

Light of the Northern Plains

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

July 2016

PRAYER JOYS/CONCERNS

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains 2016 Presbyterian Youth Triennium Delegation, 19 youth and four adults from our presbytery, will leave July 18 to begin their journey to Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. They will be joining over 5,000 Presbyterian youth from around the world to put their faith into action and to engage in fellowship. Please pray for our youth, leaders, and this event.

For the love of God to be evident in everything we do and say: 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 comprehensive immigration reform, for the end of gun violence, for the unity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

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

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 hold our Chogoria partners in your prayers.

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 pnpoffice@gmail.com or call 701-772-0783. If the request is on behalf of someone else, please check with them before requesting.

HOPE IN OUR CALLING

By: Ruling Elder Sylvia Pringle, moderator of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains

June 18-25, 2016, were the dates of our 222nd General Assembly. The overall theme was taken from Ephesians 1:18-19, "The Hope in our Calling." I spent those eight days in



Portland, Oregon, listening to passionate presentations on overtures, participating in hours of deliberation, laughing, being deeply touched by the sharing of life experiences, connecting with friends, making new friends, deepening relationships, sensing the presence of God's spirit, walking many miles, sitting for marathon sessions, eating deliciously prepared meals, staying alert and being present in each moment. We accomplished historic milestones, passed well thought out issues, elected co-moderators and our stated clerk, celebrated the service of mission co-workers who have retired, commissioned eight new mission coworkers, poured energy into matters of racial and cultural justice. For the first time in 30 years, the PC(USA) adopted a new confession of faith. The assembly approved the addition of the Belhar Confession to our Book of Confessions. Belhar is the first confession of faith adopted by the PC(USA) with origins in the global south: South Africa, to be precise. I also had opportunities for daily Bible study and worship. The music was amazing and life giving to my soul. The sermons in our worship services were spirit filled. The list goes on, I am leaving out many more important topics, but only due to space allotments for this article. Please read about the business of each day in the *Presbyterian Outlook*. If you don't get the magazine, it is online at <https://pres-outlook.org/> or you can also go to <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/ga/222nd-general-assembly-2016/ganews/>.

Our outgoing moderator, Heath Rada, gave the sermon at opening worship on Saturday, June 18th. His text was Romans 5:1-5; he often repeated the first words of verse 5, "Hope does not disappoint." He said our church is hungry for renewal of faith formation and proclamation, congregational vitality, justice for all people, and education. Rada said, "We must pursue this calling," (Eph. 1:18-19) "with all the energy, intelligence, imagination and love which God has given us." I urge you to find the complete sermon and read it.

My prayer for our churches, presbyteries, synods, and Office of General Assembly is for all of us to live for the glory of God through our energy, intelligence, imagination and love, which God has given us.

"Hope does not disappoint." Romans 5:5

NOMINATIONS: ARE YOU BEING CALLED TO SERVE



By: Hazel Merdink, Nominating Committee of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains

Often times we don't recognize the skills that God has given us to use for the benefit of God's church. You are invited reflect upon the gifts and skills you have and the gifts and skills you see in others that would build up our mission and ministry together. You are then invited to share your name and the names of others with the Presbytery of the Northern Plains Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee is seeking people who are interested in serving on various Presbytery committees. Currently the following positions are still being sought: Moderator, Vice Moderator, Council Chair, (2) Ruling Elder for Committee On Ministry

(COM), Committee for Preparation of Ministry (CPM), Clearwater Forest Representative, and Synod Ruling Elder Commissioner and YAAD Delegate (to start in May 2017).

Two positions that we would like to highlight for consideration are:

- **Ruling Elders needed for Committee on Ministry (COM):** Men and women are needed to be on Committee on Ministry willing to serve Jan. 2017 - Dec. 2019. If you have been on your church's session or PNC we need you at the Presbytery level as you already have experiences that will help you serve on COM. This committee helps with the relationships between sessions, congregations and pastors. They help with pastoral leadership and provide vacancy counselors for PNC's. This is an important committee that meets four (4) times face-to-face for a day-long meeting and eight (8) by conference calls. Prayerfully consider serving on COM or another presbytery committee.
- **Church Youth needed to be Synod YAAD:** Does your church have a youth aged 17 – 23 that is active in the life of your church? YAAD's attend Synod representing Northern Plains Presbytery in the fall of 2016 and the spring of 2017. This is a good way of getting the youth involved. They are actively involved in the decision making process of the Synod and are with other Christian youth.

Please help us spread the word about this wonderful opportunity by placing this information in your newsletter. If you feel called to fill one of these position or would like to submit a name of someone else, contact Hazel Merdink, Nominating Committee Chair, at 218-773-1832 or hmerdink@midco.net.

2017 CHANGES TO THE BOARD OF PENSIONS

By: Alissa Anderson, Administrator for Connections and Records

This spring the Board of Pensions announced some changes for 2017. They will now be offering menu based options for the churches which choose to offer benefits to their employees who work over 20 hours a week.

In mid-July all congregations will be receiving a letter outlining all the options from the Board of Pensions. Then you will have to decide who from the church will log into the Board of Pensions website, which is where you will see the cost of each option for your church. Once this has been done the church will then decide what they will offer to each category of employees, if any. The decision will have to be reported to the Board of Pensions by September 30, 2016.

What does this mean? Well for all called and installed pastors, this means that no matter the number of hours you work, you will be fully covered in the Board of Pensions. The only change for called and installed pastors is that their dues percentage rate will be based on the minimum effective salary of \$57,300 or above.

This will be a very important time, if the church decides to offer any of the menu based options to any employees, remember the deadline to report to the Board of Pensions is September 30, 2016. To read more about the changes go to:

<http://www.pensions.org/AvailableResources/BookletsandPublications/Documents/2017BenefitsPlanRedesign.pdf>.

When you receive this material please read it carefully. If there are questions, please feel free to contact the Board of Pensions at 1-800-773-7752. You can also contact Alissa Anderson, Administrator for Connections and Records at pnpmission@gmail.com or 701-772-0783 or Michael Lochow, Stated Clerk at teetiup75@hotmail.com.

BOARD OF PENSIONS DUES GRANT

In 2015, the Board of Pensions increased the dues for those with dependents by 1.5% for the rising health care costs. The Synod of Lakes and Prairies gave the Presbytery of the Northern Plains a grant in 2015 and again in 2016 to help churches offset this increase.

If your congregation qualified for this grant your treasurer should have already received a letter and the form that needs to be filled out. The deadline for this grant is September 2, 2016. If you did not receive this letter or feel that you should have, please feel free to contact Alissa Anderson, Administrator of Connections and Records at 701-772-0783 or pnpmission@gmail.com. Last year we were able to reimburse congregations 82.5% of the dues increase. Don't wait and miss the deadline!

PRESBYTERY MEETING DATES

Mark your calendar, the 2017
Presbytery Meeting dates have been
set. Here is a list of the upcoming
Presbytery Meeting dates and location:

- October 14-15, 2016, at
Rolla/St. John Presbyterian
Church
- April 21-22, 2017, at Community Presbyterian
Church of West Fargo
- October 6-7, 2017, at First Presbyterian Church of
Hallock



The Presbytery of the Northern Plains holds two stated meetings each year: one in the spring and the other in the fall. The dates are selected by taking into consideration weather, church calendars, and planting/harvesting. No one date is perfect so we ask that each congregation do their best to encourage attendance of at least their voting delegate and pastoral leader. All are always welcome to attend.

PLANNING INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

The North-East Ministry Region is planning to host educational workshops this fall. We want you to join us in helping us plan! We are looking for some exciting and new ways to do workshops for outreach and officer training. These are great topics and are looking for exciting ways to share the information.

Join us for planning on July 7, 2016, at 10:00 a.m. at First Presbyterian Church of Grand Forks. We hope to see you there!

SW MINISTRY REGION TO HOST OUTDOOR WORSHIP SERVICE



All are welcome to attend the Bismarck area annual Outdoor Worship Service on Sunday, July 10 at 10:00 a.m. in Bismarck's [Sertoma Park, Shelter 10!](#) We look

forward to gathering for worship with members and friends from area congregations including Mandan, Wilton, Glencoe, Steele, and Bismarck. We welcome any and all Presbyterians and their friends, neighbors, and anyone else who would like to experience God's word, communion, and fellowship in a beautiful outdoor setting. In case of inclement weather, the service will be held at First Presbyterian Church, Bismarck, 214 East Thayer Ave.

Members from several congregations will take part in the service. Special music and activities for children are planned.

Please bring food to share such as a vegetable, salad, or side dish for the potluck meal which is held right after the worship service. Specifically, members at Mandan are asked to bring salads and those at Wilton and Glencoe to bring desserts. The Membership Committee at First Presbyterian Bismarck will provide chicken, buns and beverages. A free-will offering will be collected to offset the charges for the main dish.

Please plan to attend, and bring your family and friends! We believe this will be a gathering with a rating of "10"!

2016 REGIONS EVENTS

Please be sure to spread the word about these gatherings and join with one another. The more we get together the stronger our connections grow; the more our knowledge of one another, the more we care for and our love for one another can flourish; and the better we can do God's glory. Events are open to everyone in or outside the hosting region. See what your region is planning and plan to attend or share with a friend.

North-East Region

July 7– Planning meeting, First Presbyterian Church of Grand Forks

October 1 – Educational Workshop, First Presbytery of Grand Forks

North-West Region

October 13 – Planning Meeting at Presbyterian Church of Rolla/St. John

South Central Region

August – Family Fun Weekend at Grand Rapids Memorial Park

September – Music Festival

October 23 – Church Growth Strategies at First Presbyterian Church of LaMoure

South-East Region

August 17 – Family Picnic at Lindenwood Park

October 14 – Planning Meeting & Meal at Presbyterian Church of Rolla/St. John

South-West Region

July 10 – Joint Worship Service in the Park

August – Planning Meeting

Fall – Knitting/Needle Day

Fall - Art Festival (Volunteer/Attend)

If you would like to know more about any of the above mentioned gatherings, or you have suggestions/ ideas for your region please contact Alissa Anderson, Administrator for Connections and Records, at 701-772-0783 or pnmission@gmail.com.

HEALTHY BOUNDARY TRAINING FOR TEACHING ELDERS



The Presbytery of the Northern Plains will be hosting a boundary training for Teaching Elders, on Thursday, August 4, 2016, at United Presbyterian Church of Jamestown, ND. The training will begin at

9:00 a.m. and conclude by 4:00 p.m. Laurie Elhard, Administrator for Communication and Finance, and Alissa Anderson, 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 to receive a credit and a certificate at the end of the training. Please plan to attend if you need to renew or have never attended a class before. Please register with Alissa Anderson at 701-772-0783 or pnpmision@gmail.com.

PNP GRANTS AVAILABLE ONLINE

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains is pleased to offer Presbyterian congregations and groups within the Presbytery the opportunity to apply for grants that may assist you in completing a project or starting a new ministry. The application process is open ended with no deadlines set, however once the funds are depleted no more grants will be available until the funds are replenished.

A brief list of funds available with the intent of the donor and an application form is downloadable at <http://www.northernplainspresbytery.com/#!/grants/c19n> or contact the Presbytery office at 701-772-0783 for more information.

FACEBOOK CAN BE EDUCATIONAL TOO



Feeling isolated and out of the loop? Do you want to know more about what is happening in other Presbyterian congregations? Do you want to be inspired by creative mission happening throughout PC (USA) congregations, but you don't know where to find this type of connection. Look no further. You can start following the Presbytery of the Northern Plains Facebook page today and information like this and more will stream on your Facebook newsfeed. To find us, go to Facebook and type in Presbytery of the Northern Plains or go to: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Presbytery-of-the-Northern-Plains/308505064888?fref=ts> and join in the fun today.

NEWSLETTER WANTED!

Please make sure that the Presbytery of the Northern Plains is on your congregation's newsletter mailing list, either hardcopy or electronically. The office staff loves reading about what is happening in each PNP congregation.



NOTICE OF CORRECTION

In June's *Light of the Northern Plains* article Entertaining our Partners from Chogoria it stated that they visited the Moorhead Public Library, when in fact they visited the West Fargo Public Library hosted by Mary Jo Moorhead. We apologize for this error.

Presbytery's Calendar

July 4	Independence Day, Office Closed
July 7	NE Planning Mtg (pg 3)
July 7	Implementation Task Force Mtg
July 8	Committee on Preparation for Ministry Mtg
July 10	Outside Worship Service (pg 3)
July 12	Committee on Ministry Mtg
July 13	Nominating Committee CC
July 14	Moderator CC
July 14	Council CC
July 18-23	Presbyterian Youth Triennium
July 24-30	Synod School
Aug 4	Boundary Training (pg 4)
Aug 9	Committee on Ministry cc
Aug 17	SE Picnic at Lindenwood Park
Aug 18	Council Mtg – Grand Forks
Sept 5	Labor Day, Office Closed
Sept 6	End of Summer Office Hours

cc = Conference Call

SUMMER OFFICE HOURS

The Presbytery office is open Monday thru Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 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 pnpoffice@gmail.com and request to be put on the electronic newsletter list.

Light of the Northern Plains is published under the Council of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains.

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

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