

# Presbytery Highlights

## *Highlights from the last stated meeting of the Presbytery of South Dakota*

The winter gathering of the Presbytery had to be rescheduled due to the weather, but there was still a substantial showing of people attending the meeting on March 3rd at First Presbyterian Church, Huron. In many ways, this most recent meeting of the Presbytery of South Dakota gave witness to the ways God's Spirit is working in individuals, churches, in our Presbytery and the larger denomination.



### **God's Spirit is working through**

#### **Individuals:**

- The Presbytery of South Dakota commissioned Deb VanOverschelde in worship as our new Treasurer.
- The Presbytery certified Marcus Brooks as "Ready and certified to receive a call" after he shared his statement of faith and answered questions from the floor. This means Marcus is now welcome to search for an ordained position.

*(Pictured left: The Presbytery prayed and laid hands on Marcus as he moves forth in his ministry.)*

### **God's Spirit is working through Churches:**

- Kristie Berglund shared good news from the Table of Grace, a New Church Development in Harrisburg. While, she admits it is a difficult mission field, there is growing interest in the ways Table of Grace offers meaning to the lives of local residents. They especially saw recent success in a Wednesday night meal they offered to families with over 50 in attendance.
- The Congregational and Pastoral Ministry Team reported a new union between the Presbyterian and the UCC churches of Willow Lake. This new union is now called the Lake Gospel Church, and will be led by Commissioned Ruling Elder Steven Johnson.
- The Presbytery approved and appointed an Administrative Commission to work closely with First Presbyterian Church of Aberdeen "to assess the viability and the sustainability of the church to provide an effective ministry of the gospel." This means a committee of five, with a moderator, from the Presbytery will provide leadership and guidance for their future over the next year.

### **God's Spirit is working through our Presbytery and denomination:**

- Rev. Roland Kemink shared the exciting work being done by our Presbytery's camping program. The camps are going through a new visioning process which will be facilitated by Deb DeMeester from the Synod office. Alyssa Schwartz (*pictured right*) and her mother both gave heartfelt testimonials about the power of our camping program.



### **God's Spirit is working through our Presbytery and denomination Continued:**

- The Presbytery made the following policy changes: there was a revision in the definition of a POSD trustee, and amendments were made to the current manual of operations pertaining to the Permanent Judiciary Committee.
- During the bi-annual meeting of our national denomination's General Assembly, there were several amendments purposed to our bi-laws (Book of Order). Those amendments then need to be approved by the presbyteries. Our Presbytery approved all the General Assembly's amendments except for "The Ministry of Members (On Amending G-1.0304)." There was debate and a close vote pertaining to an amendment "Ordered Ministry Titles" which would change the terms "Teaching Elder" to "Minister of Word and Sacrament" and "Commissioned Ruling Elder" to "Lay Pastor," which was ultimately approved.



The meeting, also, had an interesting educational component, by showing the documentary "I Am." The film asks the provocative questions "What's wrong with our world?," and "What can we do to make it better?" to scientist, philosophers, and religious leaders. While this was a secular film it challenged viewers to reevaluate assumptions we have about greed and human nature.

Rev. David Lick (*pictured left*), Pastor of Emmanuel Presbyterian Church in Marion, preached from John on the rising of Lazarus, a fitting text for this season. Rev. Lick showed the ways this text gives believers permission to lament, but also reminded the Presbytery, "Our call today in the Presbytery of South Dakota is not to see the tomb, not to smell the reek of death, but to give us voice to say, "Lazarus, come out!" Rev. Lick passionately proclaimed, "Whether the bodies come or not, that's not our place to know, to be certain of, or to expect. That's up to the grace of God. What's up to us is to fulfill the mission of the church – to find the mourning sisters and brothers, and show them the Resurrection and the Life, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord." ●



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