

**Dakotas Annual Conference
of The United Methodist Church**



**Celebration of
*Life in Ministry***

June 8, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

Embrace Church

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Welcome to this significant service of worship and celebration of ministry. We pray you may participate fully in offering praise and thanksgiving to our God for the work of the Holy Spirit.

IN ORDINATION, the Holy Spirit acts to maintain the priority of the gospel by setting apart men and women called to leadership as apostles.

The pattern for this response to the call is provided in the development of the early church. The apostles led in prayer, teaching, and preaching; ordered the spiritual and temporal life of the community; established leadership for the ministry of service; and provided for the proclamation of the gospel to new people and in new places. The early church, through the laying on of hands, set apart people with responsibility to preach, to teach, to administer the sacraments, to nurture, to heal, to gather the community in worship, and to send them forth in witness. The church also set apart other people to care for the physical needs of others, reflecting the concerns for the people of the world.

Ordination to this ministry is a gift from God to the church. In ordination, the church affirms and continues the apostolic ministry through people empowered by the Holy Spirit.

ACTS OF ORDINATION AND COMMISSIONING are anchored in the sacrament of baptism and the ministry of the baptized. All baptized Christians respond as “the priesthood of all believers,” and so, as we begin, we reaffirm our baptism together.

COMMISSIONING may be compared to the experience of the early church in Antioch as the Holy Spirit instructed the community to “set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them” (Acts 13:2, NRSV). As provisional members are commissioned, we acknowledge and affirm God’s call and the individual’s response, gifts, and training for leadership in the local church and community. We offer our support for their continuing formation as each one journeys toward ordination and full membership in the conference.

ORDINATION is understood as the act of the Holy Spirit and, as a liturgical rite, the culmination of a process in which representatives of the whole church discern and validate the call, gifts and effectiveness for ministry. Ordination of deacons and elders is both to an office and for a lifetime. Ordination confers a new identity in the life of the church as well as authority for ministry. This identity is claimed in relation to Christ and his call to leadership and service with the baptized for the life of the world. Upon ordination, deacons and elders become accountable to the whole church, to the community of the ordained, and to the order of deacons or elders of which they are a part.

THE LAYING ON OF HANDS, referenced in Timothy 1:6, indicates the sign of calling on God’s Holy Spirit to bestow the gift of grace for ministry. Commissioned people are blessed on the shoulders as a sign of sending into ministry for a specified period of time. They kneel facing the congregation as a sign that they are sent into the congregation for continued formation and service before ordination. In ordination, a bishop lays hands on the head of the candidate as a sign of the gifts of the Holy Spirit for a lifetime of ministry. The ordinands kneel facing the bishop as a sign that they are sent and supported by the congregation into a lifetime of service. The whole church affirms together with “Amen” to indicate recognition, gratitude, and commitment to the work of the Holy Spirit. The privilege of sharing in ministry with all in Christ’s holy church is celebrated by the inclusion of an ecumenical representative to share in the laying on of hands.

During the laying on of hands by the bishop of those being commissioned, ordained, and recognized, family, friends, and colleagues of the candidate are invited to stand, offering their silent blessing of grace and prayerful support.

INSTRUMENTS AND SYMBOLS, for the ordering of ministry are represented for the distinct orders. The Bible is common to all orders of Christ’s ministry. Commissioned ministers wear no stole. The ministry of the deacon is symbolized by the basin, pitcher, and towel, representing servant ministry. The deacon’s stole, worn over the left shoulder, across the body, symbolizes the servant’s towel. The ministry of the elder is symbolized by the chalice (cup) and paten (plate), representing the sacrament of Holy Communion. The elder’s stole, yoked at the neck, hanging straight down, symbolizes the yoking with Jesus Christ. The bishop’s instrument of ministry is the crozier, or shepherd’s staff, symbolizing the pastoral leadership of Christ and his flock. Like all Christians, licensed local pastors may wear a cross, which represents the servant’s apron, and a pectoral cross.

OFFERING taken this evening will support the Ministerial Education Fund, which provides scholarships to seminary students and continuing education funds for clergy.

Service

Gathering

**Please stand as you are able.*

***Processional Song**

You Have Done Great Things for Us

Matt Redman

Opening Worship

***Prayer by Bishop Ough**

***Congregational Songs**

The congregation is seated.

*Here For You
Cornerstone*

*Matt Redman
Hillsong Worship*

***Worship Leader's Prayer**

The Recognition of Common Ministry and Reaffirmation of Baptism

Bishop: Ministry is the work of God, done by the people of God. Through baptism all Christians are made part of the priesthood of all believers, the church, Christ's body, made visible in the world. We all share in Christ's ministry of love and service for the redemption of the human family and the whole of creation.

Therefore, in celebration of our common ministry, I call upon all God's people gathered here: Remember your baptism and be thankful!

Congregation: We reaffirm our baptism and our common call to ministry. Thanks be to God!

Recognition of the Retirement Class

Conference Co-Lay Leader: We celebrate the faithful service represented by this class of retirees and their spouses. On behalf of the laity of the local congregations and the many persons who were reached by the ministry of these persons, we offer our deepest gratitude.

Chair of Board of Ordained Ministry: On behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry which has received the requests, and on behalf of the Clergy Session which has granted their requests, we honor these clergy entering a retirement relationship with the Dakotas Annual Conference:

Hazel Behrens
Steve Behrens
David Birkeland
Martha Brandt
Bruce Forbes
Eric Grinager
Mina Hall

Brian Hazard
Rebecca "Becky" Holten
Randy Maddox
A. Russell Masartis
Franklin "Frank" McKeehan
Melanie Reiners
Raenelle Sorensen

Chair of Board of Ordained Ministry: Your calling has been an invitation to share in the most holy and tender moments of our lives: the sacred of the ordinary, and the power of sacred ceremony. Together we have struggled, laughed, cried, and grown.

Congregation: You answered God's call to walk with us through our lives. You were there in moments of life, death, hope, despair, joy, and sorrow. You steadfastly offered to us the presence of the living Christ.

Conference Co-Lay Leader: Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, you shared your gifts, you sacrificed, and you learned.

Congregation: You helped us all to relate to the Good News of Jesus Christ when you held candles with us on Christmas Eve, and sang triumphantly with us on Easter morning.

Chair of Board of Ordained Ministry: You brought care and compassion to families in grief, and guided others on their journey to eternal life. In your presence, we remembered that God does not abandon us.

Congregation: You reminded us that death does not have the last word. In discouragement, you reminded us that we are beloved sons and daughters of the Creator.

Bishop: Together you represent over 297 years of service in ministry. Never underestimate that which God has already accomplished through you. Continue to be true to your calling, confident of the ever-present Spirit working through your lives. Let us join in prayer:

All: Gracious God, you fill your servants with love and empower us with your Spirit. We give heartfelt thanks for the ministries of these faithful leaders, and for the ways that you have ministered to us through them. In the days that follow, make your presence known to them as they continue to love and serve you. May they, like us, continue to grow in the grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Adapted and used with permission from the West Ohio Conference

Bishop and Board of Ordained Ministry Chair present certificates to retirees who then return to their seats.

A Time of Remembrance

Conference Co-Lay Leader: We are gathered tonight celebrating the fullness of life in ministry. We honor beginnings, endings, and new chapters, always in the hope and promise of life abundant in Jesus Christ. Trusting in God's eternal goodness, we also celebrate the memory of clergy and clergy spouses who have gone on to glory in this time of remembrance and response.

Memorial Video Presentation

Anyone present who has been part of the life or ministry of those being remembered are invited to stand in honor of them as they are memorialized. Complete memoirs can be found beginning on page 10 of this booklet.

Clergy

Donald Hadrick (August 20, 2017)
Walter Nelson (October 27, 2017)
Ralph Sjursen (December 6, 2017)
Gene Kroger (May 14, 2018)

Clergy Spouses

James McLaird, spouse of Rev. Donna McLaird (August 31, 2017)
Vivian Greenough, spouse of Rev. Donald Greenough (September 17, 2017)
Nancy Veglahn, widow of Rev. Don Veglahn (October 6, 2017)
Elizabeth Eastin, widow of Rev. Kenneth Eastin (October 7, 2017)

Evelyn Nielsen, widow of Rev. Clifford Nielsen (November 8, 2017)
Phyllis Fike, spouse of Rev. Gerald Fike (December 18, 2017)
Dorothy Grinager Lindbloom, widow of Rev. Lloyd Grinager (April 10, 2018)

Bishop: Gracious and Eternal God, all of creation is given by you.

Congregation: **It is by your grace and blessing these beloved ones we have named, shared life with us. We treasure all from them that lives within us.**

Bishop: Hold them in your arms of mercy, as we hold them in our memory.

All: **As we once again entrust them to you, may we know that peace and joy which is eternal life. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Ecumenical Greeting

Introduction by Bishop Bruce Ough

Greetings from Bishop David B. Zellmer, South Dakota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Proclamation

Scripture Mark 10:35-45 and John 15:1-8

Sermon Apart from Me You Can Do Nothing, Bishop Bruce Ough

Offering

The offering from tonight's service is for ministerial student aid funds for Dakotas Conference clergy.

Offertory Song

God I Look to You

Bethel Music

Recognition of Licensed Local Pastors

Chair of Board of Ordained Ministry: We recognize that there are many ways of answering a call to ministry. We invite our newly appointed local pastors, as well as Mike Flowers, to come forward at this time.

We recognize that there are many ways of answering a call to ministry and so we take this time to recognize, thank, and bless those persons who have answered the call to the ministry of a licensed local pastor. Several of the following individuals were licensed and first appointed during the past year. The others will receive their license following the successful completion of licensing school in June and will begin serving as local pastors on July 1. We invite them forward at this time.

Jason Christensen serving White River — Mission
Rey Colon serving Huron First
Brandon Dunham serving Groton — Conde
Andy Early serving Bismarck Legacy
Corey Enfield serving Yankton — Gayville — Volin

Andrew Gross serving Madison
Justin Jenness serving Sioux Falls Southern Hills — Flandreau
Zach Kingery serving Wessington Springs
Barbara Krumm serving Ashley
Molly Leger serving Arlington — Lake Preston
Jason Martens serving Salem Unite
Jennifer McDonald serving Minot Vincent
Jeffrey Neuberger serving Park River — Fordville
Brett Roes serving Rapid City Canyon Lake
Derek Runge serving Kimball
Michelle Slott serving Rapid City First
Jeanne Sortland serving Wimbledon — Kensal
Carlisha Steffes serving in Extension Ministry at Avera Heart Hospital
Mike Waldrop serving Aberdeen First
Dan Weigel serving Bismarck Legacy
Joshua Willprecht serving Dell Rapids

Additionally, we mark an important milestone in the ministry of the licensed local pastor—the completion of the Course of Study. We invite forward:

Mike Flowers serving Spirit Lake Ministry Center

Bishop: Your leadership in ministry is essential to our conference, and together we declare it:

All: We are grateful for your covenant as servant leaders of God's people. We send you, trusting that God will be generous with and through you, shaping your lives and leadership in both mysterious and concrete ways. And to this we say, "Hallelujah!"

As we prepare to send these newly appointed local pastors out as leaders for the Dakotas Annual Conference, we ask all of the appointed local pastors who have been serving faithfully to please stand and be included in the blessing.

Bishop: Let us pray.

All: Almighty God, whose word is truth, we thank you for these persons whom you have set aside to serve as local pastors. Unleash them as bearers of your blessing in the world. Prepare them in body, mind, and spirit for their task; enfold and shield them in your grace; reveal and embolden them for leadership. May they increase and bless your church. Amen.

Commissioning and Ordination

Presentation or person being commissioned

Conference Co-Lay Leader: On behalf of the laity of local congregations who have examined and approved this candidate...

Chair of Board of Ordained Ministry: ... and on behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry of the Dakotas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, which has also examined and approved this candidate...

Both: ...we present this person to be commissioned for the work of an elder:

Jordan Andrew Louks

Candidate turns facing the bishop.

Bishop: My brother in Christ, this is a solemn hour in your life and the life of the church. You have shared in the ministry of all the baptized and have witnessed to Christ's call to leadership among the people of God.

Serving among us as a faithful disciple, you have shown gifts and graces for leading the people of God in living and proclaiming the gospel to all people.

Do you believe that you are called to the work of leadership and service among the people of God?

Candidate: I do so believe.

Do you believe in the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?

Candidate: I do so believe and confess.

Are you persuaded that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain all things necessary for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ and are the unique and authoritative standard for the church's faith and life?

Candidate: I am so persuaded, by God's grace.

Will you be faithful in prayer, in the study of the Holy Scriptures, and, with the help of the Holy Spirit, continually rekindle the gift of God that is in you?

Candidate: I will, with the help of God.

Will you do your best to pattern your life in accordance with the teachings of Christ?

Candidate: I will, with the help of God.

Will you, in the exercise of your ministry, lead the people of God to faith in Jesus Christ, to participate in the life and work of the community, and to seek peace, justice, and freedom for all people?

Candidate: I will, with the help of God.

Will you give yourself fully to the work of God in the world and to servant leadership in the life and work of Christ's church?

Candidate: I will, with the help of God.

Will you be loyal to The United Methodist Church, accepting its order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline, defending it against all doctrines contrary to God's Holy Word, and committing yourself to be accountable with those serving with you and to the bishop and those who are appointed to supervise your ministry?

Candidate: I will, with the help of God.

The candidate for commissioning is robed by a retiring member of the conference. District Superintendents will come forward and stand behind the bishop.

The Commissioning of Provisional Member

Bishop: Pour out your Holy Spirit upon Jordan Louks. Send him to be a faithful servant leader among the people, to lead the church in service, to proclaim the Word of God, and to equip others for ministry, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Thanks be to God! Amen

The recently commissioned is seated among the clergy.

Presentation of Person to be Ordained as an Elder

Conference Co-Lay Leader: On behalf of the laity of local congregations who have examined and approved this candidate...

Chair of Board of Ordained Ministry: ...and on behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry of the Dakotas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, which has also examined and approved this candidate...

Both: ...we present this person to be ordained as elder in Christ's holy church:

Travis William Krogman

Bishop: My brother in Christ, you have been called to an ordained ministry. The church now affirms your calling through ordination. As an ordained minister, you are to be a co-worker with the laity, bishops, deacons, diaconal ministers, deaconesses, home missionaries, commissioned ministers, local pastors and elders.

Remember that you are called to serve rather than to be served, to proclaim the faith of the church and no other, to look after the concerns of God above all.

So that we may know that you believe yourself to be called by God and that you profess the Christian faith, we ask you:

Do you believe that God has called you to the life-time ministry of word, sacrament, order, and service, which is the work of an elder?

Candidate: I do so believe.

Do you believe in the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?

Candidate: I do so believe and confess.

Are you persuaded that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain all things necessary for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and are the unique and authoritative standard for the church's faith and life?

Candidate: I am so persuaded, by God's grace.

Will you be faithful in prayer, in the study of the Holy Scriptures, and, with the help of the Holy Spirit, continually rekindle the gift of God that is in you?

Candidate: I will, with the help of God.

Will you do your best to pattern your life in accordance with the teachings of Christ?

Candidate: I will, with the help of God.

Will you, in the exercise of your ministry, lead the people of God to faith in Jesus Christ, to participate in the life and work of the community, and to seek peace, justice, and freedom for all people?

Candidate: I will, with the help of God.

Will you be loyal to The United Methodist Church, accepting its order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline, defending it against all doctrines contrary to God's Holy Word, and committing yourself to be accountable with those serving with you and to the bishop and those who are appointed to supervise your ministry?

Candidate: I will, with the help of God.

Bishop: May God, who has given you the will to do these things, give you grace to perform them, so that the work begun in you may be brought to perfection.

All: Amen.

The candidate kneels before the bishop, as representatives join the bishop in the laying on of hands. Those who have been a part of the ordinand's life and faith journey are invited to stand during the laying on of hands as a sign of support.

Bishop: Almighty God, pour upon Travis Krogman the Holy Spirit, for the office and work of an elder in Christ's holy church.

Bishop: Travis, take authority as an elder to preach the Word of God, to administer the Holy Sacraments, and to order the life of the Church; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

An elder's stole is given to the new elder by a retiring elder of the Annual Conference.

Foot Washing and Thanksgiving

As a symbol of servanthood, the bishop, assisted by a deacon, washes the feet of the newly ordained elder.

Prayer

Bishop: Gracious and Almighty God, we give you thanks for this clergy, and we remember all of those who have gone before us in life and ministry. May your presence continue to surround and sustain us in the work to which we are called. We are grateful that you continue to call and raise up among us these faithful servants. Strengthen all of us in hope as we bring you the glory by giving ourselves to others; in the name of the living Lord we pray.

All: Amen.

Invitation to Servant Ministry

All persons have gifts for ministry in Christ's church, yet some are called to more specialized ministries. Servant ministry is offered in many forms, be it laity or clergy. Anyone who wishes to make a commitment to servant ministry, in whatever form it may take, is invited to come forward and pray with members of the clergy and laity of the Annual Conference.

Bishop: We thank you, Generous God, for raising up among us faithful servants for ministry in your church. Clothe them in righteousness, and grant that we, with them, may glorify you by giving ourselves to others, through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

***Congregational Songs**

*Give Us Your Heart
Beautiful Name*

*Embrace Worship
Hillsong Worship*

Sending Forth

Dismissal with Blessing

Deacon: Go in peace, always open to the call and grace of God's Spirit.

Bishop: The blessing of God's unfailing love, Christ's unceasing presence, and the Spirit's unsurpassed gifts be with us all now and forever.

All: Amen and Amen!

***Recessional Song**

Lion and the Lamb

Bethel Music

Postlude

In Memory < *Clergy*

Donald Hadrick 1934-2017

The Rev. Donald Hadrick, 83, of Boulder Canyon, S.D., passed away Sunday, Aug. 20, 2017, after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease. Earlier in the day, Don celebrated his 57th wedding anniversary with his wife, Jean. A celebration-of-life service was held Friday, Aug. 25, 2017, at the United Methodist Church in Sturgis, S.D., with Pastor Sharla McCaskell officiating.



Donald Earle Hadrick was born Feb. 15, 1934, to Louis and Bertha (Elliott) Hadrick, near Faulkton, S.D., where he grew up on a farm. In 1953, Don enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and transferred to the Marine Corps Depot in San Diego, Calif. After he was honorably discharged, he moved to

Minneapolis, Minn. where he worked in a pharmacy until 1956, when he responded to his calling to be a minister.

He returned to South Dakota and attended Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell, S.D., where he met the love of his life, Virjean "Jean" Dykes. In 1960, Don graduated from DWU with a degree in history, and Jean graduated from the Methodist Hospital School of Nursing. They were married on Aug. 20, 1960, by Dr. Jack Early, DWU president, at the Presbyterian Church in Bridgewater, S.D.

In 1961, Don and Jean moved to Kansas City, Mo., where Don attended St. Paul School of Theology for one year and worked at Wyandotte Detention Center for Youth. He completed his

theology training at Garrett Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill., in 1966.

He was admitted on trial and ordained deacon by the South Dakota Conference of the Methodist Church in 1965. In 1967 he was elected elder and full member.

Don served Methodist and United Methodist churches in South Dakota at Kennebec-Reliance (1959-1961), Faith-Plainview Community Church (1962-1966), Tulare-St. John UCC-Salem UCC (1966-1972), Selby-Lowry Pilgrim UCC (1972-1979), Webster-Bristol-Butler (1979-1985), Deadwood (1985-1989), the Greater Redfield Parish of Redfield-Ashton-Rockham-Miranda (Oct. 15, 1989-1992), and Redfield-Ashton (1992-1996).

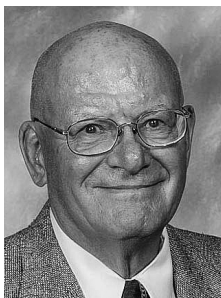
While in Deadwood, Don portrayed Preacher Smith during the Days of '76. He was instrumental in erecting a monument honoring Preacher Smith at Mount Moriah Cemetery in Deadwood.

Don served on the board of the South Dakota Mental Health Association and was a member of Kiwanis Club. In 2015, Don was honored for 60 years as a Mason. He donated more than 10 gallons of blood over the years.

In 1996, Don retired from the ministry. He and Jean moved to Boulder Canyon and lived in the home built by their children. In 2009, Don was honored as a Jubilee Clergy. He continued to serve as pulpit supply for many years until his Alzheimer's became too severe.

Walter Nelson 1926-2017

The Rev. Walter Nelson, 91, died Friday, Oct. 27, 2017, at Firesteel Health Care Center in Mitchell, S.D. Funeral services were held Monday, Oct. 30, 2017, at First United Methodist Church in Mitchell. Burial was in Underwood Cemetery near White Lake, S.D.



Walter Anthony Nelson was born at the Mitchell Methodist Hospital on April 9, 1926, to Anthon and Lilas

(Hyde) Nelson, of rural White Lake. He grew up on a farm north of White Lake in Patten Township, attending elementary school at Patten Consolidated School and graduating from Wessington Springs High School.

Walt married Janet Bonney at Kennebec, S.D., on Dec. 30, 1947, with her father, the Rev. Roger B. Bonney, officiating.

Walt served Methodist churches in the South Dakota Conference as student supply at Viborg (1946-1947) and Rowena-Ben Clare (1947-1950). He was admitted on trial by

the South Dakota Conference in 1950. He served as approved supply at Elk Point-Richland-Burbank (1950-1953).

Walt earned his bachelor's degree at Sioux Falls College in Sioux Falls, S.D., and did graduate work at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion, S.D. While earning his master of divinity degree at Drew Theological Seminary in Madison, N.J., he served at Roxbury and Halcottsville, N.Y.

He was admitted in full connection and ordained deacon in 1955 and elder in 1956. He continued serving in the South Dakota Conference at Murdo-Okaton (1956-Dec. 1961), Milbank (Jan. 1962-1969), Beresford Zion (1969-1972), Diamond Care Center at Bridgewater (1972-1974), Jenkins United Methodist Nursing Home at Watertown (1974-1979), Flandreau-Egan (1979-1982), Methodist Hospital in Mitchell-Ethan (1982-1985), and Methodist Hospital in Mitchell-Mitchell First associate

(1985-March 1987). He then volunteered with A Christian Ministry in the National Parks, conducting church services for tourists at Big Bend National Park in Texas (March 1987-1988).

Walt retired in 1987 and served White Lake Underwood in retirement (1988-1989). He was honored as Jubilee Clergy in 1996.

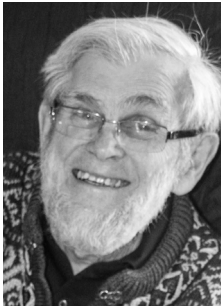
Walt and Janet enjoyed taking their children on many camping vacations through the years. In retirement, they traveled extensively for many years in their motor home, covering all 48 contiguous states.

Walt and Janet did volunteer work with Habitat for Humanity, helping to build homes in Washington, Oregon, Arizona, Maine, and South Dakota. While working with United Methodist NOMADS in Arizona, Walt suffered a stroke in late 2011.

Ralph Sjursen 1928-2017

The Rev. Ralph Sjursen, 89, formerly of Arthur and Dickinson, N.D., passed away Wednesday, Dec. 6, 2017, in Phoenix, Ariz., with family by his side. Funeral services are scheduled for Sunday, June 10, 2018, at the United Methodist Church in Arthur.

Ralph Arndt Sjursen was born June 10, 1928, in Elizabeth, N.J., to Halvdan and Leonora (Arnesen) Sjursen. He grew up and attended school in Cranford, N.J., graduating from high school in 1946. He continued his education at St. Olaf College in Minnesota, receiving a teaching degree in science and math.



While teaching at his first job in Minot, N.D., Ralph met Harryette Albert, a medical lab technician. They were married at her home town of Erie, N.D., on June 6, 1953.

A career change took Ralph and Harryette back to New Jersey, where Ralph attended Drew Theological Seminary (1953-1956). His ministry began at Gilberton, Pa. (1954-1956).

They returned to North Dakota, and Ralph was elected deacon and admitted on trial by the North Dakota Conference of the Methodist Church in 1956. He was admitted into full connection and elected elder in 1958.

Ralph served Methodist and United Methodist churches in North Dakota at Velva-Benedict (1956-1958), Hunter-Arthur (1958-1965), Dickinson (1965-1982), and Grassy Butte (1982-1991), which included the Association for Retarded Citizens (Jan. 1984-1991).

He retired in 1991. In retirement, he continued serving at Grassy Butte, along with the Belfield Presbyterian Church, until 2001. He was honored as Jubilee Clergy in 2003.

Ralph enjoyed keeping Saturdays open for family fun, often exploring the badlands of southwestern North Dakota.

The family's need for a special education classroom led Ralph to take a leadership role in the development of community-based services for children with special needs. While working as executive director for the Association for Retarded Citizens, located in Dickinson, he was honored with the Humanitarian Award from the North Dakota Council for Exceptional Children in 1981 and in 1985. He also served on the board and the construction committee for Southwest Habitat for Humanity.

Ralph is survived by his wife, Harryette, of Phoenix, Ariz.; son Phillip, of Bismarck, N.D.; daughter Greta, of Phoenix; five grandchildren; and one great-granddaughter.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brother Paul in 1944; two daughters: Susan in 1976, and Nancy in 2011; and one grandson in 1997.

Gene Kroger 1936-2018

The Rev. Gene Kroger, 81, of Madison, S.D., died Monday, May 14, 2018, at Madison Regional Health System, under hospice care. A Masonic service was held Wednesday, May 16, 2018, at Ellsworth Funeral Home in Madison, S.D. Funeral services were held Thursday, May 17, 2018, at Madison United Methodist



Church. Burial was at Rosehill Cemetery in Parker, S.D.

Gene Earl Kroger was born on Dec. 20, 1936, to Lester and Gladys (Verley) Kroger in Canton, S.D. He graduated from Lennox High School in 1954. After attending the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology at Rapid City, S.D., for one year, he completed his Bachelor of Arts degree in geology at

the University of South Dakota in Vermillion, S.D., in 1958.

Gene married Barbara Richter on Dec. 28, 1956, in Parker.

He served in the U.S. Army, including at Ft. Sill, Okla., in 1959, achieving the rank of captain. Gene worked as a sales representative for Johns Manville for 10 years. He then worked at Dakota Harvestore in Sioux Falls, S.D., as a sales engineer, vice president, and then co-owner for many years.

Gene graduated with his master of divinity degree from North American Baptist Seminary in Sioux Falls, S.D., in 1985. He served the Ellis United Methodist Church as student supply (Dec. 1982-1984).

In 1984, Gene was elected deacon and probationary member of the South Dakota Conference of The United Methodist Church. He was ordained elder and full member in 1987. Gene served United Methodist churches in the South Dakota Conference at Wakonda-Irene-Viborg (1984-1987), Dell Rapids-Colman (1987-1993), and Rapid City South Maple (1993-1999). He completed his active ministry as superintendent of the Central District from 1999 to 2003, when he retired.

Gene was active in the Madison United Methodist Church. He was a Mason for more than 50 years and also a Shriner. He served on numerous boards throughout his career. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, and traveling with Barb.

Gene is survived by his wife Barb, of Madison; two sons, Rev. Greg (Joyceann) Kroger, of Rapid City, and Gary (Kathy) Kroger, of Shoreview, Minn.; one brother, Roger (Chaloy) Kroger, of Las Vegas; four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, sister-in-law Marla Richter, and brother-in-law Gary Richter.

James McLaird 1940-2017

James McLaird, 76, husband of the Rev. Donna McLaird, of Mitchell, S.D., died Thursday, Aug. 31, 2017, at Avera Queen of Peace Hospital in Mitchell. Funeral services were held

Wednesday, Sept. 6, 2017, at the First United Methodist Church in Mitchell. Burial was in the Memorial Hill Cemetery at Lake Benton, Minn.



James David McLaird was born Dec. 11, 1940, to Ernest and Ruby (Rochel) McLaird at Lake Benton, Minn. He graduated from Miller High School in Miller, S.D., in 1958. In 1962, he received his bachelor of arts degree from

Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell, S.D. On Dec. 23, 1961, he married Donna Hillman at Faulkton, S.D. He did graduate work for one year at Boston University School of Theology and three years at the University of Wyoming, where he received his master's degree in 1966.

Jim taught history and political science courses at Dakota Wesleyan University from 1967 to 2004. When he retired in 2004, he was made professor emeritus. During these years, Donna served United Methodist churches in South Dakota at Plankinton-Mt. Vernon, Ethan, Tyndall, Hitchcock-Broadland, and Colton-Chester.

Jim's achievements in education were recognized by the Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church with the Outstanding Educator Award (1995)

and by DWU with the Presidential Award for Outstanding Service (1994, 2004), the Clarke Award for Teaching Excellence (1999, 2004), the Outstanding Service to Alma Mater Award (1999), and the College of Arts and Humanities Distinguished Alumni Award (2010). In 2005 he was awarded an honorary doctor of humane letters degree by DWU.

Jim authored numerous articles and books including "Calamity Jane: The Woman and the Legend," "Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane: Deadwood Legends," "Hugh Glass: Grizzly Survivor," and "The Dakota Wesleyan University Memory Book, 1885-2010."

For his work as an author and historian, he was honored with the Herbert S. Schell Award (1989, 1995), the Governor's Award for History (1995), the Dakota History Conference Award for Distinguished Contribution to the Preservation of the History of South Dakota and Dakota Territory (1997), the Best Book Award from Westerners International (2006), and the Robinson Award, the highest award given in the field of history in South Dakota, recognizing a lifetime of outstanding and meritorious service (2012).

Jim served on several boards during his career, including the Friends of the Middle Border Museum of American Indian and Pioneer Life, and the Laura Ingalls Wilder Memorial Society. In 2003 he was appointed to a three-year term on the national Michael P. Malone Committee by the Western History Association. He was a member of the First United Methodist Church in Mitchell.

Vivian Greenough 1934-2017



Vivian Greenough, 83, wife of the Rev. Donald Greenough, of Sioux Falls, S.D., passed away Sunday, Sept. 17, 2017, at Bethany Home in Brandon, S.D., after a courageous battle with Alzheimer's disease. A celebration-of-life service was held Saturday, Sept. 30, 2017, at Asbury United Methodist Church in Sioux Falls. Interment was Thursday, Sept. 21, 2017, at Hills of Rest Cemetery in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Vivian Jean Strom, daughter of Alvin and Alice (Gilliland) Strom, was born May 10, 1934, in Watertown, S.D. The family moved to Sioux Falls, S.D. when she was a child. Vivian graduated from Washington High School, where she met Donald Greenough, a brother of her best friend, Wava Greenough. Vivian attended Bethel Bible College in St. Paul, Minn.

Vivian and Donald were united in marriage on Aug. 15, 1954, in Sioux Falls, S.D. Don was called into Christ's ministry, and after graduating from Augustana College in Sioux Falls, S.D.,

he and Vivian moved their young family to Kansas, where Don attended seminary.

Following Don's graduation, the family returned to South Dakota. Vivian assisted Don in serving Methodist and United Methodist churches in the South Dakota Conference at Harrisburg, Dell Rapids-Garretson, Miller-Greenleaf, Redfield-Ashton, and Elk Point United.

After Don's retirement in 1991, he and Vivian moved to Akron, Ia., where he served for five years. They moved to Sioux Falls, S.D., in 1996 and were active at Asbury United Methodist Church.

Vivian is survived by her husband of 63 years, Donald; four children: Steve (Laurie) Greenough of Sioux Falls, S.D., Allison Tyler, of Longwood, Fla., Dwight (Sandra) Greenough of Miller, S.D., and Dawn Kunzmann, of Sioux Falls, S.D.; five grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; two siblings: Dwayne "Lou" (Barb) Strom of Sioux Falls, S.D., and Joyce (Ken) Haas of Sioux Falls, S.D.; and many other relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents.

Nancy Veglahn 1937-2017



Nancy Veglahn, 80, of Sioux Falls, S.D., widow of the Rev. Don Veglahn, passed away on Friday, Oct. 6, 2017, at Sanford USD Medical Center in Sioux Falls, S.D. A memorial service was held on Saturday, Oct. 14, 2017, at First United Methodist Church in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Nancy Jean Crary was born on July 17, 1937, in Sioux City, Ia., to Ralph and Margaret Crary. She attended Sioux City public schools, Morningside College in Sioux City, South Dakota State University in Brookings, S.D., and the Bread Loaf School of English at Middlebury College in Vermont.

Nancy married L. Donald Veglahn on Aug. 24, 1958. As the wife of a Methodist pastor, she lived in Howard, Spearfish, Brookings, and Sioux Falls.

She taught English at South Dakota State University (SDSU) in Brookings, S.D., from 1977 to 1992, and at the University of Sioux Falls in Sioux Falls, S.D., from 1992 to 1997. While at SDSU, she received the F.W. Butler Faculty Award for Creative Activity. She was awarded an honorary doctor of humane letters degree by Dakota Wesleyan University in 1989. Morningside College named her Outstanding Alumnus in 1975.

Nancy was an avid reader all her life. She authored 15 books

for young readers, as well as many poems and stories published in various journals. Three of her books earned the designation of "Outstanding Science Book for Children" from the Children's Book Council, and one was included on the New York Public Library's list of "Books for the Teen Age." The South Dakota Council of Teachers of English named her South Dakota Author of the Year in 1988.

In 1988, Nancy founded the Book Shop in Sioux Falls, S.D., along with Kay Coddington and Katherine Ann Talley. Nancy was one of the founders of the Sister Cities Association of Sioux Falls. She was a member of First United Methodist Church, the League of Women Voters, and Chapter CI of the P.E.O. Sisterhood.

Nancy served on the Sioux Falls Public Library Board and on the Dakota Wesleyan University Board of Trustees from 1991 to 1997. In 2006-2007, she was president of the South Dakota League of Women Voters.

She is survived by her son, Dan, of Kansas City, Mo.; her daughter, Ruth (Michael) Barrett of Rapid City, S.D.; and two grandchildren.

Nancy was preceded in death by her husband, Don, on March 10, 2015; her parents; and her brother, Bruce. Milnor-Wyndmere-Lidgerwood (1988-2000) United Methodist Churches.

Elizabeth Eastin 1941-2017



Elizabeth Eastin, 76, widow of the Rev. Kenneth Eastin, died Saturday, Oct. 7, 2017, at Ingleside, Texas. Memorial services were held Saturday, Nov. 4, 2017, at the Ingleside United Methodist Church.

Elizabeth Anne Wilson was born on June 8, 1941, at Alva, Okla., to Leonard A. and Gracie (Douglass) Wilson. She met Kenneth Eastin in 1960, and, after

a whirlwind courtship, they were married on Dec. 25, 1960.

Liz and Ken lived at Wellington, Kan., Fort Bragg, N.C., Bartlesville, Okla., and Chicago, Ill. In 1980, Ken entered Garrett Theological Seminary. After his graduation, the family moved to North Dakota, where Ken served Milnor (1986-1988) and Milnor-Wyndmere-Lidgerwood (1988-2000) United Methodist Churches.

After Ken's retirement from the ministry in 2000, they moved to Ingleside, Texas, to enjoy warm winters and beautiful beaches. Liz enjoyed eating out, spicy foods, shopping, and going to the beach. She adored her cats and dog.

Liz and Ken were involved with the Ingleside United Methodist Church. Liz sang in the church choir and was active on the church's mission committee. She was instrumental in starting the free annual community Thanksgiving dinner. She headed English as a Second Language classes and the American citizenship preparatory classes offered by the church.

Liz is survived by her daughter, Heather Eastin Mayer, and grandson, of Minot, N.D.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Ken, on Jan. 10, 2001; and her parents.

Evelyn Nielsen 1923-2017

Evelyn Nielsen, 94, of Sandpoint, Id., widow of the Rev. Clifford Nielsen, passed away on Wednesday, Nov. 8, 2017, at Luther Park in Sandpoint, Id.. Private family services were held at a later date. Her body was cremated.



Evelyn Lois Butz was born on Jan. 30, 1923, to Charles and Olive (Shriner) Butz in Oh.

She met Clifford Elburtis Nielsen in 1941, while he was a student at Central Bible College and Seminary in Springfield, Mo. Clifford was assigned to an outstation ministry in a quartet in which Evelyn was pianist. They were

married on May 29, 1943, at Monroe, Mich.

Clifford served in North Africa and Italy during WWII. He graduated from Central Bible College and Seminary in 1947. He and Evelyn served Assembly of God churches in Ohio, Pierre, S.D., and Shakopee, Minn.

In 1965, Clifford and Evelyn moved to North Dakota and served the charges of Kenmare-Donnybrook-Bowbells, Rugby-Bantry-Pleasant Lake, Hettinger-Bethany, S.D., Tappen-Steele-Driscoll, and Kulm-Jud, all in the North Dakota Conference.

Evelyn cared for others through being a licensed minister of the gospel. She and Clifford traveled to Israel, Italy, France, Great Britain, and Denmark.

After Clifford retired in 1985, he and Evelyn moved to the Seattle area to be near grandchildren. In 1994, they moved to Arizona because of Clifford's declining health. Evelyn later moved to Idaho.

Evelyn and Clifford had a son, Clifford Allen Nielsen, and a daughter, Karen Nielsen Hanna, as well as several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Clifford passed away Dec. 10, 2001, at Phoenix, Ariz.

Phyllis Fike 1936-2017

Phyllis Fike, 81, wife of the Rev. Gerald Fike, of Peoria, Ariz., died Wednesday, Dec. 13, 2017. A memorial service was held Saturday, Dec. 30, 2017, at Dove of the Desert United Methodist Church in Glendale, Ariz. Her body was donated to science.



Phyllis Joan Tincknell was born on June 2, 1936, at La Grande, Ore., to Roscoe and Anna Tincknell. She grew up in Pateros, Wash., graduating from Pateros High School in 1954. She attended Cascade College in Portland, Ore., for two years.

Phyllis married Gerald Alan Fike on

June 8, 1957, in Portland.

Jerry and Phyllis served Methodist and United Methodist churches in the North Dakota Conference at Noonan-Columbus, Rock Lake-Hansboro-Clyde, Grace City-Juanita-

Sutton, Drayton-Bowesmont, McClusky-Turtle Lake, Turtle Lake-Underwood, Bismarck Calvary, Elgin-Zoar-Ebenezer UCC, and Cavalier Trinity-Cavalier First-Neche.

Phyllis was a rebel, learning to ride a motorcycle when she was about 45. She insisted on driving her own motorcycle, refusing to be a passenger. In her 50s, she took fine arts coursework at Bismarck Junior College and began painting artworks. Her entries in juried art shows won several ribbons. She dropped out when she developed breast cancer in the early 1990s. She was proud of being a breast cancer survivor.

Jerry retired in 1998, and they moved to Peoria, Ariz. For the first time in their lives, they had a house of their own. Phyllis filled it with dogs, birds, art, love, and laughter. She enjoyed playing "Risk," checkers, and canasta.

Phyllis and Jerry had four children: Bruce, Brent, Beth, and Becky; and eight grandchildren, one of whom preceded Phyllis in death.

Dorothy Grinager Lindbloom 1924-2018

Dorothy Grinager Lindbloom, 93, widow of the Rev. Lloyd Grinager and wife of Warren Lindbloom, of Dow Rummel Village Retirement Home in Sioux Falls, S.D., died Tuesday, April 10, 2018, at Ava's House, the Sanford hospice facility. Funeral services were held Saturday, April 21, 2018, at the Halladay-Peterson Chapel at Dow Rummel. Burial was in Rosehill Cemetery at Parker, S.D.



Dorothy J. Rasmussen was born on May 26, 1924, to Clarence and Sarah (Jensen) Rasmussen, on their farm southwest of Parker, S.D. in Turner County. She was an only child but grew up surrounded by her Jensen cousins.

Dorothy went to country school, was confirmed in the Bethany Lutheran Church, and graduated in 1942 from Parker High School, where she was homecoming queen.

At Augustana College in Sioux Falls, S.D., she majored in music and was homecoming queen. There she roomed with Grace Grinager, who introduced Dorothy to her younger brother, Lloyd K. Grinager. Dorothy and Lloyd were married on June 20, 1946, at Parker, S.D., after he returned from the army.

The young couple moved to Naperville, Ill., where they lived for a year, before returning to Sioux Falls, S.D. Lloyd attended Augustana and served as a student pastor at the Harrisburg

Methodist Church. After his graduation, they moved to New Jersey and New York while Lloyd attended seminary. Upon graduation, the family returned to Sioux Falls, S.D., where Lloyd served Asbury Methodist Church. Dorothy recalled that aside from singing in the church choir, all she had time for was taking care of her children and husband.

From Sioux Falls, S.D., the family moved to Milbank, S.D., where Dorothy taught voice and piano, and then to Pierre, S.D. At Rapid City, S.D., where Lloyd was Western District Superintendent, Dorothy became a foster parent to newborn babies and was a substitute teacher. The family then moved to Yankton, S.D., and then to Mitchell, S.D., where Lloyd was director of the South Dakota United Methodist Foundation. At Mitchell, S.D., Dorothy became more involved in United Methodist Women and continued substitute teaching. The family's final move took them back to Sioux Falls, S.D.

After Lloyd's death on Jan. 31, 1987, Dorothy served as a parish visitor at Sioux Falls Wesley United Methodist Church. She was active in missions, working at the McKirdy Mission School, and serving on the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries.

In 2003, Warren Lindbloom, a college classmate, re-entered Dorothy's life. They were married on July 5, 2003. In their 15 years together, they enjoyed their time in Denver, Co., Tampa Bay, Fl., and Sioux Falls, S.D.

Retirees

Hazel Behrens



While I was working as a nurse's aid at a nursing home, I found over and over I was called upon to pray with the residents. I was being called to take care of their spiritual needs as well as their physical needs.

Connecting a person to prayer is a memory that stands out for me. I finished a sermon on prayer and a day or two later a woman came to me, and

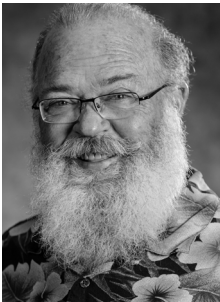
said that after 73 years she finally learned that her method of prayer was okay. She had thought that her method of prayer was wrong, too scattered and unfocused, but after the sermon she found out that it was okay to pray that way.

The thing that carries over the most for me is that for every funeral you have a word about God, about the deceased, and about us, but it really should be the other way around. First about the deceased, the reason we are there, about us, because we are the ones hurting, and finally about God.

For clergy just starting out, surround yourself with good people and turn to them often. Looking back, there were too many times I tried to do things on my own. The times I did my best were the times I turned to others.

I want to thank my husband; he's kept me sane so many times. I am also thankful for members of different ministry teams that I have been a part of—they have truly blessed me.

Steve Behrens



I remember a youth worship service in the Sioux Falls Hilltop UMC that I was a part of; I felt a call to ministry then. I was certain it couldn't be real. I was convinced pastors were perfect and I knew I wasn't. Years later as part of a church in Marshall, MN, I began to finally realize pastors were like everyone else, just with a different call. Through a men's Bible study, I was

encouraged to explore my gifts and accept the call on my life.

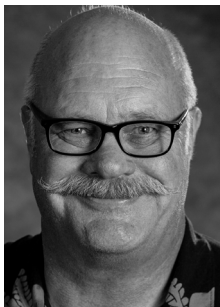
One of my best memories in my ministry career is my mother being able to see me ordained. She never stopped praying for

me and without that I would not have answered the call. It was an honor to have Rev. Harold Fitch lay hands on me at that ordination service.

As a pastor, you need to remember that you are not perfect. You simply have to admire your mistakes and move on. In your ministry, love the people God sends you to serve.

I am grateful to Rev. Glen Hammerlee, Rev. Harold Fitch, Mavis Fritzmeier, Roger Campbell, Rev. Eldon Reich, Rev. Arlyn Coalter, and Rev. Bill Hoffman for supporting my call and journey in ministry. I give thanks to my mother W. Jean Behrens, my wife Hazel, our children, and so many others, but most of all our Lord and Savior who could use even a sinner like me!

David Birkeland



I felt a call to ministry about the time I was 37. I talked to my wife and she said, "David, I don't want to be a pastor's wife, and unless God changes my mind, don't ask again." I went on with my life. I had a painting contracting business that had been in the family for quite a while. The business had debt that needed to be paid off and someone from the family to run it. So, I wasn't

going anywhere. But then my brother came back to work, and the business was paid for. I started feeling sick, so my wife told me to go to the doctor. It was the first time I had been to a doctor in 22 years. The doctor said that I was healthy and asked if I had any stress in my life. I said yes, the Lord is calling me into ministry. The doctor said, "If you're stressing about going into the ministry so much, you need to go into the ministry." When I got back home, before I said a word to my wife, she said, "I had a serious talk with God. If you're ready for ministry, I am too."

Drinking had become a big part of my life and one day I

realized that I was out of control and I asked God to help me quit. Six weeks later, my friend was getting married in Michigan and we rented a motor home to go. We were driving to the wedding, two of my friends were sleeping in the back and I was driving through the night. I took that time to reflect upon my life, and I came to the conclusion that I had asked God for help, but He hadn't done anything. I said to God that either He do something, or I was going back to drinking. About two minutes later one of my friends woke up and sat next to me and said to me, "David, I don't think you're going to believe this, but God woke me up and told me to go to David and tell him that I love him and that I have a plan for his life."

I learned that you have to have a lot of patience throughout your years in ministry. Things don't always move as quickly as you would like.

I would like to thank Ross Reinhiller, for praying for us for three years to become a United Methodist pastor. Also, thanks to the conference for having a local pastor option, because there was no way for me to do it any other way. Thanks for the opportunity.

Martha Brandt



I grew up as a preacher's kid in the Presbyterian Church and have always known God. As a child, I would talk to God all the time, sometimes as I rocked myself to sleep at night, sometimes singing, as I would swing on the old swing in Waukon, Iowa. I

had felt led to become a missionary and had an opportunity to travel to Italy. I did not travel to Italy. Many incidents played a part in my accepting God's call on my life: the deaths of my husband and two children, my marriage to Ken, and becoming part of the Brandt family. My time at Sioux Falls Asbury UMC with Pastor Dar Berkenpas, Michael McMenamy's invitation to attend

Disciple Bible Study, and being part of the Dakotas Walk to Emmaus fed my call. I did not answer quickly. Poor Ken, he didn't know if I was coming or going! But, God is persistent and in 2008, I answered the call. My life has been blessed as a result.

There are many memories that have been made over the ten years. The warmth and love, as well as the ability to just "go with the flow" and adapt to me as a "pastor in training" has been overwhelming — the camaraderie, laughter, and tears! I have had the privilege of seeing God working way ahead of me, the joy in discovering that God was ahead of what I

thought I was planning. I was told to be prepared to officiate funerals. I had three funerals in the first month and a total of 61 funeral services. I had the great privilege of marrying 16 couples. One wedding involved two older adults who found a second love after decades of marriage to spouses who had died. The churches welcomed 41 children and 5 adults (one of whom was 89 years old) through baptism and 18 by profession of faith. When I read over the list of their names, I think, "What a privilege to be a part of their families!" I may have been a pastor to these families by appointment, but these churches have become my family.

I had preconceived ideas of what a pastor looked like and acted like. All of those morphed as I learned how to be a pastor. There is wisdom in the community of faith. Utilize the wisdom of people. When members are critical or difficult, remember they're God's children, too, and respect the "where and why" of their comments. Don't think that because you said something once or even twice, people got it. Communication and transparency are critical. When you make a mistake or even when you intentionally don't do something you know you should do, apologize. Remember to have fun and enjoy where God has placed you. And, most of all, do all that you can to the very best of your ability and then turn it over to God.

Ken has been my partner and best support and encourager. God blessed my family and me with this man. When I “sat on the fence,” he was there, patiently waiting for me to figure it out. When I ran from one church to another on a Sunday morning, he was there, turning the lights on and off in the fellowship hall when I talked too long with people after worship, telling me “the bus is leaving.” He chauffeured me from one church to another as I organized and prayed to be ready for the next worship.

I’d like to thank those from the Dakotas Walk to Emmaus who have journeyed with me for years, to Pastors Dar and Kip and the members of Asbury who encouraged me and mentored me. Thank you to the Dakotas Conference for allowing me to get my feet wet for two years in my own home church before being appointed to the Aurora, White, Sterling churches. I’d like to thank Roger Spahr for the dedication and perseverance he has taken, along with the Cabinet, to provide well for the Aurora, White, Sterling churches as they move into the future that God has prepared for them.

Bruce Forbes

My first sense of calling came during lakeside campfire worship at our Lake Poinsett Camp, and it was followed by a number of other turning point experiences throughout my life. In addition to the full functions of ministry, my special interest in teaching may have appeared as early as junior high, when I remember studying for tests by pretending I was teaching someone else.



One of my greatest joys, repeated over and over again, is the opportunity to sit with students and with colleagues, grappling with the deepest issues of life, sharing our hurts, fears and dreams, seeking hope and a sense of purpose. It is an honor to be permitted to participate in this search for meaning.

I carry with me and pass on to colleagues this guidance. I am

an advocate of the Christian virtue of humility, a virtue I believe we do not emphasize enough, especially in our disagreements. Everything I believe to be true I think is true, of course. That is why I believe it. But I also know that I am human and imperfect. That means that out of all the things I believe, I undoubtedly am wrong about some. I just don’t know which ones they are, because I am human and my understanding is always limited, always partial. None of us are God. I hope to grow toward fuller understanding, which happens only when I am in dialogue, fellowship and loving service with some people whose views may differ from mine.

Many have supported my ministry and I am thankful. My son Matthew, now an adult, has always been a central part of my life, offering his love, wisdom, and support. I have always felt surrounded by an amazing “cloud of witnesses” offering love and support: colleagues in ministry and in education; students of all ages; and dearest friends. I am so thankful for them all.

Eric Grinager



I felt the call to ministry during my senior year of college. I was a basketball player at Dakota Wesleyan University and I had an injury. It was during my recovery time that I heard God’s call. Rev. Dan Rice got me involved with campus ministry to help feed and understand my call. Gordy Fosness, my coach, connected me with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes that also helped me define my call.

Every local church I have been blessed to serve is unique. Even though every church is under the same umbrella, each

church that I have served at has contributed to my faith in a unique way.

I have a deep love for the camping ministry. I was in grade school when I began attending Lake Poinsett Camp in South Dakota. I have made it a point to send youth (and adults) from the churches I have served to camp, too.

Mission trips that I have taken are memories that have stayed with me. I felt I received more than I gave. I recall two mission trips, one trip to Mexico, and another to Haiti. I enjoyed staying with a family in Mexico and getting to know them and all about their life. Haiti was a sharp contrast for me. They have so little, live in extreme poverty, but live a vibrant spiritual life.

Ministry is about loving the people. Sometimes those people with whom you may not agree with or those who seem challenging are there to help you grow. It helps us if we take our days off. Sabbath is just a healthy thing. It re-energizes you, so you can feed others.

I am thankful for the pension system. I am thankful for the unceasing grace and love of family. I am grateful to all the good people I worked with and the conference staff.

Mina Hall

My first call was in 1969, at Camp Koronis in Minnesota. I became a nurse instead of answering the call to ministry. May 30, 2000 through April 7, 2001, there was a group effort to



affirm my call into ministry through things like my Disciple class at Sioux Falls Asbury UMC. My call entailed very profound Holy Spirit events on my life, but led me into confusion. On April 7, at 10 a.m., at Blue Cloud Abbey, I was given Matthew 26:69-75, Peter's denial, to meditate on and found it quite hard to prayerfully contemplate this verse.

THEN another profound Holy event,

and I was off to seminary. God's patience ran a bit thin and the message was clear — go to seminary. This call will not end. Jesus has given me plenty of assignments centered in the Book of Acts. I have more challenges ahead of me.

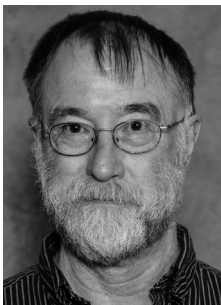
There are many memories I have of congregational members and strangers instilling the beauty and challenges of faith in my life. All memories are God-led and precipitated on Jesus' vision for the moment. It could be watching Fargo Flame of Faith UMC go from a floating ark of raining in the sanctuary as

a form of baptism to docking on firm ground with joy. It could be participating with the growth of the Liberian African Church in Fargo-Moorhead area that you can rejoice through dancing and singing to God for many hours during worship. It could be working with the homeless, individuals with addictions, or people out of prison who are searching for the meaning of Jesus and survival. It could be the Native Americans at Tree of Life and in Fargo who struggle with the disconnect between Jesus and the actions of Christians. All have their own area of great joy, fond memories, and theological challenges.

I encourage all who journey in ministry and answer God's call to live the Book of Acts. God will shout in joy for every prayer and every ministry. Evil exists in this world and fear is its greatest tool.

Thank you to my husband Tom who helped me through ministry, and the dark days of West Nile. Also thank you to Dar Berkenpas, Jeri Burns, Jackie Moon (gone but not forgotten), Cody Shuler, Juwle Nagbe, Rich Zeck, Dave Motta, Abednego Thomas, and Amanda Vivier (NACM) who showed kindness and support. Also thanks to Peder Anderson and Donna Kjonaas who were my mentors during my probationary time with the Board of Ordained Ministry.

Brian Hazard



The first annual conference I attended (in 1981), had Dr. Randolph Nugent as our conference preacher. Listening to him I realized that the United Methodist Church was committed to ministry with people beyond our own parishes and beyond our own conference, even beyond our own country. I recognized that it was my call to ministry. My call is confirmed

when the people with whom I minister find ways to reach out to our wider community in generosity and love.

One of my fondest memories is the sense of shared ministry within the Board of Camping and Retreat Ministries. Even more than the work with the board, I appreciated the chance to do shared ministry with a number of fellow pastors who served as co-deans at C.I.A. camps.

As I reflect on my ministry, I wish I had been willing to expect more of members of the congregations that I served. We need to stretch ourselves out of our comfort zone more often. That is what Jesus expects.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve in ministry.

Becky Holten

When I began working at Zion United Methodist Church in Grand Forks, ND, as the Coordinator of Volunteers, Pastor Doug Diehl kept telling me, “Becky, this isn’t a job. You are in ministry.” It took him a while to convince me and for my heart



to believe it. Thankfully, throughout my life, God has continued to open doors and put people in my life that have encouraged me to trust God and step through those doors, albeit sometimes reluctantly, to follow where God leads in ministry.

I first met Phil and Mary-Lee Lint when they came to Grand Forks to help following the flood of '97. It was a cold, damp, snowy May that we thought would never turn to spring. Phil and Mary-Lee were staying in their pop-up camper and froze that first night. While we didn't have potable water, we did have electricity and heat in our home. So I invited them to stay in our kids' twin beds. Phil and Mary-Lee returned home after 4 or 5 days of helping in Grand Forks and our topsy-turvy new

way of life following the flood went on in Grand Forks. I hardly gave the time they stayed in our home a second thought. Several years later, I went forward during the time of call at the ordination service at annual conference, Mary-Lee found me and shared that she had been praying for me to answer my call since we had first met in Grand Forks after the flood. Praise God for the way God weaves our lives together.

Trust God and give God the glory. It is God's Spirit that flows through me and allows me to do what I do and be there for people, hopefully offering what they need, especially when I feel the most inadequate and unsure of what to do or say.

The saying, “It takes a village to raise a child” is true and it is also applicable that in my case “It took a village to help me answer my call in ministry.” I am grateful and have been blessed by the many people throughout my life that have encouraged, supported, cared for, and prayed for me. I am most grateful to my husband Ron and our kids, their spouses, and our grandkids for their support and willingness to let me explore, grow, and follow this journey in ministry.

Randy Maddox

My calling to the ministry of elder and teaching was cumulative. The calling to ministry came in my college years, as part of a deepened spiritual commitment. The calling to teaching took shape more gradually, as a conjunction of the encouragement of mentors, confirmation of gifts, and the providential opening of many doors.



Of my many valued memories, what stands out most in this setting is my time with several of you as United Methodist students at (what was then called) North American Baptist Seminary. I was inspired by both your sense of calling and your enthusiasm in engaging our tradition. Among other things, it was my time with you that led me to move from teaching in an undergraduate setting to teaching in a divinity school.

As one who has served in several church institutions, and is a student of the history of the church, I am very aware of the many ways in which we, God's people, have fallen short in our witness and lives to our calling. But I have also learned how important it is to see, nonetheless, in and through our fallible efforts, God's Spirit working for good in our lives, our communities, and our world.

In addition to my students, the ones whom I would most want to thank today are the trio of our honored elders who played the most immediate role in drawing and welcoming me into the Dakotas Conference of the United Methodist Church just over thirty years ago: Donald Klarup, Don Veglahn, and Earl Butz. More broadly, I would thank the conference as a whole, and my bishops over the years, in supporting me in the ministry of scholarship and teaching.

A. Russell Masartis

Both Donna and I accepted Jesus as our Lord while attending summer Bible camp. Then while attending an evening worship service in my home church, I felt an overwhelming inspiration



to go into the ministry. After the service I spoke to my pastor who said that he and several of the elders had been praying for me to do just that. I asked him if I could then have the message the following Sunday and he agreed. I think that afterward he rethought this idea and visited me to suggest that it might be a better experience if I spoke at the less

attended evening service. I did, and during the week the idea for the message just flowed into my mind — “Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus.” I’ve kept and re-read my preaching notes from then, and laugh now at my first effort in the pulpit.

Over the 51 years of our ministry, we have presided over

many baptisms and wedding. But I remember feeling both old and blessed when there were several opportunities to perform the marriage ceremony of someone I had baptized as an infant, or blessed the children of the children I once held in my arms. How wonderful to see the ongoing procession of faith and life.

Never forget that God has a plan for you, so trust that He will lead you. Jeremiah 29:11 states, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope, and a future.”

Pastor Jackie Moon was the president of Tree of Life Ministry and invited Donna and me to come for an interview for the position of executive director. During our phone conversations and meetings, I was impressed with her faith and genuine love that she had for others. I would like to recognize that 13 years ago, she brought us to South Dakota, where we were accepted and encouraged by so many in the Dakotas Conference.

Franklin “Frank” McKeehan



I was called to ministry at church camp at the age of 8 when I heard a missionary speak about spreading the gospel in Africa. By the time I was an adult and ready to enter ministry, the greatest missionary field was right here in the United States of America.

The ministry memory that is most special to me is being able to baptize all four of my grandchildren in the United Methodist Church. What a privilege and honor that was for me.

The most valuable thing I learned in my ministry career is that if a ministry or mission isn’t a vision and created in the

local church, the chance for that mission or ministry to succeed is almost zero. It is the local church that is the source of all Christian disciples. It is those locally created disciples who must envision and lead the church into the future. The job of pastors, district superintendents, bishops, annual, and general conferences is to equip the local church to create disciples and support the ministry of the local church.

I would like to thank the people in the churches that I have served for the love, kindness, patience, and support they gave to my family and me. These many wonderful people cared for my family and me, enabled my ministry, and helped me grow in my faith. Most of all they shared good advice and wisdom that has enhanced my life journey.

Melanie Reiners

My call to ministry had been present and tugged at my heart for many years. I answered that call in 2011, when I was asked to attend licensing school. I went on to serve as pulpit supply for a year while working at my full-time job. The call became defined in 2014, when I was appointed to serve the three churches of Parkview Milbank, Tabor Big Stone City, and First UMC of Ortonville in the Minnesota Conference. My only regret in life is that I did not respond to God's call several years ago. I tell my churches quite often that I feel so blessed to be their pastor.



One of the joys of my short years in ministry was leading someone else to answer the call to lay servant ministry which, hopefully, will lead to licensed ministry.

The most valuable advice I received and have heeded least is to remember to take a Sabbath day each week. I find it

extremely difficult when I view the needs of three churches and have only 24 hours in a day. How I wish I could serve them better.

There are several who deserve my thanks today and I realize I can only recognize a few. First of all, I want to thank Dr. DeVern Schwenn for seeing the potential in several of us as he began a lay-speaking class at Central UMC in Milbank. His guidance, encouragement, and support to this day are so important to me. Thanks to my mentor, Rev. Beth Conrad-Smart. She guided me through the licensing process and she now has the opportunity to critique me every Sunday, as she is a member of my Parkview Church in Milbank. My deepest thanks goes to my husband Roger who every day is my strength and support and greatest cheerleader.

Thank you! No credit is mine; all credit goes to the Christ of the cross, my Savior and Lord!

Raenelle Sorensen



It seems I can hardly remember a time when I was not involved in ministry of some sort, beginning with teaching Bible school when I was in high school. My formal call to ministry came during a time of teaching confirmation at Zion in Grand Forks. I was helping with the class and was explaining all of the things that lay people might be called to do. When I

got to the lay speakers, one of the boys in the class pointed his finger at me and said, "And Raenelle, that's what you should be doing." I became a lay speaker. Then one day, I found the phone in my hand calling Debra Ball-Kilbourne to meet with her about becoming a local licensed pastor. I still have no idea how that phone ended up in my hand!

I have been blessed to serve at the Larimore UMC, the church where I grew up. I am now serving those persons who cared for me as a child and a youth. I find myself blessed by their love and care once again.

I remember what Debra Ball-Kilbourne told me when we were on our way to my introduction. I said, "Debra, I don't know how to be a pastor." Her response was, "Raenelle, you don't need to know. God knows!" You do not do ministry alone, place your trust in God to lead you.

I want to thank Pastors Delos Westbrook, Bill Bates, Dave Mack, Roy Caudill, Cliff Nelson, Dale Emery, Jerry Bass, and Ed Kinzler. Each of these pastors have helped me to grow in my faith and supported me.

Candidate for Ordination

Travis Krogman



Travis graduated from St. Paul School of Theology, Kansas, Mo., May 2014. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from University of South Dakota. Travis was commissioned at the 2015 Annual Conference. He has served the Lyman County Parish—Kennebec, Presho, Reliance

since 2015.

The church and community that has formed and shaped his call into ministry is Grand Avenue Temple UMC in Kansas City, MO. Grand Avenue is known for diversity; serving the Sojourner community, urban downtown dwellers and faithful members from areas surrounding the city. Travis learned through his in-

teractions at Grand Avenue UMC and the Kansas City Rescue Mission that God was asking him to do more than just serve the homeless.

His favorite scripture is Philippians 3:8 "Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake, I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ" "I think this verse is self-explanatory, nothing compares to Christ in my life and nothing else is worth living for."-Travis Krogman.

He enjoys weightlifting and coaching football in his free time. Travis is currently serving the Lyman County Parish with his wife Kristen.

Candidate for Commissioning

Jordan Louks



Jordan is a graduate of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, Ill. While attending Garrett-Evangelical, Jordan served as a chaplain intern at the Westminster Place.

A graduate of Black Hills State University, with Bachelor of Science degrees in History and Political Science, Jordan grew a passion to learn about cultures and strives for justice for all peoples. His degrees have helped shape his desire to learn more and who he will be in ministry.

He is a member of Spearfish United Methodist Church. He really did not participate in youth activities. Instead, after being invited, he became a member of the church choir. He was sixteen and the

average age of the other members was 60. Jordan became involved in other musical groups at the church — bell choir and praise band. It was during this time he felt God calling him to ministry, but he pushed it away.

Pastor Scott McKirdy and his wife Colleen became great friends, colleagues and mentors. While attending college, he went to a gathering at the McKirdy house every Sunday evening for supper, games, and conversation. At the college-aged small group, Louks explored with others what it means to be human and how God plays into that. He met his wife, Alyssa, in that small group.

He enjoys music, playing the piano, trumpet, and guitar. Jordan likes to read and explore nature. He likes board games and spending time with family, especially his wife Alyssa.



Worship Leaders

Presiding Minister, Preacher

Bishop Bruce R. Ough, Dakotas-Minnesota Area

Ecumenical Representative

Bishop David Zellmer, South Dakota Synod,
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Lectors and Worship Assistants

Rev. Michelle Brennan, Order of Deacons
Rev. Theta Wagner Miller, Order of Elders
Rev. Val Reinhiller, Chair, Board of Ordained Ministry

Ms. Myrna Hiil, Conference Co-Lay Leader
Ms. Jane Hincks, Conference Co-Lay Leader

Worship Coordinators

Rev. Taylor Johnson
Rev. Rebecca Trefz
Rev. Lou Whitmer

Greeters, Ushers, and Acolytes

Embrace Church

Music Director

Jordan Merritt, worship director, Embrace Church

Visuals and Technology

Josh Boyd, Embrace Church
Doreen Gosmire, Conference Communications
JLynn Studios, Mitchell, SD
David Stucke, Conference Communications

Dakotas Conference Cabinet

Resident Bishop

Bruce R. Ough, Dakotas-Minnesota Area

Executive Director of Ministries

Rev. Rebecca Trefz

Area Director of New Church Development

Rev. Ben Ingebretson

District Superintendents

Rev. Randy Cross, Northeast
Rev. Kermit Culver, Northwest
Rev. Kevin Kloster, Southwest
Rev. Roger Spahr, Southeast

We extend special thanks to Embrace for hosting the Celebration of Life in Ministry Worship Service and to all of those offering the gift of music during this service.

The theme of this year's annual conference, "Discover Joy: Live Deeply," focuses on the scriptural imperative—growing in love of God and neighbor (Matthew 22:37-40). We celebrate the ways in which we are inviting others to become disciples of Jesus and how we are discovering joy and living our lives in deep, meaningful ways that are far beyond our imagination to grow in love of God and neighbor. Karla Hovde, communications specialist for the Minnesota Annual Conference, created the logo graphics for this year's conference.

