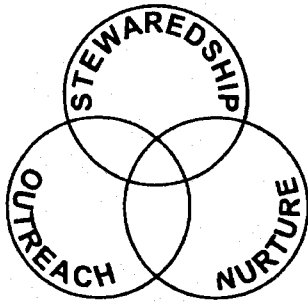


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St. Matthew's 25 Challenge

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



Volume V

AUGUST 2005

Issue 8

THE BODY OF CHRIST: A CELEBRATION

What a joy it is to be back from my pilgrimage in Europe. It was truly one of the most amazing experiences of my life. But I want to focus on St. Matthew's as a Church. My experience of the last five and a half years has been challenging and meaningful as your pastor. I came to you after thirty years as a minister under appointment in The United Methodist Church with a wide range of experiences in local churches as a pastor and as a ministry consultant through my work with Methodist Home for Children. I have also ministered to churches through my own non profit faith based ministry, The PEACE, over the past twenty years.

I came to St. Matthew's with the intention of staying five month's not five years. When asked by members of the congregation to accept this church as an appointment, I wrote a document called "I Believe" (on our website) which outlined my basic beliefs about church and ministry in the name of Jesus Christ. I wanted to do local church ministry differently from the traditional approach and the way I had served in the past. So much so, I frequently tell people here that "You don't know the natural me that I have been most of my life, only the me I have tried to be with God's help, to fulfill my calling to this church." My hearts desire was to become the spiritual leader of a congregation of people who desired to fulfill what the Scripture calls the Church under the Lordship of Christ. **I celebrate that you are becoming that kind of Church.**

Bishop Marion Edwards led us toward becoming a transformational church and now Bishop Alfred Gwinn arrives with a specific plan to help us move in that direction. How blessed I feel to have served under two Bishops who were providing Episcopal leadership in the very direction I felt God led to move.

The next great blessing is you, the people of St. Matthew's, who have responded to this call of transformation and renewal. You were already blessed with three very capable people who have gone through Lay Speaker training when I came. In the past five years we have added ten more to that group of local lay speakers. In our local church ministry structure, we have moved to an even stronger lay led ministry. Our outreach to the community, conference, national and international ministries has grown significantly. Our stewardship and financial support is the best in the history of our church because of your faithful commitment. **I celebrate your efforts.**

When I proposed the idea of my month long pilgrimage to the Pastor Parish Ministry Team and received their support and encouragement, two of our Certified Lay Speakers volunteered to fill the pulpit two of the four Sundays I would be gone. Shortly after the news was out, I had two more volunteers. The Saturday before I left, a church member called and said, "Go on your pilgrimage and don't worry about a thing back here, we'll take care of everything. And I'm not sure we could have

handled a pastor being gone a month before you came here as our pastor."

With a most grateful heart, I celebrate what you are becoming as a Church. Maybe a bit out of context I can say with St. Paul, *"Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it". (I Corinthians 12:27)* Bishop Gwinn is challenging us as pastors who lead churches to move from the traditional roles of spectators and recipients of ministries from pastors and professional staff to vital congregations where all members are ministers who are supported and under girded by the spiritual leadership of pastors and professional staff.

I celebrate what you are becoming because this is exactly what St. Paul is trying to tell the church in Ephesians 4:11-16, when he says, *"And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature adulthood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love."*

It is interesting that pastors I told about how prepared our laity was for this time I was away asked, *"Aren't you worried about being gone that long. Maybe they will feel like they don't need you."* I answered confidently, *"I'm not worried at all."* Lay people, on the other hand would respond with, *"Isn't that the way it should be in the Church."* I trust the Scriptures quoted above. My primary call as pastor is to be a prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher who provides the spiritual leadership necessary to equip you, the saints, for the work of ministry and building up the body of Christ. **Congratulations! I celebrate what God is doing in and through you.**

*Shalom,
Mike*

WHEN TOMORROW STARTS WITHOUT ME

When tomorrow starts without me, and I'm not there to see; if the sun should rise and find your eyes all filled with tears for me; I wish so much you wouldn't cry the way you did today, while thinking of the many things, we didn't get to say.

I know how much you love me, as much as I love you, And each time that you think of me, I know you'll miss me too; But when tomorrow starts without me, please try to understand, that an angel came and called my name, and took me by the hand, and said my place was ready, in heaven far above, and that I'd have to leave behind all those I dearly love.

I thought of all the yesterdays, the good ones and the bad, I thought of all the love we shared, and all the fun we had. If I could relive yesterday, just even for awhile, I'd say good-bye and kiss you and maybe see you smile.

Bust as I turned to walked away, a tear fell from my eye, for all my life, I'd always thought, I didn't want to die. I had so much to live for, so much yet to do; it seemed almost impossible, that I was leaving you.

But when I walked through heaven's gates, I felt so much at home. When God looked down and smiled at me from His great golden throne, He said, "This is eternity, and all I've promised you." Today life on earth is past, but here it starts anew.

I promise no tomorrow, but today will always last, and since each day's the same way there's no longing for the past. But you have been so faithful, so trusting and so true. And there were times you did some things you knew you shouldn't do. But you have been forgiven and now at last you're free. So won't you take my hand and share eternity here with me?" So when tomorrow starts without me, don't think we're far apart, for every time you think of me, I'm right here in your heart.

Author Unknown

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS



- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 2 - Dave Dominie | 19 - Mary Byrne |
| 6 - Christy Rome | 20 - Elinor Stewart |
| 8 - Chris Strickland | Tommy Stewart |
| 9 - David Dominie | 21 - Betty Jennings |
| 10 - Kenneth Merritt | Betty Nalls |
| 11 - Mary Morrow | 22 - Joyce DeBruhl |
| 12 - Roberta Brown | 23 - Jeremy Anderson |
| Ashley Stone | 25 - Reena Stone |
| Lorri Shackelford | 30 - Katie Jordan |
| 16 - Jeanette Ward | Joanne Bland |
| Charles Couch | |

THRIFT SHOP NEWS:

As the heat rises during the summer months, the faithful workers of the Thrift Shop continue their work. They are joined by others who assist so that we are staffed daily. We appreciate the dedication shown by everyone that works both behind the scenes and those that shop and donate items.

The mission of our Thrift Shop reaches far and wide. If you have 4 hours to volunteer, please consider volunteering for a day at our shop. You will be blessed by your service and amazed to see God's work in progress.

Because of the generosity of our supporters, we have been able to give to the following:

- ◆ **Sunshine Senior Center in Hope Mills (Books & Puzzles)**
- ◆ **Church Rental Account**
- ◆ **Church Power Bill**
- ◆ **Church Emergency Fund**
- ◆ **Air Conditioner with Extended Warranty for the Thrift Shop**
- ◆ **Council on Older Adults (Fans for the Needy)**

THANKS TO EVERYONE FOR A JOB WELL DONE!!
Lee Anna Sproul, Chairperson

DAY CARE WISH LIST:

The Pre & After School Ministry Team has placed a poster of items needed for the outreach ministries of our Pre & After School Day Care on the Bulletin Board through the double doors. If you would like to help, please see Ruby Lucas.



SPECIAL OFFERINGS WERE GIVEN TO THE FOLLOWING FROM:

CHURCH POWER BILL

- ◆ The Thrift Shop

DAY CARE RUG

- ◆ Wayne & Elaine Everts

EMERGENCY FUND

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

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

- ◆ Wayne & Elaine Everts

UNITED METHODIST MEN NEWS:

The St. Matthew's UMM met for our regular monthly breakfast meeting on July 17th with **16** men present. A delicious breakfast of Bacon, Eggs, Grits, Sausage and Biscuits were prepared by James, Randy and Wayne. It was enjoyed by all. We had one visitor, Jose Pena, son of Santos and Hilda Pena. Hilda was also in attendance with her husband and son. Calvin gave a devotion on "*The Good, Insane Concordance Maker*", *Alexander Cruden*. His first edition was published in 1737. An update was given on Dr. Hale's trip. Not going as fast as scheduled, but is safe. More on his trip in another article. A "*Church-Wide Family Picnic*" has been set for Saturday, September 24th at Lake Rim Park. A Shelter and Ball Field has been reserved. Bring your glove and along with an appetite. A sample of the "*Communion Elements Kit*" was shown to the men who will be taking it to the shut-in's and any member who is unable to attend the Communion Services at church. The only business discussed was the "*UMM Barbecue Sale*" which will be held Friday, October 14th. We need a Chairman and Ticket Sellers. We will have more information on this later.

Troy Willoughby, UMM Secretary

AUGUST FLOWER CHART

- 7 - In honor of our St. Matthew's Youth
- 14 - In honor of Cindy & Lin Roger's Anniversary
- 21 - In memory of Betty Huffman by Ike Huffman
- 28 - In honor of Katie Jordan's 27th Birthday

The 2005 Flower Chart still has spaces available if you would like to recognize a friend or loved one. The cost of flowers are only \$22.00. Please make your check out to St. Matthew's UMC and put "flowers" in the memo section and place in offering plate.



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Shirley Lukens, 2315 Prospect, Indianapolis, Indiana, 40203-2140 states "Mission begins where you are and the call of Christ is as real in Central Indiana as it is in Africa and the work of God is everywhere, not just in foreign countries which is how some define missions and missionaries. God's call to missions is as inherent as God's call to each of us wherever we are and whatever we do".

Hopefully, each of you have had a pleasant summer up to this point. We will have a **General Business Meeting on Monday, August 1 at 11:30 a.m.** I look forward to seeing all of you ladies who are not working.

A very special **THANK YOU** to the ladies that have worked so hard and faithfully to see that many projects have taken place or are being completed this month. Due to your support, St. Matthew's is a better place to belong!

Adella Pray, UMW President

DATES TO REMEMBER:

August 1 - UMW General Business Mtg., 11:30 a.m.

September 16-18 - Mother/Child Retreat - Camp Chestnut Ridge

October 14 - UMW Bazaar

October 15 - UMW Annual Meeting - Methodist College

October 23 - Fayetteville District Meeting - Grace UMC, 2:30 p.m.

November 4 - Church Women United World Community Day

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

"GRILLED THREE-CHEESE POTATOES"

6 large potatoes, sliced 1/4 inch thick
1 cup (4 oz.) shredded sharp cheddar cheese,
divided
1 cup (4 oz.) shredded mozzarella cheese,
divided
1 pound sliced bacon, cooked & crumbled

2 medium onions, chopped
1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/4 cup butter or margarine, cubed
1 Tbs. minced fresh or dried chives
1-2 tsp. seasoned salt
1/2 tsp. pepper

Divide the potatoes and onions equally between two pieces of heavy-duty foil (about 18 inches square) that have been coated with nonstick cooking spray. Combine Parmesan cheese and 3/4 cup each cheddar and mozzarella; sprinkle over the potatoes and onions. Top with bacon, butter, chives, seasoned salt, and pepper. Bring opposite ends of foil together over filling and fold down several times. Fold unsealed ends toward filling and crimp tightly. Grill, covered, over medium heat for 35-40 minutes until potatoes are tender. Remove from the grill. Open foil carefully, and sprinkle with remaining cheeses.
Yield: 6-8 servings



AUGUST**ST. MATTHEW'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH****2005**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 UMW General Mtg. -- 11:30am	2 Prayer Group -- 6:30pm	3 NO Card Ministry Bible Study -- 6:30pm NO Choir Practice	4	5	5
7	8	9 Prayer Group -- 6:30pm	10 Card Ministry -- 5:00pm Bible Study -- 6:30pm Choir Practice -- 7:30pm	11	12	13
14	15	16 Prayer Group -- 6:30pm	17 Home Extensions-10am	18	19	20
21 UMM Breakfast Mtg. -- 8:30am Lay Leader Work- shop Hay St. UMC -- 3:00-4:00pm	22	23 Prayer Group -- 6:30pm	24 NO Card Ministry Bible Study -- 6:30pm NO Choir Practice	25	26	27 FFF -- 8:30am Book Club-11:30am
28	29	30 Prayer Group -- 6:30pm	31 NO Card Ministry Bible Study -- 6:30pm NO Choir Practice			