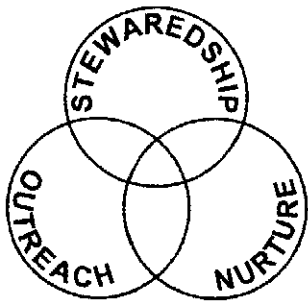


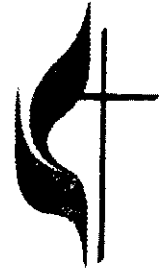
St. Matthew's UMC
202 Hope Mills Rd
Fayetteville, NC 28304



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

Website stmattnc.org • E-mail stmattumc@earthlink.net

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



Volume VI

March 2006

Issue 3

Shaped By A God Who Speaks With Us

The first Wednesday of March the 1st, at 6:30 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? Recently, while sharing with some dear friends about the loss of their beloved father, we talked about their sorrow and their joy. They knew he lived a Christian life and was with the Lord. They also knew that the last few days of his life were some of the happiest he had had in some time. They worked with him every day, and still had such a strong spiritual connection with him. But they missed his physical presence. They admitted that they really didn't know as much about the life in the spirit as they would like to know now. They have a lot of practical questions about heaven, the kingdom of God, life in the spirit and eternal life. We invest so much in the worldly part of our lives as Christians and very little in the spiritual realities of our faith that we will use for eternity.

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 worldly and are not mature in the faith. It's all right to celebrate Christmas, but if it is the most important religious season 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. The last two years I asked you to give your time and promised you would receive

a valuable blessing. Year before last we read *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren and last year we read John Piper's *The Passion of Christ*. Each Wednesday evening we gathered to discuss and share our insights for the week. It was a wonderful time of personal and spiritual growth in our church. I remember people commenting, "It was nice to know that we were reading and studying the same thing others in the church were reading." Others thought it unified us as a church and brought us closer together.

The first of the year I felt the Lord encouraging me to do some writing on subjects I have taught in workshops. Writing is such a discipline that I thought having to write a book to be used during Lent would force me to get it done. *Shaped By A God Who Speaks With Us* is the title of the study I proposed for us to read as a congregation this year during Lent.

Last Sunday, some people attending the Love Feast Celebration suggested we meet again this year to discuss the readings for the week on Wednesdays during Lent at 6:30 p.m. The first installment will be ready Sunday February 26th and will include readings for days 1-10 designed to start with Ash Wednesday. Then each Sunday you can pick up the next weeks six readings. I am writing about two weeks ahead of where you will be reading. Please keep me in your prayers as I write that God might speak with me. The format is similar to that of *The Purpose Driven Life*. I pray this book helps us examine our spiritual journey in life and the many ways God reaches out to shape and mold us into the image of Christ. My hope is that God will bless us individually and as a Church.

Shalom,

Mike

EASTER LILY FUNDRAISER

NURTURE & OUTREACH CARE & VISITATION



We are having another Easter Lily fundraiser to support our Mission Outreach commitment and beautify our Sanctuary Easter Sunday.

You may place an Easter Lily in the church in memory or honor of someone and

then take it home after the worship service Easter morning. Each 6" potted Easter Lily should have 5 or more blooms according to our supplier. It will be wrapped in colored foil and have a large white bow.

For a \$20 contribution per Lily per listing toward this project, we will have an opportunity to support our outreach missions projects and beautify our sanctuary by having dozens of Easter Lilies for Easter Morning Worship. We will also publish a listing of donors and the person or persons for whom they are given either in honor or in memory. Let us make a great success of this project and enjoy the beauty of these special plants.

We need your response **soon**. If you wish you can call the office at 425-0401. Just let us know how many Easter Lilies you wish to purchase now and we can get your information for the booklet and money later, if you like.

I (name) _____

would like # _____ Easter Lily(s)

IN HONOR OF:

IN MEMORY OF:



The Pastor Parish Ministry Team has been looking for some ways to provide better care of our members and visitors and outreach into the community. They have come up with several suggestions that require different levels of commitment.

Bulletin Delivery

This is a ministry for those who would like to be involved in an important care giving ministry with a low level of time commitment and easy contact with people. These volunteers would target elderly and shut-ins who live near them or pass by on their way home from church. They would simply drop off a Sunday Worship Bulletin without the expectation of going in to visit. If the person is not home just leave it in the door to send the message that we are thinking about you.

Doorstep Thanks To Visitors

This ministry will appeal to those who would like to be involved in an important outreach ministry which requires a low level time commitment and easy contact with people. Volunteers would target primarily first time visitors to thank them for attending our church. All it requires is a 1-2 minute doorstep thank you for worshiping with us, leaving a brochure and a small gift. We plan for the majority of these drop-bys to occur Sunday afternoon/evening or by Monday evening at the very latest. People will know we are a friendly church.

Elderly and Home-bound Visits

This Care Ministry is for those who are willing to commit a little more time and make supportive contact with our members. We want volunteers to go in teams of two for 10-20 minutes and visit with those elderly and/or home-bound members that they are assigned. They can call ahead and make an appointment and set a time that fits into the volunteers' schedules.

Revised Care Cell Ministry

We have revised our Care Cell Ministry to include only our regular and occasionally attending members and regular visitors. We will contact them weekly by phone if they were unable to attend worship to tell them they were missed.

We need a coordinator for each ministry and volunteers. Sign-up Sheets are on the Bulletin Board. You can also call the office to volunteer or ask more questions. Choose a ministry to suit your natural and spiritual gifts.



The Thrift Shop has been getting a facelift since the new year began. Thanks to everyone that has worked so hard to get things priced and out so that we could have another great month. To all the workers who so faithfully work, we say a very **"SPECIAL THANKS"** for your efforts,

especially during the winter months. Donations have continued to come in making our Thrift Shop the best in Cumberland County where you can shop for almost anything that you need or want.

THANKS TO EVERYONE!!!

FFF NEWS:

The FFF continues to see an increase in both the weekly **Bible Study** and the monthly **"Cook & Book"** activities. After studying the first book of Psalms (1-40), the group turned its attention to the Book of Judges on February 15th. The FFF is reading and studying its way through the entire Bible. Come join us each Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall! One Saturday each month, early rising members meet at the church at 8:30 a.m. to cook a meal and deliver it to church members who may be sick or shut-in, etc. Later in the morning, about 11:45 a.m. the group meets at the **Pizza Palace** for a Christian book discussion segment, fun, food & fellowship as we further our knowledge of God's love through literature. The March book is **"Evidence of Mercy"** by **Terri Blackstock**. This riveting novel takes the reader on a suspense-filled flight into a world where the dark side of human nature meets with a greater power -- where love finds root in the midst of hatred's savagery, and where terrifying and uncontrollable circumstances become the unlikely catalysts for forgiveness and faith. Join us to **"cook and a book"** on Saturday, March 25th. For more FFF information, see Lorri, Dawn, Elaine or Gail.

BABY SHOWERS!

A Floating Baby Shower will be held Sunday, March 5th from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. in the church fellowship hall for Donna Meixsell & Madison.

The Night Owls are hosting a Baby Shower for former circle member, Wendy (Webb) Johnson on Sunday, March 12th from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall. The congregation is invited to join in this special celebration. While Wendy and her husband Jimmy don't want to know the sex of the baby, soon-to-be Grandma Linda is very curious. The Johnson's are registered at Walmart and Target. For more information contact Gail at 485-2873.



The UMM met on Sunday, February 19th with 21 men present. A delicious breakfast of Pancakes, Sausage, Bacon, Hash Brown Potatoes & Eggs were served by Calvin, Peter & Christopher Rome. It was enjoyed by all. Our March breakfast will be

prepared by the Youth to assist them in their Fund Raising efforts.

Calvin's devotion was taken from John 3: 16 and John 14: 6 **"Take My Son"**. If you take my Son, all things will belong to you. If you don't want my Son, nothing will be of any value to you. Take my Son and follow His teachings.

The topic of the meeting was focused on the **"Sweetheart Banquet"** which was held on Saturday, February 18th. There were 76 people in attendance. Lynwood was in charge of the banquet and it was a great effort. Lynwood thanked the men who helped and a special thanks was given to the youth who served the meals and drinks. There were some lucky ladies who won door prizes. The fellowship of all in attendance was the best part of the evening. Thanks to all for coming!

The **ECU Wesley Singers** were given a donation of \$100.00 from the UMM, and we also provided a meal for them on Saturday, February 11th. There were 19 singers at our February 12th morning worship service.

New Business: The UMM April Meeting will be on **"Easter Sunday"**. There will be more on this at our next meeting. If the youth wants to have a Fund Raiser on this day, it will be announced at our next meeting. If not, there will be a light breakfast for all attending the **"Sunrise Service"** by some group.

At our next meeting a contribution will be given to the **"Rainbow Covenant Church"**. A decision will be made as to where the donation will go. There are many areas this money can be used. Read the areas where you feel will be most helpful.

The meeting adjourned at 9:16 a.m.

Troy Willoughby,
UMM Assistant Secretary

MARCH BIRTHDAYS



- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1 - Charles Lucas | 26 - Sherrie Leggett |
| 13 - Ginger Sessoms | 29 - Carolyn Davis |
| 24 - Harold Taylor | 31 - Brandi MaKarov |
| Wayne Hager | |

TRUSTEES MINISTRY TEAM

The Trustees have set goals for the 2006-07 year. This is the year of our 50th Anniversary, Our Year of Jubilee, and we want to have our church ready to celebrate. If any member or organization would like to make a contribution to assist the Trustees in meeting these goals, please make your check out to St. Matthew's UMC and at the bottom put for ARP Fund.

TRUSTEES GOALS FOR 2006-07

1. \$2000.00 paint Church Sanctuary
2. \$500.00 florescent lights in hallway (6 needed)
3. \$1600.00 replace tables for Fellowship Hall
4. \$7500.00 additional payment for Rental Properties
5. \$7000.00 remodel Men's Bathroom
6. Replace Floor Tiles in Hallways & Fellowship Hall (Price not available)
7. \$500.00 replace rotten wood around Sanctuary windows
8. Paint Parking lanes
9. PWC utility Pole needs work
10. Backdoor at Thrift Shop needs to be replaced
11. Windows at Thrift Shop needs repair
12. Pressure Wash Walkways
13. Sign in front needs to be cleaned
14. Fence in back of sanctuary needs painting

We have promised to participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers, presence, gifts and service:

Sandra K. Lackore of the UMC General Council on Finance & Administration said that UMC giving in 2005 was \$244.7 million, which is \$85 million more than in 2004. Of that, \$80 million was for tsunami & hurricane relief efforts. Total giving in 2004 was \$159.3 million. Individuals, churches & organizations contributed significantly to UMCOR for immediate & long-term hurricane recovery efforts.

Budget - \$167,846.48
 Needed Weekly - \$3,227.82
 Average Weekly - \$2,753.84
 Average Weekly Deficit - \$473.98

As of February 19, 2006:
 Needed to Date - \$25,822.54
 Received to Date - \$22,030.75
 Deficit - \$3,791.79

SPECIAL OFFERINGS WERE GIVEN TO THE FOLLOWING:

ARP FUND

- ◆ Perry Smith
- ◆ Doug & Dawn Stone
- ◆ Calvin & Christy Rome

BUILDING FUND

- ◆ Doug & Dawn Stone
- ◆ IMO Terry Wall & Edith Higgins, nephew & sister of Dorothy & Harold Taylor by the Sun. Morning Bible Study Class
- ◆ IMO Betty Gray by John & Connie Gray

EMERGENCY FUND

- ◆ The Thrift Shop
- ◆ Bradley Everts
- ◆ Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle
- ◆ Sunday Morning Bible Study Class
- ◆ IMO Ruby Lucas' daughter by the Peggy Pullman Class
- ◆ IMO Paul Sharpe by Carol Clark
- ◆ IMO Paul Sharpe, Elinor Stewart & Betty Gray by Betty Probst
- ◆ Doug & Dawn Stone
- ◆ James & Joyce DeBruhl
- ◆ IMO Betty Gray & Elinor Stewart by St. Matthew's UMC

FRAYED & FRAZZLED FLOCK

- ◆ Betty Probst

OUTREACH/VISITATION MINISTRY

- ◆ Calvin & Christy Rome

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

- ◆ Wayne & Elaine Everts

MARCH FLOWERS

5 - In honor of Charles Lucas' birthday by Ruby Lucas

12 - In honor of Jesse Caldwell by Ruth Caldwell

19 - In memory of Jimmy & Eddy Adams by Ralph & Verena Wright

26 - In memory of Mrs. Rhoda Wilson by Ruth Caldwell

(Space is still available if you would like to place flowers in honor/memory of a friend or loved one. Cost is only \$22.00).



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN:

Blessings come in a variety of ways and packages, some in a tangible form obvious to you, and others notice and often times rejoice with you. On other occasions one is blessed by making the blessings of others possible through some act of the kindness of others. Last week, blessings flowed both ways. Larry was blessed with a new roof on his house that had leaked so long that he couldn't remember when the leaks started. The team that installed the roof was equally blessed by having the opportunity to serve Larry and **"met Christ on the house top."** Sun and salvation do wonderful things to the soul according to Gary Locklear, a Church and Community Worker in North Carolina. Our Missionary to remember this month has a March 6th birthday. She is **Evelyn Banks** who lives at P.O. Box 204, Moro, AR 72368 or mipccw@aol.com. Please let us remember to pray for Evelyn on her special day and send her a note if you get a chance. During the February General Meeting, we voted to continue our **"Tired of Cooking"** dinner with our next one being on March 24th. Watch for the bulletin insert. Other dates to remember are **Mother-Daughter Banquet** which will be on Saturday May 13th at 6:00 p.m. The FFF will set up, the Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle will clean up, and the Night Owls Circle will provide the program. Please mark your calendar and if necessary adopt a Mother or Daughter if you don't have one. We will meet on Monday, May 8th at 5:30 p.m. to put together the **Mother's Day Booklets**. We also discussed the possibility of starting a **"Prayer Shawl Ministry"**. If you are interested in information or participating, please call me at 864-1207. Hopefully, we will be able to set a time and date for this within the next few weeks.

Adella Pray, UMW President

RUTH-ETHEL SMITH CIRCLE:

Our Circle of friends met Wednesday, February 8th. We had 17 ladies present. Minutes were read from last months meeting as well as the Treasurer's Report. We discussed our past mission project and voted on getting items for the **Stanton Hospitality House** for our March Mission Project. Items will be purchased from funds collected. Two members volunteered to help serve at the **"Tired of Cooking Dinner"** sponsored by the United Methodist Women which was held on February 24th. Three members volunteered to help clean up afterwards. Our upcoming events will be our main concern which is the **Mother-Daughter Banquet, Mother's Day Booklet** as well as the **Father's Day Worship Service**. We had three ladies who had birthdays in February. I hope they had a **"Happy Birthday"**. See you at the next meeting on March 8th at 11:00 a.m.

Lola Smith

RECIPE OF THE MONTH "THREE BEAN SOUP"

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 medium onion, chopped | 1 Tbsp vegetable oil |
| 2 medium carrots, sliced | 3 cups chopped fresh spinach |
| 2 Tbsp parsley flakes | 1 garlic clove, minced |
| 1 tsp dried oregano | 2 tsp dried basil |
| 1/2 tsp pepper | 3 cups water |
| 3 small potatoes, peeled & cubed | 3 14 1/2 ounce cans chicken broth |
| 1 15 1/2 ounce can great northern beans, rinsed & drained | 1 15 ounce can pinto beans, rinsed & drained |
| 1 15 ounce can garbanzo beans, rinsed & drained | |

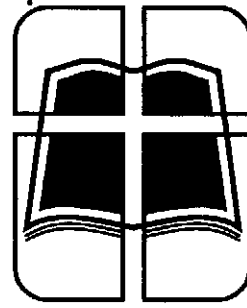
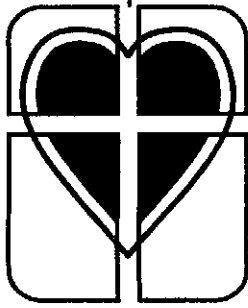
In a Dutch Oven, sauté onion in oil. Add the next nine ingredients. Simmer, uncovered until vegetables are tender. Add beans and spinach; heat through. Yield: 12 servings (about 3 quarts)



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 - How to Care in a Distinctively Christian Way
-

Saturday, 3/11/2006

9:00 AM-1:00 PM

**At: First Presbyterian Church
102 Ann St
Fayetteville, NC 28301**

**Cost: \$15 per person, or
\$50 per congregation (four or more)**

**To Register:
Call The Rev. Dr. James B. (Ben) McCoy
At (910) 483-0121**

MARCH**ST. MATTHEW'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH****2006**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Card Ministry – 5:00pm Bible Study – 6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	2	3	4
5 UMYF – 12:00pm Baby Shower for Donna Meixsell – 2:00 – 4:00pm	6	7 Prayer Group-6:30pm	8 Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle - 11:00am Card Ministry – 5:00pm Bible Study – 6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	9 Night Owls Circle – 7:00pm	10	11
12 Baby Shower for Wendy (Webb) Johnson – 2-4pm	13	14 Prayer Group – 6:30pm	15 Home Extensions-10am Card Ministry – 5:00pm Bible Study – 6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	16	17	18
19 UMM Breakfast Mtg. – 8:30am Third Sunday Celebration – 12pm	20	21 Prayer Group – 6:30pm	22 Card Ministry – 5:00pm Bible Study – 6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	23 Help-N-Hands – 11am	24 TIRE OF COOKING 4:30-6:30pm	25 FFF & Book Club 8:30am
26	27	28 Prayer Group – 6:30pm	29 Card Ministry – 5:00pm Bible Study – 6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	30	31 Kaleidoscope Camp Don Lee (6 th - 8 th Grade)	