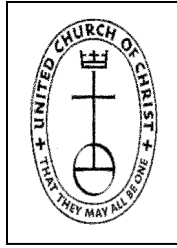


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**AWARE**  
A Monthly newsletter  
supporting the building of community  
in the NPCUCC  
a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-  
lingual, multi-national community of faith  
**August 2009**

### ***As I Look At It:***

Several weeks ago I found myself receiving some comments about my beliefs on an issue about which I have very strong feelings. I was getting "I agree with your point of view" comments. In fact, those who were responding to me were very excited about my seeming change of heart. They commented that they had thought I was a part of that "Liberal Bunch." There were those who were saddened to discover my newfound perspective. In the end, I had the unpleasant task of trying to set the record straight. A task I would rather have avoided. To be honest, I was very angry with those who chose to misrepresent me. Their lies had a nasty impact on my life and the life of those around me.

I bring this up because of a concern I have. The concern is "HOW DOES JESUS DEAL WITH ALL OF THOSE TIMES WHEN HIS VISION OF LIFE IS MISREPRESENTED by those that are looking for ways to make their arguments stronger by using his name?" How does Jesus deal with all those times when his name is used to justify the wall that has been constructed in fear that separates us from our brothers and sisters in Jesus' name? Can't you imagine how many times Jesus must have cried when his name was used to justify slavery? Every life that was reduced to dollars and cents must have been like a nail on the cross. What pain must Jesus feel when the basic rights of those for whom he died are denied because the way God created some exceeds the ability of others to understand? How must Jesus feel when his words are twisted into hate filled, bias driven comments aimed at hurting others? I can only believe that Jesus feels real pain when those whom he would call brother and sister are denied their basic rights as members of the family of God because others cannot see them as members of "Their" family.

I believe as people of faith, we need to stand for the integrity of the name of Jesus. Let us not turn a deaf ear to those who would justify their bigotry by proclaiming it in Jesus' name. Let us call foul when Jesus' name is used to justify abuse to our land and air. Let us say, "Not the Jesus I know," when his words become the foundation of a message focused on supporting privilege of any sort. Personally, I am tired of hearing Jesus' name used to justify greed. How can we so abuse a love driven Redeemer? Let us give Jesus' name the integrity it deserves. And use it with the reverence that it demands.

**Grace and Peace  
Wade**

### **State Women's Retreat**

September 25 – 27 are the dates for the NPCUCC statewide women's retreat that will be at the Abbey at Richardton. The guest presenter for the weekend will be Deborah Bailey of the National Church. This will be a special return engagement for Deborah since she was part of the original group that got the women's program going many years ago. Please check the NPCUCC web site [www.npcucc.org](http://www.npcucc.org) for more information.

### **Evangelism and New Church Start workshop**

Plans are underway for Charlene J. Smith to follow up on the previous workshops that she has lead in the Conference on the subject of church vitality and getting beyond our fears, with a workshop focusing on the central challenge of evangelism and church growth. This topic is so important for the well being of our congregations. This workshop is scheduled for November 13 – 14 at Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, Fargo.

### **82 – 4 – 2010**

At the Budget Presentation during the recent Annual Meeting in Minot we projected a short fall in the 2010 budget. This is a call to us to raise the necessary funds to do the ministry to which we as a Conference are called. Being called to meet faith challenges is not something new, in fact our Redeemer did it. When he was about his Earthly Ministry, he called 12 disciples to follow him and experience his life and ministry so that they could pass it on. Jesus also called and sent 70 into the towns and communities to spread and share the message of hope and new life he brought into the world. In all, Jesus called 82 to meet the developing church's needs.

So we are calling 82 to meet the Northern Plains Conference's needs for 2010. 82 to step forward with a special donation of \$100 towards the Conference's financial health in 2010. Already a number answered the call during the Annual Meeting. This is a call to be a part of the spontaneous 82-4-2010 movement that is already well underway. Let us meet the challenge and raise the funds we need to overcome the short fall in our budget. You can answer this call by writing a check for \$100 and sending it to the Conference Office. If \$100 is a bit steep for you please take this as an invitation to make a special 82-4-2010 offering as a "Friend of the Conference" alone for a smaller amount or together with someone else for \$100. We also invite church groups to share in this special gathering. Special recognition will be given next year as we go forth into the promised land ready to meet its challenges. Like the 70 and the 12 let us answer the call of the 82 – 4 – 2010 for NPCUCC.

## Welcome to Theresa Heupel

It is with joy that we welcome Theresa Heupel back into the pastoral family of the Northern Plains Conference. Theresa has accepted a position as the Acting Pastor for Emmanuel United Church of Christ of Hankinson. Theresa is a daughter of Zion United Church of Christ of Medina and began her ministry serving St. John United Church of Christ of Hebron. Theresa begins her duties on August 1<sup>st</sup>. Our best wishes are with Theresa and the members of Emmanuel of Hankinson. May their ministry together be a time of blessing and hope for all.

### AWARE is Growing:

The Monthly AWARE will continue to come to you as it has in the past. It will be two sides of newsy articles about the life and happenings of the Northern Plains Conference. There will be more, a new segment that will appear monthly on line only on the NPCUCC web site entitled “And So Forth . . . .” Its contents will be more thematic to provide NPCUCC members and others the opportunity to go into greater depth. “AND SO FORTH...” will be sent to you via email. Please take time to read it. If you have an idea for some articles please contact the Conference Office or R J Stohler the AWARE Editor. This month’s edition of “And So Forth...” will focus on the General Synod in Grand Rapids which took place the end of June. The August edition will include reflections from our delegates and guests as well as a summary of the voting on resolutions.

### West Central Regional Gathering of Solo Conference Ministers

In August, the Conference Ministers and delegates from the South Dakota, Nebraska and Northern Plains Conferences will meet to explore ways that we can better work together in the future. It is an open meeting with good spirit and energy on the part of the participants. More information about the discussions and the possibilities that are being looked at for the life of our Conference will be shared as they develop. Please watch the “E Messenger” and future Editions of AWARE for more information.

### Congregations Seeking a Pastor

United Church of Christ, Wahpeton  
The Horizon Parish

### In Appreciation

On July 26<sup>th</sup> Dale Carmen, the pastor of the Horizon Parish, will conclude her ministry in that faith community. Dale was the founding pastor of the Horizon Parish and guided it with grace and vision through its formative years. I want to thank her for caring and faithful leadership. Dale and Ken ((Ken has officially retired several years ago but unofficially has been a much appreciated source of help in the Horizon Parish and the Northern Plains Conference.) have retired and will be doing some traveling to visit family and beyond. May God’s richest blessing and care go with Dale and Ken as they take a much deserved time to relax and renew.

### Power Point Program on “Wills” in the Church to be presented at Hillsboro.

After two tries that our winter stormed out, the Wills program presented by the Conference Minister and sponsored by the Stewardship and Financial Planning Task Force of the Conference will be held at Hillsboro, August 27<sup>th</sup> beginning at 6:00 pm (ct). While this program makes several statements about stewardship in the present, it calls us to look also at the opportunity to invite people to remember their church in their will. We invite area congregations to come and share in this special gathering. We especially invite pastors and lay leaders to share in this event.

### First Congregational United Church of Christ of Glen Ullin to celebrate its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary

August 30<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm (ct) is the date and time for the celebration of the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First Congregational United Church of Christ of Glen Ullin. Let us join Pastor Marcy Dawson and the members of this Central North Dakota Congregation in giving thanks for a century and a quarter of ministry in Jesus’ name. The anniversary program will begin at 2:00pm at the church.

### There may be grant money for your congregation’s project

Money may be available for worthy projects by churches. For the information needed please see “What Enquiring Funders Want to Know,” on the NPCUCC Website (<http://www.npcucc.org/html/grants.php>). NPCUCC Grant Request Writer, R. J. Stohler, will be glad to explore with you possible funding for your project. You may contact him at 1537 48<sup>th</sup> St. S. #108, Fargo, ND 58103, [rjstohler@msn.com](mailto:rjstohler@msn.com), or through the Conference Office.

### The Calendar for August

Date	Time	Event	Location
8/1	9:00 am (ct)	Stewardship Workshop	Valley City
8/4	12:00 Noon (ct)	Progressive Faith Network	Bismarck
8/6	12:00 Noon (ct)	NDHRC Development	Fargo
8/10	6:00 pm (ct)	Great Plains Consortium	Sioux Falls, SD
8/11	9:00 am (ct)	Great Plains Consortium	Sioux Falls, SD
8/19	4:30 pm (ct)	NDHRC Board	Fargo
8/20	5:00 pm (ct)	Fargo Cluster	Fargo
8/27	6:00 pm (ct)	Wills Program	Hillsboro
8/29	11:00 am (ct)	Special Conference Council/Strategic Planning	Medina
8/30	2:00 pm (ct)	125 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	Glen Ullin