

BETHEL MESSENGER

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1

Letter from your Pastor

Wow! Has it been a month already? It seem like just yesterday that I first met with the Consistory about the possibility of being your interim minister. As I write this, I will have participated in four regular worship services, led the Ash Wednesday service, met with the Consistory and attended one of the Lenten soup supper services!

Last month I wrote about my sense of how the 'interim time' can affect a church, and how I would hope we could keep a 'windshield' point of view. As I've gotten to know you better, I

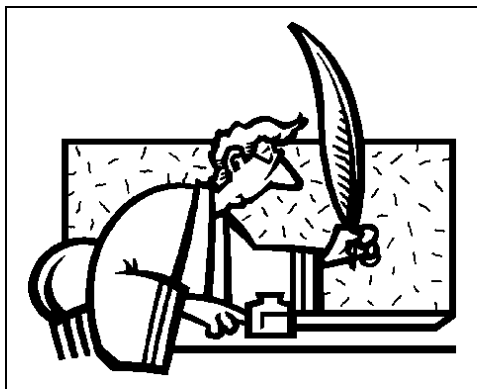
realize that you, the people of Bethel UCC, are less concerned with the past (although you still honor it) but realize that the present and the future are primary and will continue to shape who you are as the church, the Body of Christ.

Yet as we experience the present and anticipate the future, we must realize that our journey together won't always be straight and smooth. There will be what I like to call 'speed bumps' on our journey that might distract us from our goals. Some might discern these 'speed bumps' as signs that we should turn back to the old ways, stop looking forward but instead concentrate our vision at our feet so

that we won't stumble.

Often it will be difficult to discern the 'right' path to take. Then, when it comes down to the nitty gritty, when it comes down to actually taking those steps of faith, we discover our hearts aren't in it, and we discover anew the meaning of that old saying, "I just didn't have the heart for it."

God does. God continues to encourage us and empower us to make those 'leaps of faith', even when they are at times more difficult than we could ever imagine.



The 'interim time' is certainly one of those times when we struggle with who we are and who God is calling us to be. Even with the strong lay leadership that Bethel UCC is blessed with, a 'settled' pastor has much to offer.

So once again I would suggest that you keep your Search Committee in your thoughts and your prayers. Their task might be daunting, but with your encouragement and God's help, they will find a pastor that will continue in the fine work of those that have gone before.

Until that time, I personally feel blessed to be able to share this journey with you. My prayer is that, as we travel together, we might traverse the 'speed bumps' with grace and the firm knowledge that God has traveled with us in the past, is traveling with us now, and will continue to be with us into the future.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Greg

1 Consistory Meeting

Tuesday, February 3, 2009 7:00PM

Opening Prayer/Devotions – was led by Jim Raquet

Members Present – Ken Matzdorf, Jim Raquet, Judy Zimmermann, Eric Raquet, Faye Spindler and Chuck Grubisic



Secretary Minutes- Ken read minutes from January 6th meeting. Article number 3 was changed; the first sentence was deleted.

Faye made a motion to approve corrected minutes. Eric seconded it. The motion was approved.

Report of Receipts- Judy handed out a report of January Income.

Chuck made a motion to approve the Receipts. Faye seconded. The motion was approved.

Report of Expenses- Faye handed out her report.

Overview: Major expenses were pastoral support, insurance, snow plowing and Web Pro. Income was more than expenses.

Discussion: A question was asked about health insurance for UCC Conference. The answer was we pay for that insurance whether we have a minister or not. Ken made a motion to approve the Treasurers Report. Judy seconded. The motion was approved.

Memorial Fund Saving Account- Eric

passed out his report and a list of names for leaf plaques needing to be ordered to show who purchased bricks for the building fund.

Overview: Income was more than expenses.

Faye made a motion to approve the report. Judy seconded. The motion was approved.

Building Fund Income Statement- Chuck discussed his handout.

Overview: There is still money we owe to our brick investors. Income was above expenses and we have earmarks to the new 'audio/visual improvement fund'.

Faye made a motion to approve the report. Eric seconded. The motion was approved.

Correspondence- Jim handed out mail he has received to share with consistory.

1. God is still speaking Feb. 21st.
2. Salvation Army thank you for our support-will be put in the messenger.
3. SCIO sent a request for our annual contribution. Ken moved that we continue the \$100 commitment for 2009. Faye second. Motion was approved.
4. Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ sent a request asking us to release comment on any Sexual harassment issues involving Reverend Sara. Consistory approved a negative response, meaning no harassment issues are known to the members of this board.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Old Items

1. **Interim pastor update** – Contract review – Insurance issue is still open. Jim will follow up on

contract with Art Willie. Jim went over the contract.

Chuck made a motion to approve the interim contract in principle. Judy seconded. CARRIED!

2. Secretary Software – Chuck provided and update – Free software available through google. Will be operational by May. Calendar will be in outlook express.
3. Baby Shower at Church – Feb. 22 - Bev Voss request. Judy will notify Janet of activity. Eric made motion to approve the activity. Chuck second. CARRIED!

New Items

1. Lenten Plan – Pastor Greg will be asked for Ash Wednesday if a contract is approved in time. Worship team has planned the rest of the Wednesdays, including 6:30 soup supper and 7:30 worship.
2. Designate Lenten Offerings - Judy made a motion to use the Lenten offerings to offset the meal hosting fee for SCIO. Faye seconded; CARRIED!
3. Annual Meeting Review – Campaign to be started to collect money for the new sound system; to be promoted by the Stewardship committee; TABLED!
4. Any other business that needs to be discussed – Forward in Faith has increased from what was in the budget by about (\$70) = \$1594

Adjournment - Eric made the motion; Chuck seconded. Meeting was adjourned

Closed with the Lord's Prayer

Next meeting: March 3, 2009 (7:00 P.M.)

The Sunshine team needs your help.

We need you to help us if someone is sick or in the hospital or a thinking of you, so that we can send a card. Also if you know if someone from the church has a family member who has passed away so that we can send a sympathy card. We also need this information on new babies, baptism, graduation, confirmation, and weddings. You can call Carol Eckardt at 565-2372 or email at carkar@tds.net. Thank you.



Does your spirit sing or slumber during worship?

Feedback/reflection groups help our church complete the circle of communication. Feedback/reflection groups focusing on the experience of worship are now being organized. Sessions will be held April 26th and May 3rd following the worship service. You may sign up for one such group on the sign-up sheets you will find in the narthex April 5th through the 26th. Or you may call one of the Pastoral Relations Committee, whose names are listed below. Sandie Kraemer 876-2267, Carol Matzdorf 876-3501, or John Anderson 565-2326.



Holy Week Schedule

Maundy Thursday - 7:00 p.m.

Worship service with Communion

Good Friday - 7:00 p.m.

Ecumenical Service at Gloria Dei
ELCA, New Holstein

Easter Sunday - 8:00 a.m. Worship service with Communion

Easter Sunday – 9:00 a.m. Easter Breakfast

Easter Sunday - 10:00 a.m. Worship Service with Communion

BACK BAY MISSION – A Center for Community Ministry

Dear Friends:

Thank you so much for making a direct gift to Back Bay Mission in 2008 for the first time! We are honored that you have entrusted us with your gifts, and we pledge to be faithful stewards of them.

In 2008, your support helped us provide food, clothing, and financial assistance to 5,380 individuals. We partnered with 1,600 United Church of Christ volunteers from throughout the country to rehabilitate or newly construct 50 homes in neighborhoods still struggling to recover from Hurricane Katrina. We provided permanent supportive housing to homeless people suffering from chronic disabilities through our 14 apartments, and provided other vital services to an additional 1,003 individuals experiencing homelessness. We purchased property in Pass Christian, Mississippi, one of the hardest hit communities on the Gulf Coast, for the purpose of developing affordable housing. And we continued to show imagination and perseverance as our advocacy efforts centered around the daunting need for affordable housing in our area. We also began construction on our own campus to replace buildings we ourselves lost to Katrina in 2005. There's just no question: your investment in Back Bay Mission enabled us to multiply ministry in tremendous ways!

To assist you in keeping connected with Back Bay Mission, we have added your name to our mailing list. You will now receive quarterly newsletters and other correspondence throughout the year. Please let me know if you desire any other information, or if we can somehow help you share the Back Bay Mission story with others. Feel free to stop by for a visit if you are ever in our neighborhood, and know that we are always open to your

interest and your questions.

Once again, thank you so much for your support. With your gifts, we are making a substantive difference in the lives and experiences of many.

Grace and peace,
Rev. Shari Prestemon
Executive Director

CHICAGO UNITED EDEN – Seminaries of the United Church of Christ

Dear Friends in Christ:

Thank you for the gift(s) received during the months of September-December, 2008 in the amount of \$177.00 that we received from you in support of theological education at Chicago, United and/or Eden Seminaries.

Our seminaries are critical to the life of the United Church of Christ and your support is critical to our seminaries! We are especially grateful for that support as we come to the end of our 2008 fiscal year.

Equipping new leaders with the strength of faith, integrity, and vision that come from a deep biblical grounding continues to be essential to the mission of each of our seminaries today. Your dollars provide vital support for the daily operations of our seminaries as they continue to fulfill their mission.

From all of the dedicated faculty and staff, and energetic, faith-filled students at our United Church of Christ seminaries, thank you! Thank you for your financial support for their work, and please continue to hold them all in your prayers.

With deep gratitude,
Ann S. Moyer
Executive Director