



*He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. - 2 Cor 9*

## 2024 Stewardship Campaign Union United Methodist Church *Devotional Guide for Week of Prayer* *October 16-22, 2023*

This fall we are having our giving emphasis for both our Building Fund and our Ministry Fund at the same time. There will be two separate Commitment Cards. The Building Fund pays down our mortgage and our Ministry Fund provides for missions, ministries, operations, staff, utilities and maintenance.

While it is sometimes difficult to talk about our financial commitments, it is good to pray about the giving in our congregation. This week we can pray about the generosity of our church, and we can challenge ourselves to consider our financial commitments by asking:

***Lord, what do you want to do through me?***

Monday, October 16

**Prayer Focus: Volunteers, who give time and talent.**

*As each one has received a gift from God, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

*- 1 Peter 4:10*

Today we pray for the many volunteers of Union United Methodist Church. There are servants of many types: teachers and leaders, musicians and singers, children and youth counselors, office helpers and greeters, cooks and cleaners, and so on and so on.

Through their service in Christ's name, our volunteers give of their time and talents to express the love of Christ and bring the transforming power of God's grace to peoples' lives.

*Prayer:*

Gracious God, bless Union's volunteers, both those who have served over many years and those who are just starting in service; those who are deep into their journey of faith, and those who are fresh to the fields. Give them strength, patience, courage, and joy as they serve you by serving others through the church. In Christ's name I pray. Amen.

*Lord, what do you want to do through me?*

Tuesday, October 17

**Prayer Focus: Faithful, generous givers.**

*Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. - Luke 6:38*

Union is blessed to have many faithful, generous givers, at all levels of giving. These members take seriously their membership vow to support the church with their gifts, by giving in a sustained and planned way.

Faithful, generous givers tend to give whether they are present on a Sunday or not, and many of them make “second-mile” gifts when they are able. They are the core that make our ministries thrive.

*Prayer:*

Dear God, look with favor upon our Faithful, generous givers. Honor their giving according to your word and provide for their needs. Encourage those who in their giving are growing toward tithing, and even beyond a tithe. Cause them to know your presence. Amen.

*Lord, what do you want to do through me?*

# Wednesday, October 18

## **Prayer Focus: Casual Givers**

*Concerning the contribution: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper. - 1 Cor 16:2*

Casual givers are those who give when they happen to think about it, when they are moved by something (e.g. a natural disaster), or when they are in attendance at worship. They have not committed themselves to the spiritual practice of giving as the Bible instructs.

Let us pray that casual givers in Union UMC will grow in their faith by making and following a plan for consistent giving. May they discover the joy of giving and of making an impact in the lives of others through our church's ministries.

*Prayer:*

Dear God, we thank you for your consistent care and love for us, and we ask forgiveness for all the times we have been inconsistent in our responses. Send your Spirit anew upon all those who have yet to commit to a plan of proportional giving. Give them courage to trust you as they make personal changes in order to *"set something aside."* Through Christ we pray. Amen.

*Lord, what do you want to do through me?*

# Thursday, October 19

## **Prayer Focus: Those Unable to Give as they Desire.**

*“You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.” - 2 Cor 9:11*

There are members of our church who, for various reasons, just cannot give as they desire to give, or as they once gave. Life happens, circumstances change, yet a spirit of generosity can continue.

The above verse says, *enriched in every way*, and that reminds us that while financial gifts are vital to the life of our church, we also need the gifts of our prayers, our presence, our service, and our witness.

There are also those who wonder whether their financial gift can make a difference, since the gift is small in their sight. We have to remember the lesson of the widow’s mite (Mark 12:41) that the size of the gift is seen not by what is given, but by what remains, and that in God’s economy, every gift has its rightful and needed place.

*Prayer:*

Generous God, we praise you for those you have placed in our midst, who have a delight in you and a longing to give, even beyond their means. Enrich them in every way, and let them know your peace. Amen.

*Lord, what do you want to do through me?*

# Friday, October 20

## **Prayer Focus: Lifetime givers.**

*Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life. - 1 Timothy 6:17-19*

Members can make plans for Lifetime gifts through a bequest in a will or perhaps naming the church as a beneficiary on a policy. (Using legal and tax advice of course.) Such gifts acknowledge with gratefulness the legacy we have received from those who have gone before us, and provide a legacy for future generations.

Union has an excellent Endowment program, designed to assist ministries both now and in the future. Lifetime gifts of any amount build *a good foundation for the future*, and express our trust in God.

### *Prayer:*

Eternal Father, we thank you for those who have come before us, those who have loved and served you, and who gave of themselves and their resources that we might have the church we know today. Help us to plan our giving so we may join them in extending our witness to your great love beyond any one lifetime. Through Jesus our Savior we pray, Amen.

*Lord, what do you want to do through me?*

## Saturday, October 21

### **Prayer Focus: Those Unwilling to Give.**

*Give freely and generously. Don't resent giving to those in need because it is this very thing that will lead to the Lord your God's blessing you in all you do and work at. - Deut 15:10*

There are always some people who ignore giving, and can usually come up with a few reasons they don't give. They don't like the preacher or the music, or someone said the wrong thing. They are quite comfortable letting others carry the burden of what they receive.

Those who are poor in a spirit of generosity will always be with us, but we can pray for them, that God will open their hearts to let His love flow through them.

#### *Prayer:*

Almighty God, you know our hearts. Look mercifully upon those whose hearts have become closed or stagnant. Mend whatever brokenness or pain or insecurity or resentment or anger or fear that keeps them from giving their all to you. Create in them, and in us all, clean hearts, O God, and put a new and right spirit within us. In Christ we pray. Amen.

*Lord, what do you want to do through me?*

# Sunday, October 22

## Prayer Focus: All Who Give.

*Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not regretfully or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

*And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. - 2 Cor 9:7,8*

We have prayed this week for the attitude of stewardship in Union UMC, and the various types of givers that make up our congregation. We are all “works in progress,” and God’s Spirit has much yet to do in each one of us.

Yet, we can rejoice together knowing that we are a congregation that gives to the work of the Lord. Just a quick look around at all the ministries going on and you know that. May God help all of us to grow in our giving, grow in our cheerfulness in giving, and grow in our works of mercy and love.

### *Prayer:*

God of might and glory, we come to you with hearts filled with thanksgiving. You have provided for all our needs, both physically and spiritually. Most of all you sent your Son and have given us new life through his sacrificial death and resurrection. We praise you for your goodness. Bless our stewardship campaign. Help us to grow beyond what has been done in the past, so we might live into the future you have for us as your church. Amen.

*Lord, what do you want to do through me?*

**Join us for Commitment Sunday on November 19**