

# Light of the Northern Plains

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

March 2009

## PRAYER CONCERNS/JOYS

Chris Bohn, an elder at Grandin Presbyterian Church, was diagnosed in December with acute myeloid leukemia. Please keep Chris and family in your prayers at this time.

Please pray for families who find themselves in hard economic times with the loss of a job, home, or retirement funds.

On February 6, 2009 at 7:42 a.m., Eli Roger Homan, son of Spencer (who was a candidate undercare of the presbytery), was born. Eli was 8 pounds 4 ounces, and 20 inches long. Mom and baby are both well.

## 2009 MISSION GRANTS AVAILABLE

The 2009 Presbytery budget contains funds for mission grants.

### Who should apply?

- Churches in the Presbytery
- Presbytery mission teams or committees
- or teams within churches (with session approval)

**What should we apply for?** Funds to assist with special programs or projects.

- A speaker for training for the presbytery.
- Mission in your community or beyond.
- Expanding a church program to reach the unchurched.
- A dream we can help turn into a reality.

**What should we not apply for?** Money to replace church funding for existing programs. Funds for building repairs or equipment. Funds for staff.

Funding will be approved by the Presbytery Council. To apply submit a one-page description of the project and financial needs (budget).

Verification of expenses (receipts) will be expected upon completion of the project.

Mail completed request to:

Presbytery of the Northern Plains  
5555 South Washington Street, Suite A  
Grand Forks, North Dakota 58201

Or email: [pnppoffice@gmail.com](mailto:pnppoffice@gmail.com)

If you have questions, please call the Presbytery office at 701-772-0782 or Gretchen Graf, Chair of Budget and Finance, at 701-775-5545.



## PNP SELF DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE GRANT \$3,200



Presbytery of the Northern Plains Committee on the Self Development of People (SDOP) awarded \$3200 in grants this spring to two organizations that are combating poverty. The Immigrant Development Center, Fargo, ND, was awarded \$2000 to help support the "International Market Plaza." A national grant is pending. Mujeres Unidas of the Red River Valley, Moorhead, MN, was awarded \$1200 for computer(s) for their programming with women and youth in Casa Latina. These two

groups also received a Synod grant and are being recommended for a national grant.

Since 1970, the SDOP of the Presbyterian Church (USA) has been a partner in grassroots projects around the world that seek to improve the lives of poor and underserved people. Its mission has been and continues to be a God-inspired work "toward the self-development of economically poor, oppressed, and disadvantaged people who own, control, and benefit directly" from such projects.

The SDOP receives a third of the fund from the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. Through your gifts to the One Great Hour of Sharing, thousands of communities here in the United States and around the world have had an opportunity to develop solutions to their own challenges.

If you would like to learn more about SDOP committee and grants, go to: <http://www.pcusa.org/sdop/> or contact the Presbytery office at 701-772-0783 or email [pnppoffice@gmail.com](mailto:pnppoffice@gmail.com).

## ALL THINGS NEW!

Are you a person who suspects that the church must change in response to a new century, but you're not sure just what that means? Would you like to be in conversation about what works and what doesn't as the local church reaches out to your community? Would you like to share ideas with like-minded people?

Join the new Google Group **All Things New!**

This group is sponsored by the Synod of Lake and Prairies for church members and pastors who care about the future of the church and want to discuss new ways of being in ministry.

Although membership requires an invitation, all those requesting membership will be added to the group. Request your invitation to the group today by sending an email to: Gretchen Graf at [ggraf@gra.midco.net](mailto:ggraf@gra.midco.net) or Cheryl Biller at [cheryl@plantproinc.com](mailto:cheryl@plantproinc.com).

## REFORMED SPIRITUALITY WITH THE REV. DR. GARY HANSEN



The Rev. Dr. Gary Hansen, Prof of Church History and Calvin scholar from the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary.

In today's world it seems that everyone wants to explore "spirituality" but few expect to find it in the teachings of the church. "Spiritual, but not religious" is a familiar term. So is "Reformed theology." What about "Reformed spirituality?"

**RASCAL (Reformed According to the Scriptures: Companions Active in Learning)** invites you to become a "companion active" with us "in learning" more about

Reformed Spirituality. On May 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Prof. Gary Hansen, Church Historian and Calvin scholar from the University of Dubuque Theological seminary will lead us in a time of exploring a Reformed approach to spirituality.

In this weekend retreat we will look at practices that nurture the spiritual life as taught by the great leaders of our tradition, like John Calvin—whose 500<sup>th</sup> birthday we celebrate this year. Is there anything distinctive about the spirituality taught in the Reformed tradition? We will look at a range of topics, all of which have shaped the spiritual lives of our people and our churches when we were most thriving. We will look at Calvin's approach to Scripture and to prayer. We will look at the special role of the Psalms, and at the Confessions which seek to help us understand Scripture as a whole. We will look at individual practices like journaling, and corporate practices like small group fellowships. As well as group presentations, we will learn by experience in conversations, and times of practice in solitude.

The gathering will take place at Devils Lake, ND at the Fireside Inn and Suites on Highway 2 East. We expect to begin in the early afternoon on Friday

May 1<sup>st</sup>, and to conclude with lunch on Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

To register for this time of learning, fellowship, and spiritual renewal please send the registration form along with a check (made out to PNP) for \$35 to the address noted below. Some scholarship assistance is available.

Please contact the Fireside Inn & Suites (<http://firesideinnandsuites.com/>) directly to reserve a room. Their phone number is (701) 662-6760. When reserving, refer to the RASCAL seminar. The rate on a standard room will be \$65.00 plus 10% tax per night. Other rooms (suites, etc.) are also available at a discounted rate. You may reserve a room for additional nights at the same rate. All reservations must be secured by credit card by April 1, 2009.

For further information about RASCAL or this event, please contact Paul Kuhn at (701) 477 5376 or through the presbytery office.

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### Registration form

Complete this form and send with your \$35 registration fee (payable to the Presbytery of the Northern Plains) to:

RASCAL  
Presbytery of the Northern Plains  
5555 South Washington Street, Suite A  
Grand Forks, ND 58201

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## “LIVING IN A MATERIAL WORLD”

Youth Retreat – April 17-19, 2009



The Presbytery of the Northern Plains Youth Retreat will be held on April 17-19, 2009 at Crystal Springs Camp (40 miles west of Jamestown).

During the weekend, the youth will explore what it means to be a Christian in our Material World.

Advertisers tell us that to be successful we have to wear the right clothes, drive the coolest cars, live in the biggest house, and be the most athletic. Throughout the weekend we will use large group sessions, small cell groups, games, skits, and other activities to help us better understand what God has to say about all this “stuff.” This is a topic that we can all relate to.

**Who Can Come?** All 6<sup>th</sup> grade through 12<sup>th</sup> grade youth are invited to come. Friends are welcome!

**When Is It?** The retreat will begin with registration at 7:15 pm on Friday, April 17, 2009 and will conclude after worship on Sunday, April 19, 2009.

**How Much Is It?** The cost of the entire weekend is only \$75. This includes lodging, food, and program expenses. Checks can be made payable and sent to the United Presbyterian Church, 302 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue SE, Jamestown, ND 58401. Financial assistance is available.

**What Do I Need to Bring?** Sleeping bag and pillow (mattresses provided). Clothing, toiletries, and towel, Bible, notebook, and pen/pencil. Homework, if needed (free time will be provided).

For more information, go to the Presbytery’s website at [www.northernplainspresbytery.com](http://www.northernplainspresbytery.com) or contact Pastor Dave at United Presbyterian Church of Jamestown at 701-252-1748.

## COVENANT/CREATION CONNECTION

By: The Rev. John Gibbs, Presbyterians for Restoring Creation

The covenant/creation connection appears on all five Sundays of Lent.

The crisis that humanity inflicts on itself and the world does not have the last word. God does. The covenant that God makes with the earth (Gen. 9:8-17) repels chaos, preserves the face of God in us the “imagers,” and establishes the Creator’s sustaining care at and as the heart of the universe.

Human community and all creation together strain expectantly toward their common fate, in a process and an outcome never separated from “the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:31ff.). There will be new birth. Labor pains this time are not in vain.

God, who “from heaven” made 10 memorable promises, requires that we make “only an altar of earth,” using un-chiseled natural stones (Ex. 20:22-24). Those 10 promises portray the release God brings in perennial exodus, in deliverance from slavery to other gods. The “steadfast love of God” urges from Mt. Sinai: “Do not be afraid”; from shepherds’ fields: “Do not be afraid”; and from Jesus, despite his being encircled by men lying in wait to catch him: “Do not be afraid.” (Ex. 20:6,20; Luke 2:10 and 12:32). “All these

## RESOURCES

### **Honor Your Father & Mother; Leader and Student** (book)

This study for middle adults addresses the issues faced by many persons “in the middle.” The seven core sessions cover the myths and realities of aging, what it means to be caught in the “sandwich” between needs of children and parents, interpersonal relationships, and the spiritual journey shared with aging parents or other older persons. The six spin-off sessions offer helpful insights to related themes, ministry by, with, and for older adults; alternate living arrangements; dimensions of retirement and more.

### **Nobody’s Child: A Generation Caught in the Middle** (book)

Part of the Kaleidoscope Series, this six-session course focus on middle-aged persons, sometimes called “The Sandwich Generation,” because they are caught between young adult children and aging parents. This resource enables persons to explore and examine the supports and tensions of these generational relationships.

### **Every Member in Ministry: Involving Laity and Inactives** (book)

A practical guide for stewardship of money and laity. Contains sample form letters, attendance registration techniques, and designs for training laity, intended to increase participation of laity and of financial pledges.

### **Management of Ministry (The): Building Leadership in a Changing World** (book)

Anderson and Jones offer a thoughtful, comprehensive text to help pastors and laity understand their role and the role of the church in the context of the community.

To borrow a resource, contact the **Resource Center for Churches** at [info@resourcesforthejourney.org](mailto:info@resourcesforthejourney.org) or telephone (888) 293-9901 (toll free). The staff will gladly reserve one of these or another resource for you. The center has books, DVDs, reference works, choir anthems, and even a labyrinth available for loan. For a complete listing of resources, go to: <http://resourcesforthejourney.org/>

words” (Gen. 20:1), misnamed as commandments, are promises that tell how it will be in our relationships with God, neighbors, creatures. We can choose hope, not fear.

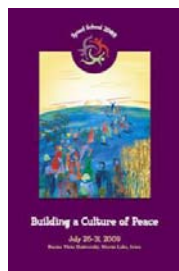
Such promises are rooted in “a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ...For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.” (Ephesians 1:10; 2:4-10) Notice: “created for good works,” not for destructive “dominion” against Creator, against creation, against “image” of the Creator.

“One heart and one way” are gifts of “the new covenant” God makes. It is the unbroken covenant not only with God’s People but also with day and night! Indeed, the God-given reliability (“fixed order”) of sun, moon, and stars, also of day and night, assure us that God’s covenant can be counted on to endure. (Jeremiah 31:31-35; 32:38-41; 33:19-22)

God would rather die than not be God for us. Global warming, sexual orientation, eco-justice, a shrinking church amending her constitution – we approach all such matters with hope in the God who makes “everlasting covenant.”

### SPRING PRESBYTERY MEETING

Next Presbytery Meeting will be on April 24 & 25, 2009 at United Presbyterian Church of Jamestown. Meeting material will be posted on the Presbytery website at [www.northernplainspresbytery.com](http://www.northernplainspresbytery.com) by April 8, 2009.



### SYNOD SCHOOL 2009 – BUILDING A CULTURE OF PEACE

By: *Duane Sweep, Synod of Lakes & Prairies*

Synod School 2009, slated Sunday through Friday, July 26-31, at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa, will convene around the theme, "Building a Culture of Peace." Synod School is an educational ministry of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies.

Synod School offers a welcoming and safe community for people of all ages and interest to learn, to grow spiritually, and to share in fellowship. Special programs for children and youth - infant through grade 12 - allow parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles and more - to attend classes with other adults, knowing that their children are in good care and having a great time.

Sara Lisherness, director of the Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), will be the 2009 convocation speaker. Evening worship will be led by "Sweet the Sound," featuring Matt and Liz Myer Boulton, and Burns and Lorraine Stanfield, who are all colleagues in ministry in the Boston area.

Synod School 2008 drew 598 people to Storm Lake.

The Synod School committee has noted that \$50 tuition scholarships will be available to the first 56 "first-timers" who register - one for each year Synod School has been held.

Promotional materials for Synod School 2009 will be sent to churches, Synod School alumni and Presbyterian Women leadership in January for use in bulletins and newsletters. The course catalog and registration materials will be mailed at the end of February. All promotional materials will be posted on the Synod website, <http://www.lakesandprairies.org/school.html>, when they become available.

### Presbytery's Calendar

March 1	Paul Henschen installation service at Pres/United Methodist Church, Ellendale
March 10	COM CC
March 19	Council Mtg at United Presbyterian Church of Jamestown
April 4	Spring PW Gathering at United Presbyterian Church of Jamestown
April 10	Good Friday – Office closed
April 17-19	Spring Youth Retreat at Crystal Springs Camp
April 24	COM Mtg RASCALS Mtg
April 24-25	Spring Presbytery Meeting at United Presbyterian Church of Jamestown
May 1-2	Reformed Spiritually at Fireside Inn & Suites in Devils Lake
Aug 28-30	Prayer Retreat at Red Willow Bible Camp

CC = Conference Call  
VCS = Video Conferencing Sites

PNP vision statement:

**“A vibrant, informed, Presbyterian community which nourishes ministry and joins in Christ’s mission.”**

Would you like to receive the Light of the Northern Plains electronically? You can by signing up for the paperless edition. It costs nothing. To sign up, simply email [pnpoffice@gmail.com](mailto:pnpoffice@gmail.com) and request to be put on the electronic newsletter list.

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Laurie Elhard, Communications Coordinator

Other contributors: Duane Sweep, John Gibbs, David Thompson, Paul Kuhn, Gretchen Graf

A copy deadline for the Light is the twenty-fifth of the month. Items may be sent to:

Laurie Elhard  
Presbytery of the Northern Plains  
5555 South Washington Suite A  
Grand Forks, ND 58201  
701-772-0783  
[pnpoffice@gmail.com](mailto:pnpoffice@gmail.com)