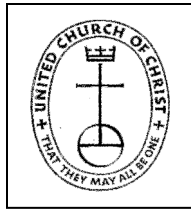


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AWARE
A Monthly newsletter
supporting the building of community
in the NPCUCC
a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual,
multi-national community of faith
September 2008

As I Look At It:

What Do You Believe God Will Do Through You?

This is one question the Christian faith continues to place before us. It is based on the affirmation that our lives can be the channels by which God's grace is transferred to a needy world. Our hands can be the way that God touches bruised and sore lives with healing. Our gatherings can be the avenue by which God's visions become our hopes. Our mouths can be speakers proclaiming God's call for justice. The operative word is believe. What do you BELIEVE God will do through you?? While God seeks to channel Holy Spirit's life renewing holy energy through our lives in many ways, God leaves to us the choice of whether we will be channels of that grace or not. We can willfully and deliberately focus and support God's healing work or we can make our life a barrier to God's living, life renewing presence.

It comes down to our willingness to let God guide our life's actions and direction. We can choose to direct our lives denying God the opportunity to be a healing part of our world through us. We can choose to allow greed and fear to replace God's hope and healing. That choice is ours; it is a matter of faith.

God is calling us to make a holy difference in this world. God is calling us to a new beginning. The question is how will we answer? For answering God's call will do what it has always done: take us out of our comfort zone into the Promised Land. It will challenge us to turn control of our lives over to God. It will put before us a vision of what in the fullness of God's presence tomorrow could hold, not just of what is. Do we trust God enough to be a part of God's tomorrow or will we continue to anchor our lives in the limits of our daily routine and never experience the promised land?

Faithful life is a pilgrimage, a journey taking a lifetime to complete. Indeed the mantra of the United Church of Christ: "God Is Still Speaking," affirms the belief that our Earthly life is a partnership with the God of Creation. Our discipleship is not a moment locked in a single event but a life enriching process sharing all the nuances of the daily journey. God's saving redeeming Spirit is always present. It is up to us to drop the walls keeping God out and invite that holy presence into our every day experience. We must accept that in God's sight we are part of a greater vision, not an end in ourselves.

"What do you believe God will do through you" is another way to ask "What will you allow God to do through your life?" Will your life be a declaration or a denial of God's presence? The answer is one we each must each give. It is a question of our faith. For the life renewing presence of God can transform each moment of our lives into a new beginning if we allow God to take control, if we put our trust in God's tomorrow. May the legacy of our journey on this land be God's new beginning as God continues to speak a message of hope through us.

Grace and Peace
Wade

NPCUCC Pastors Invited to Boundary Training Events

All Pastors of the Conference are invited to participate in one of the Boundary Training events scheduled for September 6th at Valley City, or September 27th at Bismarck. The Event will begin at 10:30, concluding by 3:00 pm (ct). Lunch will be included. Any pastor who has not received boundary training in the past 5 years should do so; those that have not received it at all should take advantage of this opportunity. There will be a third event scheduled soon for those unable to make either of these. If you have not already registered for the Boundary Training event, you are invited to use the registration form found on the web site at <http://www.npcucc.org/html/forms.php>.

Mission Ambassadors Training invites /equips NPCUCC Laity for a Special Ministry

Mission Ambassador Training will be during September. Mission Ambassadors are lay NPCUCC members who are equipped to carry the message of the great work OCWM and our mission projects do for the church in the name of Jesus the Christ. We ask that at least one lay member of each congregation receive this training. Dates and locations are September 13 beginning at 11:00 am (ct) at Bismarck, September 18 6:00 pm (ct) at Carrington and September 20 at 11:00 am (ct) at Mayville. Lunch or dinner will be provided. If you have not already registered, please do so by calling the Conference Office or going to the Conference website <http://www.npcucc.org/html/forms.php>.

All NPCUCC Women are invited to join in the Fall Women's Retreat

All the women of the Northern Plains Conference are invited to participate in the NPCUCC Women's Retreat October 10 – 12 at Maryvale. The retreat is titled "An Invitation to Prayer – Finding Your Peace Shell." This is an opportunity for fellowship, personal reflection and Spiritual renewal. Guest presenters are Shirley Nelson of CHSM and Gayla Sherman of Charles Hall Youth Services. Information and registration forms are on the NPCUCC website at www.npcucc.org/html/forms.php. If you have any questions please contact the Conference Office. This gathering is an excellent opportunity for the women of the Conference to get together, sharing hopes and dreams, discovering that their shared faith is healing, empowering and sustaining.

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 begin November 16 in New Orleans, ending the 23rd. Participants will provide their own transportation. Any who want to join 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.

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, and is now making the rounds of the Conference churches. Has your congregation hosted it yet? The tent is a way to raise awareness of the situation in Darfur, where civil war has cost thousands upon thousands of people their lives. We invite you to use the tent, to invite members to paint their statements on it and on separate pieces statements for peace and understanding. Then you may 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.

A Note from the Media Resource Center

As you participate in the Sacred Conversations on Race, two new items in the Media Resource Center may enhance your conversation. The DVD “Return to Shetek” tells the story of the rescue of 8 white captives by the Lakota Foot Soldiers. Two women and six children had been captured in fighting at Lake Shetek, Minnesota and were rescued near the North Dakota/South Dakota border. This story is an important part of our history. The short DVD (15 min) “What Makes Me White” is also recommended by the National Office.

Make Your Faith Statement Through The Conference Quilt

Each congregation received a quilt square in one packet at the Annual Meeting. It is our hope that each congregation would present one quilt square making a statement declaring the faith of the members of the congregation. These quilt squares can be done in any way the congregations chooses. The statements can be elaborate, they can be simple, they can be drawn, embroidered, painted, however you choose to share your faith statement. The quilt squares are to be turned into the Conference Office by January 15, 2009 so that they can be sewn into quilts to be displayed at the 2009 NPCUCC Annual Meeting in Minot. If you have questions or need another quilt square please contact the Conference Office.

Congregational Exchange visits

We invite NPCUCC Congregations to participate in exchange visits on World Wide Communion Sunday, October 5th. Congregations would send 4 – 6 members from their congregation to a neighboring congregation. The delegation will bring the bread for communion and a one page piece celebrating the ministry of the visiting congregation to be read during the service. The exchanges will be worked out at the September Cluster gatherings. A special liturgy will be available for use upon receiving the communion bread. We hope the celebration piece the visiting delegations will read in the host worship service will be printed in the bulletin of the home congregation, and also compiled into a booklet by the Conference Office. Please email copies of the celebration piece for the booklet to the Conference Office by October 2nd.

Charles Hall Youth Services Walk – A Thon September 14

We invite NPCUCC members across the Conference to form teams to participate in the Charles Hall Youth Services Walk –A-Thon. Each team should have at least 5 members and collect \$750 in pledges. Pledge sheets are available through the Conference Office. For those unable to form a team but want to participate in this event, Bismarck UCC will be fielding a team and the Schemmel Family will be forming a team. Pledges for either or both of these teams can be sent to the Conference Office. Please make checks out to the Northern Plains Conference and put Walk – A – Thon in the memo area.

Congregations of the Northern Plains Conference Seeking Pastoral Leadership

Salem United Church of Christ, New Salem

Bismarck United church of Christ (Christian Education Director), Bismarck

All NPCUCC Members are invited to share in the Installation Service for Lento Rodriquez

The members of the Filipino Community Church of Winnipeg invite NPCUCC members to the installation service for their Pastor and Assistant Pastors on Sunday, September 7, at 10:30 am (ct). Lento Rodriquez will be installed as Pastor and Joseph Pelayo and Glenn Saria as Assistant Pastors. Due to the distance many will be unable to share in this special service. We invite you to show your support through cards or emails either to the Congregation or the Conference Office. It will be our pleasure to carry your best wishes and hopes sent to the Conference Office to this enthusiastic congregation.

The Conference Calendar for September, 2008

Date	Time	Event	Location
9/1	-----	Labor Day - CM on Vacation	-----
9/4	3:00 pm (ct)	Conference Call Evangelism Meeting	3:00 pm (ct)
9/4	5:30 pm (ct)	CHYS Board	Bismarck
9/6	10:30 am (ct)	Boundary Training	Valley City
9/7	10:30 am (ct)	CM Leads Worship	Winnipeg
9/9	10:00 am (ct)	MV Cluster	-----
9/13	11:00 am (ct)	Mission Ambassadors	Bismarck
9/14	1:00 pm (ct)	CHYS Walk – A – Thon	Bismarck
9/17	11:00 am (ct)	Minot Cluster	Minot
9/18	10:00 am (ct)	Fargo Cluster	-----
9/18	6:00 pm (ct)	Mission Ambassadors	Carrington
9/20	11:00 am (ct)	Mission Ambassadors	Mayville
9/22	9:30 am (ct)	NDCC board meeting	-----
9/24	12:00 Noon (ct)	Ft. Berthold Cluster	New Town
9/24	4:30 pm (ct)	NDHRC Board	Fargo
9/26	11:00 am (ct)	Central Cluster	Malcolm UCC
9/26-27	6:00 pm (ct)	YC Class	-----
9/27	10:30 am (ct)	Boundary Training	Bismarck