

Light of the Northern Plains

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

February 2018

PRAYER JOYS/CONCERNS

Ardys Morris, Ruling Elder from Ryder Presbyterian Church and grandmother of the Rev. Deanna Reikow, died January 14, 2018, in Mandan. Please keep the Morris family in your prayer during this difficult time.

The Rev. Ralph Sjursen passed away peacefully on December 6, 2017, in Phoenix, AZ with family by his side. Ralph served as Pastor Supply to the Belfield Presbyterian Church for 15 years. Please keep the Sjursen family in your prayers during this time.

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.

Shine your light in and over us. Please pray that God's love will work through us, our churches, and our communities for peace, compassion, and justice for all. May we make a difference in this world for your glory and purposes.

Please join in prayer for the leadership of the Presbytery and the church in every time and place. Keep our footstep firm and on solid ground helping us to be consistent and faithful 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 pnppoffice@gmail.com or call 701-772-0783. If the request is on behalf of someone else, please check with them before requesting.

OBSERVING LENT

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

"And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

- Matthew 6:16-18 NRSV

"So, what are you giving up for Lent?" That was a common question when I was growing up. Most of my cousins and many of my friends were Roman Catholic, and since this was pre-Vatican II, the niceties were strictly observed.

In my head, I understood the concept of depriving oneself of something beloved to give us a taste of what Christ had given up for us, but in my heart I wondered about some of the deprivations selected. Is it really an alignment with Christ if you fast during Lent because you need to lose a few pounds? Is it a real deprivation to give up hard candy, while not giving up chocolate? If one chooses to follow the old-school fish-on-Friday-fast, is it really fasting if one eats lobster and shrimp? And is it really a fast if you are doing it to publicly show your piety?

Jesus gives us fairly specific directions on the proper way to give up something; to fast. In our culture of over-sharing just about everything, can you give up something without posting your progress on Facebook or Instagram or Twitter? Have you considered a fast from social media for Lent? Connecting with people in real time and in person might be the start of something.

Have you considered taking on a new discipline instead of giving up something? Perhaps you could read the book of Romans, one passage each day, with time for reflection. Or pray daily for the residents of a local nursing home or group home, or for first responders or educators. You do not need to post your progress; you can keep it to yourself, but do observe. See if you can notice a difference, in yourself or others.

May you have a blessed Lenten season.

SPECIAL PRESBYTERY MEETING UPDATE



At the October Presbytery, the Presbytery voted to establish a Task Force to consider staffing options and to present their findings at a Special Meeting in February. The Task Force has been appointed (see page 2) and is working to find solutions. However, the task has turned out to be larger than anticipated, and so they will present an update at the Spring Presbytery Meeting on Friday, April 13, 2018, at Westminster Presbyterian Church of Casselton, ND. There will be no Special Meeting of Presbytery in February 2018.

WELCOME TO THE REV. ROBERT DRAKE

On January 21, 2018, the Rev. Robert Drake was installed at First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead as their called pastor. Here is more about Robert and his journey which has led him to the Presbytery of the Northern Plains.

Robert is sometimes surprised to find his life's journey taking a turn to congregational ministry. Although he grew up in the United Methodist Church in Grand Rapids, Minnesota, a banal confirmation experience led him to turn away from the church for eighteen-years. It was not until he and his husband, Jordan, started attending a small, Presbyterian church in rural Georgia that he returned to regular church attendance. During his eighteen-year absence from church, Robert earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in theater from the University of Minnesota, Duluth. Over the years, Robert has enjoyed a variety of jobs and occupations. He has been a fast-food worker, janitor, factory assembly-line person, check-casher, residential property manager, carpenter, foreman, small-business owner, parish associate, non-profit donor development manager, and finally an ordained pastor. Every one of these jobs has left its impact on Robert's life, and he brings that real-life education to First-Moorhead and to the Presbytery. Sensing a call to ministry, Robert attended Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, New Jersey, graduating with a Master of Divinity in 2017.



Robert and Jordan met in Park Rapids, Minnesota, where Jordan was born and raised. Over their ten years together they moved five times, living in Park Rapids; Union Point, Georgia; Grand Rapids, Minnesota; Princeton, New Jersey; and now Staples, Minnesota. Jordan is the general manager of the newest hotel in Staples, Timberlake Hotel. They were both born and raised in northern Minnesota, and enjoy gardening, running, and cycling. A far-off dream is to own a small hobby farm with Highland cattle, chickens, and goats.

STAFFING TASK FORCE MEMBERS ANNOUNCED

By: the Rev. John Ritchie, Co-Moderator of the PNP Staffing Task Force

At the October 2017 Presbytery Meeting it was approved 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. Due to the scope of the task force work, there will not be a special meeting in February. However, they will report at the April Presbytery Meeting.

That task force has met several times and is working hard exploring and considering possible staffing models. We thought it would be beneficial for you to know who is on the task force.

- Candace Adams has served as a Minister of Word and Sacrament for 22 years. Previously, she served as the Moderator of Minnesota Valleys Presbytery and on their Next Pres Task Force, which did a comprehensive restructuring of the presbytery. She is currently the chaplain at the University of Jamestown.
- Gracia Fulwiler is a Ruling Elder and Clerk of Session at First Presbyterian Church of Fargo, where she has been a member for 30 years. She is a nurse and serves as a Faith Community Nurse for 17 years and coordinates the Health Ministry at First-Fargo. She has been at her present place of employment for 46 years where she has been a supervisor and assisted with staffing at the clinical level. At the Presbytery level she worked with a New Church Development twice and was a Committee on Ministry (COM) member for two+ years. She will be serving on the Care for Congregations Pod as Task Leader for doing wellness visits to congregations.
- Zelda Hartje is a Ruling Elder at Cavalier Presbyterian Church where she is a lifelong member of this church and has served as an elder for five years. She is a part time school librarian, administrator of the Pembina County Historical Society, and tax assessor in her retirement. She is married, the mother of three, and the grandmother of eight.
- Kevin Kaufmann, living in Bismarck; currently serving as the Commissioned Lay Pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Wilton; and Care for Congregations Pod Leader.
- Dixon Moorhead is a Ruling Elder at Community Presbyterian Church of West Fargo. He is also a Trained Lay Pastor. At the Presbytery level, he has served as the Moderator of Presbytery and a GA Commissioner, chaired the Budget and Finance, Council and Nominating Committees and was a member of the COM, ABS, Corporate Affairs, Chogoria Partnership Ministry Team, and Bdecan Ministry Team.
- John Ritchie serves as pastor at Mendenhall Presbyterian Church in East Grand Forks, MN. He has served on the restructuring task force for two previous presbyteries; as well as COM moderator, presbytery moderator and council moderator for The Presbytery of Wabash Valley. John is Co-Moderator for the task force.
- Sherri Stern is a Ruling Elder at First Presbyterian Church of Fargo, where she has been a member for 25 years and Treasurer since 1997. Served on the church's Management and Finance, Support and Endowment, Stewardship Committee and James II (addressing shelter and care for the homeless). For the presbytery, Sherri has served on the Finance and Audit Committee for 18 months and is Co-Moderator the task force. Her background is in banking and finance.

HOW ARE YOU DOING AT KEEPING YOUR 2018 RESOLUTIONS?

By: Ellen Misialek, Financial Task Leader for the PNP Leadership Pod

The beginning of a new year is the perfect opportunity to consider the things you would like to do better or differently than you have been. We may have resolved to spend more time in Bible study and prayer, to be more faithful in our church attendance, to lose weight and exercise more, to spend more time being in connection with family and friends, to be a more cheerful and generous giver, and to operate within our personal budget. This is just part of the list that you and I might have resolved to do back on January 1.

Now that January is over and we are evaluating how we've done on our resolutions, let's be kind to ourselves if we've done poorly and give ourselves another chance. Every day can be a new beginning!

The Presbytery has its own "new beginning" in 2018 implementing its new Pod Structure and working through the first year of budgeting for this new arrangement. We may need more than one chance to budget everything correctly. The Presbytery has been operating at a deficit for several years and using reserves to pay expenses—a strategy we need to end. We encourage congregations to send their Per Capita apportionment of \$44 per member to the Presbytery office as soon as possible and to pledge and remit a generous amount to Unified Mission Giving throughout the year. Much of the money from the Unified Mission will be used to support the Bdecan ministry, Chogoria, Earth Care, Youth, Clearwater Forest, and the University of Jamestown. The portion of Per Capita that is retained by the Presbytery is used for expenses—personnel, office, administration, Presbytery meetings, task forces and the newly created pods—Leadership, Care for Congregations, Care for Pastoral Leaders, and Mission.

The financial team is in the process of reviewing the financial transactions for 2017 and has asked a random sampling of churches to double check the records of their contributions to the Presbytery. If your church receives such a request, please respond promptly so that the financial review can be accomplished in time to report at the April Presbytery meeting.

2018 PER CAPITA

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 pnpooffice@gmail.com.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN AWARD \$6000 IN GRANTS

By: Paula Christensen, PNP Presbyterian Women Moderator Elect and Rep to the Mission Pod

Presbyterian Women of Northern Plains Presbytery (PWP) has given \$6,000 to church groups affiliated with the Northern Plains Presbytery. Part of the Presbyterian Women Purpose states, "we commit ourselves to support the mission of the church worldwide." We have given \$1,000 to six different applicants to help them achieve their mission. The six groups receiving the money include:

1. First Presbyterian Church Moorhead: The funds will provide a summer "camp" experience for the neighborhood surrounding the church as well as the kids from their congregation. They will bring Camp in a Van from Presbyterian Clearwater Forest to Moorhead.
2. Bdecan Kids Winter Wear Giveaway 2018: The purpose is to provide warm winter clothing to children on the Spirit Lake Reservation that may not be able to afford it. With the donation, the ministry team can purchase items needed that are not provided by other donations.
3. First Presbyterian Church Bismarck: Partnering with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, they will be going on a mission trip to Houston, Texas, to help with the recovery work and rebuilding homes destroyed by Hurricane Harvey. The money will be used to help cover travel expenses.
4. First Presbyterian Church Bismarck: Develop and host monthly lunches with 15-minute scripture based devotionals presented by a variety of Christian leaders with networking opportunities. The project, Higher Power Lunch, would provide local business leaders a chance for fellowship and lunch. The money will be used to support the purchase of food for the first 10 months.
5. Colgate Presbyterian Women: Provide Christmas gifts to the children/teenagers/elders of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in the impoverished region of South Dakota. The money will supplement the already on-going work being done year round collecting items by the Page Area Mission Society and the Colgate Presbyterian Women.
6. University of Jamestown: Equip student leaders for worship by the training of student chaplains, a student music coordinator, a student expressive arts coordinator, music worship team and an expressive arts worship group.



HEALTHY BOUNDARY TRAINING



The Presbytery of the Northern Plains will be hosting a Healthy Boundary Training on Thursday, March 1, 2018, at First Presbyterian Church of Grand Forks, ND.

The training will begin at 9:30 a.m. and conclude by 4:00 p.m. This training has been designed with the pastoral leader in mind, however all are welcome. You **MUST** attend the entire training to receive 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 Hancock at 701-772-0783 or pnmission@gmail.com

RESTFEST RETREAT (YOUTH)

Greater Grand Forks Area

February 17-18 (Presidents Day Weekend)

RestFest is just around the corner. Make sure all your youth in 6th-12th grades join us for this event; in fact, bring a friend or two to share in this relaxing weekend. The weekend will provide options to take part in various activities outside in the snow (sledding, ice skating, building a snowman or snow shelter) and indoors as well (swimming, worship, board games and exploring a water park). Back by popular demand, we will get dressed up for a fancy dinner out on the town.



Our accommodations will be at a hotel in Grand Forks. The cost is \$95 which includes lodging, meals and activities. Registration materials have been emailed out to churches and are also available on the Presbytery website at www.northernplainspresbytery.com, or by contacting the Presbytery office.

If you have any questions, please contact Joe Obermeyer (bdecanpresbyterianchurch@yahoo.com) or Gloria Bancroft (gloria.bancroft@hotmail.com).

NUMBER OF COMMISSIONERS CHANGE FOR PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

By: the Rev. Mary Holtey, Leadership Pod Leader



At the Presbytery meeting in October, commissioners voted churches with a membership of 100-300 are invited to send **two** ruling elder commissioners to presbytery. This includes our churches in the following communities: Hallock, Grand Forks, Casselton, Rolla/St. John, Moorhead,

Mandan, East Grand Forks, West Fargo and Jamestown. Churches with a membership of over 300 may now bring **three** ruling elders. This includes Bismarck and Fargo. Congregations with fewer than 100 members will continue to bring one ruling elder commissioner. We hope this will increase our participation at Presbytery and share more equitably our work together. The complete bylaw document is on the Presbytery's website, www.northernplainspresbytery.com.

If you have questions about the membership of your church and how many commissioners to invite, please call the presbytery office.

Presbytery's Calendar

Feb 1	Care for Pastoral Leaders meeting at Westminster -DL
Feb 2	Staff Task Force wc
Feb 7	Youth Connection Team cc
Feb 15	Leadership Pod meeting at United Presbyterian Church of Jmst
Feb 17-18	RestFest (pg 4)
Feb 26	Care for Congregations Pod wc
March 1	Healthy Boundary Training (pg 4)
March 15	Leadership Pod cc
March 19	Committee on Representation cc
March 24	Mission Pod meeting at United Presbyterian Church of Jmst
Apr 13, 2018	Spring Presbytery Meeting at Westminster Presbyterian Church of Casselton
October 8	Fall Presbytery Meeting at First Presbyterian Church of Mandan

cc = Conference Call

wc = Web Conference

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 pnppoffice@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.

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

Laurie Elhard

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