

Light of the Northern Plains

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

August 2016

PRAYER JOYS/CONCERNS

Please hold the Rev. Gretchen Graf, Honorably Retired Teaching Elder of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains, in your prayers. Eight years ago she was diagnosed with myelofibrosis, which is a form of chronic leukemia and prevents bone marrow from making blood. In August she will begin a bone marrow transplant process with her sister as her donor. Gretchen and a caregiver will need to live in Rochester, Minnesota, for almost four months for this transplant and then travel frequently for follow up during the next year.

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

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

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

In Matthew 5:9, we read, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called sons of God." This scripture is certainly not in

tune with what the world wants us to believe. The world's message is, "Me first." "What is in this for me?" But let's remember, we are in the world, not of the world. We, as Christians, are called to a higher calling and we need to live up to that calling. We are to walk in a manner worthy of the call.

In many parts of the world we can find some kind of symbolic representation of man's quest for peace. Our country has the Statue of Liberty, offering peace to those who come to our shores. Yet there is little peace in the world. The problem isn't with nations. It's with the nature of man. We keep working on peace treaties; we have peace keeping forces. When peace is pursued in one place, war may be breaking out at another place. It is overwhelming and a very sad, depressing reality.

If I had my way, there would be no wars. People would get along and figure out how to deal with differences in productive ways. I suspect most of us feel this way. However, most of us don't get to make decisions concerning war in the world, but we do have opportunities to make decisions about conflict, disharmony, peace, cooperation in our personal lives.

The Bible talks about peace with God, the peace of God, and peace from God. The Bible also tells us what peacemakers do and where they are needed.

Being at peace with God comes when we strive to live a Christ-like life, when we accept what Christ did for us on the cross. The work on the cross created a relationship between us and God. We experience peace with God as we commune directly with him.

The peace of God fills our lives with an inner calmness, a quiet assurance that all is well. With the peace of God we remain peaceful in the face of chaos and struggles in whatever our personal "war zone" happens to be. Having the peace of God doesn't mean our lives will be stress free, it doesn't mean we won't ever exhibit stress outwardly or inwardly, but it does mean



Continue on page 4.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY HIGHLIGHTS

By: Ruling Elder Michael Lochow, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains

The 222nd General Assembly was held in Portland, Oregon. I was in attendance from June 18 until June 25. It was a productive General Assembly with much civility present. If you have never been to Portland let me say that its light rail system makes traveling from the airport to the convention center to downtown Portland a breeze.

One of the highlights of the assembly was the approval of the Confession of Belhar. Approval of a confession takes votes of two consecutive general assemblies and one vote of the presbyteries. There will be a number of overtures coming to the presbyteries which propose to amend the Book of Order. They include:

- 1) that all councils adopt and implement a child and youth protection policy;
- 2) committees above the session may consist of clergy and congregational members in as nearly equal numbers as possible (more flexible language);
- 3) changing ordered titles back to minister of word and sacrament and elder;
- 4) a revised Directory of Worship; and
- 5) language regarding who can access the Lord's Supper.



I had a pleasant conversation with Rev. Alonzo Johnson who you may recall was a presenter at our presbytery meeting last fall. He had fond memories of his visit. He loved the small church atmosphere and the food. Finally, the presiding pastors at our closing worship service were the vice-moderator of the 221st General Assembly (2014) Rev. Larissa Kwong Abazia and a Korean pastor. It was only at the very end of the service that I read the Korean pastor's name: Rev. Young Han Hyun. It was then it dawned on me that he was a former member of Northern Plains Presbytery who we called "John." I was able to catch up with him after the service. He is doing well and has been pastor at the Korean Presbyterian Church in Corvallis, Oregon, for the past five years.

SYNOD PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN GATHERING

By: Lana Schultz, Moderator of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains Presbyterian Women

"Lord Make Me An Instrument of Your Peace" was the theme for the 2016 Women's Gathering of the Synod of Lakes & Prairies from June 15th to 18th in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. It was AWESOME!!!! Nearly 200 women from our Synod attended. Those in attendance from our Presbytery are pictured here. We refreshed our faith through worship led by the Rev. Dr. Carolyn Visser and the story and prayers of St. Francis of Assisi. Susan Jackson Dowd, our Executive Director from Louisville, KY, excited us about the power of Presbyterian Women. The Rev. Stephanie Anthony of Hudson, WI, helped us experience our new bible study, "Who Is Jesus" in workshop and plenary.

The Rev. Danelle Crawford McKinney, first Dakota woman ordained in PC(USA), warmed our hearts with her stories of inclusiveness in PW and her hopes for the future for Native Americans. Her family danced in Native regale as she interpreted their movements. We welcomed representatives from Dakota Presbytery which included LaVonne Looking Elk and Fern Cloud, Moderator of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, who led the workshop "The Circle of Life" using a hoop as a teaching tool.

\$4009 in offering was divided equally between The Sweetgrass Suicide Prevention Program of the Oglala Sioux Tribe and ECPAT – USA (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking). Gift cards in the amount of \$2315 were given to the Center of Hope in Sioux Falls, SD, which is a gospel outreach ministry for people who struggle with difficult life issues. In addition, we had a Hands-On Project putting together 25 quilt tops for charities of choice.

In addition to the plenary sessions, Hands-On Project, Resource Room and Marketplace with Tea Room, several workshops were offered including: Justice & Peace, Bdecan Ministry, Healing Touch, Clutter 101, Just Serve, A Time of Reflection, and three films: I AM, Trigger, and A Faith Journey of a People: Dakota and Christianity. At the installation of our new moderator, Sue Kimball of Iowa encouraged us to PERSEVERE IN OUR PURPOSE.



Front row – Char Enger, Yvonne Wegner, Donna Preston, Lana Schultz, Sharon Johnson. Back row – Susan Bond, Mary Barnes, JoAnn Zutz, Jan Carlsen, and Paula Christensen

WELCOME, REV. ROBIN DILL!

Please welcome the Rev. Robin Dill to the Presbytery of the Northern Plains. He is serving the First Presbyterian Church of Minto and the Federated Church of Grafton, ND. Robin is coming to us from Shenango Presbytery in Pennsylvania.

Robin was raised in Spartanburg, SC where he attended Dorman High School and went on to attend Carson-Newman College (majored in Psychology and Religion). He continued his education by earning a Master of Divinity at Louisville Theological Seminary at Louisville, KY.

Here is more about Robin in his own words . . . *"I worked with the Clinical Pastoral Experience program at Central State Hospital and served the male juvenile program. This was one of the best experiences of my life. After finishing LTS, I entered parish work and have served churches in Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio.*

When I started looking for pastorates after finishing at Louisville, I committed myself to working with small churches because I believed they deserved good pastoral leadership, pastors who cared about them and viewed them as something other than stepping-stones. After years in the pastorate, I feel even stronger about this idea.

A second thing I believed very strongly was that I wanted to be a pastor who worked with the people, proclaimed faithfully the Word and administers the Sacraments, was present where people were hurting, rejoicing, and living. This is what I have strived to do and to be and will continue to do. . .

I look forward to serving the congregations of Grafton Federated Church and Knox Presbyterian Church in Minto and look forward to being involved with the Presbytery of the Northern Plains."

CHURCH GROWTH



Is your church small in membership? Wondering about the future of your church? Then plan to attend this 'Church Growth' discussion on October 23, 2016, at First

Presbyterian Church of LaMoure, ND, starting at 4:00 p.m. This is where you can hear what has been successful and what has fallen short in other congregations. Come and get ideas of what to try and find a support and encouragement network right here in your Presbytery.

There are no one way answers but there are lots of opportunities out there. There will be a meal and fellowship to follow the discussion. We hope to hear your ideas! All are welcome to attend. Please RSVP by October 13, 2016, at pnpmission@gmail.com or 701-772-0783.

PLANNING MEETING



The North-West and South-East Ministry Regions will be gathering on October 14, 2016, in

Rolla, ND, at 11:30 a.m. to plan future gatherings for their regions. This is a wonderful time for fellowship and to dream of future events together. So bring a friend and let's see where all the wonderful ideas take us! Please RSVP by October 7, 2016, at pnpmission@gmail.com or 701-772-0783.

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

More information coming soon . . .

North-West Region

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

South Central Region

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

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 pnpmission@gmail.com.

... BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

we have an indispensable tool on our side to use to defeat the turmoils that come our way. We can say with the psalmist, "I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you, oh Lord make me dwell in safety." PS.4:8

Peace from God is the peace we can experience when faced with difficult decisions. Sometimes we just don't know what to do, I believe it is okay to say to God, "I don't know what to do, but this is the way I am going to proceed. Please give me peace." Seeking his guidance can bring about peace. Maybe not like a lightning bolt, but peace will come.

What are we to do as peacemakers? Peacemakers bring unity between people and God and also between each other. We need to be at peace with others to experience the blessing of peace with God.

Where are peacemakers needed? Peacemakers are needed on the world scene. Peacemakers are needed in our communities, in our churches, in our homes. Some churches and homes are places of competition, conflict, and where differing opinions are not appreciated. Our churches and homes are to be places of refuge, comfort, and encouragement.

As peacemakers, we reflect the peace of God to the world.

PUT ON YOUR TENNIS SHOES



Romans 12:1 tells us, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."

The Bdecan ministry team is taking this verse literally. September 17th will be the Bdecan PUSH (Physically Uniting to Support Health) 5K around Woodlake. The race begins at 10 a.m. After the race, there will be an open house with snacks at the church.

Registration for adults is \$15 and kids is \$5

If you are not able to run or walk the race, would you please think about supporting one of our other runners?

For more information, contact Joe Obermeyer, Youth and Outreach Coordinator for Bdecan Presbyterian Church, at (701) 294-2283 or email: bdecanpresbyterianchurch@yahoo.com

FAMILY PICNIC

Join in on the fun! The South-East Ministry Region will be gathering at Lindenwood Park in Fargo, ND, on Wednesday, August 17, 2016, for a family picnic. There will be games for all ages; fried chicken and drinks (ice water and lemonade) will be provided for all starting at around 5:00 p.m. with time to mingle before the meal at 6:00 p.m.

Please bring a salad, fruit, side dish, or dessert (along with a serving utensil) to share if you are able! This is always a fun time, so we hope you will come and join us!

Presbytery's Calendar

Aug 4	Boundary Training
Aug 6	Bdecan Ministry Team Meeting
Aug 9	Committee on Ministry cc
Aug 9	Budget and Finance Mtg
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
Sept 15	Council cc
Sept 17	PUSH Event (pg 4)
Sept 17	PNP PW Gathering (North)
Sept 24	Music Festival at Presbyterian (pg 3)
Oct 11	Committee on Ministry cc
Oct 14	Planning Meeting (pg 3)
Oct 14-15	Fall Presbytery Meeting at Presbyterian Church of Rolla
Oct 20	Council cc
Oct 23	Church Growth Discussion (pg 3)

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 pnppoffice@gmail.com and request to be put on the electronic newsletter list.

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Contributors: Sylvia Pringle, Michael Lochow, Lana Schultz, Joe Obermeyer, Alissa Anderson, and Laurie Elhard.

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

Laurie Elhard
Presbytery of the Northern Plains
5555 South Washington Street Suite A
Grand Forks, ND 58201
701-772-0783
pnppoffice@gmail.com