



TeePee Smoke



Fall 2005

**Our Saviour's Lutheran Church
Rocky Boy's Reservation**

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Barden's Installation Offers Blessings, Welcome

Rev. Arden K. Barden was installed into the Office of Pastor of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church at a special service on Sunday afternoon, on October 9, 2005. The Reverend Bishop Richard R. Omland of the Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officiated the installation as well as provided the message for the day.

Area pastors, both lay and ordained, from Lutheran, Episcopal, United Methodist and Roman Catholic churches, provided special music, read scriptures, and served the Holy Communion. The pastors also introduced themselves and brought a specific word of welcome for the newly installed pastor and commitment of support for his pastoral ministry. Tribal leaders brought comments, a gift of Sweet Grass, and a praise song to the Creator in the Cree language. The drum and song group, Red Paint, sang a "song of installation" traditionally used for a tribal chief or elders, a moment of inspiration and honor for Pastor Barden.

Pastor Barden began service at Our Saviour's on the Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation on August 1. "I am a guest on the reservation," he says about his role as he goes about his ministry in the congregation and the community. His emphasis is on understanding traditional ways, tribal history, and contemporary issues. "I want to be respectful of the people and to connect with them," he adds, "and I believe that traditional First Nation spirituality is very close to our Christian understanding." He hopes to build bridges to people's spiritual needs as well as to respond to other basic human concerns. "I serve with a model I call 'whole person spirituality' which views each person as relating to God, self, others, and world toward balance, integrity and wholeness," he explains, "but all is grounded in Christ who is our peace, in whom is our wholeness." Pastor Barden's brings a very practical style—faith alive in the everyday of love, hope and peace.

Pastor Barden was ordained in 1972. He has served parishes in Michigan and Washington. He was an ecumenical community chaplain in an affordable housing setting in Madison, Wisconsin. He was on the faculty of the Lutheran Bible Institute of Seattle where he developed a curriculum in Ministry with Older Adults. For the last ten years, he has served seven different congregations as an Intentional Interim Pastor.

Pastor Barden holds a Bachelor of Arts from Pacific Lutheran University, a Master of Divinity and a Master of Theology from Luther Theological Seminary, and Graduate Certificates in Gerontology/Counseling and in Marriage and Family Therapy (Family Systems). He brings to Our Saviour's additional training in Interim Ministry, Process Facilitation, Calling/Caring, Healthy Congregations, Bridge Builders, Lombard Peace Center Conflict Reconciliation, and Alban Institute Chaos Theory of Leadership.

He and Carol have two adult children and six grandchildren. Carol is teaching at the Rocky Boy High School. The congregation and the community have given a warm welcome to them, and agency leaders have expressed strong interest in utilizing Pastor's background, leadership, and partnership in working together in serving the reservation.

New Funding Campaign to be Initiated

Funding this Lutheran mission at Rocky Boy is a challenge amid the great needs for giving in recent months. The tsunami, hurricanes, landslides and earthquakes together with existing poverty and hunger have placed great demand for care and for financial support.

AMBASSADORS 1000 will set the goal of a thousand new contributors with the requested support of \$25.00 per unit per calendar quarter. This goal for this campaign will be the rest of 2005 and throughout 2006.

The title comes from the Biblical basis of II Corinthians 5:11-21 in which we have been given "this ministry of reconciliation" and so "we are ambassadors for Christ."

All congregations and individuals who currently support the work here are asked to help refer these "new ambassadors" either by referring their names to the office at Our Saviour's or by referring our need to them.

It is hoped that this modest amount will be regarded as "Oh, I can do that...and I will!" even with all of the other pressing needs in our world. We believe that some will want to make that quarterly amount a larger regular commitment. One person has become the "First Ambassador" just at hearing of the campaign idea and responding with just that phrase and commitment.

A simple form is available as an e-mail attachment or standard mailing. Contact us at 406-395-4307 or at oslcrb@mtintouch.net. Or, just send us a list of names, and we'll take it from there.

Video Tape May Make DVD Available

The Service of Installation was taped with the idea that it could be reduced to a DVD for members and friends of Our Saviour's. The initial result has yet to be reviewed, but if the quality is there, it will be submitted to creative editing and preparation for distribution. It is hoped that this could be done to help to introduce Pastor Barden as well as to show some of the people and activities involved in the celebration. Please indicate to the office by phone or e-mail if you would have an interest in having a copy of the installation DVD.

Regular Support Levels Are Down

Administrative Assistant Tami Big Knife reported to the Church Council on September 30 that the current income is down. There was discussion as to whether this may be a product of being without a pastor for a year, or part of the present huge demand created by recent disasters. The Council authorized expenses to be taken from a reserve fund, but will monitor budget closely. In recent months, there has not been an issue because of our pastoral vacancy, but now that we are back in the place of providing pastoral salary and benefits, built up reserves are now coming into use. The Council is confident in the historically good support, and also concurs with the concept of a campaign for new support.

Pastor Begins with Caution

Pastor Barden began ministry at Our Saviour's on August 1 by concluding "a difficult and dragged-out" move. The office is being reorganized with a new built in bookshelf. He has made several attempts to be present around the reservation by attending community gatherings and wakes, school activities, and sports events. Much of the first few weeks were taken with planning for the Service of Installation.

Pastor is interviewing each of the members of the Church Council to gain an overall perspective of the congregation's history and concerns, and begin to assess "where we need to go from here." He expects that a more complete report of these first discussions can be included in the next issue of *TeePee Smoke*.

"I'm taking it slowly," Pastor says. "I want to get to know people first, gain a beginning understand of tribal traditions and culture, and start with a lot of listening to both congregation and community." He notes that there is a long and proud history of Our Saviour's, first for 30 years as a mission, and then nearly 50 years as a congregation.

Pastor to Serve on Synod Group

The Montana Synod is shaping a group of 15 persons to develop a strategy for dealing with issues around the relationship of American Indians and the Larger Society. This may involve addressing racism, history, poverty, economics, and ecology as well as the differences and similarities in spiritual traditions between First Nation ways and Christian ways.

Pastor Barden will attend the first of three training sessions on November 28 and 29 in Townsend, MT. This is a part of a larger church emphasis in the ELCA to deal with concerns and strategies around ministry with Native Americans. Bishop Richard Omland of the Montana Synod and Outreach Staff Rev. Darius Larsen of Region I are on that ELCA planning group.

Gifts to Support our Ministry:

We are often asked in letters and e-mails the needs of the Church in assisting others. Our needs vary from one time to another and we do not want to make the TeePee Smoke all about getting. Therefore, we have included this column to give interested individuals and churches an idea of the needs that go towards assisting individuals in our community:

Sewing Club: The sewing club ladies started meeting again on September 7th. Items that are in need include material, thread and batting.

Giveaway Store: The giveaway store is being utilized by many individuals in the community. Donations can include anything you wish to part with that is in good useable shape.

Scholarships: The Church is supporting seven students this school year (see information in next section). Funds designated towards scholarships/education will be put into the education fund.

Layette Program: To date we have given out over 50 layettes to the parents/guardians of newborns born to tribal members. Items that can be used in the layettes are t-shirts, sleepers, onesies, receiving blankets, bottles, booties, baby quilts, diapers.

Children's Christmas Gift Giveaway: Before we know it we will be getting started on our annual gift giveaway. Items that can be sent for the gifts can be hats, gloves, toys or clothing items for children ages newborn to twelve years of age.

If sending funds for any of these ministries be sure to designate what the money is for and it will be used solely for its intended purpose.

Thank you to all support the various ministries of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church.

Scholarship News.....

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church is providing six (6) \$900.00 scholarships to enrolled members of the Chippewa Cree Tribe. Our scholarships are given for a period of nine months (September through May) and are paid out in increments of \$100.00 at the beginning of each month. 2005-2006 recipients this year are:

Jeff Henry
Montana State University - Northern
Computer Information Systems

Ken Morsette, Jr.
Montana State University - Northern
Elementary Education

Stephen Morsette
Montana State University - Northern
Elementary Education

Brenelda Stanley
Montana State University - Northern
Business Technology

Aleisha Sun Child
Montana State University - Northern
Health Care Administration

Dustin Whitford
University of Montana - Missoula
Native American Studies

Again this year Our Saviour's Lutheran Church was given \$450.00 from the **Northern Illinois Synodical Women's Organization** to be used for a scholarship. Our Saviour's Lutheran Church matched the \$450.00 and we are providing

a \$900.00 scholarship to an individual. The recipient of this scholarship is:

Charmayne Four Colors
Montana State University – Billings
History

A sincere Thank You to all of you who help make these scholarships available through financial donations designated for scholarships.

2005 Summer Servant Groups

The summer of 2005 brought six servant groups to Our Saviour's Lutheran Church. Many projects were accomplished, friendships made, fellowship enjoyed and mutual faith and trust in the Lord was evident. We cannot express how grateful we are to each and every group and all that they do to support our ministry in terms of physical strength, financially, and spiritually. We have tried to mention all of the wonderful achievements each group accomplished and apologize if we left anything out.



Messiah Lutheran Church of Ralston, Nebraska

Pastor Greg Berger brought a group of 25 people from June 5-10. Pastor Berger and his group accomplished many tasks such as work on two cabins of the retreat center including fixing an electrical problem in one of them, starting a pole fence around the back of the Church, painting pole fence, yard work and organizing the Giveaway Store, just to name a few. They also brought gifts of bibles and giveaway store items.

A very special thanks goes to Richard Fiddelke for sharing his talents and skills by scanning thousands of pictures (some very old) and TeePee Smokes to CD ROMs and making a DVD of them for the Church to archive and use at any time. We are grateful to have these important documents archived and accessible to the Church in a very modern way.

The following was written Pastor Greg Berger.....

One word kept surfacing all week long – gratitude. Messiah group members grateful for what they have been given, grateful for the opportunity to serve, to work hard together and to laugh – hard – for three days. Our hosts, grateful for our presence, our help. Chippewa Cree residents grateful for our work and for the clothes we brought that would clothe children and grandchildren.

But what struck me the most was an 80 year old woman who spoke and danced her gratitude to the Creator for the beauty of creation and all that was around her, including her family.

Gratitude, it permeated every thing, person, conversation and project. It was in the air we breathed, the food we ate, the bolts we secured, the wires traced, pipes soldered, rocks painted and grass that was mown.

We are also grateful for God’s protection of those who fell or were injured in some way.

I think it was the gratitude that made the work, though sometimes hard, light, purposeful and even fun!

Thank you, God, for the ability and opportunity to serve!
Thank you, God, for the faith, gratitude and spirit of all the people we met in Rocky Boy. Thank you God for my brothers and sisters in Christ with whom I traveled, worked, prayed and shared!

Gratitude! It transformed and transforms us!

Pastor Berger asked each participant of his group to write reflection papers. The following are excerpts from these papers.

I've heard it said that one can't have passion without purpose. This trip helped me to find my purpose for the week and everything I did. I felt like everything I did, I did with incredible passion. The people were so kind and open and grateful for everything we did. They are all so proud of their heritage and spoke openly about whom they are, what they believe and why they believe it. ... I was humbled and honored to be able to work with them and I know that I will never be quite the same.

God has changed me, because he helped me make new friends... Gabby is my new friend. I met her in Rocky Boy. Now I can send her letters and talk to her on the phone. ... I had fun painting the fence and cross because I love to paint. It made me feel happy to help the community...

...I wondered if everybody would accept me or how I would get along with everybody. But that soon changed. Everybody made me feel right at home. I really didn't know what to expect on this trip, but I soon found out the feeling of getting something done and it was very fulfilling. ...Thank you very much for letting me go on this trip to Rocky Boy.

Lots of things are shaping my life right now and it is a little premature to answer [fully what this trip has meant.] God is present everywhere! We tend to over look the signs and miss so much. By spending time at Rocky Boy, visiting with residents, I find myself seeing the importance of all things... the rain, the sun, the birds, and all that God gives each of us.

I remember the doggies, Chocolate Chip and Gus is what we named them, but we don't know their real names. We fed the dogs and we gave them lots of love. ... I was happy to meet new people. I had fun there. I like painting, but it was really hard to paint the cross up on the hill. I was happy to help people because it might be too steep for other people. They might slip and fall. ... I feel good about helping other people and I always think back to what I did for other people.

This trip helped put things into perspective. It made you re-evaluate your life and refocus on the important things in life: family, friends, faith. One of the most important things that helped enrich this experience was the time we shared with Tami, Rae and Gordon, as well as the dancers, singers, storytellers and their families and friends. I learned more about their culture and just about them as people.

This is my first mission trip and I embarked on it with considerable anxiety. Still, I feel that I was led by the Spirit to participate... I think that the opportunity to live out Jesus' message of compassion and to do service work in God's name ... was the major reason that I decided to go... Over the course of this week, I've reflected a great deal about my faith journey. In so doing, I've done some serious reordering of my priorities. ... I reveled in the opportunity to work side-by-side in partnership with both young people and adults. On balance I've found the trip to be transformational in many ways.

I have taken so much for granted – it was a gradual change over the years. Being around the Native Americans and their thankfulness of God's creations was an electric jolt for me. My personal life had become out of balance. ... the comradery with the "Messiah team" and the Rocky Boy community was the highlight. The laughter was wonderful for me.

This group of "travelers" became a working unit over a short time – how quickly God brought us together. ... Religion is not about how we worship, it is what we carry in our hearts and how we help each other. I knew this before the trip, but it was brought home through this trip. ... I do know I have been touched and that God is trying to tell me something. I need to keep my heart and mind open to the possibilities.

I enjoyed the relationship building that took place this week. I had a chance to get to know people from our church a lot better. I enjoyed getting to know Rae and Tami.

I would say that I was like a turtle on this trip. At first I was quiet and in my shell, but then I got used to everyone and

came out little by little – especially when I joined the fence building team.

... the trip was very humbling because the people on the reservation may not have as much as us but are probably more grateful and more giving than most of us.

Controlling ways of the corporate world vanished. Common or uncommon thoughts melded to create a unique family. A family that was inspired to help each other,...Acceptance of self, others' differences and cultural differences between reservation members was remarkable. Lifting of life's weight from body and soul occurred as we worked longer and harder. ... God was with Native Americans before Luther was even born.

I have grown spiritually by living with my church family and learning more about them. Also helping people from my heart.

God led me to come to Rocky Boy. It was the right time in my life to have a new challenge for me to tackle. I felt that this group of "strangers" became very closely bonded together by God's love for us and a new love and respect for each other.

My life is ordinary and mostly solitary and I'm not much for "group hug" scenarios. That I felt called to do this I can attribute only to the intervention of the Spirit. It has been an opportunity to lighten up, reconnect and refresh. ... Daily devotions served as an excellent exercise for introspection. My faith isn't probed and examined very often, and it needed that – I didn't appreciate that [before the trip.]

I believe that God molded me into the servant that I needed to be through the work that was done at the church and in the community. Spiritually this has been a very fulfilling experience that I believe has made me more passionate about my spirituality. Now that the trip is over, my hope is that the passionate spirituality that I and others have experienced will continue on within this group and spread throughout the congregation.

I believe this trip has made me more compassionate about other cultures and beliefs and that we need to help preserve them. ... It was great to have the different generation age groups and seeing God's work in everyone ... the kids feeding and caring for the animals and playing with and making new friends ... sharing stories and listening to their concerns for their young people.

God is letting me go so I can see how people live in other states and to see the beauty of the mountains, hills, animals and rivers.

God molded us to be helpers and to work with our hands more. Spiritually we have grown closer. We had a week working together and growing stronger in our faith.

The Native Americans have such a simple but well ingrained spiritual life. They have an inner peace so many of us strive for.



St. Joseph's Youth Ministry of Downer's Grove, Illinois

Marta Spiezio, Youth Minister, brought a youth group of 19 from June 22-30. While they were here they did yard work, painting of old and new pole fence, began dismantling an old barn that had become an eye sore and community work.



Zion Lutheran Church of Marietta, Pennsylvania

Pastor Cheryl Hoffman brought a group of 9 from July 5-12. Pastor Cheryl and her group built steps to the Chapel/Church walkway (which they are seated on in this photo), yard work, worked on dismantling of old barn and community work. Pastor Cheryl led us in worship service on one Sunday.

The following article was submitted by Pastor Cheryl Hoffman:

This was our sixth trip to Our Saviour's and the Rocky Boy Indian Reservation. Youth that first made the journey as high school freshmen have now graduated and gone off to college. These youth left behind a legacy of excitement learning that enticed a new group of freshmen to make the trip to Montana for the first time this past summer. When asked what they learned the youth replied with answers like: a new culture, new friends, shared interests, round dancing,

how to fix a lawn mower, the reward of hard work and how to bead. When asked what they liked best about the experience: meeting people, learning new things and seeing new sights, topped the list. The above is also true for the adults who “tag along”. But we have an additional joy – having the opportunity to see the youth mature and bloom throughout the week and with each additional visit. Once again we thank the members of Our Saviour's for their friendship and many gifts of grace offered to us as together we served each other.



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Telford, PA

Pastor Dave Christensen brought a group of 10 people from July 16-24. Pastor Dave and his group brought many items for our Giveaway Store, school supply kits, material and sewing machines. They also worked in the Parsonage painting and cleaning, worked in the Giveaway Store and did yard work. Pastor Dave led us in worship service on two Sundays with Wendy Christensen and Carol Osteyee providing beautiful music and song.

Reflections of Rocky Boy by Leslie Harpel

My excitement grew as we drove past waving fields of wheat and the distant mountains grew larger. I was told we would soon be at Rocky Boy, a place Pastor Dave had told us wonderful things about. What I didn't know at the time was that I was about to have one of the most profound experiences of my life.

A thought came to me as soon as we arrived at Rocky Boy, and replayed itself many times in the next eight days of our visit... "How good Lord to be here!" I felt so blessed to meet all of you! You gave out such warmth, joy, acceptance, and love and I know my spirit has been blessed forever by meeting you all and having the honor of living at Rocky Boy.

There are no words to describe a visit to the Chapel In The Sky, services at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, the mini Pow-Wow, picking (and eating) fresh June Berries, the Church Bar-B-Q, visiting wonderful families, learning Stick Games, taking part in a Sweat Lodge, seeing an Eagle soar,

and racing up to the top of the mountain to watch the sun set and the full moon rise!

I won't ever say good-bye, as I have learned that is not your way. I will say God bless you all and keep you safe until we meet again!

Reflections by Nevin and Carolyn Barndt

Our time at Rocky Boy Indian Reservation in Montana this summer was an enriching experience. The friendships we made and the traditions we shared were far more than we could have imagined. Nevin and I do not so much remember the days, as we do the wonderful moments.. the kindness and hospitality of the Rocky Boy family is a treasured keepsake.

Summer 2005 by Wendy Christensen

Highlights of this year's visit to Rocky Boy included berry picking, doing yard work for some elders, and learning a lullaby in Cree. These activities were my most treasured moments because I got to spend time with some old friends and make new ones. It's the people of Rocky Boy that draw me back year after year.



Gloria Dei Lutheran Church of Downer's Grove, Illinois

Jeff Mikyska, Youth Pastor, brought a group of 29 people from July 30-August 7. Jeff and his group put on a wonderful Vacation Bible School, built a clothes line for the Church, painted deck of Church, did a lot of community work such as painting, yard work, helping up at the Pow-Wow grounds and rodeo grounds. They also led worship service for us on two Sundays.

Montana Mission Trip Reflections by Liz Bertenshaw

Last year was my first Montana trip and the moment I returned home I knew I had to go back. So, when the time came to board the train this year I was thrilled and once again the trip was amazing and, in my mind, even better than last year.

So what is it that makes this trip so unforgettable and leaves you itching for more? This is a question that so many people ask when I come home and it is actually kind of difficult to

answer because there are so many things that make this trip as great as it is. The main reason we are there is to, obviously, help those who live on the reservation. This in itself is such a fulfilling experience because even the littlest tasks mean so much to the people we do them for. They are always so grateful for our love and care and it feels so good to make someone that happy. What is even better is that in return for all of our help the Native Americans teach us about their culture which is so different from our own, and is so great to learn about and observe. For instance, this year the youth group got the opportunity to attend the tribe's annual powwow. It was unlike anything I have ever seen and I will never forget it. Also, we have participated for the last two years in the Native American Ribbon Ceremony in which each person receives a ribbon, says a prayer and ties the ribbon to a tree. The belief is that the wind carries these prayers to God. This event really helped me grow spiritually. Also, the scenery in Montana is beautiful and going into the mountains just to think and pray is one of the most peaceful things I have ever experienced.

Another one of my favorite activities this year was the Vacation Bible School that our youth group ran for the small children living on the reservation. I got the opportunity to lead the music and it was so fun to watch their faces light up whenever I got up to start the songs. I will never ever forget that. The kids were very cute and enthusiastic and to be able to teach them about God in a way that they really enjoyed was so cool.

So, if I left my reflection at this I think that what I have said so far would be enough to convince anyone how great the Montana Mission Trip is. But there is one more reason why I enjoy it as much as I do, and this is the part of the trip that I love the most, that I remember the most, and that makes the biggest impact on me. On this trip me and the other kids in the youth group bond in a way that is so much bigger than church night suppers on Wednesdays. I won't lie, on the train ride to Montana all the youth tended to stay in their separate clicks. This year the Gloria Dei Youth, the Saint Joseph's Youth, and the freshmen really were separated on the way there. But once we arrived and started experiencing so many new and wonderful things together, the differences disappeared. We made friendships with each other. The train ride back to Downers Grove was different, with all the youth mingling with each other during the 27 hour ride. This was what made the trip so special for me. I made so many new friends this year on this trip that I may not have ever really gotten to know had I not met them on this trip. And they are close friends who I have gotten to know not only as peers, but as people who share a common spiritual and emotional bond with me. It is so hard to explain why I love it as much as I do, but the trip brings us all together and that alone can keep me coming back for more!

Montana Mission Trip Reflections by Jill Brunner

There are many people I know who love to travel. Myself... Not so much. I am the type of person would rather stay at home and waste away my summer lazily. But when I discovered that this year I was old enough to go with the

Gloria Dei Youth Group on their mission to Montana, I decided maybe I would just give it a shot. If I didn't like the trip, I didn't have to go back next year, right? So I went to a few of the meetings and heard all of the great stories the older kids had to tell, and the next thing I knew I was on a train destined for Havre, Montana with 23 other high school kids and 6 chaperones.

Upon arriving at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church on the Rocky Boy Indian Reservation, everyone was in awe at the breathtaking mountainous scenery and exhausted from the 24-hour train ride. But after a good night's rest under the abundant stars we were put right to work the next day. Splitting up into groups, some of us went to paint; blaze trails through waist high brush, scrape and stain the church's deck, whatever the Church or the residents at Rocky Boy needed us to help with. Some of the work was strenuous, but everyone seemed to work efficiently together and helped each other so we got the jobs done fairly quickly with few mistakes. We also led two church services and a Vacation Bible School for the children after working during the morning, and many of us jumped at the multiple opportunities to take hikes and witness the beautiful creation that stretched around us. The crystal blue sky was very welcoming and the views we witnessed from the top of Our Saviour's Chapel in the Sky and the neighboring Haystack Mountain were absolutely beautiful, especially right as the sun was creeping up over the eastern mountains; the perfect retreat from a hard day's work.

All of the residents were honored by our visit, some of them extending invitations for us to return and opening their homes to shelter us. The children we taught in our Vacation Bible School even recognized us when we attended the Pow Wow and the Rodeo, and they invited us to hang out with them. Overall, the people we visited wanted to spend as much time with us as we did them, inviting us to join them at their rituals such as the Sweat Lodge and Pow Wow. The residents appreciated that we took time out of our lives to travel halfway across the country to help them when they needed it.

Looking back at the multiple challenges our group overcame and how much the people at Our Saviour's appreciated us, I have to admit that this mission trip was nothing short of a success. For some people it was an opportunity to strengthen old friendships, (some halfway across the country), while for other people it was a chance to turn perfect strangers into friends. But more importantly everyone had an opportunity to help someone at Rocky Boy who would've otherwise been ignored, whether it was by taking down sheds or offering to help paint. As Chief Stone Child said, "Be kind to one another and help one another." That is exactly what we accomplished on this mission trip. And for the record, it's going to take a lot of persuasion to keep me home during the next mission trip.



Zumbro Lutheran Church of Rochester, Minnesota

Pastor Wayne Vogt brought a group of 9 from August 8-11. Pastor Wayne and his group installed new front doors on the Church, worked on one of the retreat center cabins laying the flooring, installing the baseboards and finishing painting, sewed curtains for one of the cabins, purchased and hung mini-blinds in the Church kitchen and office building, brought gifts for the layette program, a sign reading Votaw to hang on one of the cabins in remembrance of our late Pastor, Rufina Votaw, materials for use for Sunday School and helped Pastor Barden unload his moving van.

Special Thanks for Epiphany Lutheran Church of Baltimore, Maryland and Thrivent Baltimore Chapter 30949 for your generous contribution to purchase materials and supplies to work on the Retreat Center cabins.

2005 Summer Retreats Help Open the Future

Our Saviour's Lutheran continues to develop our retreat ministry. The Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (WELCA) are now in their second year of holding a cultural immersion here. Out of previous experiences, a group from the Lutheran Social Services of Utah developed their own retreat this year. The idea emerged out of discussions this year that we may pursue a similar retreat for men.

With Pastor Barden's arrival comes the potential for other kinds of retreats as well. Pastor Barden brings a background in developing retreats for church leadership, workshops for congregational life, Biblical Studies and other small group learning events, and experiences for individual spiritual development.

What is needed now is a plan to complete the retreat buildings that have been started, and to utilize other building space for these kinds of opportunities. We will listen to ideas and needs that might be expressed for cooperative retreat planning. The continued congregational interest and financial support will be instrumental in our moving forward with this part of our ministry.



Women of the ELCA

The following article was written by Inez Torres Davis with excerpts from Rev. Barbara Berry-Bailey, Linda Webster and Linda McKinsey

Women of the ELCA has a cross-cultural immersion experience on Rocky Boy so women of this church can learn first hand that which we cannot learn from simply reading books or watching television programs. We come to Rocky Boy to learn about the Chippewa Cree and to see what we have in common with the women on the reservation. We come as women.

We started in 2004 with the idea of bringing women together for a time of fellowship, shared experiences, anti-racism education, and personal as well as spiritual development. We don't come with answers—we don't even come with questions. We come to learn what our questions may be and we come to receive answers that are sometimes surprising and sometimes painful.

Some of the answers surprise us because we don't know what it is like to be First Nation and living on a reservation. We are clueless in this area but we do know that God has made us one and that if we do not try to learn what this means, the same things that have destroyed our unity in the past will continue to destroy our unity in to our future. Therefore, we use anti-racist principles as guide.

Some of the answers are painful because we see ourselves as people with good intentions but get pulled up short with having to learn what the expression means: the road to hell is paved with good intentions. It isn't enough to mean well.

What this means is that people of Northern European descent do not get a free pass from corporate responsibility for what has gone on before but must develop a passion for doing works of justice and must learn how to trust the experts – the people of Rocky Boy when it comes to deciding what these works of justice might be. Notably, not all our participants are of Northern European descent; for women of color, establishing communication and relationship across "racial" lines are also a great blessing and lead to building community.

Women of the ELCA's cross-cultural immersion experience on Rocky Boy is an opportunity, a gift given by Our Saviour's through its staff of Rae Stewart and Gordon Gray to those who want to learn how to live as God's people – in and with forgiveness – in this world. We thank you.

What does the immersion experience mean to women who attend? Here are some thoughts from three of our 2005 alum:

Because this was the second time I attended the Immersion Event at Rocky Boy, it could have been perceived that I already knew everything. But how can you truly learn about a people in 3 working days? It would take a lifetime, and even then you would still only have gained insight into the few people with whom you developed a relationship. This year's experience only made me even more aware of how much I still need to learn. I wish the immersion could occur for two weeks on an annual basis. – Rev. Barbara Berry-Bailey

I had such a wonderful time and the experience was mind boggling and so enlightening and rejuvenating. The experience is one of the highlights of my life and I will remember the experience and the wonderful people I met who allowed me to spend time with them to learn about their customs and meet their families. I feel so blessed to have been able to be part of it all. – Ms. Linda McKinsey

Even when I think I have given up some of my white, European ways of looking at things, I come and listen and see and learn. The people I met at Rocky Boy were welcoming and accepting. The Reservation is beautiful. Admittedly, much of the history is difficult to hear, but necessary. Having a women's sweat gave me respect for another way of coming to God. Sitting around the table and having some of the women of Rocky Boy share their life experience with us showed me how much they trusted us to open up in that way. The mini-pow-wow was so much fun. What a great drum! Watching the children dance and share of themselves, just enjoying who they are, was wonderful. Then being invited to participate in the dancing was great! – Linda Webster, seminarian



Lutheran Social Services of Utah

Utah Inter-Faith Circle of Three by Leslie Whited Vance
Hello! What delight to spend this week you in Montana!

We are Lilli DeCair, Spiritual and Health Teacher & Reiki Master; Joan DeMetrovich from St. Catherine's Catholic Church & Prayer Warrior; and Leslie Whited Vance an Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Diaconal Minister serving in Social Services. We'd like to work together on an inter-faith retreat this week in September from Utah as an annual event if that fits in with the congregation's plannings.

We always like to come and work with Rae's leadership with your thrift shop ministry. She just received 36 boxes of winter clothing yesterday which means a lot to families. We hope we're helping out more than getting in the way!

Our spiritual questions we're wrestling with this week: How do we create a better balance? How do we share unearned privileges and give up privileges we ought never have been given? How do we see the gift of God's spiritual creation in every good Spiritual way of knowing? And not one of us sees this in quite the same way and of course all of us think we know best (smile)!

We felt the refreshment: of beauty, art, nature, kindness, welcome, honest stories about living and enjoyed great food at the community feeds. We're learning to have great care with our words and our internal talk --- from a talk by Robert Murie. We experienced active cooperation and shared intelligence with Anne Johnstone and Mary Jane DeBerry. How could we help but notice that the poets of Rocky Boy are the voices of a powerful Spiritual future and a part of a beautiful Indian Renaissance (Merrilee Russel).

We weren't sure about the new Pastor and his wife – y'know how they would be and all and what we found was that Pastor Arden has a great sense of humor and a very good heart; and that Carol is bright and really committed to the community.

At the Pow-Wow we noticed the power of the little ones dancing the minute the drums began; and how all the ages dancing had such a power along with the power of the drum circles (of course we really liked the Red Paint drum circle!). Sitting, talking and dancing with the grandmothers of the reservation was so important and healing to each one of us.

Most of all we just want to say thank you! As a servant learning event we thought we'd really like to give --- and what we found was that we were blessed over and over again – the mutual circle of giving is such a powerful dance, isn't it?