



The United Parish

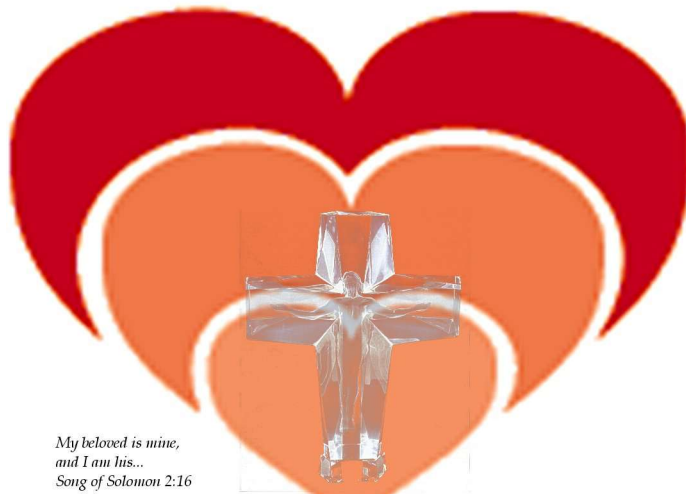
ECHO



February 2005

Elkton United Parish Church 605-542-7102
PO Box 218 Elkton SD 57026
website: <http://www.elktonunitedparish.org>

Won't you be my Valentine?



*My beloved is mine,
and I am his...
Song of Solomon 2:16*

Love, your Heavenly Father

Love in a broken world.

Just in case you hadn't noticed it, the world we live in is broken. Things keep falling apart. Buildings fall apart. Plans fall apart. People fall apart. Churches fall apart. Governments fall apart. Bicycles fall apart. Families fall apart. Everything in this world is prone to fall apart. It's no wonder that we tend to put so much emphasis on things like Valentine's Day then. We are looking for love to put things together. But that's what Lent is about.

I'm sure that you, like I, have tried to glue something together with the same type of glue that has worked so well in the past for you. I like super glue gel. It sticks to things that plain super glue doesn't and is easier to work with. One of our Christmas ornaments broke just this last season, and I tried the super glue gel. It was the type of surface that the gel usually works very well for, but this time, of course, it didn't. Then Bonnie noticed that the item I was trying to glue had a hollow core. She asked if it would work to glue something into that hollow core so that both parts would have something much more substantial to glue onto than just the thin edge I was trying to line up. It was a brilliant idea that was just the thing to do.

Valentine's day focuses on gluing the thin little edges where two lovers' lives touch. While this is not wrong and can even work in many cases, we shouldn't really be so puzzled at how many times it does not hold. Lent focuses on the love God has already given to fill the hollow core of our lives. If things keep falling apart for any of you, or someone you know, maybe you need to fill the hollow core with something more substantial for the glue to hold onto. Fill it with Christ.

In Christ's service – Pastor Daren

UNITED PARISH BOARD MEETING

The United Parish Board met on January 12, 2005 at 8:00 p.m. in the church fellowship hall. Officers in attendance were Chairman Ed Timm, Financial Secretary Donna Magnus, Treasurer Dawn Boltjes, Lay Leader Rufus DeZeeuw, and Secretary LaRee Farnham. Also attending were Pastor Daren, Linda Kampmann, Marsha Timm, Carol Styf, and Gert DeZeeuw. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ed. Pastor Daren gave a devotion and a prayer.

The minutes of the December meeting were read. Trustees report should read “repair” not “replace” back steps at the parsonage. Minutes approved with correction made.

Dawn presented the monthly treasurer report. Our propane bill is paid up to date. Comparison from 2003-2004 season shows we are using about the same amount, but have more expense this season because the cost is higher per gallon. Treasurer report was approved.

Nov 30th balance	\$	135.63
Dec. deposits		3,206.38
Transfers	\$	<u>2,750.00</u>
	\$	6,092.01
Dec. expenses		<u>6,146.51</u>
Dec 31 st balance	\$	-54.50

Donna presented the Finance report. Sales from the UCC property minus the expenses equals a gain of \$110.14. Linda made a motion to give a \$25 gift certificate to Mike Ponto for his work to bury the debris from the UCC church. Dawn seconded it; motion carried. Dawn will purchase a gift certificate probably from the CC Store. One of Lloyd Smallfield’s CD was cashed to help pay monthly expenses. Two undesignated CD’s were cashed to pay for the van that was purchased by the church. Finance report was approved.

Committee reports were given.

PPR Committee: Nothing new.

Trustees: Gert commented that the eve spouts on the church need work.

Worship: Acolytes training was held and will continue. A prayer chain has been started. They are working with Pastor Daren on a resource booklet to be put in the pews.

Christian Ed: Daren reported that the expense of the Beta study

booklets will come out of the Christian Ed account.

Mission: Nothing new.

UPW: Linda reported that there was about 80 items from the mitten tree that was donated to the school, Harvest Table, and Head Start program. They are working on Ingathering projects for all year and Valentine cards for the military. Their program was “Pledge to Mission”. An UCC offering was taken at church service for the Tsunami victims; over \$170 was collected.

OLD BUSINESS: Rufus reported that a 15 passenger '96 Ford van was purchased from Watertown for \$5,800. It is already being used to haul children back and forth to release time on Wednesdays. Annual meeting will be held January 23rd at 11:30 a.m. Sunday School is at 9:30 and church service at 10:30. Articles for the Annual report need to be given to Linda. LaRee from the Nominating Committee reported that nominations for the officers being elected are Bev Buller for Lay Leader and Dawn Boltjes for Treasurer. Daren suggested that we take a look at the By-Laws sometime to possible eliminate limits on financial position for continuity. Currently it reads that a person can hold an office for not more than 2 consecutive 2 year term.

NEW BUSINESS: Ed received a brochure regarding a free seminar “Building God’s Way” on Feb 23 sponsored by a Sioux Falls contractor. Discussion held on liability insurance on the van which is currently \$1000/year for commercial purpose vehicle. We should get quotes from other companies for comparison. Dawn received notice that the IRS mileage rate increased to 40.5 cents. Donna received a thank you note from Chris Thompson appreciating us for sending him the 1966 “Certificate of Transfer” for his parents. Daren uses his own laser printer to print the bulletins so it was decided that 75% of his toner expense will be paid by the church.

The next board meeting will be on Tues, Feb 1st at 7:00 p.m. instead of Feb 9th due to being Ash Wednesday on the 7th.

Sec. LaRee Farnham

UPW

The UPW met on January 5th at 7:30 pm in the church dining room.

The meeting was called to order by Pres. Linda and for devotion Gert DeZeeuw read “Gold Wrapping Paper”.

The purpose was read and 12 members answered the roll call with Your Job/Past or Present.

The secretaries report for both November and December were read and approved after adding Carol Stijf and Dawn Boltjes to the December birthdays. The treasurers reports for November and December were read and approved. The balance at the end of December was \$2,246.64. Approximately \$169.00 was made at the Hegerfeld sale. There was a discussion on where the Thank Offering money was to be sent. There were no bills.

We received Christmas Card from Jerry Stijf and a letter from Marlene Lang, our Shepherdess. She will be coming in July for our regular meeting. Karen-Marie, knowing it was our meeting night, called Bonnie – she wanted us to know that she was thinking of us.

In November get well cards were sent to Cal Steen, Evelyn Dexter, and Ruth Klosterman. A sympathy card was sent to the family of Ruth Klosterman and an anniversary card was sent to Ed & Marsha Timm. In December get well cards were sent to Stevie Bauman, Don Magnus & Virginia Fixsen.

Gert reported that we had served for the Ruth Klosterman funeral.

Marsha gave a short report on the reading program.

Lil Anderson and Walt Mueller helped with Bingo at the Cozy Corner.

Old Business: The tree at the Community Center for the Festival of Trees was taken down on January 2nd. There were 80+ items donated that were donated to the school, The Harvest Table in Brookings and the Food Pantry. Thanks to all!

Due to the weather there were only about a dozen people at our Caroling Party. After caroling the tree was decorated and then a light supper was served. Hopefully we can make this an annual event.

The new business began with the installations of the elected officers for 2005

President : Linda Kampmann

Vice Pres.: Patty Dzeeuw
Secretary : Beverly Buller
Treasurer : Ann Aaker.

Linda informed us about Womans Sunday Program that she found in the conference' News Letter. Womans Sunday was tentatively set for July 31st.

Our UPW now has a sister unit in Tuttle, ND. Pastor Daren took a picture of us. The picture and a 2005 program booklet will be sent to them. We are asked to keep them in our prayers.

In February we will be making the Love Packages. We were told to plan for 15.

Linda handed out the information needed to make School, Health, and Sewing Kits for the Ingathering, which will be held on September 24th. Hopefully by having the information early, we will be able to supply more kits in 2005. Patty said she will supply all the material needed for anyone wishing to make a baby quilt to be donated to the Ingathering. The church Annual Meeting will be held on January 23rd. Sunday School will be at 9:30am and church at 10:30am followed by the Annual Meeting.

A new Bible Study will be held on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month beginning on January 12th at 6:30 pm

Due to the fact that the 3rd Thursday Supper falls on St. Patricks Day we will need to find out if we will be serving the supper that night.

Starting in February we will begin our meetings with the program followed by the business meeting and then lunch. Quite often the business part has been so long that the program has been omitted.

Gert reminded us that at 7pm on January 10th will be the Second Wind Ministry for Woman. We are asked to bring a favorite mug.. We need to let them know how many are coming.

There is a need to update the deceased plaques. Gert gave the information to Linda.

Happy Birthday was sung to Thelma Brandt. Other January birthdays are Nancy Wiskur, Shirley Brown, and Gladys Gageby.

The meeting was adjourned with the Lords Prayer.

Our next meeting will be held February 2nd, at 7:30pm.

The program: Pledge Service – Then and Now was presented by Deanna Lundgren.

Hostesses were Linda Kampmann and Beverly Buller.

Secretary
Beverly Buller.

UNITED PARISH ANNUAL MEETING

United Parish Annual Meeting – January 23, 2005

The annual meeting was called to order by Chairman Ed Timm. Pastor Daren gave the opening prayer.

Dawn Boltjes, Treasurer, presented the 2004 Income Report and the 2004 Actual Expenses & 2005 Proposed Budget.

LaRee Farnham, Secretary, read the minutes from the 2004 Annual Meeting and were approved.

Donna Magnus presented the Annual Finance Report. She noted that the General Fund is almost used up (to pay bills). The balance includes \$2400 of which is designated for new carpet. One of Lloyd Smallfield CD's was cashed to pay bills. The Money Market fund (Chris Bessler's estate) has been designated as Building Fund. Sales from the UCC property minus the expenses equals a gain of \$110.14. There is one pew left for sale and several hymnal racks available. Finance report approved.

Committee reports were given.

Chairman Report – by Ed Timm

Pastor Parish Relations Committee: by Rufus DeZeeuw

Trustees: Nancy Wiskur commented that there is always work/ repairs needed in the church and parsonage. Pastor Daren mentioned that the grounding of the sound system is not completed.

Christian Ed: by Sherry Bauman

Worship Report – by Gertrude DeZeeuw. Gert will have training with the Acolyte the Saturday before they start.

Mission Report & UPW - by Linda Kampmann – if you have any projects for them to be involved in, let Patty DeZeeuw or Linda know.

Historian Report – by Marsha Timm

Pastor Report – by Pastor Daren Junker – Growing Together in Christ

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: 2005 Budget - discussion on apportionments to conferences. Virginia Fixsen made a motion to approve the budget as is; Nancy Wiskur 2nd it; all in favor; motion carried.

Election of Officers: LaRee made the following nominations for the open officer positions: Dawn Boltjes for Treasurer and Bev Buller for Lay Leader. Marsha Timm made a motion to unanimously vote for the nominees; Patty seconded it; all in favor; motion carried. Ed thanked Rufus for his time and work as PPR and Search Committee leader.

Discussion was held as to the limit of terms in an officer position especially the finance positions.

Marsha Timm made a motion to amend the Constitution to exclude the term limits on the Finance Secretary and Treasurer positions.

Seconded by Gert DeZeeuw; all in favor; motion carried. LaRee will make the change in the Constitution.

Meeting was adjourned by everyone saying the Lord's Prayer.

Sec. LaRee Farnham

THE GRAPE VINE

** Thanks to everybody for your prayers and cards with regards to David's surgery. We know the importance of prayer and again we witnessed the power of it.

** Look in the back of the church for Camp information.

** The BETA study is going great and we are starting feeling the impact of it. We will not meet on Wednesday February 7th because of Ash Wednesday. Please keep an eye on the announcements in your bulletin for a possible alternate meeting date.

** The prayer chain has been updated and is printed on the back of your calendar. Please take a moment to see who you are supposed to contact in case the prayer chain is activated.

** We have a new member!!!! John Gosbee came down from Bismarck, ND, and joined United Parish through believers baptism on Thursday, January 27th. Welcome John, we are so glad to have you with us and will keep you in our prayers.

** If you have anything you want printed in the Echo or any changes/additions to our birthday list or anniversaries, please let me know. Call me at 542-7102 or e-mail me at bonnie@aquazelle.com.

GOD LIVES UNDER THE BED

I envy my brother Kevin. He thinks God lives under his bed. At least that's what I heard him say one night. He was praying out loud in his dark bedroom, and I stopped outside his closed door to listen. "Are you there, God?" he said. "Where are you? Oh, I see. Under the bed."

I giggled softly and tiptoed off to my own room. Kevin's unique perspectives are often a source of amusement. But that night something else lingered long after the humor. I realized for the first time the very

different world Kevin lives in. He was born 30 years ago, mentally disabled as a result of difficulties during labor. Apart from his size (6'2"), there are few ways in which he is an adult. He reasons and communicates with the capabilities of a 7-year-old, and he always will. He will probably always believe that God lives under his bed, that Santa Claus is the one who fills the space under our tree every Christmas and that airplanes stay up in the sky because angels carry them. I remember wondering if Kevin realizes he is different. Is he ever dissatisfied with his monotonous life? Up before dawn each day, off to work at a workshop for the disabled, home to walk our cocker spaniel, return to eat his favorite macaroni-and-cheese for dinner, and later to bed. The only variation in the entire scheme is laundry, when he hovers excitedly over the washing machine like a mother with her new-born child. He does not seem dissatisfied. He lopes out to the bus every morning at 7:05, eager for a day of simple work. He wrings his hands excitedly while the water boils on the stove before dinner, and he stays up late twice a week to gather our dirty laundry for his next day's laundry chores.

And Saturdays-oh, the bliss of Saturdays!

That's the day my Dad takes Kevin to the airport to have a soft drink, watch the planes land, and speculate loudly on the destination of each passenger inside. "That one's goin' to Chi-car-go!" Kevin shouts as he claps his hands. His anticipation is so great he can hardly sleep on Friday nights. And so goes his world of daily rituals and weekend field trips. He doesn't know what it means to be discontent. His life is simple. He will never know the entanglements of wealth or power, and he does not care what brand of clothing he wears or what kind of food he eats. His needs have always been met, and he never worries that one day they may not be. His hands are diligent. Kevin is never so happy as when he is working. When he unloads the dishwasher or vacuums the carpet, his heart is completely in it. He does not shrink from a job when it is begun, and he does not leave a job until it is finished. But when his tasks are done, Kevin knows how to relax. He is not obsessed with his work or the work of others. His heart is pure. He still believes everyone tells the truth, promises must be kept, and when you are wrong, you apologize instead of argue.

Free from pride and unconcerned with appearances, Kevin is not afraid to cry when he is hurt, angry or sorry. He is always transparent, always sincere. And he trusts God. Not confined by intellectual reasoning, when he comes to Christ, he comes as a child. Kevin seems to know God - to really be friends with Him in a way that is difficult for an "educated" person to grasp. God seems like his closest companion. In my moments of doubt and frustrations with my Christianity, I envy the security Kevin has in his simple faith.

It is then that I am most willing to admit that he has some divine knowledge that rises above my mortal questions. It is then I realize that perhaps he is not the one with the handicap I am.

My obligations, my fear, my pride, my circumstances - they all become disabilities when I do not trust them to God's care.

Who knows if Kevin comprehends things I can never learn? After all, he has spent his whole life in that kind of innocence, praying after dark and soaking up the goodness and love of God.

And one day, when the mysteries of heaven are opened, and we are all amazed at how close God really is to our hearts, I'll realize that God heard the simple prayers of a boy who believed that God lived under his bed.

Kevin won't be surprised at all!