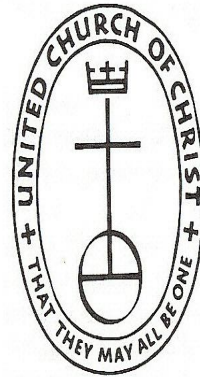


NORTHERN PLAINS CONFERENCE  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

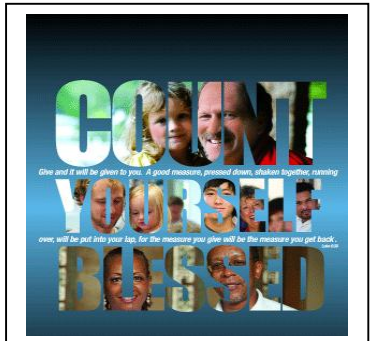
A monthly newsletter supporting  
the building of community in  
the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic,  
multi-lingual, multi-national  
community of faith.



1200 East Highland  
Acres Road  
Bismarck, North Dakota  
58501-1252  
Office Phone: 701-255-1104  
Fax Number: 701-255-0103  
Website:  
<http://npcucc.org>



NOVEMBER  
2011  
AWARE



### As I Look At It:

Two themes that present themselves to us in the month of November are Stewardship and Thanksgiving. Stewardship is uplifted in the life of the church at this time through the financial drives that many of our congregations have in preparation for the coming year. Stewardship Sunday, Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>, is the date set aside for many congregations to receive the pledges and personal commitments for 2012. The theme for the 2011 Stewardship Drive, **"Count Yourself Blessed"**, calls us to celebrate the many ways that God embraces our lives each and every day. Thanksgiving, November 24, is one of those special times when we are called to step out of our busy routine and give thanks for the ways that God's Spirit is felt in our life and for the assurance that our future will be ours in the presence of the living God. While I believe that each of these special times is significant on their own for they add focus and direction to our lives, I also am convinced that Stewardship and Thanksgiving are a vital part of each other. For to see ourselves as stewards, caretakers of God's world calls for a Thankful heart, and to truly be Thankful for

God's many blessings now and in the future we are called to dedicate ourselves to being good and faithful stewards of those gifts.

Thanksgiving is the lens we put on our lives so that we might see the world in its fullest. Thanksgiving puts the events and challenges of everyday life in their proper context. In the same way that bifocals bring the details of a page into clearer focus, so Thanksgiving helps us to see more accurately and completely the events of our daily routine. When we view the world with a Thankful Heart we are able to see the hand of God moving in the communities and events in which we are living.

Stewardship guides us to live fully and responsibly as God's partner in that world. Stewardship directs our actions and our thoughts and thereby helps us to avoid the trap that would have us believe that we are the owners of all the gifts that God so generously bestows on us, but rather that we are caretakers of those gifts. The stewardship message is that we have been entrusted with God's rich and bountiful gifts, that through the sharing of them God's grace and love might touch this world.



When Stewardship and Thanksgiving are brought together in us we are enabled to live freely and fully in the midst of God's rich abundance. When we connect the two, we discover that God's blessings are not merely baggage that we hang onto our lives, but the energy and vision that move us into a fuller tomorrow. For when Thanksgiving and Stewardship come together we experience not only the joy of receiving the blessings of God but also the even greater joy of sharing them. For of all the blessings that God has given us none is greater than that of being a channel of God's grace to another life.

When Stewardship and Thanksgiving are united in us, our everyday becomes a celebration of God's bounty all around us. Each gift becomes a light of hope and a bridge to a new tomorrow. When Stewardship and Thanksgiving are united in us our time on this Earth is transformed from a daily drudgery to a pilgrimage of promise.

Let us Thankfully share God's gifts with our brothers and sisters as we live our faith as God's Stewards in Jesus' name.  
Namaste  
Wade



### **Many Thanks to Carleton and Darcy Borden:**

As future calls to ministry will guide Carleton and Darcy Borden to challenges beyond the boundaries of the Northern Plains Conference, the Faith and Nurture Committee has with sadness and gratitude received their resignation as the Co-Youth Directors for the Northern Plains Conference. We wish Carleton and Darcy well as they look forward to the opportunities placed before them as they prepare to move to a new call. May God's richest blessing continue to be with them as they go forth as channels of God's grace. Your many friends in the Northern Plains Conference wish you well.



### **The Northern Plains Conference is looking for a Youth Director:**

Following the resignation of Carleton and Darcy Borden as co-youth directors for the Northern Plains Conference, the Faith and Nurture Committee announces that they are receiving applications from those that would be interested in serving in that position. If you are interested in being a part of the Northern Plains Conference team, helping to plan the various youth events, please do not hesitate to contact the Conference Office for more information. If you have questions do not hesitate to call 701 255 1104.



### **The Northern Plains Conference prepares to move its office:**

As a move to help trim the 2012 budget the Northern Plains Conference is closing its office at Bismarck United Church of Christ and will be moving operations to Peg and Wade Schemmel's home. The move will take place the first week of November. On November 2 & 3 the office at the church will be packed. All who would like to help are invited to come to the office located in the basement of Bismarck UCC which is located at 1200 East Highland Acres Road, The telephone will be moved on November 4<sup>th</sup>. I would suggest that if you wish to get hold of the Conference Office or the Conference Minister during that time that you call Peg Schemmel's Cell at 701 226 1196 or Wade Schemmel's cell at 701 471 3278. We will also have the means to receive emails during

the move. The final phase of the move will be completed on November 7<sup>th</sup>. I want to thank Marcy Dawson and the First Congregational United Church of Christ of Hebron for making space available for storage. Material not taken to the Schemmel home will be housed in the basement of the First Congregational UCC parsonage. If you have questions please do not hesitate to call the Conference Office. On behalf of the Northern Plains Conference I want to **thank Bismarck United Church of Christ** for hosting us for the past five years. It has been our pleasure to be in their facility and to be able to carry on the business and life of the Conference from that location. It has been our pleasure to work with the Bismarck United Church of Christ and we look forward to future opportunities to share with them and others in the NPC in the vital ministry that God has placed before us.



Let us join the members of **Hope United Church of Christ of Streeter** and their pastor, Zach Bey, as they celebrate the **100<sup>th</sup> anniversary** for their congregation. All Northern Plains Conference folk are invited to join together in Streeter on November 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 am (ct) for this special celebration.

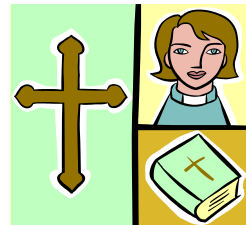


All Northern Plains Conference pastors and members are encouraged to share in the **installation service for Margaret Kloster** as the pastor for the First Congregational United Church of Christ of Argusville. The address is:

101 Third Street, Argusville. Margaret will be installed by the Northern Plains Conference Church and Ministry Committee on **November 6<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm (ct)**. Let us join together to celebrate this joyous event.

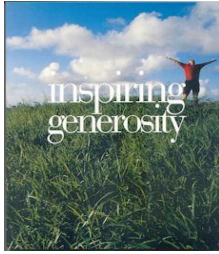


**The New Address for the Northern Plains Conference, Conference Office:**  
Beginning November 1<sup>st</sup> is 204 East Reno Avenue, Bismarck ND, 58504-6471. Please make that change in your mailing labels. The Conference phone and fax numbers and email addresses will remain the same.



Let us join together for the **Installation of Ethelind (Lindy) Holt as Chaplain** at the **Ann Carlson Center** in Jamestown, November 10, 2011 at 2:30 p.m. The address is: 701 3rd Street North West, Jamestown. This special service will be an opportunity to celebrate this historic ministry and to wish Lindy well on her new pilgrimage. As we celebrate this ministry, we also lift up the four way covenant which calls Pastor Holt into a bond with **First Congregational UCC of Jamestown**.



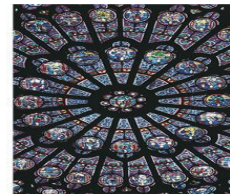


The Northern Plains Conference had the privilege of hosting Kate Huey, Minister for Stewardship, Scripture and Discipleship of the National Church for a Stewardship Workshop September 30 and October 1. Her presentation was filled with helpful, informative and very practical information. She indeed shared from the depth of her years of experience working with congregations around stewardship. Beginning **Monday Evening, December 12<sup>th</sup>** Kate will again be presenting her unique brand of wisdom and vision through a **"Coming Together On Line"** event that will be hosted via WebEx. The two hour event will begin at 6:00 pm (ct) and go until approximately 8:00 pm (ct). More information about this project will be forthcoming. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to call the Conference Office. To participate in the program you would need to call the Conference Office so a WebEx connection can be sent to you. If you have questions please do not hesitate to call the Conference Office.



**Five from Northern Plains Conference** will attend an **Evangelism Workshop**: Our best thoughts are with five Northern Plains Conference pastors and lay leaders who will join others from across the UCC in exploring ways to reach out and invite folk

from all places in life to celebrate and partner with the Still Speaking God, November 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>. Church leaders will come together to explore opportunities for information and empowerment for their local churches so that in future months we might grow in our understanding of the fullness of God's vision for the church. Northern Plains Conference church leaders attending the Evangelism workshop in Detroit, Michigan are Marcy Dawson, Marilyn Kennedy Levine, Judy Maxson, Tom Payne and Keith Mills.



#### **Congregations Seeking A Pastor:**

The following churches are seeking new pastoral leadership:

- Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ in Fargo** (currently with a hold on profiles), and
- United Church of Christ in Bismarck**



Nov. 1-11, 2011... ONE UNITED CHURCH on a shared mission for 11 powerful days to feed the hungry and confront food-related injustice. This is MISSION: 1

- In 11 days, the United Church of Christ will collect more than 1 MILLION ITEMS OF HEALTHY FOOD and other household items for local food banks and outreach services.
- In 11 days, the United Church of Christ will make an extra-special push to gather online contributions of more than \$111,111



DOLLARS for [Neighbors in Need food-related ministries](#), offerings that will be shared for hunger-action purposes with agencies of justice and compassion throughout the United States.

- In 11 days, the United Church of Christ will offer more than 11,111 LETTERS to Congress asking our government to reform U.S. foreign assistance in a way that more effectively benefits hungry and poor people worldwide, helping to provide a major final push to Bread for the World's 2011 "[Offering of Letters](#)" campaign.

DURING THE FIRST 11 DAYS of NOVEMBER, an online tote board at [ucc.org](http://ucc.org) will tally our collective count of foodstuffs, donations and letters - information we'll update and celebrate in real time together. Please also inform the Conference Office of your tally of donations and letters.

And throughout the 11 days, the UCC's [Justice and Witness Ministries](#) will organize church-member delegations to meet with Members of Congress to bring attention to our church's concern about hunger at home and abroad.

Most importantly, our UCC motto and Jesus' prayer "that they may all be 1" will become a focused, concerted mission emphasis across the whole United Church of Christ to educate ourselves and one another about food-related policy issues through sermons, seminars and conversations; to advocate on behalf of hungry people at home and around the world; to raise money for hunger-action purposes; and to share bread - and tuna, and peanut butter, and vegetables, and cereal - with our neighbors in need.

Begin now to organize your church's victory strategy. And plan now to join in a national celebration of our campaign's success on Sunday, Nov. 13 - in your local UCC church.

The world needs the distinct values, vision and voice of the United Church of Christ -

Continuing Testament, Extravagant Welcome, Changing Lives. This is MISSION: 1!



### **The Sisters in Christ Women's Ministry Committee seeks a new chair:**

Following seven years as the chair for the Sisters in Christ, Women's Ministry Committee, Peg Schemmel has stepped down and the group is looking for a new chair to guide their vital work. The Sisters in Christ are the arm of the Northern Plains Conference ministry that reaches out to and invites UCC women to come together for fellowship and sharing. Two special events that are hosted by this ministry are the Annual Women's luncheon which takes place during the Annual Meeting, and the Fall Northern Plains Conference Women's Retreat. Any who are interested in learning more about this vital ministry are invited to contact the Conference Office.



The Northern Plains Conference had the opportunity to welcome **Florence Coppola, Executive for National Disaster Ministries** to tour the various critical disaster sites in the Conference. While getting a vision of the "Lay of the Land" in North Dakota, Florence Coppola paid specific visits to Minot, Bismarck, Fargo and the Jamestown Valley City areas. We are grateful that she could take time from her busy schedule to take a firsthand look at the flood damage. Florence's trip was coordinated by Lindy Holt, the Northern Plains Conference Disaster Coordinator.



**“Voices From The Prairie”**

**A View from the Window**

During the years I spent serving in the Bismarck United Church of Christ, I would look out my office window and see the back yards of neighbors—filled with trees, lawn, storage sheds and scattered pieces of yard equipment. It’s a familiar landscape to many North Dakotans.

Now I’ve moved to Cleveland, Ohio to assume a position in the national setting of the church. Things look a bit different from my new office window. There’s an urban landscape filled with skyscrapers, high rise apartments and traffic. Off in the distance I can catch a glimpse of Lake Erie, but there’s not a lawnmower or cottonwood in sight.

**The Calendar for November**

Date	Time	Event	Location
11/2-11/5	-----	Evangelism Workshop	Detroit
11/3	10:00 am (ct)	MV Cluster	Flasher
11/6	4:00 pm (ct)	Margaret Kloster Installation	Argusville
11/7	8:30 am (ct)	Move Conference Office	Bismarck
11/10	2:30pm (ct)	Lindy Holt Installation Service	Jamestown
11/10-11/12	-----	CM attends Board meetings	Cleveland
11/13	10:00 am (ct)	CM Leads Worship	Springfield, SD
11/16	12:00 Noon (ct)	Ft. Berthold Cluster	New Town
11/17	10:00 am (ct)	Fargo Cluster	First Cong, Fargo
11/20	10:30 am (ct)	Anniversary Celebration	Streeter
11/21	11:00 am (ct)	Central Cluster	-----
11/24	-----	Thanksgiving	-----
11/28	11:00 am (ct)	Minot Cluster	-----

Even though the view from my current office window differs dramatically from that of my former office, some things still look the same. On a daily basis, I continue to see people struggling to live faithfully. I see a church committed to justice, to wholeness and healing. I see the need to proclaim the good news of forgiveness and reconciliation. Most of all, I see the grace of God which works in our midst at all times and in all places.

Admittedly, I grow homesick for the wide open spaces of North Dakota and I miss everyone there I’ve come to know and love over the years. I have gone to a new land to which I have been called—things look a little different here. Thankfully, the grace and mercy of God remain familiar sights.

Peace, Jim Moos, Executive Minister for Wider Church Ministries and Co-executive for Global Ministries, Cleveland, Ohio

