

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

October 12, 2024

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) held its stated meeting at the First Presbyterian Church of Grand Forks, ND, on Saturday, October 12, 2024.

Moderator Ruling Elder (RE) Tom Brusegaard called the meeting to order at 10:04 AM and opened with prayer.

Rev. Dr. Spencer Homan led the Presbytery in worship. Holy Communion was celebrated as part of the service. An offering was taken for the benefit of Small Church Ministries.

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	Retired	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	P
299	Christman, David	HR	E
299	Cory, Darrel	HR	E
299	Danielson, Cheri	HR	E
299	Danielson, Marli	HR	E
101	Dill, Robin	Grafton, Minto	P
101	Drake, Robert	Moorhead	

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

Congregation	Ruling Elder Commissioners	In Person or Zoom
Angus, Angus-Tabor Presbyterian		
Arvilla, Arvilla Presbyterian		
Baker, Westminster Presbyterian		
Bismarck, First Presbyterian	Becky Rosenkranz Jim Skaret	Z Z
Bismarck, Glencoe Sloan Memorial		
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	Vickie Goplen	P
Crookston, First Presbyterian		
Devils Lake, Westminster Presb.	Marvin Mead	Z
Dilworth, Dilworth Presbyterian		
East Grand Forks, Mendenhall	Marilynn Ogden	P
Edgeley, First Presbyterian		
Ellendale, Presbyterian		
Fairview, Community Presbyterian		
Fargo, First Presbyterian	Elaine Rudd Bruce Mayleth Brian McClure Rusty Bender	Z P P P
Fordville, Community Presbyterian		
Forest River, Midway Parish		
Gilby, Gilby Presbyterian		
Grafton, Federated Church	Gale Fisher	P
Grand Forks, First Presbyterian	Anne Bryson Kelly Faller	P P
Grandin, Grandin Presbyterian	Donna Preston	P
Hallock, First Presbyterian		
Hamilton, First Presbyterian		
Hannah, Hannah Presbyterian		
Hunter, First Presbyterian		
Inkster, Inkster Presbyterian		
Jamestown, United Presbyterian	Jerome Zamgba Mary Reed	P P
LaMoure, First Presbyterian		
Langdon, Presbyterian Church	Clinton Eskilsen	P
Lisbon, First Presbyterian		
Mandan, First Presbyterian	Steve Schroeder	Z
Minto, Knox Presbyterian	Ellen Misialek	P
Moorhead, First Presbyterian	Erik Swee Elizabeth Swee George O'Neill	P P Z
Oakes, First Presbyterian	Dorothea Rath	Z
Park River, Federated Church	Carmen Bell	Z
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		

Towner, Towner Presbyterian		
Walhalla, Park Center-Walhalla		
Watford City, First Presbyterian		
Webster, Webster Chapel	Wayne Lindenberg	P
West Fargo, Community Presb.	Carrie Lauber	P
	Andrew Thostenson	Z
Westhope, First Presbyterian		

Others in Attendance	Position	In Person or Zoom
Tom Brusegaard	Moderator	P
Sylvia Pringle	Vice Moderator	P
Adam Montgomery	Stated Clerk	P
Sherri Stern	Financial Task Force	P
Jennifer Kolodka	Visitor, Office Admin	P
Erin Anderson	Clearwater Forest Dir.	P
Kyle Nolan	Presbytery Foundation Rep	P
Joyce Esckilsen	Visitor (Langdon)	P
Hazel Merdink	Visitor (Mendenhall)	P
David Mbae	Visitor (Chogoria, Kenya)	P
Dorothy Kithenji	Visitor (Chogoria, Kenya)	P

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

The meeting agenda was amended to add a report by Erin Anderson of Clearwater Forest Camp. The amendment was approved without objection.

Donna Preston, Sarah Bigwood M/S/C: Consent Agenda accepted.

David Mbae and Dorothy Kagendo, Kyle Nolan, Erin Anderson, were received as corresponding members.

With amendments Nancy Emerson, Spencer Homan, Approved.

Call for Correspondence:

Rev. Kyle Nolan, Presbyterian Foundation (PowerPoint presentation).

Dorothy Kagendo and David Mbae, Chogoria Partnership Ministry (written correspondence – *see attached*.) CLP Jamie Norstog spoke about the partnership with Chogoria. Carrie Lauber spoke about her experience in Chogoria and working with Dorothy and David.

Erin Anderson, Executive Director of Clearwater Forest Camp.

Moderator Brusegaard recessed the meeting, with prayer, for lunch at 12:12 PM (1:15).

The Stated Meeting was Called Back to Order by Moderator Brusegaard at 1:17 PM.

There was No Unfinished Business.

Nancy Emerson, Sarah Bigwood M/S/C to accept the statistical report.

The Stated Clerk accepted the Reports of Examination of Session Minutes, pursuant to G-3.0108.

Approval of the FY2025 Annual Budget – Ellen Misialek (*see attached.*)

Treasurer Misialek noted cash flow on an annual basis is now a concern. \$20,000.00 was transferred from the endowment fund to cash flow expenses. It was noted that with the Steele Church now closed, those church funds remaining are now available to Presbytery.

Proposed Budget: two parts for approval.

Per capita has not changed, PNP leadership has elected to decrease their share to maintain per capita at \$50 for 2025. Treasurer Misialek noted approximately 100 congregants are lost every year for the last four years. The situation of decreasing membership is of financial concern. Treasurer Misialek is hopeful we will collect per capita in the amount of \$120,000.00 for the year.

Presbytery staff – Misialek presented a 4% salary increase for presbytery staff.

Nancy Emerson proposed the finance committee review a standard, annual 5% disbursement to fund the budget. Sherri Stern spoke to the notion there is a similar provision available and continued review will be considered.

David Mbae (Chogoria) thanked the Presbytery for our financial support.

Per capita rate for 2025 was M/S/C by Rusty Bender, Donna Preston.

Approval of the FY 2025 Budget was M/S/C Merilynn Ogden, Nancy Emerson.

The Presbytery collected \$525.00 in offering for Small Church Ministries during today's service.

Inkster Church – Care for Congregation Pod withdrew item with no objection.

Report from the 226th General Assembly (GA) - Rev. Dr. Spencer Homan and CRE Paul Campbell

Six main items for our Presbytery: Gun Safety, Rejecting Christian Zionism, Divestment from Fossil Fuels, Special Offerings (four to three/year), Non-binding Board of Pensions Resolution, Both Parts of "Olympia Overture" Passed.

Presbyterian Outlook is available to read highlights of GA work.

Overtures will be voted on within the Presbytery at the next stated meeting.

Next GA will be a hybrid meeting and hosted in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Care for Congregations Report – Rev. Sarah Bigwood

There have been significant changes with the Board of Pensions. There are changes that could possibly affect individual church budgets and pastors are having to pay more into the pension. Rev. Bigwood encourages anyone with questions to contact her.

Creative things are happening to keep pastors in the area. Any ideas needed or can be shared, please share with the committee.

If churches are looking for funding, remember to apply for grant funds.

Rev. Bigwood spoke to the two budgets, the annual and the endowment. She highlighted the forethought that went into the endowment investment that has grown and can now serve our churches in this Presbytery. The committee continues to look for new ways to use these funds to serve the churches of our Presbytery.

Continuing Preparation for Ministry Report – Rev. Dr. Spencer Homan

Dr. Homan wished to highlight Donna Preston, Corday Goddard, Carrie Lauber as three candidates working to become commissioned lay pastors. Two additional candidates will begin Spring 2025.

Nominating Committee – RE Rusty Bender

Bender replaced Robert Drake in July and joined Leadership Pod in August. He provided a list of candidate nominations (*see attached*).

Bender reviewed the vacancies (page 4 of attachment). SEE HAND NOTES FOR ACTION

Donna Preston, Donna Monteith M/S/C to name Rusty Bender as transitional Vice Moderator.

Donna Monteith, Spencer Homan M/S/C to name Elizabeth Swee to the Nominating Committee.

Good News

Donna Preston thanked everyone for the B'decan donations.

Nancy Emerson highlighted Erin Anderson's successes with Clearwater Forest.

Darrel (Jamestown) honored to be Christian Education Coordinator and continuing to see an increase in children attending. He also discussed a school in Liberia and its mission to prevent armed African conflict.

Rusty Bender, as Nominations chair, highlighted Sylvia Pringle's vice moderator role and thanked her for her service.

Rev. Jamie Norstog thanked the presbytery for the grant which funds his church's backpack program. Forest River's first attempt at doing Sunday School again in many years. The church brought in 24 students. Grew Youth Group to 30 children.

Rev. Bob Boyar thanked the Presbytery for the grant which purchased his church's live streaming camera. He also asked for prayers for his church's "Lily Grant." \$385k ask!

Rusty Bender, Director of Church Life at First Presbyterian Church – Fargo. Shared gratitude for a grant used for the Peace Summit, which included Youth events at Baker-Downer.

Jenn Kolodka, Communications Coordinator shared the next Stated Presbytery Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, April 5, 2025.

CRE Paul Campbell – Presbyterian Disaster Mission opportunity, noting the current hurricanes and asked if anyone would like to put together a work team to follow federal assistance. A great mission project.

Rev. Robin Dill, Bigwood M/S/C to adjourn the regular stated meeting of the Presbytery. Moderator Brusegaard closed the meeting with prayer. The Presbytery stands adjourned at 2:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam R. Montgomery
Stated Clerk