

The United Parish  
*ECHO*

March 2006

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Growing Together in Christ



## Pastor's Desktop

The world is so full of standards to measure up to that God's unconditional love does not usually make sense to natural understanding. In order to be paid at work, efforts have to meet a certain standard. People tend to be friends with others based on what treatment is received. Often help is only available to the degree that there is some possibility of reciprocation. This is the natural order of things and tends to seem good because it makes sense. After all, who would want to pay full price for a poorly made product? Who in their right mind would continually accept mistreatment and call the offender a 'friend'. And even while people will insist that help is offered with no strings attached, isn't there an expectation that 'what goes around, comes around' in the back of the mind?

By the world's standards God is crazy. God insists that we give to those who cannot repay. God *commands* us to love our enemy. Jesus tells a parable of paying all no matter how much or little work they did that day, and expects us to see that as the reasonable action of a generous God.

Those who object that the world cannot work the way the Bible teaches are correct. The world does not return to God and therefore cannot successfully carry it out. God's way requires all involved to love selflessly, to give generously out of what we are given, and to reward willingness rather than ability. The selfishness, greed, and legalism of a fallen world interfere with those methods of operating.

So, do we give up, shrug our shoulders and say, "Well, I guess we have to wait until Christ returns, 'cause it ain't happenin' in our lifetime."

Heavens, no!

Every time you or I find ourselves demanding rights instead of giving grace, every time we hang on to and protect what is ours instead of giving what is God's, every time you or I get upset about what is not being done right – Yes!, think of Christ – but of how much grace, love and mercy he has given us, and how that can enable us to behave more like Jesus.

It is sad how many Christians go around talking about love and forgiveness, and yet judging and condemning at the same time. God doesn't want us to just talk like Christ, we are to BE like Christ. With God's help, it is possible to grow more and more like him, but it does take trials to get there. Each trial is an opportunity to choose actions and learn thoughts that are more like Jesus and less like our sinful nature.

So, specifically:

- How did you respond to mistakes made in the past at United Parish?
- What judgments have you made about our public servants (City Council, School Board, Legislators, President, and any others)?

- How do you treat church members who have different political, or even theological, viewpoints?

There is a common saying, "You are either part of the problem or part of the solution." The world system does not work and cannot endure. As unnatural as God's approach is, it is the only thing that is eternal. Dare to trust his way and respond like Christ.

In Christ's service,  
Pastor Daren

### **Parish Board Meeting**

The United Parish Board met on February 8, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the church fellowship hall. Officers in attendance were Chairperson Bev Buller, Lay Leader Ed Timm, Financial Secretary Donna Magnus, and Treasurer Dawn Boltjes. Also attending were Pastor Daren, Linda Kampmann, Carol Styf, Marsha Timm, Virginia Fixsen, and LaRee Farnham taking the minutes in place of Carrie Thompson, Secretary. The meeting was called to order by the chairperson. Pastor Daren gave an opening prayer.

The minutes of the January meeting were read and approved with two changes. Instead of Valentines, UPW will put together "love packages" in February. Under Missions, donation of items were for the Mitten Tree, not Angel Tree.

Treasurer Report: Dawn presented the monthly treasurer report and was approved. We have some members that make a yearly donation so that is a primary reason why January income is higher compared to other months.

Beginning Balance 12/31/05	\$1,563.21
Jan. Income	6,422.25
	\$7,985.46
Jan. Expenses	<4,929.10>
Ending Balance 1/31/06	\$3,056.36

Landscaping Account \$1,053.47

Financial Secretary Report: Donna presented the monthly report and was approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PPR : Nothing to report

Trustees: Nothing new

Christian Ed: The One Great Hour of Sharing Carnival will take place on March 26th at the church.

Worship: Marsha Timm will take Gertrude DeZeeuw's place as chairperson.

Mission: Linda said rectangle crochet squares are needed for their project. They will be helping with the carnival on March 26th.

UPW: They will be delivering the rest of the Love Packages to Cozy Corner and other places. A new event they will start Feb 12th is to have coffee/fellowship before church once a month at 8:30 a.m. Once Sunday School is done for the summer, it will be held after church and probably more than once a month. Also they will give a report during church service once a month to explain the activities and purpose of the UPW. In their meeting, it was suggested to have all the "shut ins" names in a monthly drawing and then members of UPW who have time, pledge to visit that person that month.

Historian: Marsha will be typing the additional names to the annual historian report and put it in the Echo.

Building Committee: They are continuing to research and gather information on location sites.

Stewardship/Finance: The letter that Dawn Boltjes read in church Feb 5th was handed out after church and will be mailed out to those not in attendance.

OLD BUSINESS: The pictorial CD was sent out and they have received it per Pastor Daren.

NEW BUSINESS: Discussion was held on the forming of the 2006 Committees. Bev suggested that we take a look at the new list and list of members from the past. It was also suggested to have youth included in the committees. Other new business was letters Dawn received. One was from Affiliated Midwest Food regarding a contribution program to educational non-profit organizations. Not sure what this all about so Dawn will check into it with Greg at Maynards in town.

Dawn received a letter from the UCC SD Conference regarding pledging. No apportionments were figured in to the 2006 Budget. Also received was a notice from Upper Room/Hurricane Relief. They have new "Prayers for Hope" booklets available for disaster victims. Linda said the UPW may be interested in getting these. Last item from Dawn – she donated \$15.00 to the church to pay for a Church Treasurer/Bookkeeper Workshop in Sioux Falls she will be attending.

Meeting adjourned with The Lord's Prayer. The next board meeting will be on Tues. March 7th at 7:00 p.m. because Wed. March 8th is Lenten Service.

LaRee Farnham

### **United Parish Annual Meeting – January 29, 2006**

The annual meeting with 22 attendees was called to order by Chairman Ed Timm. Pastor Daren gave the opening prayer.

LaRee Farnham, Secretary, read the minutes from the 2005 Annual Meeting and were approved.

Donna Magnus, Finance Secretary, presented the Annual Finance Report. She noted that we are out of funds to transfer to the checking account to pay for monthly expenses. All the CD's that are not designated for something special were cashed in. A contribution of \$9,000 donated recently was designated for the Building Fund. Also noted that no apportionments were given last year. Finance report approved.

Dawn Boltjes, Treasurer, had previously handed out the 2005 Income & Expenses Report. Dawn commented that it has been a challenging year but the Lord will provide one way or another. They are in the beginning stages of a Stewardship Drive which should help. Discussion was held on Sunday givings and more importantly, we need to find ways to encourage more people to come and be involved.

Committee reports were given.

Chairman Report – by Ed Timm

Pastor Parish Relations Committee: by Bev Buller

Trustees: by Nancy Wiskur. Nancy also commented that the newly formed Building Committee would meet every second Sunday of the month after church service.

Christian Ed: by Sherry Bauman

Worship Report – by Nancy Wiskur. Note: Gertrude DeZeeuw has resigned.

Mission Report & UPW - by Linda Kampmann. Bev Buller, secretary for the UPW wrote the review.

Historian Report – by Marsha Timm

Pastor Report – by Daren Junker

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: 2006 Budget was reviewed. Nancy Wiskur made a motion to approve the budget as is; Sherry Bauman seconded it; all in favor; motion carried.

Election of Officers: LaRee made the following nomination for the open officer position: Carrie Thompson for Secretary and she had previously accepted. Tal Farnham made the motion to vote for Carrie as Secretary; Dawn Boltjes seconded it; all in favor; motion carried. The other position open is for chairperson and LaRee has made several calls but no one accepted. Ed Timm's term has expired and he expressed that he would like to have someone else be chairperson. Bev Buller made a proposition to Ed. If she resigned her current position as lay leader, she could become the chairperson as long as Ed would finish Bev's term (1 year) as Lay Leader. Nancy Wiskur made a motion for Bev as the new chairperson; Marsha Timm seconded it; all in favor; motion carried. Bev made a motion to nominate Ed to fill out the one-year term as lay leader; seconded by Tal. All in favor; motion carried.

Daren asked about having both hymnals out in the pews rather than keep swapping them every quarter. The advantage is to have easy accessibility to both. We will put out both and give it a try.

Daren discussed the van insurance policy for rollovers. All drivers are recommended to have training by the NHTSA Advisory. There is a video to watch and a form to sign. Motion by Linda Kampmann to accept this; seconded by Marsha Timm; all in favor; motion carried.

Daren received a document that says the UCC endorses same sex marriages. Daren does not support this and wanted to know our feelings. Discussion was held and consensus is that even though we want everyone to feel welcome to attend our church, we do not support same sex marriages.

Daren encouraged us with the new committees being formed for 2006 that we think of having youth on every committee.

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

Sec. LaRee Farnham

ADDITIONS TO 2005 UNITED PARISH HISTORY PAGE of the ANNUAL REPORT

Baptisms: Laurissa Thomas

Funerals: Herb Gries

Weddings: Jennifer Wiskur and David Nordmeyer

### **UPW**

The UPW met on Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>. @7:30 pm in the church dining room.

Linda called the meeting to order and for devotions she read an email using TV commercials to communicate ideas about God.

The purpose was read by 18 members.

Toothbrushes were brought for the Food Pantry.

The secretary's report was read and approved.

The treasurer's report was read and approved. The balance at the end of January was \$1,426.12. There were no bills.

A get well card was sent to Dick Buller.

There were no funerals.

Marsha reported that we didn't add any new books to the library in 2004 – we did get some new ones in 2005.

For Missions Dawn reported that 10 boxes of Kleenex were brought in January for the Food Pantry. She also introduced a new project "Adopt a Shut-In". Each month you would draw the name of a shut-in and make a point of visiting them sometime during the month. This program will begin in March.

The painting of the basement was tabled till spring because the walls are too cold to paint.

Envelopes for the "Pledge to Missions" were brought and given to those who weren't at the January meeting.

The soup & sandwich supper will be held on March 5<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 – 7:30 pm. Bonnie, Patty, Dawn, Virginia, and Karen-Marie volunteered to be on the committee. There will be a free will offering that will be designated to camperships. We will again be giving a free campership to someone outside of our church. Marsha reminded us of the "Mom's take 5" camp at Lake Ponsett which will be held Memorial weekend.

We put together 16 Love Packages. These were delivered to Bud & Shirley Lundgren, Milt Janssen, Bob H., Cal Steen, Don Krogman, Alice McMahon, Virginia Holmlund, Ella Mae Logan, Harold Lee, Rudy DeZeeuw, Wes Landgren, Bob Higgins, Joan Erks, Don Myers, Ruth Willert, and June Mulder.

On March 16<sup>th</sup> we will be serving the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday Supper. A committee will be chosen at our next meeting.

In March the Sunday School will be hosting the One Great Hour of Sharing Carnival. Sherry will be needing some help with this.

Linda and Patty led us in a discussion of the purpose of the UPW. The purpose was dissected into parts and we tried to determine if we were living up to what it says. Very thought provoking.

Once a month we will be serving coffee before church while Sunday school is still in session and after church when Sunday school is done for the summer. A free will offering will be taken to be used for the Youth Program in our church.

Happy Birthday was sung to Lil Anderson and Deanna Lundgren. The other February birthdays were acknowledged.

Our meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday February 28<sup>th</sup> (due to the beginning of Lent) at 7:30 pm.

Hostesses were Deanna Lundgren and Georgianna Jensen.

Secretary Beverly Buller

PS The Food Pantry would like to have someone from Elkton to be on their board. They meet every other month (Tuesday @ 4:00 pm). Dawn will check into this.

## **Grape Vine**

March 5, 2006 UPW sponsored Soup and Sandwich supper in the church basement. We will serve from 5:30-7:30. Free will offering to benefit our youth programs and camperships. Mark your calendar to enjoy a fine meal and great fellowship.

The Quilt Ministries wants to thank those wonderful people who donated quilt batting and Fiskar scissors this past month. As our ministry grows it is very helpful to have the right equipment. And a special thanks to everyone who cuts and sews the quilt tops, especially Arlyne Janssen for the many many tops she has put together and also to Virginia and Evelyn Mueller who cut and cut our squares. That is just to name a few, we have so many dedicated helpers.

One Great Hour of Sharing Carnival (sponsored by United Parish Sunday School) Sunday, March 26, 2006 from 10:30-11:30 am at the church. (no Sunday School) There will be GAME BOOTHS provided by the Sunday School classes, but anyone is welcome to sponsor a booth. There will be BAKED GOODS BINGO upstairs. Each person playing: please bring 2 plates of 6 muffins or cupcakes for prizes. (When you get a Bingo, you win a plate of muffins or cupcakes) There will be a SILENT AUCTION. We are asking for donations of items in good condition for silent auction tables, such as baked goods, craft items, etc. There will be a box at the back of the church for donations. There will be rolls, coffee and juice available.

If you have any questions, please contact Sherry Bauman at 542-3041.

\*One Great Hour of Sharing is a special mission offering used to support programs from both UCC and Methodist conferences. Profits from our one hour carnival will be shared between both conferences.

The second Sunday of every month will be our Before Church Coffee. Our next one will be on March 12th beginning at 8:30pm.

UPW is Feb 28, 2006. ( Tuesday). This is our March meeting. Hostesses Nancy Wiskur and Shirley Hegerfeld. Program " A Time for Peace and Joy", Pastor Daren. Food Pantry donation is a tube of toothpaste

Thank you to Ray and Gen Sportel for sponsoring this months Echo. If you wish to sponsor a month's issue in honor of someone or in memory of someone, please contact Dawn Boltjes.

Did you see in the news that the A.C.L.U. doesn't want any crosses on Federal property?

Crosses on Federal Property???



*Arlington National Cemetery*

Let them try and remove these. At what point do we say, enough is enough?