

**THE NORTHERN
PLAINS
CONFERENCE
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

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AWARE FOR:

FEBRUARY 2011

**A monthly newsletter
supporting the building
of community in the
multi-cultural, multi-
ethnic, multi-lingual,
multi-national
community of faith.**



AS Look At It

A number of the Northern Plains Conference Pastors responded to the Pastoral Note that I sent out late Saturday Evening, January 8th following the news of the shooting in Tucson that claimed the life of 6 and wounded 14, of whom Congress Woman Gabrielle Gifford was one. As I had somewhat hurriedly expressed my deep sadness over the tragic events that had unfolded, I promised to respond more fully in the February AWARE. Let me begin by turning to God's word, where in Colossians 4:6 we read;

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer everyone.

"Let your speech be gracious". How often do we build walls of anger when God would be better served by building bridges of understanding? How often have we heard, words that incite our fear instead of expanding our horizons?

This is not the time to cast blame, but simply to ask, if we are building walls or bridges? Jim Wallis, Editor of Sojourners, in the 1-13-11 "Sojo Mail" said the following, "Hatred is only overcome with the power of love, and violence is best defeated by the persistence of nonviolence that is aimed at winning people over, rather than winning over them.

As we move beyond this tragedy let us prayerfully seek ways to be agents of God's hope instead of mere pervades of the world's dismay. Let us strive to so speak and live that we become the model of God's holy vision instead of the denial of God's presence. May that which we do lead the way to a new world rather than simply rehash our old grievances.

President Obama began his remarks at the memorial service January 12th in Tucson by announcing that Congress Woman Gabrielle Gifford had opened her eyes for the first time following a visit he and Mrs. Obama had made earlier that afternoon. This was truly a hopeful moment of thanksgiving as the vision of a new tomorrow was lifted high. To quote Jim Wallis, "I pray that this becomes a moment when we all open our own".

God is calling us to a new day. May it be a time guided by prayer, supported by the courage of our convictions and enriched by the praise of our faith. May our words reflect the God that guides us and our actions betray the one that has called us into being.

Namaste

Wade

AWARE Available in TWO Versions:

Starting with the December 2010 issue, the Northern Plains Conference AWARE will come in two versions. There will be one that as before, will be held to two pages, and may have a smaller print size to accommodate that limitation. This is especially helpful to Congregations that mail it out via the US mail. Then, there will be a second version of the AWARE which will be an expanded version and sporting a larger font. This version will serve Congregations that send out the AWARE via email. Please let the Conference Office know how this works for you.

Congregations Seeking A Pastor:

The following churches are seeking new pastoral leadership:

New Horizon Parish (near Lakota), **Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ in Fargo** (currently with a hold on profiles).

Lenten Retreat: "The Church in the 21st Century":

The Northern Plains Conference Welcomes Jennifer Kottler from Sojourners Magazine in Washington, D.C. to the Lenten Retreat, April 3-5, 2011. The Northern Plains Conference Lenten Retreat which will be held at the Congregational United Church of Christ in Jamestown. The theme for the Retreat will be "The Church in the 21st Century". In a time of radical change which calls forth new gifts, and blesses with new challenges, the church is called to walk into the promised land of a new tomorrow. Jennifer Kottler, an ordained Disciples of Christ pastor, and member of the Sojourners editorial staff, will guide us in discussion of the future as we see it and how we need to prepare for it

Please check the Northern Plains Conference Web Site under Church News or put "Lenten Retreat" in the search box and read more about our Lenten Retreat speaker.

Housing arrangements have been made at the Quality Inn and Suites in Jamestown and you can

register for a room by calling 701-252-3611 or email your request for a room to:

GM:ND034@choicehotels.com, request the Northern Plains Conference block of rooms.

You can also find registration forms on the Northern Plains Conference Web Site under Church News or by entering "Lenten Retreat" in the search box. To help offset the cost of several meals, there will be a \$25.00 charge, payable to the Northern Plains Conference. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Conference Office.

Articles in Long Version:

The following articles can be found in the long version, that are not in the short version are: Greetings from the Media Resource Center, Yankton College Spring Courses Announced, Annual Meeting Plans Are Underway, Medallion Award, Nominations Are Received for Northern Plains Conference Offices, Northern Plains Adjunct Ministers Report, and Voices from the Prairie, Sri Lanka by Jim Moos.

Calendar for February

Date	Time	Event	Location
2/6	10:00 am (ct)	CM leads worship	Garrison
2/8	6:00 pm (ct)	Prairie Hospitality WebEx	-----
2/9	10:00 am(ct)	MV Cluster	-----
2/11	-----	CM on Vacation	-----
2/12	-----	CM on Vacation	-----
2/13	8:30 am (mt)	Cm Shares in worship	Elgin
2/16	12:00 Noon (ct)	Ft. Berthold Cluster	New Town
2/17	10:00 am (ct)	Fargo Cluster	-----
2/17	-----	Annual Consultation	California
2/18	-----	Annual Consultation	California
2/19	-----	Consultation	California
2/20	-----	Consultation	California
2/21	-----	Consultation	California
2/22	-----	Consultation	California
2/24	11:00 am (ct)	Minot Cluster	-----
2/25	-----	Conference Committees	Carrington
2/26	9:00 am (ct)	Conference Council	Carrington
2/27	9:30 am (ct)	Cm Leads Worship	Wahpeton
2/28	-----	Central Cluster	-----