

The Northern Plains Conference
United Church of Christ
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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
June 2010

As I Look At It:

Many challenges now face us as citizens of this nation and of the world. We can list a geyser of crude oil dumping into the pristine waters off Louisiana, threatening the lives of countless thousands for generations who have made a living from those waters. We may add a volcano continuing to spew its ash into the skies disrupting air travel across the world. Still we have not even begun to measure the pushback on health care reform, the struggles over immigration or the brouhaha we will face over Wall Street Reform. We are called to ask, "How did we get into this mess?"

The answer can be as simple as declaring "We Just Forgot." We forgot this is not our world to use and abuse at will, that our actions will have consequences. We forgot that in the family of God there are no stepchildren, those born in one country share a common heritage of resurrection with those born in another. We forgot that humans are not the only species of worth on this planet. We forgot that our call is not just to care for ourselves but to reach out with protective love to our surroundings, embracing all the life that God calls into being. We forgot that we do not fulfill our God given call by consuming as much as we can, but rather by doing unto the least as God in Christ is doing unto us. We forgot that the question facing us is not if we can meet our health care needs but if the most fragile member of God's family can meet theirs. We forgot that greed is not a character trait that embraces God's vision of tomorrow, it is after all a deadly sin.

What we need now is the leadership of people of faith acting and speaking faithfully. This nation will be stronger when people of faith hold their legislators to the high moral standard that God in Christ places before us. We will be stronger when we realize that we will only be as strong as our weakest most fragile citizens. We will be wiser when we appreciate the intricate ways connecting us to one another. We will be richer when we care for the needs of the poor. We will be more secure when we seek not to threaten but to understand those around us. While talking and acting tough may get our blood running, it does not fix the needs of our fragile, interconnected world. For the vision of Christ for our world did not include the smart dominating the dumb, or the strong overcoming the weak, or the rich controlling the poor, but rather the most powerful caring for the most vulnerable, not because they had to but because that is how God would have us live.

We got into the mess we currently have because we forgot that we are one family in God and as all families, we are bound together. If one member of God's family hurts another member of God's family, all in the family of God are diminished. As the children of Israel were 12 tribes but one nation, so we are one family with many tribes in many different places with many different cultures and histories. If one of the tribes in God's family IS destructive of the world in which we live, destroying the delicate eco structures, then all the tribes of this planet are threatened. If the policies of our society are harmful to one tribe then all of us are hurt.

I believe faithful living has some basic principles that call us to respect the most distant places of this world as if all land was our back yard, to remember that strangers are our brothers and sisters, to celebrate the right of descent holding the vision of tomorrow, and to subject our words and our actions to a grace check. (If what we say or do does not allow us to be a channel for God's grace then we probably should not be saying nor doing it.) I am hopeful that God's vision for all of us will be the pathway by which we not only find a hope that overcomes the challenges of today, but also a path to the fullness God would have us live tomorrow.

Let us together seek that path.

*Namaste
Wade*

WebEx is up and running

The NPC is currently growing into the use of WebEx as a means of communication within the Conference and beyond. WebEx is a computer based means of communicating with up to 25 people at one time bringing not only voice communication but also picture and date. This is available for NPC group gatherings, task forces, and even larger meetings like Conference Council and the like. We are also looking for other ways to use it to enrich the life of Conference leaders, members, pastors and congregations. Some ideas that have already surfaced are text studies, open mike shared time and event planning meetings. Some of the class times for Multiple Paths and ALWL groups might also take place on WebEx. Please let us know your thoughts as to how we might use WebEx.

Congregations seeking a pastor: Mayville, Fargo, Plymouth.

Darcy Borden installation as pastor in Argusville

Please join in celebrating of the ministry of Dorothy Borden as the pastor of the Congregational United Church of Christ of Argusville. This service will be at 5:00 pm (ct) on June 20th. All NPC pastors and lay people are invited to share in this special service of celebration and praise.

Independence Congregation Celebrates 100th Anniversary

On June 27th Independence Congregational United Church of Christ located on Ft. Berthold will celebrate its 100th anniversary. More information on this special service of praise and celebration will soon arrive.

Preparations continue for the 2010 Annual Meeting

Thanks to the work of the members of the Congregational United Church of Christ of Valley City and their pastors, Carleton and Darcy Borden, all things are moving along smoothly for the NPC Annual Meeting June 11 – 13. The year's Annual Meeting theme is "A Patchwork of Hope – The Building of a Community" Registrations for this meeting have begun to arrive as we look forward to a very special time of celebration and joy. The special Mission Offering will again be for the support of the Disaster Response Fund, enabling the NPC to respond to the needs of individuals and communities in the event of a disaster. We ask that congregations support this special mission offering by giving one dollar for every member or \$100 whichever is larger. The offering will be received during the regular offering in the June 13th worship service. If that time is not convenient for your congregation, please mail it to the Conference Office at a convenient time. Please check the NPC Web site www.npcucc.org under forms and fliers, for more information and registration forms.

"BEYOND THE BIG SKY"

Summer time is just around the corner.... Full of fun times to have through events in which our Northern Plains Conference is planning and participating.

First of all, this summer, is the Family Camping Experience during our Northern Plains Conference Annual Meeting. If you like camping in the great outdoors or close to it, bring your RV or Camper to the Wagon Wheel Inn and take a berth for your camp out. The Camp spots will be available from Friday, June 11th until Sunday, June 13th. For more information, please contact our Conference Office at (701) 255-1104, and call The Wagon Wheel Inn at (701) 845-5333 to reserve and rent a spot. The cost for the Family Camping Experience is \$100.00 per family.

Then in July, we have two events from which to choose. Of course, we would love to have you be part of both. The first event is the Biennial Western Regional Youth Event in Billings, Montana from July 5th to July 10th. The theme is "Beyond the Big Sky." We invite youth aged 13 to 18 to come and take part. It is a great chance to meet other youth your age from the western part of our country. If you are interested, please contact either your minister or the Northern Plains Conference Office for a registration form. Registrations are accepted through Monday, May 31st. So, please mail in your registration by that date and join in the fun!! If any parents and other adults in the Conference would like to come, we would love to have you join us. Feel free if you are interested, to talk to your minister as well or our Conference Office at (701) 255-1104, or either Rev. Carl Borden (701) 840-5104 (Rev. Carl's Cell) or myself, (Rev. Darcy Borden) (701) 840-5105 (Rev. Darcy's Cell) or by e-mail at: congregational.ucc.valleycity@gmail.com.

Later in July, it will be time for our annual Camp Experience at Wesley Acres in Dazey, North Dakota. The theme is "Touch the Horizon." The camp this year is for those youth in our Conference who are between the ages of 8 and 16. We are also looking to see if any of you ministers, youth leaders, or adults of the church, particularly of the male persuasion, who would like to join in the fun as counselors. If you are interested in coming as a camper, or as a counselor, please see the minister of your church for a registration and disclosure form. You can also contact our Conference Office for one as well, or you can contact Rev. Carl Borden or me. For numbers and contact information, beyond your local church, you can call the Conference Office at (701) 255-1104, or contact Rev. Carl at (701) 840-5104, or you can contact me at (701) 940-5105.

Here is to hoping you can join in the fun by coming on one or each of these adventures!!

Blessings,

Rev. Darcy and Rev. Carl Borden

Co-Adjunct Youth Ministers, Northern Plains Conference - United Church of Christ

Northern Plains Conference Receives a Brown Grant

It is with joy and gratitude that I announce that the Northern Plains Conference has received a Brown Grant through the National Church. We will use this grant to support the lay ministry programs of the Conference. A new facet of that ministry is the multiple paths opportunity inviting lay members of our Conference to go beyond licensed ministry to seek ordination. The grant will help to cover some of the costs, especially those generated through the support program designed in cooperation with United Theological Seminary. This program will help to round out the development of our Multiple Paths Students enabling them to have a command of biblical theology and of the intricacies of congregational leadership and pastoral development.

The NPC Agenda for June

Date	Time	Event	Location
6/4-6/5	-----	CM attends Mont/N. Wyoming Conference	Miles City, Mont
6/6	10:30 am (ct)	CM shares in worship	Winnipeg
6/10	7:00 pm (ct)	Conference Committee meetings	Valley City
6/11	9:00 am (ct)	Conference Council	Valley City
6/11	3:30 pm (ct)	Conference Annual Meeting	Valley City
6/12-6/13	9:00 am (ct)	Annual Meeting	Valley City
6/13	10:30 am (ct)	Annual Meeting Worship	Valley City
6/19	10:30 am (ct)	Multiple Paths	Bismarck
6/20	11:00 am (ct)	CM shares in worship	Lakota
6/20	5:00 pm (ct)	Installation Service for Darcy Borden	Argusville
6/27	-----	100 th anniversary	Independence