Dear Cornwall Church Family,

John Wesley, founder of Methodism, once wrote in a sermon entitled *The Use of Money,* “Of the three rules which are laid down. . .you may find many that observe the first rule, namely, ‘Gain all you can’. You may find a few that observe the second, ‘Save all you can’. But how many have you found that observe the third rule, ‘Give all you can’?”

This third rule which Wesley in 1789 felt had been ignored by Methodists is certainly a key part of the Christian life. Cornwall United Methodist Church has been on the receiving end of Christian stewardship throughout its 225 years of existence as a congregation.

Let’s consider some of the saints in our history who have made our existence possible:

The circuit riders came first, about 246 years ago, giving of themselves as they traveled by horseback over long distances, through cold and heat, to preach to groups where no church buildings existed. The Rev. Joseph Pilmore was one of the first missionaries sent to America by John Wesley and records in his journal that he preached one summer day in 1772 in the Cornwall area. He also stopped to preach at Manheim, at the request of “Baron” von Stiegel of glass making fame.

Mrs. Thomas Bird Coleman, wife of the ironmaster, concerned about the spiritual welfare of the families of the workers in the area, organized the first Sunday School in the Old Mill House in 1828. This group grew to a total of 175 individuals. After she died, her husband gave one acre of ground in 1834 to the Methodist Episcopal Church for the first permanent home for the congregation. A plain one-story brick building, 35 by 40 feet was erected. The church was incorporated as The Methodist Episcopal Church of Cornwall in 1864. As the congregation grew, the church was renovated and enlarged to a two-story building in 1868. In 1877 heirs of Robert and William Coleman offered to build a bigger church if people would contribute what they could. They were already outgrowing the enlarged building. Land was cleared and a cornerstone was placed for the structure we have today. Without Mrs. Coleman’s concern for the spiritual welfare of her husband’s workers and their families and the contributions of her descendants, namely Mrs. Margaret C. Buckingham, Edward Freeman, Miss Isabel Freeman and heirs of William Coleman our church might not exist. The stone parsonage was also a gift in 1910 from Edward Freeman in memory of his mother, Margaret Freeman, daughter of Mrs. Thomas Bird Coleman. This replaced an earlier frame parsonage erected in 1878.

There have been numerous donors who have funded various projects in our church. We enjoy the air conditioning because of the generosity of one family, the addition to the original building, with its lovely fellowship hall and kitchen because of the giving of other members of the congregation.

Then there are the mission trips, two to Tanzania, where in 2001 we replaced a crumbling mud brick church in Lucas Ndaro’s home village with a more substantial building and again in 2010 when a group of our members helped to build the Family Life Counseling Centers.

For many years we have also been traveling to West Virginia to aid in the Heart and Hand projects. These trips, along with other missionaries and programs in which we are involved came about because of the generosity and forward thinking of the saints who comprise our church. All of us who have made the decision to know and serve the Lord are His saints.

I hope you will prayerfully consider, as we have just celebrated Heritage Sunday and All Saints Sunday, what you can do as an individual to support the ministries of the Cornwall Church.

Sincerely,

Nancy W. Ladd, Church Historian