



The United Parish

# *ECHO*



October 2005

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Growing Together in Christ



## Pastor's Desktop

### A Moravian Attitude

“Agree to disagree” is such a load of baloney most of the times I have heard it used. What it really tends to mean is, “I think you're so stupid that I can't get through to you, so I'm giving up and letting you stay wrong.” There is no mutual love, no mutual respect in that attitude, and none in such cliches then either.

How can we ever get together despite our differences then?

In religion, thinking that your understanding is the only right understanding is termed 'fundamentalism'. The kinder, gentler type of individual fundamentalism has been termed 'Sheila-ism' by one researcher. (Absolutely NO connection to anyone in South Dakota!) This name came from one respondent who had given up on agreeing with anyone else's view and decided instead to be cheerfully content with her own personal religion of her own understanding. This is the ultimate result of American 'rugged individualism' and postmodern relative truth.

At the other extreme we find cults and churches with cult-like leaders who demand absolute adherence to the 'official' explanation. Any disagreement is grounds for removal, shunning, or something similar.

In between we find most Christians and churches trying to get along by ignoring differences as much as they can bear it.

Yet, I wonder why we don't look to the example that God gave us. In pure, balanced, complete perfection (holiness), God established a world in which beings capable of loving God, as well as each other, were to live and grow. Since only love that is voluntarily given is genuine love, these beings had to be truly capable of not loving as well. The trouble comes when the beings decide to not love. In order for God to remain holy, there cannot be any non-love in God's character and quite naturally any being not loving must be excluded from fellowship. There was no room to 'agree to disagree'.

How did God solve this? Christ. God came to earth born as a human and tolerated all the abuse and non-love of our fallen nature, but continued to love us anyway. The resurrection of Jesus shows that even death cannot stop God's love.

So how do we apply this in our church and among the churches of Elkton? I like the motto of the Moravian Church. “In essentials, unity;

In nonessentials, liberty; In all things, love.” Let's model this for Elkton, beginning within United Parish. To judge our fellow Christian is to usurp Christ's authority as Lord of all. To withdraw from unity is a form of self-righteous judgment – leading to Sheila-ism.



### **Parish Board Meeting**

The United Parish Board met on Sept 14, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. in the church fellowship hall. Officers in attendance were Chairman Ed Timm, Financial Secretary Donna Magnus, Treasurer Dawn Boltjes, Lay Leader Bev Buller, and Secretary LaRee Farnham. Also attending were Pastor Darren, Linda Kampmann, Marsha Timm, Nancy Wiskur, Carol Styf, and Virginia Fixsen, The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ed. Pastor Daren gave a prayer.

The minutes of the August meeting were read and approved except Marsha Timm was added to the attendee list.

Treasurer Report: Dawn presented the monthly treasurer report. The \$1,050 that is designated for landscaping at the parsonage was transferred to a savings account. Next month Dawn will show it on her report but listed separately under the ending balance. Report approved.

7/31/05 balance	\$4,090.15
August Income	3,247.45

	\$ 7,337.60
August expenses	6,066.41
8/31/05 balance	\$1,271.19

Financial Secretary Report: Donna presented the report, discussion held and approved.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PPR : Bev received a letter from UMC Workshop regarding a new clergy compensation form. A meeting will be held in Aderdeen for instructions on the new form. Decision made not to attend this time.

Trustees: Outdoor painting was completed at the church. The money donated for the paint was very helpful. Nancy Wiskur donated the \$125 rental fee for the scaffolding. She also donated the cupboard that is used for storage for material for the quilts. Roofing work is currently being done on the church.

Christian Ed: LaRee reported that Kickoff for Sunday School picnic went well. Sunday School started Sept. 11. Release time starts October 5th.

Worship: Nothing new. But regarding her janitorial services, we need a new dehumidifier. Dawn will check into seeing if we could get one on clearance since we are getting towards the end of the season.

Mission: On Sept. 18th during the service they will be showing items to be dedicated for Ingathering which is Sept. 24th in Mitchell. Also a prayer quilt will be donated. Neighbors in Need project will be in September.

UPW: They are getting ready for the annual Chicken Supper Sept. 21st at the Community Center.

OLD BUSINESS: Ed reported that the Building Committee is formed: Nancy Wiskur, Dawn Boltjes, Denny Lundgren, Rufus DeZeeuw and Ed Timm. Dawn read a complaint regarding the \$2,400 carpet fund wondering why new carpet hasn't been purchased for the church. Ed will mention in church the building committee is formed and the current carpet fund will be addressed by the committee. Daren updated the Constitution and By Laws with the changes amended made at the congregational meeting Sept. 11th. Suggestion was made to have all the members listed (with addresses) included in the next annual report. The van rides to Brookings has been going well. Soon the Baptist Church will be having a driver with their van. Suggestion was made that the riders should give the driver a contact name and number in case of emergency. Pictorial directory is almost done.

NEW BUSINESS: It was noticed that on the sign located in Norman's Garden says Methodist church, not United Parish. The Elkton Community Club will be told at their next meeting.

Meeting adjourned. The next board meeting will be on Wed. October 12 at 7:30 p.m.

Sec. LaRee Farnham



## **UNITED PARISH CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

**SPECIAL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 11, 2005**

**RE: Proposed changes to the Constitution and By-Laws of the United**

Parish Church.

Dawn Boltjes made a motion to accept changes on Article 4 & 7. Discussion held. Marsha Timm seconded it. Motion carried.

Dawn suggested that we vote to approve all the rest of the articles. Motion made by Virginia Fixson; seconded by Nancy Wiskur. No discussion. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourn.

### **UPW**

The UPW met on Sept. 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm in the church dining room.

The program “A Call to Prayer” (Challenges & Encouragement) was given by Beth Holm.

Pres. Linda called the meeting to order and for devotions she read “Woman to Woman Encouragement.”

The purpose was read and 15 members answered the roll call – Bring Something for the Ingathering.

The secretary's reports for July and August were read and approved with the notation that the money Marsha got for the books were books for the church library.

The treasurer's reports for July and August were read and approved. The balance at the end of August was \$1,447.63. There were no bills.

For correspondence we received Thank You for the Sr. Luncheon from the class of 2005; for the campership from John Boltjes; for serving the Larry Boltjes funeral from Dawn and from Gert & Rudy for all the cards & prayers at the loss of Rudy's sister. We also received a letter from Karen-Marie (great as usual).

In July a get well card was sent to Dave DeMarteleare and in August get well cards were sent to Kate, Gert, Virginia, and Cal. In August a sympathy card was sent to the Herb Gries family and in September a sympathy card was sent to the family of Larry Boltjes.

Donna Magnus reported that 90 were served at the Larry Boltjes funeral.

Marsha brought the new books for the church library and told us a little about them.

Nothing new on Missions.

The Ingathering will be September 24<sup>th</sup>. We will be taking the church van and will leave from the church at 7am.

The Chicken Supper will be held on September 21<sup>st</sup>. Members were asked to sign up for jobs. Cards will be given out on Sunday.

We will be serving the reception for the wedding of Jerry Wiskur on September 20<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. Volunteers are Dawn, Donna, Gert, Virginia, Thelma, Linda, and Bev.

The District meeting will be held on September 17<sup>th</sup> at Sioux Falls First.

Next month will be the election of Officers. The nominating committee needs to meet.

The Chet Johnson's house burned down. It was suggested that we give a \$50 monetary donation. The motion was made by Dawn, seconded by Marsha and carried.

Marsha said that our Shepherdess has stomach cancer and thought we should send a card. Linda will send a card from the UPW.

Katrina's victims are in need of blankets. A special offering will taken on Sunday Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>.

Gert reminded us of the Aurora Chicken Supper on September 8<sup>th</sup> and the Lake Benton's Chicken Supper on September 14<sup>th</sup>.

Happy Birthday was sung for the September birthdays.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Our next meeting will be October 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm.

Hostesses were Dawn Boltjes and Marsha timm.

Secretary

Beverly Buller

## **PRAYER QUILT MINISTRY**

There is a lot of fabric still to be cut in 4 or 6 inch squares so if you are interested and have a bit of spare time, go ahead and pick up a template and material. They are located in the cupboard in the basement

by the kitchen. There are also lots of already cut squares, so if you would rather sew, please pick of ready squares and piece together. If you have any questions where things are just call Bev.

We will meet again on Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup> at 2:00pm We will be starting making quilts for the hurricane victims, so come out and spent a fun afternoon cutting and piecing together much needed quilts. We can use as much help as you can give. Bring a pair of scissors if you wish to cut squares.

If you cannot join us on that Saturday, keep praying for the ministry and all the people who have already received a prayer quilt.

### Chicken Supper 2005



What do you get when you have a roomful of great cooks, lots of food and several hundred hungry people???? You get a very successful chicken supper and that is what we had again this year.

We were able to feed around 400 people. Many people turned out for a great meal and a fun time of visiting friends. The community center certainly lends itself to



the success of the supper. The committee truly wants to thank all those who helped in whatever way you could. Everyone showed up when asked and a few worked jobs that they weren't even asked to work. That is what makes the tasks much easier and pleasant and for this we thank you!!!!!!

Bev Buller, Sherry Bauman and Linda Kampmann

**INGATHERING**



On Sept 24, 2005 Bonnie Junker, Marsha Timm, Gert DeZeeuw , Donna Magnus, Carol Styf, Linda Kampmann, Virginia Fixsen and Bev Buller left Elkton about 7am and drove in rain the two hour trip to Dakota Wesleyan Univ in Mitchell,SD to attend the Bishop's Ingathering. Patty DeZeeuw joined us there for the afternoon. We brought with us kits and blankets and quilts and other items to donate and the United Parish offerings raised about \$1500.00 toward the day. We were told that over 651 items were donated to the silent auction and wonderful handmade quilts and afghan lined the walls for the big auction, along with a hand made coffee table and a wonderful oak bookcase. The day is fun and inspiring for those attending. Such beautiful items are painstakingly made and donated with love for the cause of easing world hunger. The final total wasn't available when we left but from the kits and money donations they had over \$184,000. That does not count any of the auction items though. Bev Lytle had donated one of her beautiful one of a kind quilts and it sold for nearly \$500.00. This money is divided up 3 ways. Of the total 50 % goes to world hunger organizations and then 25% stays in the Dakotas for projects here to help those in need. The other 25% goes to the Heifer project. It is a humbling day and we are thankful for the experience. The 2006 Ingathering is Sept 26, 2006, so mark that date on your calendar and also, start sewing, quilting, crocheting and you can also start putting together your kits for health, sewing, or school.

### **FUN TIME AT UNITED PARISH**

Do you like Lefse?? Are you interested in learning how to make Lefse? Then come to the church (basement) on October 22 at 2:00pm and join us in a fun afternoon learning and making Lefse. Please let us know if you are planning on coming so we can plan how many to prepare for. Call Bev Buller at 542-3611.

### **DOWN AT THE RIVER**

A minister was completing a temperance sermon. With great emphasis he said, "If I had all the beer in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river."

With even greater emphasis he said, "And if I had all the wine in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river." And then finally, shaking his fist in the air, he said, "And if I had all the whiskey in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river.

Sermon complete, he sat down.

The song leader stood very cautiously and announced with a smile, nearly laughing, "For our closing song, let us sing Hymn #365, "Shall We Gather at the River."

## **TOUR GROUPS**

Tourist after tourist come through the "great" churches in the world: the St. Peter Basilica, The Notre Dame, The Great Dome in Strassbourg, and so forth. Busloads of people come through and listen to the tour guide's speech. When he sees the two people praying in the pews, he lowers his voice as he is telling the group about the great people who built the building, painted the walls, the wars it withstood and all who are buried underneath in the catacombs. A young mother loses her temper with her young son who would much rather have stayed at the hotel pool. She grasps him firmly by the arm and takes him outside to avoid more embarrassment. Another family is trying to explain to their teenage daughter why it is an important stop on their journey; she would rather have been shopping. She does not see the importance of the old building with its old statues and whispering people. She rolls her eyes in sheer contempt. Her parents just ignore her and try to look like they are enjoying the tour, understanding. One of the two people in the pew leaves. She just cannot concentrate with all this disturbance and she throws a cross glance at the tourgroup. The old man is still on his knees, deep in prayer. No tour group is going to break his time with God.

The group walks further in the huge church and the droning of the rehearsed speech from the tour guide fades. Another group is already walking through the front doors “oohing” and “ahhing”, more parents telling their kids to be quiet because “we are in a church!!” and more kids failing to understand why.....why to be respectful, why church is important. After all, it is just an old building. Nothing ever happens there. Oh well, 1 hour, and then we can go back to the shopping area, or pool, or, or, or... well, the fun part of the trip. One person runs over and quickly lights a candle, because isn't that what you do when you are in church.

The first group is finally done, and quickly snapshots are taken of the family in front of the church, before leaving. A photo for in the album so they later can show all their friends that they really were there, after all, how are you else going to prove that you, for a brief moment in the long history of the church, were there. For the old man, it is time with God, a real and lasting relationship. For the tour guide, is just a paycheck. For the ones who left it is a story of how other people's bad behavior made them leave.

Are you a tourist? The tour guide? The woman leaving because of the child, or the one leaving because of the group? Or the old man who would let nobody interrupt his time with God and use anybody or anything as an excuse to leave? What is your proof that you've been there?