



TeePee Smoke



December 2005

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

Rocky Boy's Reservation

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Pastor's Prayers & Points

Pastor Arden K. Barden

GIVING AND RECEIVING/RECEIVING AND GIVING

The holidays bring the new—the birth of the new. God says in the Word of God: *Behold, I make all things new!* A new day, a new year, a new life. Sometimes it means new “things”, but mostly it is about the deeper birth (or rebirth) of one's human spirit and human dignity. It is a time of *JOY!* We give and receive gifts but the joy is what happens with the spirit.

The Christmas story is a story of a birth. It is the account of God's being born in human likeness to bring about a redemption and renewal of the foundational “image and likeness” found within the Creation itself. The original Good that was interwoven into the fabric of all of life fell into the brokenness that separates people from one another and from their own personal self as well as from the Creator and the life flow from the Creator into all of creation. The Birth of Christ brings forth God's Plan of Salvation - - the saving of the Good Creation God so very much loves.

I learn each day here at Rocky Boy of the strength of Native American spirituality and how it is not just a ‘belief’ (a doctrine) but a way of life to be lived. Giving freely is a daily practice in that it celebrates the giving-freely nature of the Creator. How God created in such a way that not only human beings but all of the creatures are linked together in a network of care and support! Food is provided; food is shared. Even when a life is lost, it is understood to serve a larger purpose, and lost loved ones are grieved for, yes, but let go and ushered into a new life on the other side.

The Give-Away is not only at the holidays, but at many other times of opportunity to share of one's abundance—all of one's goods and resources are considered a part of one's abundance. Extra food and extra goods are given away, a sharing of what one has received and now is passed on to others in a spirit of community and goodness.

One cannot help but see in the dominant culture the contrary nature of modern day individual consumerism, addictive behaviors, and disconnected living arrangements. These represent a manner of life that seeks to find one's *own* happiness through controlled gain for MY OWN house, provision, and indeed happiness itself. The “owning of one's own,” however, breaks up human community into a multitude of individual units, each competing for a piece of space or time or attention or money.

When one perceives and believes that God's Goodness is in all and among all, that Goodness can be freely received and freely given. For many this can open a new day and a new life. People have suggested that I have given a lot to move here in service of God in this setting. Indeed, it has meant considerable change in place and pace—but I am not only giving, I am receiving. And I am learning to believe in a new way that the distributing of life freely is the Good of the Creator and the joy of life itself. What I have freely received, I may freely give.

The Gospel of Jesus is that same story of Grace: God's unmerited favor looking in upon your life and mine. It is freely received and freely to be given. All those wonderful little words of the Bible represent those aspects of God as Creator, Redeemer and Spirit of Life to be so freely received and given: love, joy, peace, hope, life, truth, and good. May all of you be given something spiritually new in this holiday season. May the Birth of Christ open a new day, a new year, a new life. Receive freely. Give freely. Of God's Good.....and of God's ‘goods.’

Photo Credit Omission

We acknowledge the permission to use of the photograph of Pastor Barden on the cover of the last



issue of *The Tee Pee Smoke*. Glenda Eagleman of the local *Tribal Newsletter* was kind enough to interview Pastor Barden for the October edition of the paper. She took a number of photographs, one of which was used in conjunction with her article. We were pleased to be able to use it first on the cover of the Service of Installation and then in the TeePee Smoke, because it showed so well the altar area of the Old Mission Chapel with the quilted hanging, the beaded and feathered altar cross, and the general presentation of the chancel that has been the focus for worship for many for seventy years. We apologize that we neglected to include the intended credit line with the picture. It should have been there as follows: Photo Credit: Glenda Eagleman, *Tribal Newsletter*, Rocky Boy; Used by permission.

“There it sits!” Old Truck Gives Out



The 1985 Ford Pickup that has served the church for many years for hauling supplies for Summer Groups, removing debris from the grounds, and

bringing in winter wood, is needing replacing. During September and October, there were several times of ‘gasps and grunts’ and on November 9, it “sighed it’s last and gave up it’s spirit.” We are seeking a good used replacement, but the current cash flow limitations caused the Church Council to delay purchase of a different vehicle. We will set up a separate line item as a “Truck Fund.” Donations for this purpose are welcome; please indicate “Truck Fund” when sending something for this need.

Staff Change Adds to New Challenges

Our Administrative Assistant, Tami Big Knife, announced her resignation earlier in November. She is beginning another position part time on December 1st and will be full time in January. Tami began four years ago as our bookkeeper and has grown her

responsibilities over these years to include a care for all aspects of our congregational life and ministry as well as overseeing the servant groups and retreat groups. She will remain with us half-time through December.

The Church Council authorized a temporary replacement. Tom Tucker is being trained to cover the next several months, until a decision can be made as to where to go from here. Tom is a visitor on the reservation and his wife, Becky, is a volunteer physician here at the Rocky Boy clinic. They have a heart for serving on the Reservation, and will be here at least until the summer. Tom was formerly a construction Project Manager and brings computer, financial and organizational skills. Tom is also an alumni of Trinity Lutheran College of Issaquah, WA, graduating *Magna Cum Laude* with a B.S. in Biblical Studies with an emphasis in Global Missions.

In the next few months, Pastor Barden, the Church Council, and the members will be identifying direction and priorities for where and how this ministry needs to go. Budget support levels, response of the local people, and involvement on the congregation will be key factors in what happens. There are many ideas for both ongoing congregational ministry and the envisioned retreat center, all in the context of our Native American cultural context. These next few months pose new challenge along with this staff change; but maybe—just maybe—this is also opportunity for new things to unfold.

Weekly Bible Study

The magazine *Lutheran Women Today* is providing the foundation for our Sunday morning Bible Study. *ACT BOLDLY* takes the Fruit of the Spirit of Galatians 5:22-23 and takes one the Spirit’s basket of life for each monthly study. Pastor Barden adds to that to make it a weekly study. For example, our study of “Peace” began with a review of Genesis 3 and the Fall from God’s Goodness into the Brokenness of Sin. We saw how the Peace of the Garden fell into broken relationships with God, Self, Others and World. And we saw then how the Gospel in Christ renews that Peace in all four of those relationships. The November portion concluded with the scriptural story in the study and a discussion of how we may boldly live out the Peace with God that passes all understanding. The *ACT BOLDLY* study will continue through May as from 6 to 12 people gather each Sunday morning.

Paving Project Helps “Beat the Mud”



The ground in this area pulls out a level of intimidation when the rains come. The result is a thick mud that sticks to shoes, clothes, tires, and about anything. In an effort to help protect

our buildings from tracked-mud wear and tear, the front parking lot was paved. These “before and after” pictures illustrate the change. There is now a strip of asphalt 35 feet wide in front our building with paved access to the roads at each end. We also hope this helps with our presentation to the public and our service to the community. We are seeking to have the back areas graded and graveled as well, but paving will have to wait until budget permits. Some have expressed a desire to help with this project. A special line item for the Paving Fund is established for those who wish to send additional funds designated for this need.



2005 Support: Our Thanks!

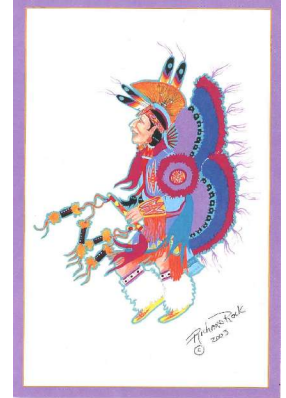
So many have given faithfully and diligently to help us maintain our ministry throughout 2005. Our present status in early December finds us running very close to or under expenses. Our year-to-date shows:

Income as of 11-30-05	\$115,700.00
Transfer from Reserves	\$ 24,670.00
Expenses as of 11-30-05	\$144,032.00
Average Monthly Income	\$10,500.00
Average Monthly Operating Cost	\$13,000.00

Your dollars, your prayers and your visits have helped to keep us going in more ways than one. To you a big **THANK YOU** and to all a big **BLESSED CHRISTMAS AND COMING YEAR.**

Ambassadors 1000 Funding Campaign Gets Started

Pastor Barden’s arrival in August found the ministry in overall reduced levels of financial support. As reserves began to diminish, it became clear from funding patterns and limitations that the Our Saviour’s mission at Rocky Boy needs to have a greater base of support. The *Ambassadors 1000* campaign was designed to seek 1000 new units of support over the next 15 months. It is hoped that these will be interested persons with regular giving at a level that is sustainable for each.



“Verbal Support” is therefore as important in this part of the campaign as is the “Financial Support.” Spreading the word of this ministry is important in people becoming aware of the long history of this mission. Due to the economic nature of reservation life, local resources are not able to support the range of programs the congregation continues to provide.

The information sheet and commitment form are available by mail (call the office at 406-395-4307) or as posted on the website at www.ttc-cmc.net/~oslcrb/ -- the artwork appears there in color! The drawing of “A Fancy Dancer” by the well-known Artist Richard Rock was used by paid permission. His use of bright colors in this simple-style drawing helps to provide the focus for what the campaign is really about—a ministry with the Chippewa-Cree Nation of which Mr. Rock is a citizen. The information and form may be downloaded or copied for distribution.

“Prayer Support” is also an important part of the campaign. We continue to seek the guidance of our God not only in supporting our ministry in the present, but also in developing our directions for the future. On-going supporters as well as new people are asked to continue to lift up this ministry before God, especially as we seek ways to better connect with the First Nation spirituality in the Chippewa-Cree tradition.

In 2006 we hope to restate our mission and clarify our vision for ministry. We will then be able to shape a more general brochure with a summary of our history and a direction for our future.

“Winter Wonderland” In Our Little Neck of the Woods



The following article was submitted by Lisa Crain, a member of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

What do people do in wintertime in Rocky Boy? Well I can't speak for everyone, but I can speak for myself. Winters in North Central Montana are usually very long, starting in November and not letting up until the end of April. This year the winter weather didn't start until November 26th. It started snowing and it is still snowing. It's Monday morning and students are slowly making it to school. I teach art at Rocky Boy Schools. In the morning I have Elementary students and in the afternoons I have Junior and High School students in my class. Today the students are being sent home early because of the snow on the roads. One school bus got stuck in the snow this morning so some of those students are finally coming into class.

People in Rocky Boy spend the early winter preparing for the long winter. People who have wood stoves go into the mountains and cut wood. Senior citizens worry about how they are going to get around in the snow. Cars and vehicles are in need of getting winterized. People who have jobs get their cars winterized, but some people don't have jobs and have to drive their vehicles around without them being winterized. Some people stay home because they are afraid of the road conditions. I am afraid to say that I am one of the people who stay home a lot because of not wanting to drive on snowy roads.

My family lives in the mountains. We have to get up early to shovel the snow. We also have to clear off the snow from our car because we do not have a garage to keep our car in. Many families in Rocky Boy do not have garages so they shovel snow also. We also need to keep our car plugged in so that it will start the next time we use it. The winter is not cold now, but in January it's very cold. Sometimes it gets down to -40 degrees below 0.

Many people work on beadwork in the winter time. I like to draw and paint. I like to stay inside in the winter time. Other people have cattle and animals that need to be fed in the winter time. Most people in Rocky Boy are used to the long, cold winters.

Hats and Gloves Ministry in Full Swing

With an early snowfall and temperatures in the single digits our hats and gloves ministry is in full swing. Thanks to the generosity of so many churches, WELCA groups and individuals we are able to provide



warm outer wear to so many in our community. As of the end of November we have already given out 141 sets of hats and gloves and also supplied the kindergarten classes at

the Rocky Boy Elementary school with several knitted hats and mittens. Thanks to all who support this ministry.

Grant Approved For Children's Program

In October, Pastor Barden wrote a grant to the ELCA's Department for American Indian and Alaska Native Ministries. The proposed program is referred to as "Food for the Soul" and is designed to bring children to the church for a meal and some spiritual and social programs. By providing transportation and food, it is hoped that this positive and welcoming atmosphere will be a constructive ministry for the homes of our community. Word has just been received that \$5000 of the requested \$7500 was granted and is in the final stages of requisition.

In January, a planning team will be formed to carry out this ministry. Plans are for it to be on Sunday morning, but there has been suggestion that it be developed into a Wednesday after-school program. In that case, other related groups could be added, and the meal could be expanded to be a family meal followed by an adult study.

**The Staff and Congregation
of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church
extend warm wishes for a
Merry Christmas and
a Joyous New Year
to all of our partners who
share in this ministry.**

Christmas Give-Away Program Is Refocused For Those Most In Need

In 2004, over 400 'baskets' were put together in order to respond to requests from a wide range of persons in the community. It was discovered that some of the recipients were from outside of our service area, and the challenge of fulfilling all those 'Santa's Stockings' was a real stretch for a small staff and a few volunteers.

For 2005, the program was redesigned to help focus the concern on those most in need, with an emphasis on children from infancy through junior high school. It was decided for this year not to wrap the gifts in order to apply those expenses to more actual gifts.

Nomination forms were created in order to help identify appropriate households. These have been distributed throughout the community. Nominations may be made by a neighbor or friend, by someone in their extended family, or by a representative of one of the tribal agencies or services. The form includes places for names of children, ages and sizes, and other interests with the goal of being able to provide as much as possible some specific gifts that are both useful and fun.

The initial response of community members has been positive. They have expressed appreciation for being able to think of people about whom they care and who may be having a more difficult time for whatever reason.

The program will utilize items that have been provided by the generosity of individuals and church groups within our external support system. In early December, these items are being sorted and inventoried. Additional items will be received and other items purchased to complete the needed base of goods. A partnership with area congregations is being developed to increase items available as well as to involve others in the assembly of the bags at a workshop on December 10th. Gift bags will be distributed between the 15th and 20th of the month. The program will be evaluated in January for procedures and for effectiveness.

Reflections From A Scholarship Recipient

Hello, my name is Charmayne Four Colors. I am currently attending Montana State University Billings where I'm studying History with a minor in Political Science and an emphasis on pre-law. I intend to graduate from MSU-Billings in the spring of 2008. The New Mexico State University School of law is where I want to complete my law degree. The focus of my studies there will be Indian Law. I want to be a prosecutor or a judge.

My parents are Luanne and Gerald "Jerry" Four Colors. I have two brothers and one sister. My older brother Justin is going to school to be an electrician. Cody is a sophomore in high school. He is active in Montana High School Rodeo, basketball and football. Lauren is ten years younger than me. She's in the third grade at the Rocky Boy Elementary. She dances both jingle dress and fancy and is starting to barrel race.

In school I'm involved with the Inter-tribal Indian Club where I hold the office of Treasurer. We're in the progress of raising money and are seeking donations to benefit our 38th Annual pow-wow held the last weekend of March. We hold the title of being the largest collegiate pow-wow in the northwest.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank my family, especially my parents because I know without their endless support, love and encouragement I wouldn't be where I am today. I know there are not a lot of Native American students who attend college. I never understood why until I came here. I have to admit it's hard. I come from a very close knit family. I hate being away from them and I get lonesome for them all the time, but I cope with it. I just wish more and more of my peers would learn to deal with it and stick it out. I know all of my accomplishments wouldn't have been possible without my family. So Thank You! (Yes, all of you!)

Charmayne Four Colors.

Editor's Note: Charmayne is a continuing recipient of a scholarship co-funded by Northern Illinois Synodical Women's Organization and Our Saviour's Lutheran Church.

Our goal is to produce the *TeePee Smoke* on a quarterly basis in the months of March, June, September and December. We value your continued support of this ministry and in the production of this newsletter.

In continuing to be good stewards of the support we are blessed with, we are in the process of updating our mailing database for 2006 and would appreciate your notifying us if you do not wish to receive further copies of this newsletter. We can be notified by various ways: via e-mail (oslcrb@mtintouch.net), fax (406-395-4076), telephone (406-395-4307) or mail.