

PRESBYTERY OF THE NORTHERN PLAINS
ONE HUNDRED and THIRTY-THIRD STATED MEETING
October 11, 2025

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) held its stated meeting at the Presbyterian Church of Langdon (ND).

Vice-Moderator Ruling Elder (RE) Rusty Bender called the meeting to order at 11:05 AM and opened with prayer.

The Rev. J. Sue Kana-Mackey, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Langdon, led the Presbytery in worship. Holy Communion was celebrated as part of the service. An offering was taken for the benefit of Rev. Dr. Leanne Simmons, TE of Bismark, to assist with living and medical expenses.

The roll was taken by means of registration forms by the attendees.

P – Present in person; Z – Present via Zoom; E – Excused; A – Absent;
HR – Ministers Honorably Retired, excused if absent; LOB Ministers laboring outside the bounds of the Presbytery, excused if absent. (*Numbers preceding Ministers' names are ecclesiastical occupational designations.*)

Other abbreviations:

TE = Teaching Elder (Minister of the Word and Sacrament)

RE = Ruling Elder

CRE = Commissioned Ruling Elder (also known as Commissioned Lay Pastor, CLP)

Pastoral Leaders			
Designation	Minister	Ministry	Attendance
299	Billings, Dan	HR	E
101	Bigwood, Sarah	Fargo	Z
299	Bishop, Catherine	HR	Z
101	Boyar, Robert	Jamestown	Z
797	Burger-Peery, Deborah	Member at Large	
107	Campbell, Paul	CLP, Casselton	Z
107	Chapman, Casey	CLP, Grandin-Hunter	
299	Cory, Darrel	HR	E
299	Danielson, Cheri	HR	E
299	Danielson, Marli	HR	E
101	Dill, Robin	Grafton, Minto	P
101	Dumont, Trudy	Devils Lake	
797	Emerson, Nancy	Member at Large	P
299	Graf, Gretchen	HR	E

299	Graham, Ron	HR	E
101	Holtey, Mary	Fargo	P
101	Homan, Spencer	Grand Forks	P
151	Kana-Mackey, Sue	Langdon	P
299	Kargard, Rick	HR	E
107	Legerski, Nancy	CLP, Bismarck	
299	Mansell, Henry	HR	E
299	McCullough, Cheryl	HR	E
299	McDowell, Martha	HR	E
797	Meier, Mindy	Member at Large	
299	Monteith, Donna	HR	P
107	Norstog, Jamie	Pulpit Supply, Moorhead	P
797	Ozaki, Michael	Member at Large	
101	Reikow, Deanna	Mandan	P
797	Rhoad, Johnny	Member at Large	
501	Sanders, Ruth	Crookston (UMC)	
107	Schnackenberg, Dave	CLP, Rolla-St John	P
101	Simmons, Leanne	Bismarck	E
107	Sorenson, Raenelle	CLP, Arvilla	Z
299	Suk, David	HR	E
501	Sveet, Elaine	Minot (Zion Lutheran)	
299	Swanson, Joan	HR	E
299	Watts, Gary	HR	E
299	Woodford, Don	HR	E

Congregation	Ruling Elder Commissioners	In Person or Zoom
Angus, Angus-Tabor Presbyterian		
Arvilla, Arvilla Presbyterian	Brenda Beck	Z
Baker, Westminster Presbyterian		
Bismarck, First Presbyterian	Signe Snortland Alice Nix	Z Z
Bismarck, Glencoe Sloan Memorial	Nancy Laschkewitsch Karen Macdonald	P P
Bottineau, United Parish		
Buffalo, First Presbyterian		
Calvin, Glenila Presbyterian		
Casselton, Westminster Presb.	Lana Schultz	P
Cavalier, Cavalier Presbyterian	Zelda Hartje	P
Colgate, Colgate Presbyterian		
Cooperstown, First Presbyterian		
Crookston, First Presbyterian		

Devils Lake, Westminster Presb.		
Dilworth, Dilworth Presbyterian		
East Grand Forks, Mendenhall		
Edgeley, First Presbyterian		
Ellendale, Presbyterian		
Fairview, Community Presbyterian		
Fargo, First Presbyterian	Brian McClure Sharon Secor Bruce Maylath	Z P P
Fordville, Community Presbyterian		
Forest River, Midway Parish		
Gilby, Gilby Presbyterian		
Grafton, Federated Church	Gale Fisher	P
Grand Forks, First Presbyterian	Ben Shannon Evan Andrist	P P
Grandin, Grandin Presbyterian	Donna Preston	P
Hallock, First Presbyterian	Betty Jo Younggren	P
Hamilton, First Presbyterian	Dorothy Robinson	P
Hannah, Hannah Presbyterian		
Hunter, First Presbyterian		
Inkster, Inkster Presbyterian		
Jamestown, United Presbyterian	Bill Weispfenning	Z
LaMoure, First Presbyterian		
Langdon, Presbyterian Church	Clinton Esckilsen	P
Lisbon, First Presbyterian		
Mandan, First Presbyterian		
Minto, Knox Presbyterian	Ellen Misialek	Z
Moorhead, First Presbyterian	George O'Neill Elizabeth Swee	Z P
Oakes, First Presbyterian		
Park River, Federated Church		
Pillsbury, Baldwin Presbyterian		
Portal, First Presbyterian		
Red Lake Falls, First Presbyterian		
Rhame, Lyle Presbyterian		
Rolla-St John, Presbyterian Church	Anita Barrett	P
Rugby, Emmanuel United Church		
Tower City, Tower City Presbyterian		
Towner, Towner Presbyterian		
Walhalla, Park Center-Walhalla	Kent Dalzell	P
Watford City, First Presbyterian		
Webster, Webster Chapel		
West Fargo, Community Presb.	Carrie Lauber	Z

Westhope, First Presbyterian		
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Others in Attendance	Position	In Person or Zoom
Tom Brusegaard	Moderator	E
Rusty Bender	Vice Moderator	P
Adam Montgomery	Stated Clerk	P
Sherri Stern	Financial Task Force	P
Jennifer Kolodka	Visitor, Communications Coord.	P
Erin Anderson	Clearwater Forest Director	P
Chandra Mendieta	Bdecan	P
Elsie Magnus	Visitor (Cavalier, Pulpit Supply)	P
Scott Halstead	Visitor (Grand Forks)	P
Betty Kaehn	Visitor (Langdon)	P
Kristy Forest	Visitor (Langdon)	P
Gail Pearson	Visitor (Langdon)	P
Wendy Waslaski	Visitor (Langdon)	P
Joyce Esckilsen	Visitor (Langdon)	P
Glen Millar	Visitor (Walhalla)	P

In accordance with the bylaws (Article IV, B-4.0500), Stated Clerk Adam Montgomery advised the vice-moderator that a quorum was established.

M/S/C = moved, seconded, and carried (of a motion)

Approval of the Agenda – Vice-Moderator Bender moved Line Item #9 – Recess for Lunch to Line Item #8 and re-numbered accordingly. **Preston/Youngren/Approved.**

Seating of Correspondence – Chandra Mendieta, Bdecan; Erin Anderson, Clearwater Forest.

Approval of the Minutes of the 132nd Stated Meeting of the Presbytery -

Lana Schultz provided the stated clerk with minor name corrections, via email. Without objection, those changes were accepted. **Reikow/Monteith/Approved, as amended.**

Care for Congregations (Vitality) Pod Report (Rev. Sarah Bigwood) - Report submitted.

On behalf of committee, TE Bigwood presented a motion to accept the dissolutions of the following pastoral relationships:

1. Rev. Robert Drake and The First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead, MN;

2. Rev. Marge Landwehr and The First Presbyterian Church of Hallock, MN;
3. Rev. Michael Osaki and The First Presbyterian Church of Crookston, MN.

Motion Carried.

The revised PNP Family Leave Policy was approved on June 19, 2025 and presented.

Bigwood presented a proposal to hire an Executive Presbyter for the consideration of the Presbytery at the Fall 2025 meeting.

Bigwood presented a proposal for a Congregational Vitality Grant Program for the consideration of the Presbytery.

Rev. Mary Holtey led the Presbytery in a blessing of the Inkster Presbyterian Church and First Presbyterian Church of Hamilton on their closings. Church members present were recognized and prayed for.

On behalf of the committee, Bigwood presented a motion to dismiss the Inkster Presbyterian Church, giving thanks for its faithfulness to the gospel and its enduring witness to the grace of Jesus Christ. **Motion Carried.**

On behalf of the committee, Bigwood presented a motion to dismiss the Hamilton Presbyterian Church, giving thanks for its faithfulness to the gospel and its enduring witness to the grace of Jesus Christ. **Motion Carried.**

Vice-Moderator Bender recessed the meeting for lunch at 12:30 PM.

Vice-Moderator Bender called the meeting back to order at 1:20 PM.

Connectional Care Pastor Report - Rev. Deanna Reikow spoke to her work of connecting with churches and understanding their needs, especially for those churches losing a pastor to retirement and other various reasons this year.

Rev. Deanna Reikow and Rev. Dr. Spencer Homan acknowledged those individuals preparing for ministry.

Bylaw Changes Proposal – Vice-Moderator Bender presented the suggested revisions of the Presbytery's bylaws, as outlined in the meeting materials, for approval. Rev. Nancy Emerson suggested friendly amendments to the proposed bylaw amendment that were accepted by Bender. **Changes were accepted.**

Vice-Moderator Bender presented the current officers, staff, pod leaders, task leaders, pod members, & task teams. Bender highlighted appreciation for churches who could forward one member's name to serve the Presbytery's needs. Nominations from the floor were accepted. With a motion from the committee, **the nominations were approved.**

Consent Agenda Preston/Dill/ Accepted.

Correspondence - University of Jamestown – Report submitted.

Vice-Moderator Bender spoke about his visit to the campus to see the stained-glass window restoration projection finished. The university gifted the Presbytery a replica of the window pinnacle in appreciation of the monetary donation to the project.

Clearwater Forest – Handout

Erin Anderson conveyed Clearwater's appreciation for the Presbytery and those who give and partake in the camp's programming. She also introduced the camp's "Fan the FLAME" capital improvement project initiative.

On behalf of the Leadership Pod, Sherri Stern proposed the Presbytery be a "leading donor" with a \$100,000.00 gift to challenge the other Presbyteries to do the same. **Motion/gift approved.**

Vice-Moderator shared pictures and his experience, on behalf of the youth, at Triennium.

Chogoria Ministry Team – Report submitted. CLP Jamie Norstog presented.

Annual Statistical Report – Report submitted.

Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Proposal – Budget submitted.

On behalf of Ellen Misialek, Treasurer, Sherri Stern presented the proposed budget, noting concerns of an operating deficit, due to deficient per capita. Stern also shared the investments' financial report, which remains positive. Misialek noted the budget reflects the recommendation of maintaining 2026 per capita at \$50 per member. **The budget was approved, as recommended.**

Good News

Glencoe-Sloan, “North Dakota’s Oldest Presbyterian Church” at 135 years old, needs new windows. Karen Macdonald presented insights on her membership, the church, and its history. A financial ask will be made of the Presbytery, at a later time.

Donna Monteith shared a memory of her time at Glencoe. As current moderator of Buffalo, Monteith shared the church has a “Dollars For Scholars” endowment, due to the sale of its manse.

Jamie Norstog shared he and his sister purchased a home in Fergus Falls, MN. This past spring, he took a call to long term pulpit supply for Moorhead and notes the change in the church’s energy with a 14% attendance increase.

Vice-Moderator Bender shared news that Baker-Downer is bringing back their fish fry on October 24, since its COVID-19 hiatus. First Presbyterian Fargo will host “Kirkin’ O’ the Tartans” on November 2.

Donna Preston thanked everyone for their support of Bdecan.

Pastor Schnackenberg announced that Rolla-St. John youth will host a “sleep-out” event for homelessness awareness.

Rev. Bob Boyar shared his gratitude for financial assistance to repair Jamestown’s doors after summer storm damage.

There was no Unfinished Business.

Vice-Moderator Bender closed the meeting with prayer. With a collective of motions, the 133rd Regular Meeting of the Presbytery was adjourned at 3:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam R. Montgomery

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Adam R. Montgomery". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Stated Clerk



Presbytery of the Northern Plains

5555 South Washington Street ~ Grand Forks, North Dakota 58201

Ph: (701) 248-0227 email: pnpooffice@gmail.com

Moderator

Tom Brusegaard

701-215-0300

gilbyguy@gmail.com

September 20, 2025

CALL TO STATED MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY

The Fall meeting of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains is called for

Vice Moderator

Rusty Bender

701-840-2618

rbender@firstpresfargo.org

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2025 at 11:45 AM at the

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF LANGDON,

423 8TH AVE, LANGDON, ND 58249

Stated Clerk

Adam Montgomery

701-361-4644

pnpstatedclerk@gmail.com

Registration and fellowship hour will begin at 10:00 AM.

Worship Service will be led by Rev. Sue Kana-Mackey at 11:00 AM.

Meeting Agenda will begin after Worship, approximately 11:45 AM.

Treasurer

Ellen Misialek

701-520-3220

emisialek@outlook.com

All are encouraged to prioritize attending in person.

The meeting will be available electronically via Zoom for those who cannot attend in person.

Ministers of the Word & Sacrament and Ruling Elder Commissioners are asked to pre-register your attendance.

The meeting agenda, registration link, Zoom link, previous meeting minutes, and reports will be available on the PNP website:

<https://www.northernplainspresbytery.com/presbytery-meeting>

Communications Coordinator

Jenn Kolodka

701-248-0227

pnpooffice@gmail.com

Connectional Care Pastor

Rev. Deanna Reikow

701-726-3857

drfpcmandan@hotmail.com

Please contact Jenn Kolodka for registration matters and Adam Montgomery for meeting business.

Respectfully,

Adam R. Montgomery, J.D.

Stated Clerk

133rd Stated Meeting of
The Presbytery of the Northern Plains

October 11, 2025 - 11:45 AM
Presbyterian Church of Langdon,
Langdon, ND

1. Call to Order - Opening Prayer
2. Worship
3. Roll Call
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. Seating of Corresponding Members
6. Approval of April 5, 2025 Meeting Minutes
7. Care for Congregations Pod Report
8. Bylaw Changes Proposal
9. Recess for Lunch
10. Consent Agenda
 - a. Officer Reports
 - b. Stated Clerk Report
 - c. Pod Reports
 - d. Committee Reports
 - e. Synod Commissioner Report
 - f. Partner Reports
11. Correspondence - Clearwater Forest
12. Correspondence - University of Jamestown
13. Youth Connection Team
14. Chogoria Ministry Team
15. Connectional Care Pastor Report
16. Annual Statistical Report
17. Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Proposal
18. Good News
19. Unfinished Business
20. Adjourn - Closing Prayer

PRESBYTERY OF THE NORTHERN PLAINS
ONE HUNDRED and THIRTY-SECOND STATED MEETING

April 5, 2025

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) held its stated meeting in the Reiland Fine Arts Building on the campus of the University of Jamestown (ND).

Moderator Ruling Elder (RE) Tom Brusegaard called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM and opened with prayer.

Corday Goddard led the Presbytery in worship. Holy Communion was celebrated as part of the service. An offering was taken for the benefit of Unified Mission.

The roll was taken by means of registration forms filled out by the attendees. The following Ministers were present unless otherwise noted:

P – Present in person; Z – Present via Zoom; E – Excused; A – Absent; HR – Ministers Honorably Retired, excused if absent; LOB Ministers laboring outside the bounds of the Presbytery, excused if absent. (*Numbers preceding Ministers' names are ecclesiastical occupational designations.*)

Other abbreviations:

TE = Teaching Elder (Minister of the Word and Sacrament)

RE = Ruling Elder

CRE = Commissioned Ruling Elder (also known as Commissioned Lay Pastor, CLP)

M/S/C = moved, seconded, and carried (of a motion)

Pastoral Leaders			
Designation	Minister	Ministry	Attendance
299	Benz, Lorelee	HR	E
299	Billings, Dan	HR	E
101	Bigwood, Sarah	Fargo	P
299	Bishop, Catherine	HR	P
101	Boyar, Robert	Jamestown	P
797	Burger-Perry, Deborah	Member at Large	
107	Campbell, Paul	CLP, Casselton	P
107	Chapman, Casey	CLP, Grandin-Hunter	
299	Christman, David	HR	E
299	Cory, Daniel	HR	E

299	Danielson, Cheri	HR	E
299	Danielson, Marli	HR	E
101	Dill, Robin	Grafton, Minto	
101	Dumont, Trudy	Devils Lake	Z
797	Emerson, Nancy	Member at Large	Z
299	Graf, Gretchen	HR	E
299	Graham, Ron	HR	E
103	Holtey, Mary	Fargo	P
101	Homan, Spencer	Grand Forks	P
151	Kana-Mackey, Sue	Langdon	P
299	Kargard, Rick	HR	E
299	Kincaid, Jacob	HR	E
107	Krumm, Barbara	CLP, Ellendale	
101	Landwehr, Marjorie	Hallock	
107	Legerski, Nancy	CLP, Bismarck	
299	Mansell, Henry	HR	E
299	McCullough, Cheryl	HR	E
299	McDowell, Martha	HR	E
299	Monteith, Donna	HR	P
101	Ozaki, Michael	Crookston	
101	Reikow, Deanna	Mandan	P
791	Rhoad, Johnny		
101	Sanders, Ruth	Crookston (UMC)	
107	Schnackenberg, Dave	CLP, Rolla-St John	Z
101	Simmons, Leanne	Bismarck	
107	Sorenson, Raenelle	CLP, Arvilla	Z
701	Suk, David	GF Hope Korean	
501	Sweet, Elaine	Minot (Zion Lutheran)	
299	Swanson, Joan	HR	E
299	Watts, Gary	HR	E
299	Wolpert, David	HR	E
299	Woodford, Don	HR	E

Congregation	Ruling Elder Commissioners	In Person or Zoom
Angus, Angus-Tabor Presbyterian		
Arvilla, Arvilla Presbyterian	Brenda Beck	Z
Baker, Westminster Presbyterian		
Bismarck, First Presbyterian	Jim Skaret	Z
Bismarck, Glencoe Sloan Memorial		
Bottineau, United Parish		
Buffalo, First Presbyterian		

Calvin, Glenila Presbyterian		
Casselton, Westminster Presb.	Lana Schultz	P
Cavalier, Cavalier Presbyterian		
Colgate, Colgate Presbyterian		
Cooperstown, First Presbyterian		
Crookston, First Presbyterian		
Devils Lake, Westminster Presb.	Katie Nettell	Z
Dilworth, Dilworth Presbyterian		
East Grand Forks, Mendenhall		
Edgeley, First Presbyterian		
Ellendale, Presbyterian		
Fairview, Community Presbyterian		
Fargo, First Presbyterian	Bruce Maylath Brian McClure Richard Laraway	P P P
Fordville, Community Presbyterian		
Forest River, Midway Parish		
Gilby, Gilby Presbyterian		
Grafton, Federated Church		
Grand Forks, First Presbyterian	Ben Shannon Thyra Knapp	P P
Grandin, Grandin Presbyterian	Donna Preston	Z
Hallock, First Presbyterian	Betty Younggren	Z
Hamilton, First Presbyterian		
Hannah, Hannah Presbyterian		
Hunter, First Presbyterian		
Inkster, Inkster Presbyterian		
Jamestown, United Presbyterian	Bill Weispfenning Tiffany Dauer	P P
LaMoure, First Presbyterian		
Langdon, Presbyterian Church		
Lisbon, First Presbyterian	Ross Cole	P
Mandan, First Presbyterian		
Minto, Knox Presbyterian	Ellen Misialek	P
Moorhead, First Presbyterian	Elizabeth Swee George O'Neill	P P
Oakes, First Presbyterian		
Park River, Federated Church		
Pillsbury, Baldwin Presbyterian		
Portal, First Presbyterian		
Red Lake Falls, First Presbyterian		
Rhame, Lyle Presbyterian		
Rolla-St John, Presbyterian Church		
Rugby, Emmanuel United Church		

Tower City, Tower City Presbyterian	Mary Cockerill	P
Towner, Towner Presbyterian		
Walhalla, Park Center-Walhalla		
Watford City, First Presbyterian		
Webster, Webster Chapel	Wayne Lindenberg	P
West Fargo, Community Presb.	Carrie Lauber	P
Westhope, First Presbyterian		

Others in Attendance	Position	In Person or Zoom
Tom Brusegaard	Moderator	P
Rusty Bender	Vice Moderator	P
Adam Montgomery	Stated Clerk	P
Ellen Misialek	Treasurer	P
Jennifer Kolodka	Visitor, Office Admin	P
Jamie Norstog	Chogoria Ministry Team	P
Corday Goddard	CLP (Fargo)	P

In accordance with the stated bylaws, Article IV, B-4.0500, Stated Clerk Adam Montgomery advised the moderator a quorum was established.

Approval of the Agenda – Bender/Campbell/Carried.

Seating of Correspondence – The University of Jamestown Campus Ministry Team will be heard upon arrival. No other correspondents were present.

Rev. Bob Boyar introduced first time attendees, Tiffany Dauer of United Presbyterian of Jamestown, Ben Shannon of Grand Forks First Presbyterian, and Thyra Knapp of Grand Forks First Presbyterian.

Consent Agenda – Campbell/Bigwood/Carried.

In the interest of time and efficiency, Item 9 – Lunch Recess was postponed and Moderator Brusegaard moved to Item 10.

2024 Annual Statistical Report - (Stated Clerk Adam Montgomery).
Bigwood/Bender/Approved.

Preparation for Ministry Report - (Rev. Spencer Homan) - Corday Goddard, Carrie Lauber and Rusty Bender were in attendance. Report submitted. Report Received.

Rev. Deanna Reikow requested the Connectional Care Pastor Report be returned after the lunch recess. The request was granted by Moderator Brusegaard.

Care for Congregations Report - (Rev. Sarah Bigwood). Report submitted.

Additional information from Rev. Bigwood included the potential merger of the Care for Pastoral Leaders and Care for Congregations pods. Community Presbyterian Church in West Fargo has called Rev. Jason Cunningham as a full-time pastor, effective May 15, 2025. Rev. Bigwood read aloud Rev. Cunningham's biographical introduction.

Approve the Call of Rev. Cunningham. Reikow/Holtey/Approved.

Administrative Commission to install Rev. Cunningham: Campbell, Lauber, Boyar, Holtey.

Per Capita debt forgiveness program.

Moorhead: Bigwood added a statement that Nancy Emerson, monthly pulpit supply and continues to celebrate Holy Communion.

Motion to accept the dissolution of Rev. Robert Drake from Moorhead Presbyterian Church (from committee). Approved.

Park River is updating their space using a large financial gift.

Moderator Brusegaard recessed the meeting with prayer for lunch at 11:15 AM (Expected call back is 12:30 PM).

The Stated Meeting was Called Back to Order by Vice Moderator Bender at 12:30 PM.

Connectional Care Pastor Report - (Rev. Deanna Reikow)

Rev. Reikow recognized Ellen Misialek for her work with a special Easter gift. Donna Preston was also recognized. Rev. Mary Holtey was recognized for her work, both in the church and the Presbytery. Adam Montgomery and Jenn Kolodka were recognized for their staff work. Elizabeth Swee was recognized for her representation with the Synod and the church at large.

Youth Triennium – Rev. Reikow shared the anxiety of youth. Crowd size is a factor for many people. Rev. Reikow highlighted the importance of small churches and those that are served by them.

Chogoria Team Report - (Jamie Norstog and Carrie Lauber). No written report.

Motion that today's worship offering, totaling \$463.00, be directed to Chogoria's Sponsorship Mission. Misialek/Bigwood/Carried.

Motion to Recess. Bigwood/McClure/Carried.

226th General Assembly Amendments

Omnibus motion to approve amendments. Bigwood/Emerson/Carried.

Amendments pulled out for discussion: Rev. Boyar 24-C, Wayne Lindenberg 24-A, Rev. Boyar 24-M

Accepted Omnibus motion, approved.

24- A F-1.0403

Wayne Lindenberg (Webster) spoke against the amendment.

Thyra Knapp (First Presbyterian Grand Forks) spoke in favor.

Bruce Mayleth (Fargo) asked for the original reading. Montgomery read it.

DO APPROVE

24-C G-2.0104b

Rev. Boyar spoke to his sole work and responsibility as Admissions and Departures Examiner. Boyar encouraged a NO vote.

Rev. Reikow spoke to the process of background checks and interviews in the hiring process. Reikow spoke to the diverse number of people who participate in the process.

CRE Paul Campbell shared he served as one of the commissioned representatives at the General Assembly. He shared how the “right of conscience” is already in the Book of Order and this addition is not necessary.

DO NOT APPROVE

24-M Episcopal-Presbyterian Agreement on Local Sharing of Ministries

Rev. Boyar inquired as to who had worshiped at an Episcopal church and the differences. He does not support this amendment.

Rev. Nancy Emerson (online) noted how this agreement would benefit the small and rural area churches. She supports the amendment.

Ross Cole (Lisbon) shared his thoughts on small churches sharing is likely to be the future.

CRE Campbell spoke in support of the amendment and shared this came from his GA committee.

DO APPROVE

Sharing of Good News

George O'Neil, Self-Development of People Committee. Funded by *One Great Hour of Sharing*. O'Neil shared a story of encountering one of the sponsored farmers at the Fargo Farmers Market. A true success story.

Ellen Misialek shared The University of Jamestown Campus Ministry Team is alive and well. Misialek shared the group's appreciation for the financial gift made last year.

Rev. Boyar highlighted his first new member after joining was Tiffany Dauer, who is now at her first Presbytery meeting.

Lana Schultz shared Presbyterian Women will be in Langdon (see packet). Schultz reminded the body PW has money available for grants, up to \$2,000.00.

Rev. Reikow shared an update on Rev. Leanne Simmons.

There was NO Unfinished Business.

Move to Adjourn – Boyar/ Laraway/Carried.

With a closing prayer, the Regular Meeting of the Presbytery was adjourned at 2:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam R. Montgomery
Stated Clerk

Congregational Vitality Report

Fall 2025

State of the Presbytery

- **Motion to accept the dissolution of the following pastoral relationships.**
 - **Rev. Robert Drake & The First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead**
 - **Rev. Marge Landwehr & The First Presbyterian Church of Hallock**
 - **Rev. Michael Osaki & The First Presbyterian Church of Crookston**
- The Presbytery of the Northern Plains gives thanks to God for the long and faithful ministry of the Inkster Presbyterian Church. Having served their community and the larger church of Jesus Christ with dedication, and after prayerful discernment, the congregation has voted to bring its ministry to a close. With gracious intent, they have willingly transferred their assets and encouraged their members to continue their witness through the two remaining congregations of the Midway Parish, Forest River and Gilby Presbyterian Churches.

In accordance with its constitutional responsibility to “control the location of new congregations and of congregations desiring to move as well as to divide, dismiss, or dissolve congregations in consultation with their members” (G-3.0303), **the Leadership Pod of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains moves to dismiss the Inkster Presbyterian Church, giving thanks for its faithfulness to the gospel and its enduring witness to the grace of Jesus Christ.**

- The Presbytery of the Northern Plains gives thanks to God for the long and faithful ministry of the Hamilton Presbyterian Church. Having served their community and the larger church of Jesus Christ with dedication since 1882, and after prayerful discernment, the congregation has voted to bring its ministry to a close. With gracious intent, they have willingly sold their building, paid off debts, transferred their assets to the Presbytery, and donated their paraments to Knox Presbyterian in Minto, ND, and a set of eight confessional banners lovingly created by Thelma Collins and Rhoda Enerson are still looking for a church home. Some of their members now worship at St. Thomas Methodist and Knox Presbyterian, and we give thanks to the church universal for their continued care and witness.

In accordance with its constitutional responsibility to “control the location of new congregations and of congregations desiring to move as well as to divide, dismiss, or dissolve congregations in consultation with their members” (G-3.0303), **the Leadership Pod of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains moves to dismiss the Hamilton Presbyterian Church, giving thanks for its enduring faithfulness, its gifts to the larger church, and its joyful witness to Christ.**

- Pod Merger - The Care for Congregations and the Care for Pastoral Leaders Pods recommend a merger and updating the name to Congregational Vitality Pod. Since we are

already meeting jointly, our reports will convey the new name. The motion will come from Nominating.

- Family Leave Policy. Per Book of Order requirements which changed in 2024, we have updated our Family Leave Policy. See attached.
- Congregational Vitality Grant Program – See attached. We are asking Presbytery to approve this proposal at the Spring 2026 meeting. Opportunities for input will take place on ZOOM between now and the Spring meeting.
- Executive Presbyter – See attached. The Presbytery of the Northern Plains is proposing the creation of an **Executive Presbyter** role to provide relational, pastoral, and administrative leadership. We are asking Presbytery to approve a version of this proposal at the Spring 2026 meeting. Opportunities for input will take place on ZOOM between now and the Spring meeting.
- FREE websites for churches. The Presbytery of the Northern Plains has contracted with a service to provide a free one-page website for churches. We know that most people search for a church online before they will attend in-person. If your church needs a web presence and is interested in a website, please contact Jenn in the Presbytery office.
- FREE Small Church Growth Training – The Presbytery of the Northern Plains has contracted with a small church growth expert, John Fong. John specializes in helping small churches grow by applying practical outreach and growth strategies that fit their size and context. By partnering with presbyteries, John ensures that churches feel supported by broader leadership, making the process more effective and sustainable. His approach equips even the smallest congregations with tools to thrive in today's ministry landscape. These services are free to all of our congregations. If your congregation is interested in being a part of this growth training, contact Jenn in the Presbytery office.
- Minister Report – See attached.
- Connectional Pastor – The Leadership Pod has extended the Connectional Pastor position through the end of 2026 or until an Executive Presbyter is hired, whichever comes first.

Argyle (Community)

Jeff Radeke, clerk of Community Presbyterian Church of Argyle, reports that the congregation continues to meet regularly with about 12 in attendance out of 18 members. Dwight Netzer has been leading worship, driving from Grand Forks, and is well-received by the congregation for his heartfelt preaching. Organist Jolene Conway plays weekly, and offerings remain steady, keeping the church financially stable. The building was painted last summer with support from the City of Argyle, and Jeff maintains the grounds and building. The congregation plans to continue services for the time being. Jeff expects to participate in a September 8 gathering at Mendenhall.

Arvilla

Arvilla worships jointly each week with the Larimore UMC and they have developed a strong Christian fellowship. They are very involved in mission projects and in early August they assisted Donna Preston in putting together 184 backpacks for Bdecan. They supplied many of the school supplies that were included in the backpack. They are also collecting money and food for the Northland's Rescue Mission in Grand Forks for their project to provide food for needy

families. Their congregations may be small (they worship 18-30 people each week) but they are active! The Presbytery is grateful for the leadership of Pastor Raenelle Sorensen.

Baker (Baker Downer)

After several years on pause during the pandemic, Baker Downer Church will once again host its community fish fry, this time in partnership with St. James in Barnesville. The event is set to return with the same spirit of hospitality and fellowship that made it a favorite tradition. They are expecting to welcome around 400 guests. Proceeds will be split between the churches with the Baker Downer funds going towards mission.

Bismarck (FPC)

Hosted the Spring Youth Retreat which went very well and was a source of encouragement. Rev. Dr. Leanne Simmons is on family leave for the next few months and Rev. David Reiter has graciously accepted a call back into service having formerly served the congregation before his retirement.

Bottineau

Sarah is working with UMC mid-council representative, Kris Mutzenberger, to discern a path forward for the churches in this region.

Casselton (Westminster)

Sarah met with the Westminster Session to explore its options for pastoral leadership following the upcoming retirement of Pastor Paul. Several options were presented.

Cavalier

Zelda Hartje shared that Cavalier Presbyterian remains an active congregation, though membership has declined to about 14, with several non-members attending regularly. Worship is most often led by Elsie Magnus, a deacon in the Episcopal Church, and the congregation has been well served by Marge in recent years. She explained that Session meets quarterly, with additional matters handled informally during coffee time after worship or by text poll when needed. Zelda expressed the congregation's eagerness for a Moderator to be appointed but noted their limited resources for mileage or time commitments. She asked what arrangements Hallock, Walhalla, and Langdon have made for moderators and suggested that perhaps Cavalier could share one as well.

Colgate (FPC)

Colgate Presbyterian Church has spent the past six months preparing for the retirement of their Assemblies of God pastor, Mark Flaten, at year's end. The Session is exploring leadership options, including sharing a pastor with Casselton Presbyterian and Pillsbury, and learning about Commissioned Lay Pastor (CLP/CRE) training. Sarah has been involved in these discussions and guiding next steps. A major storm briefly delayed plans, shifting focus to disaster relief for Colgate and nearby communities. The Session remains open and flexible as they work toward a leadership plan for the future.

Cooperstown (FPC)

The congregation continues to worship at the Assisted Living facility, where services regularly include 2-5 residents. With colder weather approaching, attendance may increase as more residents seek connection indoors. The congregation is also actively supporting the community through donations that help meet local needs.

Crookston (FPC)

Pastor Michael Osaki stepped down in mid-August to pursue a new career in social work and therapy. The Head of Staff at their partner congregation, Trinity Lutheran, also resigned. Both departures occurred during an active discernment process focused on sustainability, shared ministry, and mission alignment. The two congregations formed a Discernment Team to consider three paths: ending their partnership, maintaining the current collaborative model with a full-time pastor and associate, or shifting to a pastor and a Director of Connection and Care. They have reached out to Mendenhall to discuss the possibility of yoking. Mary Holtey has agreed to serve as moderator through December, and pulpit supply coverage is in place. Despite the transitions, discussions have remained positive and forward-looking. Mary conducted an exit interview with Michael earlier this summer.

Dilworth

Dan Billings made two visits to Dilworth Presbyterian Church this spring during their publicly posted worship times, but on both occasions, no one was present. He visited in July and was warmly welcomed. He explained his role as Presbytery rep and expressed a desire to rebuild trust and support. He plans to return regularly, either monthly or every other month. His most recent visit was in August.

East Grand Forks (Mendenhall)

As pastoral and preaching resources become scarcer in the region, churches using pulpit supply will find it harder to fill their pulpits. This is happening with Mendenhall. They've recently begun reimagining what they might do and are considering technological solutions as well as the possibility of sharing a pastor with another church, such as Crookston.

Ellendale (Presbyterian United Methodist Church)

Actively participating in the United Mission ministries of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains.

Fargo (FPC)

Fargo continues with their Shine On campaign. They've received \$230,000 in contributions successfully completing the match required to receive the National Grant for Sacred Spaces grant of \$175,000. They've received over \$2M in commitments. They are planning to roll out the external (community) campaign in the Fall/Winter of 2025. Pastor Mary plans to retire at the end of 2025 after 33 years of faithful steadfast service.

Fordville

See Park River Federated.

Forest River (Community Presbyterian)

See Midway Parish

Gilby (Gilby Presbyterian)

See Midway Parish

Grand Forks (FPC)

The church is celebrating the completion of their \$100,000 roof replacement project. Funds have been raised for the entire \$200,000 project. This is the first phase of a two-phase process for replacing the entirety of their roof.

Grandin

Grandin Presbyterian Church held summer worship at 9:30 a.m. and returned to its regular schedule on September 7 with Rally Day: Sunday School at 10 a.m. and worship at 11 a.m. Nine

children are enrolled in Sunday School. Presbyterian Women will begin their monthly Bible study this month, meeting on Saturday mornings from September through June. Over the summer, the church replaced its aging roof shingles and repaired \$4,500 in flashing damage caused by a June storm. Since January 2025, the congregation has also mourned the loss of three members, with funerals held at the church.

Hallock (FPC)

Pastor Marge retired in August. Mary Holtey is meeting with the Hallock Session to discuss options. Despite its small size and remote location near the Canadian border, Hallock has a relatively strong budget, which could position them well to take advantage of potential incentives through the Board of Pensions. Mary conducted an exit interview with Marge. Marge will be moving to Tennessee and has completed a transfer to the Presbytery there. Sarah Bigwood visited on Marge's last Sunday service as a representative of Presbytery. Deanna Reikow led the service on September 7th. Lay preacher Tim Denney, who lives near the Hallock church, will begin preaching there regularly. Tim has preached twice a month at Mendenhall for some time. The church is exploring a full-time yoked position with the Skjeberg Lutheran Church.

Hamilton (FPC)

Hamilton Presbyterian Church officially voted to close on February 4, 2025, with its final worship service held on February 23 and the official closing date of March 1. The building was listed for sale, and congregational records were prepared for transfer to Rusty Bender to take to Pennsylvania. By June, the property was under contract with a July 1 closing. The sale was finalized in July for \$8,000, leaving about \$6,000 after attorney fees. As of August, the church's remaining checking account and any insurance rebates could be used at their discretion. The church will turn over all records at the Fall Presbytery meeting. A huge thanks to Sherri Stern for all of her attention to the negotiation and sale of this property.

Hunter (FPC)

The church in Hunter sustained over \$20,000 in storm damage earlier this year. Insurance is expected to cover most of the costs, though the congregation will be responsible for a deductible. Worship services were paused during the summer months, as many members spend time at lake cabins, and resumed on September 7 at 9 a.m.

Jamestown (United)

Bob Boyar recently participated in the Interfaith Dialogue on Freedom (May 17) and presented a talk at the Stutsman County Museum on the history of the church, which he also shared at Rotary on September 16. He noted that Rev. James Baldwin, who helped start the Jamestown church, also assisted in founding several other congregations in the presbytery. The congregation begins its Sunday School program in early September and is in the process of replacing Ruth Bossingham, who retired after 46 years of teaching preschool. Bob will also lead an adult education series on God's perspective on poverty beginning September 7. The church received storm damage estimates of \$6,000–\$7,500 for repairing doors.

Langdon

The Langdon congregation is graciously hosting our Fall Presbytery meeting. Rev. Sue Kana-Mackey reports that Langdon Presbyterian Church, with more than 50 members, continues to broadcast and livestream its Sunday worship services via radio. The church has an active Presbyterian Women's group that meets regularly for fellowship and Bible study and hosts a well-attended salad luncheon with entertainment each June. Several members participate in a

knitting and prayer shawl ministry. This year, the congregation honored eight members who are over 90 years old. One youth was confirmed, another is currently in confirmation class, and a baptism is planned for later this fall.

Lisbon (FPC)

The Lisbon church, which has ties to Enderlin AF Lutheran Church located 19 miles away, has resumed its regular rhythm of worship. The congregation follows a pattern of preaching through entire books of the Bible, currently focusing on Genesis, John, and the Psalms, with occasional messages from other books for variety. From May through September, worship has been held on Sunday mornings at 11:30 a.m. Beginning in October and running through April, the service time will shift to 12:30 p.m. to accommodate confirmation at Hope AFLC in Enderlin.

Attendance typically ranges between 6–12 worshipers each week. Though small in number, the congregation is described as joyful in both worship and fellowship. The church remains committed to proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus to members, visitors, and the broader community.

Midway Parish

Deanna is assisting the Midway Parish in finding pastoral leadership. They've elected a PNC. They are considering someone who will be $\frac{3}{4}$ time. They recently elected members for the pastoral search process. Forest River church members are very pleased with the available pulpit supply they are utilizing during the pastoral vacancy.

Moorhead (FPC)

Moorhead Presbyterian Church is making steady, encouraging progress in revitalizing its ministry and leadership. Under the guidance of Sarah Bigwood, the Session has been restoring committees, strengthening communications through a new website and social media, and coordinating pulpit supply. The reestablished Worship Committee is now actively overseeing bulletins, worship leadership, children's sermons, and music. From May through July, Jamie Norstog provided long-term pulpit supply, creating a warm and welcoming worship experiences on Sunday mornings. In June, the Session extended Jamie's call through the end of the year, which he gladly accepted. In August, the Session began planning for the future, discussing a two-year plan that includes establishing a quarter-time pastoral position in January 2026 and expanding it to half-time by year's end. The congregation has expressed renewed hope and energy as they look toward this next chapter.

Park River (Federated Church)

Carmen and other leaders at the Federated Church of Park River are working to revitalize their congregation, focusing on attracting younger families. Building upgrades, including a new coffee nook, aim to create a welcoming, community-centered space. An estate gift now provides ongoing income, and they are interested in the Presbytery's grant program to support further improvements. The church has expressed a sincere desire for close relationship with the Presbytery. The remodel is 99% complete, with only minor details remaining. Thanks for continued prayers.

Portal (FPC)

We have confirmed that First Presbyterian Church in Portal closed its doors in 2022. Contacts have been identified, and we are reaching out to gather information about the condition of the building and property. The Presbytery will work with those connected to the congregation to determine the most faithful and caring resolution for the property and community.

Rhame (Lyle Presbyterian)

Lyle Presbyterian Church in Rhame, ND has completed exterior repairs on the siding, roof, and foundation and is now renovating the fellowship hall, an addition from 1926. The project has involved removing unsafe insulation, rewiring, and addressing a dangerously unstable chimney. Built with recycled, hand-cut wood, the addition will be opened into one large room with a kitchen and dining space to serve as a community gathering place. Accessibility has been improved with new wheelchair ramps, though the building still lacks running water. Future plans include repairing plaster and repainting the original 1914 sanctuary, with a long-term goal of adding restrooms (or repairing outhouses if not feasible). Pastor Terry Bagley's construction experience has been invaluable. Jason is also compiling a history of the church using archives and local sources, supplementing gaps with photos and contributions from others. He warmly invites visitors to see the progress.

Rolla & St. John

Rolla and St. John Presbyterian Churches kicked off the ACT youth program with 36 teens at game night, a joyful start to the season. Excitement is building for the October 15 Sleepout, when youth will spend the night in boxes to raise awareness of homelessness, supported by the congregation through box donations and volunteer chaperones. Dave Schnackenberg is serving as pastoral leader at Rolla & St. John.



Walhalla

Walhalla gathers once or twice a month with 9–12 committed participants. This small, faithful group continues to meet regularly, though they are discerning what the future might look like for their congregation.

Watford City (FPC)

Deanna Reikow checked in with Watford City by phone. A UCC pastor is currently filling the pulpit, but there are no clear long-term plans in place.

West Fargo (Community)

The Presbytery rescinded the call to Jason at West Fargo Community Presbyterian Church following the discovery of information that had not been disclosed during the call process. While the Pastor Nominating Committee had conducted a thorough and faithful discernment process, new concerns came to light that made it clear the call could not proceed. This was a painful and unexpected development for the congregation, the candidate, and the Presbytery. West Fargo decided not to accept a Designated Pastor through the end of the year and instead elected a new PNC in August.

Westhope (FPC)

Randy Kimpland continues to serve in the pulpit. Average Sunday attendance is about 15, with no children currently participating. Attendance continues to fluctuate depending on seasonal work and activities such as sports, planting, harvest, and vacations. While the church has no active programs or outreach at this time, they have contributed to flood relief efforts and sponsored local youth to attend Bible camp. The building has sustained storm damage in recent

years, and it has been difficult to find contractors willing to travel and work on a church property; roof repairs are still pending. Members remain committed to prayer for their church, community, nation, and world.

Others

There are a few churches we haven't heard from in a while. If you have connections or information regarding any of the following, please contact any member of the Congregational Vitality Pod. Angus, Buffalo, Calvin, Devils Lake, Edgeley, Fairview, Grafton, Hannah, LaMoure, Minto, Oakes, Pillsbury, Red Lake Falls, Rugby, Tower City, Towner, and Webster.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Sarah M. Bigwood". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of "Rev.", "Sarah", and "Bigwood" being capitalized and prominent.

Rev. Sarah Bigwood

POD Members: Rusty Bender, Sarah Bigwood (chair), Dan Billings, Cathie Bishop, Bob Boyar, and Deanna Reikow. Advisors: Ellen Misialek (bookkeeper) & Sherri Stern (treasurer).

Presbytery of Northern Plains Family Leave Policy

(Approved 06-19-2025)

I. Theological Grounding

The celebration, nurture, and encouragement of the family takes place in many ways and on many levels in the life of a church. Through Jesus' earthly life, teaching and love, we come to see God in our own lives, in the everyday circumstances of human interaction, relationship, challenge, heartbreak, conflict and joy. Family leave, at the time of birth, adoption, sickness or death gives the opportunity for congregations to extend care for the pastor and pastor's family by offering appropriate time for them to step away from their professional occupation to minister to the needs of loved ones without loss of income or security.

II. Individuals Covered by this Policy

This policy applies to the following members of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains: Teaching Elders (Ministers of Word and Sacrament) serving in installed and temporary pastoral relationships, Validated Ministers serving in PCUSA congregational settings, and Commissioned Ruling Elders (Commissioned Lay Pastors) who are enrolled in the PC(USA) Board of Pensions plan and serving churches in the Presbytery. Those covered will be identified throughout this policy as "pastor".

III. Policy

The terms of call for each pastor serving in a congregation shall include provision for a minimum of 12 weeks paid family medical leave and participation in the benefits plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Justification for paid family medical leave includes the following situations:

- birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child
- serious health condition that prevents the employee from performing their job duties
- need to care for spouse, child, or parent with serious health condition
- qualifying events arising from the deployment or separation due to military orders of the employee or their spouse

The twelve weeks need not be taken consecutively. Pastors may not request more than one paid family medical leave within a twelve-month span and three within a five year period of time. The calendar year begins on the first day of leave. Unpaid or partially paid time may be negotiated if more time is needed. Congregations and sessions are encouraged to deal with their pastors with the greatest compassion befitting followers of Christ.

A. Notification to Session: When a pastor or a pastor's spouse becomes pregnant, plans to adopt or foster a child they shall inform the session of the request for family leave at least 60 days prior to the start of the leave, recognizing that the more time the session has to prepare for the pastor's absence, the better the session will be able to ensure provision for necessary pastoral services during the leave. When a pastor's family member needs care, the pastor will inform the session and request family leave as early as is reasonable. When tragic event or bereavement leave is needed, the pastor will notify session as soon as reasonable.

B. Birth/ Adoption/ Foster Placement: In the event of the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child, the pastor shall be granted up to twelve (12) weeks of paid Family Leave. During this leave, the

pastor will receive full effective salary and full pension and benefits coverage through the Board of Pensions.

C. Serious Health Condition: The pastor of a church may request family medical leave when they experience an abrupt change in health or mental health, receive a new diagnosis, or if they need time to acquire a diagnosis or undergo treatment. This gives pastors the time necessary to discern how their health might affect their current call, learn what adaptations may be needed to continue, or arrange for alternative care.

D. Family Member Care: The pastor of a church may require leave to help transition a family member into appropriate care or provide intensive caregiving for another close family member. Often these transitions in caregiving require significant time and energy from family members. Examples of direct family members may include, but are not limited to, parents, grandparents, siblings, children, in-laws, or a spouse.

E. Military Spouse: The pastor of a church may require leave to deal with a spouse's military deployment to deal with issues arising from the military member's deployment including issues related to short-notice deployment, attending military events, briefings, and ceremonies, providing or arranging childcare or schooling for a child, or providing or arranging care for a military member's parent incapable of self-care.

F. Loss or Tragic Event: The human experience involves loss, personal and communal tragedy. We recognize that pastors are not immune to this. Tragic events cannot always be comprehensively defined. Examples of a "tragic event" may include, but are not limited to, natural disasters, community violence, or sexual assault. To protect the privacy of the pastor, it may be necessary for the pastor to consult with the Chair of the Congregational Vitality Pod to request for leave on their behalf. Such matters shall be handled with prayer and care. In the event of the death of a direct family member (may include, but are not limited to, parents, grandparents, siblings, children, in-laws, or a spouse).

G. Session Responsibilities during the Pastor's Leave: The Session is responsible for the ongoing work of the congregation during the pastor's leave. Session should be ready to arrange and pay for pulpit supply, a Session moderator, coverage for hospital and emergency visitation and whatever teaching and programming for which the pastor was responsible. Should this become a hardship for congregation, they may apply for assistance from the Congregational Vitality Pod as per section H.

H. Assistance for Churches: The Congregational Vitality Pod will seek to aid churches unable to meet the financial obligations outlined above in the event their pastor requires leave. This assistance is to assure that the pastor does not feel pressured to return to work prematurely and the church is able to secure sufficient pastoral care during the pastor's absence. Financial assistance will not be given during a pastor's use of accrued vacation. When such cases arise, individual sessions will apply to the Congregational Vitality Pod. Each case will be judged on its own merits.

I. Other Church Staff: The Presbytery invites churches to extend this or a similar policy to all church staff.

Proposal for Congregational Vitality Grant Program (Draft)

Introduction

The Congregational Vitality Grant Program provides financial support to churches within our Presbytery for projects that strengthen and enhance ministry. By investing in congregations that are actively engaged in mission and growth, the Presbytery seeks to nurture vibrant communities of faith and extend the witness of the church.

Program Details

- **Grant Amount:** Churches may request up to \$50,000, provided the amount does not exceed 150% of the appraised value of the church property.
- **Funding Cycle:** Up to \$50,000 is available annually from Presbytery endowment funds.
- **Accountability:** Funds are released only after a congregation has provided project-ready documentation (such as bids, contracts, or detailed plans) along with a clearly defined vision for how the project will strengthen their ministry.

Objectives

- **Support Vital Congregations:** Invest in congregations that are actively engaged in ministry and demonstrating energy for growth in mission, outreach, and participation.
- **Encourage Responsible Stewardship:** Ensure funds are used effectively by requiring congregations to present a clear vision and supporting documentation before receiving funds.
- **Strengthen the Witness of the Church:** Provide resources that enable churches to carry out projects that increase their impact in the community.

Eligibility Criteria

- **Churches within the Presbytery:** Only congregations within our Presbytery are eligible.
- **Vitality Requirement:** Churches must demonstrate vitality through evidence of ministry engagement and a pattern of growth in mission, outreach, or membership.
- **Project Readiness:** Applications must include documentation of bids or equivalent materials showing the project is ready to begin.
- **Financial Standing:** Churches must be current on per capita payments or actively engaged in a repayment plan approved by the Presbytery Leadership POD.

Application Process

- **Submission:** Churches submit a formal application (see attached form).
- **Review:** The Congregational Vitality Pod reviews applications and makes recommendations to the Presbytery Leadership POD. Grants are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis until the annual allocation is spent.

- Approval and Disbursement: Grants are approved with the condition that funds will not be released until all project-ready documentation has been received and approved.

Funding

The Congregational Vitality Pod may allocate up to \$50,000 annually from the Presbytery Endowment to support this program.

Conclusion

The Congregational Vitality Grant Program represents our commitment to nurturing strong, mission-driven churches. By providing accessible funding with clear accountability, the Presbytery empowers congregations to take bold steps that grow their ministries and extend the love of Christ in their communities.

Executive Presbyter (DRAFT Proposal)

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

The **Presbytery of the Northern Plains** seeks a **relational and pastoral leader** to serve as Executive Presbyter. This role is centered on connection, care, and encouragement, helping to strengthen the life of our churches and pastors while fostering unity across the presbytery.

Primary Responsibilities:

- **Church & Pastor Support** – Visit congregations, check in with pastors, and serve as a pastoral presence throughout the presbytery.
- **Worship Leadership** – Help develop and lead presbytery worship services, ensuring meaningful gatherings for the whole body.
- **Presbytery Engagement** – Encourage participation in presbytery meetings and gatherings, making them accessible and welcoming.
- **Presbytery Cohesion** – Help hold the presbytery together through relationship-building, pastoral care, and encouragement.
- **Congregational Vitality Pod Liaison** – Work alongside CVP to support pastors and congregations in times of transition, challenge, and celebration.
- **Congregational Milestones** – Walk with churches through significant moments—celebrating milestones, supporting revitalization, and providing guidance in closure when needed.
- **Denominational Awareness** – Stay up-to-date on the **Board of Pensions** and other PC(USA) developments, sharing relevant information with pastors and sessions as needed.

Ideal Candidate:

- A **caring, friendly pastor** with a heart for people and deep love for the church.
- Experience in handling **administrative tasks** including managing staff and budgets, responding timely to requests from churches, being informed by the Book of Order, and organizing communication amongst pods, committees, and congregations.
- Skilled in **worship leadership, preaching, and prayer**, offering spiritual encouragement across the presbytery.
- Comfortable **adapting to changing environments**, meeting churches where they are.
- Naturally gifted in **building relationships** and fostering a sense of community among pastors and congregations.
- Willing to **travel weekly** to be present in the life of the presbytery.

Support Structure:

The Executive Presbyter will work alongside the **Congregational Vitality Pod (CVP) chair and Leadership POD** to ensure presbytery functions are carried out effectively. This role is designed for someone who thrives as a pastoral presence and can provide administrative oversight.

To Apply:

Interested candidates should contact _____.

GRANTS, POLICIES, AND UPCOMING INITIATIVES IN THE PRESBYTERY

As a Presbytery, we are deeply committed to walking alongside our congregations and leaders in ways that strengthen ministry, provide support, and open new opportunities for growth. Below you will find information about programs that are already available, those recently established, and proposals we are discerning together for the future. We invite you not only to make use of these resources but also to join us in shaping their direction. If you have questions or ideas, please reach out to any member of the Leadership Pod, we welcome your partnership in this shared vision for ministry.

NEW PROGRAMS

The following are programs established within the past year.

Board of Pensions Assistance Program - The Presbytery's Board of Pensions Assistance Program provides phased financial support to churches facing increased pension costs beginning in 2025. The program gradually reduces assistance over three years, easing the transition while encouraging financial planning, and introduces a need-based scholarship fund in 2028 for congregations with ongoing financial challenges.

Per Capita Forgiveness Program - The Per Capita Forgiveness Program helps churches restore good standing by forgiving all unpaid per capita balances prior to 2021 and collecting only 30% of balances incurred since 2021. This approach balances grace with shared responsibility, reimbursing the Presbytery for funds already paid on behalf of congregations while significantly reducing their overall debt.

Family Leave Policy - The Presbytery of the Northern Plains Family Leave Policy, required by the General Assembly, ensures pastors receive a minimum of 12 weeks of paid family medical leave with full benefits. The policy covers situations such as birth, adoption, foster placement, serious health conditions, family caregiving, military deployment, and bereavement. It balances compassion for pastors with support for congregations, including provisions for financial assistance when needed.

EXISTING PROGRAMS

The following are established programs supporting mission and ministry in the PNP for years. If you are interested in any of the following, please contact Jenn in the PNP office.

Clergy Renewal Grant - Supports clergy and commissioned lay pastors in renewal through retreats, convocations, continuing education, sabbaticals, and other emerging needs for pastoral well-being.

Congregational Development Grant - Helps congregations strengthen leadership and ministry through initiatives such as internships, training, technology upgrades, and new program development.

New Church Development Grant - Provides resources to support efforts that make new disciples of Jesus Christ and expand the mission of the church.

Peace and Global Witness Grant - Encourages congregations and individuals to promote Christ's peace by addressing conflict, nurturing reconciliation, and engaging in global ministries of justice.

Small Church Ministries Support - Assists small congregations with projects that enhance their ministries by matching a portion of ministry-related costs.

Seminary Scholarship - Offers financial support for seminarians under care of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains through scholarship assistance.

PROPOSED PROGRAMS (not yet existing)

If you are interested in participating in any of the following, we would love your support. Please contact Sarah Bigwood at sbigwood@firstpresfargo.org to share your interest.

Congregational Vitality Grant - The Congregational Vitality Grant Program provides churches within the Presbytery with up to \$50,000 in funding for ministry-strengthening projects. Grants require a clear project vision, supporting documentation such as bids, and evidence of congregational vitality through active ministry engagement and growth. By investing in these initiatives, the Presbytery supports vibrant, mission-driven communities of faith.

Presbytery Managed Endowment - The Presbytery Managed Endowment (PME) allows congregations to establish restricted funds within the Presbytery's endowment, providing professionally managed, sustainable support through annual 5% distributions. Designed especially for smaller congregations without the capacity to manage their own endowments, the program ensures responsible stewardship, clear oversight, and alignment with Presbytery policies. This initiative offers churches a stable funding mechanism while maintaining flexibility in use and protection of principal.

Joint Administrative Commission for Non-Viable Churches - The proposal establishes a single Administrative Commission (AC) to address nonviable churches that have ceased submitting reports, responding to communication, or worshiping regularly. Instead of forming multiple commissions, one AC will oversee assessment, closure, or reorganization processes, ensuring consistency, efficiency, and compassionate care. The commission will manage records, assets, and pastoral support while following the Book of Order's requirements for fair process.

Executive Presbyter - This proposal outlines the role of an Executive Presbyter for the Presbytery of the Northern Plains, a relational and pastoral leader who fosters unity, supports pastors and congregations, and provides spiritual encouragement across the presbytery. Responsibilities include visiting churches, leading worship, guiding congregations through transitions and milestones, and ensuring presbytery cohesion while offering both pastoral presence and administrative oversight. The position emphasizes connection, care, and responsiveness, helping strengthen the shared life of the presbytery.

MINISTER REPORT

Installed Ministers of Word and Sacrament - PC(USA)

Rev. Dr. Leanne Simmons - Bismarck
Rev. Trudy Dumont - Devils Lake, Webster, Peace Lutheran
Rev. Sarah Bigwood - Fargo
Rev. Mary Holtey* - Fargo
Rev Robin Dill - Grafton, Minto
Rev. Dr. Spencer Homan - Grand Forks
Rev. Robert Boyar - Jamestown
Rev. Deanna Reikow - Mandan

Installed Ministers of Word and Sacrament - PC(USA) serving other denominations

Rev. Ruth Sanders - Wesley UMC, Crookston
Rev. Elaine Sweet - Zion Lutheran, Minot

Installed Ministers of Word and Sacrament – from other denominations serving PNP churches

Rev. Beth Kelsey* (UMC) - Bottineau
Rev. J. Sue Kana-Mackey (UMC) - Langdon

Active CLPs

Pastor James Crandall, (CLP, UMC) - Angus
Pastor Paul Campbell* (CLP) - Casselton
Pastor Mark Flaten* (CLP, AoG) - Colgate
Pastor Bill Weispfenning (CLP) - Edgely, LaMoure
Pastor Casey Chapman (CLP) - Hunter, Grandin
Pastor Dave Schnackenberg (CLP) - Rolla St. John
Pastor Merton (Randy) Kimpland (CLP, UMC) – Westhope
Chaplain Nancy Legerski (CLP) – Bismarck Area

Other Pastors in our Jurisdiction

Rev. Dan Billings
Rev. David Suk
Rev. Donna Monteith
Rev. Martha McDowell
Rev. Michael Ozaki*
Rev. Nancy Emerson

Long-Term Pulpit Supply

Dwight Netzer - Argyle
Raenelle Sorensen (UMC) - Arvilla
Rick Larsen - Dilworth
Tom Olson - Enderlin
Jesse Irvine - Fordville, Park River
Jamie Norstog (CLP) - Moorhead
Dave Montecuolo - Pillsbury
Terry Bagley - Rhame

Approved transfers

Rev. Marge Landwehr* to East Tennessee Presbytery
Rev. Robert Drake to MN Valleys Presbytery

*retiring or leaving ministry in 2025

If you notice a name missing from this list or someone identified incorrectly, please contact Sarah Bigwood at sbigwood@firstpresfargo.org

B-1.0401, TRUSTEES

{language change to reflect actual titles}

The trustees of the corporation are the members of the Leadership Pod. Its ~~chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary,~~ [moderator, vice-moderator, stated clerk,] and treasurer shall serve correspondingly as officers of the corporation.

B-2.0200, TEMPORARY MEMBERS

{language change to reflect name of newly merged pod}

b. Ministers of the Word and Sacrament of other denominations serving in this Presbytery, who qualify under the provisions of G-2.0506 may be enrolled upon the recommendation of the ~~Care for Pastoral Leaders Pod~~ [Congregational Vitality Pod] and approval by Presbytery.

B-3.0100, MODERATOR

{repeat language clean-up, suggestion for new term limits within parameters of BoO}

A Moderator shall be elected and installed prior to the annual meeting of the Presbytery and shall assume office on January 1st of the following year. The term of office shall be ~~shall be~~ for two years or until the successor shall have been named. A Moderator shall be eligible to serve a ~~second two-year term~~ [total of three two-year terms,] but shall not serve more than ~~four~~ [six] consecutive years.

. . .Between Presbytery meetings upon recommendation of the ~~Care for Congregation Pod~~ [Congregational Vitality Pod] the Moderator of Presbytery shall appoint moderators for churches without pastors and report such actions to the next meetings of Presbytery.

B-3.0200, VICE-MODERATOR

{suggestion for new term limits within parameters of BoO to coincide with Moderator}

A Vice-Moderator shall be elected and installed prior to the annual meeting of the Presbytery and shall assume office on January 1st of the following year. The term of office shall be two years and shall be eligible to serve a ~~second two-year term,~~ [total of three two-year terms,] but shall not serve more than ~~four~~ [six] consecutive years.

B-5.0000, ARTICLE V

PODS {update in language to reflect newly merged pod}

There shall be ~~five~~[four] Pods: ~~Care for Congregations Pod, Care for Pastoral Leaders Pod,~~ [Congregational Vitality Pod,] [Continuing] Preparation for Ministry Pod, Leadership Pod, and Mission Pod. All responsibilities and actions of the Pods shall be subject to Presbytery review. Pod leaders and task leaders shall be elected for one-year, renewable terms. New tasks and task leaders may be added to a Pod without Presbytery approval for up to a period of one year, after which time Presbytery shall review such addition and act on its continuance. All Pods shall report at each stated meeting of the Presbytery.

{Update of B-5.0200 to reflect merging of these two pods}

~~B-5.0200, CARE FOR CONGREGATIONS POD~~

~~The Pod shall work with congregations to maintain a healthy environment between congregations, with pastoral leaders, and with other congregations.~~

~~B-5.0201, Membership~~

~~The Care for Congregations Pod shall have a chair elected by the Presbytery. It shall have such other task leaders and members as are required to carry out its responsibilities.~~

~~B-5.0202, Responsibilities~~

~~The responsibilities of this Pod shall include, but not be limited to, working to secure session moderators, assisting churches with pastoral leadership, working with other Pod Chairs when conflicts arise between a congregation and their pastoral leader, and providing mediation for congregations.~~

~~B-5.0300, CARE FOR PASTORAL LEADERS POD~~

~~The Pod shall work with ministers of the Word and Sacrament, Commissioned and Trained Ruling Elders, and other Pastoral Leaders.~~

~~B-5.0301, Membership~~

~~The Care for Pastoral Leaders Pod shall have a chair elected by the Presbytery. The Minister of Pastoral Care will be part of this Pod. It shall have such other task leaders and members as are required to carry out its responsibilities.~~

~~B-5.0302, Responsibilities~~

~~This Pod shall be responsible for, but not limited to, the process by which pastoral leaders enter and leave the Presbytery and shall have the powers described in G-3.0307. This Pod shall also be responsible for the continuing education of ministers of the Word and Sacrament and to approve annually the status of at-large members and validated ministries.~~

B-5.0200, CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY POD

The Pod shall show care for, connect with, and challenge our ministers of Word and Sacrament, Commissioned and Trained Ruling Elders, other Pastoral Leaders, and congregations to ensure that we remain a vital Presbytery infused with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.

B-5.0201, Membership

The Congregational Vitality Pod shall have a chair elected by the Presbytery. The Connectional Care Pastor shall be a member of this Pod. It shall have such other task leaders and members as deemed necessary to fulfill its responsibilities.

B-5.0202, Responsibilities

The responsibilities of this Pod shall include, but are not limited to, working to secure session moderators, ensuring strong pastoral leadership within our churches, working with other Pod Chairs when conflicts arise between a congregation and their pastoral leader, providing mediation for congregations, and for maintaining the process by which pastoral leaders enter and leave the Presbytery and shall have the powers described in G-3.0307. This Pod shall also be responsible for the continuing education of ministers of Word and Sacrament and to approve annually the status of at-large members and validated ministries.

~~B-5.0400, LEADERSHIP POD~~ [becomes] **B-5.0300 LEADERSHIP POD**

~~B-5.0401, Membership~~ [becomes] **B-5.0301, Membership** {lacks definition}

The Leadership Pod shall have a chair elected by the Presbytery. This Pod will include the Moderator of the Presbytery, who will also serve as the vice-chairperson of this Pod; the Vice-Moderator, Stated Clerk who will serve as secretary, and Treasurer of the Presbytery; Pod Chairs for Congregational Vitality, Continuing Preparation for Ministry, and Mission; Chair for Committee on Representation; the Finance, Nominating, and Personnel Task Leaders; and the Connectional Care Pastor and Communications Coordinator of the Presbytery. It shall have such other staff, task leaders, and members as required to fulfill its responsibilities.

~~B-5.0401a, Voting Members~~ [becomes] **B-5.0301a, Voting Rights** {simplified}

~~Voting Members shall be: Chair of the Pod; the Moderator of the Presbytery (who shall be vice-chairperson of the Pod); the Vice-Moderator of Presbytery; the Treasurer of the Presbytery; the chairpersons of the Care for Congregation Pod, Care for Pastoral Leadership Pod, Mission Pod, Preparation for Ministry Pod, Committee on Representation, and Nominating Committee. It shall have such other task leaders and members as are required to carry out its responsibilities. Non-Voting members shall be the Stated Clerk, who will serve as secretary to the Pod, and the Presbytery Leader.~~ All members of this pod shall have equal voting rights, except those staff members serving the Pod in an administrative capacity, including, but not limited to, the Communications Coordinator and Stated Clerk.

~~B-5.0402, Responsibility~~ [becomes] **B-5.0302, Responsibility**

~~B-5.0500, MISION POD~~ [becomes] **B-5.0400, MISSION POD**

~~B-5.0501, Membership~~ [becomes] **B-5.0401, Membership**

The Mission Pod will have a chair elected by the Presbytery. Representatives from the Ministry Teams, Presbyterian Women, Self-Development of People, University of Jamestown, and Clearwater Forest may be part of the membership. [It shall have such task leaders and members as required to fulfill its responsibilities.]

~~B-5.0502, Responsibilities~~ [becomes] **B-5.0402, Responsibilities**

~~B-5.0550, PREPERATION FOR MINISTRY POD~~ [becomes] **B-5.0500, [CONTINUING]
PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY POD**

~~B-5.0551, Membership~~ [becomes] **B-5.0501, Membership**

The [Continuing] Preparation for Ministry Pod will have a chair elected by the Presbytery. It shall have such task leaders and members as are required to ~~carry out~~ [fulfill] its responsibilities.

~~B-5.0552, Responsibilities~~ [becomes] **B-5.0502, Responsibilities**

B-6.0104, Nominating Committee {reduce required number of members for more flexibility}

A Nominating Committee shall be elected in conformity with G-3.0111. ~~It shall consist of seven members apportioned equally among three classes.~~ [It shall consist of a chair and such members that make up a broad representation of the constituency and as required to fulfill its responsibilities.] The responsibilities of this committee shall be those described in G-3.0111. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of candidates for all open, elected positions in the Presbytery and may recommend members to ministry teams.

**Presbytery of the Northern Plains
Fall 2025 Meeting
October 11th, 2025**

***IS THERE A FIRE IN YOUR SOUL TO FIGHT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE?
DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WHAT YOU DO TO THE LEAST OF CHRIST'S PEOPLE
YOU DO TO CHRIST?
IF THE ANSWER IS YES, I HAVE A DEAL FOR YOU.***

Self Development of People (SDOP) is a ministry of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Its purpose is to assist in improving the capabilities and potential of economically poor, oppressed and marginalized people.

Grants are given to people who own, control, and benefit from projects that promote long-term change in their lives and communities.

Your Presbytery's SDOP is currently looking for someone to join the committee who is willing to work alongside the chair with the thought of eventually taking over the chairmanship of our Presbytery's SDOP.

What do committee members do?

We keep our eyes open for worthy projects, help potential grantees complete the application, and vote whether or not to approve projects. Grants are typically between \$3,000 and \$5,000. There are very few meetings, which can be attended in person or on Zoom. There is a required online orientation session.

Who can be a member?

Although anyone can join the committee, the chair must be a member of a Presbyterian Church in the Presbytery of the Northern Plains.

Want to find out more?

If you wish to explore joining this committee of compassionate individuals who are serving the community, please contact George O'Neill

email: goneill2021@outlook.com
cell phone: 701.367.3924

Presbytery of the Northern Plains
2025 Fall Meeting
October 11, 2025

Personnel Committee Report

The Personnel Task Force was active later this year and dealt with three issues, as follows:

- Recommended that the Leadership Pod approve Pastor Deanna Reikow's enrollment in a course from Princeton Theological Seminary.
- Recommended that the Leadership Pod include a 4% salary increase for Presbytery employees in the budget for 2026.
- In conjunction with the Presbytery's Communication Coordinator, the Task Force developed guidelines for posting to social media.

The Task Force consists of members:

Mary Barrett (Mendenhall), Charlotte Enger (Jamestown), Maggie Sambo (Moorhead), and Interim Lead Brian McClure (Fargo).

Report Submitted by:

Brian McClure,
Interim Lead of Personnel Committee



5555 S. Washington St.,
Grand Forks, ND 58201
Email: pnpoffice@gmail.com
(701) 248-0227

Presbytery of the Northern Plains Media Opt-Out Form

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains may photograph, record, or video its events, programs, and activities for communications, publicity, and historical purposes. This includes (but is not limited to) newsletters, websites, social media, and other printed or digital materials.

If you do **NOT** want your image, audio, or video to be captured and/or used by this Presbytery please complete this form and return it to the Presbytery of the Northern Plains' office.
This form applies to both adults and minors.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Public Spaces & Events:

Images and recordings taken in public spaces and/or at public events may not require authorization for publication.

Your Responsibility:

If you are in a non-public area where photography and/or recording is taking place, it is your responsibility to notify the applicable personnel and camera operator(s) that you have signed this Media Opt-Out Form and to remove yourself from the area when appropriate.

Scope:

This form covers the use of images, video, and audio recordings by this Presbytery and its affiliated communications. It does not cover security cameras or surveillance footage.

OPT-OUT STATEMENT:

Please check the box below and complete the form if you do **not** want to be photographed, videotaped, or audio recorded.

☐ Do **NOT** allow my/my child's image, voice, or likeness to be photographed, videotaped, or audio recorded by the Presbytery of the Northern Plains for marketing, communications, or publicity purposes.

Name of Individual: _____

Affiliated Church's Name or Partnering Organization Name: _____

☐ Adult (18 or older) ☐ Minor (under 18)

Parent/Guardian Name (if minor): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Adult Participant (if 18 or older): _____ Date: _____

Return Completed Form To:

Presbytery of the Northern Plains
5555 S. Washington St., Grand Forks, ND 58201
pnpoffice@gmail.com

Presbytery of the Northern Plains
Fall 2025 Meeting
October 11th, 2025

Bdecan Presbyterian Church Ministry Report
Reporting Period: May 2025 – September 2025

“So let’s not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t give up.”
- Galatians 6:9 (NLT)

As we reflect on the past few months at Bdecan Presbyterian Church, we are reminded of God’s enduring faithfulness and the strength of the Spirit working through our congregation and partners. While we are a small church by number, the impact of the ministry continues to grow in profound and measurable ways — through worship, service, community outreach, and spiritual growth.

We continue to gather faithfully for weekly Sunday worship, where attendance has grown to an average of 18 adults and 12 children. The church family is active and engaged, and our sanctuary is a place of welcome and joy, especially for our young ones.

Since May, the pastoral ministry has included:

1 Wedding
2 Funerals
2 Wakes
2 Prayer Services
8 Baptisms — Praise God for these public declarations of faith and commitment.

Food Pantry Ministry

Our food pantry continues to be a vital source of care and provision for our community. Monthly service numbers are steadily increasing:

May: 58 families
June: 70 families
July: 79 families
August: 115 families

This growing need has led to conversations about building a new food pantry facility. Initial steps have been taken to research land ownership and prepare for a land survey. The vision is to continue operating the current pantry while building a more permanent and expanded space.

Backpack Giveaway

In August, we held our annual Backpack Giveaway, distributing 184 backpacks filled with basic school supplies to local students. This outreach continues to be a blessing to families as the school year begins.

Mission Teams

We were blessed to host a mission team from Rochester, MN in July. Their presence and service were an incredible encouragement. Their contributions included:

- Serving hot food for families during our July food pantry distribution
- Leading Vacation Bible School with an average of 16 children each day
- Creating a “Cozy Corner” in our sanctuary, complete with toys, books, chairs, and other resources to welcome and engage children during worship
- Building a custom organizer for Sunday School supplies

Youth & Leadership Development

Three of our youth had the opportunity to attend Triennium in Kentucky — a formative, faith-deepening experience. The church supported their journey through a successful food and rummage sale, which allowed us to send \$100 with each youth and retain additional funds for future ministry use.

We are proud of our youth and remain committed to walking alongside them in their faith journey.

Looking to the Future

- **New Food Pantry Planning:** We are seeking guidance and resources to begin construction, pending land survey and planning approvals.
- **Cemetery Radar Project:** We are also in the process of securing a ground-penetrating radar to identify unmarked graves in our cemetery. This will enable us to honor those buried with dignity and help our session make informed decisions about future plots. Financial support is still needed for this project.
- **Winter Wear & Blanket Giveaway:** We are steadily gathering supplies to hold our annual winter clothing and blanket giveaway. This is a very important mission that will clothe many children in the community during the cold winter months and will take place on October 25th.

We give thanks for the partnerships we share with the Dakota Presbytery, Northern Plains Presbytery, and many churches like Rochester Presbyterian Church, whose hands and hearts have blessed our work and walk.

We invite continued prayers and support as we serve faithfully in rural North Dakota — striving to be Christ's hands and feet in a community hungry for love, hope, and justice.

May God bless each of you for the ways you hold us in care.

“Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. ²⁴ Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. ²⁵ And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near. “

- Hebrews 10:23-25 (NLT)

Respectfully submitted,
Chandra Mendieta
CRE, Bdecan Presbyterian Church
Tokio, North Dakota

Mission Pod Report for Fall Presbytery Meeting

Bdecan Ministry Team: The ministry team continues to support the Bdecan Presbyterian Church on the Spirit Lake Reservation by meeting with church members a couple times a year plus fundraise for food pantry, Ministries and Outreach position, as well as other programs at the church. Over the last several months there has been donations to the clothing closet from several churches and individuals throughout our Presbytery as well as throughout the Synod. As more people hear of our ministry to provide clothing, esp. children's clothing, more donations continue to come in. Backpack giveaway was held on August 23rd during the food pantry giveaway. Since church members were busy working in the food pantry, ministry team members as well as a couple of youth from Fargo 1st Pres. Church and 2 women from the Renville, MN church handed out backpacks and donated books to families from the reservation. We were able to hand out 168 that day and Chandra Mendieta has an additional 16 for anyone who wasn't able to come the day of the giveaway. Winter wear giveaway will take place on Sat., Oct. 25th at the Woodlake Rec Center in Tokio, ND. Many coats, hats, gloves, boots, and blankets have already been donated. We are hoping to be able to purchase snowpants, additional coats and boots to cloth around 150 children and youth. However, we are already struggling to find snowpants to purchase. Ministry Team wants to thank all individuals and churches who continue to support the mission and partnership through in kind donations and money. Without all this help, we won't be able to accomplish all that we do.

Clearwater Forest Bible Camp: Clearwater Forest continues to provide camps and retreats for all ages. This fall there will be a Ministry Retreat, Sept. 21-24, Fall for All for families as well as unaccompanied youth to attend during MEA/NDEA weekend, Men's Retreat, Oct 24-26. With a fairly new program director in place, the Bible Camp has been hosted several events for local people. This summer the day camp was well attended by local children and youth. Clearwater Forest will be kicking off a capital campaign in the near future and Erin Anderson, director, will be at our Fall Presbytery meeting to share more. Next year's programming book will be out sometime toward the end of the year/early 2026. Watch for it. In meantime, check out their website at <https://clearwaterforest.org/> to learn more.

Chogoria Ministry Team/Partnership: Ministry team meets monthly to plan, discuss, and coordinate how to continue to support Chogoria Presbyteries and Mpangua School. See a complete report from the team.

Youth Connection: Our youth and adults went with Clearwater Forest Bible Camp to Triennium in Louisville, KY end of July. It was a great experience for our youth. The Youth Connection team continues to meet monthly to plan events for our youth. We decided to encourage youth to attend Fall for All in Oct or Snow Camp in Jan at Clearwater Forest and help defray cost of either camp for our youth by giving \$100 scholarship to attend. Contact Jenn or Donna Preston for code to use when registering at Clearwater Forest website. We will host a Spring Retreat somewhere within our Presbytery. We are just starting to plan it. Watch for details later winter.

University of Jamestown: see separate report

Presbyterian Women: Coordinating Team decided to not hold a fall gathering but to encourage women to attend Fargo 1st Presbyterian's Peace Summit in Nov (watch for details coming later) or Carrie Lauber's Servant Leadership Conference (date to be determined). Spring Gathering will be held at Mendenhall, watch for details late winter. PWP will once again award grants this winter, application is available on Presbytery's website near bottom left of the main page. You can also read the latest Presbyterian Women of Presbytery and Synod Presbyterian Women's newsletters by going to Presbytery's website and clicking on the links directly below grant application link.

Submitted by Donna Preston, Pod Leader

**Presbytery of the Northern Plains
Fall 2025 Meeting
October 11th, 2025**

Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery Report

The PWP Coordinating Team decided not to hold a Fall gathering in our Presbytery but instead are encouraging all women to attend Fargo First Presbyterian's Peace Summit happening in November (watch for details coming soon) and/or Carrie Lauber's Servant Leadership Conference being held in the Fargo-Moorhead area (date to be determined).

Spring Gathering will be held at Mendenhall Presbyterian Church in East Grand Forks MN. More details regarding this gathering will be coming out later this winter.

PWP will once again be awarding grants this winter.

The application is available on the Presbytery's website home page under the Presbyterian Women category and is due by December 1st, 2025.

You can also find the latest copies of the Presbyterian Women of Presbytery and Synod Presbyterian Women's newsletters in that same location on our Presbytery's website.

Submitted by:

Donna Preston,
Mission Pod Leader

**Presbytery of the Northern Plains
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Clearwater Forest Bible Camp Report

Clearwater Forest continues to provide year round camps and retreats for all ages.

This Fall they held a Leadership Ministry Retreat on September 21-24, 2025.

They are hosting a Fall for All event during the MEA/NDEA school break. It runs October 15-29, 2025, and is open to not just youth campers but attendees of all ages. Families are encouraged to attend this event together.

There will be a Men's Retreat held October 24-26, 2025.

The program director has also been hosting several new smaller events and activities for local people.

This summer the day camp was well attended by local children and youth.

Clearwater Forest will be kicking off a capital campaign in the near future and Erin Anderson, Clearwater Forest Director, will be in person at our Fall Presbytery meeting to share more about this campaign.

Next year's programming book will be released in early 2026. Watch for it and consider checking out an event at this beautiful location.

In the meantime, check out their website clearwaterforest.org to learn more about the many year round events and offerings. Clearwater Forest is so much more than just a summer camp for kids.

Submitted by:

Donna Preston,
Mission Pod Leader

Fall 2025

To the members of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains

Greetings from the University of Jamestown!

At the writing of this report, we welcome a record 1,510 students this year across our undergraduate and graduate programs, and we joyously anticipate the dedication of our renovated Voorhees Chapel and the Reuben & Clarice Liechty Center for Faith and Life on September 26, about two years after we first broke ground on this transformational project.

I extend our heartfelt appreciation for the Presbytery of the Northern Plains' gift of \$25,000 toward a stained-glass window in Voorhees Chapel. The light that dances through these windows will inspire those who walk through the chapel's doors for generations to come.

The Center for Faith and Life is the physical home for the Unruh School of Character in Leadership, integrating six foundational virtues—wisdom, integrity, service, excellence, courage, and humility—through both formal education and co-curricular engagement.

Student involvement in Campus Ministry remains vibrant and meaningful. With opportunities ranging from Bible studies to music, prayer, and care teams, our student body is actively engaged in faith and life at UJ.

Best wishes for your Fall Presbytery Meeting and blessings in the year ahead.

With gratitude,



Polly L. Peterson

President

**Presbytery of the Northern Plains
Fall 2025 Meeting
October 11th, 2025**

Youth Connection Team Report

27 youth and 8 adults traveled by bus with the Clearwater Forest Bible Camp on a joint trip to Triennium in Louisville, KY at the end of July. It was a great experience for our youth.

The Youth Connection team continues to meet monthly via Zoom to plan upcoming events for our Presbytery's youth.

In lieu of hosting our own Fall event, we are encouraging all youth and their families to attend Clearwater Forest's "Fall for All" event being held October 15-19th (flyer attached) and/or their "Snow Camp" coming in mid-January. (Stay tuned for upcoming details on Snow Camp, registrations will need to be in by the end of December).

To help defray the cost for our youth to attend either of these Clearwater Forest events we are offering a \$100 scholarship per youth.

Contact Jenn at the Presbytery office or Donna Preston for the checkout code to use when registering your youth for these events on the Clearwater Forest website.

We will be hosting a Spring Retreat for our youth somewhere within our Presbytery. We are just starting to plan this event. Watch for details later this winter!

Report Submitted by:
Donna Preston,
Youth Connection Team Pod Leader

**Presbytery of the Northern Plains
2025 Fall Meeting
October 11th, 2025**

Chogoria Partnership Ministry Team Report

Date: September 2025

Submitted by: Chogoria Partnership Ministry Team (CPMT)

Leadership and Membership

Co-Chairs:

- Carrie Lauber
- Pastor Jamie Norstog

Active Team Members:

- Rev. Cathie Bishop
- Ginger Deitz
- Bill Hunter
- Sharon Secor

Purpose and Mission

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains and the Chogoria Presbytery of Kenya have committed themselves to partnership and strengthened ministries in order to be “mutually encouraged by each other’s faith.” (Romans 1:12 NRSV)

This partnership is intended to provide both parties with a relationship to exchange knowledge, pray for one another, embrace one another as sister congregations, and engage in joint activities.

Activities and Accomplishments (2024–2025)

1. Sponsored Students and the Hunter Fund

- Continued oversight of students supported through the Hunter Fund.
- Reviewed academic progress reports, and worked with Kenyan partners to refine sponsorship requirements and expectations.
- Facilitated private sponsorships of 15 students.
- Provided encouragement and mentorship connections for students pursuing secondary and post-secondary education.

2. Mpangua Primary School Initiatives

- Partnered with the Mpangua Primary School Board of Directors to review student scores and progress.
- Discussed the school's goal of developing a future science lab classroom to expand STEM opportunities.
- Supported the launch and monitoring of the Black Soldier Fly project to improve school latrines and provide agricultural education.

3. Youth Friendly Center Support

- The Youth Friendly Center is an emerging project in Chogoria.
- A location has been procured, and a plan for the center has been put in place.
- The next step is for our partners in Kenya to gather construction and implementation quotes to move the project forward.

4. Upcoming 2025 Mission Visit

- Planning a CPMT delegation visit to Kenya in October–November 2025.
- Will be meeting with the Chogoria Partnership Board.
- Will be meeting with the Mpangua Primary School Board of Directors.

Looking Ahead

In the coming year, CPMT will:

- Expand communications within the Presbytery to increase awareness and involvement
- Develop a long-term sustainability plan for sponsored students
- Continue deepening personal and congregational relationships across cultures
- Strengthen structures for regular reporting and mutual accountability

Submitted with gratitude for the Presbytery's support, prayers, and shared vision for global mission.

Respectfully,

The Chogoria Partnership Ministry Team

Contact: chogoriapartnership@gmail.com

2024 Presbytery Statistical Report

Presbytery

Northern Plains

Address

5555 S Washington Ste A, Grand Forks, ND 58201-8084

Phone

701-772-0783

Fax

701-775-7599

Email

pnpooffice@gmail.com

Web Site

www.northernplainspresbytery.com



Membership

Prior Active Members	2898	Adjusted membership	2892
----------------------	------	---------------------	------

Gains

Certificate	10
-------------	----

Youth Professions	21
-------------------	----

Professions & Reaffirmations	34
------------------------------	----

Total Gains	65
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Total Ending Active Members	2622
------------------------------------	-------------

Losses

Certificate	6
-------------	---

Deaths	63
--------	----

Deleted for any Other Reason	266
------------------------------	-----

Total Losses	335
---------------------	------------

Baptisms

Presented by Others	34
---------------------	----

At Confirmation	1
-----------------	---

All Other	6
-----------	---

Average Weekly Worship Attendance	1123
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Friends of the Congregation	348
-----------------------------	-----

Ruling Elders on Session	196
--------------------------	-----

Do you have Deacons? Yes / No	12 / 19
-------------------------------	---------

Age Distribution of Active Members

17 & Under	69
------------	----

18 - 25	168
---------	-----

26 - 40	210
---------	-----

41 - 55	306
---------	-----

56 - 70	488
---------	-----

Over 70	859
---------	-----

Total Age Distribution	2100
-------------------------------	-------------

People with Disabilities

Hearing impairment	174
--------------------	-----

Sight impairment	62
------------------	----

Mobility impairment	153
---------------------	-----

Other impairment	111
------------------	-----

Gender Distribution

Women	1220
-------	------

Men	871
-----	-----

Non-Binary	0
------------	---

Youth in Congregation

Age 4 and under	64
-----------------	----

Elementary School (K-5th grade)	162
---------------------------------	-----

Middle School (6th – 8th grade)	79
---------------------------------	----

High School (9th – 12th grade)	98
--------------------------------	----

Total Youth	403
--------------------	------------

Racial Ethnic

Asian/Pacific Islander/South Asian	20
------------------------------------	----

Black/African American/African	42
--------------------------------	----

Middle Eastern/North African	0
------------------------------	---

Hispanic/Latino-a	2
-------------------	---

Native American/Alaska Native/Indigenous	6
--	---

White	2028
-------	------

Multiracial	2
-------------	---

Total Racial Ethnic	2100
----------------------------	-------------

Budgeted Income	2,798,459
------------------------	------------------

Budgeted Expense	3,156,595
-------------------------	------------------

Receipts

Regular Contributions	2,442,649
-----------------------	-----------

Capital Building Fund	216,575
-----------------------	---------

Investment Income	274,986
-------------------	---------

Bequests	69,196
----------	--------

Other Income	191,517
--------------	---------

Subsidy or Aid	20,970
----------------	--------

Expenditures

Local Program	5,462,776
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Local Mission	160,018
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Capital Expenditures	301,178
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Investment Expenditures	47,418
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Per Capital Apprt	115,550
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Other Mission	31,380
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Presbytery of the Northern Plains

September 12, 2025

Financial Task Force/Investments

New Covenant Trust Company

Presbyterian Foundation

Total Fund Balance

\$1,741,999.54

September 12, 2025

- PNP Endowment Acct XXX05217 \$1,067,553.74
- PNP Support Acct XXX0551 \$ 674,445.80

December 31, 2024

\$1,497,193.47

Earnings to date:

\$ 244,553.74

Respectfully Submitted,

Sherri A Stern

Finance/Investment Moderator

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

Review of Financial Records

For the Year 2024

The financial transactions and records of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains were checked for accuracy, supporting documentation and authorization, following the outline for conducting the PNP financial review. Receipts of per-capita, special offerings and gift funds designated for PNP, Synod, PCUSA and PNP Missions were identified by the contributing church or donor information. All receipts were verified against the disbursement records and found to be accurate and complete.

Income: The year-end statements from all banks and investment accounts were reviewed and matched the amounts reported on December 31, 2024, PNP Financial Statement. The deposit book and reconciliation of the checking and money market records were verified and accurate in accordance with the Balance Sheet and Funds Overview Report.

Expenditures: All vendors and individuals receiving reimbursement during the year 2024 were reviewed for adequate documentation and allocation of expense to the respective committee or ministry team. All reimbursements to staff were found to have normally accepted documentation and verified amounts appeared on the check records. Monthly reports on expenditures, by category, were found to be complete and accurate. Vouchers continue to be used only where source documentation lacks complete information. Personnel salary and payroll are provided through an outsourcing agreement with the Synod of the Lakes and Prairies.

Notes:

Voided checks April 2024

Checks numbered 8535, 8536 and 8537 were voided due to printing error (upside down). The checks were included in the file and documented in the Disbursements folder in the physical form with VOID across the faces of the checks.

Funds Transferred as income

Income received and recorded of \$20,000 as approved disbursement from NCTC Presbytery Support account.

Based on the review, the financial statements of The Presbytery of the Northern Plains for the year 2024 represent the revenue, expense fund balances and financial position as stated.

Sherri A Stern
PNP Financial Task Leader
Audit/Review completed 9/20/2025

Scott Swanholm, CPA
Consultant
Eide Bailly

Presbytery of the Northern Plains
2025 Fall Meeting
October 11, 2025

Budget Narrative for 2026 Budget Proposal
Ellen Misialek, PNP Treasurer

Per Capita:

Membership figures for 2026 Per Capita were taken from the General Assembly statistical reports for each church as of December 31, 2024. Churches across the PNP had 276 fewer members at the end of 2024 compared to 2023. The three components of Per Capita are: General Assembly, Synod of Lakes and Prairies, and Presbytery of the Northern Plains. GA raised their portion by 42 cents from \$10.84 to \$11.26. SLP maintained their portion at \$5.50. The Leadership Pod is recommending at this Presbytery meeting that the PNP reduce their portion to \$33.24 (42 cents less per member) so that 2026 Per Capita remain at \$50 per member. This will be the fourth year of Per Capita being set at \$50. The first section of the proposed 2026 budget identifies that the PNP will transmit to GA and SLP the total amount for all members of this presbytery.

Funds Transfer:

Included in the 2026 budget is the figure of \$70,000 that may/will be transferred in whole or in part from the New Covenant Trust Company to the general fund as necessary.

Personnel Expenses:

This section reflects the proposed recommendation from the Personnel Committee to give a 4% cost of living raise to all employees. Other expenses have been updated as needed.

Office & Administrative Expenses:

These figures are budgeted as appropriate based on historical information plus items that are specific to 2026, such as General Assembly alternates for the 2026 GA meeting in Milwaukee.

Pod Expenses and Mission Pledges:

These are based on requests from Pod leaders and Ministry Teams.

Bdecan Ministry Team has requested \$12,000 for the Bdecan Food Pantry due to greater need and to the rising cost of food. Chogoria Ministry Team, Clearwater Forest, University of Jamestown, and the Youth Connection Ministry Team have requested the amounts they need to do their missions in 2026. The grand total of \$45,000 will be supported in part by donations to the Presbytery's Unified Mission support—please consider being very generous!!

Through the process of preparing this 2026 budget proposal, it is apparent that the Presbytery cannot support our 2026 budget expenditures without using a portion of the earnings on our investments held by New Covenant Trust Company. We are blessed to be able to meet current expense needs with earnings from dollars that have been wisely invested.

New Covenant Trust Fund report in a separate report from Financial Task Force.

Presbytery of the No. Plains	Per Capita	Per Capita	Per Capita 2025		Per Capita 2026
Proposed Budget for Year 2026	2023	2024	GA \$10.84; SLP \$5.50;		GA \$11.26;SLP\$5.50;
Prior Years' Financial Info	3146x\$50=	3028X\$50=	PNP \$33.66;Total \$50		PNP \$33.24;Total\$50
PNP Meeting, October 11, 2025	\$157,300	\$151,400	2898x\$50=\$144,900		2622x\$50=\$131,100
	Actual	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
	2023	2024	2025	9/20/2025	2026
CASH FLOW - GENERAL FUND					
Loan Repayment	1000	1500		1000	
Per Capita (Prior Years)	18113	4700	3000	1000	3000
Per Capita (Current Year)	132058	126600	144900	81192	131100
Uncollectible Per Capita			-25000		-23000
Investment Income	3265	3428	3000	1049	2000
Mission Support/Pres. Endowment		20000	50000		70000
Miscellaneous Income	680	1500	400		500
Synod Support	10000	10000	10000	7500	10000
PNP Unified Mission	29474	28096	25000	18118	25000
Steele Church Closing	19809	8978	0	0	0
Hamilton Church Closing				6855	0
Total Fiscal Cash Flow-In	214399	204802	211300	116714	218600
DISBURSEMENTS					
Per Capita Payment to GA	30988	29674	31414	31414	29524
Per Capita Payment to Synod	17303	16654	15939	15939	14421
Total Per Capita Payments	48291	46328	47353	47353	43945
Personnel Expense					
Connectional Care Pastor-Salary	18667	28840	30000	20000	31200
Connectional Care Pastor-BOP**	9528	14292	13477	10108	14016
Connectional Care Pastor-Travel	2228	5576	5000	3990	5000
Connectional Care Pastor-Prof. Ex.	1379	600	2000	1597	2000
Connectional Care-Intern Program			500		500
Director of Communications-Salary	25000	25750	26784	17856	27864
Director of Communications-Travel			250	187	250
Director of Communications-Prof.Ex.	611	411	500		500
Personnel Expense-FICA	3051	4443	4900	3262	5091
Stated Clerk-Salary	23800	17000	21216	14144	22080
Stated Clerk-Office Ex & Travel	1156		1000		1000
Bookkeeper-Salary	14880	15326	15960	10640	16608
Workers Compensation	250	250	250		250
Total Personnel Expense	100550	112488	121837	81784	126359
Office Expense					
Equipment	1262		1500		1500
Finance Software	270	389	400	389	400
Insurance	1618	1630	1650		1650

Postage	141	282	300	156	300
Supplies & Miscellaneous	1058	1396	1500	666	1200
Telephone & Zoom & Website	416	812	300	193	300
Total Office Expense	4765	4509	5650	1404	5350

Administrative Expenses

Committee on Representation			100		100
Nominating Committee			100		100
Administrative Commissions			100		100
Mediation&Conflict Res.-Team	284		300		300
Board Representatives			100		100
Educational Events			1000		1000
Search Committee Expense			1000		1000
GA Alternates	0		0		2000
Synod of Lakes & Prairies Academy			2500	2500	2500
Moderator	290		500		500
Presbytery Meetings	150	150	500	278	500
Total Administrative Expenses	724	150	6200	2778	8200

Pod Expense & Pledges

Cont. Prep. For Ministry Pod		61	4500	1778	4000
Care for Congregations Pod		289	500	364	
Care for Pastoral Leaders Pod		500	500	500	
Congregational Vitality Pod					1000
Leadership Pod	733	50	1000	500	1000
Mission Pod		100	100		100
Subtotal Pod Expense	733	1000	6600	3142	6100

Undesignated Mission		1500			1000
Bdecan Food Pantry Pledge	0	10109	7500	7500	12000
Chogoria Ministry Team	10000	10000	10000	3662	10000
Clearwater Forest Pledge	5000	10000	10000	10000	10000
Univ. of Jamestown Pledge	5000	8000	7500	7500	10000
Youth Conn. Ministry Team	10000	2000	10000	10000	2000
Subtotal Pledges	30000	41609	45000	38662	45000

Total Disbursements	<u>185063</u>	<u>206084</u>	<u>232640</u>	<u>175123</u>	<u>234954</u>
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Net Position before Reserves	29336	-1282	-21340	-58409	-16354
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Transfers to/from Reserves	<u>0</u>	<u>15000</u>	<u>16000</u>	<u>16000</u>	<u>17000</u>
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Net Position after Reserves	<u>29336</u>	<u>13718</u>	<u>-5340</u>	<u>-42409</u>	<u>646</u>
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2020 Grants \$7000, 2021 Grants \$10027, 2022 Grants \$3850, 2023 Grants \$13249

Disbursed from other funds in 2024:

March 2024: Small Church Ministries Grant, Jamestown UPC, \$2,000, wall-mounted camera

May 2024: Peacemaking Grant, Mandan PC, \$2,500, Blessing Bags

June 2024: Small Church Ministries Grant, Forest River Community Ch, \$2,500, Back Packs for Kids

August 2024: Peacemaking Grant, Fargo 1st Presbyterian, \$2,000, Peacemaking Summit

November 2024: Congregational Development Grant, Bismarck 1st Presbyterian, \$2000, Recording and Streaming System

December 2024: Congregational Development Grant, Moorhead 1st Presbyterian, \$750, Security System

December 2024: Congregational Development Grant, Baker Downer Presbyterian, \$800, Sound System Speakers

Disbursed from other funds in 2025:

June 2025: Small Church Ministries Grant, West Fargo Community, \$1000, PNC Expenses

July 2025: Gift from Cash Reserves, Jamestown University Foundation, \$25,000, Chapel Stained Glass Windows

September 2025: Congregational Development Grant, 1st Presbyterian Grand Forks, \$3965, Board of Pensions Support

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

Budget Proposal for 2026