

Grace Notes

Grace United Methodist Church Sullivan, Missouri

May 2008

Steve's Scribbles

Now that May is close, I am thinking seriously about setting up camp by my mailbox, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the letter carrier who will bring the little brown envelope that will put an "economic stimulus check" into my waiting hands. Since the announcement was made that taxpayers would be receiving this "free" money, I have been trying to figure out what I can do with my check. Unfortunately, most of the things I have come up with end up totaling way more than the amount of the anticipated refund!

But it also occurred to me - what might God do with that money - or at least a tenth of it? (*Okay, you knew this was coming, didn't you? Anytime a preacher gets an opportunity to talk about money. . .*) Critics may be right in that this refund may not live up to the expectations that have been placed upon it; but for those of us striving to be disciples of Jesus, it is exactly what we need - a great opportunity to practice our tithing! It is perhaps the one time that the practice of tithing would not put any strain on budgets or incomes, since this money is over and above our regular incomes. It could be one of the easiest steps of faith you can take to offer a tithe - one-tenth - of your rebate in the worship and honoring of God.

We may be tempted to think that the relatively small amount of the tithe of this rebate may not be enough to make any difference. But when the tithes of God's people are gathered together, and God's blessing and guidance is sought, they make a profound difference! They would allow God to make a difference in the lives of people all around the world. They would help to provide ministry to the children and youth of Grace UMC. They would enhance the ministries that we are already doing, as well as enable new ones. They would help us to make known the love of God in Sullivan in ways that we may not have even dreamed yet. They would allow us to support ministries beyond our local congregation that will touch lives in ways that we can't even imagine.

And who knows? Putting this tithing thing into practice, even just this once, would give God an opportunity to touch *your* life and heart as well - who's to say that this one step might not start you down a whole new path in the relationship between you, your money, and God?

May your receiving be blessed, and may your giving be more so!

Shalom,
Pastor Steve

Worship in May

The month of May brings us to a celebration of Pentecost, and ushers us into Ordinary Time, which is really anything but ordinary! Join us for worship in May to see just how extraordinary it can be!

Thursday, May 1 - National Day of Prayer
Jim Bottomley Park, Noon

Sunday, May 4 - Holy Communion
1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11

Sunday, May 11 - Pentecost Sunday
Acts 2:1-21
"Happy Birthday, Church!"

Sunday, May 18 - The Alphabet of Grace - "N"

Sunday, May 25 - The Alphabet of Grace - "O"

SPR Committee

Announcement

We had planned a carry-in dinner to honor our lay staff personnel for May 18, however one of the honorees will not be able to attend on that date. Therefore we would like to change the date to June 1. The dinner will be at the church following the second service. Please change your calendar and plan to attend preferably with one of your favorite dishes, but more importantly your presence.

Keith Oberbeck

Military Prayer Requests

Doug Archambo, Texas
Nathan Shelton, North Carolina
Sean Stumpe, North Carolina
Jake Rice, Afghanistan
Michael Richards, Iraq
William Burkhardt, Iraq



Heifer International

Congratulations on the fine participation in Heifer International. Our giving toward the knitting basket was \$238.00. That means we gave 4 shares plus. A share is \$50. A complete knitting basket for \$500 would have included 2 Llamas and two sheep and of course training in how to use these animals and pass them on. Thanks for being part of the great adventure of mission.

Blood Drive at Grace UMC

According to the Red Cross, every two seconds someone in this country needs blood. Most Americans will require a blood transfusion at some point in their lives. To meet patients' needs nationwide, the American Red Cross relies on approximately 25,000 donations daily. In the Missouri-Illinois region, 1,200 donations of whole blood are needed daily.

If you are interested in helping to maintain an adequate blood supply, then please sign up to give blood at the Blood Drive that is happening here at Grace on Friday, May 16, from 3:00 to 7:00 PM. Or you can call 1-800-448-3543 to schedule an appointment time. Healthy individuals who are at least 17 years old and weigh 110 pounds or more are eligible to donate.

Together, we can save a life!

Memorial Service for Elizabeth Meyer

The congregation, especially those who knew Elizabeth Meyer, are invited to a memorial celebration of her life on Sunday, May 4. The family will be here at 2:30 PM to receive greetings, and the service will begin at 3:00 PM. There will be an opportunity during the service to share your memories of Elizabeth.

National Day of Prayer

The Sullivan Ministerial Alliance is sponsoring a National Day of Prayer worship service on Thursday, May 1, at "Sunny" Jim Bottomley Park in Sullivan. The service will begin at 12:00 noon, and will offer an opportunity for people of all faith traditions to gather as one to offer prayer for our city, our state, and our country. Please join us as we lift our hearts and voices together in prayer!

Retaining A Sense Of Wonder

A man who took a trip observed the majesty of the mountains, the colors of wildflowers and the magnetism of a stream where trout were swimming. He returned home saying, "I hope I never get used to the glory of nature."

None of us should "get used to" the goodness of God, the Good News of Christ, the inspiring music of a choir, the stories of great saints, the thoughtfulness of neighbors, the assistance of strangers and the uplifting laughter of children who haven't lost the gift of wonder.