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ALPHA 8 OMEGA

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During the great forty days of Lent we are encouraged to reflect upon our relationship with God and with one another particularly in those areas where "we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep." As part of this reflection I asked those who participated in the first Lenten Study to consider what it means for us as individuals to confess that "I believe in God," the first four words of the Apostles Creed.

To say that "I believe in God" is to affirm two things. The first is that such a confession is a personal testimony, a confession that I must own and for which I must take responsibility. I cannot beg, borrow, or steal it. I cannot ride on the coat tails of tradition; or simply acquiesce to what the Church tells me; or, in the case of some at any given Sunday worship service, mouth the words but never engage them at any significant level. To say that "I believe" is to presume that a particular world-view makes sense to me and that I construct my life within the perimeters of that system, in our case, God. Also, to say that "I believe" is to have encountered a particular reality and affirm its efficacy for me. Without that encounter that belief is rendered impotent.

Secondly, to say that "I believe in God" is to acknowledge that I am able to apprehend God in such a way that I can know enough about him to say that I believe. It is virtually impossible to say that I believe in something that cannot be known or experienced. Therefore, I believe in a God who has revealed himself through the natural order, through the many others with whom I come in contact, through the liturgy, in Scripture, within the "groanings" of the Spirit within my life, but fundamentally in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. God is not some great metaphysical proposition; He is and because He is, I can be.

My own story of the journey towards God, or as one theologian has put it, the journey into Christ, is much like other people. At some point, we are compelled to search for meaning to the great questions of life that will somehow transcend our limited understanding. The journey towards God culminates at some point in a freedom of not having to answer all these questions on my own. Our limited understanding opens up onto the light of a much greater reality, and then everywhere we look, God is there, even in the chaos of our lives. We recognize that without that reality, there is no hope for order. So God, by whatever name we call him, transcends "all that we can ask for or imagine," but is also present in the very fabric of who we are, and enables us to become what He has created us to be.

To say that "I believe in God", with any integrity, however, is not accomplished without participation in a community of faith. This community, the Church, serves to guarantee the tradition of faith. What I believe is what we believe and the Church proclaims that belief to be true through the witness of Scripture and the reasoned interpretation of that Scripture. I experience the reality of that proclamation through hearing the word again and sharing in the sacraments. In our own tradition, what we pray is what we believe, not an external set of propositions, but a living, dynamic expression of the reality of God who gives us life and calls us into relationship with him.

I invite you to the observance of a Holy Lent and pray that in those quiet times of reflection and prayer you might meet in a powerful way the God who calls all things into being, who would raise Jesus from the dead, but who also would wash the feet of the disciples and who loves us as his own.

Karen

Grace Episcopal Church
Annual Meeting
Sun., Feb. 2 , 1986

Following an 11:00 a.m. Holy Communion Service with Bishop Anderson and Karen Hall, there followed a potluck dinner and annual meeting.

Senior Warden Merrill Hunter called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. We dispensed with the traditional prayer and opted to sing hymn 718 in deference to the seven astronauts who were killed in the space shuttle Challenger's explosion earlier that week.

Motion by Page and second by Bev Hunter to accept the minutes from the 1985 annual meeting but to dispense with the reading of those minutes. Motion carried.

Motion by Judy Payne and second by Page to accept the 1985 annual financial statement. Motion carried.

Motion by Bev Hunter and second by Richard Moose to accept the oral report on ECW by President Janice Johnson. Motion carried.

Motion by Judy Payne and second by Richard Moose to accept the ECW Treasurer's report by Violet Witt. Motion carried.

Motion by Richard Moose and second by Bev Hunter to accept the oral Sunday School report by Kitty Brewer. Motion carried.

An oral report on the UTO offering was given by Myrtle Newcomb. She reported a contribution of \$245.60 for 1985, as compared with \$218.01 for 1984.

Karen Hall spoke briefly to the meeting, stating that the highlight of her year was working with Grace Church during the summer of 1985. Although we have the potential to double the size of our congregation, she feels that the most important thing for us at present is to strengthen our own faith before we reach out to others. We are at a crossroads, for we are a strong, lively, warm and caring community, and we need to build on that. Because we are at a crossroads, we need to pray daily for direction, and she hopes that we can feel this sense of excitement. She is very glad to be back.

The nominating committee submitted the following names to fill the following vacant positions:

Bishop's Committee: Cory Wrobel
Richard Moose

Delegates to the Annual Convocation: George and Evelvn DeLay, delegates
Richard and Lois Moose, alternates

Motion by Brewer and second by Bev Hunter to accept the nominations.
Motion carried.

Bishop Anderson reported that he had recently spent a few days in Washington, D.C., attending the installation of Bishop Browning. While there he spent a lot of time with Jim and Gloria Pearson. He visited with Jim's professors and learned that he is a fine student and well-liked by everyone there.

Karen referred to a "crossroads" and we are indeed there in the Diocese. He stated that we have added four new priests to the Diocese in the past year, but it is now time to move beyond merely surviving.

"I'm excited about Madison." We have been without a full time priest for 15 years, and now it is time to test this effort in Madison for the next year to year and a half.

He feels that by 1990, we can double the size of the Diocese. Before we can do this, however, we have to discover ourselves as Episcopalians and then evangelism will take care of itself. If our own roots run deeply, we shall be attractive to others. We need to move from survival to fulfillment.

We have all the ingredients but, he cautioned, do not expect Karen to do it all. "She needs help from you."

We were one of the first churches in the state. "Why are we one of the smallest?"

Our venture requires leadership, commitment and hard work. A year ago we were just dreaming, and now we are bringing that dream to fruition.

Senior Warden Hunter closed the meeting by stating that we had had an every-member canvas and that everyone had agreed to increase his pledge in 1986.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine T. Brewer

Katherine T. Brewer
Clerk

Echo's from the Past



The first ECW Guild was formed as soon as first Episcopal services were held in Dakota Territory. It was Epiphany Guild. The Guild held a Christmas Festival on Wednesday, December 27, 1893 at 7:00 p.m. The festivities included a Christmas tree and treats for all. The festivities were held at the Rectory.

Source: Madison Sentinel, Dec. 27, 1893, published Wed Mornning, Vol. 1, No. 102

From the Madison Sentinel, Dec. 30, 1893 Saturday

This announcement for Grace Episcopal Church: Services will be held on Sunday at 10:30 A.M., Sunday School at 12:00 Noon. Bible Class in the evening at the Rectory, the subject is "The Maze." Litany, with a lecture, will be held on Wed. 7:30 p.m. All persons are cordially invited to attend and take part in these exercises.

Rev. J. W. Cleveland, Priest

Source: Madison Leader, April 12, 1890

"Grace Episcopal Church services will be held at 10:30 on 1st and 2nd Sunday of the month and on Sunday evening at 7:30.

St. Paul's Church, Wentworth - Sunday Services on 3rd and 4th Sunday of the month and evening services on Wed. at 7:30 on 3rd and 4th Wednesday's."

Rev. J. W. Cleveland, Priest

Announcement from Madison Sentinel, July 3, 1885. Dakota Territory

Episcopal Services will be held on the 1st Sunday of the Month at 10:30 - Father Morris Priest. He lived at Mitchell.

ELIJAH - He fled for his life through the wilderness, fasting 40 days and nights until he came to Mt. Horeb. There God appeared and instructed him on how to overcome his enemies. I Kings 19:1-18

JESUS - After baptism, Jesus withdrew to the desert to fast and pray for 40 days before beginning his public ministry. Matthew 4:1-2 and Luke 4:1-2.

RECONCILIATION WITH GOD

This involves:

Sorrow for sins: admitting that Christ died for our sins.

Spiritual Growth: acknowledging our dependence on God.

Commitment: is carrying out God's will daily.

Perseverance: keeping faith all year long through all experiences.

"BE DOERS OF THE WORD, AND NOT HEARERS ONLY." James 1:22

(Taken from booklet by Channing Bete Co.)



THE BUTTERFLY is a symbol of Christ's resurrection. The chrysalis stage of the pupa corresponds to the body of Christ in the grave. The pupa bursting the outer covering and emerging as a beautiful butterfly signifies Christ's victory over death and the grave. Since Christ's victory is also the believer's victory, this symbol is used to signify the resurrection of the body for all Christians.

| (Trinity Times)

Bishop's Committee
Mon., Feb. 17, 1986

Senior Warden Hunter called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

PRESENT: George DeLay, Karen Hall, Merrill Hunter, Richard Moose,
Rex Page, Ruby Stewart, Cory Wrobel. Guest was Millie Rumrill.

ABSENT: Warner Boyd, Kitty Brewer, Janice Johnson

Motion by DeLay and second by Stewart to reinvest the memorial funds at 8% in Eastern S. Dak. Rural Electric Association Employees Federal Credit Union. Motion carried.

Treasurer's report for Jan. 1, 1986 showed a balance of \$666.43. The balance as of Jan. 31, 1986 was \$507.41.

DeLay wondered whether we could get on a budget plan for paying our gas bill. Motion by Moose and second by Wrobel to investigate. Motion carried. Moose volunteered to check into this.

Stewart said that the total cost of the insulation and repair project was \$2,018.19. She will bill the Diocese for the balance of \$1,018.19 from the interest on our funds with them.

Hall stated that the Bishop need a letter from Grace outlining our commitment to Karen's ministry. Motion by DeLay and second by Page that Hunter write a letter to Bishop Anderson stating that we could provide \$250.00 per month for Karen's ministry, payable to the Diocese monthly. Motion carried.

Motion by DeLay and second by Page to have Karen ask the Diocese for an accounting of and an explanation of our funds with them. Motion carried.

Some discussion took place on a mailbox at the post office. It was decided that this was too expensive, so DeLay will investigate having a mail slot put into the front door of the church.

Karen suggested that the minutes reflect a big thank you to Richard and Lois Moose for the monthly newsletter Alpha and Omega. There was a unanimous consensus on this. DeLay urged a mailing of the publication to prospective members.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Merrill Hunter (kb)

Merrill Hunter
Senior Warden



LAY READER SCHEDULE

- 2 - Kitty Brewer
- 9 - Rex Page
- 16 - Merrill Hunter
- 23 - Beverly Hunter
- 30 - Rex Page

ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

- 2 - Annie Brewer
- 9 - Ben Johnson
- 16 - Annie Brewer
- 23 - Ben Johnson
- 30 - Annie Brewer

COFFEE

- 2 - Kitty Brewer
- 9 -
- 16 -
- 23 - Beverly Hunter



SPECIAL DAYS OF MARCH

- 17 St. Patrick's Day - Honors the patron saint of Ireland. Legend says that St. Patrick used the three leaves of a shamrock to explain the Trinity.
- 23 Palm Sunday - Marks the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and the beginning of Holy Week.
- 27 Holy Thursday - Commemorates the Disciples' last supper with Jesus and the institution of Holy Communion.
- 28 Good Friday - The day of Jesus' crucifixion.
- 30 Easter - A major holiday of the Christian year in celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus.



GOOD NEWS

Ruby Stewart reported that the insulation is doing its job. The heat bill for February 1985 was \$405.57 and the heat bill for February 1986 was \$196.97. This amount for each bill also included part of January's heat use.

Announcements



There is a calendar in the Guild Hall where you can sign up to serve for Coffee Fellowship. Sign up today!

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Attention:
Women

Women of the Church
Spring Council will be on April 25 & 26. It will be held at Holy Apostles Church in Sioux Falls.

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Remember: Lenten Services on Wednesday Evening at 7:00.

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Birthday
Anniversary

There is a sign up sheet in the Guild Hall to list your birthday and anniversary - just your month and day not the year. Please supply the needed information. Thank you!

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World Day of Prayer is March 7 (Friday) at 2 p.m. It is held at the Presbyterian Church. The topic is "Choose Life."

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STUDY

A Study Series on the Prayer Book is being held on Wednesday Evenings at 7:30 (right after Lenten Service). Any one is welcome to attend.

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Welcome!

New Member of the Church is Judy Payne. One February 2, 1986 Bishop Anderson received her into our Church.



MARCH

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

2 10:00 Sunday Sch 11:00 Morning Prayer 12:00 Coffee	3	4 Birthday: Bev Hunter	5 7:00 Lenten Services 7:30 Study Series	6	7 World Day of Prayer 2:00 p.m. Presbyterian Church "Choose Life"	8
9 10:00 Sunday Sch 11:00 Morning Prayer 12:00 Coffee Birthday: Curly Moose	10	11	12 7:00 Lenten Services 7:30 Series Study	13	14	15
16 10:00 Sunday Sch 11:00 Morning Prayer 12:00 Coffee St. Patrick's Day	17	18	19 7:00 Lenten Services 7:30 Study Series.	20	21	22
23 10:00 Sunday Sch 11:00 Morning Prayer 12:00 Coffee Palm Sunday	24 Birthday: Tom Campbell	25	26	27 7:00 Service Maundy Thursday	28 To be Announced Good Friday	29 Easter Vigil To be Announced
30 11:00 Holy Communion Bishop Gesner Easter	31					