

# UpFront

## What a friend we have in Elvis:

The smell of old-fashioned men's grooming products was the first hint that something would be different about the service at First United Methodist Church's Green Wood location. For pre-sermon music, John Latini sang Greg Brown's "Jesus and Elvis." Then senior pastor Douglas Paterson introduced . . . Elvis, who greeted the crowd in slicked-back hair, muttonchop sideburns, custom-made shiny black suit, and red satin shirt. After tribute artist Chris Ayotte sang from Elvis's Grammy-winning gospel repertoire, Paterson began his sermon with a humorous comparison between the two

"kings," found on the Internet ("Jesus lived in a state of grace in a Near Eastern land; Elvis lived in Graceland in a nearly eastern state"). The idea



for the late-June service came from choir member Katie Geddes, a 1979 Huron grad who manages the church's coffeehouse acoustic-music series. Everyone who heard about the unusual service afterward asked what the sermon was about—but at the church picnic the next day, the women talked about Elvis's eyes. Paterson's topic: "Will the Real King Please Stand Up?"