

Light of the Northern Plains

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

November 2017

PRAYER JOYS/CONCERNS

Please lift up in prayer those displaced from their homes by natural disasters in the United States and all over the world, those in need of basic supplies, and those who are working to offer assistance. Pray that conditions improve so that delivery of much needed relief supplies can reach their distribution points.

Please pray that God's love will work through us, our churches, our communities, and our world for peace, compassion, and justice for all.

Please join in prayer for the leadership of the Presbytery and the church in every time and place as we move forward in God's service.

Please pray for our congregations in transition and congregations that are in need of healing.

Please hold our Chogoria partners in your prayers.

For the love of God to be evident in everything we do and say: For people listening to God's voice to serve in leadership positions in their churches, For our sessions, For the ministry of the different agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), For wisdom for the many committees that are at work at all levels of the church, For pastors who are facing health problems, For the unity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

If you or someone from your congregations would like a prayer concern/joy to be sent out to the Presbytery, please contact the office at pnppoffice@gmail.com or call 701-772-0783. If the request is on behalf of someone else, please check with them before requesting.

BE THE CHANGE

By: the Rev. Donna Monteith, moderator of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

-1 Peter 2:9-10 NRSV

As Protestants, 2017 is the year in which we observe and celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. We have just passed the date when Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses on the door of the Wittenburg church. That marked a turning point in the Church as someone dared to challenge the idea that salvation came through the priesthood, a very Old Testament way of looking at things. In Jesus' time, sacrifices at the Temple were made through the priests. Although Jesus preached otherwise, and seemed to indicate through his choice of disciples that anyone was welcome, old habits die hard. The early church was loosely organized, but as it grew, it fell into old habits of hierarchy, which mutated through the years into the Church in which Luther served.

Northern Plains Presbytery is currently undergoing a change that seems only slightly less monumental to us than did the Protestant Reformation to 16th Century Europe. We no longer have the old committee structure that was largely dictated by the Book of Order; we now have "Pods." These Pods



have divided up the functions deemed necessary to the functioning of the Presbytery, and people who have a passion for those functions are invited to specialize in doing them. Those people with a passion for ministry outside the necessary functions have been invited to continue those ministries with like-minded folk in the Mission Pod. All the members of the Presbytery are invited to take part in the work of the Presbytery "...in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of

him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

Change is not easy. Those of us who have been in this Presbytery forever would really like to "Make Northern Plains Great Again." We long for Generous George to bring another Support Spot to the floor of presbytery; we long for a closing resolution from Bills, Overtures and Resolutions thanking the host church; we miss the many past Moderators who have gone to "that great cloud of witnesses." We have changed a lot through the years, and none of it has been easy,

but most of it has been necessary. As fallible humans, we have a tendency to see cause and effect erroneously. Our changing demographics caused the changes to be needed; the changes did not cause the changing demographics.

Change is not easy, but it is inevitable. Change is not for some and not for others. Change is for everyone in this Presbytery. Be a part of the change and find the place where you belong in the new structure and join in proclaiming God's mighty acts to the world.

FALL PRESBYTERY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

By: Michael Lochow, Ruling Elder, Stated Clerk

The 117th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains was hosted by the First Presbyterian Church of Hallock, Minnesota, on Friday and Saturday, October 6-7, 2017. The meeting covered bylaw and policy changes;



Karen Macdonald, Ruling Elder and Mission Pod Leader, presenting the revised policies.

formation of a commission and a task force; commissioners to the 2018 General Assembly; and actions on candidates, overtures, and property.

Revised bylaws and policies were presented to support the new Presbytery structure which was approved at the 2016 fall meeting. Major changes in the bylaws gave all temporary members full voting privileges, changed the parameters for determining how many commissioners each church may send to a presbytery meeting, and replaced committee language with Pod descriptions. Policies are being reviewed by the Pods. Those policies not already revised and approved will continue to guide the presbytery during their review.

Sadly, it was announced that the First Presbyterian Church of Minot, North Dakota, is closing. A five-person closing commission was elected to oversee the orderly closing of the church: Teaching Elders Darrel Cory and Donna Monteith and Ruling Elders Stan Hurst

(First - Minot), Marilynn Ogden (Mendenhall – East Grand Forks), and Sylvia Pringle (United - Jamestown). A seven-member task force will be formed to explore and consider alternate Presbytery staffing models. The task force will present recommendations at a special presbytery meeting in February 2018.

The meeting of the 223rd General Assembly will be held on June 16-23, 2018, in St. Louis, Missouri. The Presbytery elected its commissioners: Teaching Elder Mary Holtey (First - Fargo), Ruling Elder Marilyn Dean (First - LaMoure), and Young Adult Advisory Delegate Sedalia Mahlum (First - Bismarck).



The Rev. Nancy Emerson reporting on the happens at Presbyterian Clearwater Forest.

First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead, Minnesota, has issued a call to candidate Robert T. Drake, who is under care of the Presbytery of Northern Waters. Robert was examined by the commissioners and found ready to be ordained. Ruling Elder Jane Holtzclaw was moved from Inquirer to Candidate status under care of the Presbytery.

Two overture issues were presented. It was voted to concur with an overture from the Presbytery of Central Nebraska concerning the Administrative Personnel Association. An overture from the Presbyterians for Earth Care on directing the Board of Pensions and the

Presbyterian Foundation to divest from fossil fuel and to invest in renewable energy was defeated by a close vote.

Two property actions were approved: sale of the church lot at Willow City and permission for the Midway Parish to rent their manse.

Mark your calendar, the 2018 Presbytery Meeting dates have been set. Here is a list of the upcoming Presbytery Meeting dates:

- Special Meeting of Presbytery – February 2018, date and location TBA
- Friday, April 13, 2018, Westminster Presbyterian Church of Casselton
- Monday, October 8, 2018, location TBA



Candidate Robert T. Drake during his examination on the floor of Presbytery.

2018 PER CAPITA

2018 Per Capita was approved at the October Presbytery Meeting. The per capita apportionment is based on the funds necessary for the Presbytery/Synod/General Assembly to do their essential ecclesiastical work.

2018 Per Capita Apportionment breakdown is:

General Assembly (GA)	\$ 7.78
Synod of Lakes & Prairies	\$ 5.40
Northern Plains Presbytery	<u>\$ 30.82</u>
Total 2018 Per Capita	\$ 44.00

The Presbytery office has a free brochure which will help individuals understand the fundamentals of Per Capita and Unified mission. If you would like to receive a copy, please contact the office at 701-772-0783 or email pnppoffice@gmail.com.

NOTICE TO CLERKS/MODERATORS OF SESSION

By: Lana Schultz, Ruling Elder, Records Task Leader and member of the Leadership Pod

With the elimination of the Session Records Committee, changes have been made to the Session Records review procedure:

- (1) At least one clerk/moderator of session trained (attended two or more record reviews) shall set up a record review annually;
- (2) with other clerk(s)/ moderator(s) of session, within their region, to read each other's record books. (Example: Clerks from Bismarck/Mandan/Steele/Wilton/Glencoe can contact one another and set up a reading at one of those churches);
- (3) Trained clerks/moderators can stamp or sign off on the last page by writing the examiner's name, date, place and number of exceptions;
- (4) Examination lists should either be scanned and sent or copied and mailed to the Records Task Leader, currently Lana Schultz, PO Box 891, Casselton, ND 58012;
- (5) Churches will no longer receive a letter from Presbytery with scheduled record reviews. Each clerk/moderator is responsible to have the church's records read annually.

Under the new pod system, the Records Task Leader will serve as a resource person to:

- (6) provide contact information, if needed, for clerks/moderators setting up record reviews in their regions and
- (7) maintain and present an annual report to Presbytery naming complying and non-complying congregations.

In response to inquiries about electronic recordkeeping, Session records are to be reviewed annually [G-3.0108a] and maintained, preferably on acid-free paper, in written/typed hard copy book form in a fireproof, waterproof safe at the church. This form of recordkeeping ensures that records will always be readily available for review. With the constant changes in software, electronic records, over time, are not always readily available or software compatible, resulting in earlier records being lost. For this reason, electronic records will not be accepted for record reviews. Please retain a hard copy of session records, minutes and register. Questions should be directed to Lana Schultz at lanaj0@casselton.net or 701-238-4538.

NEW STRUCTURE STILL NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

The pod system is now in place and volunteers are needed. The task leaders will be seeking to find individuals from congregations to assist as needs arise. The tasks will typically have a shorter time commitment. The idea is to share the work of the presbytery over many, thereby, not overwhelming a few. This is where you come in. If you have gift and talents you would be willing to share with your brother and sister congregations, please complete a survey on the Presbytery's website: www.northernplainspreabytery.com which will help match your skills and passion for ministry.

A big thank you to everyone who has already filled the survey out! During this process, some items are still in flux and we ask for your patience. It may take time before you are requested to fulfill a role within the Presbytery. For more information, please contact the Presbytery office 701-772-0783 or email pnpooffice@gmail.com.

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Congratulations to the following people, who were elected to a Presbytery Committee and start their new responsibilities in January 2018:

Officer:

Treasurer Walter Knipe*

Committee on Nominations

Class of 2020 Sharon Johnson*

Class of 2020 Cathy Scheibe*

Committee on Representation

Class of 2020 Dan Billings, Teaching Elder

General Assembly Commissioners/Alternates

Teaching Elder Com. Mary Holtey (TE)

Teaching Elder Alt. Spencer Homan (TE)

Ruling Elder Com. Marilyn Dean

Ruling Elder Alt. Scott Dobovsky

YAAD Sedalia Mahlum

Self-Development of People Committee

Class of 2020 Diane Wray Williams*

Class of 2020 Newzad Brifki

Synod Commissioners

Teaching Elder Trudy Dumont

YAAD Holly Tweed, Casselton*

The Committee on Nominations is always seeking people who are interested in serving as task leaders or on various Presbytery committees. If you feel you have been called to serve the Presbytery as a committee member or someone you know would be interested in serving, please contact Hazel Merdink, Nominating Committee Chair, 218-773-1832, or the Presbytery office at 701-772-0783 or email pnpooffice@gmail.com.

*Re-elected for a second term.

ELDERS NEEDED FOR TASK FORCE

At the October Presbytery meeting the following request from Council was passed:

To form a seven-member task force to explore and consider alternate models of staff and to present their report and recommendations at a special meeting of Presbytery in February 2018.

If you or someone you know would be willing to serve on this task force please contact Donna Monteith, Moderator of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains, at grpresby1@midconetwork.com, or the Presbytery office at pnpooffice@gmail.com or 701-772-0783.

SUPPLY GRANT – DEADLINE NOV 30TH



The Youth Connection Team is offering financial support to the children and youth ministry programs within our Presbytery of the Northern Plains. This “Supply Grant” can be used for any curriculum, event support, or materials that may be needed

to help support the programs within your church. Something as simple as new board games, conversation starters, or a gaming system can really bring new energy to the youth involvement within your church!

The Youth Connection Team will be happy to lend advice and support to help find materials that may be helpful to your ministries. Applications have been mailed out to all treasurers or you can download a copy from the Presbytery website at: www.northernplainspresbytery.com. Applications must be received by November 30, 2017, for consideration.

REST FEST!

Youth Connection’s Annual President’s Day Weekend Retreat!

Save the Date: Saturday-Monday, February 17-19, 2018

Enjoy a weekend away with friends from the Presbytery at our Annual “Rest Fest” Retreat. This event is open to all 6th through 12th grade youth. Join us Saturday through Monday, February 17-19, as we take a break from our crazy schedules and find ways to “rest” together. Stay tuned for more information.

HEALTHY BOUNDARY TRAINING

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains will be hosting a boundary training for pastoral leaders on Friday, November 10, 2017, at First Presbyterian Church of Grand Forks. The training will begin at 9:30 a.m. and conclude by 4:00 p.m. Laurie Elhard, Administrator for Communication and Finance, and Alissa Hancock, Administrator for Connections and Records, will be leading the session. This training has been designed with the pastoral leader in mind, however all are welcome. **You MUST attend the entire training in order to receive the certificate and to fulfill the Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures (P-2.0200) requirement.**

Everyone is highly encouraged to attend. Please contact the presbytery office to register at 701-772-0783 or pnppmission@gmail.com, by November 3, 2017.

Presbytery’s Calendar

Nov 8	Youth Connection Team cc
Nov 9	Care for Pastoral Leaders cc
Nov 10	Healthy Boundary Training at First Presbyterian Church (pg 4)
Nov 11-12	Bdecan fundraiser at Moorhead Center Mall Bazaar
Nov 15	Leadership Pod meeting – Jmst
Nov 18	Mission Pod meeting - Jmst
Nov 23-24	Thanksgiving Break, office closed
Nov 28	Giving Tuesday
Dec 14	Care for Pastoral Leaders cc
Dec 21	Leadership Pod cc
Dec 25 – Jan 2	Christmas Break, office closed
Mar 1, 2018	Healthy Boundary Training
Apr 13, 2018	Spring Presbytery Meeting at Westminster Presbyterian Church of Casselton

cc = Conference Call

OFFICE HOURS

The Presbytery office is open Monday thru Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Due to meeting schedules, please call before stopping by to make sure someone will be at the office.

PNP vision statement:

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

Would you like to receive the *Light of the Northern Plains* electronically? You can by signing up for the paperless edition. It costs nothing. To sign up, simply email pnpooffice@gmail.com and request to be put on the electronic newsletter list.

Light of the Northern Plains is published under the auspices of the Leadership Pod of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains.

Contributors: Marilyn Ogden, Candace Adams, Donna Monteith, Michael Lochow, Alissa Hancock, and Laurie Elhard.

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

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