

More outreach possibilities

REGINA - A new sign marks the corner of Victoria Avenue and Winnipeg Street—the sign of Grace and New Beginnings Lutheran churches. The two have launched a joint venture, remaining separate congregations but sharing space in Grace’s building and hoping to share outreach opportunities. Members of Grace worship at 9:30 a.m. with a traditional service; New Beginnings meets at 11 a.m. for a contemporary service.



(l-r) Rev. Bruce Corson (New Beginnings), Aaron Cross (manager, Souls Harbour Mission House), Rev. Glen Stever (Grace).

A joint worship service October 26, 2008, celebrated the merger. The sanctuary was just about full and a marvellous “pot-blessing” supper delighted appetites afterward.

In his sermon, district president Rev. Tom Prachar asked the two congregations to consider themselves “trustees” managing the gift Jesus has given and to make the most of it by giving generously to all “beneficiaries” (those who do not yet know who Jesus is). Souls Harbour RESCUE Mission, which operates an inner-city soup kitchen, received the \$576 offering.

Dot Zwack



Revised church sign in Regina

Christmas contest increases Internet interest

THUNDER BAY, Ont. - To encourage congregation members to regularly use the church web site, Calvary’s Leadership/Computer committee introduced a “Jesus for the Holidays” contest.

Participants were invited to share a story or picture depicting how they keep Jesus the focus of their Christmas celebrations in spite of the pressures of the secular world. The church posted all entries on the web site where congregation members voted for their favourite photo and story. Voting began January 5 and the winners were announced prior to the worship service January 18.

Sandra Milne was declared winner of the photo contest. Her entry showed a window painting—something she’s done almost every year since her children were small.

The winner of the story contest was Betty Kouhi, who wrote about



Story contest winner Betty Kouhi (centre) with Michael Karschti (left) and Rev. John Schmidt.

Christmas memories. “These are wonderful memories,” she concluded, “but just concentrating on memories could be very sad. But Jesus coming to our earth is still meaningfully promising, even for a 91-year-old.”

Both contest winners received a shirt featuring the church theme: “Calvary’s Family Cares.” Pastor John Schmidt also received a shirt in appreciation of his many years of service to the congregation.

To read the stories and view photos go to www.calvarythunderbay.ca

Another award winner



Children and adults helped put together another winning Christmas parade float.

ATIKOKAN, Ont. - For the third year in a row, Faith Lutheran Church won the Best Religious Float prize in the town’s annual Santa Claus parade.

Fitting the parade theme, *Voyageurs*, the winning entry depicted Mary and Joseph’s journey to Bethlehem. The float itself represented the town of Bethlehem, featuring angels, shepherds and Jesus’ manger. Following behind the float, trying to catch up, came a donkey carrying Mary and Joseph.

Little kids with very big hearts

WINNIPEG - The atmosphere of the Beautiful Savior Lutheran School gymnasium was energetic and enthusiastic Wednesday, December 17 as students packaged a school-record of 129 food and gift hampers for the Christmas Cheer Board.

The school's annual Christmas food drive, now in its 10th year, grew so big that it had to be moved from the affiliated church and into the school's gymnasium, which resembled the food-lined aisles of a supermarket. Last year, the school made 35 hampers.

Principal Jennifer McCrea said the school put out word in early October that it was looking for donations. The community responded generously, raising \$31,000 for the food drive. That money was used to purchase 497 cases of groceries including 130 turkeys, 12 chickens and 280 loaves of bread. Other items included potatoes, gravy mixes, stuffing, canned fruits and vegetables and even holiday treats, which were then packaged for the needs of specific families.

McCrea said the students were



Photo by Ruth Bonneville/Winnipeg Free Press.

(l-r) Liam Wong, Tylo Borsboom and Taz Dangerfield of Beautiful Savior Lutheran School were proud to put together a record-breaking 129 hampers.

eager to help out, even if it meant working through their lunch hour.

"The kids want to help, but sometimes they don't know how," McCrea explained of the 114 nursery to Grade 8 students involved.

Some students even pitched in their own money, buying personalized gifts for the families they are supporting. Eight-year-old Tylo Borsboom said she bought a beauty kit for another eight-year-old girl.

"Some people just don't have the money to have nice things like other people," Borsboom explained.

Season starts with sauerkraut

ROBLIN, Man. - On the first Sunday in Advent, November 30, Our Savior Lutheran Church hosted its annual sauerkraut supper. Members and guests from neighbouring congregations, including Yorkton, Inglis and Grandview, enjoyed homemade sausage, a variety of sauerkraut entrees made with pork, ribs and bacon, many other complementary dishes and an abundance of delicious desserts.

After supper all attended a worship service followed by fellowship and lunch (leftover sausage, sauerkraut and desserts!).

Our Savior is a mission

preaching station of Zion (Yorkton, Sask.), served by Rev. Daniel Moeller and Vicar Daniel Larson.

Gaylene Ziprick



Rev. Daniel Moeller (right) gives advice on making sausage to Willie Eckert.

"I think it's sad that some people have to spend Christmas differently because of that."

Other students even pooled their money together, like Grade 7 students Mary McFarlane and Stacey Katyrynuik who bought gifts for a 15-year-old boy. McFarlane bought a \$20 gift certificate to Chapters while Katyrynuik bought an Axe body care package.

"We were trying to get something that was educational but still fun,"

McFarlane said.

And while some bought gifts, another student bought food to help fill the hampers. Nine-year-old Taz Dangerfield spent his money on items such as canned soup.

"If one person doesn't have a good Christmas then it's not a good Christmas," Dangerfield said. "We should care about others like how we want to be cared about."

One major donor that helped the school break its record was DMT Development Systems Group Inc., which has been raising money for the school's Christmas food drive for the past five years. This year the company raised \$26,000.

"Our employees are multi-denominational so not everyone celebrates Christmas, but they do respond to humanitarian issues," president Glen Demetrioff said.

The 129 hampers will go a long way in supporting the estimated 19,000 distributed by the Christmas Cheer Board.

"This is typical of what you see in Winnipeg," executive director Kai Madsen explained.

"You have the young and the old, the rich and the poor, coming together to help those who need it."

Matt Prepost, Winnipeg Free Press

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Who doesn't love a good steak?

SASKATOON - In what's become a popular fund-raiser for the Saskatoon zone of Lutheran Laymen's League-Canada, steak nights at Mulberry's restaurant provide great food as well as great programs—sometimes a speaker, sometimes music.

On Saturday, November 15, 2008, everyone enjoyed harmonies by the Joy Singers, a group that includes Gord Martens of St. John's Lutheran (Warman, Sask.). Donors provided items for door prizes and other giveaways, including a handmade quilt.

The zone first organized its steak nights to support an outreach booth at the Saskatoon Exhibition. The fund-raisers' success has allowed the zone to extend its support to the Lutheran Hour Ministries' office in Nicaragua.

Marion Hollinger

Candles share the light



(l-r) Candle crafters Rianna Tonn, Avery Simard, Jenna Gibson, Kelsey Tonn and Katrina Kunzelman.

PLUMAS, Man. - Every Christmas season, children of Zion Lutheran Sunday school make crafts to share with local shut-ins. This year, five girls ventured out on a cold and blustery Sunday to make about 40

log candles. The Light of Christ shone at the nearby seniors' manor in nearby Gladstone the following week when Zion's Sunday school led the afternoon service there.

Donna Lach



Ponderings from the president

Honest admissions

My dictionary defines *bias* as "a preference or inclination that inhibits impartial judgment; prejudice." You may cheer for a particular hockey team, professing

it's the best even when it's near the bottom of the standings. Your judgment may be influenced by the fact that your nephew plays for the team. As a result you have a definite bias toward that particular team.

Psychologists say we're biased even when it comes to bias. What they mean is, we tend to attribute worse motives to other people's actions than to our own. For example, we tend to explain others' behaviour by saying, "He's lazy; she's greedy." But we usually attribute our own laziness or greed to circumstances, or qualify it somehow: "If the shopping network didn't exist, I would never have wasted my money on so many things I didn't need."

Sound familiar? "I'm not to blame! I was influenced by factors beyond my control." "Because of her gossip, she got what was coming to her." "He's always so argumentative—always looking for a fight—it's his fault I lost my temper!"

Truly, "there is nothing new under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9). Our condition is an inherited one, from our first parents: Adam blamed "the woman whom you gave to be with me"; Eve claimed "the serpent deceived me..." (Genesis 3:12-13). It seems people never want to take responsibility for their words or actions, either in the Garden of Eden or today.

When we take an honest look at ourselves, we discover sins of omission (something we did not do but should have done), as well as sins of commission. Taking "the log out of our own eye" is never easy. It hurts our pride, our reputation, and our self-esteem. But it is necessary for true repentance.

The Augsburg Confession (Article XII) describes repentance in this way: "Now, strictly speaking, repentance consists of two parts. One part is contrition; that is, terrors striking the conscience through the knowledge of sin. The other part is faith, which is born of the Gospel (Romans 10:17) or the Absolution and believes that for Christ's sake, sins are forgiven. It comforts the conscience and delivers it from terror. Then good works are bound to follow, which are the fruit of repentance (Galatians 5:22-23)."

Rev. Thomas Prachar

Congregations install new pastors



LANGENBURG, Sask. – Rev. Arron Gust was installed August 10 at Christ Lutheran Church as pastor of the MacNutt/Landestreu/Langenburg parish. Participants included included (back, l-r) Revs. Linden Dressler (emeritus, Saskatoon), Murray Keith (Zion, Melville), district president Tom Prachar, Robert Hasselstrom (St. Matthew's, Roblin, Man.), Randy Kleemola (St. Peter's, Estevan), Dennis Paap (emeritus, Moosomin); (middle, l-r) Revs. Michael Keith (Our Saviour, Fort Qu'Appelle), Mark Dressler (St. Paul's, Saskatoon), Barry Wood (Canora/Kamsack/Togo parish), Dan Moeller (Zion, Yorkton); (front, l-r) Revs. Ted Giese (Mount Olive, Regina), Kyung-Hyun Kim (Trinity, Churchbridge), Arron Gust, and Ken Eichenlaub (Hope/Holy Trinity, Grandview/Inglis, Man.).



PRINCE ALBERT, Sask. - District president Rev. Tom Prachar (left) preached and officiated at the installation of Rev. Richard Mensch (centre) at Redeemer Lutheran, December 14. Northland circuit counsellor, Rev. Rob Grout (St. John's, Humboldt) served as liturgist. The congregation celebrated with supper and fellowship after the service.

Encouraging example

CORONACH, Sask. - By the grace of God and the tireless work of three congregation members, Flora Knudson, Shannon Amell and Carmel Clysdale, Faith Lutheran has a Sunday school for the first time in approximately ten years.

After his installation as pastor this past summer, Rev. Joshua Reynolds recognized the need for a Sunday school in the small congregation.

He expressed the need to the church council and offered to teach the children if another teacher could not be found. It took only a couple of weeks before Flora, Shannon and Carmel stepped up to help. The staff and children are enthusiastic about the new Sunday school.

Plans are also under way to start a youth group in the spring.

Official notice

The Eighth (47th) Regular Convention of Lutheran Church–Canada Central District takes place April 27-30, 2009, at the Ramada Hotel and Convention Centre, 1818 Victoria Avenue, Regina.

Theme: Give Jesus Glory—Tell Everyone What He Has Done (Psalm 105:1-2). Guest speaker: Dr. Gene Edward Veith, Jr., Patrick Henry College, Purcellville, Virginia.

Knitted items donated

SASKATOON - Members of the LWMLC group at St. Paul's organized the gathering of mittens, toques and scarves on their annual "mitten tree." About 40 pounds of knitted items – three large garbage bags stuffed full – were delivered to the YWCA. The "Y" serves as a clearing house for such items and gives them to places like Egadz and the West Side Clinic, as needed. A number of baby sweaters will be used for layettes.

Coming events

March 2-3 – District Board of Directors meeting

April 27-30 – District Convention, Ramada Hotel and Convention Centre, Regina

Visit the Central District website at www.lcccentral.ca

Send news, photos, articles and announcements six weeks prior to publication month.

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