

# Light of the Northern Plains

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

November 2011

## PRAYER CONCERNS/JOYS

Lorelee Rude, Moderator of the Presbytery, will marry Ryan Benz on Saturday, November 22, at First Presbyterian Church in Fargo. They will make their home in Fargo. Please pray for Lorelee and Ryan as they start their lives as a married couple.

The Rev. Gretchen Graf will end her ministry with the First Pres. Church of Grand Forks and begin long term leave on November 13. Please pray for Gretchen and the congregation.

Nancy Emerson mother died recently. Nancy is a member at large of the Presbytery and former teaching elder of First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead. Please keep Nancy and her whole family in your prayers during this time.

Morris Maruska passed away October 16, 2011, at the age of 93. Morris was a longtime member of the Angus Tabor Presbyterian Church and over the years was very active in a number of elected positions in the connectional church, including being the first moderator of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains, vice-moderator and moderator of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. Please keep the Maruska family in your prayers. Condolences may be sent to: Mark & Deb Maruska, 35672 140th St NW, Angus MN 56762

Please hold our Chogoria partners in your prayers.



## CALL FOR THE DECEMBER PRESBYTERY MEETING

By: Elder Michael Lochow, Presbytery Stated Clerk

The one-hundred-fourth stated meeting of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains will be held by video conference on Saturday, December 3, 2011, beginning at 12:30 p.m. The video conference sites are Community Presbyterian Church in West Fargo, ND; United Presbyterian Church in Jamestown, ND; First Presbyterian Church in Minot, ND; and First Presbyterian Church in Grand Forks, ND. Please plan to attend the site closest to your location. The meeting is scheduled to beginning at 12:30 p.m.; please make sure to partake in your lunch prior to the meeting.

There will be a report on the presbytery-wide retreat which is to be held on November 18 and 19, in Jamestown, ND. The objective of the retreat is to get a picture of the Presbytery's demographics, finances, and mission activities, to review the outcomes of planning work done over the past 18 months, and to discern the path God is leading us as we look to the future of the Presbytery.

Among other items of business will be the presentation of the budget for 2012 for your approval. The nominating committee will have four vacant positions and Council will have nominees for those positions for your consideration. The Committee on Nominations will be presenting names as well for positions that remained unfilled after the September Presbytery meeting. If any of you have a desire to serve on a committee, please let us know of your interest. Finally and sadly, there will be a request for a commission to close another church within the presbytery.

Presbytery meeting materials will be posted and available on the Presbytery website at [www.northernplainspresbytery.com](http://www.northernplainspresbytery.com) by noon on Wednesday, November 16, 2011, for congregations/individuals to download. For congregations that do not have internet access, packets can be mailed out to them. If your congregation needs a packet, you must contact the Presbytery office by 9:00 a.m. on November 23, 2011, to ensure you receive the packet in time.

Child care will be provided for preschool children of minister members or elder commissioners at no cost to users. Attendees who need child care must contact the Presbytery office no later than November 23, 2011, if they wish to use this service.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Presbytery office at 701-772-0783 or toll free at 1-800-243-3532, or by email at [pnpooffice@gmail.com](mailto:pnpooffice@gmail.com).

## PRESBYTERIANS TODAY WANT TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR CHURCH!

To celebrate the rich variety of ministries going on across the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), *Presbyterians Today* is featuring profiles of individual congregations. Is there something unique about your church? Does it have a long history? Unusual location? Creative worship? Is it actively engaged in a mission project? What stands out about your congregation? Please email *Presbyterians Today* information about your congregation to [today@pcusa.org](mailto:today@pcusa.org). For more information, go to: <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/today/we-want-your-church/>



## YOU AND GOD’S REVOLUTION

By: Elder Cheryl Biller, Council Moderator

You don't need human permission to participate in God's revolution. All you have to do is take the invitation seriously.

~ Anthony Smith

This was one of the daily emails I get from Emergent Village in MN, and it got me thinking in all kinds of directions. Mostly, I wondered what an invitation from God looks or feels like. This got me to thinking about something my husband and I often visit about – the need to be in tune with our own sense of call.

Most of us who live and work in the church have heard our pastors talk about feeling “called” to ministry. Some even talk about resisting that call with varying degrees of intensity (anyone remember Jacob?!). How many of us lay people feel a sense of call? How many of us revisit our sense of call periodically – and that question is directed to all of us, clergy and lay alike!

I spent some time as a Lutheran as a teen, and always liked seeing the line in the bulletin that read: Ministers – All. One of the things I appreciate about the Presbyterian tradition is that we encode that same value by laying out clearly how lay people (ruling elders) and clergy (teaching elders) are to work together with neither having greater authority than the other.

In this time of year when we are all thinking about Thanksgiving and many of us are in the midst of budgeting and stewardship campaigns, we talk a lot about time and talents and how we share them in our congregations. I am absolutely convinced that we are each bestowed with gifts, abilities, and talents by our creator God for use in God’s kingdom. Whether you are a pastor, a plumber, the local IT geek/hero, the person who makes music, the person who creates slides or publishes bulletins, no matter – your gifts can be used to build up God’s kingdom. Some of us do this by responding to God’s call to church leadership as staff people. Some of us do this when we practice the great commandments to love God and one another – either by letting the guy in line with only one item go ahead of us when our cart is full, or when the plumber comes any time of the day or night, and with good humor and better skills repairs our fixture and charges a fair sum for that service. We are good to each other, we practice God’s love for each other, through this exchange of goods for services and through our random acts of kindness.

All of these engagements with each other – commercial, private, civic, religious, etc. – give us opportunity to be the body of Christ in the world, to be the hands and feet of our savior. As you consider this season all of the ways you are blessed, don’t forget to consider the blessings of your talents and gifts and abilities. First – give thanks for them. Second - consider anew this season how you respond to God’s invitation to engage with God’s world. Will you be more fair in your business practice? Will you go a step further and consider taking a pay cut so you can keep two staff people employed for another year? Will you see Jesus as the one sick, or poor, or jailed and have mercy on him (or her)? Will you take a portion of your bonus and give it to the church before you go buy the big TV? Will you remember when you get no raise or cost of living increase, perhaps for the second or third year in a row, that there are still those without a job at all who might benefit from the can of soup you give to the food pantry? Will you consider that you have wisdom and experience that could benefit your congregation in a position of leadership? And will you remember that whether you offer any of these gifts and talents for pay or in service to your congregation or any other organization, that the job you do impacts real people, and is in service of God’s kingdom?

### 2011 PER CAPITA

2012 Per Capita was approved at the September Presbytery Meeting. The per capita apportionment is based on the funds necessary for the Presbytery/Synod/General Assembly to do their essential ecclesiastical work.

2012 Per Capita Apportionment breakdown:

General Assembly	\$ 6.50
Synod of Lakes & Prairies	\$ 5.00
Northern Plains Presbytery	<u>\$ 31.00</u>
Total 2011 Per Capita	\$ 42.50



The 2012 apportionment is based on a church's membership as of December 31, 2010 as reported in the 2010 General Assembly Minutes (Part II, Statistics).

## COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY UPDATE

By: Elder Dale Shook, Chair of the Committee on Ministry



Lyle Presbyterian Church of Rhame

Committee on Ministry (COM) has been working to support pastors, congregations, and presbytery with a variety of responsibilities including commissioning Mark Frueh as CLP in Minot, affirming Kevin Kaufmann to labor beyond the bounds of PNP within Dakota Presbytery, approving Steve Kisslinger as member-at-large until his transfer elsewhere, approving Julie Tweit to labor beyond the bounds of PNP, adding Rachel Axness to pulpit supply, approving Iva Wenzell for six additional months of pulpit supply in Langdon. Discussions are in progress with Hazelton about possible separation from PCUSA, a shared grant request from PNP, Synod, and BOP for a pastor of PNP was approved and received, triennials are still being scheduled and completed, roster review is being completed, discussions are occurring about elders serving communion, requests have been made to receive yearly member-at-large and validated ministry reports, as well as yearly salary and continuing education reports. Pastor Nominating Committees are still active in Hallock, Jamestown, Moorhead, and Watford City.

To all who have communicated with COM or have been part of helping us complete responsibilities, we always enjoy the connections and thank you for your efforts

## COUNCIL DISCUSSES RETREAT, GRACIOUS DISMISSAL, & FLOOD ISSUES

By: Elder Michael Lochow, Presbytery Stated Clerk

The United Presbyterian Church of Jamestown, North Dakota, hosted the Presbytery Council on Thursday, November 3, 2011. It was a busy day as Council worked on finalizing the agenda for the Presbytery Retreat which will be held in Jamestown, North Dakota, on Friday and Saturday, November 18 and 19. Registration for the Retreat has picked up recently, and Council members are hopeful that there will be broad representation from member congregations. The focus of the retreat is the future of the Presbytery. Council approved up to a \$25 reimbursement for daycare expense and \$50 reimbursement for hotel cost for those attending the retreat. All meals will be provided at no cost to participants.

Council spent most of the remainder of their meeting discussing the draft of a gracious dismissal policy. It is expected a final draft will be presented at the Spring Presbytery meeting. During the interim, the Committee on Ministry was authorized to act within the tenor of the draft policy, if needed, pending final approval.

Unlike most years at this time of the year, the Flood Task Force continues to meet and work. The Presbytery will be partnering with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and three other denominations to create a volunteer village in preparation for expected flood issues in 2012 and to continue to meet the needs of those still affected this year.

Council established a tentative meeting schedule for 2012. Those meetings dates are January 20, April 20, June 23, August 16 and October 25. The times and locations will be determined at a later date.

## RESOURCES

### John Calvin His Life & Legacy (DVD)

John Calvin: His Life and Legacy combines insightful interviews of well-known Calvin scholars with creative and stunning visuals from such historical places as Geneva and Paris. This documentary will stimulate audiences and inspire a greater passion and understanding of their history as Reformed Christians. The study guide and power-point supplement are included on the DVD

### Jesus in the Gospels (DVD)

Jesus in the Gospels focuses on the portraits of Jesus found in the four Gospels--Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The word 'in' used in the title signals that this study takes an approach different from the familiar "life and teaching of Jesus" approach of reading stories and accounts of what Jesus said and did in order to draw conclusions about their meaning and about who Jesus was. This study looks at the way each Gospel writer presents events and teachings and at the picture of Jesus that emerges in each of the Gospels. The video is an important part of each weekly group session. The video segment for each lesson has two parts and begins and ends the weekly group session. The first part is a seven-to-ten minute presentation by a Bible scholar or theologian on some topic or aspect of the subject treated in the lesson. The second part of the video segment brings forward through art, music, words, and movement the Jesus in the week's Scripture. Also included in the kit are a leader's guide, study manual and Gospel comparisons.

### Jesus I Never Knew (DVD)

Based on Philip Yancey's bestselling book, The Jesus I Never Knew, this fourteen-session curriculum utilizes video clips from well-known and little-known movies to portray various views of Jesus. Encourages participants to unpack their own stereotypes of Jesus and to take a fresh look at the teachings, person and life of Jesus of Nazareth. Comes with Leader's guide.

To borrow this or a different resource, contact the **Resource Center for Churches** at (888) 293-9901 (toll free) or

[info@resourcesforthejourney.org](mailto:info@resourcesforthejourney.org).

The staff will gladly reserve resources 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/>

# NATIONAL DONOR SABBATH NOVEMBER 13, 2011

By: Sally Jacobson, Ruling Elder at Emerado Presbyterian Church



Mother Teresa said: *“If we want a love message to be heard, it has to be sent out. To keep a lamp burning, we have to keep putting oil in it.”* This why I continually urge people to consider being donors.

How do we respond to the blessings God has bestowed on us? How do we deal responsibly with the gifts God has given us? To think only of ourselves is to squander our lives. But to respond gratefully means we praise God with our lips and our actions. To respond gratefully is to realize that all of life is God’s, and we are called to care for it and share it. With these thoughts, we ask you to consider giving so that others may live. Give the gift of life—organ and tissue donation.

Transplants are not specifically mentioned in most sacred text because they are a modern development. However, the timeless content of the texts speaks to donation in principle.

Revelation 21:4-5 - *“In eternity we will not need our earthly bodies: “Former things will pass away; all things will be made new.”*

Faith communities across the nation will come together the weekend of November 11-13, 2011 to share the importance of organ, eye and tissue donation. All major religions in the United States support organ and tissue donation.

- Over 112,000 Americans are waiting for a life-saving organ transplant, including more than 3,000 in the Upper Midwest.
- 18 men, women, and children die each day in the U.S. because the organ they needed was not available.
- A single donor can save and heal the lives of 60 people.

Please consider becoming a donor; it is as simple as “checking the box” when you renew your driver’s license, and discuss your decision with your family!

If your congregation would like to have me come and speak with any of your groups, please give me a call at 218-779-5429.

## 2012 PRESBYTERY MEETING DATES ARE SET

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains has one more Presbytery meeting scheduled for this year on Saturday, December 3, 2011, by video conference. Meeting dates and locations have been set for the 2012 Presbytery meetings and are as follows:

- Spring Meeting - March 9 & 10, 2012 at Westminster Presbyterian Church of Devils Lake
- Summer Meeting - June 11, 2012 at First Presbyterian Church of Wilton
- Fall Meeting - September 29, 2012 at First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead
- Winter Meeting - December 1, 2012 at all video conference sites

## Presbytery’s Calendar

Nov 3	Council Meeting @ United Presbyterian Church of Jamestown
Nov 10	Committee on Ministry @ United Presbyterian Church of Jamestown
Nov 18 & 19	Presbytery Retreat at Jamestown Civic Center
Nov 19	Council Meeting at Jamestown Civic Center
Nov 24 & 25	Thanksgiving Break, Office Closed
Dec 3	Winter Presbytery Meeting at all Video Conference Sites
Dec 23-26	Christmas Break, Office Closed
Jan 2	Office Closed
Jan 6	Agenda, Bylaws and Structure (ABS) Meeting
Jan 20	Council Meeting by video
Feb 9	Agenda, Bylaws and Structure (ABS) Meeting
Mar 9 & 10	Spring Presbytery Meeting @ Westminster Presbyterian Church of Devils Lake

CC = Conference Call  
GTM= GoToMeeting  
VCS = Video Conferencing Sites

PNP vision statement:

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

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

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