



CIRCLE TIMES

February 2024

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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Terry Eggum Church Council Chair

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TEXTS AND TITLES

February 4 – 5th Sunday after the Epiphany

1st Reading: Isaiah 40:21-31

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23

Title: *The Chameleon*

February 18 – 1st Sunday in Lent

1st Reading: Genesis 9:8-17

2nd Reading: Mark 1:9-15

Title: *Beloved – Really?*

February 11 – Transfiguration Sunday

1st Reading: Mark 9:2-9

2nd Reading: 2 Kings 2:1-12

Title: *The Silence of Glory*

February 25 – 2nd Sunday in Lent

1st Reading: Romans 4:13-25

2nd Reading: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Title: *The Past Tense Promise*

February 14 – Ash Wednesday

1st Reading: Psalm 51:1-17

2nd Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Title: *Be, In, Become*



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

Money, money, money
Must be funny
In the rich man's world.

- Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus

Eileen and I are fortunate to share common perspectives on our core convictions. That said, there are certainly places where our views are different, none more so than when it comes to ABBA, the Swedish pop group of the 70's. On the question of ABBA we are a house divided, with one person really enjoying the music and the other not so much. None of this really matters for this article except for the fact that as I pondered the topic of this piece, their song (the chorus is listed above) kept running through my mind.

Money. It is hard to overstate the importance of money in our society and in our world. There are those who say money is simply a 'fact' of life and I'm not sure I've ever heard anyone argue to the contrary. Some say Jesus talked about money more than other topic. While I've never sorted out all the statements Jesus made to determine the most popular, he did address the topic of money quite often. To gain an understanding of what he taught we can recall his teaching about the rich trying to enter the Kingdom of Heaven (Mark 10:17-27), or the widow offering up all she had, which was two small coins (Mark 12:41-44). I don't think Jesus thought it "must be funny in the rich man's world," not because Jesus didn't have a sense of humor or irony (I firmly believe he did) but because he was consistently warning those around him (and us) how money can obscure and diminish the faith.

Money. People have taken Jesus' words as a call to treat money as either a necessary evil or something that should be avoided all together. This has led some to live a life of intentional poverty. Even though I hold in high regard those who live out such a conviction, I do not believe that is what Jesus is calling *all* his followers to do. Even though there are many who would agree we are not called to eschew money, when we consider Church history it does give one pause since the Church has not had a sterling reputation with regards to it. Whether we are talking about the greed of church officials or televangelists pleading for more money or the Lord will cause a catastrophe, we Christians have not done a great job heeding Jesus' call.

Money. While it is important to heed the warnings in scripture we also should not ignore those instances where people are blessed with money/resources. Luke tells us that there was a group of women who traveled with Jesus and supported him "out of their resources" (Luke 8:2-3). While he is not specific in what the resources are, I read this as something that includes money. Or we can recall Lydia in Acts 16, a woman who was a dealer in purple cloth (a rare item) and head of her household, someone who clearly had some measure of financial resources. Then there's Abraham & Sarah who had a complement of people in their charge, which speaks of wealth. We can look to Job, who after all his trials and afflictions is blessed with more wealth than he had before, and we should not forget King Solomon, whom the Lord blessed with immense riches.

Is the Bible contradictory? No, it is not. A broad reading of scripture shows us that when it comes to money is not an either/or issue. Although it might be "funny in the rich man's world," as followers of Christ we are called to be attentive to the import of money in our lives. It can be a blessing or a curse and it all depends on our approach to it, an approach that is meant to reflect the reality of Jesus as Lord of our lives.

All of this comes to me for me not because of a silly song performed by a pop group, it is on my mind and heart as I reflect on our life together in 2023. There are many things we can say about our ministry in 2023 (the Annual Report is a good resource for that) and one of those has to be the generosity so many you displayed through your giving. 2023 set a record – at least for the last 20 years – for offerings given to the church and it was amazing to see. We didn't have one or two donors propelling that giving but rather everyone coming together – folks here in Silver Bay and those outside our community who were generous in their giving.

What does that mean for 2024? I don't know. We will continue to strive to be good stewards of all the gifts the Lord blesses to us – whether we are talking about people, ministries, and offerings. At this moment, though, it is right to pause and to give thanks to God who worked through so many, as well as to say thank you, for following the example of our Generous God and being generous yourself. May that generosity be a part of all that we do in the name of Christ in the year ahead.

Blessings,
Paul



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 February 4th

Scripture: Mark 9:2-4

Prayer: Transfigured Lord, like the apostles, I'm not sure how to respond to your glory. Grant me the eyes to see your holiness so I may honor you in all I do. Amen.

The week of February 11th

Scripture: Psalm 51:6-9

Prayer: Lord of Mercy, I am often blind to what weighs me down, the sin that takes root in my life. Open my eyes and cleanse me by your grace. Amen.

The week of February 18th

Scripture: Romans 4:17-18

Prayer: Dear Lord, I need your presence and power in my life so I may place my hope in you and find you creating something new within my world. Amen.

The week of February 25th

Scripture: I Corinthians 1:25

Prayer: Eternal God, grant me the faith to let go of my wisdom and strengthen me to live under the "foolishness" of your cross. Amen.

UNITED PROTESTANT CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

January 9, 2024 6:00 pm

ATTENDEES: Dedie Moore, Ed Maki, Mike Osmundson, Peg Osmundson, Shirley Whiteford, Agnes Gilson, Jim Martineau, Terry Eggum, Ruth Eggum, Pastor Paul and Eileen Scaringi and Allison Oja (Zoom).

Council Chair Dedie Moore called the meeting to order at 6:09 pm. Pastor Paul opened in prayer. Dedie Moore then turned the meeting over to new Chair Terry Eggum.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: None

M/M/S by Ed Maki/Shirley Whiteford to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2023 meeting. Motion carried.

TREASURERS'S REPORT: Mike O. reported that we ended 2023 in the black! The audit has been completed by Beth Smuk. Ruth Eggum suggested that we include information on the website that there is a deduction fee for use of PayPal donations. It had come to her attention that some people donating were not aware that their entire donation didn't go to the church. Mike O. reported that because Reuters will not match donations to religious organizations, there is no need to set up an account at the Credit Union for those funds. Terry Eggum questioned the distribution of the House of Love funds and whether the entire amount should be sent to HOL. Pastor stated that he is working with the Juanes' about that.

Checking Account: \$27,722.32	Memorial Fund: \$26,470.08	
Ministry Fund: \$67,043.18	House of Love: \$8,000.82	AmazonSmile:
\$463.82	Checking SS: \$3,346.55	YTD Food Shelf: \$1,389.00
YTD Income: \$113,239.95		
YTD Expense: (\$107,961.20)		
YTD Net: \$5,278.75		

The Chairs of the Boards and Committees should submit their annual reports to Secretary Lynn Anderson by January 12.

DIACONATE REPORT: Ruth Eggum reported that they are checking into re-supplying items for the Tabitha ministry. They are also revising the information sheet on Diaconate Board responsibilities.

TRUSTEE REPORT: Mike Osmundson reported Mike Tarolli will be working on the windows in the spring. Bruce Small has been doing snow removal. The lawn mower is broken and it will cost about \$1,500 to repair it. Mike O. will check with Mark Ness, who has a commercial mower, about mowing in the spring. This matter has been tabled until the April meeting.

CHRISTIAN ED REPORT: Pastor Paul reported that the Sunday School (the kids prefer this over Youth Group) began two weeks ago and is going well. We will check into purchasing a white board for them. A new Bible study on single chapter books of the Bible will start on January 10.

PASTOR'S REPORT: There is no one in hospital at this time. Continued prayers are needed for Mike O., Phil Christman and Jean Wagner. Thanks to everyone for their "offerings to God" that allowed us to finish 2023 in the black financially. There is Game Night Saturday, January 13, at 6. Pastor will be having knee surgery on January 23 and will not be here January 28. Von Borg will take the service. Pastor said that he has been given positive feedback from people who have commented on how "loved" they feel by our congregation.

OLD BUSINESS: After some discussion, it was decided to have the Annual Meeting on the January 28th even with Pastor Paul and Eileen's absence. There will be a meeting at North Shore Area Partners on Tuesday, January 16, (1-2:30) regarding establishing a mental health Clubhouse in Silver Bay. There is a possibility that UPC could be the site of the Clubhouse.

NEW BUSINESS: We will put an announcement in the Shopper now asking whether there is interest in having a community meal in April.

M/M/S by Peg Osmundson/Shirley Whiteford to adjourn the meeting at 6:43 pm. Motion carried. Pastor Paul closed in prayer.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ruth Eggum, Council Secretary

Note: January Council minutes will be approved in February

UNITED PROTESTANT CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING January 28, 2024

PRESENT: Jim Martineau, Shirley Whiteford, Maggie King, Deanne Reiten, Irene Johnson, Ruth Koepke, Jean Williams, Brenda Larson, Ellen Hogenson, Karsten Hogenson, LaVern Fergon, Ernie Kelley, Jeff Miller, Amy Wasson, Paula Fenstad, Dedie Moore, David Moore, Reba Moore, Serine Ege, Philip Christman, Lynn Anderson, David Prestidge, Ruth Eggum, Terry Eggum.

Council chair Terry Eggum called the meeting to order at 11:23 a.m. and opened in prayer.

M/M/S Dedie Moore/Serine Ege to approve the January 29, 2023 Annual Meeting minutes. Motion carried.

M/M/S Maggie King/Irene Johnson to approve the November 26, 2023 Congregational Meeting minutes. Motion carried.

There were no questions or comments on the 2023 Annual Report. Thanks to Lynn Anderson for putting it together.

M/M/S David Prestidge/Deanne Reiten to approve the 2024 annual budget. Motion carried. Thanks to Mike Osmundson for all of his work as Treasurer.

Appreciation was expressed for outgoing Council Chair Dedie Moore, Alis Stevens (Diaconate) and Angie Goutermont (Christian Ed). We welcomed new board members Jean Williams (Christian Ed) and Jim Martineau (Diaconate).

Present Board members: Trustees—Philip Christman, Ben Goutermont, Mike Osmundson, David Moore and Ed Maki; Diaconate—Peg Osmundson, Shirley Whiteford, Agnes Gilson, Allison Oja, Jim Martineau and Ruth Eggum; Christian Ed—Eileen Scaringi, Brenda Larson and Jean Williams.

Serine Ege, Lynn Anderson and Amy Wasson volunteered to be the at-large members for the Nominating Committee.

Terry Eggum and Ruth Eggum volunteered to be the at-large members of the Budget Committee.

Karsten Hogenson recommended that the Council establish a special committee to evaluate the sound system for the sanctuary, thus removing all the responsibility from the Trustees and the Pastor. Chair Terry Eggum said that this will be discussed at the February Council meeting.

M/M/S by Maggie King/ Jim Martineau to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 a.m. Motion carried. The Wednesday morning Bible study group lead in the closing prayer.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ruth Eggum, Council Secretary

Please note: the annual meeting minutes of January 28th will be approved at the next annual meeting in 2025.



Parish Nurse Notes
Dedie Moore Retired R.N.

*I am severely afflicted; give me life, O Lord,
according to your word.*
Psalm 119:107

I cannot imagine that there is anyone who has never felt severely afflicted. There are many in our world right now who are afflicted by war, loss of homes, loss of health and security. Many of us have family and loved ones who are severely afflicted, physically and/or emotionally.

Emotional and mental distress can be difficult to recognize. It can even be expressed in behaviors that make us uncomfortable or afraid. As someone said in talking about children with difficult behaviors, ask not what the child is doing, but why. Where is this behavior coming from? What need is crying out? The same question is fair for anyone.

Often there are no easy answers, but just acknowledging the pain and asking if there is anything we can do can help. Sometimes just being quietly present can give some respite.

We can never really know how it is to be someone else, the best we can do is listen with empathy and respect. If a person is missing a limb, we are quick to offer help and sympathy. Other deficits can be just as difficult to live with, while they are invisible. I have been reading a novel about the deaf community which reminded me that I may not even recognize what is a major barrier for someone else.

As the psalmist goes on to say, "I hold my life in my hand continually." We always have small and large choices between life and death.

The North Shore Mental Health Group continues to pursue setting up a Clubhouse locally. A Clubhouse is a place to support people working together on recovery from mental illness through hope, purpose and opportunities. We were excited that many community members attended the Clubhouse meeting on January 16, signaling a significant need and interest. If you have questions, ask me, call 218-220-2048, or dediedavid@yahoo.com, or check out Facebook North Shore Mental Health Group. Vail Clubhouse in Twin Cities has a webpage. Group Living with Anxiety and Depression continues to meet on Zoom the second and fourth Mondays at 6:30pm.





2023
PHOTOS

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, Mary Aijala, Mary Carroll, Chuckie Knudson, Mike and Peg Osmundson, David Gustafson, Rebecca Snook, Phil Christman, Serine Ege, Deanne Reiten, Agnes Gilson and Jean Wagner of our congregation as they deal with health-related changes and recoveries. **All the caregivers.**

February Birthdays

Gwynne Ness	5
Charlotte Olson	6
Paul Scaringi	6
Archer Goutermont	10
Kay Colby	12
Steven Betzler	13
Shawn Gilbertson	16
Dillon Gilbertson	18
LaVern Fergon	21
Nancy Gilson	21
Angie Goutermont	24



February Anniversaries

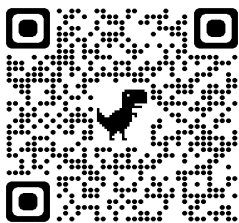
Terry and Barb Hron	1
Randy and Rebecca Snook	14
Paul and Kathryn Kolojeski	22

Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday, February 14th

7:00 pm.

Let us join together and begin the season of Lent
in the presence and companionship of God and one another.



For those who would like to support the UPC ministry electronically, please scan this code to access our website's online giving page: Note: There is a fee associated with using this application.



Wednesday Morning Bible Study 9:30 am

Join us as we explore the Bible.
Everyone is welcomed.
Our study is *One-Offs Pondering
One chapter Books of the Bible.*

Check out our 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.

February

2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<div>Pastor Paul will be in the office on Tuesday and Wednesdays . He will be in his home office on Thursdays and Fridays.</div> <div>Lynn in office Wed &Thurs 1:30 -4:00 pm</div>				1	2	3
4 Youth Group 9:30 am Sunday Worship 10:30 am Communion Pot Luck	5	6	7 WMBS 9:30 am	8	9	10
11 Youth Group 9:30 am Sunday Worship 10:30 am	12 GLAD 6:30 pm	13 Boards meet 5:00 pm Council meets 6:00 pm	14 No WMBS Prayer Shawl 2:00 pm Ash Wednesday 7:00 pm	15	16	17
18 Youth Group 9:30 am Sunday Worship 10:30 am	19	20	21 WMBS 9:30 am Lunch Comm. 2:00 pm	22	23	24
25 Youth Group 9:30 am Sunday Worship 10:30 am	26 GLAD 6:30 pm	27	28 WMBS 9:30 am Prayer Shawl 2:00 pm	29		

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