

Faith Community UMC – Bayville, NJ

“Surprise” Talent Program

Faith Community, A United Methodist Church in Bayville recently completed an extremely successful Talent Program. The program was coordinated by the Church’s finance committee and worship committee and was based on the Parable of the Talents found in Matthew’s gospel chapter 25 verses 14 through 30.

A week prior to the program’s start Pastor Rene Pak preached a sermon on the parable. No other mention of the program was made. A week later during the time of the sermon the skit “Let’s Make Some Dough!” was presented by members of the two committees. The skit presented the parable through the lens of a modern Game show. Once again Pastor Pak referenced the parable. At the end of the service baskets were passed throughout the congregation. Members and friends were encouraged to take an envelope from the baskets. Envelopes held anywhere from \$15 - \$25 along with directions on how to participate in the program. No record of how much money each person received or who received money was kept. This was a faith-based program. The Finance Committee committed \$1000 to the program. Participants were told that they had seven weeks to make their money grow by using their talents in any way they saw fit.

A “Talent Shop” was set up in the hall for participants to offer their creations for sale. A Church bulletin board was made available for those wishing to offer their services. Participation included the sale of crafts, home baked good, soups, salads, the offering of nutrition counseling, the services of the church organist for two of the weeks, etc. Participation was enthusiastic. Some turned to Facebook to offer homemade items, custom baked pies, and custom artwork to the highest bidder.

Talent Money was collected during the four weeks of Advent. In the parable the man who doubles his money is told “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!” When all the counting was done the members of Faith Community had not doubled the money they were given, they tripled it and then some. There were smiles all around as this exercise in faith and fund raising came to a conclusion. It is safe to say that all participants found it to be an extremely positive experience.



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