

June
2007

Church Membership – a Necessity or Option?

You might imagine by the question, that I think that my life is boring and that I am searching for something to spice it up. This question is debated by many and has more sides and opinions than our US Congress. And no I am not looking for something to spice up my life – a beautiful wife, a wonderful church family, a Harley, and an awesome grandson keep things pretty exciting.

Rather I ask the question out of necessity. Individualism within the US today is taking its toll on the American church. We want it our way so we choose to attend or not attend and we believe we have that option. Not helping matters any are the churches that offer nothing of a spiritual vitality that would make one want to attend.

It is a vital question and one the Session of our church is in the process of addressing. At present New Sterling has 382 members on its roll with approximately 230 of them considered active. That means over 150 members of our church are MIA – missing in action. Our Session wants to change that. Our desire is that all 382 individuals are active in a church somewhere. You will hear more of this in the coming months. Please pray that all our church family returns to church.

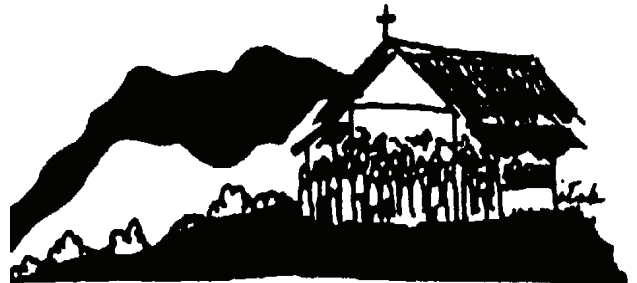
For now, let us look at the issue of church membership. Is it a necessity or an option? Does church membership mean attending church regularly? Is it necessary to attend church regularly to be considered a member? If a Christian, should I be in church as often as possible or can I be a non-attending member of the body of Christ?

Tough questions! Where do we look for answers? We look to those who have gone before us; those whom the Holy Spirit inspired to write Holy Text. We look to the Bible. In addition, I would like to look to the giants of our faith from the past. Men who answered these questions, knowing their life would hang on every word; yet answered biblically and truthfully from their hearts. The most quoted passage con-

cerning church attendance is Hebrews 10:25. It says **Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another.** This passage very simply states that we are to meet together with a purpose – to encourage one another. The writer to the Hebrews is saying that meeting together, being the church, is necessary to help each other in our daily lives. Being a Christian is tough and trying to do it alone is illogical, unwise and often leads to less than what a Christian life could be. In addition, it is unbiblical. And notice, church attendance is not to come to get something, but to give something – encouragement to others! Also note, church attendance does not first address the worship of God. Worship is to be done always by everyone who is a believer. We come to church to share our worship of God with each other, to console and be consoled, to teach and be taught, to discipline and be disciplined or as the writer says - **let us encourage one another.**

Other passages that speak to church membership are those of Paul's writings that address spiritual gifts and being the body of Christ. One is 1 Corinthians 12:4 - **there are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.** The question is - the common good of what or whom? It is the people; gifts were given for the common good of the people, which supports the reason for meeting together in Hebrews 10.

In that same chapter Paul speaks of



unity – **the body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body.** For a human body to be considered a human body the parts must be joined. Then the body functions as designed. It is

the same with the church body – if you are not here physically then the body is not a body and cannot function; it cannot live. To be a part of the body of Christ you must BE a part of the body.

The letters of Paul, Peter, James, and John were written specifically to be read to a gathering of people known as the church. If we claim regular church attendance is not needed then we are close to saying those letters have no direct, initial audience. If it is not necessary to attend then those letter could have been read to... no one!

There are hosts of other passages that speak to church membership but now I would like to offer you comments from men who know a lot more about this than I do.

In the days of old, folks who left the church and did not attend regularly were called apostates. To our forefathers church attendance was simply a given. If you were a Christian, you were in church. If you were not there then you must be a non-believer.

The great Augustine of the 4th century said, ‘he cannot have God for his father who does not have the Church for his mother.’ Martin Luther, the Great Reformer stated bluntly, ‘apart from the Church, salvation is impossible.’ Would we stand for such statements today? Why not, they are true?

John Calvin offers his theological genius to the matter when he says, “the Lord esteems the communion of the Church so highly that he counts as a traitor and apostate from Christianity anyone who arrogantly leaves any Christian society, provided it cherishes the true ministry of the word and sacraments”.

While reading these please remember each is speaking of the Church universal, not the local church. When Luther stated that salvation is impossible outside the church he is not saying that one must come to the church to be saved. No, one simply believes on the name of Jesus Christ according to the will of the Father. Once saved the person immediately and forever becomes a member of the Church universal, a member of the body of Christ and joins those believers who have lived before us, those who live now and those yet to come who will believe in Jesus Christ. As believers we are by default members of the body of Christ, it is NOT optional. This is what Luther means when he says salvation cannot occur outside the Church. Salvation cannot occur anywhere except within the body of Christ.

Question: if being members of the body of Christ

universal is not optional, how can we think that the membership in the body of Christ locally is optional? If the local body is an extension of the larger universal body, then should not every Christian be a part of the local church somewhere? Here is where the debate intensifies.

Many will say that the local church is just not the way. It is too caught up in its traditions. It is not a vibrant group. It does nothing for me spiritually. I have never seen nor felt anything of God in that place. It is boring! I could go on. While these may be true statements, and sadly many times they are, we cannot leave the Church. We don’t throw the baby out with the dirty bath water. No we pray and work for the obedience and purity of the Church.

Again, Calvin said that ‘one is apostate who leaves any Christian society, provided it cherishes the true ministry of the Word and sacrament.’ That last phrase is the key – ‘provided it cherishes the true ministry of the Word and sacrament.’ If a church does not hold high the preached Word and the sacraments then in Calvin’s mind, and biblically, it is not a church. We who lead the church are bound to lead a church in a biblical way and a church is only a church when it preaches the Word, exercises the sacraments as established by our Lord and administers discipline. If we are not doing that then we are not a church and the people are free to leave.

I have only scratched the surface of this debate but I pray that you can see that church membership and regular, active attendance is important to our Lord. It is also important to your Session.

If you are reading this and do not attend regularly, please begin. If you know someone who is a member but does not attend, encourage them. We are the body of Christ and if one member is not present, we all lose something of our identity – an identity for which Christ died.

In His Service,
Pastor Tim

Families Celebrating Jesus!

Sunday, June 3, 2007

6:00 Supper

(sub sandwiches, chips, ice cream and homemade desserts)

6:45 Music in the sanctuary led by New Sterling C3 and the Praise and Prayer Team

7:15 Chris Meade, guest speaker



Chris Meade, a former principal and educator for twenty years has accepted the call to full-time ministry. He is a 1982 graduate of ACHS in Alexander County and received a BS Education Degree from Western Carolina University in 1986. He received his Masters of School Administration from Appalachian State University in 1999. He was selected as Alexander County Teacher of the Year in 1999 and Administrator of the year in 2006.

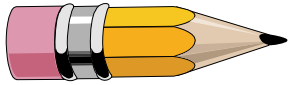
He is a widower with two children; a son Brax age 9 and a daughter Chloe age 5. He was married to Pam Gowings Meade for 12 years and 8 months. They shared a rich relationship with God at the center. He delivered the Meade family through an amazing journey of trials, triumphs, and ultimate healing. God gets all the glory, honor and praise for the blessings He has shown to them.

*The Evangelism and Membership Committee at New Sterling
invites you to join us on June 3rd to receive a message and
blessing you will never forget.
(a nursery will be provided)*

Recently members of our Evangelism Committee have met with the Principal at Sharon School, Mr. Stegall . Our endeavor was to learn more about what we at New Sterling can do to work with and develop our "Partnership" with the school.

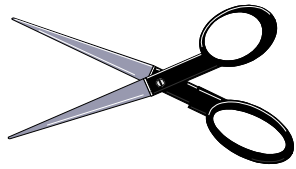
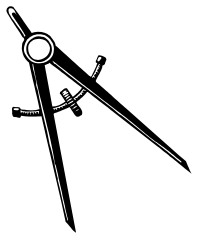


The committee would like to ask for your help in our upcoming project with Sharon School. We would like to provide as many book bags and supplies as we can for the next 2007-



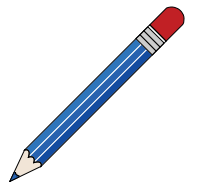
2008 school year. There are numerous children who cannot afford new book bags or school supplies at the beginning of the year or even as the year progresses. Our thought is that anyone who would like to buy school supplies during the summer and either accumulate them at home or we will find a place to keep them until time to take them to school.

We also want to get book bags for the children to put some supplies in. We need bags from Kindergarten age to 5th grade. Your participation in buying these book bags will be greatly appreciated by the Evangelism Committee and the children at Sharon School.



There is still the need for volunteers to give their time to the school to go let the children read to you, help with other subjects or just spend time with the children. Maybe you can think about this over the summer and try to work this into your schedule for the next school year.

If you have any questions regarding this project, please contact any member of the Evangelism Committee. The members this year are: Frank Emery, CHM, Betty Sides, Linda Harper, Julie Winters, Sheila Snyder, Tony Harper, Delinda Mauney, Aarene Reese, Susan Pugh, Scott Graham, Jimmy Gray and Todd McCulloch.



School Supplies needed:

Pencils Crayons Single Subject Composition Books Pencil Erasers

Notebook Paper Protractors Colored folders with inside pockets Single Erasers

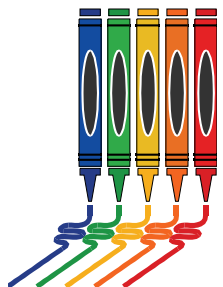
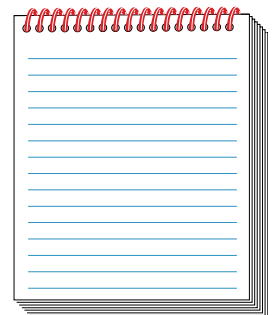
Kleenex Big Fat Kindergarten Pencils

Hand Sanitizer

Mats or Towels for Kindergarteners to take naps on

Liquid Hand Soap

Individually wrapped snacks for the younger classes to have snacks for morning break time



Here and There at New Sterling!!!!

Juanita Massey is the proud new mother of twins! Ask **Dale** how it feels to be the father of 2 turkeys!.....**Jesse Keller** has been traveling and studying in England..... **Robert Byers** is undergoing chemotherapy treatments. **Cindy Harper Bowman** recently had surgery on her wrist for vascular necrosis.....**Kendayl Waugh** received good news from her recent PET scan with 60% improvement in her disease.....**Anthony Brady** is raising his own eggs. Don't be surprised if **Kim** tells you to "Ask me about my grandbiddies!" **Anthony** carries pictures of his rooster on his phone.....**Craig and Susan Pugh, Scott and Jessica Graham, Addie and Paisley, Daniel and Kelly Pugh, Taryn and Brian Setzer** recently went to Demascus, Virginia to bike ride the Virginia Creeper Trail which was 17 miles.....**Davey Winters** recently suffered an episode with his heart and will be seeing a specialist.....Those who attended the Bonclarken Work Week were: **David and Betty Sides, Lynn and Muriel Jenkins, Earl and Harriet Linderman, Lonnie and Carolyn Elliott, Helen Cashion, Meldirene Pope, Emily Nash, Sandy Moose, Betty Godfrey**.....**Erin Elizabeth Waugh** received an American Chemical Society Senior Award at her recent graduation from Western Carolina University...**Anthony** and **Jessica** have set a date! October 20, 2007. More information to come...



THANK YOU



I would like to thank everyone for their prayers, kind words and cards during this difficult time. A special thanks to the Knit Wits for the blanket and prayers.

Leann Hartness and Family

We express our sincere sympathy to Mrs. Dorothy Dancy in the recent passing of her sister, Edith Crawford Baker. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the entire family.

In Sympathy



*Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and
not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*

Isaiah 40:31

Sterling Silvers

The May Meeting of the Sterling Silvers was a memorable as to the entertainment and business accomplishments.

The Senior Serenaders, a group of 16 Senior Citizens from Statesville gave an outstanding concert of old time melodies and hymns. It was first time the entertainment performers numbered as many as the Sterling Silvers member attendance. This singing group needs to be presented to the congregation for their repertoire was outstanding.

The project that the Sterling Silvers has been engaged in for past year was finalized. The project will be revealed to the congregation in about a month.

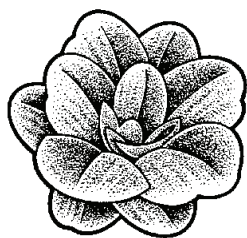
The June 11th meeting is tentatively scheduled. If any changes are needed, the members will be in-

formed. Dues will be collected at this meeting.

After the June meeting, Sterling Silvers will adjourn until 12 September 2007. Everyone have a good summer.



The Sarge



LADIES!!!!!! It is that time again to be thinking about WOMEN OF FAITH. It will be here before we know it!! The dates are October 26-27. If you are interested in attending the conference let me know as soon as possible. I need DEFINATE answers by July 1st and NO LATER!! I also need to know if you are interested in attending the Pre-conference, which is during the day on Friday. We will be staying at the Hilton again like last year on Friday night, if you would like to stay over night let me know that as well. This is first come first serve, and is open to everyone not just church members. Seats will be going fast, come and learn about God's promise to you; AMAZING FREEDOM!!!!!!



Your Sister in Christ,
Taryn Setzer

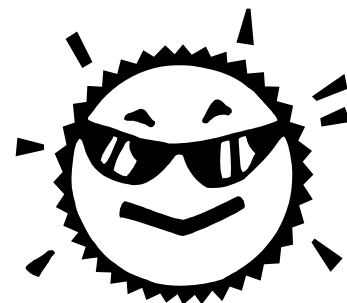


"So if the SON makes you free you will truly be FREE"- John 8:36



Jr. and Sr. High Summer Schedule

June 2	Rafting Trip be at church at 6:45 AM!!!!	
June 3	Families Celebrating Jesus	
June 10	NO YOUTH	
June 11-15	Horizon Retreat	
June 17	NO YOUTH	
June 18-22	Quest Retreat	
June 24	Meet at 12:30 after church and to go Ci's Ci's Pizza for lunch	
June 27	Put-Put and ice cream meet at church, will leave at 6:00pm	
July 1	YOUTH at 6:00pm	
July 8	YOUTH at 6:00pm	
July 14	Sliding rock trip	
July 15	YOUTH at 6:00pm	
July 22	NO YOUTH	
July 29	YOUTH, canvassing for Bible School	
July 30– Aug 3	Bible School	
August 5	NO YOUTH	
August 12	YOUTH at 6:00pm	
August 17-18	Camp out at Danny and Kelley Miller's house Drive-in movie, swimming	
August 19	YOUTH at 6:00pm	
August 26	NO YOUTH	



Invite a Friend!!

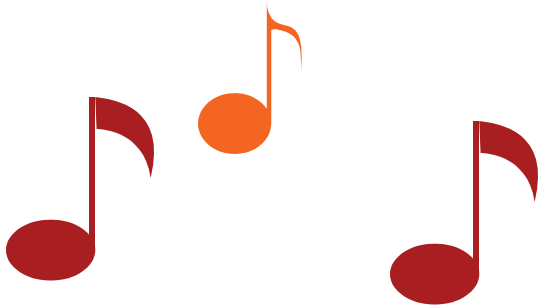
This schedule is tentative, dates might change, but keep them in mind. Take this sheet and put it on your fridge as a reminder. We will be planning another lock-in during the fall and don't forget the Jr. and Sr. High retreats in the fall. Hey guys, its going to be a GREAT summer! We are so EXCITED and can't wait to see what GOD has in store for us!



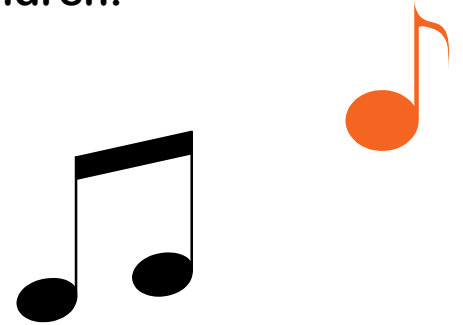
Scott and Jessica Graham, Ken Hauck, Brian and Taryn Setzer

Children's Choir

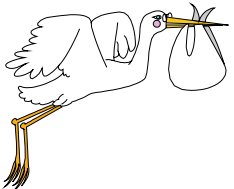
On May 20, the Children's Choir sang beautiful music in a performance called "Journey to Praise"



As always Sandy Moose with the help of Judy Cashion, Melissa Donnoly and Amber Jarrett did a wonderful job leading the children.



Grandma Brown took her two grandchildren to the zoo....They stopped before a huge cage of storks. Grandma told the two youngsters that these were the birds that brought both of them to their dad and mom. The two children looked at one another, then the oldest leaned over and whispered in his sibling's ear, "Don't you think we ought to tell Grandma the truth?"



James E. Myers

Comedy Corner



Why Parents Drink

A boss wondered why one of his most valued employees had not phoned in sick one day. Having an urgent problem with one of the main computers, he dialed the employee's cell phone number and was greeted with a child's whisper.

"Hello."

"Is your daddy home?" the boss asked.

"Yes," whispered the small voice.

"May I talk with him?"

The child whispered, "No."

Surprised and wanting to talk with an adult, the boss asked, "Is your Mommy there?"

"Yes," whispered the small voice.

"May I talk with her?"

Again the small voice whispered, "No."

Hoping there was somebody with whom he could leave a message, the boss asked again, "Is anybody else there?"

"Yes," whispered the child, "a policeman."

Wondering what a cop would be doing at his employee's home, the boss asked,

"May I speak with the policeman?"

"No, he's busy," whispered the child.

"Busy doing what?"

"Talking to Daddy and Mommy and the Fireman," the whisper answered.

Growing more worried as he heard what sounded like a helicopter through the ear-piece on the phone, the boss asked, "What is that noise?"

"A helicopter," answered the whispering voice.

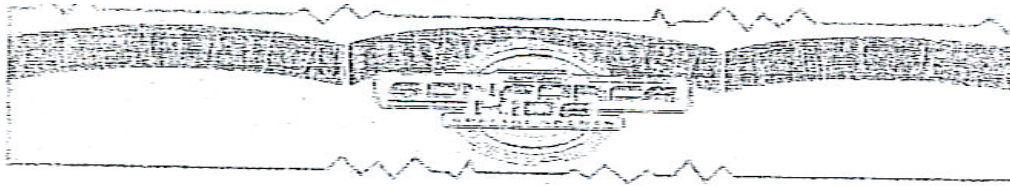
"What is going on there?" demanded the boss, now truly apprehensive.

Again, whispering, the child answered, "The search team has just landed the helicopter."

Alarmed, concerned and a little frustrated the boss asked, "What are they searching for?"

Still whispering, the young voice replied with a muffled giggle:

"ME."



V.B.S. 2007

It is that time of year to begin preparing for Vacation Bible School. It will be held July 30th thru August 3rd. We need your help to get things started. If you are willing to help us in any way, please indicate below your areas of interest. We need as many volunteers as possible to make VBS 2007 a success! Please give your completed sheets to Jessica Graham or Jill Hager ASAP! Thank You!

Name: _____

Nursery ages 0-2: _____ Kitchen Coordinator: _____

Ages 2-3: _____ Kitchen Crew: _____

Ages 4-5: _____ Skit Team: _____

1st & 2nd Grade: _____ Music Team: _____

3rd & 4th Grade: _____ Craft Helpers: _____

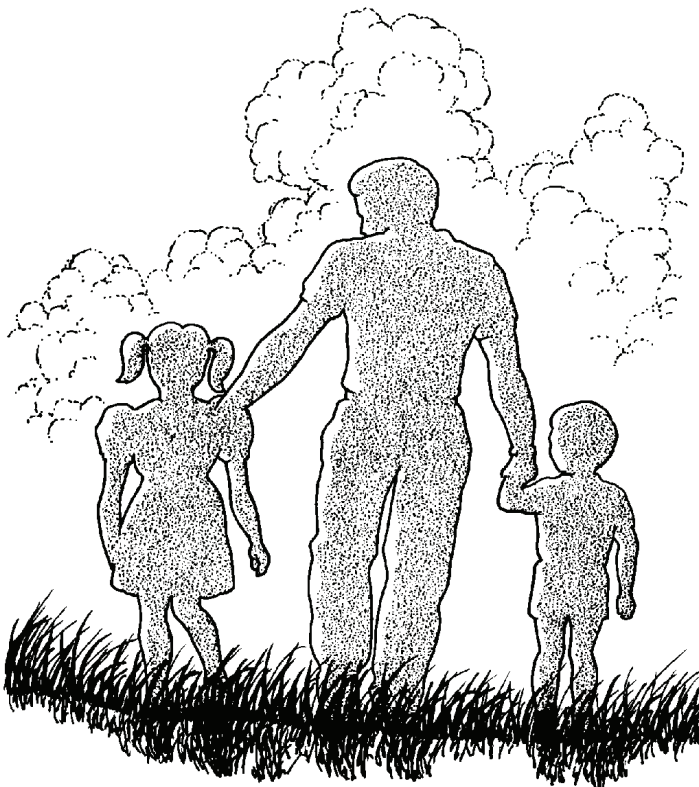
5th & 6th Grade: _____ Recreation Leader: _____

Photographer: _____ Recreation Helpers: _____

I will help anywhere: _____

“And I will be a father to you,
and you shall be my sons and daughters,”
says the Lord Almighty.

-2 Corinthians 6:18



To all the Dads in our
Congregation:

**HAPPY
FATHERS
DAY!!!!**

Congratulations Graduates

2007 Class of West Iredell High School

Kattie Compton
Jessica Ciccarelli
Jessica Lambert

*But the wisdom from above is first pure,
then peaceable, gentle, open to reason,
full of mercy and good fruits,
without uncertainty or insincerity.*

James 3:17

2007 Class of Statesville High School

Stephanie Watts

2007 Class of Western Carolina University

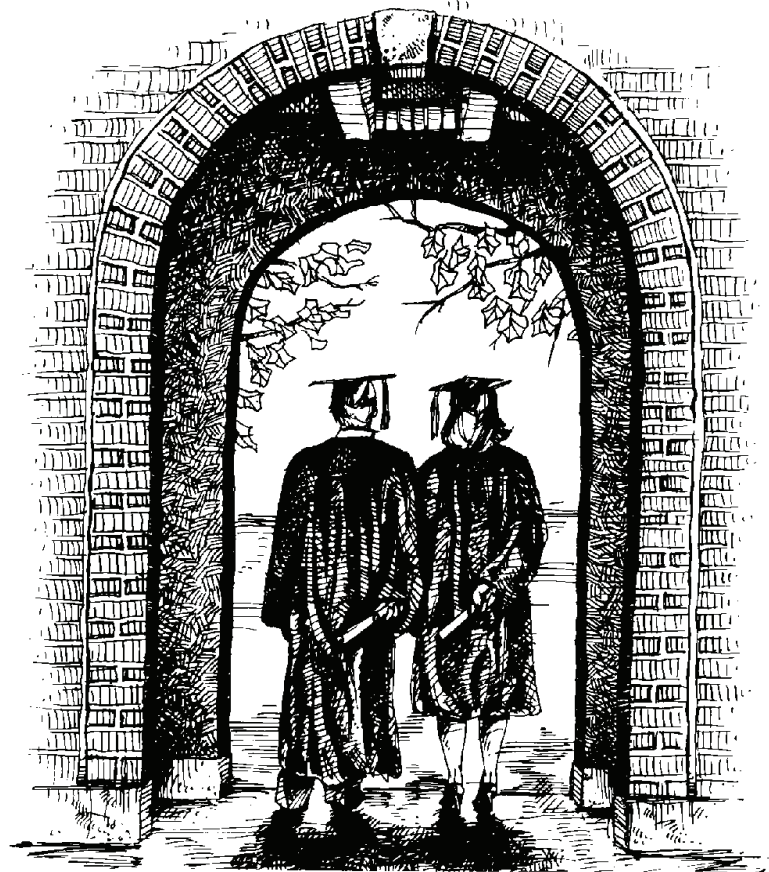
Erin Elizabeth Waugh

2007 Class of North Carolina University of Charlotte

Erica Harper
Kelly Pugh

2007 Class of Erskine University of South Carolina

Andrea Clarke



News From the Women's Ministries

This month the Golden Christian Circle will meet at 9:30 am in the fellowship hall on June 4th with Dorothy Beatty having the devotional and Lynne Pope continuing the study on Luke. Treasure Keepers Circle will meet at 7:00 pm on June 5th at the home of Judy Watson. Don't forget your apron and cutter if you have one. Mary-Martha Sunset Circle will meet June 19th at 7:00 pm in the Friendship Class at New Sterling with B.J. Brewer and Nicki Campbell as hostesses and Melissa Donnelly having the study. Mary-Martha Sunrise Circle will meet on June 20th at 10:00 am at the home of Tena Campbell with Aarene Reese having the study. Continue to work on items for the Bonclarken Gift Shop. Remember your Secret Circle Sister. Please make plans to attend the Family Bible Conference at Bonclarken, July 23rd thru 26th. For more information, contact Sheila Snyder or Peggy Gray. **Reminder:** The Love Gifts Committee should make plans to meet this month to consider nominations to be voted on by the circles in July. Those that are on the Committee are Betty Sides, Michelle Hairyes, Jane Fulbright and Kitzi Emery.

NS Women's Ministries

Sheila J. Snyder, President

What is an Active Church Member?

In the cover article this month, I discussed the necessity of membership in the local church. In that piece, I mentioned that New Sterling has approximately 230 active members. I thought you might like to know the definition of an active member.



According to the ARP Standards Form of Government, Section V,

Subpart E - an active member is one who is a communicant member who attends worship services at least quarterly and have some methodical system of contributing OR who have been previously active but are prevented by infirmity, OR who are temporarily away in academic study, military service OR for other valid reason. Please note that it says 'one who attends worship services' not Sunday school. While Sunday school is an important part of the church experience, it should not be considered a substitute for congregational worship.

The definition referred to a communicant member. What is a communicant member? Again, according to ARP Standards, a communicant member is one who has been baptized, who has made a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ, and who has submitted his life to His Lordship and the ministry of the Church.

...just wanted you to know.

Pastor Tim

In order to realize the worth of the anchor, we need to feel the stress of the storm.

Corrie Ten Boom

Homebound and Assisted Living

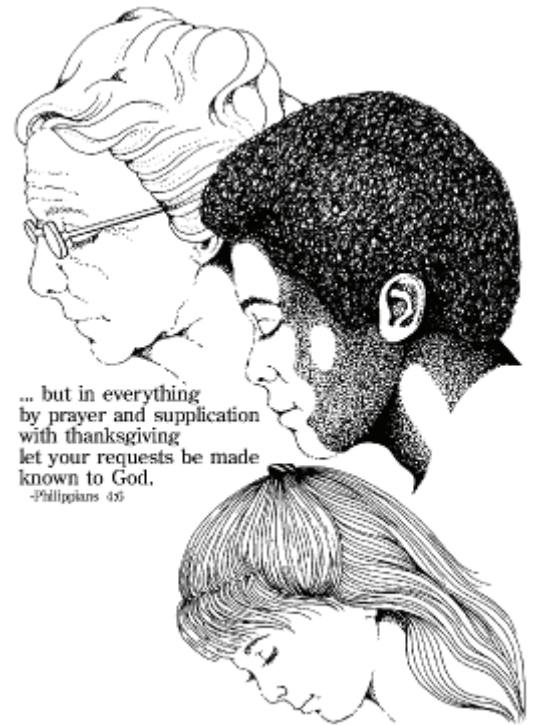
Norma and Johnsie Jenkins
1753 Midway Road
Stony Point, NC 28678
704-585-6960

Doris Ingram
Statesville Place
2441 East Broad Street
Statesville, NC 28625

Edith Reese
PO Box 346
Buford, GA 30515

Pauline Pope
Autumn Care
2001 Vanhaven Drive
Statesville, NC 28625

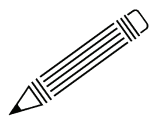
Mary Deal
Autumn Care
2001 Van Haven Drive
Statesville, NC 28625



If we have missed anyone or you would like to have your name listed here, please contact Delinda Mauney at 704-880-0527 or Taryn Setzer at 459-2637

Address for Bobby Buchanan:

Robert Lewis Buchanan
PO Box 310
Polkton, NC 28135



The glory of each morning is that it offers us a chance to begin again.

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:22-23 NRSV

... the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable jewel of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.
-1 Peter 3:4



June Birthdays

1 Ronnie Stewart
2 Sue VanZandt
4 Kent Clarke
4 Jeff McNeely
7 Jeremy Brady
11 Emory Watts
12 Sherry Clarke
12 Nancy McNeely
13 Troy Brady
13 Elijah Winters
14 Jonathan Hartness
14 Jessica Graham
16 Judy Cashion
16 Kathy Pendergrass
16 Joshua Waugh



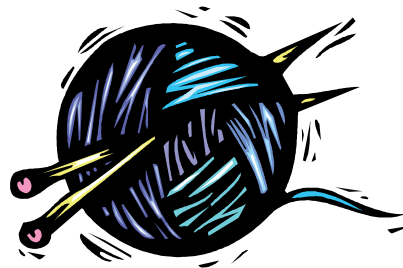
17 Davis Emery
19 Pat Caskaddon
19 Chad Harding
19 Christina Henderson
20 Wesley Fulbright
21 Edith Reese
21 Charlotte West
22 Alan Flowers
24 Eleanor Dagenhart
24 Dillard Walker
25 Jo Ann Hartness
27 Pam Garrison
27 Minnie Pope
30 Virginia Brady
30 Jimmy Gray

Knit Wit News



The Knit Wits have been busy knitting and crocheting blankets for the Dove House recently. Hopefully we will be able to deliver some for them to begin distributing soon. We would like to thank those who have helped the Knit Wits by making contributions to our ministry:

Mr. and Mrs. Franklin Beatty
Mr. and Mrs. Leon Gray
Dawn Keller
Carolyn Elliott
Judy Stewart
Juanita Massey
Emily Nash
Jane Fulbright
Betty Godfrey
Barbara Reid



Your contributions are greatly appreciated and will be used to buy yarn to use for future and ongoing projects.