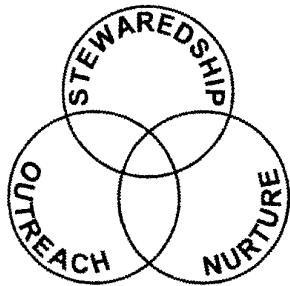


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*Jesus said, "When you did it to one of these my brethren, you did it unto me." Matt. 25:40*

**Volume VII**

**APRIL 2007**

**Issue 4**

## PASSION, PRAYER AND PRIORITIES

If ever there was a person who had a passion for praying for people it was Lyle Spidle, who was a part of our Intercessory Prayer Team for as long as most people remember. When we had a prayer conference in the Fayetteville District last year, several of us returned with the idea of strengthening our prayer ministries here at St. Matthew's and providing space for this important ministry. The Trustees and Church Council approved a plan for a Prayer Parlor in the first room on the left after going through the double doors down the hall from the Church office. Bob Pray volunteered to put together furnishings that were scattered around the church and paint to start us in the right direction. Before Lyle died, January 16, 2007, he made a donation for the prayer room in memory of his son, Richard Spidle and daughter, Roseann Stanbridge. With the pastor's assistance, Lyle picked out the item he wanted to place in the prayer room. Following his death, most of the memorial gifts were designated toward the prayer parlor.

On Sunday afternoon, March 17, 2007 the Church Council voted to name the Prayer Parlor in memory of Lyle Spidle. They further approved appointing a Prayer Parlor Ministry Team made up of the members of the present Intercessory Prayer Team of Ruth Caldwell, Connie Knight, Hilda Pena, Margaret and Scotty Clyde and the Memorial Team of Lola Smith, Barry and Pam Gallimore and the pastor, co-chaired by Roberta Brown and Calvin Rome. This team will make decisions on expanding our ministry to deepen our prayer life here at St. Matthew's. They will also make decisions for upgrading the prayer room in consultation with our Trustees. Decisions will also be made on using memorial funds for this project. If you

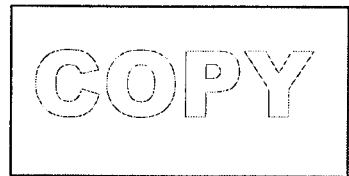
are interested is making a contribution to this effort please mark your check or envelope Prayer Ministry.

There is no better time to focus on prayer than now, when the Church is in the process of receiving a new pastor after Annual Conference. We need to pray for our Bishop, District Superintendent, and the Cabinet as they deliberate on the person that they think can best lead this church forward. Prayer will undergird this process and assure for a smooth transition that will bless the future of this church. I will be working with your Pastor-Parish Ministry Team to allow in my power to prepare the way for your new pastor. When Jesus started his ministry John the Baptist's disciples wondered who they must follow. John told them, "He must increase but I must decrease" John 3:30. That is exactly what I intend to do. The new pastor must increase in our prayers and loyalties, and I must decrease.

It is vital that the members of this church establish some clear priorities about the future. What kind of church do you want to be? What is your vision for implementing the mission to "go make disciples"? What will it look like? All too many churches get more excited about a building project than they do about responding to Jesus' call to make disciples. Our Bishop challenges churches to strive for excellence in ministry to the world around us. He wants us to be an Acts 2 church. Both have been described in previous newsletters. When we define vision as something we build we do not ask, "How will this building produce results for the kingdom"? In most cases we build to meet our own needs rather than as a means to increase our ministry for discipleship. Where is our passion for Jesus' great commission?

Shalom,

Mike



*Personal Empowerment And Community Edification*

March 13, 2007

**Dr. Michael L. Hale**  
Director  
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haleo@nc.rr.com

Bishop Alfred W. Gwinn  
North Carolina Annual Conference  
P.O. Box 10955  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27605

Dear Bishop Gwinn;

After months of prayer and seeking the Lord's guidance, I have decided to take an early retirement at the end of this Conference year. I will pursue a ministry with an emphasis on Spiritual Formation and Direction; Enrichment opportunities for churches, individuals, marriages, and families; and Christian Council/Life Coaching through The Peace Inc., a 501 (3) (c) not- for- profit corporation.

I am thankful for the many blessings I have experienced as pastor of St. Matthew's United Methodist Church as I move into my seventh year. While serving with the Methodist Home for Children for fifteen years, I worked closely with Bishop Marion Edwards as Director of Family Life Services, before my position was terminated. When he asked me to serve St. Matthew's midyear, I gladly accepted. Edward's emphasis to mold churches in Spiritual Formation and Transformational Leadership leading to setting churches loose for evangelistic ministry was a perfect compliment for my own ministry agenda.

It has been a privilege serving under the leadership of two Bishops who have shared such great visions for church renewal and transformation. When I first heard your message at the Fayetteville District introductory meeting and goals expressed since then, I feel truly blessed to have another Bishop who places an emphasis on many of the things I initiated when I first came to St. Matthew's. I now believe I have led this congregation as far as they will allow me to lead them toward these goals.

I can honestly say that I am closer to the Lord and more enthusiastic about ministry now than ever before about God's power to transform the lives of individuals and the Church. During my daily devotion time about five weeks ago, I came to the startling revelation that in God's providence, my seven years of service at St. Matthew's allowed me to meet the requirements for early retirement. My pension will allow funds for me to pursue a vision for ministry I have dreamed about for years. This past Friday, Kermit Braswell's affirmation of my spiritual gifts, skills and reputation within the Conference along with his invaluable advice on pension options, was the final confirmation I needed to commit to this change in ministry. Support from members of my weekly Covenant Group and clergy colleagues have also encouraged and confirmed this new ministry.

I respectfully ask you to accept my request for retirement with your blessings.

Shalom,

Michael L. Hale, D.Min., LCSW, CFLE

cc: Carol Goehring, Paul L. Leland, J. Donald Phillips, Beth Hood

*"Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual up-building". Romans 14: 19*

## TRUSTEE MINISTRY TEAM

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

## NURTURE

Our "**5th Sunday Dinner**" will be held **April 29th** at **6:00 p.m.** which will be hosted by the **FFF**. After dinner, we will have a "**Family Fun Night**". There will be **Bingo, Card Games, and Children's Games**. Please mark your calendar and join the fun. I would like to thank the Youth Group for hosting the **Easter Egg Hunt**. This annual event is enjoyed by all. Also a special thanks to those who provided the goodies, candy and eggs. Catherine Morgan suggested that we need a plan for members who are hospitalized or when there is a death in the family. The committee agreed that as Head of Nurture, Elaine Everts is to be notified. She is to get all the details from the person calling. Then she will notify UMW President-Adella Pray, UMM President-Raymond Gray, and Worship Leaders - Barry & Pam Gallimore who will then notify the necessary people. Elaine may be reached at (919) 499-5806, (910) 494-2427 & work (910) 947-5511. Tell the receptionist that it's an emergency.

In Christ, Elaine Everts

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 MARCH 25, 2007	
Needed Weekly	\$3,289.00	Needed To Date	\$39,467.98
Average Weekly	\$3,050.98	Received To Date	\$36,611.72
Av. Weekly Deficit	(\$238.02)	Deficit	(\$2,856.26)

## APRIL CHURCH FLOWERS

1 - In honor of **Matt Jamison & Richard Sibbett** by **Lynwood & Julie Griffin**

8 - In memory of **Earl Wilson & In honor of Diana C. Bone's birthday** by **Ruth Caldwell**

15 - In honor of **Laura & Catherine Ashworth & Chad Graham's birthday** by their **Grandparents**

22 - None

29 - None

(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.)

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS



- |                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 4 - Steven Davis    | 25 - Lola Smith      |
| 8 - Barry Gallimore | 27 - Connie Miller   |
| 9 - James DeBruhl   | 28 - Jean Lambert    |
| Joe Bledsoe         | 29 - Amanda Call     |
| 17 - Joshua Hager   | Edna Parker          |
| 20 - Clarice Edge   | 30 - Pegi Lineberger |
| Jennifer Larsen     | John Williams, Jr.   |
| 21 - Margaret Lewis |                      |

## SUNDAY MORNING EXCUSES

We live a half-mile from the church you know,  
 It's raining and our friends are coming over  
 today so we can't go, but we'll  
 drive 10 miles to a dance or show,  
 We will always go to the places we like,  
 We would ride in a car, or we would hike.  
 God forbid that we aren't doing what we like.  
 We live a half-mile from church you know,  
 The car has a flat tire so we can't go.  
 We would fix it to go shop at the mall, or to a ball game,  
 But going to church is different you know.  
 We would mend that tire in the pouring rain,  
 Or a bad snowstorm, even in the middle of the night,  
 if we couldn't mend it, we would just hike.  
 For when we are hunting pleasure all is a stifle,  
 That's when the church will have to wait awhile.  
 We're half-mile from the church you know,  
 Our friends are coming over so we can't go,  
 To disappoint our friends would be unkind,  
 But to neglect our worship service we don't mind.  
 We will spend this rainy Sunday all day with our  
 friends on earth,  
 By feasting and quenching our thirst,  
 We will spend all day at a fancy restaurant or our  
 friends house.  
 Instead of doing all that at God's open house!  
 But when it comes to the end of our days,  
 We will all be wishing that we had been taking  
 That Sunday morning trip to church and mended our ways.

Written by: H.J. Counterman, Jr.





There were **31** men present at our monthly meeting on Sunday, March 18th. It was great to see so many faces. Our invocation was given by Calvin Rome. We enjoyed a wonderful breakfast which was prepared by **Bill, Demitries, Darius** and

**Dominique. Bob Galliera** volunteered to cook breakfast in April.

Our President, Raymond Gray, opened the meeting by reading a few **"Thank You Cards"** that were sent to the UMM thanking them for the Sweetheart Banquet. Raymond thanked everyone again for all their assistance in making the Sweetheart Banquet a huge success.

Calvin gave a devotion on **"Easter Faithfulness"** from **1 Corinthians 15: 12-20 NRSV**. The minutes were read and approved. Troy Willoughby read the Financial Report and the financial giving and expenditures were discussed. The information for the UMM Charter Status is posted on the UMM Bulletin Board.

Calvin thanked the Communion Team Leaders for serving communion last month and emphasized how important this ministry is and how much it is appreciated and blessed by all involved. If you know of someone desiring to be served Communion, or would like to become a part of this ministry, please notify Calvin Rome or call Doris at the church office. The April Communion Team will be **Raymond Gray, Scotty Clyde, Troy Willoughby, Lloyd Miller, Bob Lambert** and **J.A. Sessoms**.

Information was passed around in reference to the **"Serving in America"** ministry. A motion was made to donate **\$200.00** to this ministry. It was seconded by Charles Lucas and the motion was passed. Additional information on this ministry will be posted on the UMM Bulletin Board.

April Ushers will be **(Head Usher) Santos Pena, Ike Huffman, Calvin Rome & Robert Parker**. We invite all men of the church whether you are a member or not to join us for our UMM monthly meeting which is held on the 3rd Sunday each month at 8:30 a.m. We love to see new faces, hear new ideas, and you will enjoy a great breakfast. Calvin closed the meeting with prayer.

#### **UMM CALLED MEETING:**

A special UMM meeting was called on Sunday, March 25th. A motion was made to replace the existing old electric stove in the church kitchen with a new **Gas Stove**. Fourteen men were present for this meeting. The cost of the new stove is estimated at \$1,000.00. The Thrift Shop and the UMM will share the cost of \$500.00 each. The motion was unanimously passed.

Bill Stackhouse, UMM Secretary

## **MISSION OPPORTUNITIES**



**Native American Ministries**  
**Sunday, April 22**

### **Assistance Needed in Riegelwood**

Volunteers are urgently needed during the next two weeks to help staff the **United Methodist Mobile Kitchen** serving three meals daily to volunteers making repairs from the November 2006 tornadoes in **Riegelwood**. To volunteer to prepare, serve, and/or clean up, please contact **Phil Platter** at **919-499-7803**.

### **UMCOR Emergency Kits Needed**

**MERCI** needs the following items to complete UMCOR Emergency Kits: **Toothpaste, Metal Nail Files, Large Combs, Hand Towels, Lined Loose Leaf Notebook Paper, and Cloth Diapers**. Deliver to 676 Community Dr., Goldsboro, NC 27530. Questions call: 1-888-440-9167.

### **Tornado and Storm Disaster Response**

Dozens of tornadoes recently ripped through Missouri, Illinois, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida killing at least 20 people. **UMCOR** has released several emergency grants to support the initial response. You can give to this ongoing response by making a gift to **"Domestic Disaster Response, Advance #901670"**.

### **Glean with Society of St. Andrew**

Contact the Society of St. Andrew and ask how your church can become a **"Gleaning Congregation."** You can also make a gift to the Society of St. Andrew through the Conference Advance Special. Donations can be made by noting on your gift envelope and check - **Society of St. Andrew, Advance #00081** and place it in the offering plate. 100% of your contribution goes to this ministry. For more information contact: **Rev. Julia Webb-Bowden** at **919-683-3011** or **ncglean@endhunger.org**.

**UMCOR**  
United Methodist Committee On Relief

## UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The following Mission Moment is shared by Janet Lahr Lewis, a missionary to Jerusalem, Palestine. It is "**Holy Week**" in the **Holy Land**. In the Old City a few hundred pilgrims have come to run where Jesus walked. When they pass through Bethany, do they realize that the Separation Wall has cut across the historic route that Jesus took from Jericho to raise Lazarus from his tomb? As they process down the Mount of Olives on Palm Sunday, do they see the houses that Israeli soldiers have taken over at gunpoint, leaving several families homeless during the Holy Week? When I become fed up, I set out to walk the hills. Along the way, there are two trees, one an olive and one a fig, that have forced their way up through the concrete, rooting themselves stubbornly and fastidiously along this main road, as if to remind people, "I am here and have been here for centuries. Even your concrete cannot kill me!" I think of the Palestinians, who, like the trees, are rooted in this land, who have persisted in their struggle for survival despite inhuman treatment, a broken economy, and their imprisonment behind concrete walls. Like the olive and the fig trees, their roots go deep and they will struggle until they can bear fruit, until they can once again produce a society that is lush and full, that they can share with the world. "I need you like the flower needs the rain. You know I need you, guess I'll start it all again. You know I need you like the winter needs the spring. You know I need you, I need you." From the American song "I Need You," these lyrics speak to one of the most wonderful aspects of life...That we cannot do it alone. In our society today, people place an over inflate value on independence when in reality goals can never be accomplished in a vacuum. They take relationships, partnership, and an appreciation of those around us. A golden rule by which we must live is that "each of us needs all of us and all of us need each of us". The group needs the individual and the individual needs the group. You feel from time to time that bringing a team together to work together is impossible. This is a natural feeling when you have so many different personalities and opinions coming from all different directions. However, if thousands of people can work together to make a million moving parts function to send the space shuttle into orbit, you can get 50 people to move together toward the same goal. It begins with sharing a common goal, and continues with patience and tolerance. It is everyone having their own roles and contributing their unique gifts offering their ideas and potential solutions to problems. It continues with enthusiasm and passion for the journey they have set out on. Finally the fruit from all this is the spirit of corporation that will allow people to work together in harmony for the common good of all. You have the talent, you have the skill, and simply by knowing that you need others, you can and will create a team unified by mutual respect for each other, around a common purpose that will leave a bright spot in the world for others to marvel over. For your information on Friday, March 16th, I read in the Fayetteville Observer that Ruby Lucas' brother has passed away and that the service would be at St. Matthew's on Sunday at 3:00 p.m. Rev. Hale called and asked that I contact Ruby to see what she needed. I contacted 12 people to let them know. Ruby asked for cold cuts and bread. I asked the Night Owls if they could take care of this. I apologize for not calling every woman at St. Matthew's even though I was involved with the death and funeral of a special person to me for over 50 years. As I started out, "I need you like the flower needs the rain. You know I need you, guess I'll start it all again. You know I need you, like the winter needs the spring. You know I need you, I need you." A golden rule is that the group needs the individual and the individual needs the group. **MAY GOD BE WITH YOU AS YOU GO FORWARD DURING THE DAYS OF SPRING!** Remember the UMW General Meeting will be held on Monday, April 2nd at 6:30 p.m.

Adella Pray, UMW President



### RECIPE OF THE MONTH "CRUNCHY CHERRY MERINGUE DESSERT"

6 Egg Whites	3/4 tsp Cream of Tartar
2 tsp Vanilla Extract	2 cups Sugar
2 cups Crushed Saltines	1 8 oz. carton frozen Whipped Topping, slightly frozen
1 20 oz. can Cherry Pie Filling	
1/2 cup Chopped Pecans or Walnuts	

In a large bowl, whip egg whites until foamy. Add cream of tartar and vanilla extract; beat until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in sugar. Fold in crackers and nuts. Transfer to a 13 X 9 inch baking dish coated with nonstick cooking spray. Bake at 350 degrees for 20-25 minutes, until lightly browned and edges begin to crackle. Cool on wire rack. Spread whipped topping over crust, and carefully spoon pie filling over top. Yield: 12 servings.

### RUTH-ETHEL SMITH CIRCLE

Our Circle of friends met Wednesday, March 14th at 11:00 a.m. and had a good attendance. Everyone was welcomed and we recognized those who were unable to attend. "**The Purpose of the UMW**" was read by all. Devotion and Prayer was given by Margaret Clyde. We all brought Towels to be given to the **Care Center**. A special thanks to **Dorothy Spakes, Sherrie Haan, and Mary Schneider** for delivering the towels to the Care Center. We sang "Happy Birthday" to **Ginger Sessoms** and **Sherrie Leggett**. A **Fruit Basket** was given to **Hilda Pena** by our Circle. Our Mission for April is to give funds to our St. Matthew's Youth. Prayer was given by Dorothy Taylor and then we adjourned and had a nice lunch at **Georgia Brown's**.

See you next month!  
Lola Smith

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> PALM SUNDAY	<b>2</b> UMW Mtg - 6:30pm	<b>3</b> Prayer Group - 6:30pm	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> HOLY THURSDAY SERVICE 7:00 PM	<b>6</b> GOOD FRIDAY	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> EASTER	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Prayer Group - 6:30pm	<b>11</b> Ruth-Ethel Smith Circle - 11:00am Card Ministry - 5:00pm Bible Study - 6:30pm Choir Practice - 7:30pm	<b>12</b> Night Owls Circle - 7:00pm	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> UMM Breakfast Mtg. - 8:30am	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Prayer Group - 6:30pm	<b>18</b> Card Ministry - 5:00pm Bible Study - 6:30pm Choir Practice - 7:30pm	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> Native American Ministries Sunday	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Prayer Group - 6:30pm	<b>25</b> Card Ministry - 5:00pm Bible Study - 6:30pm Choir Practice - 7:30pm	<b>26</b> Help-N-Hands Seniors - 11:00am	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> Old Fashion Worship Service 11:00 am 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday Dinner Family Fun Night 6:00 pm	<b>30</b>	<b>Prayer Group - 6:30pm</b>	<b>Card Ministry - 5:00pm Bible Study - 6:30pm Choir Practice - 7:30pm</b>			