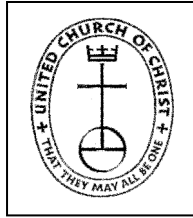


## AWARE

A Monthly newsletter  
supporting the building of community  
in the NPCUCC  
a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual,  
multi-national community of faith  
**August 2008**



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### *As I Look At It:*

There are few terms that can bring a mainline Protestant to a cold sweat quicker than “EVANGELISM”. It is a four letter word that we spell with 10 letters. We harbor all kinds of negative images about this word. Such images cause us to shudder with apprehension. We treat Evangelism as if it were a flu shot. While we hate the thought of getting the flu, and we know that Evangelism would give us the protection that comes from the only real source of hope, we shudder and squirm at the very thought of getting it. We would rather do anything else than have to “DO EVANGELISM.”

In addition, I dare say that we have been coming to Evangelism under false pretenses. We have been coming to Evangelism with the assumption that its purpose is church growth or at least church vitality. Somehow we have confused Evangelism with a systematic process to increase the size of our congregations. Now please do not get me wrong, churches growing in membership and enthusiasm for ministry may be the byproduct of Evangelism, but that is not the primary reason to do Evangelism. There is no doubt that congregations that enthusiastically embrace Evangelism will experience, growth in numbers and excitement. Congregations that embrace Evangelism have discovered the faith based fountain of youth, regardless of the age of the membership the faith of the church remains young and vibrant.

The reason for us to do Evangelism is that the faith we have through Jesus the Christ is so good it must be shared. If we care at all for our brothers and sisters in the human race we have to do Evangelism. My dear friends let's face it, Jesus Christ did not walk this Earth, die on the cross and come back from the grave so that we could sit on it. God did not send the Holy Spirit to be among us, to be working in and through us, so that we could turn it into the best kept secret of our time. If the message of God's love for each of us, the message that Jesus the Christ delivered, will not get us fired up, what on earth will?

You and I, my friends, are called to care for all our brothers and sisters, and therefore we cannot help but share this most wonderful message. We must do it, end of story. If we were in a room full of starving people, and knew where there was food, in fact were able to go and fill our stomachs regularly, and we did not tell our hungry brothers and sisters about it, we are guilty of ignoring the needs of those around us. So if we have the message of God's love and if we are able to draw upon it regularly to fill our soul, and do not share it freely with enthusiasm, I believe we are guilty of the most grievous of sins. What must God think of us, if after God sacrificed so greatly so that we would have the food for the souls of a spiritually hungry world, we hold onto it and let the world go hungry?

Evangelism is about sharing something so wonderful it cannot be kept under wraps. Beginning with the September Clusters we will be exploring the call to share the Good News, Evangelism in the Northern Plains Conference.

*Grace and Peace*  
**Wade**

### **Pastors and Lay Leaders Workshop Scheduled for August 22 & 23**

Charlene J. Smith of the National Church will be with us in Northern Plains Conference, for the workshop “God is Still Speaking, Do Not Fear.” Its goal is to equip pastors and lay leaders to guide congregations when confusion and uncertainty can keep them from moving forward. remember that the Conference will cover the cost of program and meals while lodging and travel will be the participants' responsibility. The workshop will begin at Zion United Church of Christ in Medina at 6:00 pm (ct) on August 22<sup>nd</sup> and will conclude by 4:00 pm (ct) on Saturday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>. So that we can prepare for your participation, please register with the Conference Office as soon as possible. All who wish to have lodging in Medina should make arrangements through the Conference Office. Participants should prepare by reading Paul Nixon's “I Refuse to Lead a Dying Church” and Martha Grace Reese's “Unbinding the Gospel.” Both books are on Amazon.com.

### **All NPCUCC Congregations – Prepare to Welcome the Tent of Hope to Your Church**

The Tent of Hope was first displayed in the Northern Plains Conference at the Annual Meeting in June is now making its rounds of the Conference churches. There are still many places it has yet to be. The tent is a way for us to raise awareness of the situation in Darfur, where civil war has cost thousands upon thousands of people their lives. You are invited to use the tent, to invite members to paint their statements on it and on separate pieces, make statements for peace and understanding. Then you are invited to take an offering to help Sudanese refugees in Darfur and in the United States. To schedule the Tent of Hope please call the Conference Office or Lindy Holt 701 430 0727.

### **The UCC Responds to Tornado and Flood Damage Across the Mid West**

Flooding and tornadoes in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, North and South Dakota, and Wisconsin has turned streets into rivers, rivers into wild dam-bursting torrents pouring over banks, destroying buildings and forcing hundreds to evacuate their homes.

The United Church of Christ National Disaster Ministries seeks \$200,000 for current response and long-term recovery efforts. Donations should be sent to the NPCUCC Conference office, labeled “Flood Relief.” Efforts are underway to help send clean up kits to the affected areas.

### **NPCUCC Congregations Seeking Leadership**

Bismarck United Church of Christ, seeks a director of Christian Ed.

Salem United Church of Christ, New Salem is seeking pastoral leadership

### **New Orleans Mission Trip Planned November 16-23**

Thanks to the efforts of Lindy Holt, NPCUCC Disaster Coordinator, and the enthusiasm of past participants, the 2nd NPCUCC New Orleans Mission Trip will actually begin November 16 in New Orleans and concluding the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Participants will provide their own transportation. Any who want to be involved in a project that makes a real difference in the lives of people should plan to participate. Questions? Call the Conference Office or Rev. Lindy Holt at 701 430 0727.

### **Stewardship Task Force Seeks Mission Ambassadors**

The Mission Ambassadors project that began Fall 2007 continues into the coming year. We invite congregations to seek Mission Ambassadors from among their lay leaders. Mission Ambassadors are trained to bring the message of the ways in which the UCC and the NPC answer the call to be in mission in the name of Jesus the Christ. Each Mission Ambassador would visit a number of congregations with the message of hope and promise. Training sessions will be September 13 at 11:00 a.m., Sept 18 at 6:00 p.m. and Sept 20 at 11:00 a.m. Any questions? Contact the Conference Office.

### **Celebrate Your Faith through the NPCUCC Quilt**

A white piece of cloth with instructions was in each church's packet at the Annual Meeting. Please dig it out and invite some of your members to use it to share their faith. We invite each congregation to submit one piece for the Conference Quilt, for unveiling at the 46th Annual Meeting in Minot. Please complete your design on the piece of cloth using any form you choose, (stitch, drawing, colored pencil, etc.). We ask that all pieces be returned to the Conference Office by mid-January 2009 so quilting groups across the Conference can turn them into quilts by early June at our Annual Meeting. Questions? Can't find your quilt square? Call the Conference Office.

### **St. John Hebron Invites All NPCUCC Members to Share in Service of Installation**

All NPCUCC members are invited to join the members of St. John Church in Hebron in the Installation Service for their pastor, Gaylund Olson on Sunday August 24th at 3:00 pm (ct). A time of fellowship and sharing will follow the Service of Installation.

### **New Materials in the Media Resource Center**

New materials are now available through the Media Resource Center. You can schedule materials in the Media Resource Center for use in your church by calling 605 338 8738 or by email at [mrc@sodakucc.org](mailto:mrc@sodakucc.org). These new titles are: The Power of Forgiveness, The Mormons, Great Figures of the New Testament, Encountering God in Scriptures, A Beginner's Guide to Reading the Bible, Embracing Aging, and Kilowatt Ours. Please check out these items and others you may wish to use as you plan for the Fall in your congregation.

### **Join Malcolm Congregational UCC in Celebrating 100 years of Ministry**

All NPCUCC members are invited to join the members of Malcolm UCC as they celebrate their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary on August 10<sup>th</sup>. Morning worship will begin at 10:30 (ct) at the church. A fellowship dinner will follow at the Pettibone Community building. Let us join the members and their pastor, Joan Dekrey, in celebrating 100 years of ministry for this rural prairie congregation.

### **Did You Know ...**

about free help for your planned giving ministry? UCC Church members can download the free "Local Church Planned Giving Manual" at [www.ucc.org/giving/local-church-planned-giving.html](http://www.ucc.org/giving/local-church-planned-giving.html). You may also call toll free 800-846-6822 for a free Planned Giving Sampler Packet and a master for making bulletin inserts. When members decide to make a planned giving gift they can call this number for their personalized gift annuity proposal, illustrating the income they can expect to receive over their lifetime, with the remainder gifting their church or designated charitable organization.

### **Get Better Acquainted with the NPCUCC Web Site**

As you prepare for Fall programming in your congregation, take time to better acquaint yourself with the resources on the NPCUCC web site [www.npcucc.org](http://www.npcucc.org). You will find many helpful pieces and many more to come. The web site is updated regularly and therefore is as current as humanly possible.

### **The NPCUCC Calendar for August**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
8/2	10:00 am (ct)	Conference Council	Jamestown
8/3-8/7	-----	Youth Camps	Wesley Acres
8/6	12:00 Noon(ct)	Progressive Faith Network	Bismarck
8/9	11:00 am (ct)	Financial Development/Stewardship	-----
8/10	10:30 am (ct)	100 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	Malcolm UCC
8/11-8/15	-----	New Church Leadership/Development	Atlanta
8/16	11:00 am (ct)	ALWL #3	Minot
8/17	8:30 am (mt)	CM shares in Worship	Reeder
8/17	4:00 pm (ct)	Installation of Mark Naru as ELCA Bishop	Bismarck
8/21	6:00 pm (ct)	Fargo Clergy Cluster	Lindenwood Park
8/22-8/23	6:00 pm (ct)	Do Not Fear/Charlene J. Smith	Medina
8/24	3:00 pm (ct)	Installation of Gaylund Olson	St. John/Hebron
8/25	5:30 pm (ct)	CHYS board	Bismarck
8/26	9:30 am (ct)	NDCC Executive Committee	-----
8/26-9/1	-----	CM on Vacation	-----