

FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART

I hope you are enjoying our Annual Stewardship Emphasis based on Adam Hamilton's ENOUGH: Discovering Joy Through Simplicity and Generosity. I know I am learning a lot from it. And the Financial Peace University class is a great source of information and support as well as being very entertaining. (I didn't see that part coming!) I hope many of us will take advantage of the opportunity to enroll in FPU's next session to be offered after the holidays when so many will truly need it. Speaking of which: let's all try NOT to get swept up in the consumer Christmas this year. Again.

Please keep your church in prayer as we present to the Lord our Estimates of Giving for 2010. I really believe 2010 will be one of the most pivotal years in the history of our congregation. Much prayer will be necessary.

Did you know there are about three pages of the duties of a United Methodist Elder (Ordained Minister) listed in Paragraph No. 340 of the United Methodist Book of Discipline? Whenever I want to feel overwhelmed, I read them. Among those duties is: "To model and promote faithful financial stewardship and to encourage giving as a spiritual discipline by teaching the biblical principles of giving?" How am I doing?

I love it when you share good stuff with me. (Of course, I get to decide which is good stuff, but keep those emails, etc. coming.) Bruce Ostrander gave me a brief article about harvest in ancient Israel in response to my words about "First Fruits" in a sermon. It seems that Israel was experiencing harvest in about 9 of the 12 months. Wheat, barley, flax, etc; followed by fruits & nuts (Congregational applications here are just too easy!); then grapes, olives dates, figs, and pomegranates. Each harvest was to be celebrated and shared with the community via the Temple. So that means "regular offerings" were being presented all year long. I always assumed a fall harvest spread over a couple of months like we have.

I also love this piece (below) from Kathy Cottrell about how we can be a CHURCH THAT NEEDS NO MONEY. I will be praying for a big harvest at APUMC as we wrap up our annual Stewardship Emphasis.

See you in Church, APUMC!

Pastor Carl