



A&M

United Methodist Church

Messenger

Sharing the heart of Christ.

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January 25, 2008



GIVE THANKS

Earn all you can; save all you can; give all you can. – John Wesley

Last Sunday was the beginning of a special four-week stewardship emphasis about our church's ministries. You make a difference in the lives of people throughout the year as you worship God with your tithes and offerings. Our spiritual theme for this stewardship emphasis is *Giving Thanks*.

Below are answers to some of your questions about giving:

What is our church's definition of stewardship?

Stewardship is the devout investment or use of money, time, and ability. In biblical times, a steward supervised a household or an estate. Today, as God's children, we deem God the source of all we have, seek to hold it in trust for God, and desire to be "good stewards of the manifold grace of God". 1 Peter 4:10a

Why do we give?

Giving is rooted in God's very being. The ability to give is a gift from God. All life is grace, a free, unearned gift from a giving God who invites us to share in the divine life and mission of giving. Giving is indispensable to Christian discipleship. It is part of holy living. Growth in discipleship inevitably includes growth in giving.

What is a tithe?

A tithe is a biblical standard, usually one-tenth of one's annual income, given back to God to support the church and its ministries. God allows us to keep ninety percent of all entrusted.

What is proportional giving?

Proportional giving involves giving a percentage of one's income. You can begin your giving journey by identifying a percentage that is manageable, yet sacrificial. Each year, you can chart a course that allows you to grow in your stewardship aimed toward the tithe.

Why is it important to make an estimate of giving each year?

When you determine your commitment, it ignites your faith and provides a path to guide your giving throughout the year. Such commitments allow us to grow in our faith. Your commitment also enables the church to practice good stewardship, planning ministries in anticipation of available resources.

Why is giving important?

Jesus taught that giving is important, and until we have committed our finances to God, we have not fully committed ourselves. Our attitudes toward possessions and money can either be a stumbling block along our faith journey or a means of growth in grace. God doesn't need our money. God wants our hearts, but our hearts are inextricably connected to our treasures.

Share the Love of God

Valentine's Banquet
February 8, 6:30 p.m.
Tickets On Sale
This Sunday
\$12 each

Enjoy an elegant evening. Savor a delicious, melt in your mouth prime rib dinner with all the trimmings, tasty chocolate fountain, and wonderful music. Then outbid all your friends at our silent and live auctions!

The funds raised at the banquet go to support youth mission projects and supplement the cost of summer camp. Thanks to your generous donations last year many more youth were able to attend mission trips and camp. Our goal this year is to raise **\$6,000**.

In addition to attending the banquet, there are many ways you can help us reach our goal. You can help underwrite the banquet expenses and/or donate an item to our silent and live auctions.

You can fill out a donation form this Sunday, or contact Lisa Pitts at lisapitts@suddenlink.net or 571-1036.

Please prayerfully consider the impact that your donation will have on the youth of A&M UMC.



JumpStart is an introductory program for visitors and new members. A new session will begin this Sunday, January 27, at 9:45 a.m. in Room 111.

If you are new to the church, new to Methodism, or just want a refresher course please join us!

Lent: The Reminder Disciplines

The 40 days before Easter (beginning on February 6 this year) comprise the season of Lent, which is our time of penitential preparation for the celebration of our Lord's passion and resurrection. Sundays are excluded because they are essentially celebrations of the resurrection.

Traditionally Lent has been a time of "give up" and "take on", when we deny our-

LENT

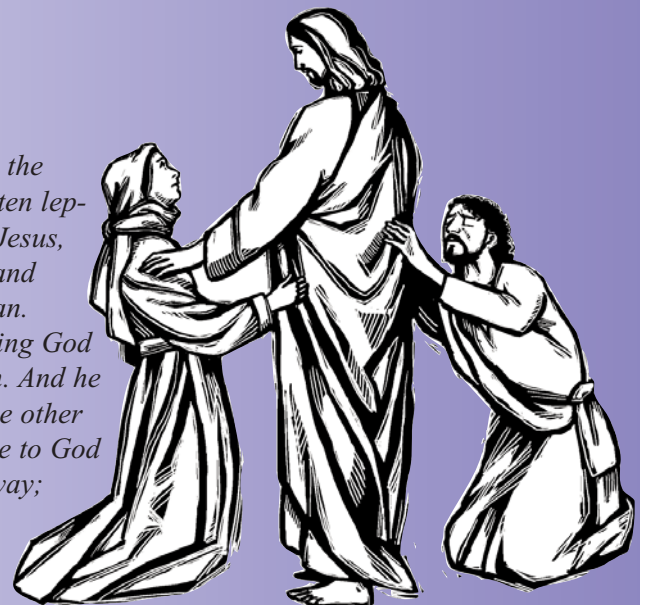


selves some pleasure and take on an additional time of study, worship and/or service. These disciplines should not be self-improvement ones, like "I need to go on a diet and Lent is a good time to begin." They should not be hair shirt disciplines wherein we wear ourselves out. They are to be reminder disciplines of who we are and that for which we are preparing.



GIVING THANKS

Scripture: *On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" When he saw them, he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were made clean. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well." —Luke 17: 11-19*



Thought: This scripture clearly and painfully brings into focus Jesus' ten blessings and the lepers' responses. What sorrow Jesus must have felt when only one of the ten came back to say thank you. Let us pledge in this New Year to be a personal example of the one who returned by giving Him more of the thanks He deserves.

Prayer: Jesus You are our savior and sustainer, You are the light of hope in this world. Please forgive us when we like the nine lepers have gone on with our lives and forgotten to give thanks to You. Help us to be better stewards of Your love and the blessings that You shower upon us.



Kip's Korner

by Rev. Kip Gilts

Never Underestimate the Power of Gratitude

When he saw that he was healed...he prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, 'Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they?...Then he said to him, 'Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.' Luke 17:15-19

I saw her seated behind all the others. She couldn't have been more than seven years old. She was with her brother and they were trying to see the drama presented by college students. I motioned for her to join me on the hill of Tenextitla, a mountain village outside of Tamazunchale, Mexico. They followed my invitation and were able to see over the heads of all those in front of them. I smiled and told Katie Shannon to take a picture of them – they were so cute!

The rest of the day was a blur. We colored pictures, distributed eyeglasses, played games, prayed with those requesting prayers, gave out toys to every boy and girl, and so much more. After several hours of activity, we began packing up. Only a handful of villagers remained. A woman led two children up to me and they extended their hands and warm greetings, "Muchas gracias." I looked into their faces and was surprised to see that it was the same girl and boy that I invited to join me on the hill for the drama. As I shook their hands and hugged their necks my heart was filled to overflowing. It had been a busy day and most of the villagers had left without saying a word to us. That was alright, we weren't there for the thanks. However, when gratitude was expressed my heart overflowed with joy.

I wonder how many times I linger to give thanks to God for the wonderful things that I have received from God. I fear that it is not nearly as often as it could be. When I return a portion of what God has given to me, I wonder if



January 20, 2008

Contributions

Offering \$15,720.18
MTD & YTD \$61,299.89

Expenses

MTD & YTD \$65,920.73
2007 Carryover (1,344.41)

ATTENDANCE

8:30 a.m. 238
9:45 a.m. 162
10:50 a.m. 370
TOTAL 770



Lent Begins February 6, 2008
6:30 p.m.
In the Sanctuary

Prayer Vigil from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.
in the Prayer Chapel

Kip's Korner cont'd.

God's heart is filled to overflowing as mine was in Tenextitla when I saw those beautiful children of Mexico. I learned at that moment to never underestimate the power of gratitude, not only on the part of the grateful, but also on the part of the giver.

I encourage you to take time this month reflecting on all that God has given to you – financially, relationally, physically, and so many other ways. Then linger a bit, look up to God and say, "Thank you, Lord. Thank you." Hearts will be overflowing.

Sincerely,
Kip Gilts

Prayer Corner

Prayers of Healing for Elva Gutierrez, Ellen Horner, M. R. Calliham, Joe Duncan (Jana Barrett's dad), Paul Pulley (Jane's son), Tom Sessums, Beckie Stover, and Joe and Connie Wallace.

Prayers of Thanksgiving for the birth of Davis Everette Patton on January 15. His parents are Glen and Jill Patton and grandparents are Larry and Carol Patton.

Prayers of Comfort for Connie Lipsey for the death of her mother, Dorothy Beard, on January 13; Nancy Pride for the death of her mother on January 16; Ron Petty for the death of his mother, Mona Petty, on January 16; the friends of Dr. Charles Plum who died recently in Allen, TX; and Jesse Parr for the death of his mother, Hester Parr, on January 18.

Please, always keep our troops around the world and their families in your prayers.

Congratulations!

Kristi Hosea was recently recognized as "outstanding Crime Prevention Specialist of Central Texas." Kristi is an officer with the Texas A&M University Police Department's Community Oriented Police Services (C.O.P.S.) program and the Crime Prevention Unit.



Co-Ed Softball Team Now Forming

We need guys and girls (especially girls) ages 16 and up who want to play softball. We play on Thursday nights beginning February 21. There are nine games and a tournament in the season. All games are at Veterans Park. It's lots of fun and good exercise too! Our team ages range from 16 to over 50 and have all skill levels.

Call Penny Thomas at 690-8600 to learn more and sign up.

Activities at A&M United Methodist Church

Sunday, January 27, 2008

- 8:30 a.m. **Worship Service, Sanctuary
- 9:40 a.m. **Sunday School for all ages
- 9:45 a.m. **Worship Service, Annex
- 10:50 a.m. **Worship Service, Sanctuary
- 10:50 a.m. **College Sunday School, Annex Fellowship Hall

3:00 p.m. L.E.A.D. Institute, *CLC

- 4:00 p.m. CROSSFIRE Bells, Choir Room
- 5:00 p.m. CROSSFIRE Choir, Choir Room
- 5:00 p.m. Financial Peace University, Fellowship Hall
- 6:00 p.m. UMYF, *C-Youth Commons
- 7:00 p.m. Brass Choir, Choir Room
- 7:30 p.m. Al-Anon & AA, Rms 204 & 209

Monday, January 28, 2008

- 2:00 p.m. Susanna Wesley Circle, Katherine Wigington's home
- 5:30 p.m. First Place, Room 114
- 5:30 p.m. Stewardship Comm., *C-211
- 6:30 p.m. Christian Believer, Room 129
- 7:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 802, Scout Rm

Tuesday, January 29, 2008

- 7:00 p.m. Canterbury Bells, Choir Room

Wednesday, January 30, 2008

- 7:00 a.m. Men's Prayer Breakfast, F.H.
- 8:45 a.m. Disciple I, Carol Patton's home
- 3:30 p.m. Artistic Adventures, *C-G.H.
- 4:30 p.m. Confirmation, *C-205
- 5:00 p.m. Cherub Bells, Choir Room
- 5:30 p.m. Capital Campaign Mtg., *C-211
- 6:30 p.m. Youth Bible Study, *C-211
- 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Sanc.

Thursday, January 31, 2008

- 12:15 p.m. Emmaus Reunion, Jane Pulley's home
- 6:10 p.m. College Dinner, *C-Great Hall
- 7:00 p.m. Mosaic Worship, *C-Yth Com.
- 6:30 p.m. Coventry Bells, Choir Room

Saturday, February 2, 2008

- 8:30 a.m. United Methodist Women District Officers, F.H.

Sunday, February 3, 2008

- 8:30 a.m. **Worship Service, Sanctuary
- 9:40 a.m. **Sunday School for all ages
- 9:45 a.m. **Worship Service, Annex
- 10:50 a.m. **Worship Service, Sanctuary
- 10:50 a.m. **College Sunday School, Annex Fellowship Hall
- 4:00 p.m. CROSSFIRE Bells, Choir Rm.
- 4:00 p.m. INVEST Team, Parlor
- 5:00 p.m. Financial Peace University, TBA
- 5:00 p.m. CROSSFIRE Choir, Choir Rm.
- 6:00 p.m. UMYF, *C-Youth Commons
- 7:00 p.m. Brass Choir, Choir Room
- 7:30 p.m. Al-Anon & AA, Rms 204 & 209

Monday, February 4, 2008

- 11:00 a.m. Membership Care, *C-211
- 5:30 p.m. First Place, Room 114
- 5:30 p.m. Stewardship Comm., *C-211
- 6:30 p.m. Christian Believer, Rm. 129
- 7:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 802, Scout Rm

Tuesday, February 5, 2008

- 11:30 a.m. United Methodist Women General Mtg., Annex F.H.
- 7:00 p.m. Canterbury Bells, Choir Rm.

Wednesday, February 6, 2008

- 6:00 a.m. Prayer Vigil Begins



A letter from Don Braune, Spiritual Emphasis Team Leader for "Giving Thanks"—

Dear Church Family:

As we prepare to embark upon a spiritual journey that will strengthen our faith and enrich our lives, let us go forth with great joy and confidence. We have already begun to focus sharply on the scope of daily ministries our church will provide in the future. Our personal stewardship determines the scope and success of those ministries. The theme for this emphasis is "Giving Thanks".

In order to prepare us for this journey we are asking the congregation to unify in prayer for one another and for the church. In Mark's gospel, we read, "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them and you will have them." (Mark 11:24 NKJV). Seeking help through the Holy Spirit by prayer is our greatest source of power and strength. Even though this special emphasis is only for four weeks, we ask that you continue to pray all during the year because stewardship is what we do, all of the time, with everything God has given us.

Each of you should have received a Prayer Tent in last week's mail. Please place this guide in a prominent, convenient place and faithfully refer to it daily. Try to make it an entire family worship as you study the selected scriptures and jot down your unique prayer and vision for the ministries of our church. Be specific in asking God's guidance and blessing upon each of our ministries, your participation, others who are involved, and our church staff. Be open to God's leadership in your lives as we all unite in prayer. Be bold in your prayers. "Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (1 Thessalonians: 17-18 NKJV).

Thank you for your participation. If you would like additional copies of the Prayer Tent, please call the church office.

As we journey to the conclusion of this stewardship emphasis, let us know that, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will strengthen our faith and enrich our lives. To God Give The Glory!

- 8:45 a.m. Disciple I, Carol Patton's home
- 11:30 a.m. D.M.A., Fellowship Hall
- 3:30 p.m. Artistic Adventures, *C-G.H.
- 4:30 p.m. Confirmation, *C-205
- 5:00 p.m. Cherub Bells, Choir Room
- 6:30 p.m. **Ash Wednesday Service, Sanc.
- 6:30 p.m. Youth Bible Study, *C-211
- 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Sanc.

Thursday, February 7, 2008

- 12:15 p.m. Emmaus Reunion, Jane Pulley's home
- 6:10 p.m. College Dinner, *C-Great Hall
- 6:30 p.m. Coventry Bells, Choir Room
- 7:00 p.m. Mosaic, *C-Youth Commons

Friday, February 8, 2008

- 6:30 p.m. Valentine's Banquet, *C-Gr.Hall

Saturday, February 9, 2008

- 8:00 a.m. Lay Speakers' School, *C-Great Hall

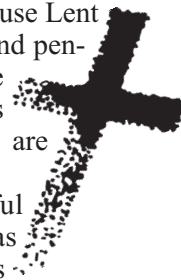
*C means the room is located in the Christian Life Center

**Childcare provided without reservation

A Happy Lent

We wish you all a Happy Lent. Yes, a Happy Lent. Just because Lent is a time of discipline and penitence doesn't mean we have to wear long faces and tell how much we are sacrificing during Lent.

Making a joyful noise unto the Lord is as important in Lent as it is during Easter or Christmastide. The Gospel for Ash Wednesday warns us against practicing our piety before others.



—Church of The Resurrection
Bellevue, WA