

# CIRCLE TIMES

**June 2023**

**United Protestant Church Newsletter**

**Silver Bay, Minnesota**



## **The United Protestant Church Mission Statement**

*We are an open-minded Christian fellowship. We seek to follow  
the Word of God and to pass God's love on to others  
as we actively welcome them into our church family.*

**Rev. Paul Scaringi, Ph.D.**

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### **NOTE FROM PASTOR PAUL**

As I take my sabbatical leave, I want to express my deep gratitude to you for granting me this time. I pray that our ministry together will be enriched through these days apart. The Rev. Kathryn Bell has accepted the call to be your interim minister while I am away and I trust you (and she) will know a special measure of God's grace and blessing in this time.

For any questions or concerns that may arise in these months ahead, please contact either Dedie Moore or Peggy Jo Osmundson or Lynn Anderson

I look forward to being back with you on July 11<sup>th</sup>.

Peace,  
Paul



**We chose the name "Circle Times" for our first U.P. newsletter 62 years ago.**

**It was a way of reminding ourselves that we are a united group of several denominations.**

**This is a much needed witness in our world filled with diversities.**



## From the Pastor

Pastor Paul is on sabbatical. For his monthly article he decided to dig back in the archives and share a previously published piece. The following is from June 2011.

*Jesus said to them, "Give to the emperor the things  
that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's."  
And they were utterly amazed at him.  
- Mark 12:17*

I imagine that the verse above is familiar to many. The religious leaders of Jesus' day were trying to trap him by posing a question regarding paying taxes. This verse is Jesus' reply and it was an answer, Mark tells us, that amazed them (and I imagined frustrated at least some of them as well).

I have not met many that claim this verse as one of their favorites, yet it is a crucial statement by Jesus. For in his reply to the religious leaders Jesus points to a new way of how God's children will relate to those who govern them.

In the Old Testament we find vast detail of how society should be governed and what laws should be enacted. The vision for the people entering the Promised Land was one of God being their sovereign ruler. This understanding was rooted in their worship and was meant to impact all facets of life from economics to politics to relationships. We call this type of society a theocracy; a society where God governs all aspects of life for the well-being of all.

When Jesus began his ministry and proclaimed the advent of God's kingdom many believed that he would restore ancient Israel by removing the Roman occupying force and re-establishing a theocratic state. Jesus' opponents recognized this expectation (and may have thought this was Jesus' understanding as well) and tried to use this to either alienate Jesus from the people or entrap Jesus with the political powers of the day. This was the cunning behind their question. If Jesus told the people to pay taxes, he would be legitimatizing Roman rule and thereby deny God's sovereignty over Israel. Or, if he told the people to *not* pay taxes, he would find himself opposing the government and inviting their wrath. I imagine the folks who posed this question thought they finally had him 'between a rock and a hard place.'

Jesus' answer not only foils their scheming it also indicates a new way God's kingdom is to be understood. In God's kingdom, which Jesus inaugurated, a theocratic state is not an immediate concern. Jesus demonstrated that God's kingdom will grow and mature in a variety of ways and in all sorts of societies. He turned the expectations upside down and continually pointed to a kingdom that grows not through legislative force but rather through the transformed lives of individuals and communities as they live in the presence of God, which in turn transforms the world.

I've been thinking lately about Jesus' response to the religious leaders of his day as I've been listening to the news. National and state political issues have been dominating the airwaves and we're told that upcoming elections will be exceedingly partisan. We also see that the

Christian faith is often cited as a reason why we should support a particular policy or candidate. In both cases one could argue that this is nothing new – politics are frequently partisan, and Christianity has long been a staple in American political discourse. But do we see how disjointed it is to be talking about heated (if not vicious) political speech and Christianity in the same sentence?

When Jesus says, *Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's*, I do not believe he is telling us to stay out of or ignore political life. When we take this verse and combine it with the life Jesus led while he walked this earth, we see a different way of engaging with our society.

As followers of Christ, we are called to all walks of life and, I believe, we should be active participants in our political process. But we are active in politics in the same way we are active in other arenas – trusting in God to work, living a life where the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-26) are evident, and loving God and our neighbor as our self. If these principles are the foundation of what we do, we begin to understand that it is not only the outcome of our actions that is important but also how we carry out those actions. The old saying that “the ends justify the means” might be acceptable for some, but it is *not* the way of Christ.

I pray you will consider what it means to be a participant in our political system. I encourage you to take an active stance – to listen carefully to what our elected leaders say, to vote, to let your voice be heard, and, most importantly, to pray for our leaders. I also encourage you to do this ever conscious of the fact that we are “ambassadors” (a good political term used by Paul in 2 Cor. 5:20) of God’s kingdom in politics and in all facets of life.

Blessings,  
Paul

**PLEASE NOTE:**

The UPC Council meeting scheduled on  
May 9th was not officially conducted.  
Due to the lack of a quorum, there are  
no Council meeting minutes for May.  
The next UPC Council meeting is  
Tuesday, June 13th.



**Parish Nurse Notes**  
**Dedie Moore R.N.**

*...for this day is holy to our Lord; and do not be  
grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.*

Nehemiah 8:10

I have been reading a lot lately about joy, attachment, the synchronization of how our brains are designed to work and how we are called to live by scripture. Jim Wilder describes himself as a neurotheologian, the intersection of neurology, how our brain works, and scripture.

It is clear to anyone who has cared for an infant how their brain is wired to form attachments. First to the primary caregiver, then the family group and the larger group they belong to. If the child's interactions are more based on fear and shame, it is difficult for the child's character to develop in a healthy way.

The exciting news is that these essential connections can be grown and learned at any age. By practice these connections can be built and nurtured. We do this in our church by noticing each other, sharing joys and concerns, supporting each other in trials.

I thought this quote from Jim Wilder, "Joy Starts Here" sums up joy well:

"When we are the sparkle in someone's eyes, their face lights up with a smile when they see us. We feel joy. From the moment we are born, joy shapes the chemistry, structure, and growth of our brain. Joy lays the foundation for how well we will handle relationships, emotions, pain, and pleasure throughout our lifetime. Joy creates an identity that is stable and consistent over time. Joy gives us the freedom to share our hearts with God and others. Expressing our joyful identity creates space for others to belong. Joy gives us the freedom to live without masks because, despite our weaknesses, we know we are loved."

Joy is not the same as happiness. One can have joy at the same time they are sad or angry because they know they are loved. It seems to me so many people now lack a tribe, maybe a family, and have difficulty developing their identity.

There are many YouTubes by Jim Wilder (Life Model Works), Chris Coursey (Thrive) if you want to hear much more.



## ***Taking 5***

Below you will find the Taking 5 scripture and prayers for this month. I encourage you to take 5 minutes each day to read the scripture closely, pray the prayer attentively, and spend the remaining time in prayerful silence, seeking out God's presence and prompting in that time. Thank you for being part of this important discipline for our church and for you.

Peace,  
Paul



### **The week of June 4<sup>th</sup>**

Scripture: Genesis 12:1-4

Prayer: Dear Father, clear my vision to see the path you have prepared for me this day. May I follow you. Amen.

### **The week of June 11<sup>th</sup>**

Scripture: Matthew 9:36-38

Prayer: Gentle Shepherd, I oft forget you see me and the world as it truly is – harassed and helpless. Lead me to you. May I be used by you this day. Amen.

### **The week of June 18<sup>th</sup>**

Scripture: Romans 6:9-11

Prayer: Eternal God, you are the light that shines throughout the cosmos yet I often fail to see your light within me. Illumine my days so I may be alive in you. Amen.

### **The week of June 25<sup>th</sup>**

Scripture: Matthew 10:40-42

Prayer: A cup of water seems too small, Gentle Lord, for the hurts of this world. As you have refreshed me, help me to refresh others. Amen.

### **OUR CIRCLE**

“OUR CIRCLE” is a news article that features a member or friend of U.P. Church. The article is based on conversations and written answers to questions. We hope you will enjoy learning about the folks who are familiar participants in our church life.



**Betsy Myers**

Betsy Myers was born in Red Oak, Iowa to Beth and Dale Jones. Being an only child, she lived on a small farm near the tiny town of Wales, Iowa with her parents. Wales had a Presbyterian Church, a school with 12 grades, a country store, her grandmother's home and maybe 6 other homes. Her life revolved around this close-knit Welsh community, her parents, and relatives. Betsy's father loved the outdoors, animals, his family and his small community where he grew up. This created an easy-going lifestyle that the family enjoyed. Her mother, Beth, was a teacher who served in a one room school and boarded at the Jones home where she met and married one the Jones boys who was Betsy's father, Dale.

Being the only child and having no brothers meant that Betsy had to work hard to do the never ending outside chores of animal care and tractor field work. Her mother once drove a tractor dangerously up a steep hill and after that it was Betsy's job. She had to stand on the pedals, holding onto the wheel and push with all her might to get them to work. In the summers she was pressed into kitchen duties, including farm meal cooking which she did not like. Her mom attended summer school classes in Omaha, Nebraska to keep up her teaching certification. She left Betsy detailed instruction each day as to how to prepare lunches and dinners to feed her father and any relatives working in the fields that day. On haying days, her boy cousins were not happy if she did not drive and turn the tractor just right so the hay bales would fall on the

barge. They had to jump off and lift them up onto the barge. She had the last laugh as they had to work in the hot, dusty barn to stack the bales. Her growing up years were very stable with Sundays and holidays spent at church and extended family gatherings.

On nice summer days she often walked to “her tree” or the small woods on the corner of their farm. This was Betsy’s alone time which was something needed and enjoyed. Betsy has warm memories of listening to the rain on a summer evening knowing it helped the crops. Rain on a summer morning meant a shopping trip to Omaha which was a big treat. Saturday evening shopping trips and vacations were spent with the family’s best friends, the Williams family, which had two children, Shirley and Richard. One day coming home from an Omaha shopping trip, they saw a watermelon stand. Everyone pooled their last coins to buy one. At home, Richard set it on the kitchen table. It rolled to the floor and split open. They grabbed forks, sat on the floor and ate it all! Fall and winters were wonderful-all the crops were in and was time to relax. Southwest Iowa is hot but there could be snowy winters. Betsy loved those days best for she could roam the farm after snow falls or go sledding over the pastures. This was a passion and gave another reason why she enjoys the north shore of Minnesota.

After high school, Betsy attended the University of Northern Iowa with a scholarship. Her time there was very happy while she earned a BA in Elementary Education with an almost Spanish Minor. Years later she went back to school to get an endorsement in the new field of Early Childhood Education. All of her working years were in that field. She taught at childcare centers that were low income based and at hospitals for health care workers. Her teaching experience included preschools: non-denominational, Head Start, Jewish, First Christian Church sponsored, as well as Catholic. Betsy has observed that children are children no matter what background. The last ten years of her career were working for Child Care Resource and Referral performing scheduling, instructing classes for early childhood staff, and helping parents find care for their children while they worked. There were more than 230 early childhood programs to monitor and distribute grants for in the county agency that she developed and headed.

Betsy and Bob Myers attended the same college but met later at a friend’s wedding. Apparently, their friends had not introduced them earlier because they thought they would not get along. Once married they lived in Waterloo, Iowa and a daughter, Becky, was born. Bob changed jobs and they moved to Perry, Iowa. Having graduated from the University of Iowa, Becky married Jason and they gave Betsy and Bob two grandchildren, Emily and Lucas. Betsy and Bob, before their retirement, purchased a vacation house in Silver Bay. After retirement, they became permanent residents. They had found a place to enjoy nature’s wonders while hiking the trails and observing wildlife in their backyard. Betsy, especially, loves the cold and snow that winter gives. She enjoys the Silver Bay community life which she found welcoming and made friends with a Finland quilting group, neighbors, and church family. In regard to UP Church, Betsy writes, “We had even attended a Thanksgiving meal at the UPC and Bay Days Ecumenical services before we moved. The church was so welcoming. When I had mental health problems, Bob, my family, my faith, the church and Pastor Paul were key supporters in my recovery process.” Betsy comments, “No one is an island. Be willing to accept help and support from your family, friends and faith. We all need each other.”

Note: We will miss Bob and Betsy for they have sold their house and found a home in Iowa that is closer to their daughter’s family. May their new life change be blessed.

Article by Lynn Anderson



# What's up now with U.P. folks!!!

## **Keep these folks in your thoughts and prayers:**

**Pat Viola** is at home in the Silver Bay, MN Veteran's Home (56 Outer Drive).

**Ellen and Karsten Hogenson, Phyllis Pearrow, Ray Burge, Dave and Kay Colby, Irene Johnson, David Prestidge, Mary Aijala, Mary Carroll, Chuckie Knutson, Ed Maki and David Gustafson** of our congregation as they deal with health-related changes and recoveries.  
**All the caregivers.**

### **June Birthdays**

Jim Martineau	1
Nancy Viola	3
Greg Christenson	5
Phyllis Pearrow	12
Kathy Thompson	17
Dawn Connor	22
Sandy Wakefield	23
Beth Smuk	23



### **June Anniversaries**

Karsten and Ellen Hogenson	7
Bruce and Kris Small	10
Jim and Brenda Larson	14
Terry and Kathy Thompson	14
Ray and Marion Burge	16
Phil and Becky Goutermont	18
Larry Longmore & Lynn Anderson	24

### **Upcoming Events**

Split Rock Service and Picnic

June 18th

One Great Hour of Sharing

June 25th

Bay Days Ecumenical Service

July 9th



June 18th

### **Please Note:**

The most recent Covid 19 booster shots are available at our pharmacy and other locations.

Contact your provider if this is recommended for you.

### **Wednesday Morning Bible Study 9:30 am**

Our current study is  
*The New Testament You Never Knew*  
CD sessions by  
N.T. Wright and Michael Bird  
All are welcome.

### **Check out our new website:**

<https://www.unitedprotestant.org>.  
You can download the latest newsletter and sermon as well as keep up to date with what is happening here at UPC.



# June 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 Sunday Worship 10:30 am Communion	5	6	7 WMBS 9:30 am	8	9	10
11 Sunday Worship 10:30 am	12 GLAD 6:30 pm Zoom	13 Boards Meet 5:00 pm Council Meets 6:00 pm	14 WMBS 9:30 am Prayer Shawl 2:00 pm	15	15	17
18 Split Rock Sunday Worship 10:30 am	19	20	21 WMBS 9:30 am	22	23	24
25 Sunday Worship 10:30 am OGHS	26 GLAD 6:30 pm Zoom	27	28 WMBS 9:30 am Prayer Shawl 2:00 pm	29	30	
<div>Pastor Paul will be on Sabbatical 4/11-7/11/23 Lynn in office Wed &amp; Thurs 1:30 -4:00 pm</div>						

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