

The United Parish
ECHO

April 2006

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



Pastor's Desktop

On occasion I will take the opportunity to share the answer to a question from the congregation in this column. Most of the time, such questions are just answered individually, or through the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, but when it seems that it is a question that several people may have, then it makes sense to make sure the answer is widely available. One such question has come up, as reported in the Parish Board minutes.

Our question this month is about children and communion. There is well-founded concern among many people in the congregation about what is the role of children at the Lord's Table.

While for each person this may be a simple question with a straightforward answer, for United Parish it is not so simple – partly because we have a dual heritage, and partly because our openness and welcome enable us to function as a community church. Both of these things mean that the answer might be different for different attendees at United Parish.

Some have a conservative understanding of communion and confirmation. This viewpoint holds that anyone who wishes to partake in communion must have had substantial training in Christian doctrines and after this confirmed their infant baptism as their own expression of Christian faith. The value of this position is that confirmands hold communion in deep respect as a way in which God's grace is extended to those who have intelligently accepted it.

Another perspective sees communion as an opportunity to encounter Christ in a spiritual manner. This encounter can produce profound spiritual growth even in someone who does not necessarily understand what is going on. Communion has even, historically, been advocated as a 'converting ordinance' because of this encounter. The value of this position is that it recognizes the sovereign action of God in communion and helps to avoid 'magical thinking' – that is, that a simple, physical act can cause God to do something. It preserves the right of God to reach out spiritually to anyone regardless of age or understanding.

Finally, there is the simple fact that we offer an open communion. In our extending of Christ's invitation to the table, we state that anyone in relationship with Christ is encouraged to participate. Some Christian traditions include the possibility for people younger than a traditional confirmation age to already have a depth of faith and relationship that would 'require' participation in communion.

When we realize the wide variety that may be validly present in our worshiping congregation, it becomes apparent that there will be some significant differences in how children might participate in communion. As the pastor for such a mixed group, I have to rely on the judgment of parents. If they bring their children for-

ward, I can give a blessing, or communion, as the parents indicate with a nod one way or another. In all cases there will be a smile when people come forward, because as you may have seen already – I firmly believe that the Lord's Supper is a foretaste of the celebratory wedding feast to come. And, there is no better place to let a welcome be genuine, even to those who understand things differently from ourselves, than at the supper table.

In any case, it is worth serious reflection before anyone of any age partakes of communion, since the Bible gives us some serious warnings about partaking 'unworthily'. Since it is the Lord's Table and we are communing with Christ, and with one another in the name of Christ, approaching this ordinance lightly may be about the same as taking the Lord's name in vain.

In Christ's service,
Pastor Daren

United Parish Board Meeting

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

The minutes of the February meeting were read and approved with one change. The contact person at Maynard's for information about the contribution program to educational non-profit organizations through Affiliated Midwest Food is Gary and not Greg.

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

Beginning Balance 01/31/06	\$3056.36
February Income	4682.11
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\$7,738.47	
February Expenses	<4,662.54>

Ending Balance 02/28/06

\$3,075.93

There are still some health insurances to be paid and deducted at the end of the month.

Landscaping Account \$1053.47

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

Committee Members and Reports

Pastor-Parish Relations: Nothing to report.

Members: Ed Timm, chairperson, Bruce Holm, Virginia Fixsen.

Trustees: Will find someone with a pick-up to collect and take care of fallen branches around church and at Peace Church lot.

Members: Nancy Wiskur- contact person, Dawn Boltjes, Troy Wiskur, Dennis Lundgren, Susan Sudtelgte.

Christian Ed: The One Great Hour of Sharing Carnival committee met are getting things lined up for the event on March 26th.

Members: Bonnie Junker- chairperson, LaRee Farnham, Sherry Bauman, Katie Timm, Amber Doop, Georgianna Jensen.

Worship: Met on 2/24/06 and divided responsibilities between members. Discussed ideas for Lenten Services with Pastor Daren.

Members: Marsha Timm- chairperson, Nancy Wiskur, Thelma Brandt, Ann Aaker, Cassie Timm, Carrie Thompson.

Missions: The crocheted pieces needed for their project are finished and need to be delivered.

Members: Linda Kampmann- chairperson, Virginia Fixsen, Patty DeZeeuw.

UPW

Names of the “shut ins” have been drawn and will be visited as planned. Third Thursday Supper will be March 16th from 5p.m. to 7p.m. Money was donated towards the “Prayers for Hope” booklets for disaster victims. Donation was made to the “Tree of Life Ministries” for their washer and dryer project at the Rosebud Reservation. The Soup and Sandwich Night held on March 5th had a GREAT turn out!!!

Historian: Marsha made corrections and started the new report with , unfortunately, two funerals. (And now three.)

Building Committee: Meet 2nd Sunday each month. Large lot on north end of town has been “taken off The Block” for liability issues. Committee will meet again on the 12th.

Members: Nancy Wiskur- contact person, Ed Timm, Dawn Boltjes, Rufus DeZeeuw, Dennis Lundgren.

Membership (Welcoming): Nothing to report.

Members: Nancy Wiskur, Amber Doop, Susan Sudtelgte, Tal or LaRee Farnham.

Stewardship/Finance: Nothing new.

Members: Dawn Boltjes, Bruce Kinner, Donna Magnus.

Old Business

Pictorial CD is in progress according to Pastor Daren.

Bev read old and new committee members list for each committee. Lots of new names- great to see!!

New Business

Donna was contacted by a Mrs. Kordhour. She was inquiring about Peace Church furnishings that her husband’s great grandfather had a hand in making. She was interested in purchasing a pew. Someone will check to see if any are available.

Letter from Salem Reformed Church in Menno was received. They are choosing to leave the Two Rivers Assoc. due to the stand on supporting same sex marriages.

Pastor went over a sheet on “Where does our Ministry stand?”, “What should we be working for?”, “What do we want for our church?”. Our church has the ability to be a “Pastoral Church” with membership being 50-150 . We already have many families who help and contribute. We are also known to help and love one another even when we don’t always agree.

Donna was approached about letting our kids go up to have communion. It was discussed and Pastor Daren will be addressing this matter in his part of the Echo.

There will be a Bridal Shower at the church on April 8th for Amber Doop, their wedding is to be held on May 6th. Quilt day to be moved to April 15th.

Meeting adjourned with The Lord’s Prayer. The next board meeting will be on Wed. April 12th at 7p.m.

Carrie Thompson

UPW Meeting

The UPW met on Feb. 28th at 7:30 pm in the church dining room.

Pastor Daren presented the program Lent/Easter – A Time for Peace & Joy.

The meeting was called to order and in honor of Evelyn Stuefen, Linda read “A Native American View of Death”.

The purpose was read by 18 members.

Tubes of toothpaste were brought for the Food Pantry.

The secretary's report was read and approved.

There was no treasurer's report. One bill was brought by Gert.

We received thank-you's for love packages from Gert & Rudy, Cal, and Harold Lee (Marsha's dad). Arlene thanked us for Milt's. Irma Ellis sent us \$20 to be used for the Ingathering kits. Donna thanked us for Don's Prayer Quilt . We also received a thank you from the Ingathering for our donation..

Get-well cards were sent to Bud Lundgren, Evelyn Stuefen, and Don Magnus. Sympathy cards were sent to Ray Sportel (for the loss of his brother) and the Evelyn Stuefen family.

100 were served at the Evelyn Stuefen family (2/27).

Dawn reported the Food Pantry would like someone from the community to be on their board. She asked for any ideas for a representative. Jenny Nordmeyer will deliver our Food Pantry items each month – she works in Flandreau on Thursdays. Pastor Daren also received a request for funds from the Upper Room. \$25 will provide 50 prayer books for Katrina victims or \$37.50 will provide 50 issues of The Upper Room to damaged churches. Linda made the motion to donate \$25 for the Prayer books, Sherry seconded the motion, motion carried.

The 3rd Thursday Supper will be on March 16th. Linda, Sherry, and Nancy volunteered to be on the committee.

We will be serving coffee following Lenten Services. Bev and Thelma volunteered for Ash Wednesday. A sign up sheet will be left on the table in the dining room.

Kate will be in charge of morning coffee on March 12th and Shirley Hegerfeld will be in charge on April 9th.

The One Great Hour of Sharing Carnival will be held on March 26th. Sherry said there will be a silent auction and asked that we bring baked goods, crafts items, etc. (make sure items are in good condition). Please bring the items to the church by Saturday the 25th if possible.

Donna brought some items from the Peace Church for us to see and wanted to know where we should keep them.

The Tree of Life Ministry on the Rosebud Indian Reservation (Mission, SD) is in need of laundry facilities for the volunteers that come to help (800 per year). The cost would be \$1,400. Sherry made a motion that we donate \$50. Dawn seconded the motion; motion carried.

Nancy brought up the idea of having a “Spring Fling” dinner (April) with the proceeds going to the general fund. Think about it!

Happy Birthday was sung to Lil Anderson. Other March birthdays and anniversaries were acknowledged.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, April 4th.

The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Hostesses were Nancy Wiskur & Shirley Hegerfeld.

Secretary

Bev Buller