

# Romans 12

We who are many are one body in Christ.

Produced by the General Board of Discipleship of The United Methodist Church to communicate effective principles and practices demonstrated by congregations that are actively making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

These congregations are marked by:

- Clarity around the mission and vision of the congregation.
- Practice of spiritual disciplines, both corporately and individually.
- Nurture of growth in discipleship through mutual support and accountability.
- Cultivation of intentional and mutual relationships with the most vulnerable—the poor, children, the imprisoned, the powerless.
- Consistent concern for inviting people into relationship with Jesus Christ, combined with wise practices for initiating them into the Body of Christ.
- Connectional relationships that facilitate participation in God's mission of global transformation.
- Shared clergy and lay leadership.

## More Than Enough

In a sluggish economy with church members who are living from paycheck to paycheck and a culture that bombards us with arguments over debt and deficit, it is natural to respond with anxiety and insecurity. The people of Asbury United Methodist Church in Delaware, Ohio chose to respond to the culture of anxiety with faith in God's abundance.

The pastor and another longtime church leader challenged the congregation to believe that with God they have more than enough. They began the summer by taking guidance from Jesus' parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 19:12-27). Then \$650 was divided among several members of the congregation who promised to multiply the funds they received and return the proceeds to the church at the end of the summer.

One of the women used her money to buy food for a supper she prepared for her husband and several of his business colleagues. Her husband told his friends to bring their checkbooks with them. During supper the guests were told about the ministry of Asbury UMC and invited to make a donation. All the guests responded by writing a check to the church.

A child set up a lemonade stand, the youth sponsored a spaghetti dinner, a woman crocheted dish cloths to sell, and others created pieces of art for sale. Skills and talents were used to tell the church's story as well as raise money. By the end of the summer the \$650 seed money produced over \$2,200!

While the money raised was important, equally important was the creativity that was unleashed and the energy that was created as people moved from an attitude of scarcity to one of abundance.

## Questions for Discussion

- How does your congregation foster a culture of abundance amidst the dominant culture of fear and scarcity?
- How does your congregation witness to God's abundance in the neighborhood?
- What can you do to help the people of your congregation be channels of God's abundance for the world?

**Steve Manskar is the Director of Wesleyan Leadership at GBOD. He can be reached at [smanskar@gbod.org](mailto:smanskar@gbod.org).**



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