



“Celebrations”

*A publication of the Synod of Alberta and the Territories
Fall 2010*

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Header photo of stained-glass courtesy of Faith Lutheran, Calgary. Window design by Geoff Jamieson. All photos in Celebrations by Colleen McGinnis, unless otherwise stated.

Technological Separation



Let me say at the outset that I am not aspiring to be the grinch who stole communication technology. For better or for worse, you have it and

use it even as I do. It’s all here to stay, and I confess that it is fascinating! The social media are growing exponentially as are the applications. Electronic multi-tasking is a way of life. A briefcase on wheels, brimming with hardware and software—I dare not leave home without it. As our culture shifts and adjusts to these innovations in communication, we can look to the true litmus test—our children—to see the social impact of communication technology. The kids are linked in; they know all about social networking via electronic media. A kid without a multi-function cellphone, access to the Internet, and a Facebook account is considered “underprivileged” by his or her peers.

Here’s a modern-day vignette to which we can all relate: a family in a restaurant waiting for a meal to be served with a tween or teen talking on

her phone, text messaging, or checking up on her friends through Facebook. The parents are exasperated but trying to take it all in stride. A family is sitting around a table in one another’s company, but for the child, her friend’s latest T-shirt or piercing takes precedence over any family chatter at the table. It is saying “no” to the real live people you’re with and “yes” to someone—anyone—in cyberspace.

I thought I misheard when a newscast reported that a provincial campground experimented this past summer with making wireless networking (Wi-Fi) available to campers. The extended news story reported that kids and business folks loved it. Parents? Not so much. Another story caught my attention: schools that had gone totally Wi-Fi with some very unexpected results. Children began exhibiting dizziness, headaches, and nausea at school; the symptoms mysteriously left when classes were

out. The evidence is anecdotal, and no studies have been done to date. But the suggestion is that this may have to do with low levels of radiation generated by the electronic technology. Will this limit our interaction with technology? Probably not.

We are, at best, married to our electronics. At worst, we are hopelessly addicted. Martin Luther said our god is that to which we look for our highest good. By that definition, our attachment to technology is a form of idolatry. Humankind is created for relationship and social interaction.



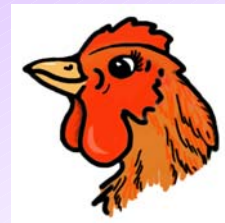
By the design and intention of our Creator, we are not solitary persons. But being in one another's presence and relating face-to-face is quickly giving way to pseudo-relationships with varying degrees of separation, buffered by the electronic media. God doesn't love us by saying so on Facebook. God, in the person of Jesus Christ, comes to find and love us face to face. Jesus doesn't email or text us; he seeks out and abides with us wherever and however we happen to be. We have been saying it in our church because we know it to be so in our congregations and in our individual faith journey with God: it's all about relationships! And it is.

By Bishop Ronald B. Mayan

\$50.00 isn't just chicken feed!

That buys a whole *flock* of chickens, three fish nets or a medical kit.

Of course, if you make it \$75.00, you can get a couple of sacks of potatoes, three fuel efficient stoves, or a pair of goats.




The possibilities are almost endless!

See for yourself at Canadian Lutheran World Relief

www.clwr.org

and click on Gifts from the Heart.

Around the Synod



Coming Events

Do Science and Faith Matter to Each Other?

Find out in a Chester Ronning Centre presentation Friday, November 19 by Fr. José Funes, Distinguished Visiting Fellow and director of the Vatican Observatory. Participants will meet at 10:00 am in the Chapel of Augustana Campus, Camrose, and then move to the Forum Board Room from 10:30 to 11:30 am.



This presentation continues at 8:00 in the evening on

November 19 at the Telus World of Science, 11211 – 142 St NW, Edmonton, with a discussion on Astrobiology: Are We Alone in the Universe? Call Rebecca Warren VanArragon at 780-679-1146 (Camrose) for more information.

Camrose Lutheran Bible Institute: Christmas Choral Presentation on Tour

Gloria – a program of choral music and dramatic narratives will take place on
 December 10 – Friday – 7:30 pm at St. Peters Lutheran, Millet
 December 11 – Saturday – 7:30 pm at St. Matthew’s Lutheran, 7607 – 89 St. Edmonton
 December 12 – Sunday – 10:30 am at St. John’s Lutheran, New Sarepta
 December 12 – Sunday – 7:00 pm at Messiah Lutheran, Camrose

Men’s Retreat at Kuriakos February 4 – 6, 2011

Connecting Sunday faith with everyday life is not as easy as it sounds. How do you live the “Jesus way” in the workplace, in your community, and in your home? Rev. Darryl Roste and Rev. Rolf Nosterud will be leading conversation and worship, lending their insight and learning to yours. Register after January 1, 2011. www.kuriakos.ab.ca

Lutheran Hospital Ministries Southern Alberta looks at Alzheimer’s

“Unlocking Alzheimer’s” will be presented by the Alzheimer’s Society of Calgary on Thursday, November 18, 1:30 – 2:30 pm at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, 703 Heritage Drive SW, Calgary.

“Boost Your Marvelous Brain” takes place on Thursday, January 27, 2011 from 1:30 – 2:30 pm also at St. Andrews’ Presbyterian. Learn about the brain, the potential for improving long term health of the brain and tools to create brain health strategies.

Contact Judie Coleman at judieco@yahoo.ca for more information on these seminars.

A Traditional German Christmas Service

Concordia Lutheran Seminary invites you to a traditional German Christmas Service at 3:00 pm on Sunday, December 12th in the Seminary Chapel. The guest preacher is Rev. Roland Kubke from St. John Lutheran Church, Beach Corner, AB. For more information, contact Rhonda Buck at rbuck@concordiasem.ab.ca or call 780-474-1468.

Incredible. Inspiring. Ineffable. Awesome.

Four perspectives on the Lutheran Anglican Youth Gathering

From August 19 – 22, Canadian Lutheran and Anglican youth, together with their team leaders, gathered in London, Ontario to take part in the first joint event of its kind. Here is what four participants had to say about their experience.

Hayley Gottschalk, St. John's Lutheran, Barrhead – Youth

“The gathering is an experience of a life time, its like you're in another world with absolutely nothing to worry about, you are just worshiping God with youth from across Canada, it's incredible. The feeling you get from a gathering is like no other I have ever felt, you feel so close to God and everyone around you, it's amazing. You make so many new friendships that will last.”

Lydia Book, Ascension Lutheran, Edmonton – Youth

“It was inspiring and I really loved it.”

Marta Ree, St. John's Lutheran, Barrhead – Youth

“The trip created a sense of community that is beyond words. It is something that is simply ineffable.”

Shelly Ree, St. John's Lutheran, Barrhead – Home Team Leader

It was truly a privilege to travel with forty-two amazing youth. Our group was made up of youth and leaders from St. John's Lutheran, Barrhead, Ascension Lutheran, Edmonton, St. Peter's Lutheran, Millet, Grace Lutheran, Bentley, and Highwood Lutheran, Calgary. We travelled to Ottawa and explored our nation's capitol a few days before the Clay gathering. During this time spent before the Gathering, the youth from the various churches began to gel as a group. We explored museums, visited Parliament Hill, biked around



Leaving on a jet plane. Tanner Chell, Ascension Lutheran, Edmonton, Marta Ree and Anna Ree, St. John's Lutheran, Barrhead and Julie Cameron, St. Peter's Lutheran Millet.

Photos by Marta Ree, Anna Ree and Paul Chell



“Goofy” Pastor Kevin Ree, St. John's, Barrhead, playing ball by 1860 rules.



Lisa Kuschminder, St. John's, Barrhead, go-karting at Wally World.

Rideau Hall and many of the embassies, as well as taking in the International Fireworks Competition in Hull Quebec.

As a leader I found it amazing that the youth from five different congregations, rural and urban, younger and older, took very little time in becoming fast friends. At times this became an actual problem because all forty-two would travel in one large group, getting on busses, walking down sidewalks, crossing streets or riding bikes.

Via Rail was our mode of transportation to get to London from Ottawa. Train travel is not the usual form of travel for western Canadian youth so this was a unique experience. By the time our youth hit the Clay Gathering in London, Ontario they were pumped to experience everything that the Gathering had to offer. Close to one thousand Lutheran and Anglican youth together worshipping in the first large group gathering was a remarkable experience for our young people who have never been at a gathering before, as well as for our seasoned youth.

As leaders we try to see the gathering experience through the eyes of our youth – what they may be thinking or feeling. Father Bill (Anglican leader, Rev'd Canon William Cliff), the guest speaker, spoke truth to our youth and his words were meaningful and relevant to their lives. I believe that our group very much appreciated the words of Father Bill, and the drama team that brought the scripture to life for them. They enjoyed singing the worship songs, taking part in worship and being in fellowship with close to one thousand kids who had many things in common. Perhaps their most important

connection was that they all made it a priority in their lives to travel with other young people across the country to worship and praise the God that loves them and wants to be Hands On in their lives.



Julie Cameron, St. Peter's, Millet playing the pump organ at Pioneer Village, London.



Nikolas Koberstein, St. John's, Barrhead, karaoke singing at one of CLAY's Late Night Activities.

It really was an awesome, inspiring, exhausting, and incredible trip for me as I traveled along side these young disciples of Jesus.

The Greatest Challenge

Pastor Larry Kochendorfer becomes the new Assistant to the Bishop

What would you do if you were offered a new job when you already had one you loved?

This is what Pastor Larry Kochendorfer did when he was called to take up retiring Pastor Phil Hink's position of Assistant to the Bishop. He prayed. And the Holy Spirit led him in the direction he was meant to go.

But it was not without inner turmoil. Worry, excitement, joy, sadness – all these emotions and more moved through him as he made the transition from pastor at Ascension Lutheran Church to Assistant to the Bishop at Synod Office.

“One day,” says Pastor Larry, “I was sitting in the quietness of the Ascension church building and thinking of the voices of people gathering for worship on Sunday mornings. I thought of the sound of the coffee being made as water spit out of the coffee maker, of music heard in my office as musicians prepared for worship in the sanctuary, of the sound of children's voices laughing and playing and talking next door in the nursery, and much more ...and of course my tears began to flow!”

That was in July. Several months later, the installation service was held at Ascension on September 25. Now, with the move to his new office complete, and the benefit of some experience in his new position, Pastor Larry spoke about his recent thoughts.

Q: How did you feel about the Installation service?

A: It was very celebrative! Affirming is another word I might use. It was wonderful to have so many rostered leaders there, and to experience the gifts of music and dance that came from the people at Ascension. A DVD recording the day's events is being



Receiving the blessing from Bishop Ron Mayan, assisted by Robyn Simpson-Mohr

prepared, and I'm looking forward to reliving it. There were two other very special musical moments for me. One was the blessing (benediction), which was commissioned for the Installation service and composed by Doug Thurne, a member at Lord of All Lutheran, Strathmore. The other was the hymn that my wife Cathy and daughter Anna sang. This music, with its beautiful text and melody composed for the service by a good friend, Rev. Phil Burkett, from Indiana, was received just days before the service.



Anna and Cathy Kochendorfer

Q: Are you enjoying your new position?

A: Yes. I feel settled – comfortable and at home. I think a big part of that was setting up the office. The Synod staff have been very helpful in making the transition relatively smooth. It has been a huge learning curve, but I'm tackling it as the days come and as I work through my "list". I've become particularly interested in relationship building with pastors, congregations, call committees and synod committees. And, something I've discovered is a whole host of congregational ministries that are working in a local context. I think that this is incredible and I need to find ways to share these stories.

Q: What responsibilities will you be focusing on in the future?

A: Campus Ministry, Canadian Missions and my first Synod Council meeting. I'll be retaining my association with the committee for Worship and the Arts, and will be responsible for the partnership with our Companion Synod. Cathy and I will be travelling to Bogota, Colombia in November by invitation of the Colombian Lutheran Church for conversation regarding their vision and mission. As well, because of my personal interest, every couple of weeks I've been emailing prayers to those on the ABT synod news list. We have also begun weekly Synod staff devotion and prayer time.

Yes, Pastor Larry will be busy, but he's happy to immerse himself in the work. He moves forward in his new position knowing he has the love, support and respect of his family, friends and colleagues. As Bishop Ron said in his sermon on September 25, "Welcome to the greatest challenge of your vocation. And may the Lord of the Church bless you in it."



Rev. Dr. Larry Kochendorfer
Assistant to the Bishop

By Colleen McGinnis

More photos from the Installation service ...

The service of installation for Pastor Larry Kochendorfer was indeed beautiful, uplifting and soulful. On this and the following page is a selection of photos from that day, especially for those who were not able to attend the service, but also for those who might wish to relive it.



Getting ready.



Conducting the service.



Communion Table



Sharing the Peace



Ascension Butterfly – Olivia Hoepfner



Jordan Kochendorfer



Choir singing - Lord, I Believe



Rostered Leaders

Youth go from Hanna to Calgary on a Mission for God



From the left: Raeleen Minchau and Beth Lewis

On September 18 I was privileged to go with five peers to volunteer at the Mustard Seed in Calgary. After a stay at one of our sister churches, we continued to the Foothills Industrial Park – a part of the city unlike the rest. It had no traffic, was very quiet and clean. After pulling up to the shelter, we saw about thirty bikes all lined up, some broken some not. We walked into the shelter to the front desk, where we were escorted to the kitchen. After cleaning up and putting our aprons on, we got down to business. I put butter and strawberry jam into individual cups, while everyone else made sandwiches; this was their snack for the day. After preparing the snack, we went on a little tour of the building. We started in the office. We saw where the staff conducts random searches, and I also saw a wall. This wasn't any wall, as it was covered with pictures of past shelter members holding keys – the keys to their apartments and their new lives. This proved to me that this shelter was truly a work of God.

We then moved on to the main dining area where the room was huge. It had lots of tables and chairs, vending machines, and activities, but not many people. We were told many of the people were out working or at job interviews. We continued onto the sleeping area. Mats, mats, and more mats filled the area – a few spots shy of 400. The mats were thick, but smaller than the width of a twin sized mattress. We then went on to the back where the donations were kept. Mattresses, furniture, clothing, and hygiene products filled the rooms.

After our tour, we went back to the kitchen to serve the less fortunate. This was our chance to interact with them. We fed them fajitas and potatoes and they were very thankful.

These people were just like us in many ways; they were picky about their food, they had laptops and cell phones, they wore clean clothes, and smiled a lot. I will never forget that these people are like us. They are so often stereotyped in a negative way, but they have friends, and family, likes and dislikes, and hobbies. They are just people who are going through a rough time in their lives. They may not have enough money to rent or buy a house or apartment and many of them have health issues that hold them back.



“Mr. Mustard” – Spencer Smith

I learned a lot on this trip. I learned that we have so much, while there are people that can fit all of their belongings into a small trunk. They don't have a home and are forced to live elsewhere. Thanks to organizations like the Mustard Seed, people are moving on and becoming productive citizens in society.

By Beth Lewis, Redeemer Lutheran, Hanna

The youth group for Hanna Redeemer Lutheran Church visited the Mustard Seed in Calgary this fall. It was a good experience, with lots of learning and fun as well. We participated by preparing food for the homeless and then serving it. Many were so grateful that we would come out and do what we did for them as young members of society. We learned a lot. The people were nice, friendly, well dressed and well kept. Many had vehicles, jobs, more than one pair of shoes, name brand clothing, phones, iPods, and laptops even. They just simply couldn't afford rent. The mustard seed helps people put together a plan to save so they are able to afford to rent or buy a house somewhere. There were pictures on the wall of many adults who were holding a key and standing in the doorway of their new apartment or living quarters.

The people at the Mustard Seed had a schedule. There were times they had to be outside and working, and times they were allowed to sleep. Men and woman had different sleeping spaces. They had meal tickets and could only have two servings. We dished up their plates.

Going to the Mustard Seed opened all of our eyes and made us think. Homeless people don't just sit around and do nothing all day. I hope if any other group gets this opportunity, they take it.

*By Alisha Minchau,
Redeemer Lutheran, Hanna*



Left to Right: Alisha Minchau, Beth Lewis, Tyrell Storch, and Spencer Smith.



An Assortment of Anniversaries ...

100 Years for Sharon Lutheran Congregation

"Bind us together, Lord. Bind us together with cords that cannot be broken." And, bind them together He did, for 100 years and counting.

On June 19 and 20, 175 people celebrated this important milestone at Sharon Lutheran Church, southwest of Irma, beginning with a supper and "Song Fest" on Saturday night. A tent had been set up and held a display of memorabilia, which included friendship quilts from 1946 and 2010.

Sunday's church service included another memorable event. Bishop Ron Mayan was present to confirm Kailynne Hollinger in her faith. Kailynne is the granddaughter of Gordon Hollinger, the first baby baptized in Sharon Lutheran Church. After church the congregation gathered in the cemetery, where all the names of the deceased were read out and a carnation placed on each grave. Coffee and anniversary cake, cut by Irene Fluevog – Sharon's oldest member at 98 years, brought the weekend to a close.

Paul says in Colossians 2:2, "I want their hearts to be encouraged and united in love." Sharon Lutheran Church is a testament to these words.



Irene Fluevog cuts the anniversary cake.

100th Birthday for St. John's Church Building - Wetaskiwin West



Pastor Angela Bergquist
St. John's Lutheran Church



Church Interior

In our prairie provinces, it's not all that common for a building to reach the venerable age of 100 and still be in use! It was a good reason to have a party, and on August 22 the church filled with people who came to help celebrate this occasion. A landmark on Highway 13, just a few kilometres west of Wetaskiwin, St. John's Lutheran Church stands as a testament to the steadfast spirit of this country congregation that was established in 1893.



The Saturday Morning Breakfast Group - 20 Years

In 1990, six 40-ish men decided to meet for breakfast every other Saturday for meaningful conversation, laughter and mutual support. When the group began, all six lived and worked in Camrose. Andrew Church, Alan Ford, Michael Mucz, Don Rebus, Darryl Roste and David Samm formed the Saturday Morning Breakfast Group. Life inevitably brought changes. Children grew up, went to college or university, married, moved away, and had grandchildren. The men decided that they did not want to talk only about sports and weather.



Left to right: David Samm, Darryl Roste, Don Rebus, Andrew Church, Michael Mucz, Alan Ford – share conversation and mutual support.

Over the years conversations have centered on challenges of parenting, work, personal concerns, spiritual issues, and church involvements. Four of them are members of the Lutheran church and two are members of the United church. Twenty years later, two have retired, and the other four are still working in their respective careers. Four are still living in Camrose, one in Leduc, and the other now in British Columbia.

In October, the men (taking advantage of a visit from the B.C. member) took a cooking class and then prepared a delicious French cuisine meal as a gift for their spouses. The occasion was to celebrate 20 years of friendship, fun and good humour. They plan to continue to meet every other Saturday morning with whoever can come. It has become something no one wants to miss!

By Pastor Darryl Roste

Other 100th Anniversaries this year include Lutheran churches at: Kingman, New Norway, Edberg, Amisk Park /Czar-Hughenden and Medicine Hat. Congratulations to all!

***Celebrations* IS A PUBLICATION OF THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE SYNOD OF ALBERTA AND THE TERRITORIES.**

ITS PURPOSE is...

- ...to connect the people and congregations of our synod.
- ...to provide a forum for celebrating the people, places and mission of the congregations in our synod.
- ...to help us learn from each other and encourage each other in our work for Jesus Christ.

SUBMIT articles and photos about the life, work and mission of the congregations of our synod to the *Celebrations* editor, Colleen McGinnis at:

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