

Care Ministry

A day in the life of Faith's Parish Nurse.



Parish Nurse - Ellen Van Arsdale

Monday, March 7, was a busy day for Ellen Van Arsdale Faith Presbyterian Church's new parish nurse. Ellen brings to her job a wealth of experience. Besides being a registered nurse, she holds a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in nursing with an emphasis on community health.

At 9:30 Monday, she led a free exercise class in Illingworth Hall. Wilma McDaniel was one of the people taking advantage of the session. (Exercise classes will be held at 9:30 a.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays.) "It's good that it's free. At my age, I can't spend money on exercise classes", said Mrs. McDaniel. More than the usual number of people were there. "Ellen gave us a rubber ball so we could exercise our arthritic hands at home", said Mrs. McDaniel. To demonstrate how the simple device could loosen stiff finger joints, she held a small red rubber ball in hand and squeezed repeatedly.

Right after exercise class, Parish Nurse Ellen moved to the Council Room where she conducted a seminar on the booklet "Five Wishes" that guides a person on end of life issues. The "Five Wishes" booklet provides questions and forms to help individuals determine their final, end of life wishes. Copies of the "Five Wishes" booklet are available through Ellen or the church office. At the Presbyterian Women's gathering Thursday, April 21, Ellen will provide a program answering the most frequent questions about women's health issues.

All this comes easy to Ellen who has exceptional credentials. She brings with her years of varied professional experience and academic accomplishment. She holds degrees from the University of Iowa and Boston College. She has taught nurses at St. Anselm's in Manchester, N.H., Boston College, Creighton University in Omaha, and Western Michigan University. She has been a visiting nurse, a hospice nurse, a school nurse, an administrator of patient services and most recently parish nurse at Desert Palms Presbyterian Church in Sun City West.