

Light of the Northern Plains

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

April 2015

PRAYER CONCERNS/JOYS

Julie Lindegard, Ruling Elder from the First Presbyterian Church of Hallock, MN, had back surgery on Tuesday, March 17, 2015. The surgery went well and she is now at home. Please keep Julie in your prayers during this time of recovery.

Krissy Danielson, daughter-in-law of Teaching Elders Marli and Cheri Danielson, died on February 25, 2015. She is survived by her husband Mitch, son Parker (11), and daughter Payton (9). Please pray for the Danielson family during this time.

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.

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

APRIL PRESBYTERY MEETING

By: Michael Lochow, Ruling Elder, Stated Clerk



Come prepared to learn and join us at the One Hundred-Twelfth Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains which will be held on April 17-18, 2015, at the First Presbyterian Church of Grand Forks, North Dakota. Registration will begin at 11:00 a.m. with the meeting convening at 1:00 p.m.

If you want to learn about calling a pastor or how to care for yours then you should plan to attend this presbytery meeting. Friday will feature two workshops: Calling a Pastor led by Ruling Elder and Committee on Ministry Chair Jim Skaret and Care of Pastors led by Teaching Elder Elaine Sweet.

Calling a Pastor: Learn how to best navigate the Presbyterian's system of calling a pastor. An updated manual "On Calling A Pastor" has recently been distributed by our denomination's Church Leadership Connection. This thorough guide is a great resource for churches in transition, including congregations with relationships with other denominations. Learn the variety of pastoral positions and relationships possible, review the theological foundations for our Call Process, and changes in the system. You will also receive a profile of current pastoral leadership and vacancies in our Northern Plains Presbytery. Led by Jim Skaret.

Care of Pastors: This will be a meaningful and educational workshop supporting pastors in their self-care and advising personnel committees and elders in how to strengthen their pastoral leader(s). Learn about the benefits of good continuing education, clergy peer groups, and sabbaticals. Learn also about some causes and effects of stress on pastors, their families and congregations. Consider how a great Personnel Committee in your congregation can aid in the growth of your church. Led by Rev. Elaine Sweet.

The proposed amendments to the Book of Order will be outlined and discussed on Friday with the vote being taken on Saturday. You will also hear reports from the University of Jamestown, Clearwater Forest Camp and Retreat Center, and our Ministry Teams.

Presbytery meeting materials are now available on the Presbytery website at www.northernplainspresbytery.com, for congregations/individuals to download. For congregations that do not have internet access, packets can be mailed out to them. If your congregation needs a packet, you must contact the Presbytery office by April 8, 2015, to ensure you receive the packet in time. Please review all Presbytery materials which will be posted on the Presbytery web page. It is important as a commissioner to Presbytery you come prepared and ready to participate. Following the presbytery meeting you should be prepared to report to your local session on the work of the Presbytery and how your church might participate more fully.

Child Care will be provided for preschool children of minister members or elder commissioners at no cost to the users. Attendees who need child care must contact the Presbytery office no later than April 8, 2015, if they wish to use this service.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Presbytery office at 701-772-0783 or toll free at 1-800-243-3532, or by email at pnpooffice@gmail.com

WE ARE EASTER PEOPLE



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

On Good Friday, we will go to the cross with Jesus. We will allow our sins to be crucified with him. We will allow our hearts to be broken because of our sins against God and each other. We will take the time to mourn the death of Jesus; to mourn the disasters caused by our sins. We will cry out to God for forgiveness.

Slowly the time of mourning will cease, the sun will rise again, and on Easter we will rejoice in Christ's resurrection. We will weep out of gratitude for our new lives.

Yes, with Christ, we have been resurrected from a past that weighed us down with mighty weights. Weights that scream at us, telling us we are no good, that we have no self worth, that we are sinful and can never be good enough to be forgiven. Christ's death and resurrection removed those weights from us as sure as the stone was rolled from the cave's opening.

But, whether the stone was rolled away or not, Jesus was resurrected. The stone could still be there to this day, it could be securely covering the entrance to the grave, and Jesus wouldn't be there. But, we need to "see" an empty tomb in order to help our unbelief. "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief." We've all said that at one time or another. God understands. Why else would he show us an empty grave? God showed us this empty hole to show us life. There was nothing in there that was alive, but its very nothingness brought hallelujahs and praises. Life was in that empty tomb. Beautiful life!

The risen Christ didn't hang around the tomb. He went to "find" the ones he loved. They didn't go looking for him, where would they start to look? They were probably still in shock from the events on Golgotha's hill, and from what the women had told them. "Jesus is alive!" I see them as speechless, or all talking at once.

The disciples went to the upper room, a place where they received comfort from one another. And they locked the doors. While there, Jesus "found" them. Later the disciples were again behind locked doors when Jesus "found" them. Jesus also "found" the fisherman and offered advice on how to catch more fish.

No, Jesus didn't wait until the disciples had an approved agenda and an organized plan on how to go about looking for him. Jesus didn't wait. He "found" them. He made the first move. He came to them just as he comes to us in spite of our doubts; he comes to us and unlocks the closed doors to our hearts. Locks are no problem for our God.

Sometimes we hide behind locked doors. We doubt his existence in our lives; we hide behind our fears, worries, confusion. As we remain behind these locked doors, our faith falters, we begin to doubt the risen Savior's power. The power to break through the locked doors of our hearts. Jesus finds us in our despair. When we see him and recognize him as our risen Savior, the locked doors can be flung open. We acknowledge our resurrection from a past that kept us from the freedom offered by Jesus. Freed from a past filled with burdens so heavy we only want to hide behind locked doors. Thank God he cannot be kept away because we lock him out. He walks into our lives, stands with us, next to us, wanting us to welcome him. He wants to make us beautiful in his sight. He wants to take our emptiness and fill it with his never ending peace, his living water, his love.

We celebrate Easter. We celebrate the empty tomb. We celebrate our resurrected lives. We celebrate the new life promised by God. We celebrate our abundant life. We are Easter people, celebrating the power of the resurrection each day. We live each new day as resurrected people of God!

TIME RUNNING OUT TO REGISTER FOR SPRING YOUTH RETREAT

By: Scott Dobovsky, leader of the Youth Connection Team and Laurie Elhard, Admin. for Communication and Finance

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains Spring Youth Retreat is just around the corner. Registration forms are due by April 11, 2015. You have a few more weeks to spread the word about this wonderful opportunity. Your youth will love the chance to get out of town, deepen their faith, and connect with other Presbyterian youth from across the Presbytery.

This event is open to all youth in grades 6-12 and will be held at Crystal Springs Camp (just west of Jamestown) on May 1-3, 2015. The theme of this retreat is "[Balancing it All](#)." We will be looking at how we balance our faith with everything else happening in our busy lives. Cost for this weekend is \$85. A [brochure](#) and [registration forms](#) are available from the Presbytery's website at: www.northernplainspresbytery.com

Please let us know of any obstacles your congregation may be facing having your youth attend (travel arrangements, sharing leaders, or if financial assistance needed), we will try to help find solutions. If you have additional questions, contact either Scott Dobovsky, leader of the Youth Connection Team, at 701-293-6311 or sdobovsky@firstpresfargo.org or the Presbytery office at (701) 772-0783 or pnpooffice@gmail.com



"Give your entire attention to what God is doing right now, and don't get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow. God will help you deal with whatever hard things come up when the time comes."

Matthew 6:34 The Message (MSG)

COLLECTING CHILDREN'S CLOTHING FOR BDECAN



Bdecan Ministry Team will be collecting all sizes and all seasons of gently used or new children's clothes for the Bdecan Clothing Closet. You can bring them to either the Presbyterian Women Spring Gathering in Colgate or to the Presbytery meeting on April 17-18, 2015, at First Presbyterian Church of Grand Forks. Need of children's clothes is on-going. Please call Joe Obermeyer, Youth and Outreach Coordinator at Bdecan Presbyterian Church, at 701-294-2283, if you need to arrange a pickup from your congregation.

VOLUNTEER FOR THE FARGO/MOORHEAD MARATHON

The South-East Ministry Region is invited to participate in the Community Presbyterian Church of West Fargo's aid station in the Fargo/Moorhead Marathon on May 9, 2015. They will be handing out water, PowerAde, "Sweet Jesus Brownies," cookies, and orange slices to the runners. Arranging of the tables will begin about 6-6:30 a.m. and we will be there until the last runner passes. Everyone is invited to help and stay as long as you like.

Please email (pnpmmission@gmail.com) or call (701-772-0783) the office and let us know your name, phone number, email, t-shirt size and time frame willing to volunteer ASAP. You will get your t-shirt the day of the marathon.

NEXT STEP PLANNING

On April 17, 2015, the North-West and South-West Ministry Regions will be meeting at 11:00 a.m. at the First Presbyterian Church of Grand Forks, ND (before the presbytery meeting), for a meal and to plan the future gatherings of their regions. Everyone is invited to join and share your ideas with your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

Please RSVP to Alissa Anderson, Administrator for Connections and Records, at pnpmmission@gmail.com or 701-772-0783 by April 10, 2015.

FELLOWSHIP MEAL AT PRESBYTERY

The South-Central and South-East Ministry Regions are gathering for a meal and fellowship before the presbytery meeting on April 17, 2015 at 11:30 a.m. at First Presbyterian Church of Grand Forks, ND. Everyone is welcome.

Please RSVP to Alissa Anderson, Administrator for Connections and Records, at pnpmmission@gmail.com or 701-772-0783 by April 10, 2015.

VOLUNTEER AT NORTHLAND MISSION

The North-East Ministry Region will be gathering at the Northland Rescue Mission on April 22, 2015, at 10:30 a.m., where they will get a tour of the facility and help serve the noon meal. Then they will be planning the future gatherings for the region.

It is a great opportunity to give back to the community and get to know each other as we plan future gatherings together! Please RSVP to Alissa Anderson, Administrator for Connections and Records, at pnpmmission@gmail.com or 701-772-0783 by April 15, 2015.

REGIONAL GATHERINGS

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 more good we can do God's glory. Watch for future details of the gatherings below:

North-East Ministry Region

April 2015 – Northland Rescue Mission / Planning Meeting

South-Central Ministry Region

April 17, 2015 – Meal and Fellowship
Spring 2015 - Presentation on Evangelism

South-East Ministry Region

April 17, 2015 – Meal and Fellowship
May 9, 2015 – Fargo/Moorhead Marathon

South-West Ministry Region

April 17, 2015 – Planning Meeting with a meal

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 pnpmmission@gmail.com.

MINISTRY REGION MAP

Unsure of which region your congregation is located in? Check out the map below:



Still unsure, please contact the Presbytery office or go to: <http://www.northernplainspresbytery.com/#!ministry-regions/c9oy>

LEADING LONG, LEADING WELL WORKSHOP

Leading well in today's church is especially challenging for clergy. How do you remain resilient so you can focus on leading God's mission in the world?

The best thing we can do to help negate the effects of burnout, is to encourage and equip pastors to care for themselves and develop healthy coping and Sabbath taking practices. The Presbytery will be hosting a workshop, Leading Long, Leading Well, addressing these issues.

In this day and a half workshop, we will explore the notion of resiliency as part of strong leadership, and offer you the opportunity to discover what resiliency means for your own leadership. We will also explore mind, body, and spirit practices that will enhance your leadership effectiveness.

The event will be held on Thursday, April 16, 2015, and Friday, April 17, 2015, until 11:30 a.m. (so you may have lunch and join the Presbytery meeting at 1:00 p.m.) at First Presbyterian Church of Grand Forks. North Central Ministry Development Center will be leading the event with Mark Sundby and Mary Kay DuChene returning as our presenters.

Come, rejuvenate! For your leadership today and tomorrow! A [brochure](#) with registration form is available from the Presbytery's website at: www.northernplainspresbytery.com.

SUMMER SR. HIGH MISSION TRIP



The Presbytery of the Northern Plains Youth Connection Team will be sponsoring a Senior High Mission Trip this summer. The trip will run from July 18 - 25, 2015, and is open for any youth going into 9th grade (Fall 2015) to those who graduate spring 2015. It will begin in Fargo and the group will travel around the state of North Dakota visiting churches and communities that are a part of our Presbytery. Work projects will be done at each stop. Cost is \$230 per person.

A minimum of 10 youth from around the Presbytery is required for this mission trip to take place. Please let us know of any obstacles your congregation may be facing having your youth attend (travel arrangements, sharing leaders, or if financial assistance needed), we will try to help find solutions. [Registration forms](#) and a [promotional flyer](#) are available from the Presbytery's website at: www.northernplainspresbytery.com

If you have additional questions, contact either Scott Dobovsky, leader of the Youth Connection Team, at 701-293-6311 or sdobovsky@firstpresfargo.org or the Presbytery office at (701) 772-0783 or pnppoffice@gmail.com.

SYNOD SCHOOL INFORMATION

Synod School catalogs have been mailed out to each congregation and registration is underway. Synod School runs Sunday through Friday, July 26-31, at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa. If you missed the catalog in the mail, you can view it at <http://lakesandprairies.org/SynodSchool>

Theresa Cho, co-pastor St. John's Presbyterian Church in San Francisco, and prolific writer and speaker, is this year's convocation speaker. Classes include everything from "Religion in the 'Game of Thrones'" to "God and Young Adult Fiction" to "Knitting Socks Using the Magic Loop Method." Everything - yes, everything - is at Synod School.

Presbytery's Calendar

April 3	Good Friday, Office Closed
April 5	Easter
April 11	PW Gathering in Colgate
April 14	Committee on Ministry conference call
April 14	Youth Connection Team conference call
April 16	Council conference call
April 16-17	Leading Long, Leading Well Workshop (pg 4)
April 17	Committee on Preparation for Ministry
April 17	NW & SW Ministry Regions Planning Meeting w/ meal (pg 3)
April 17	SC & SE Ministry Regions Fellowship Meal (pg 3)
April 17-18	Annual Presbytery Meeting at First - Grand Forks
April 22	North-East Ministry Region Planning Meeting (pg 3)
May 1-3	Spring Youth Retreat (pg 2)
May 25	Memorial Day, office closed
July 4	Independence Day, office closed
July 18-25	Youth Mission Trip (pg 4)
Sept 7	Labor Day, office closed
Oct 23-24	Fall Presbytery Meeting at Glencoe Sloan Memorial, rural Bismarck

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 pnppoffice@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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