



# GPARCS REMARCS

Newsletter of the Great Plains Association  
of Retired Clergy and Spouses

October  
2025

## Orders & Fellowship 2025

October 20 - 22

Younes Conference Center NORTH  
707 Talmadge St.  
Kearney, NE

Focus:

**White Christian Nationalism**

Keynote Speaker:  
**Brian Kaylor**

Click [HERE](#) for information about schedule, lodging and **REGISTRATION**

**Register by Oct. 12 to avoid a late fee**

Click [HERE](#) for information about **the plenary speaker**

A Special  
Invitation to Retirees

Orders & Fellowship

**LUNCH Gathering for Retirees**  
Tuesday, 11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

**Tuesday**  
**Oct. 21, 2025**

*Connect*

*Learn*

*Participate*

Come for robust conversation around the topic of Abundant Aging.

A short video to spark conversation.

How we think about aging affects how we experience it.

The Words we use. The Assumptions we make.

The Examples we follow. The Changes we seek.

Everyone is another day older today!

**Intriguing**

**Find out more about what GPARCS can do.**

*“The purpose of GPARCS is to connect with one another and enrich our lives with learning opportunities and resources.” (GPARCS Bylaws)*

**Please come and be part of the conversation! Bring YOUR IDEAS!**

Tell us what YOU would like to DO, to LEARN. Ways to CONNECT.

**Let’s use our imaginations!**

*Hmm....possibly... Local community service days? Mission trips? Travel/learning opportunities? Either home or abroad. Ongoing small fellowship groups? Periodic small study groups? Covenant groups? Activity-centered groups? Learning enrichment classes in person or on-line? Topics of interest? e.g. -- navigating retirement from age 60 to 99? Navigating current crises? Living together with compassion and justice in families, churches, neighborhoods, and world? What to do about CHANGE?! etc., etc., etc.*

**Of course, this is just a small smattering of potential ideas. I’m thinking the possibilities may be endless!**

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Therefore,  
ENCOURAGE one  
another and build one another up.  
~ 1 Thess. 5:11a

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## ROUGH TRANSLATIONS

*Hoping against hope, he believed.*

—Romans 4:18

Hope nonetheless.

Hope despite.

Hope regardless.

Hope still.

Hope where we had ceased to hope.

Hope amid what threatens hope.

Hope with those who feed our hope.

Hope beyond what we had hoped.

Hope that draws us past our limits.

Hope that defies expectations.

Hope that questions what we have known.

Hope that makes a way where there is none.

Hope that takes us past our fear.

Hope that calls us into life.

Hope that holds us beyond death.

Hope that blesses those to come.

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“Rough Translations”

© Jan Richardson, from  
*Circle of Grace: A Book of  
Blessings for the Seasons.*

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Jan is an artist, writer,  
and ordained minister  
in the United Methodist  
Church. She has  
traveled widely as a  
retreat leader and  
conference speaker.  
With her words and art  
she creates spaces of  
welcome, imagination,  
and solace.

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## EXPRESSING SYMPATHY Mutual Aid Association

When a Great Plains minister or spouse dies do you have an effective way to show you care about them?

The Great Plains United Methodist Conference Mutual Aid Association was started to do just that. The Mutual Aid Association provides a Sympathy Expressing Gift of **\$1,500** each time a member dies. New members provide an initial \$10 donation. Then when a member dies a Call Letter is sent or emailed to the other members of the Mutual Aid Association. The living members each send \$5.00 to the Mutual Aid Association treasurer. The treasurer then sends a check of **\$1,500** to a designated beneficiary of the member who has died. Along with the check is a list of the members who contributed the money. Since 1917 over 880 families have benefited from these gifts.

If you would like more information about the Great Plains Mutual Aid Association, contact **Rev. Jim & Lynn Wallasky** at [mutualaidgreatplains@gmail.com](mailto:mutualaidgreatplains@gmail.com). This is a great way to show you care when a Great Plains minister or spouse dies. *By Bob Neben.*

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“The eye  
cannot say to the hand,  
‘I don’t need you!’  
And the head cannot say to the feet,  
‘I don’t need you!’”  
*1 Cor. 12:21*

### ✦ Are there any **RETIRED CLERGY GROUPS**

meeting in your area ?

✦ If **YOU** are presently  
part of a **RETIRED CLERGY GROUP**  
that gathers on a regular basis

*or you are planning, or willing, to start one  
in the near future*

*and if the group is open to others joining,*

***We would love to know  
about the group  
so we can let others know!***

**If your group is not already listed**

**on the following page,**

**OR if the information listed *needs to be updated*  
please contact:**

Lois Johnson at: [lois.lojosw@gmail.com](mailto:lois.lojosw@gmail.com)

### **UPDATE !**

Interested in  
useful, thought-provoking,  
information and news?

**Stay in Touch! Don't miss out!**

Please make sure **Great Plains**  
has your **UPDATED** contact  
information

by clicking **HERE**

-- NEXT, locate **the district**  
you relate to in retirement  
and either call or click the link for the  
administrative assistant

If you no longer wish to check  
your **Great Plains** email address  
you may request mailings  
be sent to  
the email address you regularly check

## Community - Making God Visible

Great Plains United Methodist  
**RETIRED CLERGY GROUPS**  
who meet regularly and welcome new participants!

**Cowley County Retired Clergy Group**

When: We meet for an informal gathering occasionally (about 3 times a year)

Where: Usually Cumbernauld Village, Winfield, KS

*For more information about dates and location:*

contact Kent Melcher [kandjmel@gmail.com](mailto:kandjmel@gmail.com)

**Flint Hills Retired UM Ministers Group**

When: Every other Monday, 3:00 p.m.

Where: Meadowlark Hills, 2121 Meadowlark Rd, Manhattan, KS

Contact Person: Jim Reed [jreed@greatplainsumc.org](mailto:jreed@greatplainsumc.org)

**Grand Island Group**

*For information on times and location:*

contact Carla Gun [cgun@greatplainsumc.org](mailto:cgun@greatplainsumc.org)

**Lincoln ARMS Area Coffee Group**

When: 2nd Wednesday each month, 10 a.m.

Where: Aldersgate UMC, 84th & South, Lincoln, NE

*For more information about the group:*

contact Tom Hyde [tghyde@gmail.com](mailto:tghyde@gmail.com)

**Wichita Area Gatherings for Retired Clergy & Spouses**

When: 4th Friday each month, 11:30 - 12:30.

Where: East Heights UMC, Wichita, KS

Contact Person: Garry Winget [wingetg@earthlink.net](mailto:wingetg@earthlink.net).

*Each person brings own lunch and beverage. It's an informal time to visit. No program.*

community  
doesn't  
end  
at  
retirement

*Let us not give  
up meeting  
together,  
as some are in  
the habit of  
doing,  
but let us  
encourage one  
another."  
- Hebrews  
10:25*

Re-fill

Re-flect

Re-kindle

Re-generate Merriam Webster:

- spiritual renewal or revival
- renewal or restoration of a body,...or biological system after injury or as a normal process

# News from our Great Plains Clergy Excellence Team

## STAYING CONNECTED

**Retirees are requested to contact the District Office to provide your *current* contact information**

-- address, phone number & email you currently use.

**“WHICH District Office?”  
you may ask!**



### Choose a local Church

As you know, in retirement you need to choose a local church where you will maintain a charge conference relationship.

**It is the district in which that local church is located, that needs your updated contact information.**

The district Administrative Assistant can then update the records.

IF a Retiree resides **OUTSIDE** the bounds of the conference, the Retiree is expected to maintain a charge conference relationship with a local church that is part of the same conference where the Retiree’s clergy membership is held.

It would be helpful to **notify the pastor** appointed to the church with which you wish to maintain your charge conference relationship, **AND** to ask the pastor what date the charge conference form is due.

### Provide a Charge Conference Report

All Retirees will need to annually **provide a report** to the home charge conference of all ministry related activities (“Report of Other Clergy Relating to the Charge Conference”). **However, if you are currently serving a local church appointment in** Great Plains (in your retired status) you **do NOT** need to complete this form.

Click [HERE](#) for a link to the **Charge Conference form for retirees.**

Still not sure which district to contact?  
Click [HERE](#) for a map of the New Districts

Click [HERE](#) for links to each of the Districts and Administrative Assistants

*The Book of Discipline 2020/2024 ¶1358.5* provides more information if you would like to read further.



## **YOU are receiving GPARCS REMARCS !**

- a communique we hope to post to your email address several times a year -- with a variety of news, information and announcements, compelling articles, thought-provoking quotes, stories and meditations that invite reflection, and other comments and miscellaneous particulars.

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### **Leadership team of the Great Plains Association of Retired Clergy and Spouses**

Claudia Ricks Hubbard (chair), Linda Louderback (chair emeritus), Jo Mead (secretary), Trudy Anderson (vice chair), Ken Parker (treasurer), Lois Johnson (communications), Lance Caruthers, Dale Coates, Robbie Fall, Carla Gunn, Thomas Hyde, Jerre Nolte, Bruce Emmert (Board of Ordained Ministry liaison), Kathy Williams (conference staff liaison Director of Clergy Excellence), Shelly Petz (conference staff liaison -Clergy Faith and Wellness)

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