

# THUSE NEWS

## OCTOBER 2021

### SOUTH PARKERSBURG UMC

*To Know Christ and to Make Christ Known*



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## PASTOR'S MESSAGE

The personal connection makes all the difference in the world! The other day I was at McDonald's chomping away on an egg McMuffin when a man came in and sat down. He took a phone out of his backpack, which was stuffed, plugged it in and sat there looking over his phone but never ordering. I got the impression he was homeless.

When Jesus encountered someone who needed to hear about the kingdom (the woman at the well, the invalid at the pool) he struck up a conversation with them. Christians, too, have something to share—Eternal Life. I quickly asked myself, "How can I start a conversation with this guy?" I came up with a plan.

I bought a \$10 McDonald's card, walked up to him, placed it before him, and said, "Hi, I am buying your breakfast today in the name of Jesus Christ." He looked at me for a moment like a deer in the headlights, then smiled, said thank you, and took the card and ordered. I returned to my seat, prayed, and waited.

After a biscuit and coffee, he started talking to me. I just listened to his story. Then I said to him, "Jesus loves you. Do you know Jesus?" Realizing that the Holy Spirit's task is to draw people to Jesus if a faithful witness will ask the question, I waited. Exodus 14:14 says, "The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." He smiled, reached into his backpack and pulled out a well-used Bible. "Yes, and it is Jesus who takes care of me", he replied. (he was indeed homeless and passing through)

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Had he said anything but that, I simply would have given a 2 minute witness that I've used over the years followed by an invitation to accept Jesus.

My point is...creating initial personal connections fulfills Jesus' command to "Go into the world". SPUMC will grow when we do things in and outside the church to initiate new connections. As we ask Jesus in prayer to lead us at SPUMC in what ministries to reopen following the pandemic and how to restart them, Jesus will lead us to bear fruit for the kingdom if we listen and obey. The Holy Spirit will move where disciples are faithful, even at McDonald's.

Your Servant in Christ Jesus,

Edward Craft

## MARK CHAPMAN CONCERT SEPTEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2021



An inspirational Sunday morning  
listening to the singing & ministry of  
Mark Allen Chapman!!!

## **GIDEON SPEAKER SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10TH**

Larry “Mad Max” Maxwell will be a guest speaker at our church on Sunday morning, **October 10<sup>th</sup>**, to make a presentation on the Gideons. Larry is a retired Parkersburg South High School teacher and he has spoken several times at our church on the Gideon Mission.

Below is a description of the bible written in the  
Gideon New Testament Book

The Bible contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you.

It is the traveler’s map, the pilgrim’s staff, the pilot’s compass, the soldier’s sword, and the Christian’s charter. Here Paradise is restored, Heaven opened, and the gates of hell disclosed. CHRIST is its grand subject, our good the design, and the glory of God its end.

It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened at the judgement, and be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and will condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents.

## SPARK & YOUTH GROUP



**SPARK** - Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> Grades

**YOUTH GROUP** - 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> Grades

Sunday Evenings from 6:00-7:30

Both groups begin in the CFC with a light meal.  
After the meal, SPARK kids go to the church for lessons, singing, crafts and games.

Youth stay in the CFC.

Please prayerfully support us as we minister to the children and youth of our church and community.

To join our team or help with meals, please see

Anna Deem, Children's Coordinator

Brad Lewis, Youth Director

## Children's Ministry

Spark for Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grades resumed on Sunday, September 19, from 6:00 to 7:30. We started with a delicious meal of Tacos-in-a-Bag and ice cream for dessert. Our lessons are on amazing animals and how God used them throughout the Bible. Our first lesson was about a dove and how God used it to bring hope to Noah and his family after the flood. We were able to use the beautiful mural of Noah's Ark in the children's wing to tell about the story.

This week's craft was a two-part craft. The children painted rocks a solid color of their choice and next week will add designs with rainbows, doves, boats, or whatever they choose. They will hide their rocks in the landscaping around the church. Don't be surprised when you see their beautiful artwork hiding among the other many rocks!

We are learning the song, It Ain't No Big Thing, in Spark, Children's Church and Sunday School. The children will perform on **October 24** for Sunday worship service.

We are planning a Harvest Festival/Halloween Party for **October 31** from 6:00 to 7:30. We will have food, costumes, decorations, games and fun! We need lots of help from adults. Volunteers are needed to provide and serve snacks, decorate and set-up game stations, provide prizes for the games, and help with clean-up after the event.

**If you can help, please see Anna Deem or Michaela Hupp, Children's Coordinators.**

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## SPOOKY SPAGHETTI DINNER OCTOBER 24<sup>TH</sup>, 2021

*The Youth of our church are planning a Fundraiser on **October 24<sup>th</sup>** immediately after worship service. Those who attend Sunday School can join in the fun when their classes dismiss.*

**Menu:** Regular Spaghetti, Gluten-free, or whole wheat spaghetti with sauce... Also included: Salad... Garlic Bread... Dessert... Iced Tea or Water...

**Eat In or Request Take Out!!!**



The Youth (6th to 12th graders) played a little kickball and nine square with our friends from Washington UMC. Good times and memories, and a great group of kids!



Youth Sunday School has been focused on daily devotions to God. Making God a priority in our daily life. The importance of being people of integrity, doing what is right in every situation – focusing on the power of our tongues and how we should be cautious in the use of our words.

## COLLEGE STUDENT OUTREACH

Below are the names and addresses of those attending college from the SPUMC family. Please consider sending them a note of encouragement or a card as they continue the Fall Semester. Each will be receiving a Halloween card with a Wendy's Boo Buck for a free Frosty to enjoy as they continue their hard work. IS YOUR COLLEGE STUDENT MISSING? DO WE HAVE INCORRECT OR INCOMPLETE INFORMATION? Please share new or updated information with Ashley in the church office or Melissa Kuhl via Facebook Messenger or email [makuhl@cascable.net](mailto:makuhl@cascable.net)

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Hayden Chaddock<br>622 Madison Ave.<br>Parkersburg, WV 26101<br>Major: Welding   | Davon Hampton<br>82 Dover Dr.<br>Mineral Wells, 26150<br>WVU-Parkesburg   | Emma Hyson<br>University of Charleston<br>2300 MacCorkle Ave. SE,<br>Apt. 303<br>Charleston, WV 25304<br>Pharmacy School            |
| Sarah Craft<br>1820 Mt. Vernon Circle<br>Parkersburg, WV 26101<br>WV School of Osteopathic<br>Medicine – In Rotations...           | Madison Hoover<br>2356 Capitol Drive<br>Parkersburg, WV 26101<br>Ohio Valley University<br>Interdisciplinary Studies<br>Graduating in Dec. 2021 | Dylan McCoy<br>82 Dover Dr.<br>Mineral Wells, 26150<br>WVU-Parkesburg<br>Major: Criminal Justice                                    |
| Makenna Gibson<br>Room 208 Summit Hall<br>211 Grant Ave.<br>Morgantown, WV 26505<br>Major: Undecided                               | Abbie Gibbs<br>Room #432-A2<br>600-602 North High St.<br>Morgantown, WV 26505<br>Major: Nursing   | Drew Sams<br>350 Wedgewood Dr.<br>Apt. 1121<br>Morgantown, WV 26505<br>Major: Sports Management<br>& Marketing                      |
| Dylan Cox<br>University of Mount Union,<br>Box #381<br>1972 Clark Ave.<br>Alliance, OH 44601-3929<br>Major: Sports Medicine        | Michaela Hupp<br>1810 Rayon Drive<br>Parkersburg, WV 26101<br>WVU-Parkesburg<br>Major: Early Childhood<br>Development                           | Mercedes "Sadie" Nelson<br>Buskirk Hall, Rm/Box 605<br>1738 College Ave.<br>Huntington, WV 25703-9600<br>Major: Game/Graphic Design |
| Beth Lowther<br>6001 S. Kings Highway<br>Site R4<br>Myrtle Beach, SC 29575<br>Coastal Carolina University<br>Major: Graphic Design | Megan Kesterson Smith<br>2613 Broad St.<br>Parkersburg, WV 26101<br>WVU-Parkesburg<br>Major: Graphic Design &<br>Media Communications           |   |

Respectfully Submitted by *Melissa Kuhl* – Christian Education Team

## ICE CREAM SOCIAL SEPTEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2021



The Ice Cream was heavenly as well as the music at the Ice Cream Social Sunday night, September 12<sup>th</sup>. People who were driving by stopped to listen and thanked us for a blessing. Attendance was Super as we Worshiped, Fellowshiped, and did what Methodists do so well...EAT!

Thanks to Michaela and all others who worked on preparing & running this event!!!

## UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The United Methodist Women met at their regularly scheduled meeting on September 14, at 6:30. We were presented with an assortment of ideas. The ladies chose to form committees and determine where to go further. There will be a children's fall party and the women will see how they can help with it. There was a discussion about our bereavement dinners and a committee was formed to decide how we would address various levels of guests at such dinners.

We will be hearing from those committees in October and will be discussing a variety of other topics. Your presence and input are greatly appreciated. As our refreshments we had Munch and Crunch so we could chew and discuss. There is things coming up in which we need everyone's help. October is traditionally our Undie Sunday. So thanks in advance for any donation.

The next meeting is Tuesday October 12th at 6:30 and we invite you to bring a friend. Nancy Russell has agreed to have our devotion. Thanks to everyone who is working so hard. Your favorite drink is always welcome to bring to the meeting.

In His Service

*Sandy Sinnott*

# CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

Over the past several months your Church Council has addressed, and approved, some key issues regarding the mission and operation of our church. Below is a summary of the actions taken:

- In March we approved deferring to 2 months (April & May) of Apportionment payments to the West Virginia Conference to offset budget deficits in the first 2 months of the year. Since that time our financial performance has improved and we will be paying back those deferred payments by the end of the year.
- Funding was approved to make improvements to the parsonage during the transition period between Pastor Jim leaving and Pastor Edward arriving at mid-year.
- Brad Lewis was approved as Youth Director of our church. Brad has been in this role for some time and Church Council has now approved it as a salaried position.
- Jason Evans and Kim Gumm were approved as Offering Counters in the Finance organization of the church.
- Church Council approved creating a new colored picture directory in 2022.
- The annual Charge Conference “package” was approved by the Council. This year’s conference will be conducted on Tuesday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, at 7:00PM at the church with our District Superintendent Reverend Loretta Isaiah reviewing and hopefully approving the package which includes all aspects of our church mission and operation for 2022.

Another input for the Charge Conference was to provide a list of our 3-5 greatest strengths and 3-5 greatest weaknesses/challenges for our church going forward. Below are the lists created by the Church Council:

## Greatest Strengths:

- We are a very welcoming church.
- We have many talented people in our congregation who are willing to share those talents.
- We have wonderful children’s & youth ministries.
- We are blessed to hear Biblical based sermons.
- We are contacting church members that have been absent during the pandemic and inviting them back. If they aren’t ready yet, we are promoting our online services.

## Greatest Weaknesses/Challenges:

- We need to do a better job of outreach to our close neighbors.
- We need to recruit and train people to take over jobs that have been held by the same people for many years.
- We need to instill a strong Biblical message of tithing to the congregation

*Jan Barnes* – Church Council Chairperson

# STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

## *Stewardship Alert ...*

The August Silver Plate offering for Old Man Rivers was \$ 930.00. THANK YOU !! The September offering total to Grace of God Food Pantry is pending.

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October Silver Plate Second Mile Giving is designated to Community Resources



### Our Vision

Thrive is a community empowerment program which provides basic living essentials to families and individuals through a case management process that ensures their stability while working through goal plans for self-sufficiency. These services include access to food, household cleaning supplies, and personal hygiene items; clothing support for foster and adopted children; and new baby care supplies. Thrive delivers services through a dignified shopping experience where participants are given choices of selection to meet their specific needs.

### Our Mission

To collaborate with service agencies in the greater Parkersburg area in providing a full complement of case managed assistance to help families achieve and maintain self-sufficiency.

- **Thrive Market** , A Choice Based Food Market
- **Thrive Homegoods** Providing Infant, Toddler and Housing Supplies
- **Hope Grows**, A Project Providing Fresh Greens and Organic Vegetables
- **Kelly's Closet**, Clothing Distribution for Foster Children

### **Open Monday – Friday 1pm – 3pm**

Because *Thrive* is meant to function as an emergency necessity resource, customers are able to visit twice before needing to make an appointment with a case manager through Community Resources. Working with a case manager allows **Community Resources and Thrive to** better understand the needs of our clients and how we can help them reach self-sufficiency.

*Submitted by: Kay Wilhelm*

## FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The Financial performance in the month of August was nearly breakeven with Operating Expenses exceeding Operating Revenue by only **\$478.33**... This small deficit during the month resulted in a year-to-date deficit of approximately **\$9,600**. We are optimistic that tithing and offerings will begin to increase as we move past the summer months and into yearend.

On a lighter note, A small church in the hills of Tennessee struck oil in its parking lot. It was a gusher and money was coming in so fast the finance committee didn't know what to do with it. The committee called a special congregational meeting of the forty members of the church and asked what to do with all the money. Deacon Brown said, "I move that we divide all the money among our members, and I further move that we don't take in any new members!!!"

PLEASE NOTE: WE HAVE NOT STRUCK OIL... OUR CHURCH NEEDS  
NEW MEMBERS!!!

*Larry Sexauer* – Finance Chairperson

## BACKPACK BLESSINGS

Dear Church Family,

We had another blessing in the backpack ministry. The Wood County Nutrition Center has informed me that our church is getting \$3,000.00 to use for supplying food for the backpack ministry. Also, the backpack ministry has raised \$166.00 from our silent auction at the ice cream social. I feel so blessed.

Thank You.

*Date*

## LOVE CHANGES EVERYTHING

Jack Kelley, a reporter working for USA Today, was in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, to cover a terrible famine. He came across a boy on a back road. The boy was malnourished; his stomach was protruding. His hair was reddish, and his skin was wrinkled as if he were 100 years old.

The photographer gave him a grapefruit. The boy was so weak he could not hold it, so Kelley cut it in half. The boy took half, looked up as if to say “thank you,” and began to walk toward his village. He did not realize the photographer and reporter followed at a distance.

In the village he came to his younger brother, who looked to be dead. His eyes were glazed over. The older boy kneeled, bit off and chewed a piece of grapefruit, opened his brother’s mouth, put the fruit in, and worked his jaw up and down. (The reporter later learned that the older brother had been doing this for two weeks.) A couple days later the older brother died, but the younger one lived.

Is this what Jesus meant when He said, “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends”? (John 15:13). Love changes everything. It changes our hearts and causes us to do things for others that we would never have done before.

—Anonymous

## CALM AND QUIET

*I have calmed and quieted myself.* - Psalm 131:2

Stress levels keep rising. At work, at school, even at home, the pressure is on. Productivity targets climb. Housing bubbles burst. Viruses run out of control. Who can calm down? Who can relax?

Well, maybe I can take a cue from Psalm 131 and not concern myself with things above my pay grade. Maybe I can imagine myself as a toddler snuggling against my mother’s warmth, the gentle rhythm of her breathing soothing me. Ahhh. Can I just stay here?

When Jesus was a toddler, he and his family were refugees in Egypt. What a lot they had experienced! Visits by smelly shepherds and stargazing foreigners. A close escape from Herod’s hit squad. And then months turning into years while they lived as strangers in a strange land.

Yet we can imagine Mary picking up Jesus and wrapping him in her arms. And we can imagine Jesus finding comfort from her warmth and her steady breathing. Out of place in Egypt, threatened back home—none of that was a concern for little Jesus, who rested quietly in his mother’s embrace. The psalm and Jesus himself invite us to snuggle against the warmth of God’s presence, to rest in God’s embrace, to trust God when the pressure is on, to trust God like Jesus trusted his mother’s arms.

Source: Today Devotional - Bob Arbogast — Thursday, September 23, 2021

## FISHER'S OF MEN... LUKE 5:1-11

Luke's story of Jesus calling the first disciples is unique among the synoptic Gospels. While Mark and Matthew speak of Jesus walking along the Sea of Galilee and abruptly calling Simon, Andrew, James, and John to follow him (Matt 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20), only Luke tells the story of a miraculous catch of fish preceding the call. Luke's story shares common elements with John's post-resurrection story of Jesus meeting his disciples at the Sea of Galilee. As in John 21:1-10, we see a futile night of fishing, Jesus offering some unsolicited fishing advice, an overwhelming catch of fish, and a recognition of Jesus' identity that focuses especially on the response of Simon Peter. In Luke's Gospel, this is not Simon's first encounter with Jesus. Jesus has already been to Simon's home in Capernaum and has healed his mother-in-law (4:38-39). Perhaps that explains Simon's willingness to let Jesus use his fishing boat as a floating pulpit.

Simon had been fishing all night with no success, then working from the early morning hours cleaning his nets. Most likely he was exhausted and looking forward to going home and getting some sleep. So it must have seemed a bit of an imposition when Jesus got into Simon's boat and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Nevertheless, Simon did what Jesus asked (5:1-3).

Luke does not tell us what Jesus taught the crowds that morning. The focus is on what follows. Jesus tells Simon to put out into the deep water and let down his nets for a catch. Simon obviously believes this will be a futile exercise. He is the professional fisherman, after all. We can almost hear the exasperation in his voice when he responds, "Master, we have worked all night but have caught nothing." But then he continues; "Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets" (5:4-5).

We know what happens next — nets so full of fish that they begin to break, boats so full of fish that they begin to sink. Seeing what is happening, Simon is overwhelmed with fear and wonder, sensing that he is in the presence of divine power. He responds by falling down at Jesus' knees and begging him, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" (5:6-8)

Simon is caught by surprise. In the midst of his ordinary daily grind, and in fact, after a particularly lousy night at work, he is encountered by one who changes everything. Amazed by the power of God displayed in the abundant catch of fish, Simon is immediately aware of his sinfulness and unworthiness. He sees the overwhelming disparity between God's power manifest in Jesus and his own mortal, compromised life.

Jesus responds to Simon by saying, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people" (5:10). The Greek word for "catching" used here (*zogron*) is rare in the New Testament, but means "to catch alive." Of course, fishing with nets was a matter of catching fish alive, but those live fish would soon be dead. Here Jesus calls Simon and his partners to a new vocation of catching people so that they might live, a life-giving vocation of being caught up in God's mission of salvation for all.

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Although they have just brought in the greatest catch of their fishing careers, Simon Peter, James, and John leave those boatloads of fish behind and follow Jesus (1:11). Their encounter with Jesus has completely reoriented their lives.

This text offers rich possibilities for reflecting on how God calls ordinary people to discipleship and mission. After all, there is nothing the slightest bit extraordinary about Simon Peter and his fishing partners. They are simple fishermen, and they are simply doing what they did every day. They are minding their own business, cleaning their nets after a long, particularly discouraging night of work, when Jesus comes along, enters into their utterly normal, mundane lives and changes everything.

Jesus calls Simon and his partners as they are. Simon is acutely aware of his unworthiness, but Jesus is not put off by this in the slightest. Jesus does not ask Simon to get his act together, his resume prepared, and then come back for an interview. Rather, Jesus encounters him as he is, tells him not to be afraid, and calls him to a new mission of catching people.

Throughout Scripture we see that human sin, failure, and inadequacy are no obstacles to God's call. God calls imperfect people to do God's work, people who are aware of their unworthiness and are often doubting and resistant to God's call (see, for example, Exodus 3:10-12; Isaiah 6:1-6; Jeremiah 1:6-8.) God doesn't wait for them to shape up. God calls them as they are and then works on shaping them into faithful servants.

Simon Peter's resistance to Jesus stems not only from his sense of unworthiness. He initially protests Jesus' instructions to go out into the deep waters and let down the nets because he is convinced that the fish are not biting. They have worked all night and caught nothing. We can hardly blame him for his skepticism.

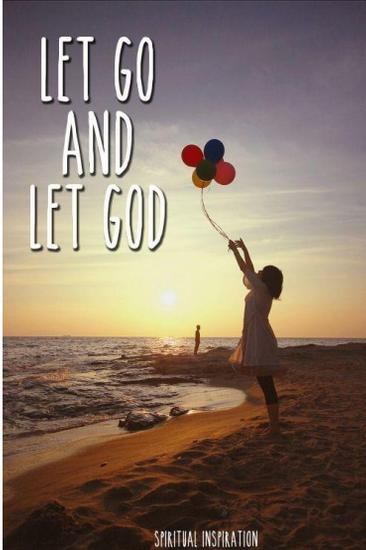
How often do we resist Jesus' claim on our lives because what he is calling us to do seems too crazy, too impractical? How often do we avoid putting out into the deep waters of following and bearing witness to Jesus because we are convinced that we will not see any results? What might it mean for us to go deep-sea fishing with Jesus — to trust and follow him outside our comfort zones, to let go of our certainties, to have our lives radically reoriented?

For most of us, this will not mean leaving our current professions behind (although we cannot rule out that possibility). We all are called by virtue of our baptism to participate in God's mission to the world in Jesus Christ. We all are called daily to reorient our priorities to align with God's priorities, to use the gifts God has given us in service to others, to share the good news of Christ in word and deed.

Jesus' mission does not wait until we think we are ready. The need for the gospel in this broken world is far too urgent. We are called right now — even in spite of our frailty, failures, and doubts, even in the midst of our ordinary, busy, complicated lives. Jesus' word to Simon Peter is also a word to us: "Do not be afraid." This is Jesus' mission, and we trust that he will keep working with us and through us, "catching" others as he has caught us — in the deep, wide net of God's mercy and love. We trust, finally, that the catch is in God's hands, and that God's desire is for the nets to be bursting and the boats full.

*Elisabeth Johnson*

## PRAYER LIST



Tony Justice  
Charlene Syms  
Vicki Shuman  
Don Bailey  
The Nichols Family  
David Burke  
US Firefighters  
Lisa Hall  
Chester Keener  
Colleen Hinzman  
Melody Galland  
Judy Jonas  
Norma Sage

Wayne Wright  
Norma Wright  
Phyllis Walters  
Nathan Joy  
Susan Stoops  
John Goodrich  
Ken Pritchard  
Rev. Carroll McCauley  
Dorothy McCauley  
Tim Davis  
Pam Davis  
Izac Dotson



Remember the Families of:

Gerald Jonas – Brother of Jim Jonas

Helen Travis – Mother of Shelia Mays



## BIBLE QUIZ

This Month's Bible Quiz is about New Testament topics in the Bible... Answers can be found, or checked, in the scripture noted at the end of each question... Good Luck!!!

1. In what city did Mary, Martha, and Lazarus live? (John 11:1)
2. What was the name of the angel that appeared unto Zacharias? (Luke 1:19)
3. What was the judgement seat of Pilate known as? (John 19:13)
4. What food did Jesus eat when he met with his disciples after his resurrection? (Luke 24:42)
5. Who owned the tomb in which Jesus was buried? (Matthew 27:57)
6. Paul's letter to the Romans was not physically written by Paul, but dictated by Paul to whom? (Romans 16:22)
7. Who sent his greetings at the end of Peter's first epistle? (1 Peter 5:13)
8. Who said "When I am weak, then am I strong?" (2 Corinthians 12:10)
9. What disciple said "Thou shall never wash my feet" (John 13:8)
10. What precious jewel is mentioned by Jesus in a parable about the kingdom of heaven? (Matthew 13:45)

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02-18-2005

GOOD THING I FOUND YOU GIDEON ... IT  
SEEMS SOMEONE HAS BEEN HIDING ALL YOUR  
BIBLES IN HOTEL ROOMS