



## AS I LOOK AT IT

With the close of 2010, Peg and I have completed our 9<sup>th</sup> year of service in the Northern Plains Conference. Time does go way to fast and in spite of how hard it is to imagine, the end of 2010 will mark the 9<sup>th</sup> year I have served as Conference Minister. I remember the time we have shared with gratitude. It has been a privilege to be in ministry among you.

Having said that the question we must ask is what is next? What is it that the future is calling us to be? I believe that the last 9 years have been productive. But as is true with any period of time that can be labeled as "the past", it is merely a prelude to the future. The question that we have to answer is what are we to be about in the coming years? Let me be so presumptuous as to attempt a response. Here are three ideas that hopefully will spur conversation about the years ahead for the Northern Plains Conference.

While we in the Northern Plains Conference have an abundance of geography, developments in communication provide options that were not available 10 years ago. I believe that we need to develop ways to do ministry more efficiently and effectively regardless of the distance that separates us. Miles need no longer be a barrier that gets in the way of ministry. We need to find ways to do as much as we can through our computers and leave the face to face times for those happenings that can be handled no other way. This calls for not only a change of technique but attitude.

I believe that one of the gifts that Northern Plains Conference can make to the wider church is to develop a more complete understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the small and rural congregation. There is no doubt that God will continue to embrace the people of the prairie, the questions is, how do we deal with the

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**THE NORTHERN PLAINS  
CONFERENCE**

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**United Church of Christ**

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**1200 EAST HIGHLAND  
ACRES ROAD**

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**Bismarck, N.D.**

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**58501-1252**

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<http://www.npcucc.org>

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**AWARE FOR:**

**JANUARY 2011**

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*A monthly newsletter  
supporting the building of  
community in the*

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*multi-cultural, multi-ethnic*

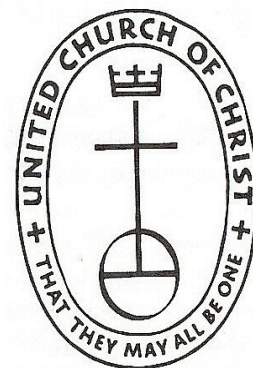
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*multi-lingual, multi-national*

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*Community of faith.*

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economic and sociological challenges it presents? How do we do ministry in a declining population? The challenge facing us is not just to accept the future but to shape it so that small and rural congregations and communities are not the victims of what happens but the designers. To curl up in a ball and say we have no future is to shun the blessings God has placed before us.

Finally I believe that we need to find new ways to the stewards that God will call us to be. OCWM is not a growth industry any place including the Northern Plains Conference. We handle money differently than our parents did and this means we have to provide different opportunities to give money. We need to help our congregations and our Conferences find a stronger financial future.

I am presenting these and other thoughts not out of fear but expectation because I know that God is calling us to a new day. Let's talk about the future of the Northern Plains Conference.

Namaste  
Wade



### **Disaster Preparedness**

It is never early enough to begin preparing for disasters that happen in our local, state, national and worldwide

communities. Preparedness can make a huge difference in what happens. While it may seem early to be concerned about spring flooding around North Dakota, now is the best time to get prepared. We already are faced with the challenges with the on-going flooding in Devils Lake, and know how vulnerable communities downstream are beginning to be. We're never quite sure if we will have major flooding or not although the state this year it seems inevitable that some communities will be affected.

Recently while preaching; leading a workshop and visiting at Zion UCC in Medina, part of our conversation was about how prepared are we for disasters in our churches, communities and homes? We heard all of the old stories of the major disasters that have affected people over the years past and talked about if we are as prepared as we once were in disaster times. We decided we really aren't.

I would encourage your church to focus one of your worship services this spring on ways that your church can prepare and help the people in your community to be ready too. If I can help with your ideas and resources, contact me at Lindy Holt, [ethelindholt@gmail.com](mailto:ethelindholt@gmail.com) or at 701-430-0727.

Lindy Holt  
Disaster Ministry Coordinator for  
Northern Plains Conference



**Voices from The Prairie:**

Greetings from Colorado! I wanted to thank all of my brothers and sisters from the Northern Plains Conference especially from the Bismarck UCC and Salem UCC for your cards, and care packages while I was deployed last year. Words cannot describe what joy they brought me and those whom I shared them with in South West Asia. I got word at the end of my deployment that I would be moving over to the Air Force Academy and working at the Cadet Chapel. I returned to Peterson AFB in March and moved to the Academy in May. I am the Fourth Group Chaplain and I provide spiritual/religious support to roughly a thousand cadets. I am also co-pastor of the Protestant Traditional Service and have been the officer in charge o many projects.

One of the ministries I enjoy is working with the female cadets. An organization on the academy offers an opportunity for the freshmen and sophomore female cadets to gather with female officers, enlisted and junior/senior cadets to address issues related to being future female officers. We are there too mentor, support and encourage these young women. I have spoken with a handful of female cadets who are interested in

becoming chaplains. Many of them did not think of it as a possibility but my presence had lead them to consider it as a career path. I am looking forward to attending the NPC Annual Meeting in June and sharing with you some of my experiences. Please continue to keep in your thoughts and prayers the men and women who are deployed around the world and their families during their time of separation.

Shalom and Blessings,  
Ch. Heather Bodwell



**Northern Plains Adjunct Ministers Report:**

Northern Plains Council of Youth & Young Adult Ministry Presents:



***The 2011 New Earth Summer Camp Experience***

***July 24<sup>th</sup> to July 28<sup>th</sup> 2011 at Camp of the Cross Ministries***

1228A 47th NW, Garrison ND 58540

For Directions to camp go to:

<http://www.campofthecross.com/location.html>

**For Ages 8-18**

Check us out on Facebook: NPCUCC  
Northern Plains Council of Youth & Young Adults

Stay tuned To The Conference Web Site for more information. If you need more information quicker, feel free to contact Rev. Carl and Darcy Borden at 701-840-5105/701-840-5104.

Carl Borden Northern Plains Youth and Young Adult Ministry Minister

### **AWARE Available in TWO Versions:**

Starting with the December 2010 issue, the Northern Plains Conference AWARE will come for the 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.



### **Make Plans To Attend The Lenten Retreat:**

Northern Plains Conference Pastors licensed and ordained and ALWL and spouses, are invited to make plans to share in the **Northern Plains Conference Lenten Retreat** which will be held **April 3-5, 2011**. The location of this gathering is still undecided, but will be declared soon. The program for the gathering will feature **Rev. Jennifer Kottler**, the

Director of Policy and Advocacy for Sojourners Magazine. Rev. Kottler will be working with us around the theme of "The Church of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century". To say that we live in a changing world is to understate the obvious. The ground around us is shifting. The call of the church is to be the spiritual light for a world that is different than anything we have ever experienced. It is a different world that the one for which many of us were trained. In fact the expectations, challenges and opportunities are not the same ones that our parents faced. This does not mean the church does not have a future, but rather that the pathway of that future is unique to this time and to this place. From her perspective on the editorial staff of Sojourners, Rev. Kottler will help us to get a glimpse of that pathway. For more information about Rev. Kottler, please check the Northern Plains Conference United Church of Christ web site [www.npcucc.org](http://www.npcucc.org), where you will find her biography and picture under the tab of Church News.

In addition to the interesting and meaningful time with Rev. Kottler, there will be ample opportunity for reflections, prayer, fellowship and renewal. Please mark your calendars to join with your Northern Plains Conference friends and share in **the Lenten Retreat**.



## The Annual Meeting Planning Committee is Hart at Work:



The Annual Meeting Planning Committee comprised of representatives from First Congregational United Church of Christ of Fargo and Northern Plains Conference representatives, has been hard at work drawing together an outline for the **2011 ANNUAL MEETING**. The meeting will take place **at First Congregational United Church of Christ in Fargo**, and will begin on Friday afternoon, **June 3, 2011 and conclude following worship, Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011**. Our special guests will be: **Geoffrey Black**, General Minister and President of the UCC, who will be a keynote speaker and the preacher for the Sunday worship service; **Stephen Sterner**, the Executive Minister of Local Church Ministries who will be a keynote speaker for the Banquet and a workshop leader; **Mike Schuenemeyer**, Executive for the Health and Wholeness Advocacy Ministry, who will be leading the Saturday afternoon sharing and exploration time; and **Barbara Baylor**, Ministry for Healthcare Justice, who will be the speaker for the Women's Luncheon, and a workshop leader. In addition to this line up, the Children's Defense Fund will also have a presence and a display. This Annual Meeting will truly be a time for the Northern Plains Conference family to come together, support one another and united in and around in the ministry to

which our Redeemer is calling us. Mark your calendars for **June 3-5, 2011** and make plans to join us in Fargo for a special Northern Plains Conference weekend.



## Pulpit Supply Training (ALWL) Classes To Begin:

All who would be interested in sharing in a vital and exciting ministry of the Northern Plains Conference are invited to take part in the Winter of 2011 ALWL classes. The classes are open to Northern Plains Conference members who with the recommendation of their pastor are interested in being trained to become Pulpit Supply leaders for the congregations of the Conference. There are four classes, for which costs are covered by the Conference. If you or someone you know is interested, please give a call the Conference Office for more information. To submit a name, Northern Plains Conference pastors are encouraged to use the ALWL Prospective Recommendation Form which you will find on the Northern Plains Conference web site. The easiest way find the form is to go to the web site [www.npcucc.org](http://www.npcucc.org), to the search area at the top of the homepage, and type in "ALWL Prospective Recommendation Form" and you will go directly to it. Download it, and fill it out and send it to the Conference Office. If

you prefer, please call the Conference Office, and we can help you. I am confident that most if not all of our Congregations have people within their membership that God has blessed with the gifts to serve in this vital ministry.

**Evan Mandigo Becomes UCCIB Insurance Agent for the Northern Plains Conference:**

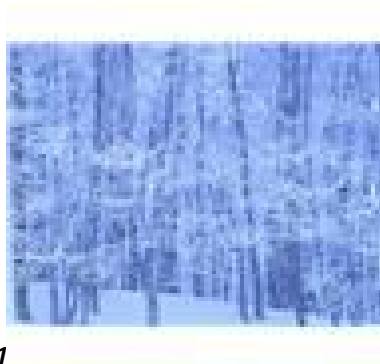
All the "I's" have been dotted and the "T's" have been crossed to bring Evan Mandigo fully on board as the UCCIB Insurance agent for the Northern Plains Conference. Evan has hit the ground running setting up meetings with Congregations and making plans to share the message of

service to all through the UCCIB. Congregations that would wish to talk with Evan about their policy or about taking a new policy are invited to call him at 701-471-0937.



**Congregations Seeking A Pastor:**

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



**THE CALENDAR FOR JANUARY, 2011**

TIME	DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
1/1	_____	NEW YEARS DAY	_____
1/9	_____	CM shares in worship	Valley City
1/10	9:00 a.m. (ET)	Lay Ministry Gathering	St. Louis, Missouri
1/11	9:00 a.m. (ET)	Lay Ministry Gathering	St. Louis, Missouri

1/12	10:00 a.m. (CT)	MV Cluster	Hebron/First
1/16	9:45 a.m. 11:00 a.m.	Annual Meeting Worship	Carrington
1/17	10:00 a.m. (CT)	NDCC Board	Bismarck
1/19	12:00 noon	Ft. Berthold Cluster	New Town
1/21	11:00 a.m. (CT)	Central Cluster	Gackle
1/23	10:00 a.m. (CT) 11:00 a.m. (CT)	Worship Annual Meeting	Hankinson
1/23	6:00 p.m. (CT)	NPC/SDUCC Meeting	Watertown
1/24	11:00 a.m. (CT)	Minot Cluster	_____
1/28	6:00 p.m. (CT)	Central/Fargo Clusters Holiday Gathering	Moorhead, Minnesota
1/30	10:00 a.m. (CT)	CM shares in worship	Argusville
1/31	6:00 p.m. (CT)	Annual Meeting Planning	Fargo/First

