

St. Matthew's 25 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

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Spiritual Formation

Last year we started a small daytime Spiritual Formation Group on Tuesdays with eight or nine persons following the Upper Room guidebook called "Companions in Christ". A few weeks ago we had 15 people sign up for another program for eight weeks this summer, called "The Way of Forgiveness". We are delighted to have several teens in the group this time along with our adults.

Spiritual formation is the process of allowing God in Christ to shape or form us into the image of Christ. St. Paul tells us this is the goal of the Christian life. It makes perfect sense if we believe what I have shared with you from Ephesians 1:3-4, that "God... 'spoke' us forth in Christ before the foundations of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love." Because of sin God's purpose for us was undercut and necessitated sending his Son to redeem us from sin so we could be conformed to the image of Christ.

Up until now we took for granted that spiritual formation was taking place in all the activities of the Church. In reality we were forming people to be good members and church people, but were not necessarily concerned with their personal spiritual life in terms of discipleship. Our denomination began to pay more attention to spiritual formation a decade or so ago. How is this approach different from the way we have done things before.

Like the rest of our culture we generally approach life and scripture from an informational point of view. What are the facts? What are the historical and culture settings? What does this mean according to Biblical authorities? Now there is nothing wrong with information. We need the best information we can get.

But scripture is also supposed to be approached from a personal point of view because we worship a personal and loving God. This means we can read scripture to see what God is saying to each of us

personally. We do not have to understand every single word or verse of scripture for God to speak a special message to us through one or two verses. We are to approach scripture with our spirits as well as our minds.

Spiritual formation considers the impact of our spiritual encounter with the word of God on our own spiritual growth. Just as the word of God formed us in the beginning, our encounter with the living word of scripture can form or shape us in a powerful way.

We can also shape and form one another spiritually as well. Generally, we do not do this by analyzing, teaching, judging, giving advice, 'fixing', solving a problem, or making each other feel better. That is the role of counseling or therapy.

Guiding someone spiritually requires another set of skills. Some have called this skill "holy listening" or "spiritual friendship". A "holy listener" creates a hospitable place for their spiritual friend and God to interact. They wait to experience the movement of the spirit and guide their friend by asking questions, which draw them closer to the witness of God in their lives. They help their friend tune in to what God might be saying to them. They respect that their God and their friend can come together by inviting their friend to look deeper into their life experiences for God. They ask questions like: Where did you experience God's grace or loving presence in their situation?; or Is God calling you to move in a certain direction or inviting you to accept a new challenge in your life?

Are we at St. Matthew's truly open to God and his Word shaping and forming us into the image of Christ Jesus? Are we willing to be Holy Listeners? Can we be spiritual friends to each other as we journey down the road of faith? This is my hope.

*Shalom,
Mike*



St. Matthew's United Methodist Church

202 Hope Mills Road, Fayetteville, NC 28304

**2003 Second Quarter
Statement of Giving**

June 30, 2003

1. On September 24, 2002, the Church Ministry Council decided that a quarterly Statement of Giving should be provided to the congregation. Enclosed please find your statement of giving through the second quarter of 2003. If there are any questions about your statement, you may contact me at home (867-8031) or at work (432-1471). You may also leave a message for me at the church office (425-0401).

2. The budget has been "in the black" since the first Sunday in March because of generous gifts. Also, the Finance Ministry Team sponsored a Brunswick stew fundraiser and two yard sales. The Choir sponsored the Dinner Theater fundraiser. All of these fundraisers have helped the budget to remain in the black.

3. Since this is the mid-point in our budget year, it is a time to reassess our giving for the year. The table to the right shows the amounts given to date for the first 80 giving units in the church. There are another 35 giving units that have contributed \$100 or less. On the back of this letter you will also find a mid-year or 26th Sunday budget comparison for years 1992-2003. You can see that we are doing well compared to previous years. However, during the summer months, we have historically seen our giving fall off at St. Matthew's as members go on vacations. We can already see a decline in our positive budget figures in recent weeks. Please prayerfully consider your giving plan for the coming months.

6290	1100	610	340
5000	1090	609	325
4000	1015	600	300
3890	915	570	295
3360	910	555	290
2917	910	540	280
2135	900	525	212
2109	900	520	206
1975	900	520	205
1900	895	517	200
1853	851	505	200
1733	820	500	150
1700	800	500	150
1680	770	480	150
1670	756	400	150
1518	750	380	150
1495	750	360	140
1313	745	356	125
1300	738	350	122
1200	705	340	115

4. May the Lord guide you in this matter as we strive to meet our budget goals for 2003.

Calvin Rome
Financial Secretary

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it."



During the past month the Thrift Shop contributed to the following:

- ◆ Church Power Bill
- ◆ Emergency Fund
- ◆ Fire-Proof Cabinet for Church Office
- ◆ Matched funds for upgrading computers & additional computers for One-By-One
- ◆ Salvation Army K-2-K Summer Camp Program
- ◆ The Church Youth Summer Programs - Cure Americas

All of this was made possible because of your generous gifts of time and materials. A very special **THANK YOU** for all of your purchases which makes these gifts possible.

Mary Schneider, Chairperson
Lee Anna Sproul, Co-Chairperson

“NO EXCUSE SUNDAY”

To make it possible for everyone to attend church this Sunday, we are going to have a special **“No Excuse Sunday.”** Cots and hammocks will be placed in the aisles for those who say, “Sunday is my only day to sleep in.” Eye drops and extra coffee will be provided for those with tired eyes from watching TV late Saturday night. There will be a special section with padded recliner chairs for those who feel that our pews are too hard. Doctors and nurses will be in attendance for those who plan to be sick on Sunday. We will have steel hard hats available for those who say “The roof would cave in if I ever came to church.” One section will be decorated with trees and grass for those who like to seek God in nature. Scorecards and pens will be provided for those who wish to list the hypocrites present. Blankets will be furnished for those who say the church is too cold, and portable fans for those who say it is too hot. And finally the sanctuary will be decorated with both Christmas wreaths and Easter lilies for those who have never seen the church without them. When things are going fine, you have no need to attend church, but when trouble or death strikes your family, where will you turn for help? For the church to be helpful, your time, talent, treasure, prayers and presence are needed every Sunday, not only occasionally. See you every Sunday!

-Anonymous-



The United Methodist Men met on June 15th at 8:30 a.m. We had **20** men present. A delicious breakfast was prepared by **Lynwood & Julie Griffin and Marvin & Lynn Hiner.**

Marvin & Lynn Hiner.

Lynwood gave the devotion from Matthew 4: 1-7 which was about temptations from the Devil. Do not put your Lord to the test. Faith grows like a seed, plant it in good soil and watch it grow. Prepare your life as a farmer prepares his crops, and it will prosper for you.

Cards were read from (1) the Youth thanking the UMM for sponsoring two Youth to Louisburg, and from (2) the Card Ministry thanking the UMM for the Mother’s Day Service.

Our **“Father’s Day Booklet”** was a success thanks to **Ruby Lucas and Doris Miles.** Ruby prepared the booklet mostly with one hand due to surgery on her wrist. Doris printed it on the new Copier. Many **thanks** to those ladies who made it all possible.

Lynwood gave a review on the painting and repairs to the Educational Wing. We had **15** men come out on Memorial Day to help with this project. They made our church a place to be proud of. We can accomplish so much when we all work together. A special **thanks** to **Lynwood and Hank** for handling this project.

Eight men agreed to help with the **Yard Sale** on June 21st. All showed up and sold items, moved tables, carried clothes, and sat in the shade. A good fellowship was enjoyed by all.

The UMM prepared the Monday night meal for **Vacation Bible School.** We had **Shepard’s Pie, Green Beans, Rolls, Salad, & Homemade Peach Ice Cream.** A special **thanks** to **Heather Shackelford** for assisting Troy.

A **Church Family Picnic** is scheduled for the Fall, as well as the **Bazaar & Barbecue Sale.** More on that later. Have a nice **“4th of July”.**

Respectively,

Troy Willoughby,
UMM Secretary

JULY BIRTHDAYS



- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 4 - Jacob Gallimore | 15 - Eric Snyder |
| 5 - Marie Parker | 20 - Jack Spakes |
| 6 - Gail Terwilliger | 21 - Margaret King |
| 7 - Peggy Williams | Carter Manship |
| Danny Colon | 25 - Kenneth Manship |
| 10 - Gertrude Schultz | 29 - Juli Pray |
| Elizabeth Gibson | Wendy Johnson |
| 11 - Wayne Everts | 30 - Vicki Powell |
| Christy Khondaker | |

"FUN WEEK FOR KIDS"

Due to the recent floods which caused the Dam and Pool to break at Camp Rockfish, there is limited water activities for campers. Therefore, we came up with an alternate plan of activities for kids during the week of July 14 - 18.

- ◆ **Monday, July 14**
9:00 am - 3:30 pm—Raven Rock State Park
- ◆ **Tuesday, July 15**
9:00 am - 3:30 pm—Round-A-Golf & Round-A-Bout Skating Center
- ◆ **Wednesday, July 16**
9:00 am - 3:30 pm—Bowling & Pope Park
- ◆ **Thursday, July 17**
9:00 am - 3:30 pm—Fantasy Lake & Picnic Area
- ◆ **Friday, July 18**
9:00 am - 1:00 pm—Special Operations Museum (Tentative Plans)

The cost will still be \$50.00. Checks should be made out to **St. Matthew's UMC** and at bottom put **Day Camp** in memo section. Please drop kids off Monday - Friday at 9:00 am and pick them up Monday - Thursday at 3:30 p.m. and 1:00 pm on Friday. If you have questions or transportation problems, please contact Elaine Everts (603-0268) or Dawn Stone (868-3657).



SPECIAL OFFERINGS

EMERGENCY FUND

- ◆ in honor of Jewel Sharpe's birthday (June 19) from her Secret Prayer Partner
- ◆ from the Sunday Morning Bible Study Class
- ◆ from the Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle
- ◆ from The Thrift Shop
- ◆ from Paul & Jewel Sharp
- ◆ from God's Teens for families with children
- ◆ from John S. Hale
- ◆ In honor of Marie Parker's birthday from her Secret Prayer Partner

POWER BILL from the Thrift Shop

ARP/TRUSTEE FUND

- ◆ from Lynwood & Julie Griffin
- ◆ from Wayne & Elaine Everts
- ◆ from Lee Anna Sproul
- ◆ from Perry Smith
- ◆ from Frank Bagley
- ◆ in memory of Sandy Jones' Brother & Mother-in-law from the Sunday Morning Bible Study Class

DAY CAMP FUND

- ◆ from the Night Owls Circle
- ◆ from Ruby Lucas
- ◆ from Brad Everts
- ◆ from Gail Terwilliger

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

- ◆ from United Methodist Women

CARD MINISTRY

- ◆ in honor of Lyle Spidle from Kenneth & Patricia Hendrickson

ACS/YOUTH MINISTRIES

- ◆ from Wayne & Elaine Everts
- ◆ from Calvin & Christy Rome

MEMORIAL FUND from the Majewski & Fortner family

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY CLASS

Are you a person who thinks that Sunday School is only for children? Or are you a person who thinks that you only need to come to worship service to get your lesson out of the Bible? You are so wrong, there is so much more to the Word of God than what you get sitting in the pew. Come join the Sunday Morning Bible Study Class. We are studying Galatians. We'll save a seat for you!



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

It was the day of the big race—at the Seattle Special Olympics. There were nine contestants all physically or mentally disabled assembled at the starting line for the 100-yard dash. As the flag waved they all started out. Not exactly in a dash, but a relish to run the race to the finish line and win. All that is except one little boy who stumbled on the asphalt, tumbled over a few times and began to cry. The other eight runners heard the boy cry. They slowed down and looked back. Then they **all turned around and went back**, every one of them. One little girl gave him a kiss and said "this will make it better." Another hugged him and helped him up. And then to the astonishment of the crowd, all nine runners linked arms and walked together toward the finish line.

Could this be an example of what it means to "live justly?" Putting the well being of others before our own ambitions. Linking arms and crossing the finish line together, not racing ahead to make it there first with little concern of what becomes of those we have passed along the way. I think the United Methodist Women are great about turning around. In so many ways I have seen you turn around and link arms with the poor, the marginalized and the oppressed. I have seen you stop what you were doing to pick someone up. I have seen you drying tears and giving words of encouragement. May we always have the desire and will within our hearts to live justly and walk humbly linked together by the love of Jesus Christ.

Our local church promotion of the Methodist Home for Children "Sharing Sunday" was once again a fine success. To date they have received **\$96,044.13** with more coming in. Thanks be to God for blessing our efforts on behalf of children. Children who truly need to know that someone is linking arms with them. Children who need to know that someone cares. Please see UMW Bulletin Board in hallway for additional information on Mission Studies.

Adella Pray, UMW President

RECIPE OF THE MONTH "MILK CHOCOLATE BROWNIES"

8 oz whipped topping (thawed)	2 eggs
1 1lb. 5 oz. Package of Brownie Mix	1 tsp. Vanilla
6 oz. Chopped walnuts, pecans or both	1/2 cup chocolate chips
1/2 cup white chocolate chips	



Pre-heat oven to 325 degrees. Grease bottom of 9" x 13" pan. In a large bowl, mix thawed whipped topping, eggs and vanilla until smooth. Stir in brownie mix just until moistened. Stir in nuts, spread mixture into pan. Sprinkle chocolate chips on top. Bake for 30 - 40 minutes, or until toothpick comes out clean. Do not over bake. Cool and slice. Serves 10 - 12 people.

LOOKING AHEAD:



SEPTEMBER 8
UMW General Mtg.,
7:00 p.m.

OCTOBER 10-11
UMW Bazaar

WHAT'S UP FOR
THE NEXT 5TH
SUNDAY?

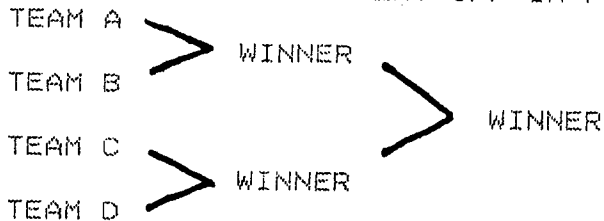
AUG. 31, 03

QUIZ BOWL

4 MEMBER TEAMS COMPETING IN BIBLE
TRIVIA

WE NEED AT LEAST 2 TEAMS TO PLAY, BUT WOULD LIKE 4 OR MORE

TENTATIVELY TEAMS WILL PLAY OFF IN PAIRS AGAINST EACH OTHER



WE CHALLENGE THE YOUTH, UMM, UMW
HELPING HANDS, THE SUNDAY SCHOOL
CLASSES, INDIVIDUALS, AND FAMILIES
TO GET A TEAM TOGETHER AND JOIN
IN THE FUN.

ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS:

- 1) GET A TEAM TOGETHER OF 4 PEOPLE
- 2) SELECT A NAME FOR THE TEAM AND A CONTACT PERSON
- 3) SIGN UP OUTSIDE THE CHURCH OFFICE BY JULY 27, 2003
- 4) YOU WILL BE CONTACTED WITH CATEGORY HEADINGS AND GENERAL INFORMATION
- 5) START*PREPARING

IF YOU CAN HELP WITH DONATIONS FOR A PRIZE PACK,
PLEASE CONTACT LORRI SHACKELFORD OR DAWN STONE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 The Way of Forgiveness - 6:30pm Prayer Group - 7:0pm	2 NO Card Ministry NO Choir Practice	3	4 Independence Day	5
6	7 PASTOR	8 The Way of Forgiveness with Dr. Hale - 6:30pm Prayer Group - 7:00pm	9 ON	10	11 VACATION	12 FFF - 10:00am
13	14 Kids go to Raven Rock - 9am-3:30pm	15 Kids go to Round-A- Bout Center - 9am-3:30 pm The Way of Forgiveness - 6:30pm Prayer Group - 7:00pm	16 Kids go Bowling & Pope Park - 9am-3:30pm Home Ext. - 9:30am NO Card Ministry NO Choir Practice	17 Kids go to Fantasy Lake & Picnic - 9am- 3:30pm	18 Kids Tentative Plan Special Operations Museum - 9am- 1:00pm	19
20 UMM Breakfast Mtg. - 8:30am	21	22 The Way of Forgiveness - 6:30pm Prayer Group - 7:00pm	23 Card Ministry - 5:00pm Choir Practice - 7:30pm	24	25	26 FFF - 10:00am
27 UMM Choir - 11am	28	29 The Way of Forgiveness - 6:30pm Prayer Group - 7:00pm	30 NO Card Ministry NO Choir Practice	31		