



# SAILING INTO A BRIGHT NEW DAY

## **2023 Stewardship Booklet Vol.2**

*40 Days of Prayer for our church.*



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## Into the Deep...

2023 Stewardship Theme Verse: When [Jesus] finished teaching, he said to Simon, “Push out into deep water and let your nets out for a catch.” (Luke 5:4, The Message)

We are kicking off our stewardship season on **October 8 (Stewardship Kick-Off)**. We say “stewardship season” because there is no other way to delineate it. As you know, “stewardship” is not an annual financial campaign, but a way of Christian life. As we begin the stewardship season, we invite each and every member to pray for our church and its ministries for 40 days. We know you have had 40 days of prayer for Lent or other occasions, but have you prayed for 40 days straight for our church and our ministries? We are calling all of you to do that. In our membership vow, prayer is a big part of it! This is a part of our stewardship campaign! I hope this guide will help you pray more specifically and fervently.

It is also a time for you to reexamine our financial gifts, service, attendance/presence, and witness to our faith. On **November 12 (Commitment Sunday)**, we will bring our commitment cards and celebrate God’s many blessings and our faithful responses with a meal with a special video presentation.

As we strive for excellence in life, that is, in schools, work, personal endeavors, let us also strive for excellence in faith. Jesus calls us to go deeper in our faith and in our stewardship. Let us respond to his beckoning.

Rev. Dr. Millie L. Kim

Dan Williams, Stewardship Chair

## Day 8

Scripture: Then the word of the Lord came to [Elijah], saying, "Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there, for I have commanded a widow there to feed you." So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks; he called to her and said, "Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink." As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, "Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand." But she said, "As the Lord your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die." Elijah said to her, "Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said, but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterward make something for yourself and your son. For thus says the Lord the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the Lord sends rain on the earth." She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days. The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord that he spoke by Elijah. (1 Kings 17:8-16)

Dear Friends,

Giving is a part of who I am as a husband, father, son and Christian. It is a portion of the service I am compelled to render to my fellow man. Giving has always brought me a level of euphoria only surpassed by spending time with my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Whether my giving is reflected through the obedience of tithing, spending time with those society deems unworthy or mentoring to the next generation, it is something I love to do.

Many years ago I found myself on the back pew of Ousley United Methodist Church wrestling with a conundrum. The question at hand was whether I should make tithing a consistent and important part of my life. As I mentally went back and forth I did not hear the sermon of the day, but I did hear the Holy Spirit remind me of God's Word.

Malachi 3:10-12 "Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing. I will rebuke the locust for you, so that it will not destroy the produce of your soil; and your vine in the field shall not be barren, says the Lord of hosts."

It was at that moment I decided to put it to the test. I did not take this scripture lightly, since it is one of the few places in the Bible where God invites a test. From that moment to this one, the Lord of Hosts has provided abundantly over anything I could ask for or imagine for my family and me. I did not instantly receive a material wage increase or come into some large sum of money, but it did seem like the little I had went so very far. I think I have seen an example of His goodness and mercy like this before in 1 Kings 17:8-16. Halleluiah! Thank You Lord!

Tony Barner

Pray for Dr. David Walters, Mark Hadden, and our choir.

## Day 9

**Scripture:** Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away, for I have come down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.” (John 6:35-40)

Dear Friends,

To me, giving is like a nourishing meal for the soul. Just as food sustains our bodies, giving sustains our spirits. It's an act of sharing and abundance, where the act of giving becomes a source of joy and fulfillment. When I give, whether it's a kind word, a helping hand, or helping out with kids, I feel a profound sense of connection with others. It reminds me of our interconnectedness and the power we have to make a positive impact in someone's life. Giving allows me to express empathy, compassion, and love, and it fills my heart with warmth and gratitude. It is through giving that I discover the true richness of the human experience, and for that, I am eternally grateful.

Makenna Wood, an 8th Grader

Pray for Hope Lewellen and all adult volunteers for youth ministries.

## Day 10

**Scripture:** When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see only a reflection, as in a mirror, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love remain, these three, and the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:11-13)

Dear Friends,

I have learned so much about giving during my first year on staff here at MPUMC. Growing up in a United Methodist Church, I don't think I ever fully grasped why we discussed giving and took up an offering each week. Looking back, I think I just kind of assumed that a "magical" someone paid for everything going on at the church! Becoming an adult and beginning to manage my own finances, and then coming here to MPUMC and seeing all the hard work, diligence, and mindfulness that goes into managing ours, it suffices to say that I understand now not only how giving works but also why giving is so important. Giving is just one of the ways we try to show God that we are trying to be even a fraction as faithful as He is to us. And one thing's for certain: we can never outgive God! Every gift we give is multiplied in more ways than we can imagine; even when we can't always see the direct effects of it. Another blessing of this church and congregation is that we give not only monetarily, but also of our time and of our spirit; I see this every week with the adult volunteers that help with my ministries, and in the young people, who are just learning how to give, but still do it so freely and with so much grace. I am amazed and inspired by this church and our young people and pray that our gifts continue to multiply in this season of stewardship and beyond. Amen!

Hope Lewellen

Pray for Kasey Brady and the Park Children's Worship.

## Day 11

**Scripture:** “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)

Dear Friends,

Why do I give? That’s a big question. My giving has been a journey alongside my Christian walk; it’s had its ups and downs. Why I give has matured alongside my faith. In the beginning it was “because my parents said so” and now it’s because I believe that supporting the church through tithing is essential to my faith. It is a cornerstone of my personal budget. When I had no extra money, a dollar went in the offering plate because that’s literally all I had. I wanted to show my daughter that it was important, even if it’s just a dollar! Many years later I have structured my budget to include the church first, not last. I’m very proud of that accomplishment. I believe that where you put your money is where your heart and soul are in your life.

Dorothy Kopp

Pray for Cheryl Mitchell and all the Lunches of Volunteers and recipients.

Please vote for lunches of love!

## Day 12

**Scripture:** Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers and sisters. Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfillment of his own purpose, he gave birth to us by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures. (James 1:16-18)

Dear Friends,

What does giving mean to me? To me, giving is an act of worship. We give out of an overflow of gratitude and praise for what God has done in our lives. James 1:17 says "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." Giving back to God and being good stewards of what he has given us is a way we can celebrate God's goodness and faithfulness. 1 Chronicles chapter 16 paints a picture of this: "Ascribe to the Lord, all you families of nations, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering and come before him. Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness" (vv 28-29). We are called to live a lifestyle of worship, and giving is part of that lifestyle.

Nicole Elsey

Pray for Nicole Elsey, our Contemporary Band members, and our Contemporary Service.

## Day 13

**Scripture:** Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore,

glorify God in your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

Dear Friends,

Stewardship means using wisdom and discernment as we manage the gifts we receive, whether they are monetary, spiritual, or physical. Financially, we are to spend money wisely, toward causes that honor God and further His kingdom. We all have spiritual gifts, and we are called to apply them in ways that bless others. Finally, our bodies are the most personal gift we've been given, a "temple of the Holy Spirit", and we must treat it in such a way that it glorifies God.

Sherri Adams

Pray for David Hargett and our ushers and greeters who model hospitality for us.

## Day 14

**Scripture:** Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us, and his love is perfected in us. (1 John 4: 7-12)

Dear Friends,

Some of you already know that I grew up in a household that did not attend church. My father was a staunch atheist. That was very difficult for all of us. So, we did not celebrate Easter or Christmas at home; in fact, we did not celebrate much of anything. It was a sad situation. But my mother's father (my maternal grandfather) was a Presbyterian minister, so we knew Jesus and the love of God. It was a small church in our neighborhood that reached out to us with devotional books, crafts, Easter baskets, and Christmas presents. I don't know how they knew our situation, but they did. I remember their thoughtfulness and kindness very fondly, and it left me a lasting impression of Christians. I grew up yearning for a loving community of faith and what it could do to hurting families.

Giving is what makes the world go around and what makes life bearable and even joyful! That's what you are doing through your giving.

Rev. Dr. Millie L. Kim

Pray for our Grief Group and Dementia Support Group.

## Ways to Give:

### **In Person:**

#### **During Worship Service**

**10:45 -Contemporary Worship (Family Life Center)**

**11:05 -Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)**

**1405 Rockbridge Rd. SW, Stone Mountain 30078**

### **By Mail:**

**Mountain Park UMC**

**P. O. Box 871147**

**Stone Mountain, GA**

**30087**

### **Online:**

**[www.mountainparkumc.org/give](http://www.mountainparkumc.org/give)**



### **Text:**

**Simply text “give2mpumc” to the number 73256**

### **Legacy Giving:**

**[mountainparkumc.org/legacy](http://mountainparkumc.org/legacy)**





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*Living Jesus. Loving Community.*