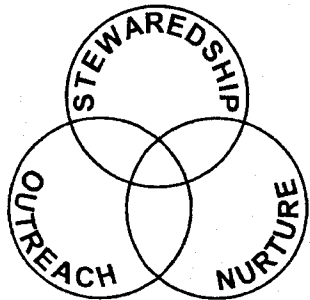


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St. Matthew's 25 Challenge

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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 VI

NOVEMBER 2006

Issue 11

GIVING THANKS FOR THE FAITHFUL

Although Fall is one of my favorite seasons for the weather, when it comes to the church financial calendar it is my least favorite season of the year. Recently, while talking with a group of pastors, we were discussing how preparing for Charge Conference and dealing with Church budgets was something we really dreaded. It seems as if working with Church finances brings out the worst in a lot of church members.

In all of the churches represented by the pastors, there were stories about how negative, selfish and resentful many church members are around budget setting time. Often the pastor receives the brunt of people's hostility toward finances, Conference and making ends meet. While assisting a pastor friend with his Church Stewardship Campaign, I discovered that a lot of his lay people felt the same way about church finances, budgets and stewardship at this time of year. Isn't it sad so much negativity exists around carrying out the mission of the Church. We are called to be the Body of Christ in the world around us.

Following Charge Conference, many pastors are struggling to raise money to close out the year and pay apportionments. Finally, the year-end financial reports are due. In the middle of the Advent-Christmas season, Pastor-Parish meets to make recommendations for the pastor to return to the church or not. Is it any wonder that this is not a favorite time of year for many pastors? With harvest time, Thanksgiving and Advent, it certainly should be.

Recently, during my morning devotional time, I was in prayer concerning this dreaded time of year. I clearly heard the Lord speak to me and say, "**Be thankful for those in your church who are faithful to their vows.**" Amazingly, this pulled me away from my own negative thinking, as I rejoiced in those faithful members who are so supportive of the church and live up to their membership vows.

I actually started naming names and giving thanks for those individuals and families who demonstrate their faithfulness in so many ways. Vivid pictures of their faces appeared in my mind as I lifted them up in prayer. These are the people who take seriously their commitment "**to support the church with their prayers, their presence, their gifts, and their service.**" These are the servants of God who make the challenges and hardships of a pastor a blessing. It was as if I was being showered by their love of Christ as I prayed. Maybe for the first time in my ministry as a United Methodist pastor, I was not dreading the meetings that were to come up for me at the end of October and first of November.

I can't honestly say I looked forward to those meetings, because the negativity, resentment and hostility is still likely to be there. God did help me come to realize that *in most churches, the people who complain the loudest, react with so much hostility and display the most resentment are those who are failing to keep their vows to Him and His Church.* They probably do not realize how they come across. Nor do they realize the issues are really not financial, but spiritual. Lord, help us perceive issues with the spirit!

The Lord helped me that morning to understand the same thing He told Samuel when God's people wanted a king. "Don't take it personally, they are not rejecting you, they are rejecting me as their God." In Malachi, He tells us that when we don't tithe we are stealing from Him. Surely no one wants to reject God or steal from Him. Lord, help us all to be more faithful!

Shalom,
Mike



We continue to be blessed with givers, workers and shoppers. Thank you for all your support so that we may continue to help families in need as well as provide assistance to many missions.

The Thrift Shop contributed to the following:

- ◆ St. Matthew's Emergency Fund
- ◆ St. Matthew's Power Bill
- ◆ The Methodist Home For Children

FFF NEWS:

We invite anyone who would like to join us for any of our activities to please come and join us. Whether it's just one or all of our activities that catches your attention, please know that we will welcome you. We are all about sharing God's blessings with others. *"Whenever we have an opportunity let us worship for the good of all and especially for those of the Family of Faith". Galatians 6: 10.*

FFF UPCOMING EVENTS:

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18

8:30 A.M. - Book Club will meet at JK's for Breakfast and discuss "Breaker's Reef" by Terri Blackstock. Her books are intriguing and grip the reader right from the beginning. The book is a Murder Mystery with Biblical truths built into everyday life. Even if you are not a reader, you will enjoy this author's books.

10:30 A.M. - We will meet at the church to prepare meals and finalize plans for the month of December. All members are encouraged to be here.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2

8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. - Parents Day Out. This is a free babysitting service available to parents to allow them time to do their Christmas shopping. For infants and children with special diets, please bring their food.

9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. - Gift Wrapping sponsored by the Youth

3:00 P.M. - Birthday Party for Jesus complete with Cake & Games.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9

4:00 P.M. - People Without Partners Dinner. This is a Five Course Meal prepared especially for the Single People in our Church Family. It's a great time of fellowship along with some great food beginning with Appetizers and ending with Dessert. This is an "RSVP" evening. Invitations will be mailed in late November. If yours happens to get lost in the mail, please see someone from the FFF and have your name put on the list to attend.



On Friday, October 13th, the UMM held its annual **Barbecue Plate Sale**. After all was said and done, we were satisfied with the results. Chairman, **Raymond Gray** was a very busy man on that day getting everything in order.

Rock Merritt and his crew did the inside kitchen work. That crew consisted of **Fred Rozier, Cliff Morgan, Jack Spakes, and Lynwood Griffin**. The outside tent was managed by **Frank Bagley, James De-Bruhl, Bill Leggett** and **Ike Huffman**. A special **thanks** goes to **Charles Lucas, Bobby Lambert** and **Perry Smith** who cooked the hushpuppies.

Doug Stone was the second shift kitchen and clean-up man. Many **thanks** to these men and their efforts for a successful Barbecue Sale. **J.A. Sessoms** was the top ticket seller of over **200** dinners, and he delivered them all. **Santos Pena** was the second top ticket seller. These men and all who sold tickets made our day.

There are some improvements to our Fellowship Hall that are needed, and some of our money will be used to start that project. More on this later.

Troy Willoughby

W.A. STEWART SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS:

Our class has been recognizing a person or persons who contributes their time and effort by helping others and serving God. The class looks at people who serve God and our church without being asked, as well as helping others. Without these people, a lot of things would go unfinished or not get started. This award was discussed by some members of our class and taken on as a project. We felt that we as a class wanted to show appreciation for the work they do behind the scenes.

Our First Quarter Recognition Award went to **Dorothy Spakes** and **Jean Lambert** for their work in the Thrift Shop. Our Second Quarter Recognition Award went to **Douglas Stone** and **Wayne Everts** for taking care of our lawn and gardens. Our Third Quarter Recognition Award went to **Pam** and **Barry Gallimore** for their work in the Worship Ministry and the new Pictorial Directory. Many **thanks** to these people, but there are many more people who work as hard. We will be awarding these other people each quarter.

TRUSTEES MINISTRY TEAM

A special thanks to **Doug Stone** for being **"Trustee of the Month"** in October. Our **"Trustee of the Month"** for November will be **Charles Lucas**. We appreciate everything the men of our church do to make our church a safe and attractive place to worship our Lord. God bless you all!



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS



3 - Elaine Everts	12 - Gudrun Arnold
5 - Justin Cole	15 - Hank Zielinski
6 - Lynwood Griffin	23 - Irma Evans
8 - Lynn Hiner	25 - Mary Sue Grady
10 - Jack Byrne	28 - Christopher Rome
11 - Bob Pray	



Our youth will be participating in the Annual Conference "*Pilgrimage*" November 10 - 12 at the Crown Coliseum. Our youth look forward to this event each year. The theme for this year is

Candle in the Darkness with guest speaker,

Lisa Yebuah. This weekend is a time when our youth have an opportunity to rejuvenate their faith. Our youth would like to thank ***Troy Willoughby*** for taking our cans to the recycle distribution center so we can continue our mission project. We would like to thank all who support this mission project by placing your cans off behind the church in the recycle barrels. At this time, the youth are working on our ***Fundraising Project*** of wrapping Christmas Gifts. We have decided to change one of our dates. For those early bird shoppers, we will be wrapping gifts on ***October 29th*** following church. Our other date is now ***December 2nd*** so we can accommodate those parents who are taking advantage of ***Parents Day Out*** and anyone who missed our first date. May God Bless Each of You!

Elaine

NURTURE:

Our ***Homecoming Committee*** met Thursday, October 19th. We decided to purchase new tables for the Fellowship Hall which may be used for many future Homecomings. Adella has volunteered to redo the large ***History Album***. We are also going to place pictures in an album from our ***50th Homecoming Celebration***. If anyone has pictures they would like included in this album, please give them to myself or Amanda Call. It has been a joy to work with this team. The month of October has not been as busy as previous months. We are having our annual ***Harvest Dinner*** on Sunday, October 29th at 6:00 p.m. followed by our ***Talent Show*** hosted by Amanda Call. This will be the start of our ***Can Food Drive*** which will be held during the whole month of November. Please be mindful that many people are not as fortunate as us. Also, another way we can give to our community is by participating in ***Trunk-or-Treat*** on Tuesday, October 31st from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Please decorate your trunks and provide a safe place for children in this community to go. We would like to thank the ***United Methodist Men*** for providing the meat for our Harvest Dinner. I would also like to thank those who are cooking the turkeys and hams. I pray that this dinner will be a wonderful time to fellowship with our church family. May the Lord pour out His blessing on each of you as you support the ministries of St. Matthew's.

In Christ, Elaine

SPECIAL OFFERINGS WERE GIVEN TO THE FOLLOWING:

ARP FUND

- ◆ Doug & Dawn Stone
- ◆ Perry Smith

CHURCH LIGHTS

- ◆ Betty Jennings

EMERGENCY FUND

- ◆ The Thrift Shop
- ◆ Sunday Morning Bible Study Class
- ◆ Wayne & Elaine Everts
- ◆ Steven & Lisa Davis

LAWN CARE

- ◆ Wayne & Elaine Everts

MEMORIAL FUND

- ◆ In memory of Randy Caldwell by Deane & Marilyn Wilson

PRAYER PARLOR

- ◆ In honor of Barry & Pam Gallimore by the W.A. Stewart Bible Study Class

RAINBOW COVENANT

- ◆ W.A. Stewart Bible Study Class

RUGS FOR DOORS

- ◆ Wayne & Elaine Everts

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

- ◆ Wayne & Elaine Everts

YOUTH

- ◆ Wayne & Elaine Everts

NOVEMBER CHURCH FLOWERS

5 - In honor of Lynwood Griffin & Lynn Hiner's birthday by their family

12 - In honor of James & Joyce DeBruhl's 54th Wedding Anniversary

19 - In honor of Troy & Betty Willoughby's 24th Wedding Anniversary

26 - Available

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

BUDGET - \$167,846.48

AS OF OCTOBER 22, 2006

Needed Weekly \$3,227.82

Needed To Date \$138,796.13

Average Weekly \$3,041.87

Received To Date \$130,800.61

Avg. Weekly Deficit (\$185.95)

Deficit (\$7,995.52)



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

As I sit to write this, I am enjoying the brightness of the fall early morning sunshine and the cool breeze that comes at this time of year. God truly blesses us with beauty during the fall season. A very special **thank you** to everyone who helped with the **Bake Sale** in any way. It was a huge success only because of your hard work. **THANKS!** Due to Charge Conference, our **November General Meeting** will be held on **Monday, November**

13th at 6:30 p.m. As you become involved in the busy schedules of the **Holiday Season**, I encourage each of you to find time each day to thank God for all of your blessings. Don't forget to pick up your **Shoebboxes** for **Samaritan's Purse** and put smiles on children faces across the world.
Adella Pray, UMW President

RUTH-ETHEL SMITH CIRCLE:

The Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle met in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, October 11th at 11:00 a.m. Dorothy Spakes opened with a devotion from the Upper Room. Mary Schneider read the minutes from the last meeting and Sherrie Leggett gave the Treasurer's Report. We discussed who would like to work in the kitchen, host and do the program for 2007. Our mission fund for November will be used to purchase items for **Food Baskets** for the **Cumberland County Mental Health** which will be distributed to needy families at **Thanksgiving**. Our mission project for December will be the **Shoebboxes** for **Samaritan's Purse**. We will also help with refreshments which will be served after the **Christmas Cantata**. We went to **Fuller's Barbecue** and enjoyed a delicious lunch and great Christian fellowship. Many **thanks** to **Dorothy Spakes** who substituted for Lola Smith. See you at our next meeting on November 8th at 11:00 a.m.

Lola Smith, Circle Leader

HAPPY FALL TO YOU!

From one pumpkin to another!!! A woman was asked by a co-worker, "What is it like to be a Christian?" The co-worker replied, "It is like being a pumpkin." God picks you from the patch, brings you in, and washes all the dirt off of you. Then He cuts off the top and scoops out all the yucky stuff. He removes the seeds of doubt, hate, and greed. Then He carves you a new smiling face and puts His light inside of you to shine for all the world to see." This was passed on to me by another pumpkin. Now it's your turn to pass it to other pumpkins. I liked this enough to send it to all the pumpkins in my patch.



Submitted by: Carolynne Michalski

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

"PUMPKIN CASSEROLE"

4 oz Italian Sausage

4 cups Pumpkin, peeled & cut

Into 3/4-inch pieces

1/2-1 cup Chicken Stock

1/4 cup dried Cranberries

1/2 Tsp Thyme

1/4 Tsp Pepper



1/2 cup chopped Onion

1/2 cup chopped Tart Apple

1/4 cup White Grape Juice

1 cup Couscous, cooked

1 Tbsp Olive Oil

1/2 Tsp Oregano

Crumble sausage into a large saucepan. Cook 7 minutes or until almost done. Remove meat from pan. Saute onion and pumpkin in the pan for 7 minutes or until pumpkin softens. Stir in apples and sausage, cook for 3 minutes. Add grape juice and chicken stock, cook 2 minutes; remove from heat. Stir in remaining ingredients. Place in a greased 2-quart casserole, cover with foil, and bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes. Remove foil, and bake 10 more minutes. Serve immediately. Yield: 4 servings.

NOVEMBER 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	6 Charge Conference -- 7:00pm	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 – 7:30pm	10 ← YOUTH	11 PILGRIMAGE
12 →	13 ← UMW General Mtg. -- 6:30pm	14 MISSION	15 TRIP Home Extensions – 10am Card Ministry – 5:00pm Bible Study – 6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	16 TO Help-N-Hands – 11am	17 MISSISSIPPI	18 FFF & Book Club - 8:30am
19 UMM Breakfast Mtg. – 8:30am UMYF – 12:00pm	20	21 Prayer Group – 6:30pm	22	23 THANKSGIVING DAY	24	25
26 HANGING OF THE GREENS & ANGEL TREE	27	28 Prayer Group – 6:30pm	29 Card Ministry – 5:00pm Bible Study – 6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm	30		
		Prayer Group – 6:30pm	Card Ministry – 5:00pm Bible Study – 6:30pm Choir Practice – 7:30pm			