

The Church Bell

The Newsletter of the

United Church of Christ, Congregational

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February 2010

“ENCOUNTERS”

by Elaine Miller, Assistant Pastor

Several of you have asked about your sister church, Wakonda United Church of Christ, Congregational, following their annual meeting two weeks ago. It has become more obvious over the past year, even before their joyous 125th Anniversary celebration last summer, that the time was getting close in which she would cease to exist as a congregation.

That issue was the main item of discussion at the meeting. It's probably not necessary to say that there is any number of other things we would have preferred to talk about but they are a realistic people. So the conversation began, “What are we to do? What will happen to our church building? Who will take care of us when one of us dies? Who will be here to baptize our grandchildren? How can we do this?”

These are painfully important questions for, you see, the closing of a church is like going through a death. Many of us are well aware of the feelings of grief and distress that accompany the loss of a loved one. We've been there and done that.... “How can we let go of that which has been the home of our hearts? It has been there for us at the deepest points of sorrow and the highest peaks of joy? Who will help us now?”

For now, they've agreed that weekly Sunday worship will continue through the summer. The Wakonda community celebrates its 125th Anniversary in July; they want to participate as a church in the festivities. It is likely worship will be suspended after that, though no date is set at this time. Most of their questions will be answered in additional discussions over these next months. But some we cannot answer for ourselves.

You, as a sister church, have been a wonderful part of the family. Thank you for your presence in music, prayer and spirit. We will especially need that as we make the journey towards locking the doors for the last time; knowing others care helps in what will surely be a “time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.” (Eccles. 3:4) May God's blessings of courage and strength guide us all in this year of passage.

FEBRUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

February 7
YOUTH SUNDAY
“Wake Up Everybody!”
II Corinthians 5: 16-21
Communion
LAF Celebration

February 14
“If Only You Had Recognized”
Luke 19:41-44

February 21
LENT I
“Sharpening Our Senses”
Luke 4: 1-13

February 28
LENT II
“Help My Unbelief”
Mark 9:14-28

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Women's Fellowship will meet on Thursday, February 4th in the Mayflower Room at 9:30 a.m. Hostesses will be Alice Barnes and Jill Macy. Eileen Turner will have devotions. Pastor Steve Miller will be telling us about his trip to Taize, France. All are Welcome!

YOUTH SUNDAY – LAF CELEBRATION - PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Sunday, **February 7, 2010**, will be **YOUTH SUNDAY**. Our entire worship service will feature the gifts and talents of a wide range of our young people; from special music and lay readers to preachers and pray-ers, from bell-ringers and rock and rollers to ushers and greeters, this is a wonderful way to celebrate our youth. Immediately following our worship, the Confirmation class will sponsor a scrumptious brunch, featuring pancakes and sausage. All proceeds from this fundraiser will support the confirmation travel fund.

LAF CELEBRATES ASH WEDNESDAY

On Wednesday, February 17, 2010, we will celebrate Ash Wednesday at our regular LAF gathering. This time is intended to help all ages enter into the spirit of the Lenten season. This is a wonderful opportunity for all of us as we examine the rituals, colors, and meanings of this holy time. Dinner is at 5:30 pm and a teaching worship service will be held at 6:00 pm in the sanctuary. This will include the imposition of ashes for those interested in that ritual. All are welcome to begin this holy season.

LENTEN DISCIPLINE – THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

The season of Lent is a time to refocus and remember who we are and who we hope to be as faithful, loving and spirit-filled people – a chance to “Be still and know...” Unfortunately, in our busy lives, we often forget! To this end our church will provide a reminder and invitation of these important ideas **each day during Lent** using technology (either e-mail or text). If you would like to be on this distribution list, please e-mail the church office with your request: uccv@uccvermillion.org.

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY DAFFODIL SALES

You can give hope to people facing cancer by supporting the American Cancer Society Daffodil Days program. Daffodil Days is your chance to fight back against cancer by raising funds and awareness to help beat the disease. The cost of each bouquet is \$10.00. Checks should be payable to the *American Cancer Society*. Orders are due by February 14. The daffodil bouquets will be distributed on Sunday, March 21.

ATTENTION SINGERS! COME JOIN THE HOLY SONG

Singers in high school and beyond are welcome to join the UCC Adult Choir as we prepare beautiful music for Palm Sunday, March 28th. The music team has chosen to showcase several choral pieces in a variety of styles that bridge the relationship between Christianity and the five fundamentals of Islamic spirituality: creed, prayer, sharing, discipline, pilgrimage. Join us in the choir loft on Wednesday nights during the months of February and March for rehearsal. Child care is provided. Please contact Gretchen Burbach song.birdies@yahoo.com or 624-7317 for more information.

VMA LENTEN PRAYER 2010

The pastors of the Vermillion Ministerial Association would again like to invite you to join them for prayer each Friday during Lent. The group will gather shortly after noon (12:00 pm) for a brief prayer and reflection service and then share a simple soup lunch, concluding by 12:50 pm. The entire community is welcome as we prayerfully move through this holy season. The Lenten schedule is as follows:

February 19	St. Paul's Episcopal Church (10 Linden Street)
February 26	St. Agnes Catholic Church (416 Walker Street)
March 5	First Methodist Church (16 N. Dakota Street)
March 12	United Church of Christ
March 19	Grace Baptist Church (1102 E. Main Street)
March 26	Trinity Lutheran Church (816 E. Clark Street)
April 2	First Baptist Church (101 E. Main Street)

VIDEOS ON CHURCH WEBSITE

We are starting to put video on the church website. If you have video of a church activity (edited or unedited), contact Mike and Charlotte Marek at design@themareks.com. It is best if you can provide the video already in computer file form, such as AVI, MP4 or MOV files. See the video already on the website at uccvermillion.org.

AUTOMATIC PLEDGE DEPOSITS AVAILABLE

For every family, payment of their pledge to the church is an act of generosity and love. There is something symbolic about opening your hand and placing gifts in the plate as it is passed on Sunday. We recognize, however, that we are becoming a paperless world and many of our members would appreciate the opportunity to transfer funds electronically. Participation is totally voluntary, but those wishing to make a bank transfer should contact Beth Lewison, Parish Steward, at the church office for a form.

The Board of Trustees

VERMILLION FOOD PANTRY

Food items most needed at the Food Pantry (located at Trinity Lutheran Church, 816 E. Clark Street): jelly/jam, cold cereal, chili and chili beans, instant potatoes, box of stuffing mixes, Jell-O and pudding mixes, soda crackers, tomato soups, scalloped potatoes, cake mixes, hand soaps, peanut butter, fruit juices, chunky soups, pancake mixes, muffin mixes, motel shampoos, toilet paper – wrapped.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Monday, February 1

7:00 pm Mayflower Mondays

Tuesday, February 2

6:00 pm BC

7:00 pm Boy Scouts (every Tuesday)

Wednesday, February 3

3:10 pm Jolley LAF

5:30 pm LAF

7:00 pm Adult Choir

Thursday, February 4

9:30 am Women's Fellowship

4:00 pm PALS

Sunday, February 7

9:00 am Adult Bible Study

10:30 am Worship

11:30 am Coffee Hi

Diaconate meeting

5:00 pm NO Confirmation

7:00 pm Unitarian Fellowship

7:45 pm NO V-III (High School Youth)

8:00 pm Taize

Monday, February 8

7:00 pm Mayflower Mondays

Tuesday, February 9

6:00 pm BC

Wednesday, February 10

3:10 pm NO Jolley LAF

5:30 pm NO LAF

7:00 pm Adult Choir

Thursday, February 11

6:00 pm MOPS

Sunday, February 14

9:00 am Adult Bible Study

10:30 am Worship

11:30 am Coffee Hi

5:00 pm Confirmation

7:45 pm V-III (High School Youth)

8:00 pm Taize

Monday, February 15

7:00 pm Mayflower Mondays

Tuesday, February 16

6:00 pm BC

Wednesday, February 17

3:10 pm Jolley LAF

5:30 pm LAF

6:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service

7:00 pm Adult Choir

Thursday, February 18

7:00 pm Trustees meeting

Sunday, February 21

9:00 am Adult Bible Study

10:30 am Worship

11:30 am Coffee Hi

5:00 pm Confirmation

7:00 pm Unitarian Fellowship

7:45 pm V-III (High School Youth)

8:00 pm Taize

Monday, February 22

7:00 pm Mayflower Mondays

Tuesday, February 23

7:00 pm BC

Wednesday, February 24

3:10 pm Jolley LAF

5:30 pm LAF

7:00 pm Adult Choir

Thursday, February 25

12 noon PALS

6:00 pm MOPS

Sunday, February 28

9:00 am Adult Bible Study

10:30 am Worship

11:30 am Coffee Hi

Cabinet

5:00 pm Confirmation

7:45 pm V-III (High School Youth)

8:00 pm Taize