

## Last Wishes Seminar Highlights

Beginning on April 26 and continuing until May 31, twenty three different people participated in the four Last Wishes seminars on things we should all know as we age.

During our first session we talked about services available in the community to help us, whether we are experiencing limited vision or hearing, physical or mental decline, or the inability to manage our finances.

Our second session focused on the paperwork we should all have in place as we age, including Powers of Attorney for medical and financial decisions, and a Health Care Directive in which we spell out the type of medical care we want when we are unable to speak for ourselves. Sherry Mills Moore assisted with the presentation of this information. We learned that Legal Services, 1-866-621-9886, will help those over age 60 create their Health Care Directive at no cost.

During our third session we talked about funerals – traditional burials, cremation, organ donation, and the Deeded Body program of UND. David Wise, a local funeral director, emphasized that all funeral homes are encouraging senior citizens to pre-plan their funerals. Individuals can also pre-pay for their service, but that is a personal choice. Janet Lucas provided information on the Deeded Body program, including pictures of the memorial service held after the bodies are cremated.

During the fourth and final session we talked about nursing home care. Pat Hager had provided a document listing all of the facilities in the Bismarck-Mandan area and the services each provides. Blaine Nordwall traced the development of governmental funding for nursing home care, and answered a lot of questions on eligibility for Medicaid and the different asset tests for a single individual vs. a couple.

Copies of all of the handouts will be compiled into a notebook which will be placed in our church library. Anyone can check out this notebook, or can make photocopies of some of the document it contains. In addition 2 books – Being Mortal and The Other Talk – will also be placed in the library. Both books will be reviewed in the July newsletter.

Thanks go to Sherry Mills Moore, David Wise, Janet Lucas, and Blaine Nordwall for helping to facilitate these seminars, and to Pat Hager and Janis Cheney for providing some of the materials that were either distributed or discussed. As we move into fall, Pat Conrad will follow-up with many of the seminar participants to see if these sessions were helpful, and to learn what each has done to become better prepared for facing the future. In addition Pat will ask how the church can be of assistance when the individual eventually dies, so that each person's final wishes can be honored.

-Pat Conrad

*A special thanks to Pat Conrad for organizing and presenting the  
Last Wishes Seminars to our congregants and the public!*

