

Light of the Northern Plains

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

October 2011

PRAYER CONCERNS/JOYS

Please pray for those displaced by the floods, those who lost loved ones, and those who will work to offer spiritual and emotional care or help with recovery efforts.

Please hold our Chogoria partners in your prayers.

SEPTEMBER PRESBYTERY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

By: Elder Michael Lochow, Presbytery Stated Clerk

The 103rd Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains was held at First Presbyterian Church, Mandan, North Dakota, on Saturday, September 24, 2011. The meeting opened with worship, including Communion, and was led by Mission Co-Worker Burkhard Paetzold of Germany. Paetzold focuses much of his ministry among the Roma people, Europe's most marginalized group.



Burkhard Paetzold

The report of the Presbytery Council included a recommendation to add Ministry Team representatives to Council as voting members and to have Council act as the Committee on Representation for the Presbytery.

A Planning Team of Council has suggested a five-step process to plan for the future of the Presbytery. A key in that process is a Presbytery-Wide Retreat which is scheduled for November 18 & 19, 2011, at the Jamestown Civic Center. The process will culminate in recommendations and a staffing plan to be presented at the March 9-10, 2012, meeting of the Presbytery at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Devils Lake, North Dakota.

Good news was heard from the Bdecan Ministry Team. The Presbytery learned that Westminster Presbyterian Church in Arlington, Virginia, has been doing mission at Bdecan for the past six years. They wish to partner with the Presbytery of the Northern Plains and its churches and rather than traveling to Bdecan, Westminster Presbyterian has committed those mission monies to help fund a full-time youth and outreach coordinator and to provide funds for the Bdecan Food Pantry. They are also providing funds to repair and renovate the manse at Bdecan.

Kevin Kaufmann, speaking for the Flood Response Team, reported on the situation in Minot. An update and letter of thank you from the Minot Presbyterian church was read to the commissioners. Deb Burger related her personal experience with the Minot flood in word and pictures.

2012 Per Capita

General Assembly	\$ 6.50
Synod of Lakes & Prairies	\$ 5.00
Northern Plains Presbytery	<u>\$31.00</u>
Total 2012 Per Capita	\$42.50

The apportionment is based on church membership as of December 31, 2010 as reported in the 2010 General Assembly Statistics.



Recommended Unified Mission

General Assembly	20 %
Synod of Lakes & Prairies	20 %
Northern Plains Presbytery	60 %

Candidate Shane Berg's request to be removed from the roll of candidates was honored. Shane has served on the faculty at Princeton Theological Seminary for several years and this position does not require ordination.

Candidates Paul Snyder and Sandra Goering are nearing the end of their studies. Inquirer Blair Moorhead is expected to advance to candidacy status next year. Candidate Curtis Brophy was ordained by Heartland Presbytery in August and is serving a church in Kansas City.

Presbytery's portion of per capita remained unchanged at \$31.00. Both the Synod and the OGA raised their shares slightly and the per capita total is now \$42.50 per member.

Several members were elected to Presbytery offices. Among those elected were Elder Michael Lochow as stated clerk for a one-year term; Elder Bill Cawley as treasurer for a three-year term; Rev. Deanna Reikow as Moderator for 2012; Rev. Darrel Cory as Vice Moderator for 2012; and Elder Lorelee Rude as Council chair for a one-year term.

The meeting particulars of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains for 2012 were presented: Friday and Saturday, March 9-10, at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Devils Lake, ND; Monday, June 4 or 11, First Presbyterian Church, Wilton, ND; Saturday, September 29, First Presbyterian Church, Moorhead, MN; and Saturday, December 1, by video conference.

The next meeting of Presbytery is scheduled for Saturday, December 3, 2011, by video conference.

UNITED IN RELATIONSHIP

By: Elder Cheryl Biller, Council Moderator



We are, for better and occasionally not, the Presbyterian Church in the USA, or PC(USA). As such a body, we have agreed, as stipulated in the recently ratified new form of government we call our Book of Order (BOO), that our congregations are “the church engaged in the mission of God in its particular context.” And further we state, “The triune God gives to the congregation all the gifts of the gospel necessary to being the Church.” I hope you are with me to this point! It is the next two lines that, I suspect, some of us are not as enthused about. “The congregation is the basic form of the church, but it is not of itself a sufficient form of the church. Thus congregations are bound together in communion with one another, united in relationships of accountability and responsibility, contributing their strengths to the benefit of the whole, and are called collectively, the church.”

What all that tells me is the following:

- a. We as the Presbytery should both expect and trust our local congregations to identify and use the unique gifts they each possess in the places they work and do mission, and
- b. We as the Presbytery have a responsibility to assist local congregations in reaching that full potential, and
- c. We as individual congregations have a responsibility to share our strengths with the Presbytery for the benefit and betterment of other congregations and the whole Presbytery, and
- d. Congregations ought to be engaged in mission as their primary focus, and they ought to understand what makes their “particular context” just that.

I would enjoy a lively conversation with any of you on each of these points so if you are inclined, call or email me and we can have some fun.

What the above lines from section G-1.01 of this document also tell me is this – congregations, while functioning somewhat independently and absolutely blessed with unique strengths and gifts, are not autonomous entities. They are part of a whole – birthed, most of us, many years ago by the Presbytery. While individuals – pastors and/or elders or even members and participants of one of our congregations – may be so dissatisfied with PC(USA) that they choose to leave, congregations are not free to take that same action. Discussions about future orientation, missions, health, and vitality are not discussions a congregation is free to have independently. They must, by definition and common authority, include representatives of the Presbytery. This requires courage on the part of individuals in a congregation who begin these types of conversations (and these individuals have every right and even a responsibility to hold them if they feel moved in their heart to do so). This also requires patience and restraint on the part of individuals who would represent the Presbytery in those conversations.

If you’ll allow just one short story – I had an opportunity a year or so ago to visit with the session of one of our congregations about per capita. They were behind and myself and another from the Presbytery went to visit with them about it. Instead of a contentious and awkward discussion of who owed whom how much money, why it hadn’t been paid, and when it might be – we had a great discussion about what per capita is for, how it gets used, and why it might be a useful tool. And I left being impressed and moved by elders who were faithfully and creatively trying to live out that particular practice. I am convinced both sides of that conversation learned and were blessed by it, and I am convinced that point c. listed above would make us all better if we engaged more fully with each other – as congregations together and as congregations collectively gathered as a Presbytery.

As we all seek to be faithful to God in the practice of our faith, let us not turn inward either as individuals or as congregations. Rather let us say what’s on our hearts in the light of day, and of God’s love, to each other; and let us see if we can all find faithful and creative ways to be God’s people engaged in God’s mission.

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	Westminster Presbyterian Church of Devils Lake
Summer Meeting	June 11, 2012	First Presbyterian Church of Wilton
Fall Meeting	September 29, 2012	First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead
Winter Meeting	December 1, 2012	At all video conference sites



Who is this retreat for?

Everyone who attends or works for a Presbyterian church in the Presbytery of the Northern Plains - clergy, lay pastors, elders, members, friends... A church may bring everyone who wants to come.

What will we do?

Look at who we are and how we serve God's work in the world. There will be a number of ways to understand our present reality and our future dreams.

What will it cost?

Presbytery will pay for four meals at the Civic Center and subsidize motel rooms at \$50/person up to the actual cost of the room. People are encouraged to share rooms as they are able. There are no registration fees, but please register in advance for planning purposes.

Presbytery-wide Retreat



November 18 & 19, 2011

From 11:00 am Friday to Noon Saturday

At

Jamestown Civic Center
212 3rd Avenue NE
Jamestown North Dakota

Sponsored by: Presbytery of the Northern Plains

Presbytery-wide Retreat General Information:

The presbytery council invites all Presbyterians in the Presbytery of the Northern Plains to a conversation about our future.

On November 18-19 we'll have a retreat at the Jamestown Civic Center. Each congregation is invited to bring as many people as want to come - pastors, lay pastors, elders, members, participants. The only expectation is that those who attend will join in the conversation about the life of the presbytery with "energy, intelligence, imagination, and love." We'll begin at 11:00 a.m. on Friday and finish by noon on Saturday, with box lunches available to those who wish to take them for the road.

Registration forms are now available. There is no registration fee, but we need to know you're coming so we can be ready with space and food to welcome you.

The presbytery will provide meals and snacks. We will also subsidize your hotel room at \$50 per person, up to the actual cost of the room. We encourage you to find a roommate as possible to reduce costs. Please make your own motel reservations (there are blocks of rooms being held at all Jamestown area motels) and bring a copy of your receipt to the second day of the retreat so you can be reimbursed.

What will happen at the retreat?

- A review of conversations we've had before and a chance to talk about what we've learned from those as we go forward.
- Presentations about our demographics and finances and time to talk about what that information means to us.
- A time for every congregation to share their excitement about what they are doing in ministry and mission (at home and beyond).
- An active exercise to help us talk about what presbytery work matters most to us and how each of us could be involved in that work.

How will this information be used?

After the retreat, presbytery council will use the information gathered to draft a strategic plan that describes who we are and where we are going together. This will come back to presbytery in the spring for full conversation and adoption (with perhaps amendments). Building on all the work done over the past two years, council will also bring to presbytery a staffing plan which fits the strategic plan. Presbytery will be able to discuss, adapt, and adopt this plan, giving council the responsibility of implementing the plan presbytery approves.

For every participating church

Please bring a poster describing the ways you are in mission and ministry. You may use photos or graphics, lists or captions. Tell us what your church does as a congregation, how you serve your community, and how you support mission beyond your town. These posters will be displayed and discussed. Be ready to share your best programs and ideas with others so that they can learn from your success! These posters will be the focus of our Friday evening at the retreat.

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Congratulations to the following people, who were elected to a Presbytery Committee and start their new responsibilities January 2012:

Stated Clerk	Elder Michael Lochow *
Treasurer	Elder Bill Cawley, CPA *
Moderator	the Rev. Deanna Reikow ***
Vice Moderator	the Rev. Darrel Cory ***
Council Chair	Elder Lorelee Rude ***
COM	Elder Don Casmey The Rev. Keri Shelton * The Rev. Gary Watts *
CPM	Elder Eric Swee
SDOP	Elder Elizabeth Swee The Rev. Nancy Emerson * Elder George O'Neil *
Synod Commissioner	the Rev. Vicki Rucker */***

*Re-elected for a second term.

** Filling empty seat on committee, position starts immediately.

***Their position also holds a position on the Presbytery's Council.

The Committee on Nominations is always seeking people who are interested in serving on various Presbytery committees. Currently, the Nominating Committee is seeking to elect an alternate elder commissioner and minister and alternate minister commissioners for the 2012 meeting of General Assembly. According to Presbytery's policy, P-6.0104 III C 1-4, this is a self-referral to the nominating committee requiring a written statement that describes the desire, qualifications and sense of being called to serve the Presbytery as a commissioner; listing of service in the Presbytery and other governing bodies; and the nominee's availability to report to Presbytery. The election of these commissioners will be held at the winter meeting.

In addition, if you feel you have been called to serve the Presbytery as a committee member or someone you know would be interested in serving, please contact Darrel Cory at 701-772-3445 or contact the Presbytery office at 701-772-0783 or email pnppoffice@gmail.com.



BECOME A FAN

PNP IS ON FACEBOOK

In an effort to help Presbyterians in the Northern Plains to connect with each other, the Presbytery has a Facebook page. Facebook users may become members of the Presbytery's group. The group will receive periodic event updates and is open to posts and discussion topics from members. So become a fan of the Presbytery and join in the fun.

RESOURCES

Unfreezing Moves: Following Jesus into the Mission Field (Book)

By: William M. Easum

Prepares Christian congregations to fulfill their basic function - to make disciples who make a difference for Jesus Christ. This book is about helping "stuck" and "unstuck" churches either become unstuck or constantly improve their ministry of making disciples. This book is designed to help church leaders make profound changes in the way they do ministry or constantly practice methodological innovation/improvement to be effective in creating disciples in their churches.

Flowing Water, Uncommon Birth: Christian Baptism in a Post-Christian Culture (Book)

By: Samuel Torvend

These reflections on Christian baptism draw on the work of biblical and liturgical scholars, church historians, sociologists of religion, theologians, poets, cultural analysts, film-makers, and writers, the witness of the New Testament, the sermons, hymns, and architecture of early Christians, ancient and modern liturgical texts, medieval mystics, reformation leaders, and modern martyrs and reformers.

Be welcome, then, to these reflections on that one-time event which, nonetheless, welcomes the baptized into a life-time engagement with its many riches.

Great Figures of the New Testament Disk 1, 2, 3 & 4 (DVD)

Improve your biblical literacy and re-encounter the New Testament as a great repository of literary genius. Unlike primarily historical introductions to the Bible, these lectures frequently raise issues of religious interest. The point of this exploration is not to inculcate any theology, let alone any particular religious world-view. Rather, it seeks to read the ancient texts anew to discover what they say then and now and how they were interpreted by both the secular culture and the faithful church.

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

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY FALL UPDATE

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



Following and interacting with presbytery membership and congregations are always part of Committee On Ministry (COM) responsibilities, but the following are actively on the COM agenda this fall:

1. An educational retreat, open to all, is being planned for the weekend of March 18-19. Mark your calendars! Further information about the speaker, topic, and place will follow as plans are solidified but the quality will be comparable to Dr. McKim's visit in 2011, and Dr. Neal's in 2010. Thanks to the CLP Resource Team for developing this offering.
2. The roster of the presbytery is being reviewed, corrected, and updated.
3. Triennial visits continue this fall and winter.
4. Issues related to manses are being discussed, i.e., state of repair, health, etc.
5. Issues related to elders serving communion are being considered.
5. Pastor Nominating Committee work continues in Moorhead, Watford City, Hallock, and Jamestown.
6. The Pastor Support team of COM is thanked for its leadership and various activities.

COM welcomes any input or questions, and wishes all a glorious and healthy fall.

CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH AND TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

On October 20 and 21, 2011, you are invited to be transformed in the way your congregation ministers to one another and reaches out in mission to the community around them.

A conference will be held at First Presbyterian Church of Fargo which is designed to stimulate and equip congregational leadership (lay and clergy) for transformational ministry. After the conference participants should:

- 1) Understand the dynamics of congregational transformation
- 2) Understand tools and gifts available for leading transformation
- 3) Be able to identify areas of potential transformative ministry in local church
- 4) Be able to identify hallmarks of healthy congregations
- 5) Recognize constructive patterns of healthy leadership
- 6) Be better equipped to promote congregational health for life in community

This two day conference cost is \$285 (materials \$235, workshop \$50, snack included); room and board are the responsibility of individual attendees. It is sponsored by the Presbyteries of the Northern Plains and South Dakota in conjunction with the "For Such A Time As This" program of the Office of Vocations, PCUSA.

For more information or to register, please contact the Rev. Peter Reynen by email pcreynen@itcmilbank.com or call 605-432-7928.

Presbytery's Calendar

Oct 2	Session Records Reading @ First Pres. Minot or Mendenhall Pres EGF
Oct 10	Nominating Committee CC
Oct 11	Committee on Ministry CC
Oct 15	Agenda, Bylaws and Structure mtg location TBA
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 24 & 25	Thanksgiving Break, Office Closed
Dec 3	Winter Presbytery Meeting at all VCS
Dec 23-26	Christmas Break, Office Closed
Jan 20	Council Meeting VCS
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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