

# 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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Issue 2

## LENT- A SEASON OF SPIRITUAL PREPARATION & SELF EXAMINATION

The last Wednesday of February the 25<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 p.m. we will celebrate Ash Wednesday. We gather to celebrate, of all things, our humanness and our mortality. On the surface that sounds pretty strange, doesn't it? It goes along with other strange things we do as Christians. We celebrate our mortality at funerals too. If you have ever noticed our funeral bulletins, the heading reads, "A Service of Death and Resurrection". We do not simply focus on death but resurrection. We look forward to the positive promises of our faith: resurrection and life eternal. As Christians, we approach our humanness and mortality because our true life and home is the kingdom come.

Lent is a season of spiritual preparation for the truly joyous celebration of Easter and the power of the resurrection. Easter, not Christmas, is the center of our faith. Christmas is a seductive substitute for those who are not mature in the faith. It's all right to celebrate Christmas, but if it is the most important religious day for your faith, maybe you need to go deeper in your faith journey. Lent exists precisely for that purpose.

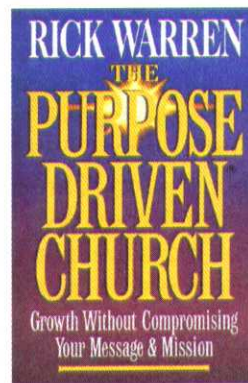
We prepare ourselves to get the most from Easter by using Lent as a time of spiritual self-examination. I invite you to join me on a spiritual quest during Lent. Traditionally, we fast or give up something during Lent. This year I am asking you to give your time and I promise you will receive a valuable reward. I want every adult and youth member of our church to read *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren during the season of Lent.

I read Rick Warren's *The Purpose Driven Church* a couple of years ago. I was thoroughly impressed. Rick Warren is pastor of Saddleback Valley Community Church in southern California. He started with one family and has grown to over 10,000

average attendance is worship weekly. If we truly want to grow at St. Matthew's we must become a "Purpose

Driven Church". Later, Rick discovered that the Church functions more in accordance with Biblical principles when people lead "Purpose Driven Lives".

As I have shared in previous issues of The Challenge, I believe we have arrived at a critical point in the life of this congregation. I have been much in prayer about what God would have me do to address this important stage in our Church. I have been lead to offer this challenge for Lent. I am convinced that if we commit to reading *The Purpose Driven Life* together as a congregation, God will richly bless us as individuals and as a Church. This is a simple, readable book yet a profound guide to a deeper spiritual life for each of the Church and us.



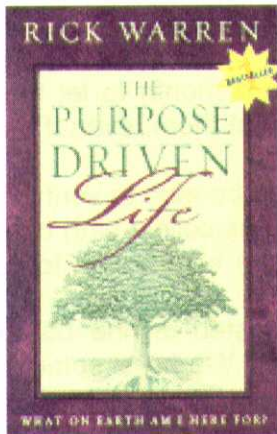
My sister shared that this was the first book she has ever truly read and finished in her life. When Jane and I visited her after Christmas we heard a wonderful testimony about what God was now doing in her life. Jane and I were both amazed by the changes we saw in her life. She has also passed out twenty or thirty copies of the book to friends and people in her church. They are now going through the book in their Sunday School class.

I have already spoken to three of our adult Sunday School teachers about suspending their regular studies during Lent and focusing on the six basic themes of this book during church school. I will present this to the others at the Sunday School teacher's breakfast scheduled for Sunday morning February 1<sup>st</sup>. I will also focus on discussing these issues at Wednesday evening Bible Study during Lent.

Lent is the forty days before Easter not counting the Sundays. *The Purpose Driven Life* is forty short readings. What a natural match. This could change your life and the ministry of this church.

*Shalom,*

*Mike*



# ***TRUSTEE MINISTRY TEAM***

The Trustee Ministry Team met to organize for the new year, Tuesday, January 20, 2004 in the library with the following members present: Lynwood Griffin, Perry Smith, Lee Anna Sproul, Raymond Gray, Kenny Shackelford, Michael Johnston, and Michael Hale. The meeting was called to order by the chair and Jeanette Ward was elected secretary by acclamation.

The chair reported the following: *the* Church sign is now working after a new electrical line was run underground; a new portable lighted sign was donated by the UMM (a short heavy-duty drop cord is needed to connect it to the electrical plug on the sign); wiring for computers and a video camera was installed; Calvin Rome has donated and installed the camera, which enables Doris to see people at the door; termite inspections were done for all property 1119104; two-thirds of the lawn care service has been underwritten thus far; 8 rolling trash cans were purchased and our trash service will pick them up when placed next to the Thrift Shop. The chair also reported on the break-in at the church Christmas Eve and the loss of all our microphones. We will make a \$1700 claim, which will not increase premiums. The chair authorized Barry Gallimore to purchase new microphones from funds available.

Trustees voted unanimously to tear down the old trash screen and replace it with a concrete pad and six foot, three-sided vinyl gated fence at a cost of about \$600. Michael Johnston volunteered to help with the pad and provide concrete tools needed for the job.

The team discussed the Altar Area Expansion with positive support from all present. Darrel Collins is working on drawings. Bill Kozikowski has been contacted to do the screen modification work at a cost of about \$1200. Some of the men in the church can do the majority of the other work.

The chair will appoint a team to assess needed repairs on rental property, which needs to be done this year; the Thrift Shop needs trim painted and windows caulked; and the Sanctuary trim needs to be power washed and painted.

Dr. Hale was authorized to contact the Hope Mills Road DOT project engineer concerning placing a driveway entrance into our property on the south side of church. The next step will be a letter to Lindo Tippit, head of DOT. The youth were given permission to paint their Sunday School room brighter colors after submitting a plan with color scheme.

The Trustees were very enthusiastic about a plan to have a Vision Ministry Team planning session in February or March. The meeting will be on a Saturday from about 10:00 am until 2:00 pm with a light lunch. We want to talk about a five year and a ten year vision plan for our church. We hope to invite the

Reverend Benny Melvin to tell us about the advantages of long-term pastorates during the morning session. Rev. Melvin's last appointment before retiring was Pittsboro UMC where he served fourteen years. He said he did not get into his best years until he passed year six.

The Trustees also want to seriously consider starting ministries that will help us reach out to people in our community by fall of this year. That is the best way to help us grow. A positive discussion was held about starting a half-day, five day a week early childhood program for mornings. They also encouraged the possibility of starting a five-day a week after-school program. Dr. Hale was authorized to get the State guidelines for these ministries. We want to invite the Reverend Hope Vickers, minister at Cumberland UMC to speak to us after lunch. The programs discussed above have helped that church to grow to the point that they have a larger budget than we do now and a growing membership.

Anyone in the church can attend this gathering as long as they want to see our church grow. Bring your ideas and visions for our future. The date will be announced as soon as our guest speakers are scheduled.

## **CARE CELLS**

After a year of work updating our membership records and taking 147 names off of our rolls at Charge Conference, we have now located each local member on maps and divided the Church into eighteen Cell Groups. These groupings are made on geographic location based on the addresses available to us at the time. Cell Groups are made up of eight to twelve families or households.

We hope this ministry will help us to show that we are a caring community of believers. We want to use our Pew Pads to determine when an active or regular member has missed a Sunday. Then they receive a short phone call by Monday evening to let them know they were missed. We want to contact inactive members at least once a month to let them know that we are concerned about them, even if they don't attend regularly.

Care Cell leaders will also be able to verify the accuracy of our records, as well as collect birth dates and anniversary dates so we can send cards to our members on these occasions.

Care Cell Groups are posted on the bulletin board in the hall near the library. We hope someone in each group will volunteer to be a Care Cell leader in each group. Sign your name beside your group if you are willing to be a leader. Leaders can pick up a more detailed list in the church office. Thanks in advance.



In addition to those projects that we have done within the local church, the Thrift Shop has given to the following:

- \* *The Emergency Fund*
- \* *Scholarship Fund*
- \* *Better Health of Cumberland County*
- \* *The Care Clinic*
- \* *Samaritan's Purse*
- \* *Salvation Army*
- \* *Red Cross*
- \* *The Care Center of Social Services*
- \* *Methodist Children's Home*
- \* *Methodist Benevolence Foundation*
- \* *Cure Americas*
- \* *Hinton Rural Life Center*
- \* *Honduras Mission*
- \* *UMCOR,*
- \* *Work First Program.*

Over **\$8,000** was given during the last year. Thanks to everyone who contributes time or materials and purchases. If you are not a part of this special mission project and would like to be, please contact Mary Schneider.

Mary Schneider, Chairperson  
Lee Anna Sproul, Co-Chairperson

### ONE - BY - ONE:



We are beginning the wind-down of this term. It is hard to think that May is just around the corner. The students have worked very hard. Report Cards show good progress. What we are trying to do is still working.

Our number of students and teachers has dropped. Quality still has priority. The students are happy. The teachers are doing a great job. We want to praise all of the folks who are participating.

### SENIOR COMPUTER CLASSES:

This is a joy! Guess what? As our Seniors learn what they want to know, they move on, and there are now more openings.

Anyone out  there interested?

Please contact me!

God bless You,  
Amy



The UMM met on January 18th at 8:30 a.m. for a delicious breakfast served and prepared by **J.A. Sessoms, Randy Caldwell** and **James DeBruhl**. There were 20 men present.

Devotion was given by **Calvin Rome**. "What is the right question" was the topic. If you have to think about, "is it right or wrong?", it is usually wrong. What is sin and what is not? Good question for us all to think about.

Our new officers for 2004 are **Wayne Everts, President, Douglas Stone, Vice President, Troy Willoughby, Secretary, Lyle Spidle, Treasurer, and Calvin Rome, Chaplin.**

Items of interest were discussed. **February 14th** is the date for the **Sweetheart Banquet**. Reservation forms were put in the bulletin for two weeks. This will give us an idea of how many people to expect. **Fred Rozier** and **Troy Willoughby** will prepare **Steak, Potato, and Salad.**

**Lynwood Griffin** spoke to the men about rebuilding and relocating the trash bin receptacle. This new receptacle area will look better in appearance than the old one. Maybe the air-conditioners will also be enclosed to make the church property more attractive.

The Thrift Shop workers for February will be **J.A. & Randy** on the 3rd Saturday and **Troy & Lucas** on the 4th Saturday. We are always looking for additional men to help in this project. Let us know if you will be willing to take a Saturday.

Troy Willoughby, UMM Secretary

### TEENS HELPING TEENS:

The sign out front of the church is beginning to help us bunches. **Thank you** to everyone who had a hand in getting the sign. We are still looking for more students to help and students who can help. This is a really good program. Remember, we meet on Thursday nights from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. If you know anyone who needs help or who can give help. Please pass the word. We appreciate it.

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



- |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 2 - Linda Webb        | 14 - Connie Knight |
| Sue Rutledge          | 20 - Marty Webb    |
| 4 - Mark Webb         | Calvin Rome        |
| 5 - Cathy Edwards     | Bob Probst         |
| 10 - Leigh Thomson    | 25 - Edna Galliera |
| 11 - Jean Biggs       | Julie Anderson     |
| 12 - Catherine Morgan | 27 - Raymond Gray  |
| 13 - J.A. Sessoms     |                    |

### GREAT NEWS FROM GOD'S TEENS!

We are only a month away from our **Mission Trip**. Our excitement just bubbles out of us. All of our plans are falling into perfect place. Please read all of our article.

We still need to have more teens sponsored for our Motel Rooms (only \$40.00 per person). We really need your help. In our hearts, we know that you believe in us. This mission gives us a chance to share with other teens who live in the mountains. This is an "**Outreach Ministry**" for us.

Our Two Fundraisers are really working out. Our "**40's & 50's Night**" is for everyone. It is not limited to our church, and visitors will be most welcome. We will have tickets for pre-sale at only \$6.00 per person. Remember, there will be an exhibit area of memorabilia from the era. If you have any items for display, please let us know. There will be a delicious meal, including **Chicken, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Green Beans, Rolls, and Dessert!** To really top off the evening, our favorite D.J., **Mr. Terry Jordan** will entertain us with music and dialogue. Dancing is encouraged. We promise a festive evening. Mark your calendars for **Friday, February 20th from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.**

The **Christian Mini-Cheerleading Camp** will be held **Saturday, February 21st, from 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.** Krystle will be giving a letter and sign-up forms to our K - 5th graders first. Registration is only \$5.00 per child. We will cut off admission at 40 children, first come, first served. We also plan to send materials to Cumberland UMC and Arran Lakes Baptist Church. Fred Horlebein is providing a free pizza lunch.

May God richly bless each of you for supporting our trip. We are growing as Christians, and we want to share that with others. Thank you for being there for us.



## SPECIAL OFFERINGS WERE GIVEN TO THE FOLLOWING FROM:

### EMERGENCY FUND

- ◆ Sunday Morning Bible Study Class
- ◆ Sunday Morning Bible Study in memory of Julia Agnew's brother
- ◆ Wayne & Elaine Everts
- ◆ Catherine Morgan's Secret Pal in honor of her birthday (Feb. 12)
- ◆ Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle

### GOD'S TEENS

- ◆ Fred & Mary Rozier

### CHURCH POWER BILL

- ◆ The Thrift Shop

### CHURCH YARD MAINTENANCE

- ◆ The Thrift Shop

## DESIGNATED FUNDS AS OF JANUARY 2004:

|                              |           |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Altar.....                   | 1,775.00  |
| ARP.....                     | 1,005.00  |
| Children's Music Fund.....   | 147.82    |
| Designated Gifts Misc.....   | 331.88    |
| Door.....                    | 285.00    |
| Education-Summer Camp.....   | 279.06    |
| Emergency Fund Gifts.....    | 2,453.69  |
| Frayed & Frazzled Flock..... | 45.00     |
| Flower Donations.....        | 225.00    |
| God's Teens.....             | 160.00    |
| Lawn Care Service.....       | 900.00    |
| Memorial Fund Gifts.....     | 545.00    |
| Music Funds.....             | 921.82    |
| Organ-Kersweil.....          | 8,069.73  |
| Scholarship Fund.....        | 3,857.20  |
| Trustee's.....               | 507.00    |
| Youth Retreats.....          | 74.00     |
| Trustee's Checking.....      | 1,183.02  |
| Building Fund.....           | 5,992.14  |
| Parsonage.....               | 86,742.52 |
| Rental.....                  | 9,434.82  |

## ATTENTION!!!

COPIES OF THE 2004  
ST. MATTHEW'S SCHEDULE  
OF EVENTS ARE LOCATED  
ON THE TABLE  
IN THE HALLWAY.



## UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

**RESCUE:** U.S. Missionaries, Jean and Gene Phillips lived through some of the most significant moments in African History of the last half century. When all else seemed to fail, God came through, sparing their lives, answering their prayers and showing them a way through the darkest nights.

**NICKEL AND DIMED: ON (NOT) GETTING BY IN AMERICA:** How does a person survive on \$6:00 - \$7.00 an hour? To find out, the author worked minimum wage jobs from Florida to Maine and Minnesota. She discovered that low pay work from Motel Maid to Dinner Table Server required exhausting effort.

**IN THE FOREST OF YOUR REMEMBRANCE:** A celebration of Faith, this book shows a personal account of 33 miraculous events the author has experienced. Through narratives, Gloria Jean Pinkney guides readers toward finding the Holy Spirit in their lives by searching the "forests of remembrance".

These are three of the new books that we have for the reading program. If you did not read last year, please consider joining us this year. Please join us on February 2nd at 7:00 p.m. to help plan for upcoming events.

Adella Pray, President UMW

### RUTH-ETHEL SMITH CIRCLE

We met in the Fellowship Hall on January 14th for our first meeting in 2004. The turn out was good. We began setting goals and making plans for the first quarter. We're looking forward to having a great year.

My special thanks to **Joyce Christian** for being Chairperson last year. A good job, Joyce. I'll miss you.

**Betty Jennings** has accepted the Secretary's position for another year, and **Anne Alred** will continue to be our Treasurer. We have a new officer this year. **Sherrie Leggett** has graciously taken the position as Co-Chairperson. Thank you Sherrie.

We welcome new members to our Circle. It's a wonderful way to get to know our Church ladies. So, come and join us on at our next meeting on February 11th at 11:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. You might wonder what took you so long to become a part of our group.

God's Blessings to everyone for a **Happy, Healthy, and Safe 2004!**

Catherine Morgan, Chairperson

### UPCOMING DATES:

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2**

**7:00 pm- UMW General Meeting**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 20**

**9:30 am—District Spiritual Day**

**Apart (We will be hosting**

**this meeting here at St.**

**Matthew's this year. So**

**please make plans to attend).**

### RECIPE OF THE MONTH

#### "APPLE CRUMB PIE"

#### INGREDIENTS:

Pastry for Single-Crust Pie (9 inches)  
6 cups peeled and chopped tart Apples  
(6 medium)  
2 Tbsp. Butter or Margarine, melted  
2 Tbsp. Sour Cream  
4 Tsp. Lemon Juice

1/2 Tsp. ground Cinnamon  
1/2 Tsp. ground Nutmeg  
1 Tbsp. All Purpose Flour  
1/2 cup Sugar

#### TOPPING:

1/4 cup cold Butter or Margarine  
1/2 cup All Purpose Flour  
1/2 cup Sugar

Line a 9-inch pie plate with pastry; flute edges. In a bowl, combine the apples, butter, sour cream, lemon juice, sugar, flour cinnamon, and nutmeg. Spoon into pastry shell. For topping, combine flour and sugar in a bowl; cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle over filling. Bake at 375 degrees for 45 to 50 minutes or until the filling is bubbly and the apples are tender. Cool on a wire rack. Yield: 6 to 8 servings.



## HONDURAS PROJECT UPDATE (AMBOS FOUNDATION)

On the November 10th, 2003, Gail Terwilliger and I departed with 10 other people on the 3rd Annual Mission Trip to the **Ambos Foundation** in **Sabana Grande, Honduras**. Sabana Grande a town of **3800 people** is located in the **Francisco Morozan District** about 45 kilometers from **Tegucigalpa** the capitol city. TGA as we know it is a relatively modern city of 3 million people with all of the amenities associated with a big city. **Burger King, Pizza Hut** and **Wendy's** are only a few of the hot spots lining the single runway airport.

After a days delay due to US Airways mess-up, we departed Miami arriving in TGA at 4:30 CST. We were met by **Memo** and **Savala** who transported us to the **Fabrica**, (a closed compound with a factory) where we stayed.

On the third day, our work commenced. We were to rehab a 30/60 ft. concrete building. Our first task was to repair approximately one third of a corrugated concrete and tile roof which had been taken off by Hurricane Mitch several years back. The building had set idle for approximately 35 years and belonged to the city of Tegucigalpa. Since they could not maintain it, they gave it to the town of Sabana Grande who in turn gave it to the Foundation with the understanding it would be refurbished and maintained. The children assisted in sanding the interior stucco walls and readied them for painting. We installed two four hundred gallon water storage tanks on the flat roof of one of the new bathrooms. The day labors dug a trench 60 feet breaking up the floor in order that we might put in the sewer and floor drain lines which emptied into the city sewer and street respectively. All the roll out windows were removed and cleaned and those broken or cracked were replaced. The nurses set up a small medical clinic in the main building and gave the **58 children** serviced by the center **pre-physicals** which were completed by a volunteer doctor from Sabana Grande. Gail and Linda went to TGA and purchased approximately **600 books** and they along with others painted the library, cleaned shelves and painted furniture. The books did not arrive prior to our departure, so Gail will return with Susan in February to complete that project. The interior of the building was painted with 3 coats, and the exterior (to include window bars) with 2 coats of paint. We installed **two commodes** and **lavatories** in the **bathrooms** after the trench was filled and concrete replaced. An **Internet Cafe** area was established in one section of the building and **twelve computer desks** were constructed. The computers complete were donated by the **Wachovia Bank of Morehead City, N.C.** They were to be shipped in December 2003.

The entire group met with the **Mayor of Sabana Grande** and Susan presented him with a certificate and letter from the **Mayor of Newport, N.C.** declaring them **Sister Cities**. They were accepted with great appreciation.

We attended a **Commemoration Service** at the Catholic Cathedral circa 1806 and were accepted with open arms.

We believe that the majority of the town knew of our presence as we were accepted and felt totally safe.

Without the generous donations of St. Matthew's **\$1291.00** and those funds raised outside the church **\$1230.00**, this mission could not have been accomplished. All help has been greatly appreciated, and we are sure God will look kindly on all.

Our prayer is that St. Matthew's will continue to excel and that we collectively can find it in our hearts to support a mission of our own members either in the states or a foreign country in the near future.

God speed,  
Bob Pray & Gail Terwilliger

# Review of St. Matthew's Giving for 2003

The Financial Secretary at St. Matthew's counts the weekly offerings and maintains the records of individual giving. I, Calvin Rome, have been the Financial Secretary since 2000. I also served as the Financial Secretary from 1994-1996. I am honored that the church continues to allow me to fill this position of trust. This is one of those jobs in the church where specifics are not discussed. However, once a year I have been reviewing the individual giving statistics and giving a general report to the congregation in order that you may better understand the state of individual giving in our church.

## Table of Family Giving

|      |      |     |
|------|------|-----|
| 8048 | 1505 | 512 |
| 8045 | 1500 | 510 |
| 6710 | 1473 | 500 |
| 6280 | 1458 | 485 |
| 6023 | 1441 | 390 |
| 6020 | 1410 | 370 |
| 5175 | 1400 | 350 |
| 4320 | 1320 | 340 |
| 4243 | 1300 | 330 |
| 4238 | 1262 | 310 |
| 3930 | 1130 | 305 |
| 3580 | 1125 | 300 |
| 3470 | 1090 | 282 |
| 3068 | 1060 | 279 |
| 3030 | 1050 | 275 |
| 2920 | 1040 | 240 |
| 2800 | 1020 | 225 |
| 2600 | 1010 | 206 |
| 2450 | 980  | 200 |
| 2206 | 930  | 193 |
| 2205 | 920  | 180 |
| 2000 | 905  | 167 |
| 1965 | 830  | 160 |
| 1960 | 680  | 150 |
| 1943 | 676  | 145 |
| 1820 | 620  | 140 |
| 1800 | 606  | 140 |
| 1685 | 600  | 137 |
| 1660 | 600  | 125 |
| 1611 | 600  | 125 |
| 1600 | 550  | 125 |
| 1525 | 540  | 119 |
| 1514 | 540  | 100 |

The Apostle Paul advised the Corinthians: "On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper..." (1 Cor 16:2). 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."

To the left is a table of the first 99 family giving units in the church that gave \$100 or more during 2003. There were another 25 who gave \$100 or less. These 124 family giving units include visitors some of whom only attended once during the year. The table also includes some members who have moved away but continue to faithfully support St. Matthew's. And there are also other members who for whatever reason gave nothing during 2003...

### Where do you fit on the table?

The amounts listed include all recorded giving of each family that was identified by name in some manner and placed in the offering plate. The totals also include donations for non-budgeted items such as Emergency Fund, Flowers, ARP Fund, Memorial Fund, Trustee Fund, Yard Service Fund, Special Offerings, Love Offerings, Scholarship Fund, Youth Mission Donations, Music Fund, etc.

As you can see, some members have given substantially to the church during 2003. We have an aging congregation and it continues to amaze me at the level of financial support coming from our retired members. I can just imagine the care and stewardship they gave to their financial planning during their main earning years in order that they may be able to continue supporting the mission of the church during their retirement. By just looking at the **Table of Family Giving**, you can easily see how the loss of support by just one or more members through death, sickness, transfer, job loss, etc could greatly affect the financial status of St. Matthew's.

St. Matthew's UMC has been blessed this past year. By budget percentages, 2003 was not quite as good for us financially as 2002. However, dollar-wise, we received over \$8000 more toward the 2003 budget than toward the 2002 budget; but our budget increased \$10,000 from 2002 to 2003. Also, you have given generously to non-budget items, such as the Door Fund (over \$6000), the Organ Replacement Fund, the Emergency Fund, the ARP Fund, etc.

In 2004, we have attempted to slow the budget increase by freezing all possible budget items. However, the budget has still increased over \$4000 because of "must fund" items such as insurance. Just like in our family budgets, each year there are unavoidable increases in our expenses.

We were blessed at the end of the year. When we were lacking \$2000 needed to finish paying our full apportionment for 2003, through your "extra mile" giving, we were able to fully pay our apportionment.

At the end of the year, I am occasionally asked if we aren't "really" using January's tithes to finish paying the previous year's expenses. Well, the church must use the donations in the manner designated by you. Having been your Financial Secretary for several years, I have a feel for the giving patterns of each family. And I can assure you that more than 85% of the money designated by members to finish paying the 2003 apportionment was really "extra mile" giving.

This brings me to another point that can be readily seen in the table below:

### Budget Comparison 1992-2004

|                       | 2004         | 2003      | 2002      | 2001      | 2000      | 1999      | 1998      | 1997      | 1996      | 1995      | 1994     | 1993     | 1992     |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>Annual Budget</b>  | \$153,502    | \$149,353 | \$139,284 | \$154,692 | \$148,833 | \$143,153 | \$118,924 | \$115,291 | \$111,315 | \$103,232 | \$99,500 | \$93,502 | \$93,731 |
| <b>Needed Weekly</b>  | \$2952       | \$2,872   | \$2,679   | \$2,975   | \$2,862   | \$2,753   | \$2,287   | \$2,217   | \$2,141   | \$1,985   | \$1,913  | \$1,798  | \$1,803  |
| <b>Average Weekly</b> | \$2183       | \$2,731   | \$2,576   | \$2,339   | \$2,526   | \$2,514   | \$2,137   | \$1,950   | \$2,023   | \$1,691   | \$1,785  | \$1,624  | \$1,695  |
| <b>Weekly Deficit</b> | \$769        | \$141     | \$103     | \$636     | \$336     | \$239     | \$150     | \$267     | \$118     | \$294     | \$128    | \$174    | \$108    |
|                       | Year to Date |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |          |          |          |
| <b>Received EOY</b>   |              | \$142,025 | \$133,929 | \$121,605 | \$131,338 | \$130,715 | \$111,132 | \$101,384 | \$105,202 | \$87,931  | \$92,840 | \$84,456 | \$88,131 |
| <b>Deficit EOY</b>    |              | \$7,328   | \$5,355   | \$33,087  | \$17,495  | \$12,438  | \$7,792   | \$13,907  | \$6,113   | \$15,301  | \$6,660  | \$9,046  | \$5,600  |
| <b>%Received EOY</b>  |              | 95.1%     | 96.2%     | 78.6%     | 88.2%     | 91.3%     | 93.4%     | 87.9%     | 94.5%     | 85.2%     | 93.3%    | 90.3%    | 94.0%    |

We have started off 2004 poorly. We already have a budget deficit of over \$3000 just in the month of January. The weekly offering has averaged a shortage of \$769 per week. We are trying to hold the line on the church expenses but the costs of operating the church simply increases each year. It is tempting to blame our poor January beginning on our Altar Fund pledge drive to remodel the altar area. The purpose of a pledge drive like this is to determine the willingness of the congregation to accept the project with "extra mile" giving. The congregation has pledged \$4846. That tells me you are willing. To date, we have received \$1775 toward that pledge. I can assure you that practically 100% of this amount has been "extra mile" giving, above and beyond what each member has normally given toward the budget.

In 1 Corinthians we are told: **"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."** (1Cor 9:6-7). As I have said, I have a feel for each family's giving pattern. Many members have been giving the same amount faithfully for several years. Are you one of these faithful? It is the responsibility of each of us to periodically reevaluate our financial stewardship. When was the last time that you prayerfully considered the amount that you are giving each week or each month?

CALVIN ROME  
FINANCIAL SECRETARY

***Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing.***  
(Malachi 3:10)

# FEBRUARY

# ST. MATTHEW'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

# 2004

| Sunday  | Monday  | Tuesday                                | Wednesday   | Thursday   | Friday   | Saturday   |
|---|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| <b>1</b><br>SS Teachers Break-Fast Mtg. - 8:30am<br><br>UMYF - 4:00pm<br>Praise Team - 5:30pm | <b>2</b><br><br>One-By-One & UMW General Mtg. - 7pm                 | <b>3</b><br><br>Prayer Group - 7:00pm  | <b>4</b><br><br>Card Ministry - 5:00pm<br>WNA & B.Study-6:30pm<br>Choir Practice - 7:30pm   | <b>5</b><br><br>THT - 7:00pm                         | <b>6</b><br><br>Lay Speaker Camp               | <b>7</b><br><br>Retreat<br>Rockfish                              |
| <b>8</b><br><br>UMYF - 4:00pm   | <b>9</b><br><br>One-By-One - 7:00pm                                 | <b>10</b><br><br>Prayer Group - 7:00pm | <b>11</b><br>Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle - 11:00 am<br><br>Card Ministry - 5:00pm<br>WNA & B.Study-6:30pm<br>Choir Practice - 7:30pm                        | <b>12</b><br><br>Night Owls Circle & THT - 7:00pm    | <b>13</b><br><br>THT - 7:00pm                  | <b>14</b><br>FFF - 10:00am<br><br>Sweetheart Banquet 6:00pm      |
| <b>15</b><br>UMM Breakfast Mtg. - 8:30am<br><br>UMYF - 4:00pm                                 | <b>16</b> Presidents' Day<br><br>OFFICE CLOSED<br><br>NO One-By-One | <b>17</b><br><br>Prayer Group - 7:00pm | <b>18</b><br>Home Extensions-9:30am<br><br>Card Ministry - 5:00pm<br>WNA & B.Study-6:30pm<br>Choir Practice-7:30pm                                      | <b>19</b><br><br>THT - 7:00pm                        | <b>20</b><br><br>40's & 50's Night 7:00-9:00pm | <b>21</b><br><br>Christian Cheerleading Mini-Camp 10:00am-2:00pm |
| <b>22</b><br><br>Donation Spaghetti Lunch - 12:00pm<br><br>UMYF - 4:00pm                      | <b>23</b><br><br>One-By-One - 7:00pm                                | <b>24</b><br><br>Prayer Group - 7:00pm | <b>25</b><br><br>Card Ministry - 5:00pm<br>WNA & B.Study-6:30pm<br>Choir Practice-7:30pm<br><br>Card Ministry - 5:00pm<br>Ash Wednesday Service 7:00 pm | <b>26</b><br>Help'N Hands - 11am<br><br>THT - 7:00pm | <b>27</b><br><br>THT - 7:00pm                  | <b>28</b><br>FFF Book Club @ Pizza Palace - 11:30am              |
| <b>29</b><br><br>Old Fashion Sunday<br><br>Covered Dish Supper - 6:00pm                       |   |  |   |  |  |  |