

**THE NORTHERN PLAINS
CONFERENCE UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST**
A monthly newsletter
supporting the building of
community in the multi-
-cultural, multi-ethnic,
multi-lingual, multi-
National community of
Faith.

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**AWARE FOR;
MAY 2011**



As I Look At It

At a recent West Central Regional Meeting, Jerry Paul, the president and CEO of the Deaconess Foundation made a comment that I found enlightening. He said, "Health is not contagious, sickness is contagious, health we have to work at".

So often we go along thinking that if we do nothing to hurt something everything should work out fine. Many times I have worked with a couple that is having marital difficulty only to discover that at some point in the relationship one or both of them have stopped working at making it strong. They thought that their marriage would simply flow along, smoothly with little or no effort on their part. I remember the husband who speaking of his wife said, "She should know I love her, I told her so 5 years ago, if it had changed I would have let her know" (famous last words). We take for granted that that which is healthy stays healthy. Our bodies, once healthy will not stay that way if we do not exercise, and eat healthy food. In a relatively short period of time weakness and illness will come in. Not only will sickness enter our bodies but it will spread to areas that were not sick. We have to work at being healthy.

The same could be said for the church and for our faith. A healthy congregation does not happen without work. Work on the part of the members, the pastor, and yes possibly even the Conference. One healthy event does not create a healthy church; it does not even create other healthy events unless effort and prayer is present to help those who participated in the event and those outside who were touched by it grow so everyone can take part in other healthy events. God's Spirit is a renewing life giving force, but we have to help others experience that spirit. It can take years to enable one who out of fear has built walls that keep all, even God; out, to remove just a few blocks so that Divine Spirit can bring new life. All that while, we need to remain present, allowing God's Spirit to flow through us searching for a way to enter. Health takes work.

The work that health takes is that of the faithful servant hood to which God is calling us. It is the work of caring for the forgotten, understanding the confusing, and being a channel of a holy vision. It is the work of embracing hope in the face of despair. It is the work of calling on faith to overcome fear.

We can do all the right things and something can go dreadfully wrong. Just as health in our bodies is not a guarantee, so health in our congregations cannot be assumed. But we can be assured that the God that calls life into being continues as a source of healing, to create. The God, who never leaves, never stops working for our good health. Our bodies never stop striving for health. Until the very last breath is gone our bodies seek health. So God's Spirit continues to work within each of us that in our faith lives we might strive for health. In the same way that searching, life embracing Divine Spirit continues to work in our congregations that beyond the argument, beyond the confusion, beyond the fear we might find health. Let us not take God's Spirit for granted, but join it as a partner, as we strive for healthy congregations. Let us be about the hard faithful work that brings health. Namaste Wade

Summer Camp 2011 is coming!

We are happy to report that Reverend Tammy Toepke-Floyd is returning as our young youth's Camp Dean, and we are happy to announce that Reverend Marilyn Levine is going to be our older youth's Camp Dean. Reverend Leola Allen and Ernie Conley will be returning also as our Arts and Crafts Team, along with assistance from Kathy Holmes. Registrations are already starting to arrive, and it looks like it will be a summer experience to remember. Applications are available on our Northern Plains Conference website (www.npcucc.org) and we

hope to see you this coming July at Camp of the Cross in Garrison, North Dakota.

Articles not in the short version are: 2011 New Earth Summer Camp Experience, Summer Camp Registration information, Camp of the Cross Sunday, Voices From the Prairie, Congregations Seeking A Pastor, Disaster Clean Up and Recovery, Northern Plains Conference/South Dakota Conference talk of Union, Medallion Award information, The NPC Nominating Committee is hard at work, Sisters In Christ welcome special guests to the Northern Plains Conference, Northern Plains Conference members

are invited to share in the installation of Richard Wyman as pastor for First Congregational UCC in

Reeder, UCC Insurance Board information

The Calendar for May

Date	Time	Event	Location
5/2	-----	NCC Clean Air Gathering	Washington, DC
5/3	-----	NCC Clean Air Gathering	Washington, DC
5/4	-----	NCC Clean Air Gathering	Washington, DC
5/5	4:00 pm (ct)	NDCC Board	Stanley
5/5	6:00 pm (ct)	NDCC Dinner	Stanley
5/6	5:30 pm (ct)	Multiple Paths Gathering	Valley City
5/7	9:00 am (ct)	Multiple Paths Gathering	Valley City
5/10	10:00 am (ct)	MV Cluster	-----
5/11	12:00 Noon (ct)	Ft. Berthold Cluster	New Town
5/14	10:00 am (ct)	CHYS Howasta Lunch	Bismarck
5/14	11:00 am (mt)	ALWL #5	Dickinson
5/15	9:30 am (mt)	Installation Service for Richard Wyman	Reeder
5/17	3:00 pm (ct)	NPC/SDC talk	Medina
5/18	9:00 am (ct)	NPC/SDC talk	Medina
5/18	10:00 am (ct)	Social Media Webinar	-----
5/19	10:00 am (ct)	Fargo Cluster	-----
5/20	2:00 pm (ct)	Prairie Hospitality Face to Face	Hankinson
5/21	9:00 am (ct)	Prairie Hospitality Face to Face	Hankinson
5/22	-----	CM shares in worship	Bismarck
5/22	7:00 pm (et)	HRC Clergy Call	Washington, DC
5/23	9:00 am (et)	HRC Clergy Call	Washington, DC
5/24	9:00 am (et)	HRC Clergy Call	Washington, DC
5/26	11:00 am (ct)	Minot Cluster	-----
5/27	11:00 am (ct)	Central Cluster	-----
5/30	-----	Memorial Day	-----