

Stewardship in Action

Rocky Mountain Conference

Resources for October 2008

The Conference Treasurer's Office, in cooperation with the Conference Board of Discipleship Stewardship designee, Rev. Keith Watson, is working to provide stewardship resources throughout the Conference. Through this monthly email, we hope to assist local churches and clergy to make stewardship an active part of their congregational life.

STEWARDSHIP MOMENTS

[If you have a short stewardship story from your local church that you would like to share as a resource or idea for other congregations, please email it to Laurie Day, Asst. Treasurer and Donor Services, at laurie@rmcumc.org.]

UMCGiving.org has "[Mission Moments and More](#)," a section providing resources including a **Mission Moment**, **Offertory Prayer**, and **Newsletter Nuggets** focusing around one central theme each week. These are great ways to share the life, mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church.

A Different Kind of Miracle

"You give them something to eat," Jesus said to his disciples when he miraculously fed 5,000 starting with just five loaves and two fish. That's also what the members of Wilson UMC in Colorado Springs were told on August 3 after that gospel story was read. "You have twenty minutes to be back here with food for the hungry," the pastor, Keith Watson, told them. "You give them something to eat." Congregants left the church – some going to nearby grocery stores and others back to their home pantries – and were back in a short time carrying bags of non-perishable goods for the neighborhood food pantry. In two twenty minute segments, about 140 participants gathered about 700 pounds, over \$1,000 worth of food. "It was holy shopping," Watson commented, "a real sermon in action preached by the whole congregation that morning." In one morning the church gathered enough food to feed 18 families of 4 for three days. That is pretty "miraculous" isn't it? (Rev. Keith E. Watson, Wilson UMC, Colorado Springs, CO)

Through Episcopal Fund, bishops tenderly show the way

"I have a special concern for you church leaders. I know what it's like to be a leader, in on Christ's sufferings as well as the coming glory. Here is my concern: that you care for God's flock with all the diligence of a shepherd. Not because you have to, but because you want to please God. . . . Not bossily telling others what to do, but tenderly showing them the way."-- 1 Peter 5:1-3, The Message

Hearing the disciple Peter's words in contemporary language, one understands why the term "shepherd" so often is used to refer to bishops. Much as a shepherd tends the sheep, our bishops nurture their flocks: the pastors and the people of The United Methodist Church. More than 140 active and retired bishops around the world provide spiritual guidance. When your congregation gives 100 percent to the Episcopal Fund apportionment, you enable our bishops to lead the church in responding to needs related to education, health care, natural disasters, poverty and much more. The Episcopal Fund comes back to annual conferences in the visionary leadership of your bishop and the continuing support of bishops who are retired. Bishop Eben K. Nhwatiwa, resident bishop of the Zimbabwe Area, said, "With the assistance and support I get from the Episcopal Fund, I can go and go and go with confidence, knowing God's resources are put to productive use." Your congregation's 100 percent of this apportioned fund is vital. Your Episcopal Fund gifts strengthen our connectional church and help us to express the bountiful love of Jesus Christ. Thank you! (www.UMCGiving.org)

UPCOMING SPECIAL SUNDAY

World Communion Sunday is October 5.

One of the six churchwide Special Sundays, World Communion Sunday, will be observed October 5. World Communion Sunday gives Christians a time to share in the sacrament and then to serve God through scholarships for U.S. and international students. These scholarships enable people from around the world to serve and lead in their home churches and communities by making church related higher education a reality. Fifty percent of the offering goes to World Communion Scholarships (formerly known as Crusade Scholars) and the other fifty percent supports Ethnic Minority Scholarships and In-Service Training programs. UMCGiving.org has numerous resources and support materials to help educate your congregation about World Communion Sunday, including children's sermons, talking points, graphics and stories. Free printed resources can be ordered [online](#) or if you would rather call and order resources, call toll free 1-888-346-3862. Music and worship resources are available at www.gbod.org/worship. (www.UMCGiving.org)

OFFERTORY PRAYERS

Weekly offertory prayers following the lectionary can be found under Stewardship section on the General Board of Discipleship website, www.gbod.org/stewardship

Offertory Prayer for World Communion Sunday, October 5

Transforming God, in the breaking of the bread, life is transformed. In the breaking of the bread, sin is transformed into forgiveness, grief into joy, conflict into peace, fear into love and despair into hope. In the pouring of the cup, life is reconciled. In the pouring of the cup, broken life is mended. The rough places become plain. Walls become bridges. Our differences find their connection at Jesus' table where we all have a seat and are invited to feast. In the breaking and pouring of ourselves as bread and wine, the body of Christ, we offer hope to our world. In your holy name we pray. Amen.

--Adapted from 2008 Episcopal Address by Bishop Sharon Brown Christopher

(www.UMCGiving.org)