

Pirates seek real treasure in B.C.

SURREY, B.C. - Faith Lutheran Church welcomed pirates young and old (but only friendly ones) to join its ranks during vacation Bible school, July 13-17. Adventures awaited them in the form of Bible stories and skits, worship songs, action-packed games and crafts. Volunteers spent five evenings as “captains” and “first mates” to 65 children on their learning journeys.



A contingent of friendly pirates descended upon Faith Lutheran church in Surrey for a week of learning about God’s love and salvation through Jesus.

Together, the crews

explored Bible stories and true Bible heroes, while children learned about their own call to be heroes for God. More than 50 volunteers spent a great week getting to know the group, spending 10 hours with them by week’s end.

Simultaneously with vacation Bible school, Faith offered adult Bible

studies in English, Korean, Chinese and Spanish. More than 40 people attended!

Faith also adopts five mission projects to support financially each year during VBS week. Families, church members and volunteers receive information about the ministries and make donations furthering God’s

kingdom in these places.

On Friday a closing program featured songs the children learned, a recap of events and a special gift bag for each child. A slide show highlighting the weeks’ activities ended the evening.

This year’s VBS was dedicated “In loving memory of Rev. Dr. Kwang Soo Kim, our loving and devoted pastor and friend for 17 years.”

Rev. Kim worked as a VBS volunteer as early as his high school days in Seoul, Korea. He served his entire pastoral ministry at Faith, and went to his eternal rest on May 26, 2009. This important ministry was always very near and dear to his heart.

Bev Tancon, 2009 vacation Bible school coordinator, Faith Evangelical, Surrey

Going away to camp makes for family fun

LAKE ISLE, Alta. - July 13-17 proved a great week for all ages at Camp Koinonia (Greek for “fellowship”), a Lutheran family camp some 100 km from Edmonton.



Closing celebration at Camp Koinonia after an exciting week of vacation Bible school, adult Bible studies, youth events, and fellowship.

More than 50 children visited *Gadget’s Garage* vacation Bible school and learned how God does great and exciting things in their lives. This year’s camp was extra special thanks to help from the Crew Ministries’ team, *Redefined*.

While children attended VBS, adults participated in a thought-provoking Bible study, *Sin and Grace*, led by Rev. Rich Docekal from All

Saints Lutheran Church, Edmonton. Great discussion transpired over the course of the week!

Youth gathered at the pavilion for their own special evening time, with *Redefined* leading devotions and games—the first time the camp offered a program specifically for grades 7 and up. It proved very popular!

At closing ceremonies on Friday morning, everyone—children to

adults—had to get up and entertain. The Crew team led a few songs, which got everyone up and moving. The week wouldn’t have been complete without a

hotdog lunch afterward, with Rev. Jon Estes (Advent, Evansburg, Alta.) manning the barbecue.

Next year Camp Koinonia celebrates 50 years of God’s grace. Celebrations will take place over the Civic Holiday long weekend, July 30-August 2, 2010. For more information, contact Shirley Sutherland at 780-416-2867 or visit www.lakeislelutherancamp.org.

“The harvest is plentiful...”

SURREY, B.C. - Every year they come, thousands of farm workers from Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. They work from dawn to dusk, rain and shine, spring, summer and fall, in orchards and fields, until they return to their homes for the winter. In trailers, cabins and camps, they lead a hard existence, trying to make a better life for their families. But wherever they are in Greater Vancouver, Richmond, Ladner, Surrey or Delta, in Abbotsford or Chilliwack, they are likely to encounter Eduardo Rodriguez, Faith's dedicated Hispanic worker.

On Saturday, September 12, Eduardo and his Hispanic fellowship put on a Mexican fiesta. They worked past midnight on Friday and returned at 6:30 a.m. the next day. Dishes from Latin America and the Caribbean, a mariachi band, songs, laughter and dancing, in the decorated hall for the more than two hundred people, foreign farm workers, who came from everywhere, brought there by the bus Eduardo and his flock had hired. The workers were served by waiters with white towels over their arms and treated with respect and



Taking a moment to relax after an amazing turnout for the Hispanic Celebration Dinner. From left to right: Alejandra, Carmen, Gabriella, Samantha, Gerardo, and Eduardo

dignity. For some it was the first time they had come to a church, let alone a Lutheran one.

The entire event was planned by the Hispanic Fellowship of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, Surrey B.C. They prepared and served the meals for the two hundred- plus who attended without help of any kind, and experienced the joy of working the Lord's harvest, where “the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few” (Luke 10:2a).

Year in, year out, Eduardo, wife Blanca and their three children, Jaquelin, Carmen and Gabriella, make their way from their home in New Westminster to Faith, Surrey—a 15-km journey—on foot, by SkyTrain and by bus. They don't have a car. But that's never deterred them from attending meetings or volunteering for vacation Bible school, or stopped Eduardo from completing the DiscipleMaker's Course.

Every Sunday Eduardo conducts a worship service in Spanish. For many years attendance varied from a half- dozen to 15 people. Now it's 20 to 30 or more. The service has outgrown the capacity of the chapel where they worship.

Eduardo has a full-time job in a mattress factory, but you'll often find him elsewhere—in shopping malls, grocery stores, on bus and SkyTrain platforms, in farm-worker camps, even on Co-op Radio, CFRO, 102.7 FM—wherever foreign workers are likely to congregate. He's there to listen, to tell them about the love of Jesus; to tell them they need not feel lonely. Since He cares for them, that is why he, Eduardo, is there for them.

Wheels turn to support Vancouver Olympics

BARRHEAD, Alta. - Rev. Darren Siegle (Redeemer/Vega and Christ/Mellowdale), together with young people from the congregation, rode in the Canadian Bible Society's *Bike for Bibles* program, held for the first time in the Barrhead area on Saturday, May 30.

The group raised about \$3000, which will be added to the fund for distributing Scriptures to athletes in Vancouver for the 2010 Winter Olympics.

Eighteen riders pedalled the 85-km route, including Dr. Steve Chambers from Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton. Northern Alberta Bible Society's Rev. Chuck Mortimer, and Norm Selman, an active LCC layman from Edmonton, organized and ran the event.



(l-r): Steven Greilach, Rev. Darren Siegle, seminary professor Dr. Steve Chambers, Jordi Greilach, Brad Lussier and Karli Andrukiewicz.

It dovetailed nicely with resolution 2009-01-05, passed at the district convention one week earlier, which encouraged prayer, support, and involvement with the

Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games mission opportunities.

Thanks go to many from the parish and elsewhere who sponsored the bikers.

Lloydminster sets up shop

LLOYDMINSTER, Alta. - During August 10-14, First Lutheran welcomed 125 children to *Gadget's Garage* vacation Bible school, where they learned the secret meaning of *GADGET*—God's Always Doing Great Exciting Things in our Lives.

Reinforcing the theme, volunteers taught five Bible lessons, one per day: Creation, Jesus' turning water into wine, the parables of the seeds, Jesus' transfiguration, and Jesus' resurrection and appearance on



Roland Starke and Marina Day help welcome vacation Bible school children.

the Emmaus road. Games, snacks, crafts, stories and Bible challenges reinforced each lesson throughout the week.

A Thursday night program showed parents what their children learned, and many families indicated they would be back next year. Thanks go to volunteers (more than 50 in total) for taking the time to contribute to this outreach. With their help, VBS was a great exciting success this year!

Deacon Leah Becker, DPS, First, Lloydminster



From the President

“I don't believe in organized religion—I like to do my own thing.” “I'm not a religious person, I'm a spiritual person.” Sound familiar? My guess is, a significant portion of the population would relate positively to these two statements. Is that just an excuse not to go to church? No, I don't think so. I think people who make these statements genuinely believe they are spiritual and don't need the church or its message.

It may surprise some to hear that the Bible actually agrees with them. They are indeed spiritual. Every man, woman and child is spiritual—if, by using the word “spiritual,” we mean having a sense of God. The Bible affirms that everyone is born with knowledge of God. We all know He exists, He is all-powerful, He is just and He is holy. St. Paul wrote, “For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made” (Romans 1:19-20 ESV).

The important question is whether being “spiritual” is enough. That's where people generally err. Usually when people say, “I'm spiritual,” they imply their level of spirituality is sufficient. They claim the church or “organized religion” can contribute nothing. Based on their level of spirituality, they feel they have all they need, and they and God are on good terms.

In Jesus' day the Pharisees believed they were on good terms with God too. The basis for their claim wasn't spirituality, it was obedience and legalism. They believed that based on their outward obedience to the law and its numerous interpretations in Jewish society, they were fine with God. Jesus roundly condemned them. In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told the

people: “For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:20 ESV). In other words, not even the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees was sufficient to inherit the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus would say the same thing today about those who rely on being “spiritual.” In other words, unless our spirituality *exceeds* that of the most spiritual, we will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Our spirituality is not enough. In fact, it is never *anything* before God because of sin. St. Paul writes, “What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. As it is written: ‘There is no one righteous, not even one’” (Romans 3:9-10 NIV).

Sin is a spiritual condition in which we are conceived and with which we are all born. Although we know God, we do not know Him in a saving way. Sin is every disobedience of the law. Although we can be outwardly obedient, the mind and heart constantly manifest the sinful spiritual condition we inherit and pass on, one generation after another.

Being spiritual isn't enough. Being outwardly obedient isn't enough. It is through Christ alone that we stand in a right relationship with God. God sent Him to be the atoning sacrifice to pay the penalty for our sin. I am on good terms with my heavenly Father, not because I am spiritual or obedient—in fact, not because of anything I am or have done. It is all because of what God in Christ has done for me. Neither religious legalism nor secular spirituality holds any prospect of hope or redemption. Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6 ESV).

Rev. Don Schiemann

Noteworthy enrichment and outreach

EDMONTON – The hallways at Concordia University College of Alberta (CUCA) rang out with music August 10-15 as 74 young people from Grades 4-12, several well-respected music clinicians, and 19 music educators from all over western Canada came together for *Singspiration/Inspiration for Teachers*, CUCA's annual choral camp and teacher-education program.

This August marked the camp's tenth anniversary, and although the program has expanded to include many components over the years, the basic philosophy remains the same.

"*Singspiration* is about process, not product," says artistic director Dr. John Hooper. "We take a group of young people with varying musical backgrounds, put them together with a world-class conductor, and by the end of the week they come out not only better musicians, but better people."

He adds, "It can be a life-changing experience for these young musicians." And if it is, the diversity of experiences the camp offers plays a large part.

Singspiration isn't just about song, though it's rooted there. In addition to singing with either junior or youth choir, this year's campers made music with handbells



Youth Choir conductor Brian Galante with his singers.



(l-r): Conner Seerden, Michael Gust, Nathan Bootsma, and guest music clinician for Honour Handbells, Chris Cheng.

(*Ringspiration*), drums, guitars and participated in art classes and orienteering.

Time spent "just hanging out on the lawn and building relationships with fellow campers and counsellors" is important too, says three-time counsellor Shawna Fair. "This is really a ministry where we invest in the kids on a very personal level. We hang out, get to know them, encourage positive friendships, and do some wacky things together! It's really a lot of fun."

While the young musicians rehearse, dedicated music educators sit taking notes and watching conductors. While youngsters attend art class and other non-music sessions, or sit outside enjoying some sun, teacher-participants attend professional growth sessions.

Some participants attend for credit, some come just for a day or part of the week, but all appreciate having a chance to spend time with renowned music educators to glean ideas and to grow professionally.

"*Inspiration for Teachers* is a natural extension of *Singspiration*," says *Singspiration* executive director Jody Stark. "We have the chance to impact the lives of 80 youth each year, but these music educators are involved with thousands of kids over their careers. If CUCA can support them in the important task of giving kids a richer life through music, we are privileged to do so."

Singspiration/Inspiration for Teachers takes place each August at Concordia University College in Edmonton. Next summer's camp: August 9-15, 2010. Contact singspiration@concordia.ab.ca for further details or visit music.concordia.ab.ca/singspiration.

Visit the ABC District website at www.lccabc.ca

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

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Golden Spike welcomes new pastor



GOLDEN SPIKE, Alta. - Zion Lutheran welcomes Rev. Jamie Waring to its congregation. (front, l-r): Revs. Dr. Vern Raaflaub, Joe Das, Jamie Waring, James Avery; (back): Revs. Bill Ney, Darren Siegle, Roland Kubke, Ked Rodeman and Todd Hoeffs.