



The United Parish  
*ECHO*



September 2005

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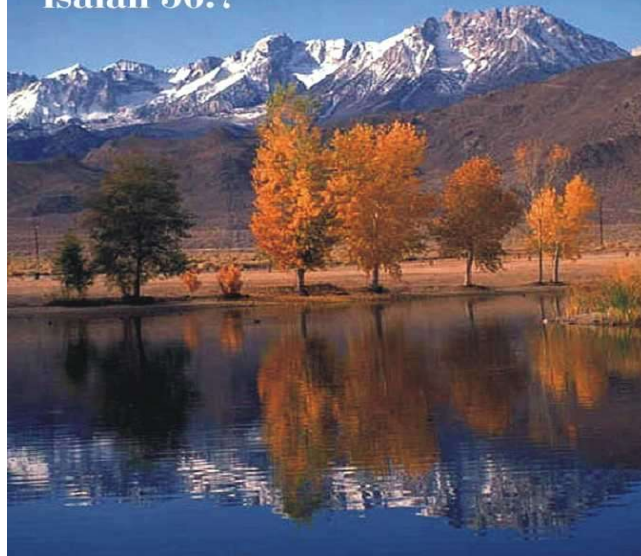
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Growing Together in Christ

**I will bring them to my  
holy mountain,  
and make them joyful  
in a house of prayer.**

Isaiah 56.7



## Pastor's Desktop

The people of United Parish have undertaken a bold challenge, perhaps out of necessity, perhaps out of faith. Long ago, two churches of different denominations realized that sharing resources, especially that most expensive resource of a pastor, made sense in a small town. So, the Peace United Church of Christ and the Elkton United Methodist Church began down the road that eventually led, through several ups and downs, to a formal merger into one yoked parish, aptly named 'United Parish of Elkton'.

Many people are well-acquainted with the view that two 'perfect' people who fall in love, often find that they have married someone very imperfect. During courtship, and even to a degree when living together, each person puts their best foot forward, strives very hard to be the best they can be, and holds back criticisms. Everyone has heard the complaints of 'Ever since we got married, she's not interested any more.' and 'Ever since we got married, he doesn't pay attention any more.' As the illusion of perfection is replaced by the reality of imperfection, each of the lovers could become dissatisfied. That dissatisfaction might get expressed through complaints, then sarcasm, and finally withdrawal. As each step along the way fails to produce the desired change, more anger, bitterness, and distrust creeps in until two strangers are now living in the same house. This has happened to United Parish.

Each congregation was looking to the other for the solution to the problems they knew they had. Each congregation was making an extra effort to look good to the members of the other congregation. There is nothing sinister in this, it is just human nature at work. When the two congregations joined in a complete merger, the masks were slowly dropped. Disillusionment resulted in conflict over little things, which was swept under the rug whenever possible. Newcomers would be subtly told which 'bumps in the carpet' to watch out for, in other words, what topics to not discuss. When a group of people decided that this was not okay, and that things needed to be done differently, the conflicts that were left unresolved flared up in one great battle that threatened to destroy the union.

Now, hurt feelings remain that everyone is afraid to stir up. Conflict avoidance is still the highest priority. When the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee started to apply the guidance that I had gathered from the

Constitution and By-Laws, one of the members was concerned about the hurt feelings it could provoke, and that member warned us of the trouble that could come. But it is time to stop avoiding areas of disagreement. There are many intelligent and deeply caring people in United Parish, people who sincerely want to faithfully follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Because every one of us is unique, there will certainly be differences of opinion, and sometimes about subjects that matter a lot. This will stir up strong feelings. But just like in a marriage, strong feelings are not to be feared, but acknowledged and incorporated with love and respect.

I ask the people of United Parish to draw upon the same boldness that led to the merger. Use that boldness to begin sincere and open dialog about the issues that have hurt before, but this time let's keep the Spirit of Christ before us at all times. I am not interested in making United Parish into a 'Baptist' church. I will not allow 'the Methodists to take over'. And I cannot stand by in silence as inactive members emotionally blackmail us. Jesus binds up the broken-hearted and sets the captives free, so let go of the pain and anger and let Christ lead us into new life.

In Christ's service  
Pastor Daren

### **Parish Board Meeting**

The Parish board met on August 10, 2005 at 7:30pm in the church basement. Officers in attendance were Chairman Ed Timm, Treasurer Dawn Boltjes, and Financial Secretary Donna Magnus. Secretary Laree Farnham was on vacation and Linda Kampmann served as temporary secretary. Others in attendance were Thelma Brandt, Gertrude De Zeeuw, Carol Styf, Virginia Fixsen, Nancy Wiskur and Pastor Daren. Pastor opened the meeting with a prayer. Linda read the minutes from the July meeting and with a correction that Gert DeZeeuw's name was not listed with those in attendance the minutes were approved as read.

Treasurer report: Dawn handed out copies of the expenses and income for July. Our expenses for the month were \$4602.50 and our income was \$4392.50. Our ending balance was \$4090.15. The report was approved as presented. The ending balance included the \$1050.00 that was donated for landscaping at the parsonage. It was decided that since there may not be any landscaping completed this summer that money should be put in a separate account to be used only for a landscaping project.

PPR No report.

Trustees: Nancy Wiskur presented a price break down for painting the outside of the church. There was some discussion about whether it made sense to spend this money on the church at this time but it was decided that we need to maintain the building we have now to the best of our ability and finances. Nancy has made arrangements with Elaine Peters and Thelma Brandt in the event we need to use their outside water faucets when we use pressure washers to ready the wood for painting. The church has agreed to reimburse both ladies for any difference in their water bills. Nancy has also arranged to borrow paint sprayers and is looking to borrow or rent a scissor type hoist to be able to paint the high peaks. Also, we will have two extra offerings designated for the painting project to help offset the expense.

The small roofing project to the parsonage has been completed but we have not received all the bills yet.

Christian Ed. Linda reported that VBS with St Mary's was very well attended with between 50-60 children from preschool to 6th grade attending the three nights. The \$150. offering from VBS was donated to the Tom Carpenter family and already been sent to them. The Sunday school kickoff picnic will be held in conjunction with the Outdoor service on August 28, 2005. Sunday school will start on Sept 11.

Worship Gert reported on what changes her committee decided on their job description included in the constitution and by laws.

UPW Women's Sunday was July 31, 2005 and the service went well. All commented on the wonderful message that Marsha Timm delivered entitled "Prayer Exercise".

On August 3 the UPW held their guest night with about 75 in attendance from out of town churches. All enjoyed a great feast of salads and a fun program.

Mission: Linda delivered 7 Firefighter Only Health kits to Mitchell and they will be sent out to the western part of the state to help when the firefighters are involved in the many fires. We are still collecting all other kits and they need to be turned in before Sept 18. At that time we will have a dedication moment for all the kits, quilts and other hand made items that we will be donating to the Bishops Ingathering in Mitchell on Sept 24, 2005.

Old Business. Dawn had figures to share with the board concerning the budget program for LP at Cenex. The amount of \$ 550.00 needs to be paid each month for 10 months to cover the heating expense of the church and parsonage for 2005-2006 heating season. It was approved to go on the budget program.

Dawn also reported on a letter the church received from the South Dakota Revenue office informing us that churches are not tax exempt and we need to keep track of any items that we purchase that we are not taxed for. These would mainly be items purchased off the internet where taxes are not charged. Dawn said she will keep track and once a year she will need to report this to the Revenue office and pay tax on those items.

The board went over the constitution and by laws and made the proposed changes to be presented to the congregation at our Congregational meeting on September 11.

Ed Timm is still working on forming a new building committee and hopes to have this committee in place by the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 by praying the Lord's Prayer. The next meeting is September 14 at 7pm.

Respectfully submitted by  
Linda Kampmann  
Temporary Secretary

### **PRAYER QUILT MINISTRY**

The Prayer Quilt Ministry is very thankful for the cupboard donated to the ministry. Thank you so much.

We are still meeting every second Saturday at 2pm in the church basement. Come and join us in this so appreciated ministry. I am sure there will be a need for many quilts in the months to come.

### **UPW**

The United Parish guest night was August 3rd, 2005. About 70 guest and members enjoyed a wonderful buffet of salads and a very fun program. They were treated to various readings, both humorous and thought provoking as well as a game and a song. The theme was "Life is a Picnic". The basement of the church was transformed into a colorful picnic area, complete with ants and worms. Sherry Bauman, Ann Aaker and Bonnie Junker were on the program committee. Guests were here from Flandreau, Lake Benton, Mn White, Aurora and Estelline. Door prizes were won by Harriet Dappen, Lil Anderson, Joyce Brodersen, Viola Willmot, Bernice Christensen, Ardele Madison, Barb Shulz, Judy Kirkberg, Shirley Reynold, Florence Rochel, Grace Bell, Hela Trautman, Marydee Toastes and Johnny Boltjes. Marsha Timm won the prize during the game.

### **A VERY SPECIAL PERSON**

"We have set aside this one day to honor someone who shares her talents 365 days a year. I have the pleasure to present LaRee Farnham.

LaRee is active in our church on many levels. At present, she can be seen taking minutes as Parish Board Secretary. She has the ability to turn a beehive of discussion into a short yet understandable report. This task is time consuming but LaRee does the job well. Her ability to organize must come from holding down the home fort while Tal is busy coaching.

LaRee has been a member of the Christian Education Community for a number of years. She also shares her faith in God with the children of our church. She teaches Sunday School. Word has it her classes get good treats! She helps each year with the Christmas Program from the early planning stages, to making cue cards, to running off scripts, to dressing wiggly shepherds and angels and so many more tasks to numerous to mention.

The past few years, United Parish Vacation Bible School has participated in a successful joint effort with Our Lady of Good Counsel. LaRee has been co-director every time. She helps with decorations, organizes workers, sees that teachers have all their lesson plans, makes countless phone calls, dons costumes to teach a lesson and overall helps to transform the event into a inviting exciting place for our children to come and learn about God.

LaRee also shows her dedication to our church by lending a helping hand wherever needed. You will see her smiling face at Sunday School picnics, the Harvest Festival, the Annual Chicken Supper, Third Thursday Supper, and many other community events.

LaRee is cheerful, faithful, focused, humble, supportive, patient, and dedicated. She is also a wife and mother and of course the Ultimate Elk Fan!

We are so blessed to have you and your family as member of our United Parish family. Thank you LaRee for everything you do for our church – both seen and unseen.”  
Baumann

By Sherri

LaRee received the Special Mission Recognition Pin from the United Parish Women in July 2005.

## **A TRUE TREASURE**

The United Parish is blessed with so many talented and hard working people and it is hard to honor just a few this year, but I think most would agree that Dawn Boltjes stands out as a true gift .She goes by many names in all the areas she is involved in. She keeps our bills paid and works very hard to do comparisons to get the very best value for our offerings. She spends many many hours on this and brings clear reports to the board meetings and keeps us informed in a very thorough manner. She tries very hard to keep us on task at the meetings and has even been known to bring an alarm clock. For this job we call her our treasurer.

She is seen on most scenes involving the United Parish, whether it be Harvest Festival committee member, working hard and cheerfully at Chicken Supper, co-coordinator on the recent pictorial directory, helping with Sunday school and vacation Bible school, cutting away with the Prayer quilt ministry etc etc. But, sometimes it is hard to see Dawn, like when she is liturgist and can barely peek over the stand. Dawn is generally cheerful and positive and just a treat to be around. For this we call her a valued member of the United Parish.

However, Dawn has another name that she is most thankful for and feels most blessed to be called and that is the Mom of Johnny Boltjes. Thank you many times over Dawn for all you do.

## **UNITED PARISH BUS**

United Parish has for the past month provided a weekly trip to Brookings using our church van and it has been greatly welcomed and appreciated by members in our community who are otherwise unable to go to Brookings for groceries etc.

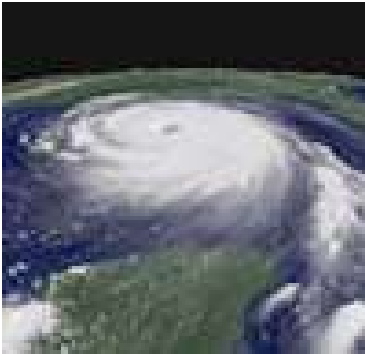
At this point Pastor Daren and Bonnie have been alternating driving on Friday afternoons. To ensure longterm availability and consistency we are looking for volunteers. If you are able to volunteer an afternoon (11:50 – 3:50) and



drive the van, please contact Pastor Daren.

This is such a worthwhile ministry and directly benefitting our community.

### “KATRINA”



I cannot imagine anybody who by now has not heard and seen the devastation and despair hurricane Katrina has brought to the Gulf Coast. Thousands and thousands of people have lost all that we daily take for granted. Loved ones, homes, children, houses, jobs, their neighborhood ...everything that gave them certainty every day.

The images on the news channels are horrific and I find it nearly impossible to really understand how the victims must feel. And then I read that NOAA is predicting that the worst of the hurricane season is still to come.

If you wish to help, please consider donations now, next week, next month. The human, basic, needs are so huge.

I have a great wish; I wish that each church in America, and there are MANY, would build one new home for each victim who has lost theirs and have no insurance. As Christians, it should be second nature to us, no, first nature.

*“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”* Matthew 25:35-26

*“The King will reply: “I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me”.* “  
Matthew 25: 40

PRAY PRAY PRAY for all the people affected so directly by this hurricane. Pray for what your role can be in helping.

If you are unsure which agency to use for your donations you can give a designated offering through the church and we will make sure it gets there.

## GRAPEVINE

- Save your HyVee grocery receipts for cash for the United Parish. HyVee has a program where they will give cash back to your church for shopping at HyVee. All you need to do is save all your grocery receipts from HyVee. After you have about \$ 500.00 or more bundle them neatly together and we will have a drop off place at church.. You must subtract any tobacco, alcohol and the tax from each receipt. After we have collected \$150,000. and we turn them in HyVee will give our church \$1000.00. It may sound like alot of money to get to \$150,000 but many area churches and other organizations have done it many times over. Please remember to bundle them neatly and record the amount of each bundle and to subtract any tobacco, alcohol and the tax from the total. Any questions contact Linda Kampmann or Shirley Hegerfeld.
- Ingathering: This year's ingathering is on September 24<sup>th</sup>. We will leave early in the morning using the church van and be home in the evening. If you wish to, you can bring a homemade or homegrown item for the auction. If you have any questions or wish to ride in the van, please contact Linda or Patty.
- Chicken Supper: will be September 21<sup>st</sup>, 5pm -8pm, in the Community Center. More information will follow over the next few Sundays and in the Bulletin.
- The Church Directory is being put together and we will have another lay-out meeting on Saturday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, at 10pm. Bring a sack lunch if you wish.

THE GAS PRICES FINALLY GOT TO ME!!

