



The United Parish
ECHO



February 2006

Elkton United Parish Church 605-542-7102
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Growing Together in Christ

**GREATER LOVE HAS NO ONE THAN THIS,
THAT HE LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS
FRIENDS.**

(John 15:13)



Pastor's Desktop

What is healthy love?

Everyone seems to get the 'lust is not love' lecture at some point in their life, so that is not what we will focus on here. No, I am speaking of love.

Some of you may have also heard the explanation from a preacher about the four different Greek words for love and the significant differences, but I'm not even going into that.

Then there is the 'love is not just an emotion, but an act of the will' explanation. Although that is a good one, maybe we will cover it another time.

Nope, nothing deeply theological this month - just a second look at what we would all tend to use the English word love for - the intense emotional bond between two people.

So, what is healthy love?

It is often simple to identify unhealthy love: possessiveness, obsession, over-dependency, controlling, self-abasing - all examples of clearly unhealthy love.

But Jesus clearly said that love is the greatest commandment when answering the lawyers' challenge. Paul goes on to say that love is the greatest of the eternal three: faith, hope and love. Christ's disciples are to be identified by the fact that they love one another. Love is clearly central to Christian life, but only healthy love.

In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul writes extensively about what love is. I encourage you to read it carefully. The greatest example of love is Christ's willing suffering and death for our sake. Was that really healthy?

Healthy love is investing your very self in the betterment of another. In other words, love always builds up the one loved. Jesus could willingly give up his life on the cross, because he knew it would stand as an absolute sign of love, and yet because of his eternal life we would not be left without his presence. Before you think that Jesus was some wimpy pushover that 'just loves everyone', consider the cost of his love in going through the crucifixion.

Healthy love does not always feel good. Sometimes it takes us down a difficult road, but the point is that this road is always takes us closer to God, and always brings some eternal benefit. Jesus showed love not only by forgiving the adulterous woman caught in the act, but also by saying "Get thee behind me Satan" to Peter. Jesus showed God's love not only by healing many people, but also by allowing Lazarus to die. Healthy love is never mean, but it sure can hurt.

Healthy love has the long term good in mind. A quick, 'feel-good', warm fuzzy happiness does not tend to last long. We all know that. But just like kids always want candy, it is what we so often are looking for from God and his body on earth - the church. Healthy love gives us emotional spinach. It may not be what we want, but it is what we truly need. As they grow into adults, children grow into the realization that their parents loved them by making them eat mostly healthy food, and allowing some candy. Don't you think that upon arrival in the next life, you and I will say, "Thank you God for making me endure the tough lessons of love, and allowing me some happiness."

Now, let's love God and one another.

Parish Board Meeting

The United Parish Board met on January 11, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the church fellowship hall. Officers in attendance were Chairman Ed Timm, Financial Secretary Donna Magnus, Treasurer Dawn Boltjes, and Secretary LaRee Farnham. Also attending were Pastor Darren, Carol Styf, Marsha Timm, and Virginia Fixsen, The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ed. Pastor Darren gave a reading from the Bible.

The minutes of the December meeting were read and approved.

Treasurer Report: Dawn presented the monthly treasurer report and was approved.

Beginning Balance 11/30/05	\$< 29.11>
Dec. Income	3,790.29
Transfers	5,236.39
	\$8,997.57
Dec. Expenses	<7,434.36>
Ending Balance 12/31/05	\$1,563.21

Landscaping Account \$1,053.47 (\$1.97 interest added)

Financial Secretary Report: Donna presented the monthly report and was approved. This report will serve as the report for the annual meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PPR : No report

Trustees: The fire extinguishers were inspected. Gene at Cenex cleaned the furnace and put in new filters.

Christian Ed: We had many nice comments about the Sunday School Christmas Program.

Worship: Ann Aker has taken over the responsibility of arranging organists for Worship service.

Mission: Dawn will put a thank you to the community in the newspaper for those donating items for the Angel Tree.

UPW: For February, they will be putting Valentines together. All the residents of Cozy Corner will get one. For the next meeting instead of the normal roll call, the ladies are ask to donate a paper or health product to go the Food Pantry in Flandreau.

BUILDING COMMITTEE: They will be having a meeting soon to discuss location sites.

OLD BUSINESS: Marsha asked about the status of the pictorial directories. Pastor Darren reported a problem with the software version but he has a solution to the format and will be sending out the CD's soon.

NEW BUSINESS: Discussion on the two open officer positions to be filled at the annual congregational meeting on January 29th. LaRee, on behalf of the nominating committee, has been making several calls. Snacks and beverages will be served during the meeting. Pastor Darren will be sharing information he received from the UCC and UCM endorsing homosexual marriages.

Meeting adjourned with The Lord's Prayer. The next board meeting will be on Wed. Feb. 8th at 7:00 p.m.

Sec. LaRee Farnham

UPW

The UPW met January 4th @ 7:30m pm in the church dining room.

The pledge service program “Renaissance thru Peace” was presented by Marsha Timm.

Pres. Linda called the meeting to order. A devotion from Romans was read about the gift God has given us and giving our best to the Master.

The purpose was read. 13 members answered the roll call by bringing a box of Kleenex for the Food Pantry.

The secretary's report was read and approved. The treasurer's report was read and approved. Balance Jan. 1st \$1,610.67. There is a bill at the locker.

We received notes from Ruth Becker and Rev. Jean. Thank you's were received from the FCCLA Alumni for the Tour of Tables donations, for the Christmas party invite from Gen Sportel, and for the prayer quilt from Shirley and Bud Lundgren.

Get well cards were sent to Shirley Lundgren, Rudy DeZeeuw, Eva Williams, and John France.

There were no funerals.

For the reading program we were asked to read – read – read.

We helped with Bingo at Cozy Corner.

We were reminded to turn our 2005 Thank Offering in to Ann.

Linda passed out a handout showing what each unit gave in 2005 to the different missions.

The Thank Offering still needs to be sent in.

Installations of Officers by Gertrude.

The dates in the 2006 program both were reviewed and corrections noted.

Love packages will be assembled next month. There are 14 names on the list (includes residents at Cozy Corner).

A new project for the UPW will be a Soup & Sandwich Supper to be held in Feb. There will be a free will donation which will go to the camperships.

Donna Magnus needs addresses for the Valentines cards.

Gert asked that we go through the Nativity sets and do something with the broken sets. She also asked about the carpet squares in the closet.

Jan. birthdays and anniversaries were acknowledged.

Linda passed out new copies of what is needed for the kits for the Ingathering.

Our next meeting will be Feb. 1st.

The meeting adjourned, with the Lord's Prayer.

Hostesses were Linda Kampmann and Bev Buller. (Patty filled in for Bev.).

Secretary

Patty for Bev Buller

Grape Vine

The mitten tree was decorated so pretty with several dozens gloves, mittens, as well as warm hat and scarves and even some warm knitted slippers. I wish we had taken a picture before we dismantled it. The generosity of the church and community always overwhelms us. Many of these items were homemade and so warm and comfy looking. A large bag of gloves and hats etc were taken to the school and they were received with great appreciation. The balance of the warm outerwear was boxed up and donated to Children of the Harvest. This was a group that Pastor Daren had read about that were actually requesting these items. So again, thanks a million for caring.

Please keep saving the HyVee receipts, the box is in the entry way at the church. If you have any questions please contact Linda Kampmann or Shirley Hegerfeld.

We need the crochet pieces turned in by the end of Feb so they can get sent to the Banquet.

There are new lists out for the UMCOR kits (health, school, sewing, and layette kits) in the back. Please start thinking about these kits. It may seem like a long time from now that they need to be ready, but as we all know time goes fast and the more we can get done, the more people can benefit from your help. If you have any questions or want to supply materials or part of a kit, please contact Linda Kampmann.

Thank you to Don & Norma Krogman who sponsored this month's Echo in honor of their 45th Wedding Anniversary (December 25, 2005)!!