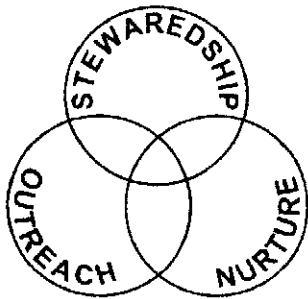


St. Matthew's UMC
202 Hope Mills Rd.
Fayetteville NC 28304



St. Matthew's 25 Challenge

Office 910-425-0401 • Fax 910-425-9393
Website stmattnc.org • E-mail stmattumc@stmattnc.org



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

Volume V

MARCH 2005

Issue 4

ARE AMERICANS, INCLUDING METHODISTS & OUR CHURCH, STINGY?

Following is an article from the *NC Christian Advocate*, 1/25/05 by our conference Director of Connectional Ministries, Charles Michael Smith, as well as a few comments of my own in brackets [].

"A few days after the St. Stephen's Day a Tsunami devastated a large portion of coastal Southern Asia and even some of Somalia in Africa, an unnamed United Nations official used the work "stingy" in response to the United States government's pledge of \$35 million in relief. Why would anyone say such a thing about us? Well, Spain had already promised \$65 million, and later Japan beat that by a bunch. Later, after an international storm about our penury offer started brewing, we multiplied our gift by 10 and our latest pledge is \$350 million. That sounds much better when you consider that estimates of the total damage exceed \$13 billion.

"**This unparalleled disaster has raised the question across the world about how generous the world's richest nation truly is when it comes to sharing our wealth with others.** True, we are the largest contributor to the United Nations, but when we are compared with other members based on what percentage of our Gross National Product we fork over, we are near the bottom. Likewise, our foreign aid program is criticized by analysts for being puny unless we have military or oil interests in the recipient nation. And these criticisms are not

new; they have been around through several administrations.

"My fear is that what is happening with our government's generosity only mirrors what is taking place on a personal level. **Tithers are a rare breed within our churches, despite biblical endorsement and United Methodist policy ('tithing is the minimum goal of giving in The UMC,' paragraph 629.5, 2004 Book of Discipline),** and many of them are members of Tom Brokaw's Greatest Generation which is rapidly dying out. **Our average gift in United Methodist churches represents less than 2% of the donor's annual income.** And what we fail to practice in our religious life has a way of influencing our secular life as well... [*Or maybe we are so secular that it influences our religious life. In the North Carolina Annual Conference for the year 2003 with a total membership of 234,056, spent \$140,112,197 for all causes. This translates to \$598.63 per member. (This includes children, teens and inactive members in the church.) The total giving at St. Matthew's for all causes in 2003 was \$155,056.27 divided by a membership of 332 was \$466.98. We are not even average in our giving. The great majority of this money we spend on ourselves, not others.*]

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

"German Theologian and Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, martyred by Hitler in the last days of WWII, picked up on this idea as he taught and preached and spoke of **Jesus as "the man for others."** He influenced my generation of preachers to go out and proclaim that message to our congregations and to try and lead them in following Jesus Christ into whose life and death and resurrection we had all been baptized. Our nation, and our churches, along with all people of good will, have a Marshall Plan-like opportunity to do something wonderful for others in the wake of the tsunami simply because it's the right thing to do. And for those of us in churches, it's also the Christ-like thing to do. I'm betting our churches will lead our country in the greatest outpouring of generosity the world has ever seen. Wouldn't that be a great way to start this year of our Lord?" [This crisis will be a continuing issue not simply an opportunity to **make a one time gift and forget it.** When we do that we are not being generous, we are simply trying to ease our conscience. When we give out of what we have left over and from what is extra, we are giving for our own benefit. **I must admit that your giving for others has increased dramatically in the last four years at St. Matthew's.** We could do more. But when we are offering to God and others in need no more than 2% of our incomes as United Methodist and even less as members

Our Mission at St.

Matthew's UMC was established by the risen Lord when he told us, "Go make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have Commanded you;" "be my witnesses" and "preach the gospel to the whole creation." Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16: 15, Acts 1:8.

*of St. Matthew's UMC we have a long way to go. Scripture tells us that we have not even made a free will offering until we have exceeded the tithe or 10% of our incomes. If you are a child, teen or college student this means 10% of what you earn plus your allowance. Married women often say they don't earn much, so their gift is small, One woman I know went to her husband and told him she would like to tithe her half of the family money an amazingly he agreed. Someone recently talked to me about giving 10% of their Income Tax Refund to the Church. I don't know about you, but I make it a point of give beyond the tithe and I still feel selfish and stingy when I look at all I have and the great needs of others. What do you think, **"Are Americans, including Methodists & our church, stingy?" What about you, personally?** When you sit down and look at what you are going to deny yourself in order to give something to others after your tithe, you can consider your self a generous person. What great joy and abundance would we experience personally and as a church if we were truly generous?]*

Shalom,

Mike

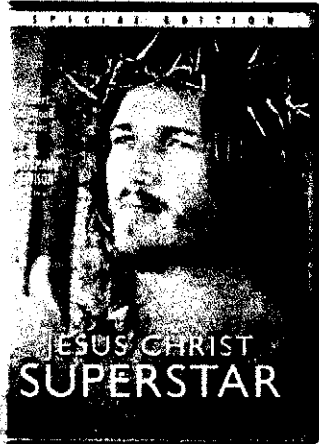
Our Vision at St.

Matthew's UMC is for God's grace in Christ to transform our lives and Church through exciting, creative ministries that embody St. Matthew's 25 Challenge by faithfully serving the poor, hungry, naked, imprisoned, sick and strangers in our own community , as if ministering to Christ himself, for Jesus said, "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it unto me." Matthew 25:40

Holy Week JESUS Film Festival

St. Matthew's UMC - Sunday March 20th - Saturday March 26th

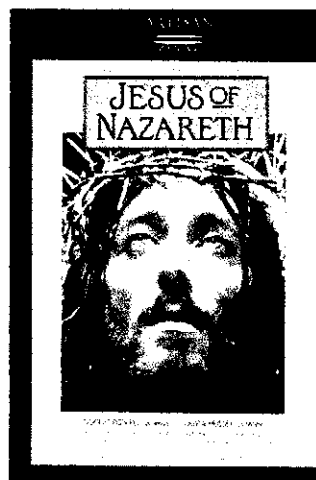
Holy Week is the culmination of the Lenten Season of self examination and denial. This event will help us to immerse ourselves in images of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. Many have been reading John Piper's *The Passion of Christ* and this week will add to the impact. We will start each evening at 6:30 p.m. and have a brief ten minute intermission with refreshments during each film in order to avoid being out too late. Holy Thursday we will have a special celebration of Holy Communion. Saturday afternoon we will show one of the longer films at 4:00 p.m. with an intermission for a light supper and return for the remainder of the film followed by a brief Easter Vigil Candlelight Service. We have the video licenses to show these films and look forward to sharing the experience with you. St. Matthew's UMC welcomes visitors to join us for this meaningful Holy Week experience. We are located at 202 Hope Mills Rd, Fayetteville, NC. Call 425-0401 for more information.



Jesus Christ: Superstar is a Norman Jewison's screen adaptation of the Andrew Lloyd Webber - Tim Rice "rock opera," which was a smash on stage in the early '70s. "Though it may seem dated, it is still a film worth

checking out. It is visually incredible. The sunsets over the Israeli deserts are awesome. The music is still some of the best work Andrew Lloyd Webber has written, as well as the lyrics of Tim Rice. The performances are incredible, notably Carl Anderson as Judas and Ted Neely as Jesus." **Arthur J. Perez Review** My favorite is the Gethsemane scene where the music and cinematography stirs up some real passion.

Jesus of Nazareth "originally made for TV in 1977, is an in-depth version of Jesus' life is so thorough that ... it doesn't skimp on some of the landmark events of this famous biblical story. Director Franco Zeffirelli gives more than 12 minutes screen time each to the Last Supper and the Crucifixion. Passages of the Bible are quoted



verbatim, the locations have a Palestine-like authenticity. It stars Robert Powell as Jesus, Olivia Hussey as Mary, and Stacy Keach as Barabbas, and many of the non-Roman characters are actually played by Semitic-looking actors." --*Kimberly Heinrichs* -



"CBS produced the television miniseries **Jesus**, which not only retells the biblical story, but takes a look at the more human side of the man. Jeremy Sisto stars... overall he is surprisingly convincing. Beginning with an adult Jesus, who works

with his father as a carpenter, the program traces his life and death through resurrection. The strong supporting cast, including Jacqueline Bisset as Mary, Gary Oldman as Pontius Pilate, and Debra Messing as Mary Magdalene, lends to the credibility of the miniseries. This is a satisfying retelling of the life of Jesus and will please those who want new ways to explore biblical stories, as *Jesus* not only reinforces the ideals of the New Testament but shows Jesus as a complex individual" --*Jenny Brown*

Remember, all films are an artistic interpretation and expression of the author, screen writers, directors and actors. Sometimes they are not historically accurate but they make us think about Jesus from differing points of view.



The Greatest Story Ever Told

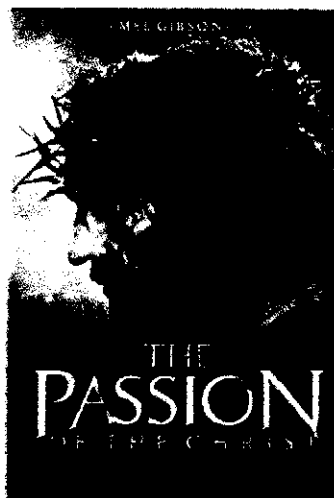
is a 1965 film directed by George Stevens about the life of Christ. "Max von Sydow does beautiful work as Jesus --his spontaneous mourning at discovering his friend Lazarus has died is not like anything in other New Testament epics--and

Stevens renders the familiar tale with a handsome authenticity.... Seemingly half of Hollywood's living stars at the time make brief (often very brief) cameo appearances. But there is a lot to like in the film, and Von Sydow's sensitive nobility sticks in the memory." --Tom Keogh -- This film is often compared with the 1961 "King of Kings", and "Jesus of Nazareth".

THE Jesus Film, "is an evangelistic movie shown around the world (the DVD has a choice of about 8 languages) of the highlights of the ministry of Jesus, according to the *Gospel of Luke*. It is a very well produced and acted



documentary, bringing dramatic visual imagery to biblical scripture. Intended to introduce people of all nations to Jesus, it should also appeal to those Christians who appreciate adding another dimension to their biblical experience." **E R Huber** This is a part of The Jesus Film Project and the people who produced this film are interested in evangelism world wide. Imagine using a generator to power a projector to show this film on a giant screen in the middle of Africa and other remote places in the world to share the Good news. Thousands have accepted Jesus as their Savior and Lord because of this project. What a tremendous ministry to the world.

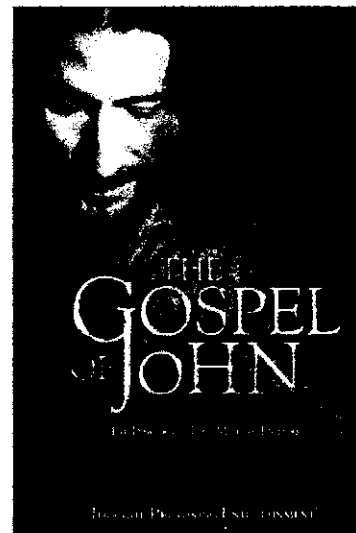


"After all the controversy and rigorous debate has subsided, Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* will remain a force to be reckoned with. An Interpretation of the final 12 hours in the life of Jesus, is scripted almost directly from the gospels and spoken in Aramaic and Latin with a relative minimum of

subtitles. For Christians and non-Christians alike, this film does not "entertain," and it's not a film that one can "like" or "dislike" in any conventional sense. Rather, *The Passion* is a cinematic experience that serves an almost singular purpose: to show the scourging and death of Jesus Christ in such horrifically graphic detail that even non-believers may feel a twinge of sorrow and culpability in witnessing the final moments of the Son of God, played by Jim Caviezel in a performance that's not so much acting as a willful act of submission, so intense that some will weep not only for Christ, but for Caviezel's unparalleled test of endurance." --Jeff Shannon

The Gospel of John

"is an ambitious motion picture that has been adapted for the screen on a word for word basis from the American Bible Society's *Good News Translation™ Bible*. The story of Jesus' life as recounted by His disciple John, This motion picture follows the Gospel precisely, neither adding to the story from other Gospels, nor omitting complex passages. John is the best-loved but least understood of the gospels, presenting a uniquely human portrait of Jesus. " gospelofjohnthefilm.com



UMs' contributions for tsunami aid reach \$2 million

By Elliott Wright
INFORMATION OFFICER OF THE UNITED
METHODIST BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES

NEW YORK (UMNS) — United Methodist contributions to tsunami relief in the Indian Ocean region reached \$2 million as of Jan. 10, as officials continued processing donations.

The figure incorporates the total of what has been given by online and telephone credit-card donations but only part of the boxes of checks received, according to Roland Fernandes, treasurer of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, the parent organization of the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

"We have deposited checks dated through Dec. 31, 2004, totaling \$755,000," Fernandes said. "We continue to receive checks for 2004. We have begun to process mail contributions for 2005. Hundreds of checks are being received each day."

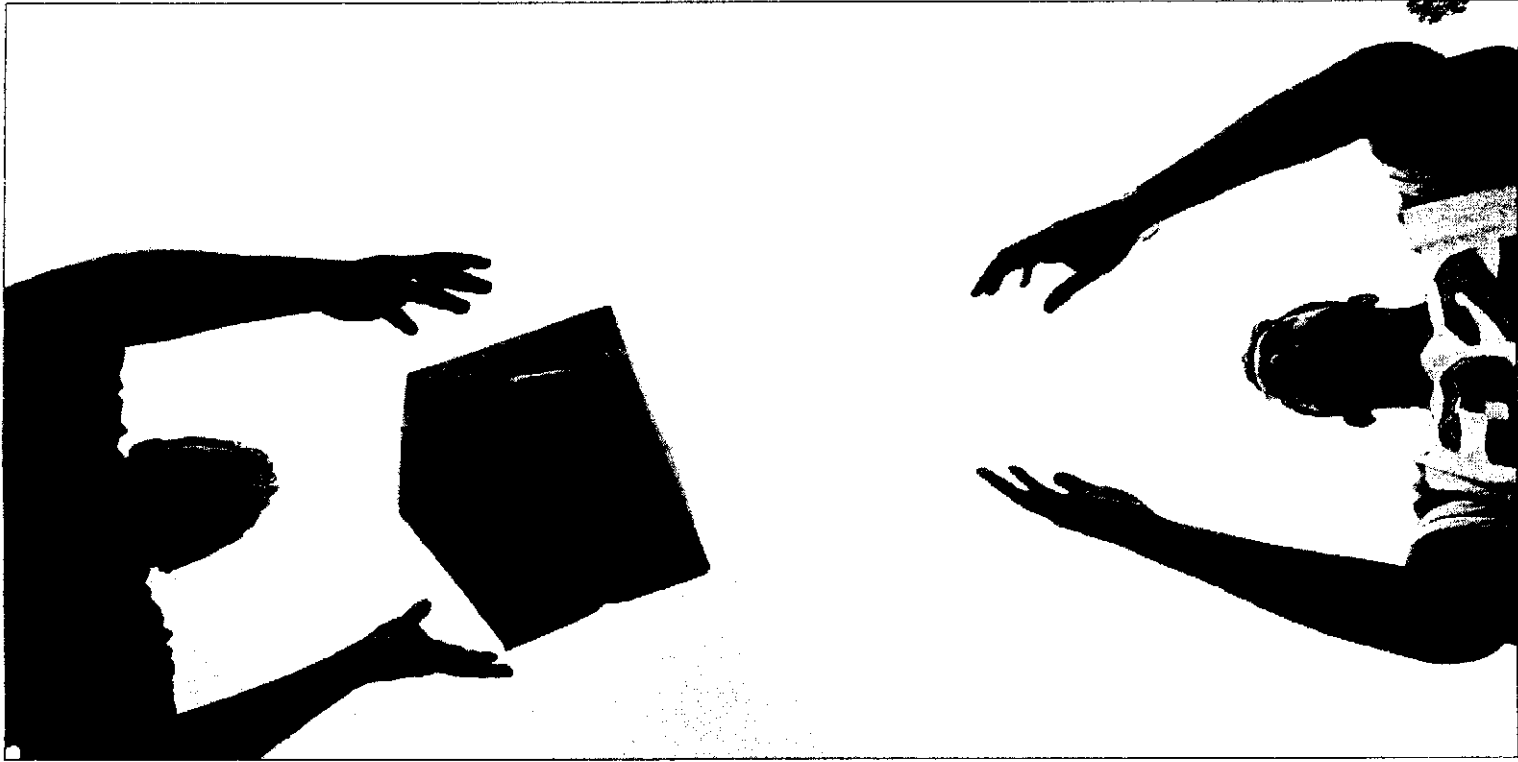
Fernandes also offered a reminder that the Internal Revenue Service of the U.S. government will allow January donations to tsunami relief to be counted as 2004 charitable contributions.

"Donors can decide whether they want their contribution to go into the 2004 tax year or apply it to 2005, so long as the gift is made by Jan. 31," he said.

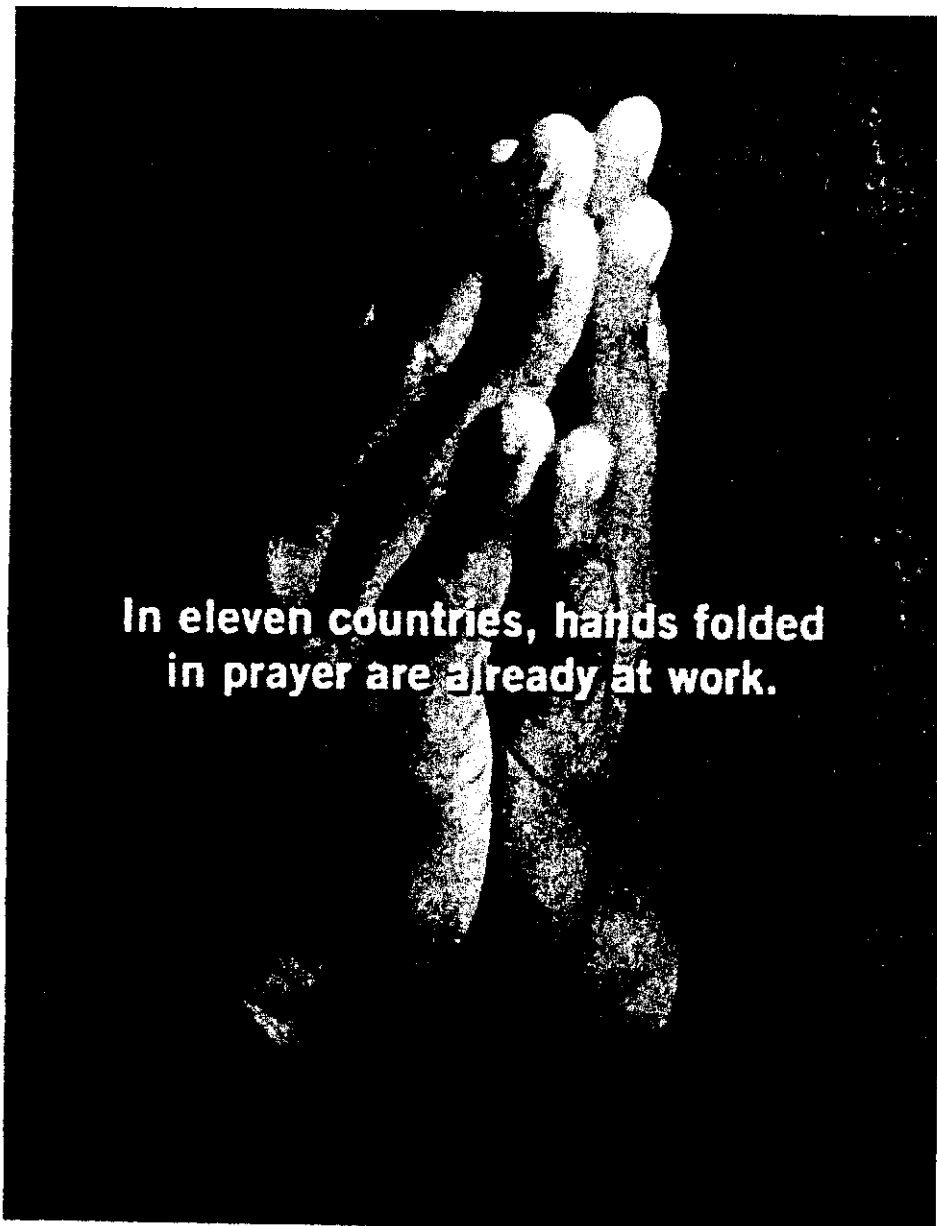
Donations to UMCOR's "South Asia Emergency" relief efforts can be placed in local church offering plates or sent directly to UMCOR, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 330, New York, NY 10115. Designate checks for UMCOR Advance #274305 and "South Asia Emergency." Online donations can be made at www.methodistrelief.org. Those making credit-card donations can call (800) 554-8583.

One hundred percent of the money donated to "South Asia Emergency" goes to that relief effort.

Church volunteers unload relief supplies, including boxes of biscuits, at a Methodist church in Trincomalee, Sri Lanka.



A UMNS PHOTO BY PAUL JEFFREY, ACT INTERNATIONAL



**In eleven countries, hands folded
in prayer are already at work.**

The world is feeling a loss as big as any in history. Generations erased. Entire communities swept away. The destruction the people from South Asia to East Africa are enduring is almost beyond belief and understanding. And as the families of those affected by the recent tsunami remain in our heartfelt prayers, the people of The United Methodist Church are putting those hands of prayer to work.

Because this disaster is not just this week's news story or a headline soon to be forgotten. It is about people struggling to put lives, families, and communities back to-

gether. Finding hope that comes from knowing that, with God, they are not alone. Knowing that prayer, money, and skilled hands will be there for as long as it takes to stop the pain and ease the memories.

We ask that you join us, and millions around the world, to give to those who have lost so much. Through your local United Methodist church, through our international partner organizations, and through the United Methodist Committee on Relief. Through whatever means, let your prayers and generosity be felt across the world.



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church™

Give your contribution to any United Methodist Church and designate it for "South Asia Relief."

This message brought to you by the neighborhood United Methodist churches in the North Carolina and the Western North Carolina Conferences.

<http://www.ncumc.org>

For more information:
<http://www.wncumc.org>

<http://www.MethodistRelief.org>

MARCH BIRTHDAYS



- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1 - Charles Lucas | 26 - Sherrie Leggett |
| 9 - Jeff Anderson | 29 - Carolyn Davis |
| 11 - Dejah Anderson | 31 - Brandi Makarov |
| 13 - Ginger Sessoms | |
| 24 - Wayne Hager | |
| Harold Taylor | |

Conference Confirmation Celebration; Fuquay Varina UMC With Bishop Al Gwinn

Saturday March 12th: 10:00am - 1:00pm

We have two or three young people who are beginning to work toward Confirmation and Membership in St. Matthew's UMC, which will be celebrated Easter Sunday. These young people will begin meeting with the pastor during Sunday School starting Sunday March 6th for the "Claim the Name Confirmation" study. One part of our experience will be attending the Conference Confirmation Celebration at Fuquay Varina UMC with Bishop Al Gwinn.



FAYETTEVILLE DISTRICT LAY RALLY

Sunday, March 20th
3-5 p.m.

This will be a great time to hear our new bishop and support those in the congregation who have gone through Lay Speaker training. St. Matthew's will also be recognized as a Rainbow Covenant Church because we paid all our apportionments and gave extra in fine lanes of Advance Giving: World, National Missionary Support, UMCOR, and Conference Advance Specials. Hopefully, we will be well represented because they always take a count of the number of people attending from each church.

SPECIAL OFFERINGS WERE GIVEN TO THE FOLLOWING FROM:

CHURCH POWER BILL

- ♦ The Thrift Shop

EMERGENCY FUND

- ♦ Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle
- ♦ The Thrift Shop
- ♦ Sunday Morning Bible Study Class
- ♦ Paul & Jewel Sharpe

LAWN CARE SERVICE

- ♦ United Methodist Men
- ♦ The Thrift Shop

SUMMER YOUTH BREAKAWAY

- ♦ Wayne & Elaine Everts

MARCH FLOWER CHART

6 - In honor of Charles Lucas' birth
day by Ruby Lucas

13 - In honor of Jesse Caldwell's
birthday by Ruth Caldwell

20 -

27 - In memory of Rhoda Wilson by
Ruth Caldwell

The "2005 Flower Chart" still has
spaces available for you to sign-up to
give recognition to a friend or loved
one. Flowers are only \$20.00. Please
make your check out to St. Matthew's
UMC and put "flowers" in the memo
section and place in the offering plate.



During the month of February, we have been able to help several families with needed items. Your efforts to provide goods to sell and your willingness to work at the shop makes this is all possible. Keep up the **Good Work and Thanks** for everything.

Contributions were made to the following:

- * Card Ministry
- * Church Power Bill
- * Yard Maintenance
- * South African Zulu

- * Amy-Jo Everts Mission Trip
- * Bed and Bread Club
- * Highland Chapter of the Red Cross
- * Safe Haven Care Center
- * Emergency Fund
- * Children's Home

Lee Anna Sproul, Chairperson

FRAYED & FRAZZLED FLOCK:

We will not meet on March 19th for **Cooking** and the **Book Club**, instead we will meet for both on March 26th. We will be reading **"Every Storm"** by Lori Wick. We have had several requests from people wanting our recipe for "Taco Soup". I hope you enjoy it!

TACO SOUP RECIPE:

- 1 pound Ground Beef (Browned)
- 1 can Corn
- 1 can Diced Tomatoes
- 1 can Kidney or Chili Beans
- 1 package Taco Seasoning
- 1 package Hidden Valley Ranch Dressing

Mix all ingredients together. Makes about 4 servings. Double as needed. Simmer in Crock Pot all day or about 30-45 minutes in a Soup Pot.



ONE-BY-ONE:

A special "Thank You" to all my new volunteers. I was deeply touched by all the support. Our calendar is as follows for the rest of the school year.

- March 7 & 21
- April 4, 11, 18 & 25
- May 2, 9, 16 & 23 (Last one)



There were **16** men present for our February Meeting. A delicious breakfast was prepared by **Doug Stone** and **Troy Willoughby**. Randy Caldwell, our regular cook was in the VA Hospital for treatment.

Calvin Rome gave a devotion on **"This is the Victory"**, from the Book of Devotion for the Armed Forces. The Scripture was from **Psalms 46** and **1 John 5: 4**. Keep the faith for that is the victory.

Business discussed was the **"Mother's Day Service"**. The men will fill the choir and the pulpit on that day. We need all our men for that event and hope all our members will attend. The other item discussed was the need for a large coffee maker. It should be in the kitchen by next month.

On February 12th, we had our annual **"Sweetheart Banquet"** for all of St. Matthew's Sweethearts, Wives and Daughters. There were **75** in attendance. I think everyone enjoyed the meal and the entertainment by our own **Morgan Edwards**. She was great! Her sound technician was **Peter Rome**. The St. Matthew's Family should be very proud of our youth and what they are doing for us and their work for our God. This includes the great effort of their parents. I know we are traveling the path Jesus is leading. Let's hope we can continue to follow.

Many thanks to **Douglas Stone** for organizing this years event. His leadership and organizational skills were put to the test on that night and he did an outstanding job. His helpers were **Wayne Everts** and **Pam Gallimore** who were in charge of the decorations, the **FFF** ladies who prepared the desserts, the **Youth** who were the servers, and **Troy** and **Fred** who cooked the steaks and washed the dishes. A special thanks to all the people who made this event so special. This is just our way to say **"Thank You"** for supporting us in our projects.

There were guests from out of town who told me their men did not have any function to honor their Sweethearts. Thanks to people like **Frank Bagley**, **Perry Smith**, **Hank Zielinski**, **W.A. Stewart** and many others who began this some **30** years ago and still continues today. If I failed to mention any one, I apologize. I have only been at St. Matthew's for 18 years.

Yours Respectively,
Troy Willoughby, UMM Secretary



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

As we **"come to the Potter"** for molding, for strength, for healing and for love; and are nurtured, let us remember that we are vessels of clay in the hands of the Potter. A very special **thank you** to **Cliff** and **Catherine Morgan, Dr. Hale** and **Doris** for helping to get the **"2005 UMW Handbook"** ready. If you have not received your copy, please see me. Catherine has copies for the Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle members. As you use the prayer calendar, you will note that July - December is not finished. I would like for you to fill-in your individual

calendar.

Adella Pray, UMW President

This months special prayer request is for:

Sook Hee Yoo

846 Beechwood Road

Havertown, Pa. 19083

Email - SOOKHEEY@hotmail.com

Her Birthday - March 7

RUTH-ETHEL SMITH CIRCLE:

We Circle met Wednesday, February 9th at 11:00 a.m. We had a great turn out and acquired one new member, **Karola Spell**. We welcome Karola in the name of the Lord. It is always a delight to have another UM lady join with us in our efforts to reach out to help someone.

Jean Lambert and **Dorothy Spakes** were our Hostess. They invited **Karen Flom** from **Urban Ministry** to speak to us on their needs and what is being done in that area. It sounded like a worthwhile project for us. The needs there are many and we voted to take **Urban Ministry** for our **March Project**. We will be purchasing **Underwear, Socks, Blankets, or Personal Items** for Adult Men. The **UMW Handbooks** has been completed. I think you will find this book helpful to you as we go through the years. I hope you will read it and become familiar with what is being done, as well as enlighten us all to reach out a little further in our spiritual ways. Our next meeting will be **March 9th at 11:00 a.m.** in the **Fellowship Hall**. After a short business meeting, we will go to **Sammio's** on Raeford Road for fellowship and lunch. Anyone who has not joined our circle, is welcome to join us. Call me at 425-6207 and I will get you a reserved seat. May God bless everyone during this most Holy Season.

Catherine Morgan, Chairperson

DATES TO REMEMBER:

March 4 - Church Women
United World Day of
Prayer

March 19 - District Spirit
tual Day Apart

April 23 - Conference
Racial Justice Work
Shop, Ashley UMC,
Smithfield

May 6 - Church Women
United May Friendship
Day

May 7 - Mother-Daughter
Banquet, 6:00 pm

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

"PARMESAN ALMOND PASTA TOSS"

16 ounce Box of Pasta (your choice)

1/4 cup Shredded Parmesan Cheese

1/2 cup Slivered Almonds

1/2 tsp Italian Seasoning Blend

1/3 cup extra Virgin Olive Oil

2 Cloves Garlic, minced



Cook pasta according to package directions; drain. In a large skillet, lightly brown almonds in olive oil over medium heat, stirring often. Add Italian seasoning and garlic. Stir until garlic is translucent. Add drained pasta to oil and seasonings in skillet. Toss to coat. Add cheese. Toss gently. Garnish with additional cheese if desired. Serve warm. For a hearty main dish, add grilled chicken. Makes 4 servings

YUM! YUM!

MARCH

ST. MATTHEW'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2005

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Prayer Group – 6:30pm	2 Card Ministry – 5:00pm WNA & B.Study-6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	3	4	5
6	7 UMW Mtg. – 6:30pm One-By-One – 7:00pm	8 Prayer Group – 6:30pm	9 Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle - 11:00am Card Ministry – 5:00pm WNA & B.Study-6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	10 Night Owls Circle – 7:00pm	11	12 Confirmation Celebration
13 UMYF – 12:00pm	14 One-By-One – 7:00pm	15 Prayer Group – 6:30pm	16 Home Extensions-10am Card Ministry – 5:00pm WNA & B.Study-6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	17	18	19 East Egg Hunt – 2:00pm
20 UMM Breakfast Mtg. – 8:30am UMYF – 12:00pm Dist. Lay Rally at Salem UMC – 2:30-4:30pm Covered Dish Supper – 6:00pm	21 NO One-By-One	22 Prayer Group – 6:30pm	23 Card Ministry – 5:00pm WNA & B.Study-6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	24 Help'N Hands Senior Group – 11:00am HOLY THURSDAY SERVICE 7:00pm	25	26 FFF – 8:30am Book Club – 11:30 a.m.
27 EASTER Sunrise Service – 6:30am Donation Breakfast to follow	28 One-By-One – 7:00pm	29 Prayer Group – 6:30pm	30 Card Ministry – 5:00pm WNA & B.Study-6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	31		