

The Messenger

February 2009

Pastor Sondra Atkins

St. Paul United Methodist Church
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WHAT IS PRAYER?

Prayer is a way to stay in love with God. Prayer is the way individuals, small groups and congregations grow and become vivid. It is a habit, a discipline, but not discipline with a clenched jaw. Prayer is more about receiving from God than it is about asking God for things or working hard at intercession. Prayer involves effort, habit and focus; but it results in lightness and energy and excitement..

If we will open our time to scripture, prayer, adoring God and listening to God, the inspiration of the Spirit just falls in. If we pray, we won't have to suck in inspiration like a vacuum. The whispers of the Spirit will nudge around the edges of our minds and surface in subtle ways. If we will open up, inspiration will fall in. Many of our early Protestant forebears called this a "prepared heart." If we study scripture, pray and prepare ourselves to be used, God will direct us, lead us, use us for things God wants to do. It's as simple as that. Open your heart and Christ will enter in. We have the choice.

Prayer

- 1. A prayer life has two parts - individual prayer and prayer with others.**
- 2. Trusting God for guidance is counter-intuitive.**
- 3. Prayer is a lifelong practice.**
- 4. We need someone to help us learn prayer.**
- 5. We need discernment and accountability.**

FAITH QUIZ

Do you say yes to any of the following statements?

1. I'm living a faith that doesn't make me buckle my seatbelt when I reach for my Bible in the mornings.
2. I'm living without Christ guiding me through the meetings, conversations, and choices of my day.
3. I don't feel a deep sense of repentance or forgiveness.
4. I am seldom aware of leadings from the Spirit.

If you answer yes to any of these questions, please, please ask God to help you find a book, a group, a friend or your pastor who will help you take the next step in a richer faith life. There's more. You haven't yet seen some of the glorious horizons of faith.

Save the Date

- Date:** March 6, 2009
Time: 9 a.m. – 8 p.m., a come-and-go event
Location: Saint Paul UMC, 12th and M Streets, Lincoln, NE
Event: World Day of Prayer Celebration

REPORT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Bill Fleischman, Finance Secretary, reports that 19 responses have been received from the commitment letter sent out to church members in December 2008. Total commitments to date total \$1,800 per month.

NOTICES

Committee Chairpersons: Please be sure to check the mail boxes frequently. They can be found on the library shelves. The church office has established file folders for each committee if you have important items that you want to keep.

Church Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1-5:00 p.m. You may call during these hours or leave a message on the answering machine at other times.

Lost and Found: The church office has some lost and found items. If you may have lost some jewelry items at the church, please call the office and see if they have been found.

FOOOOOD FOR THOUGHT

Kevin and Ryan, ages five and three, were waiting for breakfast one Saturday morning. As their mother was preparing some pancakes, the boys began to argue loudly over who would get the first one from the griddle.

Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. "If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake. I can wait.'" she explained.

Kevin immediately turned to his younger brother and said, "Okay, Ryan, you be Jesus!"

WELCOME HOME OPEN HOUSE FOR JASE BLUNT

Sun., Jan. 25, 2009, 1-3:00 pm

Elmwood Fire Station

SEWING PARTY Wednesday, January 28, 2009 10:00 am to 3:00 p.m.

Come to Carolyn Oehlerking's home to help complete school bags to be taken to UMCOR-Sager Brown. It would be great if you can bring sewing machine or serger, scissors and pins. We also need people to pin, turn and iron as well as seamstresses. Bring along a small salad or dessert for lunch to go with a casserole that will be provided.

UFO Events 2009

February 8th: Valentine Banquet fundraiser for future mission trip.

March 22nd: Bowling Party. Meet at the church at 1:00. Bring \$10 for bowling and money to eat out in Lincoln after bowling.

April 19th: Meet at St. Paul UMC for devotions, food, and fun.

If you have any question please call Myrna Bornemeier at 994-2685.



February Birthdays



Anna Struble – Feb. 5
Kay Gakemeier – Feb. 6
Greg Vogt – Feb. 13
Kevin Huxhold – Feb. 13
Mary Miller – Feb. 14
Dorothy Pointer – Feb. 14
Serena Romero – Feb. 16

Margie Nielson – Feb. 18
J. Scott Cook – Feb. 19
Martha Knox – Feb. 20
Angela Clements – Feb. 20
Boyd Clements – Feb. 20
Bryce Bornemeier – Feb. 21
Jennifer Brettmann – Feb. 23
Dale Kunz – Feb. 23

Audrey Cook – Feb. 24
Cody Behling – Feb. 25
Lisa Wenzel – Feb. 26
Richard Pratt – Feb. 26
Joyce Backemeyer – Feb. 28
Robert Fleischman – Feb. 28
Deborah Novak – Feb. 28

EQUAL EXCHANGE STORE

On the north side of the Fellowship Hall is a table of Equal Exchange products. What is Equal Exchange?

Equal Exchange was founded in 1986 to create a new approach to trade, one that includes informed consumers, honest and fair trade relationships and cooperative principles. As a worker-owned co-op, they have accomplished this by offering consumers fairly traded coffee, tea and chocolate direct from small-scale farmer co-ops in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

These products have been certified by Fair Trade USA, an independent certifier association of Fair Trade Labeling Organization.

For the majority of small coffee farmers, who live in rural communities in some of the poorest countries in the world, the benefits are small. The chain of events that leads from the farm to your cup is long and expensive: processors, creditors, exporters, brokers, and a cast of middlemen—known to Latin American farmers as “Coyotes”—can all come between you and the farmers before you get to sip your morning brew. With world coffee prices constantly changing and “coyotes” paying the lowest price possible, coffee farmers never know how much they will get for their crops. Isolated from markets, they struggle just to make a simple living. The producers of a rich crop are often trapped in poverty.

Our trading partners are small farmer cooperatives—businesses owned and governed democratically and directly by the farmers themselves. Decisions are not made based on who has the most wealth or land but how collective resources can best be managed to improve the welfare of the whole community.

Prices are posted at the Equal Exchange Table. Just put the money for your purchases in the can provided. Thank you

UMC Cass County Food Bank December 2008

What an enlightening experience I have had over the last ten months. The everyday happenings in life that you hear about in the newspaper, on the television and just talking to people can put you on a roller coaster of emotions. This holiday season has been just that. What a ride!! The generosity of people in the Cass County area has made my Christmas such a heartwarming event. The true meaning of Christmas has appeared at the food bank. For the churches, businesses, individuals and the school who have donated food and money your gifts are so greatly appreciated. Those who have volunteered, I hope you know how important your time has been to make the monthly distributions happen. Each distribution has its own personality or happenings. It is so much fun to give stuff away! We always feel good about giving to people. We are the givers and then we become the takers. We take that good feeling of helping someone home with us! I trust that everyone has had a good time this year just doing that! WE can only hope that we make a difference in someone's life. Someday maybe those people can return the favor to others.

At the December distribution there were plates of delicious cookies made by the ladies of St. Paul United Methodist church given out. Thank you to all those fantastic cookie makers! We received a great surprise gift from Russ' IGA, 66th & O ST. I got the call around 2:30 on Friday afternoon to come pickup produce. The timing of this gift was truly perfect! There was too much for me to haul. I found a volunteer in Lincoln (John Wagoner, Jared's boss) who made it possible to bring even more wonderful items home. So a huge Thank you to John Wagoner, Jared Blunt, Joseph Sanchez and Russ's IGA! If you think about it please tell them and Russ's IGA Thank you!

We had a big haul from the Lincoln Food bank as well on Thursday. A big group of un-loaders showed up with plenty of muscle because we sure needed it! Boy, the unloading was FUN and FAST!!!!

In December, we began receiving USDA products once again. When I receive the total numbers from the Lincoln Food Bank for 2008 on what was spent and received that will be passed on to you.

Egg cartons! The Lincoln Food Bank is in need of empty clean egg cartons.

I will be glad to take the egg cartons to the Food Bank. Just let me know!

I won't say that there isn't any stress in doing the food bank, because there is. You learn to say “It will be okay” and “What happens..... happens!” and attach a little prayer. You have all answered the prayer one way or another. Thank You for helping in God's work!

Linda Blunt

PS. Watch for the sign up sheet in Church, don't let this fun time pass you by, join us! You can also call 994-3295.

2009 ST. PAUL UMC LEADERSHIP

The following list is the committees for the 2009 St. Paul UMC Leadership. We appreciate the members who served on the 2008 committees and also the members who have answered the call to serve on the 2009 committees.

*Chair of Administrative Council – Lori Spohr; Lay Leader - Greg Vogt;
Financial Secretary - Bill Fleischman; Interim Treasurer - Joyce Vogt*

NOW Committee- Chair Carolyn Oehlerking

Members: Joyce Backemeyer, Curt Backemeyer, Marietta Vogt, Carol Gewiss, Angie Buckner, Barb Minch, Gloria Hensley, Doug Frahm, Lynn Justesen, Jason Zeorian

Worship Committee- Chair Linda Blunt

*Members: Tara Zeorian, Carol VanAckern, Renee Wynegar,
Megan Campbell, Laurel McReynolds, Bill Fleischman, Jacob Blunt, John Oehlerking*

Finance Committee- Chair Walter Oehlerking

*Members: Joyce Vogt, Bill Fleischman, Dave Spohr, Jim Hendrix, Greg Vogt, Lori Spohr,
Carolyn Oehlerking, Marvin Stewart, Genia Leone, Martha Ann Bornemeier, Ken Kunz,
Kathy Frahm, Wayne Althouse*

Education Committee- Co-Chair Nicki Justesen

Members: Genia Leone, Jennifer Brettmann, Frank Leone, Myrna Bornemeier, Susan Ernst

Membership Committee- Chair David Spohr

Members: Carol Gewiss, Secretary

SPPRC - Chair Genia Leone

*Members: Ken Kunz, Genia Leone, Marthana DeGarmo, Sharon Stewart,
Jim Hendrix, John Oehlerking*

Trustees - Chair TBA

*Members: Joyce Vogt, Dan Bornemeier, Dale Kunz, Keith Wynegar, Lois Bornemeier, Elmer Vogt,
Judy Hendrix, Gordon Lannin, Teresa Hawks, Lynn Justesen, David Spohr*

Memorial Committee- Chair Lois Bornemeier

Members: Roger Bornemeier, Adele Fleischman, Pam Bornemeier

Nominations Committee- Chair Pastor Sondra

*Members: Wayne Althouse, Gary Vogt, Martha Ann Bornemeier, Jennifer Brettmann,
Joyce Backemeyer, Ken Kunz, Greg Vogt, Karen Rase*

Discipleship Plan

Charge Conference December 11, 2008

Mission Statement: Elmwood Saint Paul UMC welcomes God's people to celebrate God's gifts; to be inspired by God's work; and to share God's love.

Goals and Objectives based on the six signs of discipleship: radically hospitality, heartwarming worship, risk-taking mission and justice ministries, systematic faith development, gracious generosity, connectional joy and commitment.

The **Administrative Council** will work together to:

- a. Support the Sunshine Daycare Center. (in house)
- b. Sponsor USDA Food Bank.
- c. Continue to be an emergency shelter for the elementary school.
- d. Use church building for other meetings, such as: boy scouts, 4H, etc.

The **Education Department** will support:

- a. Junior Youth group. (Kindergarten through sixth grade.)
- b. Sunday School Transport effort.
- c. Program geared toward college students.
- d. Study groups.
- e. Calling system to keep in touch with Sunday School children.
- f. Continue SS Kick-off.
- g. Lenten Project.
- h. Visit other Sunday Schools.
- i. Mission project.
- j. Acolyte Training.
- k. Confirmation
- l. New member education.
- m. Safe Sanctuary training.

The **Nurture, Outreach, and Witness Committee** will work toward :

- a. Programs geared toward our farmers.
- b. Continue to support Community Senior Center.
- c. Birthday Sunday
- d. Fifth Sunday Potluck
- e. Prayer Shawls
- f. Create ways to express selfless love
- g. Ministries of Justice and compassion
- h. Physical and financial opportunities

The **Worship Committee** will work toward heart warming worship experiences including:

- a. Prayer vigils
- b. Witnessing and inviting the unchurched to worship.
- c. Vibrant, joy filled worship.
- d. Witnessing through: special music, reading, ushering, acolytes, etc.
- e. Relevant worship.
- f. Scripture based worship.
- g. Communion.
- h. Use of technology.

The **Stewardship/Finance Committee** will work to encourage gracious giving through:

- a. Tithing
- b. Ongoing Involvement.
- c. Support of church activities.
- d. Financial push.
- e. Commit to supporting our connectional system financially with 20% tithe toward apportionments

*“FAITH is a force that is greater
Than knowledge or power or skill
And the darkest defeat turns to triumph
If we trust in GOD’S WISDOM and WILL.”*
Helen Steiner Rice

MEMBERSHIP/OUTREACH COMMITTEE

HELLO! I am Dave Spohr, the new membership/outreach chairperson for 2009. Last year I was the chairman for the Trustees Committee. This year I felt that it is important to be the chairman for this membership committee. I wanted to take a few minutes of your time to let you know of our goal for the future of St. Paul United Methodist Church.

In order to accomplish the goal, we need to develop a team of positive members to assist in meet this goal in this coming year. Our main goal is contacting each member of the Church by phone. We will be asking each member the following questions:

1. What can the Church do for you?
2. What can you do for the Church?
3. Do you have any positive recommendations for the future of this Church in order for members to experience God’s message?

In addition we will invite the members to attend worship services more regularly in order to re-establish a relationship with the Lord. Their participation in positive gatherings, both onsite and offsite of the Church, would benefit them in establishing more friendships with other members and strengthening their faith.

If you would like to be on this committee, please contact me on my cell phone, 610-1365, or at home phone, 867-2211 as soon as possible. I would like to start making phone calls by mid-February. Thank you for your time and consideration.

God Bless, Dave Spohr

NO EXCUSES ANY LONGER

Many believers don't see the importance of regular church attendance. Members of Northend Prince of Peace Church in Seattle received a special announcement in the mail, listing the many things that will be done for them at church on the following "no-excuse-to-stay-home-Sunday." According to the pastor, cots will be available for those who say Sunday is their only day to sleep in. Eye drops will be supplied for those who have red eyes from watching late Saturday night TV shows. There will be steel helmets for those who say the roof would cave in if they ever went to church, blankets for persons who think the church is too cold, fans for those who say it is too hot, scorecards for those wishing to list all the hypocrites present, TV dinners for those who can't go to church and also cook dinner. Finally, the sanctuary would be decorated with Christmas poinsettias and Easter lilies for those who have never seen the church without them.

Rules from God for 2009

1. Wake Up !! Decide to have a good day.

"Today is the day the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad in it" **Psalms 118:24**

2. Dress Up !! The best way to dress up is to put on a smile. A smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks.

"The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at outward appearance; but the Lord looks at the heart."

I Samuel 16:7

3. Shut Up!! Say nice things and learn to listen. God gave us two ears and one mouth, so He must have meant for us to do twice as much listening as talking. "He who guards his lips guards his soul" **Proverbs 13:3**

4. Stand Up!!... For what you believe in. Stand for something or you will fall for anything.. "Let us not be weary in doing good; for at the proper time, we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good..."

Galatians 6:9-10

5. Look Up !!... To the Lord.

"I can do everything through Christ who strengthens me."

Philippians 4:13

6. Reach Up !!.. For something higher. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not unto your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge Him, And He will direct your path."

Proverbs 3:5-6

7. Lift Up !!... Your Prayers

"Do not worry about anything;

Instead **PRAY ABOUT EVERYTHING.**"

Philippians 4:6



*The honour of your presence is
requested at the*



VALENTINE'S BANQUET

Sunday, February 8

Serving from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

*St. Paul United Methodist Church,
Elmwood*

Succulent Roast Beef - Tartalizing Ham

Snaopy Green Beans - Savory Buttered Corn

Delicious Potato Casserole - Luscious Rolls/Butter

Selection of Scrumptious Salads

Delectable Desserts

Refreshing Hot and Cold Beverages



Free Will Offering -

with proceeds going to future mission trips of the UMYF

(United Methodist Youth Fellowship)

Everyone is invited - singles, couples, all ages - come enjoy a delicious meal and the warmth of fellowship on a cold winter day. If you are unable to attend, take-out meals are available - please call the church at 994-6735 prior to 10:00 a.m., Feb 8, to arrange delivery.