

Serving faithfully for 50 years...and beyond

PLUMAS, Man. - A Sunday service of thanksgiving, July 26 at Zion Lutheran, commemorated the 50th anniversary of Rev. Alvin Borchardt's ordination. Rev. Borchardt—who left retirement to become Zion's assistant pastor in 2001—and his wife Jean welcomed their son, Rev. Harold Borchardt (Good Shepherd, Winnipeg), as guest preacher.

It was another milestone for the couple, who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary last August.

At Plumas community hall, the after-program included greetings and congratulations from the Central District (via president, Rev. Tom Prachar), Portage Circuit (Rev. Alex Klages), FaithLife Financial (George Malmstrom), home congregation Zion, Plumas, Man. (Rev. Richard Klein, chairman Don Kunzelman) and representatives of congregations in Neepawa, Portage la Prairie, Brandon and others. Celebrants shared much love and laughter in honour of a man gifted by God to share the Gospel and God's love with many.



(l-r): Rev. Thomas Prachar (Central District president), Rev. Harold Borchardt (Good Shepherd, Winnipeg), honoree Rev. Al and Jean Borchardt, Rev. Richard Klein (Zion, Plumas).

Born to Rev. and Mrs. A.O. Borchardt in Langenburg, Saskatchewan, he completed his undergraduate work at Concordia College, St. Paul (Minnesota) in 1954, graduating from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in 1959. He spent his vicarage year in Elgin, Illinois (St. John's), becoming ordained on September 13, 1959. He and Jean (Kulpa) married on August 17, 1958,

and were blessed with four sons and two daughters. In 1999 to Neepawa, but a mere two years later accepted the call to serve with Rev. Klein in Plumas—a call he continues to carry out faithfully.

Rev. Borchardt has served the church as circuit counsellor, district vice-president, member of district and synod nominating committees, and Lutheran Laymen's League pastoral advisor.

Donna Lach

Coming events

October 4-6

North-South Sask Pastors Conference, Lumsden, Sask.

October 5-7

Manitoba-Northern Ont Pastors Conference, Kenora, Ont.

October 19-20

New Church Workers Conference, Regina

November 23-24,

District Board of Directors, Lumsden, Sask.

Vicar farewell



ROBLIN, Man. - Daniel Larson (seen here with his family Megan, Patrick and Brennan) enjoyed a farewell potluck supper in honour of his year as vicar. Zion (Yorkton) and St. Paul's (Springside, both in Saskatchewan), along with Roblin preaching station, have welcomed a new vicar for 2009-10, Douglas Zahner.

Opportunities are worth seizing

ATIKOKAN, Ont. - Opportunities to tell people about God's love and forgiveness of our sins through His Son, Jesus, are all around us. Many times they come when we aren't looking. One such opportunity came my way this summer.

I received a phone call from the Boy Scouts of America asking me to be summer chaplain at the Northern Tier Atikokan Base (part of their wilderness canoeing program). I didn't know if I wanted to do it; it would require taking on extra duties and forgoing a regular vacation, since they wanted me there three to four times a week, including Sundays.

After much prayer and effort, working out a schedule in which I could stay overnight on Saturdays and drive back to my church in time for Sunday-morning services, I agreed. I travelled to the Boy Scout base three times a week and led one or two services each day for different groups.

I enjoyed these multiple services; the experience was teaching me to think "on the go" and adapt to different situations. But I wondered if my rapid-fire services were doing any good. Was I really reaching anyone, or was I just fulfilling a requirement for the "duty to God" patch?

To earn this patch, scouts had to lead grace before a meal, attend a religious service and participate in at least three daily devotionals while on their trek. For some of the scouts attendance may have just been a requirement to get another patch for their shirt, but others told me what they heard was truly meaningful.

Not all chose to attend a service, and while it was discouraging to have some walk away after I explained who I was and what I was offering, it was also encouraging to hear their



Rev. Gerry Anderson preaches to a group of scouts.

friends encourage them to stay. One leader told me the scouts in his

opportunity before us.

Rev. Gerry Andersen, Faith, Atikokan

Impromptu concert draws a street-wise crowd

THUNDER BAY, Ont. - Street Reach activities began in the usual way on a warm summer evening in the ministries' building on Simpson Street. Coffee brewed; iced tea cooled. A dozen or so regulars enjoyed friendship over cups and cribbage boards.

Then Dan walked in with his guitar. Would he play for us? Or, better yet, how about if we pulled our chairs onto the sidewalk...could we enjoy the music outdoors? We began setting up and before we knew it, dozens of neighbourhood people were milling around expectantly, happily. We were amazed—where had they all come from? Eventually, about 40 people enjoyed the outdoor concert and a cup of soup, freely given, from the soup van that arrived promptly at 8 p.m.

Open hearts, a smile, love. We realized that the church is not only

a building where people gather. "Church" happens where the people are.

Mary-Anne Barton

Street Reach Ministries is an outreach of the Lutheran Community Care Centre in Thunder Bay, managed by Rev. Neil Otko and supported by the Central District.



Dan, a gifted musician and composer.

District board approves preacher payments

LUMSDEN, Sask. - In a cost-reducing move, the Central District Board of Directors met at St. Michael's Retreat Centre, August 24 and 25, during which they:

- Approved the 2010 Church Workers' Compensation Guide, including a 2.3 percent cost-of-living increase. Guidelines also call for guest preacher payment, \$125 per service, and up to \$175 for two services per Sunday.
- Learned that mission receipts from congregations remain on par with last year but still fall short of what's needed to fund existing programs.
- Accepted the constitution from St. Paul's (Bergheim, Sask.), a former ELCIC congregation.
- Heard about shifting soil under the district office building. Treasurer Wally Dressler reported that shifts due to soil problems in that part of Regina may necessitate a move. Preliminary investigations

into selling or leasing appropriate office space elsewhere in the city have begun.

- Adopted details of an Abuse Prevention Policy for all employees and volunteers or anyone else connected with the Central District office.
- Decided to look into feasibility of starting a street ministry in Regina, similar to what district already does with StreetReach in Thunder Bay. Previously the board had considered possible work among Aboriginal people in and around the Fort Qu'Appelle area northeast of Regina.
- Welcomed two new lay members appointed at the last meeting to fill vacancies: Gloria Rathgeber (Zion/Yorkton, Sask.) representing Yorkton region and Claudia Edel (Christ/Neepawa, Man.), Winnipeg region. Claudia's term was short-lived, however, since the board learned her husband, Rev. Ken

Edel, had accepted a chaplaincy position with the Canadian Forces in Edmonton.

- Heard about plans to offer Lay Enrichment School in modules at various district locations. Assistant to the president Rev. Sye Van Maanen said discussion with Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, on professors' involvement continues.
- Noted that three vacant congregations are in the process of calling a pastor; 18 vacant congregations/parishes are not calling at the present time.
- Approved constitutional changes for two congregations.
- Received work reports on StreetReach, on DPS intern Melissa McNeil in La Ronge, on German-language work in Winkler/Morden and Spanish in Brandon.

*Rev. Thomas Prachar,
Central District president*



Ponderings from the president

The importance of eye contact

"Has Aubrey found Jesus yet?" Carson wondered.

Closing the front door, Lulana said, "The mister hasn't embraced his Lord, no, but I'm pleased to say he has come as far as making eye contact with Him."

City of Night, Dean Koontz, p. 91

I'm sure the author, in the dialogue above, intended a clever juxtaposition between giving Jesus a big hug—believing in Him as a dear Saviour—and just making eye contact with Him, acknowledging Him as a passing acquaintance at Christmas perhaps.

Of course, Carson had it all wrong. Neither Aubrey nor anyone else can find Jesus. Thankfully, Jesus has taken the initiative to find sinners like you and me, all because of His undeserved love and mercy for us. Martin Luther, in his explanation to the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed, had it right: "I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him."

I believe Lulana had it right too. Our Lord can use us as His tools in so many ways and instances to help people "make eye contact with Him." While we don't bring people to faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit may use us to help others see Jesus as more than just a passing acquaintance. By inviting someone to come to church to hear God's Word, especially when they're facing problems in their life, we will be helping them "make eye contact" with Someone who truly cares about them and can help. When we stand up for our Christian principles, we're enabling people to see Christ in us, even as Someone they may want to get to know better in the future. By helping people "make eye contact" with Jesus, we are simply introducing them to the living God so the Holy Spirit can do His work of calling them by the Gospel, enlightening them with His gifts, sanctifying and keeping them in the true faith.

Rev. Thomas Prachar

Youth group reaches out

WINNIPEG - At a Manitoba Housing complex near Beautiful Savior in the south end of the city, a young girl committed suicide. This hit the church youth group so hard, the members grew determined to do something. They visited the site as a group and prayed for the girl's family. They also asked God for direction.

Touched by the hopelessness that led to such a tragic decision, the young people decided to host a hotdog and movie night for local children. Their objective: to provide a safe place for two hours on Wednesday evenings where the children could come together, make new friends and be fed physically and spiritually. Currently, about 25 children from the complex (and some parents!) meet each Wednesday. Several moms help out as well.

For the past year a congregation member has been sharing God's love with families from the complex by bringing some of their children to Sunday school. After she asked for transportation help, other members volunteered to pick up more children on Sunday mornings. These children, nurtured by the youth group and welcomed by the congregation, are proud to call Beautiful Savior their church.

Debb Bomback



Beautiful Savior's youth group found its mission in providing hope, safety and spiritual food to children from nearby public housing.

Summer installations



Rev. Ward Yunker's installation as associate pastor at Peace (Winnipeg) June 28 brought together (front, l-r) District President Tom Prachar, LCC President Robert Bugbee, Rev. Yunker, and Peace pastor Rev. Brad Schollenberg. Other Winnipeg pastors attending were (back, l-r) Revs. Richard Beinert (Immanuel), Richard Kruesel (Holy Cross), James Scholz (Redeemer), and Alex Klages (from dual parish Trinity/Winkler, Zion/Morden).

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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On August 16, dual parish Trinity (Wilkie) and Lutheran Church of Unity installed Rev. Douglas Taylor as pastor. Saskatchewan clergy in attendance included (front, l-r): District President Tom Prachar, Rev. Taylor, Rev. Howard Ulmer (Saskatoon); (back, l-r): Revs. James Dimitroff (Grace, Saskatoon), Lowell Guebert (emeritus, Saskatoon), David Mellecke (Holy Trinity, Luseland) and James Vosper (Holy Cross, Saskatoon). Rev. Taylor, a 2009 seminary graduate, joked with the others that he was claiming the title "youngest pastor in the Central District!"