PNP Leadership Pod Monthly Meeting June 18, 2026

Bender called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM. Jamie Norstog provided the opening prayer.

Rusty Bender, Adam Montgomery, Brian McClure, Jamie Norstog, Ellen Misialek, Lana Schultz, and Donna Preston were present.

Rev. Sarah Bigwood, Rev. Dr. Spencer Homan, Sherri Stern, and Jenn Kolodka were excused.

A quorum was established.

Agenda approved, as written (Misialek/Norstog).

Approval of the May 2026 Leadership Meeting Minutes - Change spelling to “BOYAR.” (Misialek/McClure) Minutes approved, with correction.

Stated Clerk Report (Montgomery) - Monitoring news from General Assembly. Working to provide CLC access to the Executive Presbyter Search Committee. Members of Leadership are welcome to contact Montgomery on his personal phone, at any time, for expedited assistance.

Moderator’s Report (Bender) - No Report.

Treasurer’s Report (Misialek) - Report Attached. Cash is running tight. Per capita is running a little slower than would be optimum, but making it work. $3600 was paid for General Assembly alternate lodging.

Financial Task Force (Stern) - No Report.

Communications Report (Kolodka) - No Report.

Presbytery Connectional Leader Report (VACANT) - No Report.

Congregational Vitality Report (Bigwood) - Report Attached. Schultz corrected a spelling in the committee’s minutes.

Mission (Preston) - Preston spoke about the Fall Retreat. Bdecan will be looking to make management changes in the near future due to personal circumstances.

CPM (Homan) - No Report.

Personnel Report (McClure) - McClure shared the Executive Presbyter (EP) Search Committee held its first meeting virtually. The next meeting will be Tuesday, June 23. The committee will be posting on CLC, upon gaining access. The question of salary was also discussed, and the committee is looking for additional resources to provide direction and advice. Preston shared the idea of posting the position in the Synod newsletter.

Nominating Committee Report (Bender) - A Teaching Elder nominee for the EP Search Committee declined the nomination. The position will be left open.

Committee on Representation (Schultz) - No Report.

In ‘Other Business,’ with committee approval (Preston/McClure), there will be no Leadership Pod Meeting in July. Misialek requested a discussion on “Per Diem Policy.” Bender noted the presbytery’s policy is currently underfunded by IRS standards, at $35.00/day. Discussion ensued. McClure moved to authorize per diem for General Assembly delegates at $100.00/day, Preston seconded for further discussion. Total per diem would be $600 for delegates. APPROVED.

Bender asked Preston to close the meeting in prayer.

The regular monthly meeting of the Leadership Pod was adjourned, without objection, at 10:15 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Montgomery, State Clerk

PNP Leadership Pod Monthly Meeting May 21, 2026

Bigwood opened the meeting, with prayer, at 9:29.

Rev. Sarah Bigwood, Lana Schultz, Rusty Bender, Donna Preston, Brian McClure, Ellen Misialek, Rev. Spencer Homan, Sherri Stern, Jenn Kolodka, and Adam Montgomery were present.

Quorum was established.

Approve the Agenda (Stern, Preston).

Approval of Minutes (Preston, McClure) – Correct spelling of "Lauber" (February Minutes). Approved with changes.

Communications Coordinator (Kolodka) - A fall presbytery meeting date and location need to be finalized.

Treasurer's Report (Misialek) – Report attached. Clearwater Forest check has been issued. Discussion regarding *Per Capita* reminders and collection.

The meeting returned to discussion on the fall presbytery meeting. Jamie Norstog offered Moorhead Presbytery to host the meeting on October 3.

Mission (Preston) - Report attached.

Committee on Representation and Nominating (Bender) - Report attached. Executive Presbyter (EP) Search Committee update. A slate of individuals to serve on the EP Search Committee were presented.

Bigwood asked for a motion to bless the proposed committee formally. Preston moved and Homan seconded. With approval, Bigwood offered the blessing on the commencement of this committee and their charge.

Congregational Vitality (Bigwood) – Report attached.

Glencoe Vitality Grant Request was presented and APPROVED.

Rev. Bob Boyer will be working with Community Presbyterian Church - West Fargo on their continued search for a full-time pastor. Bigwood shared CPC's salary offering is low and is impacting the pastoral search. A proposal to offer $10,000.00, to be matched by the church, for additional salary was presented to the pod. Discussion ensued. Bigwood/McClure offered a motion, stating, *Leadership Pod will seriously consider and support a grant request for $10,000.00, for three years, from the New Church Development Restrictive Fund, to supplement a competitive pastoral salary.* APPROVED.

Kolodka informed the pod that the Lord had called Pastor Janis Sue Kana-Mackey home the prior evening. Langdon is asking for any assistance as they navigate this unexpected news.

Clearwater Forest Clergy Renewal Grant Request (attached)- Clearwater requests $3500.00. Preston/McClure made a motion to support the clergy retreat at the amount of $2000.00 APPROVED.

Stated Clerk (Montgomery) – General Assembly is next month.

Homan shared he is working on becoming a certified coach with the International Coaching Federation (ICF). He is required to serve 100 hours of coaching and seeking clergy, lay clergy, and pulpit supply to offer his services. The pod happily supports him!

Preston/McClure moved to adjourn. Bigwood closed the meeting in prayer.

The regular meeting of the Leadership Pod adjourned at 10:28 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Montgomery, State Clerk

April 16, 2026 online.

9:33 opened with prayer by Bigwood

Ellen Misialek, Adam Montgomery, Jenn Kolodka, Donna Preston, Rev. Sarah Bigwood, Rusty Bender, Lana Schultz, Brian McClure

Quorum was established.

Approve the Agenda (Bender, Misialek).

Approval of Minutes (Montgomery) – Minutes for 2026, to date, will be emailed to the Pod for an email review and approval.

Mission Report (Preston) – Report attached. Mission met last night. 40 people will be at the Spring Retreat. Momentum is building.

Nominating (Bender) – Executive Presbyter (EP) Search Committee update. As Chair of Personnel, Brian McClure will chair the search committee and include three Ruling Elders and three Teaching Elders. No other Leadership Pod members will be used to fill the committee seats. Prospective committee candidates were discussed. Misialek reminded the Pod there is a $1000.00 budget line item for the purpose of the EP search.

Treasurer's Report (Misialek) – Report attached. Per capita continues to be collected. Financials are stable and there are no concerns or irregularities.

Misialek posed the question of General Assembly (GA) alternates attending and how to pay the expenses. Currently, there is $2000.00 for the specific line item.

Spencer Homan joined the meeting.

Bigwood (Preston) made a motion to approve the travel expenses (airfare, hotel, meals, local transportation) for GA alternates. Discussion ensued. Motion APPROVED.

Congregational Vitality (Bigwood) – Mandan was granted $2000.00 to fix their sound system. Baker Downer has been presented with an option to purchase adjacent property.

Sherri Stern joined the meeting.

Bigwood presented the opportunity to the Pod for discussion and leadership insight. Discussion and questions ensued. Misialek/Preston moved to forward the purchase opportunity to First Presbyterian Church – Fargo's Session for consideration. APPROVED.

Stated Clerk (Montgomery) – No report.

Moderator's Report (Bender) – No report.

Financial Task Force (Stern) – No report.

Communications Report (Kolodka) – No report.

CPM (Homan) – No report. Homan raised the notion of online discussion regarding full time pastors working 40 hours a week to ensure work/life balance. Discussion and questions ensued. McClure shared the idea that congregations should be made aware and reflect on what a "work/life balance" for recruitment and retention of pastors could look like.

Bigwood noted the time was 10:34 AM and led the Pod to a conclusion.

Preston/Homan moved to adjourn. Preston closed the meeting in prayer.

The regular meeting of the Leadership Pod adjourned at 10:37 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Montgomery, State Clerk

Leadership Pod Minutes for March 19, 2026

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

Rev. Bigwood called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:33 AM, with prayer.

Roll Call Rusty Bender, Rev. Sarah Bigwood, Rev. Spencer Homan, Jenn Kolodka, Brian McClure, Ellen Misialek, Jamie Norstog, Donna Preston, Rev. Deanna Reikow, Lana Schultz, Sherri Stern.

* Adam Montgomery, Stated Clerk was absent.

A quorum was established. Jenn Kolodka was designated to stand-in for Montgomery.

Approval of the Agenda (Preston, McClure) discussion to add Rev. Bob Boyar to the agenda as a guest speaker upon his arrival. Approved.

Approval of the Leadership Pod Meeting Minutes none available, will be reviewed next month.

Mission Report (Preston): 27 youth attended Winter retreat, it was free to attend. This is a larger group than in the past! YCT would like to continue to keep costs down for future retreats. Will review future budget requests and potentially increase their $2000 amount.

> **MOTION** (out of committee) *to designate the offering from Presbytery Meeting for Youth Connection Team for upcoming youth presbytery retreats*. Discussion. Approved.

9:38 Rev. Bob Boyar joins.

CVP, West Fargo Candidate Discussion (Rev. Boyar) discussion on vetting process for West Fargo's pastoral search. West Fargo utilized additional advertising methods and found a candidate. Discussion. Concerns that candidate does not meet qualifications.

Discussion on CLP/CRE process and CLP/CRE academy.

Discussion on designated pastor definition for West Fargo opening.

10:08 Bob Boyar exits.

Treasurer's Report (Misialek) Discussion on insurance companies for churches. Continued positive responses to the per capita forgiveness program.

CVP Report, continued (Rev. Bigwood) discussion of Spring Presbytery meeting CVP report, presbytery minister report, updated EP proposal report with feedback from Zoom meetings, updated CVP grant proposal report with feedback from Zoom meetings.

Communications Coordinator (Kolodka) provided an update on the Spring Presbytery meeting. 2026 Fall Presbytery meeting location will change. Location TBD.

Adjourn with Prayer
Bigwood/Bender moved to close the meeting in prayer. Rev. Reikow led the pod in prayer. The regular meeting of the Leadership Pod was adjourned at 10:50 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenn Kolodka, Communications Coordinator

Leadership Pod Minutes for February 2, 2026

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

Bigwood called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:29 AM, with prayer.

Roll Call Rev. Sarah Bigwood, Jenn Kolodka, Adam Montgomery, Donna Preston, Ellen Misialek, Lana Schultz, Rev. Spencer Homan, Jamie Norstog, Rusty Bender, Brian McClure.

Sherri Stern and Rev. Deanna Reikow were absent and excused.

A quorum was established.

Approval of the Agenda (Preston, Schultz) Approved.

Approval of the January 2026 Leadership Pod Meeting Minutes (Shultz, Preston)

- Correct spelling of “Kolodka” and “Homan.”

Treasure’s Report (Misialek) Report attached. Per capita is coming in and Misialek feels positive about it. Total membership of the presbytery is amended and a note will be placed in the budget to this fact.

Communications Coordinator (Kolodka) Register for the spring Presbytery meeting, call for written reports, and schedule speakers.

Mission (Preston) Report attached. Grant(s) information has been shared with interested parties.

Congregational Vitality (Bigwood) Report attached. Two grand requests have been submitted.

MOTION APPROVED

Discussion on the proposed Executive Presbyter position, duties, budgets, and timelines. CVP will continue to explore the details of the position to provide a comprehensive proposal to the Presbytery.

LANA Carrie Loeber to serve Communion at PW SPring Gatherering Mendenhall April 25

CPM Report (Holman) No Report.

Personnel Committee (McClure) No Report.

Nominating (Bender) No Report.

Committee on Representation (COR) (Schultz) No Report.

Other Business None.

Adjourn with Prayer

Homan/Preston moved to close the meeting in prayer. Bigwood led the pod in prayer. The regular meeting of the Leadership Pod was adjourned at 10:11 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Montgomery
Stated Clerk

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

Leadership Pod Minutes for January 15, 2026

Bigwood called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:30 AM, with prayer.

Roll Call Rev. Sarah Bigwood, Jenn Kolodaka, Sherri Stern, Adam Montgomery, Donna Preston, Ellen Misialek, Brian McClure, Lana Schultz, Rev. Spencer Holman, Jamie Norstog.

*Rusty Bender (excused), Rev. Deanna Reikow was absent.

A quorum was established.

Approval of the Agenda (Preston, Stern) Approved.

Approval of the Leadership Pod Meeting Minutes (Preston, Homan) September, November, and December 2025 Minutes were approved, as amended.

- (Preston) Clearwater investment should read "$100k."

Stated Clerk (Montgomery) Churches will need to submit Statistical Reports by February 20, 2026. Baker Downer rolls and assessment has been corrected.

Moderator's Report (Bender) Email report was provided, prior to the meeting. Bender continues to plan and coordinate the spring presbytery meeting.

Treasurer's Report (Misialek) Report attached. The deficit is not alarming, however Misialek notes that the presbytery will not be able to cash-flow, as things are. The endowment will continue to be used to operate financially. "Generally, the finances are pretty good."

Next month, Misialek will provide the initial 2026 financials. The per capita report shows nice changes in churches paying per capita. She is optimistic for further per capita support in the coming year, including some back payments. Special offerings names have changed at the national level but the missions remain largely the same.

Letterhead is being updated.

> **MOTION:** (Norstog/Preston) *To authorize Ellen Misialek and Sherri Stern to be signers of the financial accounts with Alerus Financial.* Approved.

Financial Task Force (Stern) Excellent year for investment earnings. New Covenant Trust manages the investments in a balanced and safe manner. From the beginning of the investment fund, the account growth to date is $650,913.18.

*Reikow joined the meeting.

Communications Coordinator (Kolodka) Individual churches have been contacted regarding submitting their statistical information. The spring presbytery meeting is taking shape with room and catering secured. Thanks to Brian McClure for his work on providing a social media policy, which has been very useful.

Presbytery Connection Leader (Reikow) Reikow's term will conclude in March 2026. She will return to pastor her home church.

> **MOTION:** (Preston/Reikow) *To authorize the Finance Committee to review church information and make the appropriate adjustments that reflect the congregational numbers and assess accurate per capita.* Approved.

Congregational Vitality (Bigwood) Report attached. Bigwood highlighted the upcoming meetings to discuss the executive presbyter position and the vitality grant proposal. Bigwood asked for feedback regarding a potential pastoral candidate for West Fargo.

*Bender joined the meeting.

Mission (Preston) Report attached.

CPM Report (Holman) No Report.

Personnel Committee (McClure) No Report.

Nominating (Bender) No Report.

Committee on Representation (COR) (Schultz) No Report.

Other Business None.

Adjourn with Prayer

Preston/Spencer moved to close the meeting in prayer. Bender led the pod in prayer. The regular meeting of the Leadership Pod was adjourned at 10:34 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Montgomery
Stated Clerk

Leadership Pod Minutes for December 18, 2025

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

Campbell called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:30 AM, with prayer.

Roll Call Paul Campbell, Sherri Stern, Adam Montgomery, Donna Preston, Ellen Misialek, Brian McClure, Rev. Mary Holtey, Rev. Deanna Reikow, Rev. Sarah Bigwood, Rusty Bender, Rev. Spencer Holman, Tom Brusegaard.

Jenn Kolodka was absent (excused).

A quorum was established.

Approval of the Agenda (Preston, Bigwood) Approved.

Approval of the Leadership Pod Meeting Minutes With the new year, incoming Leadership Chair Bigwood will be forwarding the Minutes requiring review and approval.

Stated Clerk (Montgomery) Buffalo asked for interpretation assistance in navigating Book of Order requirements pertaining to their congregational size.

Communications Coordinator (Kolodka) Statistical Reporting begins January 2, 2026. The website was updated with upcoming Zoom meetings and related information. The Online Church Director for 2026 was updated. Kolodka asks that individuals review their respective church's information for accuracy. Work will continue to coordinate the Spring Presbytery meeting.

Presbytery Connection Leader (Reikow) Update on Rev. Leeanne Simmons. Bismarck, Glencoe and Mandan continue to look for an evangelist to conduct outreach.

Treasurer's Report (Misialek) Report attached. $2300 in per capita has been received since last month. Misialek remains cautiously optimistic the per capita goal will be reached.

Alerus Financial is increasing customer safety standards to satisfy regulatory requirements. Montgomery will draft and attest a Leadership Pod Resolution, identifying the persons authorized to conduct financial transactions, on behalf of the presbytery. In addition, Misialek will be looking to open a high interest CD (~ 3.0%).

A $10 cash donation, from California, was received in the mail.

The accounting software gave notice that sales tax may be applied to our subscription. More information was requested.

Investments (Stern) Investment Account growth, since opening, stands at $643,103.96. $150k was transferred to the “generosity fund.” Misialek will write a check to Clearwater for $100. The remaining $50k can be used to supplement deficiencies or be returned to the investment account.

Congregational Vitality (Bigwood) Park River is now current with owed per capita and considered to be in good standing. Moorhead has issued a check for owed per capita and will continue to make payments.

Personnel Committee (McClure) No Report.

Nominating (Bender) Eli Holman will serve as adult adviser for YAAD at GA.

Mission (Preston) Report attached.

CPM Report (Holman) No Report.

Other Business

Bigwood gave recognition to Campbell for his leadership work, with other members sharing their personal appreciation. Campbell provided a life update on his (and Cathie’s) move to Ohio.

Adjourn with Prayer

Preston/Holtey moved to close the meeting in prayer. Reikow led the pod in prayer. The regular meeting of the Leadership Pod was adjourned at 10:10 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Montgomery
Stated Clerk

Leadership Pod Minutes for November 20, 2025

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

Bigwood called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:29 AM, with prayer.

Roll Call Sherri Stern, Adam Montgomery, Jenn Kolodka, Donna Preston, Ellen Misialek, Brian McClure, Rev. Mary Holtey, Rev. Deanna Reikow, Rev. Sarah Bigwood, Rusty Bender, Rev. Spencer Holman. Guest (via Zoom): Rev. LeanneSimmons

Paul Campbell and Tom Brusegaard were absent.

A quorum was established.

Approval of the Agenda (Bender, McClure) Approved.

Approval of the September Meeting Minutes Tabled until the December meeting.

Stated Clerk (Montgomery) The Portal Presbyterian Church is determining its future. Contact information for the church is being forwarded to Bigwood.

Montgomery shared observations of current events, as highlighted on PC-USA and *Presbyterian Outlook*'s social media and offered guidance for the pod

Communications Coordinator (Kolodka) A hosting location and date need to be determined. There will be agenda items that will require debate and voting. Adequate technology will be needed. An inquiry of the University of Jamestown for March 21 (28th as a backup date) will be made. The intention for the fall meeting will be hosted in Bismarck on October 24.

Treasurer's Report (Misialek) Report attached. Misialek is concerned about *per capita* for the year. The budget projected $119k for the year and, to date, $90k has been collected.

Stern shared the $100k grant to Clearwater Forest will be made by the end of the year.

Presbytery Connection Leader (Reikow) Bismarck, Glencoe and Mandan will be looking for an evangelist to conduct outreach. Additional specifics can be found in the Vitality Report.

Congregational Vitality (Bigwood) Report attached. Bigwood highlighted three churches (Cavalier, Portal, and Fordville) that may be facing closure.

Motion to Dissolve Pastoral Relationships: Holtey, Campbell, Flatten, and Kelsey. Approved.

Mission (Preston) Report attached.

CPM Report (Holman) No Report.

Personnel Committee (McClure) No Report.

Nominating (Bender) McClure will continue as the Personnel Chair through 2026. Paul Campbell will be leaving at the end of 2025. The committee nominated Bigwood to assume the Leadership Pod Chair. Lana Schultz will be joining the pod in the new year, replacing Holtey, upon her retirement.

Other Business

Adjourn with Prayer

Holtey/Preston moved to close the meeting in prayer. Bigwood led the pod in prayer. The regular meeting of the Leadership Pod was adjourned at 10:23 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Montgomery
Stated Clerk

Leadership Pod Minutes for September 18, 2025

Roll Call

Paul Campbell, Sherri Stern, Adam Montgomery, Jenn Kolodka, Donna Preston, Ellen Misialek, Tom Brusegaard, Brian McClure, Rev. Mary Holtey, Rev. Deanna Reikow, Rev. Sarah Bigwood, Rusty Bender, Rev. Spencer Holman.
Others present included PNP's Investment Committee Members: Scott Swanholm, Marilynn Ogden, Jacob Roberts (NCTC), and Jim Hitson (NCTC).
No Pod members were absent.
A quorum was established.

Campbell called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:30 AM, with prayer.

Approval of the Agenda (Preston, Bender) Approved.

Campbell asked the POD to grant members and representatives of the PNP's Investment Committee "voice to participate in the meeting"; (Holtey, Preston) permission was granted.

PNP Investment Committee Presentation Stern introduced Jim Hitson, Regional Representative for *New Covenant Trust*. Jacob Roberts was introduced as PNP's Administrative Officer. Hitson presented on the current investment market. The presentation continued with review of the current balances and specific portfolio performance since FY2020.

Stern shared an intention to establish a "stable value account" which would be an account to permit higher available cash reserves. With two large funding initiatives in the next 6-12 months, the investment portfolio risks liquidation at inopportune market prices. Stern is proposing an amount of $200,000.00 with $125,000.00 already earmarked for the Clearwater and University of Jamestown projects.

Upon the completion of the presentation, the Investment Committee members exited the meeting.

Approval of the August Meeting Minutes (Stern, Preston) Approved.

Stated Clerk (Montgomery) Montgomery noted the October Presbytery meeting is approaching and will be working with Kolodka to facilitate.

CPM Report (Holman) Report attached. Commissioning Lay Pastors will be recognized, with the help of Reikow, at the presbytery meeting.

Communications Coordinator (Kolodka) The Pulpit Supply list has been updated. The Call and Agenda for the October Presbytery Meeting is being drafted. Kolodka noted there is a call for reports. About 25 churches will be receiving hard copies of Call, Agenda, and bylaw proposals via U.S. Postal Service. Worship service will be collaborated with Bender.

Kolodka shared she received a suspicious call. McClure opined that she write an "incident report" to document the call for record keeping.

Presbytery Connection Leader (Reikow) Reikow shared an update on Rev. Leann Simmons and her travels and contacts with several churches.

Treasurer's Report (Misialek) Report attached. Cash flow is concerning. $12,000.00 in per capita has been received. Most accurate balances will be shared in a revised report for the presbytery meeting. Misialek also noted a review of the presbytery policy for reimbursement is needed by the Leadership Pod. Per Capita for 2026 will need to be proposed at the October meeting. Bigwood recommended the amount stay at $50.00 due to positive investment performance. The financial outlook appears to be an $85,000.00 deficit for the coming year, which would require a draw from investment funds. Budget will be presented to the presbytery, in October, as written.

Mission (Preston) Report attached. Campbell shared dollar amounts of church damages from the summer. Bigwood shared her desire to allocate $4000.00 to help churches meet their insurance deductibles. Campbell made a motion to provide the grants, Preston seconded. Misialek will issue the checks from the Disaster Assistance line item.

Congregational Vitality (Bigwood) No report. Bigwood shared a report identifying pastors in the PNP bounds. There was pod support for the hiring John Fong to consult and grow churches in a collaborative effort. $10,000.00 will be used through the Small Congregational Development Fund will be used to move forward on a contract with Fong. Bender/Holtey moved to allocated $1000.00 from Small Congregational Development Fund to promote the use of website services. David Reiter was approved to return to pulpit service in Bismarck, during Rev. Simmons' absence. Bigwood shared she will not be able to attend the October Presbytery Meeting.

Personnel Committee (McClure) Held task force meetings to assist in social media posting and working with Misialek on recommended salary adjustments.

Nominating (Bender) No Report.

Other Business

Adjourn with Prayer

Stern/Preston and Holtey moved to close the meeting in prayer. Campbell asked Reikow to lead the pod in prayer. The regular meeting of the Leadership Pod was adjourned at 11:46 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Montgomery
Stated Clerk

Leadership Pod Minutes for August 21, 2025

Roll Call

Rev. Sarah Bigwood, Rev. Mary Holtey, Donna Preston, Jenn Kolodka, Brian McClure, Sherri Stern, Adam Montgomery, Rev. Deanna Reikow, Rev. Spencer Homan, Ellen Misialek, Rusty Bender, Tom Brusegaard were present.
Paul Campbell was absent.
A quorum was established.

Bigwood called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:30 AM, with prayer.

Approval of the Agenda (Preston, Holtey) Approved.

Approval of the July Meeting Minutes (McClure, Holtey) Approved.

Stated Clerk (Montgomery) No Report. Kolodka inquired as to listing an online option for Records Review. Confirmation is pending.

Mission Pod (Preston). Report attached.

Communications Coordinator (Kolodka) Kolodka is working with Pastor Sue (Langdon) to prepare for the fall Presbytery Meeting, including technology and catering. Reports will be called for by September 20. Erin Anderson (Clearwater Forest) will be a guest speaker for the meeting. A *Triennium* presentation will also be created for presentation at the meeting.

Treasurer's Report (Misialek) Report attached.

Misialek mentioned the funds from the Hamilton Church are sitting in the Miscellaneous Line Item of the budget. The Presbytery is currently running a $42,000.00 deficit and a money market transfer will need to be made. Misialek will have FY2026 budget presentation at the fall meeting. Misialek encourages any pod/committee/leader with a budget should contact her to collaborate. The current budget erroneously missed a Board of Pensions Assistance Program provision. This will need to be added in the next fiscal year.

Presbytery Connectional Care Leader (Reikow) Reikow shared her traveling/visiting schedule. Keep Pastor LeAnn in your prayers as she continues to explore medical options. Midway Parrish elected a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC).

Congregational Vitality (Bigwood) Report attached.

Motion: Approve and send to Presbytery for consideration the proposal to create an Administrative Commission to investigate non-viable churches and provide recommendations on closures.

Discussion ensued regarding the potential lack of attendance at the fall presbytery meeting and if the lack of voters would impact this initiative.

Motion Approved.

Motion: Approve and send to Presbytery for consideration the Congregational Vitality Grant proposal.

Homan amended the proposal to read “a church” and that the financial match would be relational to the specific requesting church.

Motion Approved.

Bigwood began discussion regarding an executor presbyter. *Reikow exited the meeting, for further discussion.* Reikow’s current employment concludes at the end of the calendar year.

Motion: To extend Reikow’s position and employment through the 2026 calendar year. Approved.

Discussion continued regarding the position, what it would entail, the salary, and the requisite presentation to the presbytery for consideration.

Personnel Committee (McClure)

Motion: Approve Deanna Reikow's enrollment in the course offered by Princeton Theological Seminary and the use of $995 from Professional Development/Expenses to pay for the course. Approved.

Nominating (Bender) No Report.

Other Business

Bigwood presented the idea of inviting John Fong, a specialist in church vitality and growth, to a future presbytery meeting.

Stern reminded the pod that Regional Investment Manager Jim Hitson will be a guest at the September Leadership Pod meeting.

Bigwood presented an opportunity for presbyterian churches to create, re-design, and use website services through a new entrepreneur, Robby Bigwood. The subject will be shared with various churches and revisited next month.

Adjourn with Prayer

Bigwood adjourned the meeting by asking for the group to recite The Lord's Prayer. The regular meeting was adjourned at 10:57 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Montgomery
Stated Clerk

Leadership Pod Minutes for July 17, 2025

Roll Call

Paul Campbell, Jenn Kolodka, Adam Montgomery, Ellen Misialek, Rusty Bender, Rev. Mary Holtey, Sherri Stern, Donna Preston, Tom Brusegaard, and Rev. Sarah Bigwood, Brian McClure were present.
Rev. Deanna Reikow, and Rev. Spencer Homan were absent.
A quorum was established.

Campbell called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:30 AM, with prayer.

Welcome Brian McClure!

Approval of the Agenda (Bigwood, Holtey) Approved, as amended.

Approval of the June Meeting Minutes (Misialek, Bender) Misialek requested the Minutes be revised to read "Community Presbyterian Church – West Fargo" as a receiptient of the $1,000.00 one-time grant. Approved, as amended.

Stated Clerk (Montgomery) No Report.

Communications Coordinator (Kolodka) No Report.

Treasurer's Report (Misialek) Report attached.

The second set of per capita payments have been made. Proceeds from the sale of the Hamilton Church will need to be discussed. There have been no requests for disaster relief. This is a slower time of year for churches to collect and pay assessments.

PNP Investments (Stern) Report submitted.

New Haven Trust has advised an increase in "cash-on-hand;" approximately $50-100,000.00 was recommended. More discussion will ensure in September.

Presbytery Connectional Care Leader (Reikow) No Report.

Congregational Vitality (Bigwood) Report attached.

Motion: The Session of First Presbyterian Church of Fargo requests that the Presbytery of the Northern Plains grant The Rev. Mary Holtey the status of "Honorably Retired" upon her retirement in December 2025. Approved.

Motion: The CVP requests that the Presbytery of the Northern Plains grant The Rev. Marge Landwehr the status of “Honorably Retired” upon her retirement in August 2025. Approved.

Motion: To grant permission for Paul Campbell, CLP, to perform a wedding outside of his current congregation. Approved.

Motion: To recommend to Presbytery, at the Fall Meeting, a Congregation Vitality Grant. Discussion ensued, noting that outside the Presbytery, Bigwood still refers to it as “Committee On Ministry (COM),” as that is what people understand/know. Consideration was withdrawn.

Erin Anderson joined the meeting, virtually.

The Regular Meeting was suspended to permit the presentation at 10:00 AM.

Clearwater Forest Presentation (Erin Anderson) “Fan the Flame” Campaign to build a new multi-purpose building. FLAME = Faith Formation, Leadership Development, Adventure Experiences, Mission & Service, Enviornmental Education & Stewardship. Campaign totals $2,000,000.00.

The Regular Meeting returned to the business of the Congregational Vitality business.

Bigwood posed the question of interest in a grant program, as opposed to a loan program which was not supported during Leadership discussion last month. Informally, support to continue the discussion of a grant program was given.

Committee for Preparation for Ministry (Homan) No Report.

Mission (Preston) No Report.

The University of Jamestown’s Stained Glass Window Project was mentioned to ensure the timely disclosure to the university and securing the Presbytery’s naming rights. Stern confirmed Misialek could comfortably write a check from reserves, at this time. Due to the financial position of the Presbytery, Bender suggested paying the entire contribution now. Stern agreed and made such motion, seconded by Bigwood; Approved.

Nominating (Bender)

Brian McClure as Personnel Moderator.

Bender continues to seek willing and able people to serve on a number of committees and positions.

Bender spoke to his review of the bylaws. Discussion ensued regarding session moderators. From committee, a motion was made to approve the revisions to the bylaws and move forward to the full Presbytery at the Fall Meeting. Approved.

Youth Connection (Preston) - No Report.

Other Business – None.

Adjourn with Prayer

Campbell adjourned the meeting by asking for a closing prayer. Bigwood offered the prayer. The regular meeting was adjourned at 11:27 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Montgomery
Stated Clerk

Leadership Pod Minutes for June 19, 2025

Roll Call Jenn Kolodka, Adam Montgomery, Ellen Misialek, Rusty Bender, Rev. Mary Holtey, Sherri Stern, Donna Preston, Tom Brusegaard, Rev. Deanna Reikow, Rev. Spencer Homan, and Paul Campbell were present. Rev. Sarah Bigwood was absent. A quorum was established.

Campbell called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:32 AM, with prayer.

Approval of the Agenda (Bender, Reikow) Approved, as amended.

Approval of the March Meeting Minutes (Preston, Holtey) Approved, as amended.

Stated Clerk (Montgomery)

Work continues on an intra-presbytery matter.

Mission (Preston) Report attached.

University of Jamestown's Stained Glass Project: Bender/Reikow made a motion to approve the financial commitment of $9,000.00, $8,000.00, and $8,000.00 for the project, over three years. The motion entertained questions of which budget accounts should be used for this project. Motion was approved.

Clearwater Forest update: Bender spoke to the capital campaign to expand its mission with a multi-use space. The total cost of the campaign is $2M. The question of contribution was proposed. Stern noted the Presbytery's Endowment is at approximately $1.6M. She noted the fund has earned $120k in the fiscal year. Stern recommended $100k over three years, as a strategic means to contribute but also conservatively use endowment fund interest. The subject will be revisited.

Communications Coordinator (Kolodka)

Kolodka posed the question of what subjects should be posted on social media. Currently, Facebook is utilized for presbytery business/announcements. The matter will be referred to the Personnel Committee for their consideration and guidance.

Langdon has confirmed their willingness to host the Fall Presbytery Meeting for October 11, 2025 at 11:00 AM. Registration begins thirty minutes prior.

Treasurer's Report (Misialek) Report attached.

If Per Capita is to be paid as before, a transfer of funds will be necessary from savings.

Misialek/Stern moved to authorize $1,000.00 from Small Church Ministries for the previously approved CPC allocation. Motion was Approved.

Presbytery Connectional Care Leader/Care For Congregations/Congregational Vitality (Bigwood, Reikow) Report attached.

Reikow presented the 2025 PNP Family Medical Leave Policy. Motion from committee was approved.

Reikow presented a draft of the Presbytery Loan Program Proposal. Reikow noted Park River has already inquired as to applying. Questions and concerns with the implementation of this program were shared. The proposal will be sent back to committee for further discussion.

The presbytery continues to search for and invite qualified pastoral candidates.

Reikow noted the future of her position will need to be considered by Leadership.

Campbell recessed the meeting at 10:58 AM. The meeting was reconvened at 11:07

Other Business

Bylaw Edits: Bender presented the proposed changes to acknowledge the creation of the Congregational Vitality Pod, changes to terms of office, clarifications and simplifications in verbiage, and renumbering. Misialek requested one month to review and discuss further at the July meeting, noting it was likely presbytery would follow the advice of Leadership. Homan inquired as to naming Congregational Vitality to Committee on Ministry (COM), to align with PC-USA.

Adjourn

Bender/Misialek moved to adjourn. The regular meeting was adjourned at 11:24 AM, with a closing prayer given by Brusegaard.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Montgomery
Stated Clerk

Leadership Pod Minutes for May 15, 2025

Roll Call

Jenn Kolodka, Adam Montgomery, Ellen Misialek, Rusty Bender, Rev. Mary Holtey, Sherri Stern, Donna Preston, Tom Brusegaard, and Rev. Sarah Bigwood were present.
Paul Campbell, Rev. Deanna Reikow, and Rev. Spencer Homan were absent.
A quorum was established.

In Campbell's absence, Bigwood (acting as moderator) called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:30 AM, with prayer.

Approval of the Agenda (Stern, Preston) Approved, as amended.

Approval of the March Meeting Minutes (Preston, Misialek) Amended. *Stated Clerk's Note: There was no Leadership Meeting in April, due to Presbytery.*

Stated Clerk (Montgomery)

An oral report was provided, which shared the Stated Clerk's recent collaboration with another presbytery on a pastoral matter.

Communications Coordinator (Kolodka)

The Fall Meeting will be offered/asked of Langdon to host, on October 11. More to come on this, details are finalized.

Treasurer's Report (Misialek) Report attached.

The Report reflects four months of activity. Nine donations were made for Special Ministries. The Presbytery's Report on Giving has been received. A $10,000.00 allocation was made to Clearwater Camp.

Rev. Deanna Reikow joined the meeting.

Mission (Preston) Report submitted.

Presbytery Connectional Care Leader (Reikow) Anniversaries were highlighted and celebrated. The Midwest Parish is in need of regular pulpit supply. Reikow will be visiting Watford City. Hallock will be needing assistance with an imminent retirement. Pastor LeAnn is improving.

Congregational Vitality (Bender) Will continue to develop and present at the Fall Presbyterty Meeting. Jamie Norstog is filling in at Moorhead. The committee presented three motions (report), which were approved.

Care For Congregations (Bigwood) Report attached.

Community Presbyterian Church (West Fargo) Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) update was provided. The search continues. Bigwood is looking into an interim pastor to support the church as it continues to give a call. On motion (Preston, Stern), up to $1000.00 was allocated to reimburse the church for expenses incurred, due to unforeseen hardships. The allocation was approved.

The Family and Medical Leave Policy was asked to be entertained and will be discussed next month.

The Loan Program will also be considered and discussed next month.

Committee for Preparation for Ministry (Homan) No Report.

Nominating (Bender) No Report.

Youth Connection (Preston) - No Report.

Other Business – None.

Adjourn

Preston/Holtey moved to adjourn. The regular meeting was adjourned at 10:39 AM, with a closing prayer given by Rev. Bigwood.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Montgomery
Stated Clerk

Leadership Pod Minutes for March 20, 2025

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

Roll Call

Jenn Kolodka, Adam Montgomery, Ellen Misialek, Rusty Bender & Rev. Mary Holtey, Sherri Stern, Paul Campbell, Donna Preston, Rev. Deanna Reikow, Rev. Spencer Homan, Rev. Sarah Bigwood.

Tom Brusegaard was also absent.

Campbell called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:31 AM, Rev. Reikow opened the meeting with prayer.

Approval of the Agenda (Preston, Homan) Approved.

Approval of the January Meeting Minutes

Reviewed churches who did submit annual statistical reports.

Motion to Approve (Homan, Preston). Approved.

Stated Clerk (Montgomery)

GA 226 Proposed Amendments (attached) will be added to the Presbytery meeting agenda. Montgomery will be in contact with Brusegaard to draft the meeting agenda. Leaders and chairs are encouraged to submit agenda items and reports soon.

Communications Coordinator (Kolodka)

Meeting registration is again required to get catering numbers. Kolodka continues to finalize items and actions to ensure a successful meeting.

The Fall Presbytery Meeting was asked to be scheduled. Preston/Homan moved to tentatively schedule the meeting for October 11, 2025. Further discussion ensued as to the hosting property. Bigwood will ask Community Presbyterian Church – West Fargo if they are interested in hosting.

Treasurer's Report (Misialek) Report attached.

Nothing unusual to report. Per Capita funds are dwindling. Financial Statement for the meeting is up to date, as of March 18. Misialek shared her efforts in monitoring the Presbytery mail being received in Grand Forks.

Investments (Stern) No Report.

Presbytery Connectional Care Leader (Reikow)

Excitement of being more "pro-congregation" on the part of Leadership. The Northeast has been covered since the last meeting. Reikow plans to be at the Presbytery meeting an hour ahead of the schedule, to make herself available to church representation for anything they may want to discuss.

Bigwood inquired as to any funds available for pastors "going through extreme emergencies?" Reikow answered, historically there have been funds found and then pastors were connected with the Board of Pensions. Holtey supplemented that Leadership has used the pod's discretionary funds also.

Bigwood/Holtey motioned to direct $500 from Pastoral Care and $500 from Leadership Pod ($1,000.00 total) for the benefit of Rev. Leann Simmons. Approved.

Care For Congregations (Bigwood) Report attached.

Informal conversations have commenced regarding the merge with Care for Pastoral Leaders.

Motion from Committee: *Grant permission to the Hamilton congregation to sell their building and property with all proceeds returning to the Presbytery of the North Plains, to cover Per Capita debt obligations. If there are funds that remain, the congregation may request to have those funds transferred to the congregation(s) or mission(s) of their choice.* Approved.

The Pod commenced discussion as to the Park River Federated Church, Per Capita, member rolls, and the desire to continue to grow smaller churches.

Motion from Committee: *Request permission for Andrew Thostenson to administer communion at Community Presbyterian Church – West Fargo, on Sunday, April 20, 2025.* Approved.

Care for Pastoral Leaders (Vacant) *in transition, due to Rev. Holtey's retirement.*

Committee for Preparation for Ministry (Homan) Report attached.

Nominating (Bender) - Rev. Holtey's retirement resignation was accepted this morning.

Youth Connection (Preston) - No Report.

Other Business

Misialek wished to discuss the GA Amendments. The consensus is there should be some pre-meeting work regarding the GA proposals to allow discernment and contemplation. Montgomery will inquire to the Synod as to a “Cliff’s Notes” version of the amendments to be presented to the voting body.

Adjourn

Bigwood/Preston moved to adjourn. The regular meeting was adjourned at 10:35 AM, with a closing prayer given by Rev. Homan.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Montgomery
Stated Clerk

Leadership Pod Minutes for February 20, 2025

Roll Call

Jenn Kolodka, Adam Montgomery, Ellen Misialek, Rusty Bender & Rev. Mary Holtey, Sherri Stern, Paul Campbell, Donna Preston, Rev. Deanna Reikow, Rev. Spencer Homan.

Rev. Sarah Bigwood was absent due to church obligations. Tom Brusegaard was also absent.

Campbell called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:31 AM, with prayer.

Approval of the Agenda (Preston, Holtey)

Approval of the January Meeting Minutes

1. Use last names
2. Jamie resigned from Gilby and Forest River
3. First Pres Hamilton is Closing
4. Dan Billings considering Care for Congregations appointment

Motion to Approve as Amended (Preston, Holtey).

Communications Coordinator (Kolodka)

Removed Pastoral Contact information for safety and privacy. A message has been added to contact the office for this information. The list will be available for operations purposes.

University of Jamestown is going to be limited in their catering capabilities for the spring Presbytery meeting. Kolodka shared options to consider. Preston mentioned there was once a caterer at the Jamestown Church, which might be an option.

Statistical Reporting was better than years past. Kolodka set Calvin, Hanah, Inkster, Portal, Wilton were set to "zero."

Treasurer's Report (Misialek)

Report submitted. $22k collected for per capita. GA and Synod have been paid the traditional 1/3 payment, year to date. Financially "in a logical place."

Investments (Stern)

Investment Report will be done quarterly. April will have a report. Hamilton Church has two interested buyers. Reikow spoke to the process of a closing commission, however the Hamilton Church has not been assigned such a commission. Discussion ensued on the process of closing, past due per capita, church records, and the lack of closing oversight by the Presbytery. Stern will forward an authorization letter to the Stated Clerk for authorization.

Connectional Care (Reikow)

Working to understand the makeup and administration of Park River.

Care For Congregations (Bigwood) Report Submitted.

Care for Pastoral Leaders (Holtey)

Terms of Call Reports have been requested.

Nominating (Bender) - No Report.

Youth Connection (Preston) - No Report.

Other Business

Bender will continue to work on the merging of the “Care” pods. A Fall 2025 presentation is planned.

Misialek asked for help regarding an email shared from Synod inquiring as to participation in Medical Assistance Grants. Reikow will assist.

Adjourn

Homan/Stern moved to adjourn. The regular meeting was adjourned at 10:15 AM, with a closing prayer given by Rev. Reikow.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Montgomery
Stated Clerk

January 16, 2025

Sarah, Mary, Paul, Rusty, & Adam at First Presbyterian Church - Fargo

Donna, Jenn, Sherri, Ellen, Spencer, Deanna & Tom (online)

Paul called the regular monthly meeting of the leadership pod to order at 9:30 AM and opened with prayer.

Approval of the agenda Rusty, Mary – approved.

December 2024 Leadership Pod Meeting Minutes – Donna, Sarah – approved.

Stated Clerk Report (Adam) – State Reports are do next month. Working with Pam Prouty on the transfer of Rev. Robert Drake.

Communications Coordinator (Jenn) - Annual Statistical Report communication efforts to ensure churches are receiving the notification and accurately reporting, for per capita purposes. Discussion regarding the collection of pastoral salary information reporting. Church directory information is available online. Discussion of how many recorded presbytery meetings should be made available online, as space is limited.

Treasurer's Report (Ellen) - report attached. Ellen emphasized the need for accurate statistical reporting to ensure accurate per capita. Ellen is asking to particularly address Inkster, Steele, and Wilton. The per capita bill for 2025 is $31,414.32 (2898 members). Registration with the North Dakota Secretary of State has been filed. Ellen asked the committee to amend the budget and cover half of Deanna's board of pension cost for 2025 (Sarah, Mary) - approved.

Investments (Sherri) - EOY 2024 Report was submitted.

(Deanna) - Bismarck, Mandan, Glencoe... Deanna has a list of churches she will be visiting. Lily Grant was not accepted.

Congregational Care (Sarah) - Per Capita Forgiveness Program consideration. The committee is now asking the leadership pod for its approval. Motion came from committee – approved. Grant permission to Rusty Bender to administer Communion at Baker-Downer for February and March 2025 – approved. Jamie Norstog has submitted his resignation as teaching elder. First Presbyterian Church is closing, effective March 1, 2025. Their last service will be February 23 – 9:00 AM. Dan Billings is considering joining the committee. At the Spring Presbytery meeting, formal action to close Inkster will be required.

Pastoral Care (Mary) - Those pastors who are leaving will have exit interviews.

Nominating Committee

Rusty, Donna move to adjourn. Closed with prayer by Sarah. Meeting adjourned at 10:22 AM.