

You give them something....

Our faith teaches us...

The familiar story of Jesus feeding the 5000 begins with the disciples suggesting to Jesus that the crowds of people gathered around be sent to nearby villages to buy food for their evening meal. Jesus responds, *"You give them something to eat"* (Matthew 14:13-21). As you know, the story closes with the miraculous news that 5000 people had been fed with just five loaves of bread and two fish – and not only that, but there were baskets of leftovers as well.

Our church follows...

The story of our congregation in recent months has been strikingly similar to Matthew's account of the miracle feeding of the 5000. Undaunted by one of the most far-reaching economic downturns in decades, the Bolton Congregational Church UCC has not sent people away to face hardships and hungers on their own. Not only have we resisted the temptation to moderate our commitment as Christians to serving others in need, we have actually increased our outreach efforts to families of local schoolchildren, doubled the size of our upcoming housing recovery mission to Biloxi, Mississippi early next year, and also greatly increased our Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday food basket programs. Faithful to the example of the disciples who were with Jesus on the day that the miracle of the 5000 took place, we have heard the words: *You give them something to eat... or to drink... or to wear on the first day back to school... or to wrap and place under the Christmas tree... or to feed the family dog or cat... or to once again open the door to a hurricane-ravaged home after five long years.* Yes, we have heard Jesus speak these words, and we have responded in true Christian spirit.

A new year awaits...

While the economy shows signs of recovery, the year ahead will surely still hold challenges in which we will continue to hear the voice of Jesus beckoning to us, *"You give them something...."* that "something" will be a basic need like food and drink for many; for others it may be shelter or clothing... or supportive pastoral counseling... or perhaps the availability of Church School, youth and adult programs that teach life-enriching Christian faith and values.

Your response matters...

Along with your dedicated participation in the worship life and volunteer ministries of our church, your financial support is also absolutely essential for our continued commitment to responding with strength and enthusiasm when we hear Jesus say, *"You give them something...."* in 2010. The annual financial pledges of all of us are critical to providing the staff, resources and facilities which make us able to answer the challenge *"You give them something...."*

If your financial situation is uncertain as we head into the new year, it is understood that you may not be able to make your customary pledge right now. Unless your situation is dire, though, please do not eliminate our church from your annual household budgeting but rather consider adjusting your giving in proportion to your reduced income until things improve and you can resume your usual level of giving.

If the economy has not had a major impact on your household, please know how vitally important it is for you to continue your habit of generosity to our church's ministries.

And if your household finances have actually improved recently due to added income or reduced expenses, please share that blessing with our church by proportionately increasing your giving knowing that this will help make up for those who are unable to be as supportive as they would like to be at this time.

Thank you for using the enclosed pledge card to respond with joy and conviction as our congregation continues to listen and respond when our Savior calls to us, saying...

"You give them something..."

≈ The Board of Stewardship ≈

2010 Pledge Form: "You give them something...."

**The Bolton Congregational Church UCC 228 Bolton Center Road, Bolton CT 06043
860-649-7077 www.boltoncongregational.org**

For 2010, I/We pledge to the Bolton Congregational Church UCC an annual financial commitment of \$ _____ to support the programs and ministries that enable our congregation to respond with strength and enthusiasm to Jesus timeless call "You give them something..."

(Signed)

(Signed)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

"When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, 'This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.' Jesus said to them, 'They need not go away; you give them something to eat.' (Matthew 14:15-16)

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