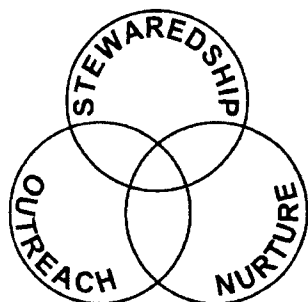


St. Matthew's UMC  
202 Hope Mills Rd  
Fayetteville, NC 28304



## St. Matthew's 25 Challenge

Office 910-425-0401 • Fax 910-425-9393

Website [stmatnc.org](http://stmatnc.org) • E-mail [stmatumc@earthlink.net](mailto:stmatumc@earthlink.net)

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



Volume V

DECEMBER 2005

Issue 12

### WE'RE ALMOST THERE!

We at St. Matthew's UMC have a right to be proud of and celebrate our mission outreach giving the last several years. This year, we are doing better than ever before. Several classes and groups have given more gifts to these areas of mission than ever before as a part of Rainbow Covenant giving. I am so proud of your response to this challenge. We have been a Rainbow Covenant Church for the last three years. We have not only paid our apportionment commitment to conference and world missions, we have also contributed to five advance lanes of giving including national, international, jurisdictional, conference and missionary support.

Due to your generosity, we have averaged a \$1,000 a week in November to make up for being behind in our apportionment giving. At this rate, we can meet our apportionment goals and will qualify as a Rainbow Covenant Church for the fourth year in a row. These funds for mission work beyond the local church are **a-portion-meant for others**. You have already done such a great job responding to the needs of suffering people devastated by storms this year.

Thanks in advance for supporting the mission outreach ministry of our Church and meeting our apportionment goals by December 31, 2005. Please mark your special gifts, checks, & envelopes apportionment or mission outreach.

*Shalom,*

*Mike*

### SAFE SANCTUARIES MOVEMENT

Headlines about clergy and lay sexual misconduct are prompting members of all denominations to look hard at their own churches and ask pointed questions: To what extent is this a problem in our congregations? What is being done to address it? Are our members, especially young people and children safe in our church? Two churches in Harnett County were in the news this past year due to such abuses by church members. We can't just say, "It can't happen here?" We are doing something about it.

St. Matthew's Trustees looked at this issue closely and decided to act. Dr. Hale shared that the Safe Sanctuaries movement was a result of a resolution "Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in the Church," passed by the 1996 General Conference, recommending specific measures for prevention to congregations, annual conference (regional administrative units) and church wide agencies. The resolution cites Christ's warning to adults of the consequences of causing children to stumble.

Our insurance carrier, Guide One, has also made this a requirement for all staff and volunteers who work with children and youth. Our Church Council adopted the general policy for Safe Sanctuaries printed on the next page. A Safe Sanctuary Ministry Team is working on forms and policies to keep our children and youth as safe as possible. Present workers with children and youth are asked to pick up a packet to fill out and return to the office.

# THE CHURCH AS A SAFE SANCTUARY FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH

## INTRODUCTION

The General Conference of The United Methodist Church, in April 1996, adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of sexual abuse of youth and children in the church. The adopted resolution includes the following statement:

Jesus said, "Whoever welcomes a child...welcomes me" (Matthew 18:5). Children are our present and our future, our hope, our teachers, our inspiration. They are full participants in the life of the church and in the realm of God.

Jesus also said, "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones..., it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:6). Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to the little ones, the children. The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state that "children must be protected from economic, physical, emotional, and sexual exploitation and abuse" (§ 162C).

Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation, and ritual abuse ("ritual abuse" refers to abusive acts committed as part of ceremonies or rites; ritual abusers are often related to cults, or pretend to be) occur in churches, both large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural, and racial lines. It is real, and it appears to be increasing. Most annual conferences can cite specific incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation within churches. Virtually every congregation has among its members adult survivors of early sexual trauma.

Such incidents are devastating to all who are involved: the child, the family, the local church and its leaders. Increasingly, churches are torn apart by the legal, emotional, and monetary consequences of litigation following allegations of abuse.

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong.

(From *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church – 2000*; pages 180-81.  
Copyright 2000 by The United Methodist Publishing House. Used by permission.)

Thus, in covenant with all United Methodist congregations, we adopt this policy for the prevention of abuse of children and youth in our church.

## Purpose

Our congregation's purpose for establishing the church as a Safe Sanctuary and this Children/Youth Abuse Prevention Policy and accompanying procedures is to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all our children and youth.

## Statement of Covenant

Therefore, as a Christian community of faith and a United Methodist congregation, we pledge to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all our children and youth as well as all of the workers with children and youth. We will follow reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of workers; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events; we will educate all our workers with children and youth regarding the use of all appropriate policies and methods (including first aid and methods of discipline); we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirements of state law; and we will be prepared to respond to media inquiries if an incident occurs.

## Conclusion

In all of our ministries with children and youth, this congregation is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each child and youth will be "surrounded by steadfast love, established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal" (From "Congregational Pledge 2," "Baptismal Covenant 11," in *The United Methodist Hymnal*, page 44).

(Adopted by St. Matthew's Church Council, October 24, 2005)



## UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

As I write this article and watch the sunrise, I am reminded of how busy the holiday season becomes for most of us. I would encourage each of you to take time out of the busy days ahead to remember why we celebrate this season. Please remember to pray for all the world, and especially for our church and its members that we may remember the reason for the season and respond in a Christian way. Pray for the missionaries that we have been remembering all year. To each of you I say **THANKS** for the support this year and I appreciate all that you have done to keep things on track and to help us **"COME TO THE POTTER FOR MOLDING"**. We will meet on **December 5th** at **6:30 p.m.** for our **General Meeting**. A light supper will be provided. If you have information for the handbook, please get it to me **ASAP** so that we can get them ready for January 1, 2006.

**"Yet, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay,  
You are the potter; we are the works of your hand. Isaiah 64:8**

May God Bless you throughout this season and the year ahead.

Adella Pray, President UMW

### RUTH-ETHEL SMITH CIRCLE

Our ladies met on November 9th at 11:00 a.m. in the fellowship hall. It was a very productive meeting. New officers were elected and we are looking forward to a very successful **"New Year"** with new ideas. The New Officers for 2006 are as follows: **President: Lola Smith, Vice President: Dorothy Spakes, Secretary: Mary Schneider, and Treasurer: Sherrie Leggett.** Thanks to all of you for stepping up to lead our Circle. The **"Christmas Card Mailbox"** will be placed in the hallway Sunday, November 27th. Please be careful not to place cards in the slots if the person does not come to church often or is a shut-in or in a Nursing Home. Please mail those cards to them, or they will not get one. Our next meeting will be **Wednesday, December 14th**. Don't forget your **Secret Prayer Partner's Gift** and to bring a gift to exchange. May God bless everyone in our church. Reach out and touch someone less fortunate and many blessings will flow your way!!!! **"Merry Christmas"** and **"Happy New Year"**!

Catherine

### RECIPE OF THE MONTH

#### "CRANBERRY CHEESECAKE"

1 cup sugar  
2 Tbsp cornstarch  
1 cup cranberry juice  
1 1/2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries

**CRUST:**  
1 cup graham cracker crumbs (about  
14 squares)  
3 Tbsp each of sugar & melted butter



**FILLING:**  
4 pkgs. (8 oz. each) cream cheese,  
softened  
1 cup sugar  
3 Tbsp all-purpose flour  
1 Tbsp vanilla extract  
1 cup eggnog  
4 eggs

In a saucepan, combine the first four ingredients; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cook & stir over medium heat for 2 minutes. Remove from heat; set aside. In a small bowl, combine cracker crumbs & sugar; stir in butter. Press onto the bottom of a greased 9-inch spring form pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 10 minutes. Cool on a wire rack. In a mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese & sugar until smooth. Add the flour and beat well. Add the eggs; beat on low just until combined. Add the eggnog & vanilla; beat just until blended. Pour two-thirds of the filling over the crust. Top with half of the cranberry mixture (cover & chill remaining cranberry mixture). Carefully spoon remaining filling on top. Bake at 325 degrees for 60 to 70 minutes or until center is almost set. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen; cool 1 hour longer. Refrigerate overnight. Remove sides of pan. Spoon remaining cranberry mixture over cheesecake. Yield: 12 servings.



As this year draws to an end, we have a great deal to be thankful for in the Thrift Shop. This month alone, we have been able to send **\$1000.00** to **First United Methodist Church** in **Gautier, Mississippi** to help rebuild and repair homes damaged by the hurricanes. We have been able to give to funds to provide heat for the elderly and to help in other causes as well. The Thrift Shop thanks those of you who donate items and volunteer to work in our shop. We have had a blessed year. We have been able to help more people through our giving of goods, as well as provide more gifts to organizations to help others such as **The Care Clinic** and **UMCOR**. The Christian mission of reaching out to others is great here. I honestly feel that those involved are touched more by the mission of helping others than anyone can possibly realize. **Thanks** to everyone that helps our shop in any way. If you have not volunteered your time in this wonderful organization, we would love to have you.

Lee Anna Sproul, Chairperson

### FFF NEWS:

First, we would like to **THANK** the **METHODIST MEN** for their donation and joint sponsorship with our December projects. They include the following:

- ◆ **Dec. 3 - Parents Day Out**
- ◆ **Dec. 10 - People Without Partners Dinner**
- ◆ **Dec. 11 - Happy Birthday Jesus Party**

Without their continued support, these ministries would not be successful. Again, we thank you.

We would also like to **THANK** our **YOUTH** for their continued support, presence, and helping hands. They are always there no matter what we ask of them. It's a joy to watch the fellowship between the generations.

We will continue to meet for **Bible Study** during the month of December. We are currently studying the book of **Psalms**.

**Book Club** will not meet during the month of December, we will return in January. The book for January will be by Lori Wick "**Moonlight on the Millpond.**"



We had **22** men present for our UMM Breakfast Mtg. on Sunday, November 20th at 8:30 a.m. A delicious breakfast consisting of Sausage, Eggs, Potatoes and Biscuits was prepared by Randy, Hank, and Troy. It was enjoyed by all.

Our financial results of our Barbecue Sale were disclosed. The men made a profitable return. Many thanks to all who helped to make this fund-raiser a great time of fellowship.

Our monthly expenditures were **\$250.00** for **Flood Relief** and **\$127.31** for **Hams and Turkeys** used at the **Thanksgiving Harvest Dinner**. The left over Turkey and Ham were given to the FFF for their food mission to the sick and shut-in's. Lorri announced that the turkey was made into soup and delivered on the following Saturday. I can attest that it was very good. The UMM gave a donation to the **Food Mission**.

Calvin gave a report on the **Communion Mission** that the UMM are involved in. There will be three teams who will offer Communion to people in their homes and rest homes. It is a blessing to give as well as receive in this mission. I can honestly say it has been a blessing to me to be able to share time with the families of the shut-in's. They appreciate anything we do for them.

The best for last—Calvin gave a devotion from **Hebrews 10: 32-36**. "**Not Home Yet!**" It was a story about an older couple returning from missionary work in Africa. Seeing all the fanfare about a President returning from a hunting trip, the man was thinking something was wrong. We have given our life to God and no one noticed or cared. His wife said to him, "go pray and you may have the answer". After he prayed, he told his wife the answer God had given him. "**You Are Not Home Yet.**"

Put in your book that January 1 will be our annual "**Black-Eye Pea Sunday Dinner**" consisting of Black-Eye Peas, Greens, Ham and Cornbread.

Troy Willoughby, UMM Secretary

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS



- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 2 - Adella Pray          | 18 - Donna Dorwart     |
| 3 - Rebecca Ramirez      | 20 - Meghann Dominie   |
| 7 - Phil Ogden           | 25 - Lorene Biggs      |
| 12 - Tina Welch          | 27 - Karola Spell      |
| Robin Shields            | 30 - Virginia Bachelor |
| 14 - Jose Pena           | Marie Strub            |
| 16 - Heather Shackelford |                        |

## SPECIAL OFFERINGS WERE GIVEN TO THE FOLLOWING:

### ARP FUND

- ◆ Wayne & Elaine Everts
- ◆ Doug & Dawn Stone

### CHURCH POWER BILL

- ◆ The Thrift Shop

### EMERGENCY FUND

- ◆ The Thrift Shop
- ◆ IMO Sylvia Bullard, Roberta Brown's sister, Mary Ronell Smith, James DeBruhl's sister, Paul Sharpe & Eva Smith's sister by the Sunday Morning Bible Study Class
- ◆ Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle
- ◆ IMO Billy O. Bachelor by Florence Oruska
- ◆ James & Joyce DeBruhl
- ◆ Paul & Jewel Sharpe
- ◆ IHO Mary Sue Grady's birthday by her Secret Prayer Partner
- ◆ IMO James DeBruhl's sister & Harold Taylor's sister by St. Matthew's UMC
- ◆ The Night Owls
- ◆ IMO Paul Sharpe by St. Matthew's UMC
- ◆ IMO Eva Smith's sister by St. Matthew's UMC
- ◆ IMO Sylvia Bullard by Marty & Linda Webb
- ◆ IMO Paul Sharpe by Bill & Sherrie Leggett
- ◆ IMO Paul Sharpe by Ruth Caldwell

### LAWN CARE SERVICE

- ◆ Wayne & Elaine Everts

### MEMORIAL FUND

- ◆ IMO Billy Bachelor by Adult Disciples Class, Morris Chapel UMC
- ◆ IMO Billy Bachelor by St. Matthew's UMC
- ◆ IMO Sylvia Bullard by St. Matthew's UMC
- ◆ IMO Mary Ronell Smith by James & Joyce DeBruhl

### RAINBOW COVENANT

- ◆ W.A. Stewart Bible Study Class

### SCHOLARSHIP FUND

- ◆ Doug & Dawn Stone
- ◆ Wayne, Elaine & Bradley Everts



**WOW!!!** Pilgrimage was awesome? Ray Buckley and Chris Hughes led thousands of youth for this time of praise and worship. The theme for

Pilgrimage this year was **"Tuning In To God"** and they both had the youth very attentive during this time. Our mission this year for Pilgrimage was to send school kits to students in Zimbabwe and our group donated 9 kits.

We appreciate all who assisted in the weekend. Without the help of many, we would not have been able to send **4 Goody Boxes** to our Service Members and College Students. Our youth have a wonderful team of adults who work with them and they appreciate all the hard work this team provides.

December is going to be a very busy time for our youth. Our youth are still continuing their **Recycling Project**. This money helps us provide for our mission projects. Recycling also helps keep our world that God has given to us clean.

We would like to thank everyone for supporting our youth program. We appreciate all that you do for us in Christian Love.

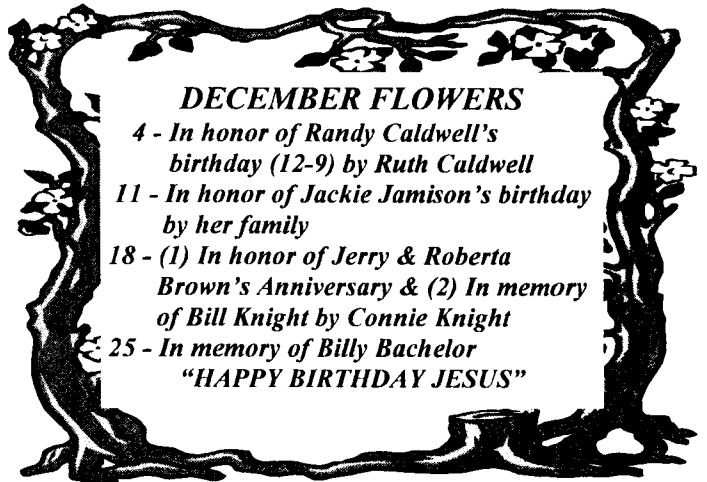
In Christ,  
Mrs. Elaine

### LOOKING AHEAD:

- Dec. 3 - Youth Baby-sit at church from 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. for parents to go Christmas Shopping.**
- Dec. 10 - Youth serve the meals for "People Without Partners Dinner" at the church**
- Dec. 11 - Brief Meeting after church service**
- Dec. 18 - Christmas Caroling & Youth Party at the Everts**

### DECEMBER FLOWERS

- 4 - In honor of Randy Caldwell's birthday (12-9) by Ruth Caldwell*
- 11 - In honor of Jackie Jamison's birthday by her family*
- 18 - (1) In honor of Jerry & Roberta Brown's Anniversary & (2) In memory of Bill Knight by Connie Knight*
- 25 - In memory of Billy Bachelor "HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS"*



# THE DEVIL'S BEATTITUDES

In Wednesday's Bible Study of St. Matthew's Gospel, we have been studying the beatitudes as the character traits St. Matthew thought should be marks of faithful members of the community of faith, the church. Calvin Rome shared this from his home church newsletter.

If the devil were to write his beatitudes, they would probably go something like this:

1. Blessed are those who are too tired, too busy, too distracted to spend an hour once a week with their fellow Christians – they are my best workers.
2. Blessed are those Christians who wait to be asked and expect to be thanked – I can use them.
3. Blessed are the touchy who stop going to church – they are my missionaries.
4. Blessed are the trouble makers – they shall be called my children.
5. Blessed are the complainers – I'm all ears to them.
6. Blessed are those who are bored with the minister's mannerisms and mistakes – for they get nothing.
7. Blessed is the church member who expects to be invited to his own church – for he is a part of the problem instead of the solution.
8. Blessed are those who gossip – for they shall cause strife and divisions that please me.
9. Blessed are those who are easily offended – for they will soon get angry and quit.
10. Blessed are those who do not give their offering to carry on God's work – for they are my helpers.
11. Blessed is he who professes to love God but hates his brother and sister – for he shall be with me forever.
12. Blessed are you who, when you read this think it is about other people and not yourself – I've got you too!

Matthew shares Jesus words:

- 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
- 5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
- 6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
- 7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
- 8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
- 9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.
- 10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 11 "Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.
- 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Which set of beatitudes do you really live by?

# WHO WOULD YOU TARGET?

The following was sent to the church as a follow-up on Sunday, November 20<sup>th</sup> scripture from Matthew 25: 31-46. It makes you think.

Dr. Smith's teaching style was different from that of most seminary professors. Students never knew quite what to expect. One afternoon, those entering Dr. Smith's classroom were confronted by a huge, red target taped over a large bulletin board on the wall. An ample supply of darts covered a nearby table.

"We're going to do something different today," explained Dr. Smith. "I'd like you to take out a piece of paper and draw a picture of someone that you really don't like – or someone who has recently made you angry. Then, when you have finished, please feel free to put your pictures right in the center of this target, and vent your frustration with these darts."

A faint murmur filled the classroom as the students exchanged jaded looks. What lesson was Dr. Smith trying to drive home today? Well, whatever his point was, this assignment promised to be significantly more fun than heavy theology. The students set to work on their illustrations. One girl drew a picture of a rival who had stolen her boyfriend. Another student drew a picture of his little brother. Some renderings were simple – others included many small, ugly details – pimples and warts. The scratching of pencils and pens was punctuated by an occasional snicker. It was clear that the students were having a little too much fun picturing their enemies.

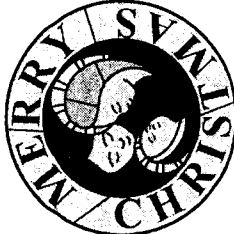
Then the class lined up and began throwing darts. One by one, the students tacked their caricatures in the center of the target and took aim. The first darts were thrown carefully but as the session progressed, students began to hurl the darts with such force that their targets were ripped apart.

But before everyone had a chance to throw, Dr. Smith announced, "Okay – that's all the time we have. Please return to your seats." The students who had missed out were visibly angered at not being able to vicariously puncture their enemies. More murmuring filled the classroom.

As the class settled down, all eyes were fixed on Dr. Smith. Then, slowly and carefully, he removed the target from the wall. A hush fell over the room. Underneath the target was a picture of Jesus. The picture had been shredded in places. Holes and jagged marks covered his face. His eyes were pierced.

Dr. Smith gave no explanation – but quoted only the words of Jesus..."In as much as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 PARENTS DAY OUT 8 AM - 8 PM
4 Church Ministry Council - 12:00pm	5 UMW General Mtg. - 6:30pm	6 Prayer Group - 6:30pm	7 Card Ministry - 5:00pm WNA & B.Study-6:30pm Choir Practice - 7:30pm	8 Night Owls Circle at Roberta's - 6:30pm	9	10 PEOPLE WITHOUT PARTNERS DINNER
11 Happy Birthday Party for Jesus - 2:00pm Christmas Cantata - 5:00pm	12	13 Prayer Group - 6:30pm	14 Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle - 11:00am Card Ministry - 5:00pm WNA & B.Study-6:30pm Choir Practice - 7:30pm	15	16	17
18 UMM Breakfast Mtg. - 8:30am Youth Caroling & Christmas Party at The Everts	19	20 Prayer Group - 6:30pm	21 NO Home Extensions NO Card Ministry NO WNA & B. Study NO Choir Practice	22	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE TIME TO BE ANNOUNCED
25 	26	27 Prayer Group - 6:30pm	28 NO Card Ministry NO WNA & B. Study NO Choir Practice	29	30	31