



SAILING INTO A BRIGHT NEW DAY

2023 Stewardship Booklet Vol.3

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 your 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 Captain

Day 15

Scriptures: And God said to them: Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth. (Genesis 1:28) As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as the manifold grace of God. (1 Peter 4:10)

Dear Friends,

My Dad was one of 13 children; my Mom was one of 10. We attended church every Sunday. As a young child growing up in a small Baptist church in a farming community, my parents always gave me money, usually 50 cents or a dollar, to place in the offering plate during Sunday service when they placed theirs in the offering plate. Even at a young age, I felt as though I was making a BIG contribution to my church.

I was also taught at a young age that service in church was a Christian's responsibility to give back. My Mom modeled service by teaching Sunday School classes, leading WMU (Women's Missionary Union), responding to needs in the community, and visiting the sick and elderly. My Dad was a deacon, helped with building repairs and physically moving new ministers. As a farmer, he was the manager of the farms (that God had blessed him with) and our environment where we lived. He was the caretaker of the fish in the pond, cattle in the pastures, the streams that flowed around the farms, and soil that needed to be amended to make it fertile to produce food, not only for family, but beyond. They each supported our church and the community. They were very aware of the God-given blessings; I was not always aware of those blessings.

I now know that those early years have greatly influenced my Christian journey so much. Each day, I realize that anything I give to the church is only a small part of the continual blessings that I receive each day from God. He entrusts us with gifts while we are here on earth that are ours to manage wisely—money, talents, skills, or spiritual gifts. It is my responsibility to invest my gifts wisely to honor God and his work in my church and my community.

“God's foremost rule of finance is this: We own nothing. We are managers, not owners. Stewards, not landlords. Maintenance people, not proprietors. Our money is not ours; it is His.” (Max Lucado)

Helen Hogan

Pray for Millie as she gives our church guidance and for David, Mark, our choir members, and for caretakers of dementia and Alzheimer loved ones.

Day 16

Scripture: And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians 3:17)

Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right. (2 Thessalonians 3:13)

Dear Friends,

I would like to talk about the “service” part of stewardship. I don’t think you have to do anything “monumental” or “heroic” to serve. You can:

- wash the tablecloths after Wednesday night dinners,
- sing in the choir or play handbells,
- serve on a committee,
- be a greeter or an usher,
- be a part of a mission team,
- work up in the sound booth,
- be active in UWF (United Women in Faith) or United Methodist Men,
- or help with needs around the church.

But the key is to do something. THAT’S what “service” is all about.

I’d like to share an excerpt from a letter I received a few years ago, after we returned from a Honduras mission trip.

“The last four years have truly changed my life, and I prayed that our team could make a real difference this year. I prayed that God would help us to change the lives of those people for the better. When you and I were walking back to the village down that rocky rut-filled road from doing the last job, I was praying to myself that I hoped we had done something special and that God was pleased with our work. At that very instant, from out of nowhere, a little boy quietly slipped up beside me and reached out and grabbed my hand. I was startled for a moment because it caught me off guard. He was about the age of my son. He didn’t say a word. He just looked up at me and smiled. I just about lost it and broke down right there on that road back to the bus. I will never forget that moment for the rest of my life. God answered me through that child. All the bumpy roads, nausea, and bad jokes were so worth that one smile and those big brown eyes filled with joy. I know we made a difference!”

In Christ’s Service with YOU,

Mike Leone

Pray for our relationship with Honduran Outreach and mission work in Honduras.

Day 17

Scripture: Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)

Dear Friends,

I come from a long line of prayer warriors. My mother was a strong prayer warrior, and my grandmother was a strong prayer warrior. But I did not inherit the gene; I had to intentionally set aside a time to pray. If I wait until I have time, have peace in my heart, when I am still, etc., forget it! I never get around to praying. I pray first thing in the morning when I wake up and I pray before I go to bed. I sometimes pray in the sanctuary during the day when I am struggling with something or when I am overwhelmed with workload. It is a great place to pray; I want you to try it during the week. Prayer is essential in my life, in our lives, and in the life of our church. It is no wonder that prayer is a big part of stewardship. In our membership vow, it is the first one listed among others. I am so glad you are participating in this 40 day-of-prayer for our church. I know it will change us and our church. When we pray, we are aligning ourselves with God and moving toward the will of God. God will reveal Himself to us and His vision for church!

Keep Praying!

Your Pastor,

Millie

Pray for the Holy Spirit to rest upon our church.

Day 18

Scripture: Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die, for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:1-5)

Dear Friends,

God’s ownership is all inclusive — God owns everything and everyone. The fall is about (among other things) man’s failure to exercise dominion over the serpent (one of those living things), rebelling against the commands of the Creator/Owner concerning the tree in the midst of the garden, and taking upon himself the prerogatives of ownership (“and you will be like God,” Gen. 3:5). The fall is a rebellion against God’s ownership of and authority over all things. Seen from this perspective, stewardship is not just the responsibility of Christians but of all humanity. The difference is that Christians by virtue of our regeneration have been given the capacity to comprehend God’s ownership of all things, and consequently, we also have been given the capacity to recognize our accountability in our use and management of what God has given over to our care.

Anonymous

Pray for Nominations Committee as they nominate leaders for 2024!

Day 19

Scripture: As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace. (1 Peter 4:10)

Dear Friends:

What does being a Care Team member mean to me?

Being a member of the Care Team is very important to me. When asked to write about this, it made me smile. We have some amazing members of our church we serve by our phone calls and visits. These folks are often lonely, have health issues, or just need someone to talk to. Often, I will visit people in their homes or senior living apartments. On occasion, I have brought my schnauzer, Angel, with me. The residents enjoy petting her as much as she enjoys being loved by them. My stewardship of giving of my love, time, and care are gifts I can share we others. In turn, I am blessed as well. Being a good steward is one way of expressing my love for God and my gratitude to Him.

With Love,

Charlene Steverson

Pray that others may serve with us on our Care Team

Day 20

Scripture: As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.” (Matthew 21:1-3)

Dear Friends,

I don't know his name or what he looks like. I only know what he gave. He gave a donkey for Jesus to use on the Sunday he entered Jerusalem. An interesting bit of history is found in Matthew 21:3. It is the story of the man who gave the donkey to Jesus. The scripture says, “If anyone asks you why you are taking the donkeys, say that the Master needs them, and he will send them at once.”

Did the man have any idea his generosity would be used for such a noble purpose? Did it occur to him God was going to ride that donkey?

All of us have a donkey. Something that, if given to God, could move Jesus and His story further down the road. Maybe you sing or program a computer or speak Swahili or write a check. Whichever it may be...that's your donkey. Do you give it?

The guy who gave Jesus the donkey is just one in a long line of folks who gave little things to a big God.

Max Lucado

Pray for Betsy Jenkins and our funeral guild as they provide comfort and hospitality to those who are grieving the loss of their loved one.

Day 21

Scripture: He looked up and saw rich people putting their gifts into the treasury; he also saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. He said, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them, for all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on.”

(Luke 21:1-4)

Dear Friends,

Mary Lou played an important role in my becoming a minister in the United Methodist Church. She was the registrar at Candler School of Theology for many years and taught me many valuable lessons in life while I was there. She talked about her first experience of “tithing.” She grew up in a small farming town where everyone knew each other. One day, her church treasurer came to visit her mom, and Mary Lou was in the next room eavesdropping. She was 7 years old. The church treasurer said, “Your bills were stuck together, and we just came to check on you, that you meant to turn in \$40 instead of your regular tithe.” That was the first time that Mary Lou realized that her parents tithed. Not only that the church treasurer knew that without the \$20 bill that stuck to the first one, they could not make it for the week. She came to return the money! This made a lasting impression on Mary Lou of her parent’s faithfulness to God in their poverty and church’s love and care for her family.

Needless to say, Mary Lou is a faithful tither in her United Methodist Church and she gives above and beyond her tithe.

Rev. Dr. Millie L. Kim

Pray for those who are struggling with their finances and unable to give monetarily.

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



Text:

Simply text “give2mpumc” to the number 73256

Legacy Giving:

mountainparkumc.org/legacy

