sugar
 1 Tbsp. Cinnamon
 1 Cup Brown Sugar
 1/2 Cup Butter



Pull biscuits apart, cut each biscuit into quarter pieces. Mix sugar & cinnamon together, coat biscuit quarters in sugar/cinnamon mixture, layer in a bundt in pan. Mix brown sugar & butter together & sprinkle on top of biscuits in the pan. Bake 30 to 40 minutes at 350 degrees. Let cool & remove from pan. Pull apart with fingers to eat & enjoy!

A LITTLE PARABLE FOR MOTHERS

The Young Mother set her foot on the path of life. "Is the way long?" she asked. And her Guide said: "Yes, and the way is hard. You will be old before you reach the end of it. But the end will be better than the beginning."

The young mother was happy, and she would not believe that anything could be better than these years. So she played with her children, and gathered flowers for them along the way, and bathed with them in the clear streams; and the sun shone on them, and life was good, and the young Mother cried, "Nothing will ever be lovelier than this."

Then night came, and storm, and the path was dark, and the children shook with fear and cold, and the Mother drew them close and covered them with her mantle, and the children said, "Oh, Mother, we are not afraid, for you are near, and no harm can come" The Mother said, "This is better than the brightness of day, for I have taught my children courage."

Morning came, and there was a hill ahead, and the children climbed and grew weary, and the Mother was weary, but all the time she said to the children, "A little patience, and we are there." So the children climbed, and when they reached the top, they said, "We could not have done it without you, Mother." And the Mother, when she lay down that night, looked up at the stars, and said, "This is a better day than the last, for my children have learned fortitude in the face of hardship. Yesterday I gave them courage. Today I have given them strength."

The next day came strange clouds which darkened the earth – clouds of war and hate and evil, and the children groped and stumbled, and the Mother said, "Look up and lift your eyes to the Light." The children looked and saw above the clouds an Everlasting Glory, and it guided them and brought them beyond the darkness. That night the Mother said, "This is the best day of all, for I have shown my children God."

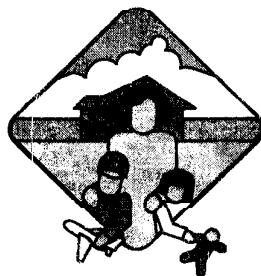
The days, weeks, months, and years went on and the Mother grew old and was little and bent. Her children were tall and strong and walked with courage. When the way was hard, they helped their Mother; and when the way was rough, they lifted her, for she was as light as a feather; and at last they came to a hill. Beyond the hill they could see a shining road and golden gates flung open wide.

The Mother said, "I have reached the end of my journey. Now I know that the end is better than the beginning, for my children can walk alone, and their children after them."

The children said, "You will always walk with us, Mother, even when you have gone through the gates."

They stood and watched her as she went on along, and the gates closed after her. They said, "We can not see her, but she is still with us. A Mother like ours is more than a memory. She is a Living Presence."

-Temple Bailey



Submitted by: Dorothy Taylor

MISSIONS

STEVE TAYLOR

Reach Out to Afghanistan With Love School Kits for School Children

A collaborative outreach between the North Carolina and Western North Carolina Conferences, NC Department of Public Instruction, and Stop Hunger Now



"In March, some 9.6 million children started the school term in Afghanistan. Many of these children and their teachers lack the most basic of school supplies - paper, pencils, rulers, etc. We believe that by supporting education in Afghanistan, we can help further the cause of peace."

Mike Ward
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. - Matthew 18:5

School Kits

Student and teacher kits should be packaged individually in plastic storage/sweater boxes (approx. 10" X 14"), plastic storage bags, or book bags.

Description of a Student Kit

- 8 1/2 X 11 Paper (min. 50-sheet pkg.)
- #2 yellow pencils
- Pencil sharpener (small, handheld)
- Ballpoint pens
- Colored pencils
- Crayons
- Watercolor paints
- Clipboard (no stickers)
- Safety scissors
- Ruler (metric)
- Soap/Washcloth/Tube Socks

Description of a Teacher Kit

- 8 1/2 X 11 White Paper (min. 50-sheet pkg.)
- Construction paper
- Chalk
- Tape
- Tape measure
- Glue sticks
- World Map
- Inflatable Globe
- Scissors
- Ruler (metric)
- Ballpoint pens
- Markers
- Clipboard

We in the North Carolina and Western North Carolina Conferences are collecting school kits for children in Afghanistan, children who have lost so much. They have few resource and this offering of love is truly a life-giving gift. We can make a difference in their lives! We can help bring peace to this war-torn land! Will you help? Will you join us in this act of love?

It's about Afghanistan's children, the world's children, our children ...

*It's about the
Light of the
World. It's about
Christ!*



Jesus said "As you did it unto the least of these ... you did it unto me."

Collections in the North Carolina Conference

Kits can either be delivered to the Merci Warehouse or shipped there.

MERCI—The Marion Edwards Recovery Center, 676 Community Dr. Goldsboro, NC
Phone: 888-440-9167

Directions: From I-95 traveling on US 70 toward Goldsboro. At Highway 581 turn right. Just before the railroad crossing, to the right is Community Drive. Turn right onto Community Dr.
Hours of Operation: M-F 8:30 - 4:30pm. (Call if you wish to come at other times.)
Collections will continue through the summer.

Financial contributions should be made payable to the NC Conference - UMC and sent to NC Conference/Raleigh Area, P.O. Box 60053, Charlotte, NC 28260-0053. Please mark check and envelope for "Stop Hunger Now- School Kits."

ST. MATTHEW'S SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

MAY

- 4 - Mother-Daughter Banquet, 6:00pm
- 5 - Native American Ministries Sunday
- 11 - UMYF Car Wash (8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.)
- 12 - Mother's Day (UMM lead Worship Service)
- 18 - Spring Church Family Picnic (sponsored by UMM)
- 19 - Call To Discipleship, 2:00-7:00 p.m. (light meal)
- 26 - Peace With Justice Sunday

JUNE

- 2 - Graduate Sunday (followed by Reception)
 - Shower for Christy Barber, 2:00-4:00 p.m. (hosted by the Night Owls Circle)
- 3 - UMW General Meeting
- 9 - Promotion Sunday
- 15 - UMYF Lock-In
- 16 - Father's Day (UMW lead Worship Service)
- 23-27 - Vacation Bible School
(Donation Dinner 5:30-6:30pm, Classes 6:30-8:00pm)
- 30 - Fifth Sunday Night Fellowship Supper
(featuring Music by the Children's Choir)

JULY

- 8-12 - Camp Rockfish Day Camp

AUGUST

- 25 - Church-Wide Family Picnic (sponsored by UMM)

SEPTEMBER

- 22 - Homecoming
- 29 - Fifth Sunday Service

OCTOBER

- 6 - World Communion Sunday
- 11-12 - UMM Barbecue Sale & UMW Bazaar
- 20 - Laity Sunday
- 25 - Youth Lock-In
- 31 - Fall Festival

NOVEMBER

- 10 - Honor Veterans
- 17 - Harvest Dinner/Children's Program, 6:00 p.m.
- 24 - UM Student Day
Angel Tree
Community Thanksgiving Service
- 27 - Thanksgiving Eve Service, 7:00 p.m.

DECEMBER

- 1 - Hanging of the Greens & Chrismon Service, 7:00 p.m.
- 15 - Christmas Cantata
- 24 - Christmas Eve Communion Service, 6:00 p.m.



GRADUATE SUNDAY JUNE 2

Graduates will be honored during the Worship Service and followed by a Reception in the Fellowship Hall. Please give names of all graduates to Lorri Shackelford or Sandy Jones.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

JUNE 23 - 27

DINNER - 5:30-6:30 p.m.
CLASSES - 6:30-8:00 p.m.
(Classes for all ages)

If you would like to help, please call Sandy Jones at 867-5442.



CAMP ROCKFISH DAY CAMP JULY 15 - 19

COST - \$50.00
AGES - K-12

PRE-REGISTRATION
JUNE 1 - 30

ACTIVITIES:

Swimming, Crafts,
Nature Hikes & more

MAY

ST. MATTHEW'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2002

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5 NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES SUNDAY Children's Choir – 9:30am UMYF – 4:00pm	6 One-By-One – 7:00pm	7 Prayer Group – 7:00pm	1 Card Ministry – 5pm WNA & B.Study-6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	2	3	4 MOTHER DAUGHTER BANQUET 6:00 PM
12 MOTHER'S DAY Children's Choir – 9:30am UMIM lead Worship Service – 11:00am UMYF – 4:00pm	13 One-By-One – 7:00pm	14 Prayer Group – 7:00pm	8 Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle 10:30am Card Ministry – 5:00pm WNA & B.Study-6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	9 Mental Health Award Banquet – 6:00pm Night Owls Circle – 7:00pm	10	11 UMYF Car Wash – 8:00am-2:00pm FFF – 10:00am Outreach Evangelism Team – 1:00pm
19 UMM Break- fast Mtg. – 8:00am Children's Choir – 9:30am Call to Discipleship – 2:00-7:00pm	20 One-By-One – 7:00pm	21 Prayer Group – 7:00pm	15 Home Extensions-9:30am Card Ministry – 5:00pm WNA & B.Study-6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	16	17	18 SPRING CHURCH FAMILY PICNIC - 2:00pm
26 PEACE WITH JUSTICE SUNDAY Children's Choir – 9:30am UMYF – 4:00pm	27 MEMORIAL DAY CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	28 Prayer Group – 7:00pm	22 Card Ministry – 5:00pm WNA & B.Study-6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	23 Help'n Hands – 11am	24	25 FFF – 10:00am
			29 Card Ministry – 5:00pm WNA & B.Study-6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	30	31	