

The Northern Plains Conference  
United Church of Christ  
1200 E Highland Acres Rd.,  
Bismarck, ND 58501-1252  
Telephone: 701-255-1104  
<http://www.npcucc.org>



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

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

“I am convinced as we look at the fullness of the many assets that we have including our churches, their leaders, our licensed and ordained ministers, and the multitude of volunteers who are the driving force for discipleship, we will find that there is nothing that is beyond our capacity or our vision.” These words from the Moderator’s report summarize the vision that guided the 46th Annual Meeting of the Northern Plains Conference United Church of Christ held June 5 – 7 in Minot.

In the opening message Rich Weis, Dean of United Theological Seminary guided us with a message that gave to all the assurance that God is already at work in our lives to create a New Heaven and a New Earth, to create anew the community of God’s blessing.

With these words, we were challenged to reach beyond today to stretch the horizons of our vision so that God might lead us as bold disciples into the Promised Land of Tomorrow. Our gathering as a Conference at the Annual Meeting is a celebration of God’s ever-present and active grace and an affirmation of God’s promise to guide us into the future.

We prayed. We sang some new songs composed by Marilyn Kennedy Levine, pastor from New Town and Parshall Memorial. We did Congregational and Conference Planning. We shared our hopes and fears. We ate wonderful meals. We enjoyed the greatest of hospitality from our brothers and sisters of Zion of Granville and the Congregational UCC of Minot. We heard a stirring anthem composed by Mike Jensen of Minot, sung by the Conference Choir. We received the Sunday message from the host pastor, Frank Picard. And there was more.

From the presentation of the model of the Amistad to pastor Frank as the host pastor, to the closing benediction the meeting was a celebration of the hope and vision the living Spirit of Christ gives us. Charlene J. Smith of the National Church reflected on this when she challenged us to get off of our “butts” and be about ministry. Several days following the Annual Meeting she sent an email in which she said “The Positiveness of the meeting was encouraging”.

During the meeting we adopted two resolutions reflecting this vision of Bold Doing Daring Discipleship. One called on the National Church to strengthen its focus on its mission and its ministry amid the many discussions of restructuring during the General Synod. The other resolution sought health care reform for all men women and children. Both of the resolutions can be viewed on the NPCUCC web site [www.npcucc.org](http://www.npcucc.org).

Dr. David Greenhaw, President of Eden Theological Seminary gave focus to our gathering with his keynote address that called us to be about doing the ministry God is empowering us to do. We have the means, we have the vision, we have the faith. It is ours to do in partnership with the God who always walks with us.

In conclusion, I would say the 2009 Annual Meeting truly lived up to its theme; “The Joy of Bold Discipleship.” It called and it empowered us to step forward as servants of God’s will and confident that God steps forward with us. Let us this coming year (09 – 10) live the vision of our Annual Meeting, the vision of Bold, Doing Daring Discipleship.

***Grace and Peace, Wade***

### **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.

### **Congregations seeking a pastor**

United Church of Christ, Wahpeton  
The Horizon Parish  
Emmanuel United Church of Christ, Hankinson

### **Register NOW for NPCUCC Youth Camp**

Planning is complete for the July 26 – 30 youth camps at Wesley Acres near Valley City. NPCUCC youth are urged to mark these dates on their calendars, complete and return the application form. The NPCUCC Adjunct youth coordinators, Carleton and Darcy Borden, invite all interested youth to check the NPCUCC website [www.npcucc.org](http://www.npcucc.org) for informative fliers and registration forms.

## Stewardship for the 21st Century

There will be a special workshop focusing on fund raising techniques and approaches that will be helpful for Congregations of all sizes. It begins with dinner, July 31<sup>st</sup>, approximately 5:30 pm (ct), and continues through Saturday, August 1st ending at 4:00 pm (ct). Jane Heckles of the National Church will facilitate this workshop. Each Congregation is asked to cover costs of transportation and lodging while the Conference will cover program and meals. Pastors and lay leaders are urged to make plans to come to this exciting event. Registration forms and an informative flier can be found on the NPCUCC website [www.npcucc.org](http://www.npcucc.org).

### Special Brown Bag Gathering to focus on Spiritual Care in the Midst of Disasters

There will be a special gathering on July 31st at the Congregational UCC of Valley City beginning with a Brown Bag lunch and continuing until near starting time for the Stewardship in the 21st Century workshop. Bryan Crousore, Disaster Specialist for Church World Service, will be with us to share his expertise and understanding. Pastors and interested persons from NPCUCC Congregations are invited to share in this special time together.

### State Women's Retreat:

September 25 – 27 are the dates for the statewide women's retreat that will be held at the Abby 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 website for more information and a registration form.

### Evangelism and New Church Start Workshop:

Charlene J. Smith will be the facilitator for the special evangelism workshop that will be held November 13 & 14 at Plymouth Congregational in Fargo. This will follow the style and approach of the Church Vitality workshops she led earlier, but will be independent enough so that any who were not part of those workshops will find it meaningful. Please check the NPCUCC web site for informative fliers and registration forms.

### 82-4-2010

At the Presentation of the Budget during the recent Annual Meeting in Minot we projected a short fall in the 2010 budget which we then adopted. This is a call to us to raise the necessary funds to be about the ministry to which we as a Conference are called. Being called to meet the challenges of the faith is not something new, in fact our Redeemer did it. When he was about his Earthly Ministry he called 12 disciples to be trained and 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. Thus, Jesus called 82 to meet the needs of the developing faith community that became the church.

So we are calling 82 to meet the needs of the Northern Plains Conference for 2010. 82 to step forward with a special donation of \$100 towards the financial health of the Conference in 2010. We already have a number who answered the call during the Annual Meeting. This is a call to be a part of the spontaneous 82-4-2010 movement which is already well underway. Let us meet the challenge and raise by the close of 2009 the funds that we need to set aside 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" in cooperation with someone else or alone for a smaller amount. Church groups are also invited to share in this special gathering. There will be a special recognition next year as we go forth into promised land of tomorrow ready to meet the challenges of the new day. Like the 70 and the 12 let us answer the call and be a part of the 82 – 4 – 2010 for NPCUCC.

### The Calendar for July, 2009

Date	Time	Event	Location
7/1	-----	Closing meetings following GS	Grand Rapids, Mich.
7/2	-----	Schemmels fly home	-----
7/4	-----	CM travels to Winnipeg	-----
7/4	-----	Independence Day	-----
7/5	10:00 am (ct)	CM shares in Worship	Winnipeg
7/7	12:00 Noon (ct)	Progressive Faith Network	Bismarck
7/11	-----	Memorial Service for Bud McLain	Mayville
7/24-7/25	5:00 pm (ct)	Alternate Paths to Ordination	Ft. Stephenson
7/25	10:00 am (ct)	Central Cluster	Jamestown/ Home of Susan Lester
7/26	10:00 am (mt)	Service in honor of Dale Carmen	Carson
7/26-7/30	-----	Youth Camps	Wesley Acres
7/31	12:00 Noon (ct)	Spiritual Support Amid Disaster Gathering	Valley City
7/31	5:30 pm (ct)	Stewardship in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	Valley City