



The Echoes



For the Sake of Children

“Then people brought little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked them. Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’

Matthew 19:13-14, Today's New International Version

What are we willing to do for the sake of children? It is a question that has often been asked in churches. I mean, what church doesn't want to see more children coming through the doors? But it is a question that I find myself asking these days with much more urgency. In many local churches across Canada, I have heard pastors starting to admit from the pulpit that we have “lost at least one whole generation, if not more.” What we mean by “lost” is that we now realize – hindsight is 20/20 – that in many local churches that our focus, programming, and energies over the last 30 or so years have been virtually useless in attracting and/or retaining young people. As one pastor put it, “we have failed our young people.” We have failed them by not effectively sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with them. As a father to three young girls, and with another baby on the way, I am passionate about reviving a passion for young people in our churches.

So what are we willing to do for the sake of children? I think each local church needs to wrestle with that question before the Lord. In the church I serve we came up with a fun initiative this past Fall that caused me to give something up for young people: my hair. Losing my hair was meant to be a fun public stunt to raise awareness for our congregation's Operation Christmas Child Shoebox drive. If you don't know about OCC check out the website www.samaritanaspurse.org for information.

These shoeboxes full of small gifts and the Gospel message offer tremendous hope to impoverished children around the globe, and it is a campaign that our church always gets excited about. However, our campaign hit a plateau a couple of years ago. We had seen steady growth in the number of shoeboxes each year, until we hit the 154 mark. For a couple years we couldn't seem to increase our giving beyond that number. So, in a spirit of creativity (and silliness) I threw down the gauntlet to my congregation: if we bring in 200 shoeboxes this year I will shave off my hair. Kind of like “Cops For Cancer” or similar initiatives, I wanted to make a public statement about how important these children are to our church. The congregation countered by saying that if they brought in 210 boxes I would have to also shave off my goatee. I was game for that! So, on Sunday, November 23, as our service began the Kids Church marched in and began stacking shoeboxes around me until I was completely walled in. The final count: 315! More than double our previous records. Let's just say that this pastor had a chilly head that December! And what was really cool was the fact that our whole town had heard about the challenge, and as they saw my bald head that winter they were reminded of our church's commitment to children. I don't think that it is a coincidence that we tripled the number of young families and children who attended our Christmas service that month.

What are we willing to do for the sake of children? Giving up hair was mainly a silly prank, but it was a start for us as a church. It communicated clearly to our town that we put ministry to kids first. What is God calling you personally to do for the sake of children? Let's not lose anymore generations.

Pastor Paul Donison

Bethel - Elbow

“When man listens, God speaks. When man obeys, God acts. When man prays, God empowers.” - Corrie ten Boom

November: There was a good turnout for our congregational annual meeting on November 11th. Annual reports were shared, old and new business discussed and all the positions open for nominations were filled by willing volunteers. Thank you one and all for your servant-hearts.

December: For the month of Dec. our WMF was collecting warm mitts, gloves, scarves and hats on an evergreen “mitten tree”. Some of the items collected will be sent to LAMP and others will be going to Mexico with a group of young people from LCBI in Outlook. On Dec. 11th the WMF hosted the annual Christmas Party for the men and women of Bethel. There was a candle light service followed by games in the fellowship hall and a delicious lunch. A large crowd enjoyed the Sunday School Christmas Concert on Dec. 14th, “Who Could Imagine a King?” and “Animal Gifts”. The performance was followed by a time of coffee and fellowship. Many thanks to Ashley Stamnes (director), Shannon Hundebly (superintendent) and all the teachers, musicians, and helpers who make it such an enjoyable program every year! A special love offering was taken during the service on Dec. 28th for Pastor David and Debbie. It was an opportunity for the congregation to show their

appreciation and thanks for the Hesje's ministry. Approximately 40 people brought in 2009 together at a New Year's Eve Party at the church... in spite of the inclement weather. Games, food, fun and fellowship were enjoyed by all.

January: This announcement appeared in the bulletin: “Starting Wed. Jan. 7th at 7:00 pm, the Hesje's are hosting a Bible Study Fellowship Night for the under 50's (I.D. Will be checked at the door).” Hmmmm.. when Paul wrote in Galatians 3:28, “There in neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” he seems to have omitted, “there is neither **young** nor **old**”(just kidding). Here at Bethel there are two weekly ladies Bible Study groups, a biweekly men's fellowship breakfast, and two mixed Bible Studies, besides the adult Sunday School class that Pastor David leads. We are truly blessed to have the freedom to openly study the Word of God in this country.

Three of “our” young people are attending CLBI in Camrose this year and are part of a mission team. Tim Olson and Beth Jeglum are both in India and Kristianne Hundebly is in Ecuador. We pray God's protection and a fruitful ministry for these students. Ron Hundebly went to Nicaragua with a team of men under the auspices of Living Waters International to dig a fresh water well in an impoverished village.

Donna Hundebly



The Elbow Lutheran Bible Camp is looking for an assistant caretaker to assist in the day to day operation and maintenance of the camp from June 1st to August 31st for \$1500/month. Accommodations will be provided and food will be provided when there is a camp in session.

For more information or to apply please contact:
Rod Vollmer Box 161 Loreburn , SK S0H 2S0

Do you have pictures from Bible Camp that you would like to share? Send them to elbc_echoes@yahoo.ca to get them posted on the website.



Bethlehem, Outlook

**“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.
- Rom. 15:13**

December 2008 was a busy month with all its pre-Christmas events. Our congregational Christmas Banquet was held on December 6th. Pastor Harley Johnson was our guest speaker and Special Delivery brought us a message through song. Approximately 105 people came out to celebrate with us – in spite of the heavy snowfall. Our Sunday School held its program on Dec. 14th at 7pm. A very cold evening – but they did a wonderful story of Christmas for us to enjoy. Fellowship with coffee and dainties followed. Monday, Dec. 15th and Wednesday, Dec. 17th the community choir presented their cantata, “Holy Night of Christmas” at the Alliance and United Churches respectively. Donations were taken for the Outlook Food Bank. On Dec. 16th the LCBI Concert Choir presented “Come, Celebrate and Rejoice” at Bethlehem Lutheran Outlook. It was almost a whole week of programs and of course refreshments and fellowship followed each event. Candlelight Service was held on Christmas Eve and morning worship on Christmas Day.

Congratulations to Karla (Olson) and Scott Gjesdal on the birth of their little boy, Knute Joel Gjesdal. Pastor Daryl and Sherryl Olson are the

proud grandparents. He was baptized at Bethlehem on Dec. 21st. God's blessings to you all.

Sincere sympathy is expressed to the following families. The Hermanson family in the loss of their mother, Dora Hermanson who passed away Dec. 13th with the funeral on Dec. 20th at Bethlehem. Also to David and Kirsti and family on the passing of David's mother “Pastor Gail Haugen” in BC in late November. And to Kevin Grotheim and Lyn on the passing of Kevin's mother Marion Grotheim on Dec. 30th. The funeral was held at Bethlehem on Jan. 5th, 2009. May God give you comfort, strength and peace at this time of loss and keep you in His care.

The first Sunday in the New Year we had a potluck dinner following the morning service. In spite of the cold weather several people ventured out. It is good to get together with everyone once in awhile. Sunday School resumed after the holidays on Jan, 11th. Our Bible study and youth groups have also resumed their activities for the New Year.

We'd also like to remember in prayer Myron and Kae Geramo who have gone to do missionary work in Africa. They will be with their son helping out for the next 3 months. Remember also Pastor Bernie and Cheryl Belau who have gone on a mission trip with Youth With a Mission in Hawaii. May God Bless and keep them in His care.

June Haug



Skudesnes, Loreburn

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 1 John 4:7

November: Merry Christmas to everyone from our little church on the prairie. Our little Sunday School was just a bubbling with excitement about the upcoming Christmas concert. Practices for the concert started in early November. Our

congregation welcomed The Forefathers in November who shared their gift of song with us. Thank you to Glenn, Robert, Dennis and Jake. I was honored to accompany such a fun and gifted group.

It was fantastic how many boxes we filled for Samaritan's Purse. A big thank you to everyone for the donations. A special thanks to Judy Langager who gathered them all up and made sure they got to Mavis Bristow's on time!

December: On the 3rd the Skudesnes ELW had their Christmas celebration. Soup and sandwiches were enjoyed on that cold, blustery evening, followed by a short program, special music, the Christmas Story and carols. Memories of past celebrations and blessing were shared over coffee, dessert and crazygames prepared by Gerri, Leone and Maxine. The evening of the 7th started off with a turkey supper and all the fixings spearheaded by Sharon Urlacher and Doris Starnes. After everyone was full, we all went upstairs to have our hearts and minds filled with the message of Christmas delivered by our Skudesnes children. The church was packed and for 22 precious minutes the children shared the Christmas story in a program fittingly called "Our Tiny Christmas". Everyone was welcomed by Abby Adams and Linzay Sanden. The cast included Jody, Jacey and Linzay Sanden, Abby Adams, Dodge and Alexius Long, Darrah Langager and Casey Haugen. The offertory was played by Abby Adams. The children decided to buy a pair of goats, garden tools,

etc. for a needy country with the donations. Prayers of thanksgiving were given by superintendent Dana Adams. Shelley Haugen surprised us all with costumes and a gorgeous Bethlehem background. Throughout the season of advent services started out with different families doing an advent reading, lighting the candles and special music.

The minus 30 degree mornings sure didn't keep Vice-Pastor Bob and Mrs. Langdon from venturing out from Moose Jaw. Thanks to Jesus for always keeping them safe during their journey.

Our congregation looks forward to the arrival of the new cranberry hymnal. A big thank you to Verna Urlacher from the Skudesnes family for her weekly gift of music.

I cannot believe another year has passed. It has been such a blessing being able to pray, sing and worship along side such wonderful people at Skudesnes. Growing together in Christ is something I pray everyone will one day be able to do.

Carie Langager

Bethlehem, Hawarden

Sharing the message with us has been Pastor Bernie Belau, Ted Lehn, Gene Sundby, Pastor Dave Hesje and Myron Germe. Marcel Vermette has a spell binding children's story each week.

Nov. 30 – Glory Bound was here for the Country Gospel Evening, potluck supper was shared before the musical evening.

Dec. 5 – Family Christmas potluck supper and program with the Hein Family providing the music for the program. After the program we sang Christmas Carols around the tree.

Dec. 10 – LWC visited Luther Place

Dec. 21 – Sunday School Program and Christmas Carol Singing


Dec. 23 – Candlelight Service

Dec. 25 – Christmas Day Service

The Sunday School packed 36 school kits to be sent to CLWR.

We continue pray for Cohen Haaland, Ken Lee and those in need.

Hazel Evans

 <p>From the Editor</p>	<p>I am sorry to announce that after the June 2009 publication of The Echoes I will have to give up being the editor. If you are interested in taking on the position please contact Rod Vollmer @ 306-857-2191. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve the camp in this way.</p>	<p>Submissions for the next Echoes are due on: March 15th</p> <p>If you would like to submit a writing or an announcement please sent it to: Echoes Editor C/O: Rhonda Lee Box 159, Hawarden SK, S0H 1Y0 or at elbc_echoes@yahoo.com</p>
---	---	--

Memorials

Donations

Leverne & Rene Baxter

In Memory of Alan Hunter

Lillian Christensen
Garry & Hilda Sivertson
George Evenson
Oliver & Verna Pederson
Orville & Marion Pederson
Victor & Linda Lee

In Memory of Gladine Peachy

Jeanne Barton

In Memory of Ruth (Sollid) Olson

Roy & Joyce Olson

In Memory of Ted Hundebly

Erwin & June Koberstein

In Honor of Kevin Langagers 25

Years in Ministry
Norma Knutson

In Memory of Mabel Rawling

Lillian Christensen

In Memory of Vye Vaughan

Vernon & Betty Vallevand

In Memory of Jim Kerney

Faye & Wolfgang Dombrowski

In Memory of Olaf Lee

Ken Lee
Gerald & Linda Follick
George & Carol Mooney
Victor & Linda Lee

In Honor of Elmer Knutson's 90th
Birthday

Vernon & Betty Vallevand

**Donations to the camp can
be sent to:**

**Elbow Lutheran Bible Camp
C/O: Linda Follick
Box 1587
Outlook, SK S0L 2N0**



Thoughts Along the Way

June Haug

Thank you dear Lord for this past year
For the fellowship and the fun
The times of learning we hold dear
Praise the Lord for each one

There's been times of failure, we must admit
But you never left our side
We were always encouraged not to quit
For in you, there'd be strenght to abide

As we step forward into a new year
With pages so clear and bright
We pray we will walk with the Lord so dear
Who will lead us the way aright

And as the year passes with each new day
May we gladly proclaim His love
In thoughts and deeds along the way
Leading others to Christ above.

The Echoes is now available online at <http://elbowlutheranbiblecamp.googlepages.com> and through email in PDF format. If you would like to receive electronic notification when each edition is published, please send an email to: elbc_echoes@yahoo.com Please type "subscribe" in the subject field.