

# Light of the Northern Plains

Presbytery of the Northern Plains

June 2016

## PRAYER FOR GA COMMISSIONERS

The 222nd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will be held from June 18-25, 2016, in Portland, OR. Please keep all commissioners, including Northern Plains commissioners: Adam Allmer (YAD), Donna Monteith (Teaching) and Sylvia Pringle (Ruling), in your prayers.

*Almighty God, in Jesus Christ you called disciples and, by the Holy Spirit, made them one church to serve you. Be with our General Assembly commissioners. Help them to welcome new things you are doing in the world, and respect old things you keep and use. Save them from empty slogans of senseless controversy. In their deciding, determine what is good for us and for all people. As the General Assembly meets, let your Spirit rule, so that our church may be joined in love and service to Jesus Christ, who having gone before us, is coming to meet us in the promise of your kingdom. Amen.*

This prayer comes from the *Book of Common Worship*, published by Westminster/John Knox Press, in 1993 as found on page 805.

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

## AFTER PENTECOST . . . WHAT NEXT?

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

Throughout the teachings of Jesus, we read that he is to die, rise, ascend, and then our father will send us a gift, a helper, a counselor, the Holy Spirit. He tells his disciples he will send a comforter, counselor after he has returned to his father. So . . . what about this gift the disciples were to receive after Jesus left this earth? This gift that we all have been given?



We say that the spirit is God, co-equal, co-existent, co-eternal with Father and Son. We say the spirit possesses all the attributes of deity. We say the spirit dwells within us. Theologians have tried to explain the spirit. Often the explanations are deep and unclear, leaving us to still wonder and perhaps lack a feeling of intimacy with the spirit. We can relate to a father and a son, but a spirit? What do we do with this knowledge? What good is it to know that the word Parakletos translates to helper, counselor, comforter? Knowing this, are we able to know God better?

Theology is important, an understanding of Greek words and how they translate is helpful, but explanations don't always speak to the power and reason for God sending us his spirit. Explanations don't speak to the relational experience of the spirit. Explanations can seem out of touch with the intimacies of the spirit's presence, on a personal level. We need to understand what the spirit can do in our lives and the difference the spirit can make in our lives, on a personal level. We need the transforming power of the spirit.

The disciples in the upper room were transformed. They spoke and understood language different from their own. This gift allowed them to communicate with those living in other parts. They became bold as they told others about this man, Jesus. They became passionate about their mission. How can we know the spirit is alive within us? He appears gently, or with a purpose, soft as a dove, or as a mighty wind. We all have experienced the presence of God's Spirit. We experience the spirit's presence as we sing. Perhaps the hymn, "There's a Sweet, Sweet, Spirit in this Place" brings comfort to you. (If there was a comment section with this meditation, I am certain that many would tell of the times when they knew the spirit was "up

close and personal." Comments would be shared that would speak passionately of the times the spirit seemed to take our hands and lead us, or the times the spirit could be felt as a warm, loving arm around our shoulders. We would tell about the times we were empowered with words to offer encouragement or comfort to our neighbors.)

The gift of the spirit is knowledge. We know something; we discern something. It is an inner awareness, a strengthening assurance. The awareness of the spirit in our lives causes us to be amazed, peaceful and so very grateful.

As God's children, we are wonderfully made to include an inner system by which we receive divine information and understanding. We are equipped to grasp the spirit's messages, to sense the spirit's presence, to hear the still small voice, or to be moved by the spirit's mighty wind.

As God's children, we have knowledge that we are in Christ, we have immediate access to the father through prayer, we have knowledge that the spirit gives us the capacity to bear fruit. The spirit gives us the abundant life promised by Christ! We are spirit filled. We have an intimate, passionate, abiding "ABBA" relationship with the living God. The spirit's earthly dwelling is within each of us.

Let us seek to allow the spirit full reign in our lives, knowing that the spirit IS God.

## WALMART DONATION TO AID SOUP KITCHEN



Westminster Presbyterian Church in Devils Lake was very happy to receive a \$1,000 grant from Walmart to continue running the Bdecan Soup Kitchen. The Bdecan Soup Kitchen is a free meal that is served at Bdecan Presbyterian Church, next to the Bdecan Food Pantry. This meal is served to anyone who comes on the nights that the food pantry is open to the public. Westminster started this ministry back in the spring of 2014. Ever since then there has been a wonderful meal each and every month. Members from Westminster buy the food, prepare, and serve the meal to sometimes over 100 people.

This ministry is such a wonderful blessing to the members at Bdecan and to the Spirit Lake Tribe. No one is turned away from getting food, which is a wonderful thing. The Soup Kitchen is not just about getting a meal. It is a community gathering to share a meal together. It is about the fellowship that goes on around the tables. The people that come are getting to know the people serving, and the people serving are getting to know the people who come each month.

Thank you Westminster for what you have done with the soup kitchen, and now what you can continue to do. This donation will help feed families on the reservation for months to come.



## ENTERTAINING OUR PARTNERS FROM CHOGORIA (KENYA)

By: Ruling Elder Sharon Secor, Leader of the Chogoria Partnership Ministry Team



Rev. Samuel Murigu, Rev. Sarah Muriithi and David Mbae traveled from the Chogoria Presbyteries of Kenya to the Presbytery of the Northern Plains to share with their partners what it is to be a peacemaker in Kenya and to learn about the peacemaking activities in the Presbytery of the Northern Plains.

Churches throughout the Presbytery welcomed our visitors beginning the night our guests arrived, when they went straight from the airport to the Wednesday night dinner at 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church in Moorhead. The hospitality continued as they worshiped with the

congregations in Fargo, West Fargo, Grandin and Baker for the next two weekends. They brought greetings, preached, served communion and enjoyed mid-west potlucks and warm hospitality.

Life in the Northern Plains was shared with Samuel, Sarah and David throughout their time with us. Sarah attended a class at NDSU while David and Samuel visited fourth and first graders in a school setting. A trip was made to HERO (Health Equipment Recycling Organization). Much of the equipment and many of the supplies that are taken to Kenya for use at the Chogoria Hospital and the medical camps are donated by HERO. Our partners could not believe the abundance of equipment and supplies in that warehouse and the generosity that it is shared around the world.

A visit to the Moorhead Public Library was very informing. Our friends from Kenya were impressed with the concept that all of the books, resources, access to computers and the internet connections were free and open to all people.

An afternoon spent at the Emergency Food pantry and a morning spent at Churches United for the Homeless brought a new sense of how it is to be peacemakers in the world. The delegation was filled with inspiration to go home and challenge their Presbyteries to consider how they might make such organized efforts to help the hungry and homeless in their villages.

Highlights of the trip were attending the PNP Presbytery



David Mbae, Sharon Secor, Rev. Samuel Murigu, and Rev. Sarah Muriithi

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meeting in Oakes, visiting Jamestown University for two days, spending the day in Tokio on the Spirit Lake Reservation and that evening with the members of the Bdecan congregation, participating in the Spring Youth Gathering in Crystal Springs and the Spring PW Gathering in Jamestown.

Woven throughout this time were countless people who opened their homes and hearts to our guests. Thank you to those who helped plan the itinerary and the logistics of this trip, to those who drove Samuel, Sarah and David from point to point across the vastness of PNP, to those who opened their homes to strangers and ended up with new friends, to those who shared their work place and their daily lives and to everyone who prayed, sang, listened and shared in the fellowship with new people and new friends. Our partnership has been richly blessed by this visit.

## IT TAKES A TEAM...



Have you ever wanted to do a mission project with another Presbyterian congregation? Have you always thought a different educational workshop could inspire new mission ideas for your congregations? If answered yes to these questions . . . put on your thinking caps and attend the North-East Ministry Region gatherings on Saturday, June 11, 2016, at 10:00 a.m. at Mendenhall Presbyterian Church, East Grand Forks, MN. This gathering is to plan upcoming mission, fellowship and education opportunities for congregations in the North-East Ministry Region and beyond.

All are welcomed to this gathering. Time will be spent in fellowship and developing upcoming events which can range from family picnics, volunteer chances or educational events. So, bring your ideas and a friend.

A light snack will be provided, so please RSVP to Alissa Anderson, Administrator of Connections and Records at [pnpmission@gmail.com](mailto:pnpmission@gmail.com) or 701-772-0783 by June 9, 2016.



## EVERY CONGREGATION TO HAVE CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

It is now a part of our Constitution that every council shall have a child protection policy. (G-3.0106) This means every synod, presbytery, and congregation must have such a policy. In fact, the Presbytery of the Northern Plains just approved its child protection policy at the April 2016 Presbytery Meeting. Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk of Presbyterian Church (USA), is encouraging that presbytery minutes reflect their child protection policy and also reflect that the presbytery has checked session minutes to ascertain that church sessions have adopted a child protection policy.

Now is the time for your congregation to act if you do not already have a child protection policy in place. Since our Constitution requires this, if there ever were an incident in a church, a lawyer will first ask to see this policy. Many insurance carriers are also requiring such policies in order to continue coverage.

For congregations starting this process, there is help available. The Insurance Board has resources on their website, <http://www.insuranceboard.org/>, that include examples of such policies and it has the specific requirements for states. In addition, Ruling Elder Michael Lochow, Stated Clerk, (701-200-6794 or [teeitup75@hotmail.com](mailto:teeitup75@hotmail.com)) is available to answer questions and provide assistance.

## 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

June 11– Planning meeting, Mendenhall Presbyterian Church of East Grand Forks

### North-West Region

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

### South Central

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 – Family Picnic at Lindenwood Park

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

### South-West

July – 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 [pnpmission@gmail.com](mailto:pnpmission@gmail.com).

# INSTALLATION SERVICE FOR THE REV. CATHERINE BISHOP

Sunday, June 5, 2016  
at 4:00 p.m.

Come celebrate with the Community Presbyterian Church of West Fargo as they install their new pastor, Teaching Elder Cathie Bishop, on June 5, 2016, at 4:00 p.m.

A special commission has been appointed by our moderator for this installation. A special thank you to those serving: Teaching Elder Mary Holtey (Fargo); Teaching Elder Donna Montieth (Grandin/Hunter); Presbytery Moderator and Ruling Elder Sylvia Pringle (Jamestown); and Ruling Elders Dawn Larson and Andrew Thostenson (West Fargo).



## HEALTHY BOUNDARY TRAINING

The Presbytery will be hosting a Healthy Boundary Training on Thursday, August 4, 2016, at the United Presbyterian Church of Jamestown led by Alissa Anderson and Laurie Elhard, Presbytery of the Northern Plains Staff. This training is open to everyone interested in attending, however it is especially designed for pastoral leaders. It will fulfill the Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures (P-2.0200) requirement. To receive credit and a certificate you **MUST** attend the entire training.

Everyone is highly encouraged to attend. Please contact the presbytery office to registrar at 701-772-0783 or [pnppmission@gmail.com](mailto:pnppmission@gmail.com), by August 1, 2016.

## 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 to 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 following are committees and representative positions opening in 2017:

- Moderator and Vice-Moderator
- Council Chair
- Committee On Ministry (COM);
- Committee for Preparation of Ministry (CPM);
- Committee on Representation (COR);
- Self-Development of People (SDOP);
- Session Records Committee;
- Clearwater Forest Representative;
- Synod Commissioner and Delegate YAAD (start in May 2017);

Please help us spread the word about this wonderful opportunity by placing this information in your newsletter.

## Presbytery's Calendar

June 1	Youth Connection Team CC
June 7	Implementation Task Force Mtg
June 8	Budget and Finance Mtg
June 9	Nominating Committee CC
June 10	Committee on Prep for Min Mtg
June 11	NE Ministry Region Gather (pg 3)
June 14	Committee On Ministry CC
June 16	Moderator CC
June 16	Council CC
June 18 – 25	General Assembly
July 4	Independence Day, Office Closed
July 12	Committee on Ministry Mtg
July 18-23	Presbyterian Youth Triennium
July 21	Moderator CC
July 21	Council CC
July 24-30	Synod School
Aug 4	Boundary Training (pg 4)

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](mailto: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.

Contributors: Sylvia Pringle, Joe Obermeyer, Hazel Merdink, Sharon Secor, Michael Lochow, 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](mailto:pnppoffice@gmail.com)