

# The Spark



## Count Your Blessings and Pray

As we approach the upcoming holiday season, it is important that each of us takes the time to recognize how blessed we are. Yes, we face challenges in this life, and some of those challenges bring great heart-ache. We struggle with our health, we struggle with our relationships, we struggle with providing our basic needs, and yet in the total scheme of things, it is amazing how God has provided for us.

Sometimes, his provision is that he opens doors for us to be able to earn the money that we need to pay our bills. Other times, he moves in the hearts of others who generously help us out during times of difficulty. These are examples of things that we have seen when coming to the aid of people in the path of the recent hurricanes in the southeastern part of our country. We would hope that the same would be true for us if we ever faced some sort of a natural disaster here in northern Michigan. But we also have to think of the places in the world where there is a great human suffering and very often, this suffering is brought about because of the presence of evil.

We should be grateful for organizations such as Samaritans Purse, because of the compassionate care and efficient use of the funds they receive. But we should also remember

the places in the world where there are great needs that are unmet.

We think of innocent individuals who are caught in war zones, and we think of people here in our own country who fall between the cracks of government support and private charities.

Wherever the needs are, may we be praying that God will move in the hearts of those who have the ability to help. May we also be praying for His protection and provision, because in this world, we are his church. His church crosses denominational lines and is synonymous with the "Body of Christ". Let us truly be the church and shine His light as we approach the celebration of his birth at the beginning of a new year in His service.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

**Pastor Jim Huber**

**November  
2024**

**First  
Union  
Church**

- **Count Your Blessings**
- **Matter of Prayer**
- **Board Highlights**
- **The Recipe Box**
- **Wisps**
- **from Willow**



# A Matter of Prayer

## O GOD, DEFENDER OF THE POOR AND OPPRESSED,

Help us to hear their cries and come to their aid. Teach us to see with your eyes their tremendous dignity and to care for them as you care. Let us see in them your face, that through our solidarity with them they may experience your compassion, concern and love.

Lord, hear our prayer ... for the poor, the homeless, the unemployed and those who live without life's basic necessities; We especially pray for those living in terror and fear; May the Prince of Peace be near to them and bless them with hope, in Jesus Christ's name we pray, Amen.

### Please continue to pray for the following people:

**Randy Dunn** has gone through so much with his heart, but he looks much better since his last hospital stay. It was encouraging to me just to see his big smile again. Please keep praying for his health.

**Dick Carr**, on dialysis three times a week

**Julie Watkins**, peace of mind

**Carl TerHaar and Karl Nelson**, for encouragement

**Jordan & Miranda Sweeney** for the loss of their baby by stillbirth. Pray for peace for Jordan and Miranda and their families.

**Lynda VanderVusse** had a very successful "robotic" knee replacement surgery. She is recovering very well.

**Pat Smith**, a resident at Cedar Cove, passed away last week. Please pray for her family. Her obituary will be in the next Cedar Cove newsletter and online. She will be missed. You may remember seeing Pat's smiling face at the Maritime Museum, where she and her husband, **Brad**, worked for several summers.

**Sherri Huff** was all ready to have foot surgery, but was sent home from My Michigan in the Soo because some generators were down. Her surgery did eventually happen successfully.

**The Berryhills** have a new great-grandchild and another one we have prayed for is doing well and is due around Thanksgiving. Pray for a healthy baby and a safe delivery.

Pray for **Cedar Cove Assisted Living, Northwoods Christian Camp, and Cedar Bay Camp & Retreat Center.**

Pray for **Jack Hays'** and **Tom Moore's** health struggles and recoveries.

Pray for **Lynn Forrester** and her upcoming back surgery.

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If I die tomorrow, I'll be with the Lord.  
If I live tomorrow, the Lord will be with me.

Either way, I belong to him.

And I can never thank him enough for staying by my side through thick and thin.

## Board Highlights 10-28-24

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. and was opened with prayer.

Attendance – Present: Mike Bolcer, Del Jacob, Rick Wilson, George Huff, Sherri Huff, Solana and Daniel Peterson, Jeremy Bigelow, Marcia Perkins, Pastor Huber and Mike Jellison. Mike Davis and Christy O'Hare arrived by 7:00 p.m.

Minutes of the 9-23-24 meeting were reviewed.

Mike Jellison moved, Terry Moore second, Unanimous vote to accept

Treasurer's Report – Rick Wilson

Updated status (monthly). Report on file. New acct set up with Fidelity for excess mission giving. Short and long term planning - discussion - no action taken

Pastor's Report – Jim Huber, attendance has leveled out for fall and winter months.

New members - Jericho and Brianne Haust (along with their children Grace, Oliver, Josie, Edith, and Walter)

Elder's Report – Mike Bolcer - New Elders on board and meeting weekly (or more as needed)

Deacon's Report – Updates on various projects. Recent findings on the structural integrity of the deck around the Manse

- ☐ Chair repair
  - ☐ Vinal siding and conduit repair jobs.
  - ☐ Patch in janitor closet repaired
  - ☐ Water sample submitted; nitrates are due before 12/31.
  - ☐ Front door of Church needs painted; Del Neville agreed to do the work.
  - ☐ Manse decking/lattices being removed. New decking in planning phase.
  - ☐ Terry Moore contacted nursery near Elk Rapids (Barnes) about trees to border manse west property.
- Motion by Mike Davis to approve tree planting project to the money amt of \$4000  
Second by Del Jacob. Unanimously approved.

Youth Programs – Daniel/Solana - 2 new students coming to youth group, seven total now. Working on Operation Christmas Child. Had a good time at corn maze.

Christian Education – Marcia Perkins/Christy Cloud-O'Hare. Anchor Club has 42 registered students, with donations and volunteers. Downstairs is 10-11 students on Sunday morning.

Women's Association – Sherri Huff - Thinking about possible cooking/baking/class for young women. Thinking about craft Saturday also once per month.

Mission Committee – Rick Wilson and Jim Huber - Moxness video presentation is being planned by Pastor Huber. Committee is discussing how to increase support and emphasis on missions. Committee next meets on Thursday, November 14 at 9:00 a.m.

Old Business – Men's Fall Banquet - Monday, November 4, 5:30 p.m. Contact person: Mike Bolcer

New Business - Community Thanksgiving Service Tuesday, November 26, 7:00 p.m, Hessel Presbyterian Church; Singspiration - January 6, 6:00 p.m.; Foster parent's presentation on a Sunday a.m. (5 mins) with display during coffee hour

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m. The next scheduled board meeting is Monday, November 25, 6:30 p.m. (no December meeting on December 23)

Respectfully submitted, Marcia Perkins

### **Soup & Sandwich Luncheon**

First Union Church  
Cedarville, MI

A variety of soups, sandwiches & desserts

Open to the public  
(No charge)

**Upcoming dates:**

**Nov. 21~noon**

**Jan.16~noon**

**Feb. 20~noon**

**Mar. 20~noon**

## The Recipe Box Sue Rye

Hi everyone, time to settle into winter-mode now. Heavy jackets, where are your boots? Anything you can wear to stay warm! I had to get new boots for this year...just want to tell you to be prepared, prices are UP!! On to recipes. This is my apple pie recipe and I love it. For me, the trick is not too much cinnamon. I don't like it so brown with cinnamon that you can't taste the apples, but if you love cinnamon, then go for it!

### Apple Pie

6 cups of apples, peeled & sliced  
2 T. flour  
1 T. grated lemon rind  
1/4 t. salt  
1/2 t. cinnamon

Put apples (of your choice) in the bottom of an unbaked crust

Mix other dry ingredients and pour over apples evenly, then add top crust

Bake at 450-degrees for 10 minutes and then at 375-degrees for 40-50 minutes

\*\*\*My best tip for this pie was that I would go to Gordon's Food Service and order a big tin of frozen, pre-peeled and sliced apples. I would thaw them and divide them into Ziploc freezer bags with enough apples for a pie in each bag and then re-freeze them. I haven't done this in years so I don't know if they even sell them that way anymore, but I'm telling you, that was just a slick way to go!

I did a little reading up on preparing your Thanksgiving bird, and believe it or not, it said, "Do not wash or rinse off your bird." In the end all that does is make any bacteria spread. Take paper towels and pat the bird as dry as you can. This will make for a nice, crispy skin on the bird when it cooks.

Here's another tip...you can feed your fur baby some Thanksgiving leftovers, such as turkey, cranberries, and sweet potatoes. Do not give him onions or garlic or highly seasoned food. My mother was the type who made us sit at the

table until your plate was clean, even if it was something like liver, which I absolutely detested. I remember one time I was still at the table a good hour later and my older brother, Roger, came in, saw the liver, threw it in the trash, and said, "Get out of here". I took off! So the upshot is...I never made my kids eat anything they hated. Now that I'm older, I think there must have been a middle ground. Like, **"Try one bite"**...Okay~ here's the reason I said all that. I don't want to put in recipes of just foods I like. This next recipe is a parsnip/carrot puree, and although I like carrots, maybe you love parsnips, but I don't!

### Parsnip & Carrot Puree

2 carrots, peeled and cut in 2-inch pieces  
4 medium parsnips, peeled and cubed  
1/4 cup snipped chives or sliced green onions  
6 T butter, room temperature  
1/2 t salt  
1/4 t black pepper  
1 to 2 T butter (optional)

In a large pan and one-inch of water, bring parsnips & carrots to a boil; reduce heat. Simmer 15-20 minutes, covered until tender. Drain and return vegetables to pan. Add chives, 6 T butter, and salt and pepper. Puree with an immersion blender (or transfer to a regular blender) until smooth. Garnish with the 2 T butter and additional chives and pepper. Serve as a side dish.

P.S. When I first read this recipe, I thought it said *Parsnips & Curry* (two things I do not care for). But lo and behold, it said *Parsnips & Carrots*. So I'm thinking this recipe might qualify for the **"Try one bite"** theory.







You can have flaws, be anxious, and even be angry, but don't forget that your life is the greatest business in the world. Only you can stop it from failure. You are appreciated, admired, and loved by many. Remember that being happy is not about having a sky without storms, a road without accidents, a job without effort, or relationships without disappointments.

"Being happy is to stop feeling a victim and become the author of your own destiny. It's going through deserts, but being able to find an oasis deep in your soul. It's to thank God every morning for the miracle of life. It's kissing your children, cuddling your parents, having poetic moments with your friends, even when they hurt us.

"To be happy is to let live the creature that lives in each of us, free, joyful and simple. It's having maturity to be able to say: "I made mistakes". Having the courage to say "I'm sorry". It's having a sensitivity to say "I need you". Is having the ability to say "I love you". May your life become a garden of opportunities for happiness... that in spring I can be a lover of joy and in winter a lover of wisdom.

"And when you make a mistake, start over. Because only then will you fall in love with life. You will find that being happy doesn't

mean having a perfect life. But she uses tears to irrigate tolerance. Use your defeats to train your patience. Use your mistakes with the serenity of the sculptor. Use pain to tune into pleasure. Use obstacles to open the windows of intelligence. Never give up ... Above all, never give up on the people who love you. Never give up on happiness, because life is an amazing show."

-POPE FRANCIS

**Sue Freel** leads the opening for our Sunday School's Primary Department.



**Dick Carr** recently made a beautiful new sign for the back door of the church. Thank you, Dick, for your many years of faithful service!



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# *The Spark*

*Creating intentional followers of Jesus Christ*

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