

# OFFERTORY MOMENTS 2010

## **APRIL 14**

Our promise to God is that we will be faithful in our Prayers, Presence, Gifts, Service and Witness. We sometimes take these promises for granted – especially our gifts. The Biblical standard for giving is the TITHE – 10%. If we're not there yet, let's set a goal to get there.

Let us give generously and sacrificially as we present God's tithes, and our offerings.

## **APRIL 21**

Our church is in mission in more than 125 countries in the world. There's a United Methodist church in every township with a population of at least 10,000 in the United States. We're part of a world-wide community of faith. We supply nets to prevent malaria. We dig wells in Africa. We build Habitat houses. Our gifts increase our ministry – here and around the world.

Let's give generously as we present God's tithes and our offerings.

## **APRIL 28**

When we say, "God's tithes and our offerings," do we know what we mean? The tithe is 10% of our income, to be given to God. We give, not for God's sake or the church's need; we give for our own spiritual growth and discipline.

Let's grow spiritually as we grow in our generosity.

Let us now give God's tithes and our offerings.

## **MAY 5**

In Africa, in Sudan, a little girl is tasting fresh, clean water for the first time. Our Holston Conference, because of the generosity of its people, is digging wells, offering Christ, preventing disease and providing just a LITTLE better life for God's children. When we give generously and sacrificially, we make it possible for God's love to be known.

Let us now give God's tithes, and our offerings.

## **MAY 12**

When we go on a journey, we have to make sure we have fuel. Our MISSION is to Make Disciples of Jesus Christ. Our fuel for the mission is our generous giving. Let us continue to BE DISCIPLES of Jesus Christ and to MAKE DISCIPLES of Jesus Christ, as we give generously, because God has been generous to us.

Let us now give God's tithes and our offerings.

## **MAY 19**

What if (your church's name here,) did not exist? Would anyone miss us? Would YOU miss us? (List a few good things that wouldn't be happening.) We're here to be Christ's presence in the world and in this community. Our witness and our ministry is reflected in our generosity. Let's give generously so we can BE Christ's presence.

Let us now give God's tithes and our offerings.

## **MAY 26**

Memorial Day is a day to remember the many heroes who lost their lives during wars in which our country has been involved. As you pause to pray for those serving in Iraq, Afghanistan and other places, remember their sacrifice and the contributions they make for our safety. When you give to the work of the church, you also make sacrifices and help make our community and world a better place. Let us give generously as we present God's tithes and our offerings.

### **JUNE 3**

When we pray the Lord's Prayer, we ask that God's will be done on earth. It is not always easy to know what God's will is for our lives, is it? But one thing that we DO know to be God's will, is that we be generous givers to God's church, and that we move toward the giving of ten percent of our income. Let us become closer to God's will as we give generously, and present God's tithes and our offerings.

### **JUNE 9**

Today, the Holston Annual Conference convenes at Lake Junaluska, N.C. I and \_\_\_\_\_, who is our Lay Member of Annual Conference, will be representing our church. The members of Annual Conference represent over 166,000 members of our Holston Conference churches. Together, we can make a difference in the world. When we give generously, we touch lives, offer Christ, and bring comfort to God's children everywhere. Let us give with passion as we present God's tithes and our offerings.

### **JUNE 16**

Last week, 2,000 or so Holston Conference United Methodists met at Lake Junaluska. \_\_\_\_\_ and I were your representatives. We worshiped, conducted business, set a new budget, established priorities and made our offerings. \$\_\_\_\_\_ was raised from Holston churches for our 2010 mission offering, Hope For Sudan. We are glad to be part of a church that cares for God's children everywhere. Let us now continue to be generous to God as we present God's tithes and our offerings.

### **JUNE 23**

In the beginning, God created the Heaven and the Earth! Eventually, God created you, and me. All we are, whatever we have and everything we hope for and love, comes from God. How can we give back too much to God, in whom we live and breath and have our meaning? Let us joyfully give God's tithes, and our offerings.

### **JULY 30**

Can we even IMAGINE not having FREEDOM? Have we any idea how much has been sacrificed so that we might have the privilege of being in this church to worship and serve? Freedom and security comes at a cost and includes responsibility. We can celebrate our freedom by our generous giving to the God who has made it all possible. Let us give generously of God's tithes and our offerings.

### **JULY 7**

The Bible tells us we are created in God's image. We believe God is a loving and giving God. Therefore, if we are in God's image, we, too, must be giving and loving. How do we reflect God's image in our lives and our generosity? Let us be God's image now as we give generously of God's tithes and our offerings.

### **JULY 14**

In the Bible, the HEART is the core of our being. It is the place where our spiritual life begins. John Wesley spoke of his experience of the "strangely warmed heart." How is it with our hearts? We can have BIG hearts, WARM hearts, TENDER hearts, and maybe even HARD hearts. God has given us the capacity to have GIVING and GENEROUS hearts. May we exercise that now as we give generously and present God's tithes and our offerings.

## **JULY 21**

When Jesus went home with Zacchaeus, he knew that Zacchaeus had let money come between him and God. Jesus was concerned, not about the money, but about the soul. An amazing transformation took place. Zacchaeus gave half his net worth, and repaid anyone he had wronged by 400 percent. The way we use our money says more about the health of our soul than the size of our bank account. We can be transformed by our generosity. Let us now give God's tithe and our offerings.

## **JULY 28**

In the act of Holy Communion, we believe Jesus Christ is with us in his mystical presence. We don't just remember Jesus, we experience him. The elements are physical signs of Jesus with us, here and now. Another physical sign of our participation with Christ is our money...our gifts to the work of God's church. Let us celebrate the presence of Jesus as we generously give God's tithes and our offerings.

## **AUGUST 4**

Money is a lot more than just money. In the faith and in the Church, money is about Evangelism. Money is about worship and children and youth. Money is about the work of the Kingdom, and can change the lives of countless people. If we truly believe that Jesus Christ can change the world through the work of the church, then let us give generously, attaining the tithe, and beyond. Let us give God's tithes and our offerings.

## **AUGUST 11**

We're here as a church to be a witness to each other and to help one another in our Christian journey. We're ALSO here to be a witness to those who are "out there" and to bring them into a transforming relationship with Jesus Christ. When we give generously and sacrificially, we have a greater witness to those who are not yet with us. Let us give generously, as we present God's tithes and our offerings.

## **AUGUST 18**

Jesus tells us not to give in such a way as to draw attention and praise to our giving. But, Jesus ALSO tells us to "let our light shine so others may see our good works – and glorify our Father in Heaven."

We are called to be givers of the kind of gifts that glorify God, so we can discover the joy of generosity.

Let us give glorifying gifts to God and the work of God's Kingdom, as we present God's tithes, and our offerings.

## **AUGUST 25**

We sometimes hear someone referred to as a "Prayer Warrior." That person has received the gift of prayer, and has a passion about prayer. We may not all have that gift, but we can ALL become "Giving Warriors." We can practice the gift of generous giving, so that the work of God's church and Kingdom can be furthered, here in our community and across the world.

Let's be "Giving Warriors," and let the fruit of the spirit called "generosity" be a reality.

## **SEPTEMBER 1**

This weekend we celebrate "Labor Day," honoring all those in so many places who work for the good of us all. As we honor Labor, we also honor the fruits of our labor, remembering that the Bible calls us to give our "First Fruits" to God, and calling us to give the Tithe as our first fruit.

Let us honor God and all who labor, as we present God's tithes and our offerings.

## **SEPTEMBER 8**

Martin Luther, the great reformer, once said, "I have held many things in my hands and I have lost them all. But whatever I have placed in God's hands, that I still possess." The money we keep will someday be gone. But what we give to God has eternal power and usefulness. Let's contribute to something that lasts, as we give God's tithes and our offerings.

## **SEPTEMBER 15**

In II Corinthians, Paul writes, "This most generous god who gives seed to the farmer that becomes bread for your meals is MORE than extravagant with you. He gives you something **you can then give away**, which grows into full-formed lives, robust in God, wealthy in every way, **so that YOU can be generous in every way, producing with us great praise to God.**"

God gives extravagantly to us so that we may be generous to the work of God's hands. Let us be obedient and generous as we give God's tithes and our offerings.

## **SEPTEMBER 22**

When Sam Houston, that well-known politician, teacher and military leader, came to Christ and was baptized, he offered to pay a large obligation for his church. When asked why, he said, "Because, my pocketbook has been baptized, too."

It's been said that too often, our pocketbook and checkbook don't get baptized with the rest of us. God's gift of our salvation is worthy of our generous response. Let's give generously as we present God's tithes and our offerings.

## **SEPTEMBER 29**

As we welcome the season of Autumn and enter another beautiful time of nature's splendor, we remember God's continuing, creative gifts. We enjoy the beauty and variety of the world, the food we eat, the air we breathe, the love that sustains us. It is because of God's generosity that we are here. Let's now be generous with the gifts of our resources, as we present God's tithes and our offerings.

## **OCTOBER 6**

In the front of the United Methodist Hymnal, we find John Wesley's "Directions for Singing."\* Direction #4 on his list reads: "Sing lustily and with a good courage. Beware of singing as if you were half dead, or half asleep; but lift up your voice with strength." Wesley is calling us to awaken and come into the fullness of our God-given voices -- whether these be our singing voices or our other gifts and talents. We may not all be able to sing so well, but we can give with enthusiasm, joy and good courage. Let us now give God's tithes and our offerings.

## **OCTOBER 13**

Randy Alcorn says, in his book, The Treasure Principle, "As thunder follows lightening, giving follows grace. When God's grace touches you, you can't help but respond with generous giving. Giving is simply the overflow of joy." That's a profound statement, isn't it? As God's grace has touched you and your life, so let your generosity demonstrate the overflowing of your joy. Let us now give God's tithes, and our offerings.

## **OCTOBER 20**

What do you think is the most important ministry of this church? (As pastor, give several possibilities that come to mind.) What would happen if we had to give this up? Our gifts to the church are our ways to sustain our ministries, touching us, our neighbors, and people around the world. Let us give generously to sustain God's mission, as we present God's tithes and our offerings.

### **OCTOBER 27**

There are always budgets and bills and obligations. The church is no exception. But we give, not because God and the church need our money. We give because, in our commitment and discipleship, and as a part of our spiritual growth, WE need to give. Remember Paul's words, that "God loves a cheerful giver." Let us give, cheerfully and generously as we present God's tithes and our offerings.

### **NOVEMBER 3**

Sometimes, when we can't be in charge, we don't want to do a thing. If we don't know the answer, we don't want to ask the question. If we don't know exactly what our money is being used for, we don't want to give it. But a GIFT is something given without restrictions or expectations, like God's gift of GRACE to us.

We give our gifts to GOD because God had first given life, love and grace to us. When we give to God, God will use our gifts for good. Let's release our gifts as we give God's tithes and our offerings.

### **NOVEMBER 10**

Jesus tells us to feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, clothes to the naked and to visit those in prison and give comfort and healing to the sick. That is a pretty tall order. We can't do all that. But, yes, we can! When we give, our gifts work toward accomplishing all that we have mentioned, and then some! God uses our gifts to touch lives around the world. Let us give gratefully and joyously as we give God's Tithes and our offerings.

### **NOVEMBER 17**

We have much for which to be thankful. We may have blessings of nation, of health or wealth. We may have beauty and soundness of mind. We may be blessed with love and comfort. We may be free. BUT ALL WE ARE SURE OF IS GOD! And this is the GOOD NEWS. THAT IS ENOUGH!

As we recognize this truth, let us give generously to the God who is ENOUGH, as we present God's tithes and our offerings.

### **NOVEMBER 24**

As we approach the season of our culture's most extravagant spending, we need to focus on the gift that God has given the world...his son, Jesus Christ. For the sake of our discipleship, we need to know that Christmas is not about spending, but about giving. Let's remember God's tithes and our offerings as we present these gifts to God.

### **DECEMBER 1**

Advent is the season of expectation and hope. We remember God's dramatic entry into human life through the infant Jesus. We are reminded that God is always present with us, but this season helps us focus on the amazing gift God has given us. As God gives gifts to us, and we shop for gifts for family and friends, let us give generous gifts to God, and the ministry of The Church of Jesus Christ, as we now give God's tithes, and our offerings.

### **DECEMBER 8**

During Advent, we see the infant Jesus, the vulnerable and beautiful baby. The scene is sweet and sentimental. But we know the tiny baby grows up to be a forceful man, calling disciples to himself and making sacrifices, as well as calling us to sacrifice. Let us follow Jesus by making sacrifices and giving generously to the ministries of his church. We will now present God's tithes and our offerings.

### **DECEMBER 15**

As Christmas draws near, our lives are busy. We have shopping to do, traveling to and from family members, menus to prepare, parties to go to. It is an exciting and sometimes exhausting time. But the “Reason for the Season” is the coming of Christ into the world, into our lives and into the ministry and service of our church. Let us give generously to our ministries and the work of God’s kingdom as we present God’s tithes and our offerings.

### **DECEMBER 22**

We trust that everyone had a wonderful Christmas Day. Now, the sounds of “Merry Christmas” are behind us. Now we start to say “Happy New Year!” Yet the spirit of Christmas should never leave us, as Christians and as God’s Children. So as we continue through this Christmas season and approach the coming new year, let’s let the love, peace and joy of Christmas continue. Let us show our generosity thorough the gifts of God’s tithes and our offerings.

### **DECEMBER 29**

Happy New Year! New Year’s Day brings a sense of new beginnings. We make resolutions. We try to drop bad habits and start good habits. We see the hope of God’s newness in the world. One way we can be more in tune with God’s will and purpose for our lives is to give generously to God’s church and the ministries we carry out in the name of Christ. Let us now give God’s tithes and our offerings.