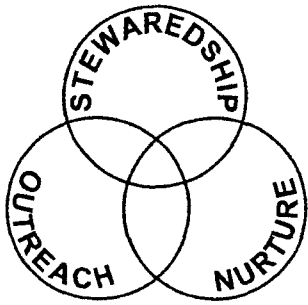


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Jesus said, "When you did it to one of these my brethren, you did it unto me." Matt. 25:40



Volume VII

MARCH 2007

Issue 3

IS IT LINT OR LENT?

A pastor friend of mine, Sandra Mull, led devotional time at a recent retreat and posed the question above? I decided to take her question in a different direction. Last Wednesday, February 21st was Ash Wednesday. We gathered to celebrate, of all things, our humanness and our mortality in our traditional service. Each person was invited to remember who they are as sinners and bring their sins and touch a rugged cross to remind them that we were celebrating Jesus' journey to the cross to take away those sins. Then people knelt for the imposition of ashes. This is an act where the pastor uses the ashes from burning last year's palms to make the sign of the cross on each person's forehead as he says, "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return." On the surface that sounds pretty strange, doesn't it?

To put dust or ashes on your head was a Jewish symbol of mourning, death and the grave. Without the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, we would have nothing to look forward to but mourning, death and the grave. As Christians, we can approach our humanness and our mortality with hope because our true life and home is the kingdom to come.

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 not mature in the faith. It's all right to celebrate Christmas, but if it is the most important religious day for your faith, maybe you need to go deeper in your faith journey. Lent exists precisely for that purpose; going deeper in the faith.

Lent is associated with the old English word for spring. We all know that many people think that this is a time for a good "spring cleaning." Strangely

enough, that is where LINT comes in. Now most of us know about lint. It is that stuff you find when you move the refrigerator or washer. It is that wispy light stuff that we find in those hard to reach places under furniture. Lint is actually dust particles that are drawn together by electromagnetic force to form those strange creatures that live in these hidden places. That is the major reason we do our "spring cleaning." We know they are hiding from us. How embarrassing it would be for someone to come over and find these "linter" creatures lurking there.

Lent is a time of "spring cleaning" for the soul. Lent is a time of spiritual self-examination. It is a time to look under and behind places in our hearts and minds that allow us to hide our sin and unfaithfulness from our conscious awareness. We have an opportunity to get rid of those issues in our lives that would embarrass us if others knew the truth about us. Is it possible that we are more embarrassed about the lint and dirt people might find in our homes than we are of the unrecognized sin that God finds in our lives?

Jesus has given us the means to accomplish this spiritual cleansing of the moral ashes, dust and lint in our lives through confession and forgiveness. His sacrificial death and resurrection have paid the price for our transgressions. I invite you to join me on a spiritual quest during Lent to search out those secret places where we hide our failures. I challenge you to join me in letting in the fresh air of the Holy Spirit to cleanse and refresh our lives. When Easter breaks forth in all its glory, we can celebrate the power of the resurrection renewing our lives as faithful disciples.

Shalom,

Mike



The Thrift Shop has had some very good days during the past month, both in sales and in being missionaries to the community. In fact, we have just about sold out of our Winter items. If you have things that you have been putting off giving, now is a good time to get a head start on your Spring cleaning.

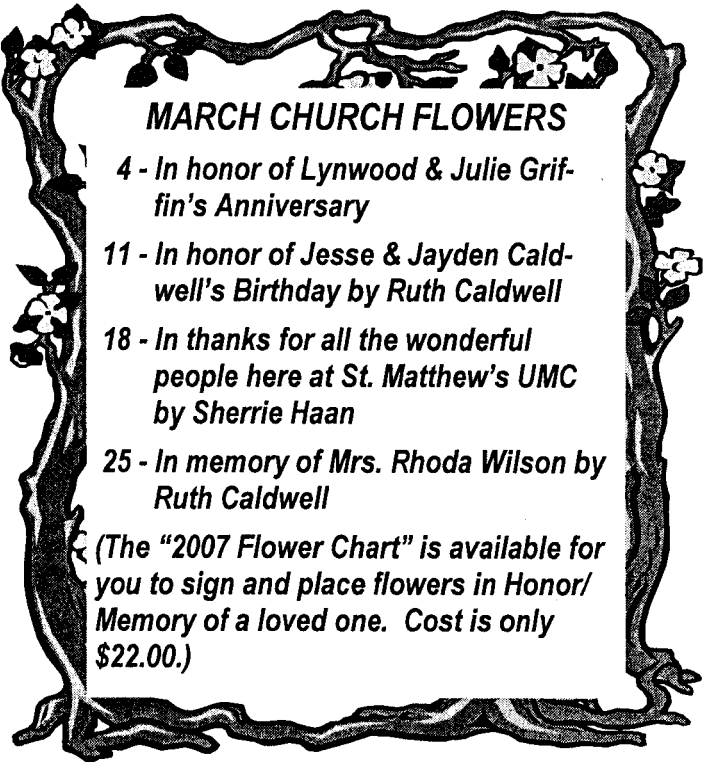
Thanks to all your support, we were able to give **UMCOR** a gift of **\$1,000.00**. A special thanks for all your support and for all the hours of time you give to make this mission possible.

TRUSTEE MINISTRY TEAM

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

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

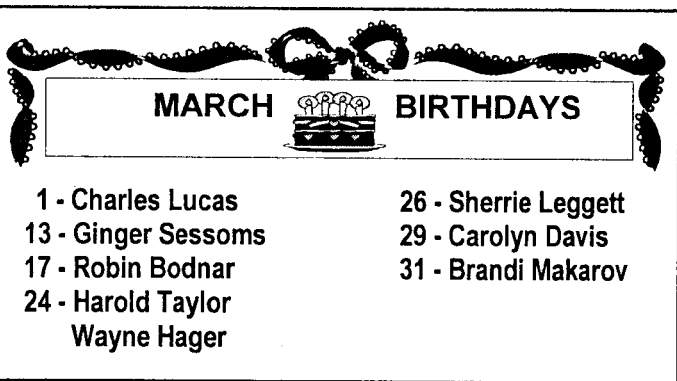
ANNUAL BUDGET - \$171,027.91		AS OF FEBRUARY 25, 2007	
Needed Weekly	\$3,289.00	Needed To Date	\$26,311.99
Average Weekly	\$3,017.92	Received To Date	\$24,143.35
Avg. Weekly Deficit (\$271.08)		Deficit	(\$2,168.64)



MARCH CHURCH FLOWERS

- 4 - In honor of Lynwood & Julie Griffin's Anniversary
- 11 - In honor of Jesse & Jayden Caldwell's Birthday by Ruth Caldwell
- 18 - In thanks for all the wonderful people here at St. Matthew's UMC by Sherrie Haan
- 25 - In memory of Mrs. Rhoda Wilson by Ruth Caldwell

(The "2007 Flower Chart" is available for you to sign and place flowers in Honor/Memory of a loved one. Cost is only \$22.00.)

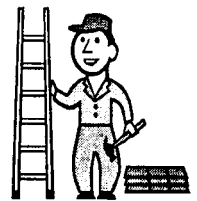


MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1 - Charles Lucas	26 - Sherrie Leggett
13 - Ginger Sessoms	29 - Carolyn Davis
17 - Robin Bodnar	31 - Brandi Makarov
24 - Harold Taylor	
Wayne Hager	

MISSION TRIP TO MISSISSIPPI MARCH 19 - 25

There are lots of ways of giving. How about giving some vacation time to help another family or families move closer to living in their homes? Sam Loy and Jim Bailey will lead another team to Gulfport, Mississippi in March. The team will leave on Monday, March 19th and return on Sunday, March 25th. No building skills are necessary, only the willingness to help our neighbors on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi. Individual cost is only \$100, plus the cost of meals while traveling there and back. For more information, contact Sam Loy at 910-385-4540 or email him at samloy@nccumc.org.



"One Great Hour of Sharing" is scheduled for **Sunday, March 18th**. This is the one time each year set aside to raise operational funds for the United Methodist relief activities. **UMCOR** receives no World Service funds or any other apportionments. United Methodist gifts to this special offering keeps **UMCOR's** lights on and **UMCOR's** delivery system in place at home and around the world, feeding the hungry, caring for the refugee, acting out the love of Jesus in the midst of death. They also enable us to respond immediately to disasters, like Katrina. You are **UMCOR**. Please take part in this critical offering. Without you, there is no **UMCOR**.





The UMM met Sunday, February 18th at 8:30 a.m. There were **29** men present. P.J. was home and it was great to see him again. We wish you good luck, Peter and we will keep you in our prayers. **HOOHAH!!!**

Our invocation was given by Calvin Rome. We then enjoyed a wonderful breakfast prepared by Fred Rozier and Raymond Gray. Thanks you two, it was delicious and filling. Our cooks for March 18th will be Bill and Maria Stackhouse, Demitries, Darius, and Dominique.

Our President, Raymond Gray opened the meeting by reading a card from the **"Spidle Family"** thanking the UMM and St. Matthew's for their support and prayers. Afterwards, Calvin gave a devotion on **"DEFINING GOD" Deuteronomy 6: 1-9, 20-25**. The minutes from last months meeting were read and approved.

Our Treasurer, Troy Willoughby read the financial report and the financial giving and expenditures were discussed. He also presented an Expenditure Sheet for the activities from the UMM's Account. (This is the sheet that was discussed at last months meeting). Thanks, Troy for taking the time to prepare this sheet and for having the books balanced to the penny. **GREAT JOB!!** Calvin Rome will be added to the UMM Bank Account and given the authority to sign checks.

Troy discussed the re-charter for the UMM and presented literature and membership information. A Certificate re-instating the enrolled members through 2008 was posted on the UMM Bulletin Board. Discussion was made concerning all the benefits belonging to the UMM Charter Members. Lloyd Miller has been a UMM Charter Member for many years and is a valuable resource who knows all about these benefits. Thanks Lloyd, we will be calling on you.

The UMM continues to serve Communion to our Homebound Members. Please notify Calvin Rome or Doris Miles if you know of someone desiring to be served Communion. It is a blessing to all involved. Our **March Communion Team** will be **Bob Lambert, Lloyd Miller, Troy Willoughby, J.A. Sessoms, Scotty Clyde and Santos Pena**.

Our President, Raymond Gray, requested that when any group or activity from the church needs support or assistance from the UMM, that a letter be sent or given to the UMM Team so it can be put on the calendar and plans can be made. This letter will be helpful in assisting with your ministry.

Please stop by and read all the important news located on the **UMM Bulletin Board**. There are

great mission opportunities for anyone who would like to participate. **A SPECIAL THANKS** to **Troy Willoughby** for arranging this Bulletin Board.

The UMM invite all men of the church whether you are a member or not to join us on the 3rd Sunday of each month at 8:30 a.m. We would love to see new faces and hear new ideas. You will enjoy a great Breakfast and good Christian Fellowship.

THANKS to everyone who helped with our **UMM Annual Sweetheart Banquet**. It was because of great teamwork that we all had a good time. I don't want to list individual names, because I would probably forget someone. **A SPECIAL THANKS** to the cooks, decorators, dishwashers, game participants, ushers, cleaners, and everyone who attended, Your generous donation of **\$364.00** will help support one of our **Rainbow Covenant Missions in India "Project for Destitute Children"** that provides medical services, education, vocational training and shelter to less fortunate children. Again, **THANK YOU!!!**

Calvin Rome closed the meeting with prayer.

God bless!

Bill Stackhouse, UMM Secretary

THE BICYCLE MAN

I'm sure most of you have heard of **Moses Mathis (The Bicycle Man)**. He is in the process of moving from Blue Street to a new location near downtown within the next month. I have spoken to him on several occasions and have volunteered to collect items in this area that would be of use to him. Since the first of the year, I have delivered 3 bicycles, 1 tricycle, 2 computers, 4 printers, 3 sets of speakers, and various other computer related items. I found the bicycles along the streets waiting for the trash man. Moses also accepts any children's books (up to level 6 preferred). They don't have to be new, but in fair condition. He and other volunteers distribute these to needy children along with the bikes at Christmas. I will be giving periodic updates on our success to help Moses. This project enables us to be a part of a fantastic ministry. Please keep Moses in mind. If you have any items to donate, or see bikes, etc. along the road, please call me at 864-1207 or 309-1788.

Thanks!

Bob Pray



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

We have made it through one more year with new visions and expectations here at the Wesley Community Center in Dayton. Our **People Taking Charge Program** has experienced a positive shift and we believe our new goals will make a wonderful year for us. We held a **Health Economical Empowerment Expo** with a wonderful turnout of 100 people from the community coming to get information. Our People Taking Charge Programs help many move towards self-sufficiency with a positive attitude. One of the graduates said that she built up her self-esteem, identified some career goals, and has gained a closer relationship with her family. We see her as a leader in every sense of the word. These were words of **Robert Walker** who is a missionary in Ohio... "Just one more place to know that your gifts to missions are working every day somewhere in the world". Special congratulations to **Mary Schneider, Doug & Dawn Stone** and **Marie Parker** who received the "**Gift To Missions Award**" in their honor. Please check the UMW Bulletin Board for additional upcoming events for April and May. It would be great if we could get a group of ladies together who would be interested in attending some of these meeting and workshops. Please let me know if you are interested. Our next meeting will be **Monday, March 5th** at **6:30 p.m.** with a light supper provided. We will have more information on upcoming events when we meet.

Adella Pray, UMW President

DATES TO REMEMBER:

March 2 - World Day of Prayer, 9:15 am - Bible Study & 10:00 am - "United Under God's Tent" at College Heights Presbyterian Church, Seabrook Road

March 17 - District Spiritual Day Apart, 9:00 am - Registration at St. Andrews UMC, bring a bag lunch; drinks and dessert will be provided

RUTH-ETHEL SMITH CIRCLE:

Our Circle of Friends met Wednesday, February 14th at 11:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone was welcomed. Devotion and Prayer was given and afterwards the Minutes from the last meeting and Treasurer's Report were read. Also, "**The Purpose of the UMW**" was read by all. We were delighted to have guests from "**The Care Center**". They gave a program on "**Battered Women**". It was very informative and surprised us all by hearing how much of this is going on today. Our mission for March is to give towels to the Care Center. Each member is asked to bring one towel. We discussed upcoming events such as our "**Mother's Day Booklet**" and our circle will clean up the kitchen after the "**Mother's Banquet**". In September, the Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle and United Methodist Women will vote on New Officers. We sang "**Happy Birthday**" to the ladies who had a birthday in February. On March 14th, we will meet briefly at 11:00 a.m. and then go to "**Georgia Brown's**" for lunch. The meeting was adjourned and lunch was served.

Lola Smith, Circle Leader

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

"HAM & BEAN SOUP"

1/4 cup chopped onion	1/4 cup sliced celery
1/4 cup chopped bell pepper	1/2 tsp minced garlic
2 Tbsp olive oil	1 3/4 cups water
1 14 oz. can tomatoes, chopped	1/2 cup ham, cubed
1 14 oz. can kidney beans	2 small potatoes, cubed
Dash black pepper & hot sauce	Parmesan cheese



Saute onion, celery, bell pepper, and garlic in olive oil in a two-quart saucepan. Add tomatoes, beans, water, potatoes, and ham. Cook until potatoes are tender. Season to taste with pepper and hot sauce. Serve warm with Parmesan cheese. Yield: 4 servings

NIGHT OWLS CIRCLE

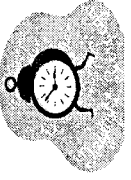
Our circle of friends met Thursday, February 8th at 7:00 p.m. Our February Project was to give a donation to the **FFF** for all the great things they do. Our March Project will be to give a donation to the **Emergency Fund**. Our next meeting will be March 8th at 7:00 p.m. Ruby Lucas will provide the program and refreshments.



MARCH

ST. MATTHEW'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 Communion Service - 11:00 am	5 UMW Mtg. - 6:30pm	6 Prayer Group - 6:30pm	7 Card Ministry - 5:00pm Bible Study - 6:30pm Choir Practice - 7:30pm	8 Night Owls Circle - 7:00pm	9	10
11 Daylight Savings Time Begins 	12	13 Prayer Group - 6:30pm	14 Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle - 11:00 am Card Ministry - 5:00pm Bible Study - 6:30pm Choir Practice - 7:30pm	15	16	17
18 UMM Breakfast Mtg. - 8:30am Youth Donation Lunch - 12:00pm	19	20 Prayer Group - 6:30pm	21 Card Ministry - 5:00pm Bible Study - 6:30pm Choir Practice - 7:30pm	22 Help-N-Hands -- 11:00 am	23	24 FFF & Book Club - 8:30am
25	26	27 Prayer Group - 6:30pm	28 Card Ministry - 5:00pm Bible Study - 6:30pm Choir Practice - 7:30pm	29	30	31 EASTER EGG HUNT 2:00PM