



Picture above: Winter brings the beauty of snow among the hills and valleys of the Reservation. Here the huge stone cross that adorns the hill above the mission complex shows through the blanket of snow.

Our Saviour's Pursues the Calling of a Pastor

When the Montana Synod became aware of the financial challenges facing Our Saviour's Lutheran Church (OSLC) and the 80-year old Lutheran mission at Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation, the energy and commitment of the then Bishop Richard Omland and his Associate, Rev. Jessica Crist, were turned toward seeking additional resources for maintaining the ministry.

During April and May of 2007, the Synod Office developed a grant proposal through the Division for Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). With the guidance of area EOCM director, Rev. Darius Larsen, and with the bookkeeping assistance of Carol Barden and the pastoral help of Pastor Barden, then pastor of Our Saviour's, the needed information was gathered to establish the basis for the grant. Pastor Crist prepared the grant request according to ELCA guidelines and requirements.

The basic discussion for the grant was through the congregation. Members gathered several times to offer their ideas, shape the goals, and authorize the request. The grassroots origins of this request was necessary to assure both the cross-cultural aspects of the ministry and the transitional dynamics of new pastoral leadership; these origins also help assure the congregational ownership of the future of the ministry and mission of OSLC.

The three-year grant specifically was sought to maintain the Ministry of Word and Sacrament through OSLC, to strengthen the relationship between the congregation and the reservation, and to develop the mission as a resource to the larger church through cross-cultural hospitality, service and education. In all of these, the substance of the grant connects the mission with the commitment of the ELCA and of the Montana Synod in continuing gospel presence, mutual care, and positive partnership with Native Americans. Thursday, July 26, word was received through EOCM Director Darius Larsen that the grant had been approved for the first stage for 2008 for the amount of \$37,000. Implementation of the grant is contingent upon the calling of a new pastor.

Bishop Elect Jessica Crist met with the Church Council in July to present names of potential pastors. From September through January, the congregation has met with several different candidates. The goal is to have a new pastor on-site by the end of March, 2008. Marilyn Sorenson, from the Multi-Cultural Ministry of the ELCA in Chicago, has also met with the congregation, as has Pastor Larsen. All three have committed their support to the mission and ministry of Our Saviour's at Rocky Boy's.

Another Time of Transition—

Dear Friends of Rocky Boy's,

Change comes often, and sometimes we didn't plan on it, and didn't even want it. As the Spring months of 2007 unfolded, it came increasingly to the forefront that we are not getting enough resources in to cover all our building maintenance and staffing needs. We have buildings still not completed and the older ones need significant maintenance in order to preserve their use. Attempts to increase our income over the last two years have brought in more dollars, but not enough to cover the increase of fuel and materials costs. We have strived to share costs with those who use our buildings, but resources for them are limited and it runs contrary to our sense of mission to assure that people are served in times of need. We reduced some staff time, but that only makes the issues of program operation and upkeep more challenging. It became clear that using a significant portion of our resources for pastoral salary needed to be evaluated. So, during the spring months, it was decided that I needed to leave the ministry here at Rocky Boy following the Servant Group season.

My goal in coming to the reservation was to be here between five and eight years in order to develop some new directions for mission and ministry with the Chippewa-Cree. I found that serving across the lines of race and culture brought satisfaction and blessing to me as a pastor. I was pleased to earn the valued trust of many families and to receive the welcomed partnership of those serving the community in human concerns. I grew so much in my own understanding of the history of the relationship between the larger society and the Native people, and I developed more fully my own faith as a Christian through learning some of the ways of First Nation spirituality. So many things are as I like to say "differently similar and similarly different" and in all God as Creator, Redeemer, and Holy Spirit lives with the Indian people, even though the manner and practice of their spirituality is different. I learned as much about myself as a white European American as I did about these friends as Native Americans. Two years was hardly enough time to develop understandings and relationships and grow through mistakes of perception and communication. I will miss greatly the people and the privilege of serving them.

The transition of our mission eventually will be more than to new pastoral leadership—it will be to a renewed sense of mission, mutuality, and partnership. I believe that we are past the time when as Westerners we do all the "giving" which lends itself to a paternalistic, arrogant and condescending manner even as we mean well. We need to put ourselves in the place of "receiving" from those about whom we come to care and serve. This will call us into a respect for their spirit and their ways as Creator has been their provider through the centuries and their strength through much adversity, including the resulting diseases, oppressed economics, and imposed social structure due directly to European's invading their homeland. And, it will call for us to learn from who they are as a people—a very spiritual people at the core of their culture—and to receive from them perspectives to think about our own ways in both faith and culture. To this point, American Indians have been much more gracious to receive and adopt Christian beliefs and practices than our churches have been willing to receive and adopt anything from Native spirituality. Only as I became a student among them did I come at even a small level to become a part of them. It has changed me in how I relate to my culture and my world and certainly to my God. The transition for the mission, therefore, needs to be one of finding ways that the heritage of the Native American can help our Western Church and our Western Culture. There is great potential for the mission at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church on the Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation to become a center for mutual cross-cultural learning and spiritual growth.

My time was also blessed by the interaction with so many of our constituency of interest and support. I have witnessed the commitment of people who travel hundreds of miles to bring goods to share through the Give-Away Store. I have communicated with people who send significant financial support on a regular basis. I have enjoyed the friendship and encouragement of people who come across the country to give time and materials in summer Servant Groups. I have visited with people in churches in those far away places who sew, save, gather, sort and ship items to help our people who live here. So much is shared without question, and it enriches my own Christian spirit and confidence that so many people "live their faith," as we sometimes put it. I thank you for the privilege of being in this place of helping to connect what is in your heart for others in "loving your neighbor."

To all on the reservation and to all beyond the reservation—to my Native friends and my non-Native friends—I extend my heartfelt thanks for your trust and your support. May you also be blessed as you, too, grow in your serving one another. I also thank the Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the Call comes to serve whenever and wherever we are, and by whose inspiration and guidance all good things come.

In the service of Christ,
Pastor Arden K. Barden

*Our Saviour's congregation presents
a blanket as a God-speed blessing
and gift to Pastor Barden.*



Workshop Provided for Women's Gathering

The Northern Illinois Synodical Women's Organization (NISWO) met on September 22, 2007, under the leadership of their outgoing president, Mary Howe. Through Mary's inspiration, many of the individuals and groups of NISWO have provided goods and financial support for the Lutheran mission at Rocky Boy's. This is one of many national and global outreach missions of the group.

Pastor Arden Barden was invited to lead a workshop in "cross-cultural ministry" based on his experience as a pastor at Our Saviour's, Rocky Boy. He spoke of three components of ministry in a cross-cultural setting: 1) know yourself; that is, your own culture, perspectives, and attitudes based on your individual development and public history; 2) know as much as you can about who the people are whom you serve regarding their culture, perspectives, and attitudes; and 3) remember that ministry must be mutual by nature, respecting as much as possible whatever may be given and received through the ministry involved. A "Number 4" is also added as a part of our Christian Callings "Keep the Cross in the cross-cultural," recalling not only the meaning of the Cross for God's saving grace for all people, but also the power of service and sacrifice in how the Cross of Christ is the foundation for Christian life and ministry.



Pastor Barden utilized "two hats" to demonstrate the parties involved in the ministry. One was a college hat representing the Western way of thinking and being with structured ways of functioning, future-oriented goals, and linear, conceptual, orderly and categorical thinking (from the head); the other was a "Native Pride" hat which Pastor Barden shared, though a gift, is not his to wear out of respect for those whose ways are more circular, relational, spontaneous and natural (from the heart). The presentation was well received by the group, and stimulated reflection and discussion regarding attendees' own life training and spiritual perspectives.

To recognize Mary's care for the ministry at Rocky Boy's and the multiplied support through the Women's Organization, she was presented with the Luther's Rose medallion that the mission has traditionally given to bishops and pastors who visit Our Saviour's. The Rose (worn by Pastor Barden and Mary in the photo) is in Chippewa-Cree beadwork done by tribal member Tim Parker. Martin Luther had drawn the rose to tell the story of the Gospel and it continues to provide a visual inspiration to people throughout the generations.

Tipi Purchased for Summer Groups

During the summer, visitors often want to sleep under the open skies of our Big Sky country, especially young people. Some express the desire to sleep in a tipi, a traditional Native American dwelling. In June, new poles and ties were purchased to provide the frame for a new canvas tipi. Canvas was purchased and one of our knowledgeable elders engaged to sew the tipi in traditional construction. A knowledgeable tribal member, Deland Denny, did the initial set up according to traditional practice. An elder Chippewa-Cree, Henry Day Child, provided the prayer and smudging to initiate the use of the tipi. The tipi was thus erected with a traditional prayer and a blessing for its use for visitors as they learn more about First Nation culture.

A special gift was received to help enable the purchase of the tipi, and other gifts are welcome. If enough donations are received, a second tipi could be purchased next summer so that one is available for boys and men and one for girls and women.



Student Volunteer at Rocky Boy —Angela Precourt



I came to Rocky Boy in mid-September, in order to spend my long awaited break from school serving at Our Saviour's. At home in Boulder, Colorado, I study English and anthropology with graduation not too far away. I belong to a wonderful community of students and young professional sharing a passion simply for Jesus and the things on our King's heart. We are a church desperate to see and believe that the love and mercy of Jesus is as radical as he says it is, and that his Kingdom is as powerful as the parables suggest.

It's been difficult to explain, to myself or anyone else, why exactly I came to Rocky Boy. Certainly it wasn't with any pretensions as an anthropology student that I was going to grasp the culture here, though witnessing it has been beautiful and humbling. What put Rocky Boy in my mind and led me to contact OSLC could have simply been a whim, after recalling my brief week or so of service up here with my youth group several years ago. But after having heard back from Our Saviour's that there was a need at the church, whim turned to a commitment to come and serve in whatever capacity seemed most appropriate and helpful. To put it most simply and honestly, all I wanted was to be with people and to serve in the small ways given to me.

When I arrived at Our Saviour's, I was put to work immediately sorting the boxes and boxes of donations for the free store, for the layette give away, and for the Christmas give away. For the most part, this task has kept me busy. At times I am overwhelmed by the generosity of those who donate to this church. The heart of our Lord is expressed so beautifully in the giving that keeps this ministry alive everyday in Rocky Boy.

[Angela was able to stay through the fall and returned to her home in Boulder December 7]

RAE'S CORNER

I would like to take this opportunity to wish every supporter a very **Happy New Year!** The Give-Away Store is still doing well. However, we are in need of gently used clothing for teens and younger children, both boys and girls. I thank all the kind people who take time to send us all that you do. It's very much appreciated by the people who utilize the clothing store.

For 2007, we gave 47 layettes. *THANK YOU EVERYONE for sending the much needed items.* Thank you also for several visitors who volunteered their time to put layettes together.

The hat and glove distribution usually doesn't end until winter is gone! We are always in need of warm hats and gloves. As I am writing this, the temperature is at 34 below!!

Our **Christmas Give-Away** this year was another success. Although we could not give everyone a gift, we were able to give gifts to 56 persons, young and elderly.

I personally thank each and everyone of you good folks for all that you do for Our Saviour's Lutheran Church and pray that you all have a good, healthy 2008.

❖❖❖❖❖ Rae Stewart, Give-Away Store Coordinator

Facility Project Status

Entrances

Update: The walkways that were installed have assisted foot traffic between the building. However, access to all buildings needs to be addressed in terms of deteriorating steps, weathered decking, adjacent landscaping, and related parking areas. The parking lot in the front that was paved in the fall of 2005 has been a big help in maintaining



Log Chapel

Update: This past summer the Servant Groups repainted the exterior and painted the “chinking” white again so it renews the look of the original log construction. This adds to the “overhaul” of summer 2006 of new windows, new furnace, and insulation, so the Chapel will continue to serve the

small worshipping community of Our Savior’s Lutheran. This historic building from the 1920s continues to be the focal point of the original Mission at Rocky Boy’s as well as the spiritual center of our meaning and purpose for the future.

Needs: We still have to finish trimming the windows interior, stain the interior trim, put another coat of paint on the interior and purchase/install some blinds and curtains for the interior to help in the summer months.

Cabins



Update: Work on the cabins has been limited this year due to a lack of funds and the inability to heat them. We still have not been able to connect the septic tank to the Reservation sewer system. This photo shows a summer Servant Group repairing the wind damage (70 mph gusts) to the roofing of one of our cabins.

Needs: We are still in need of purchasing and installing heaters (3) and instant hot water units and four (4) sets of bunk beds for each cabin for this summer. A part of the vision for new directions for the Mission continues to include the possibilities of hosting retreats, cultural exchanges, and special church events.

Financial Status- Electrical

Estimate: \$ 5,194.20
Donations: \$ 180.00
Balance: — \$ 5,014.20

New Church

Update on Floor Replacement: New commercial quality flooring was installed. We have encountered problems with the initial installation and usability, and have been working on resolving these issues. A new sealer has been applied and the building continues to serve the community for wakes, ceremonies, social events, and public meetings.

Needs: Financial help is still needed to bridge the gap between the insurance coverage of the residential grade flooring and the commercial grade flooring. At present the roof covering that was applied seems to be adequate, but there has been occasional signs that more work may need to be done to assure that all leakage has been managed.

Financial Status

Expenses: \$ 14,747.00
Donations: \$ 13,839.50
Balance: — \$ 907.50

Maintenance Needs

Update: Now that the Maintenance Shop has been winterized, our attention shifts to the equipment that is in constant need of repair or replacement. Considerable study will need to be done over the next few months to determine priorities and costs.

Current Needs: Repair or replacement of the 1984 Ford pickup, the old riding lawn mower, the “quad” (four-wheel utility vehicle), and a variety of hand and power tools.

Reflections from Summer Servant Groups 2007

☞ Pastor Cheryl Hoffman, **Zion Lutheran Church, Marietta, Pennsylvania**

It is hard to believe that this summer was our eighth trip to Rocky Boy and Our Saviour's. We call it a mission trip, but after eight years it is now a cross-country trip to catch up with friends. Though each year has been different, every year has given us memories that will last a lifetime.

This year the crew from Zion was joined by a small group from Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Maryland, a member from a Lutheran church in Lancaster, PA and my grandmother (Nana) and sister. It was a wonderful opportunity to share the blessings of Rocky Boy with friends and family. I asked the group to share some of their favorite memories from our trip.

Dani Rosser has been on 6 trips to Rocky Boy. She writes, "I will never forget all the people that I have met over the years on my trips out to Rocky Boy. There are so many memories of each trip out that I will never forget. I learned so much about the culture out at Rocky Boy. I love the people out there and they are so friendly and nice to everyone of us. I am thankful for the friends I have made."

It was my sister, Crystal's, first trip. She wrote, "I will never forget the people that I met. I enjoyed learning about the tribe and meeting some of the members. The week gave me a better appreciation for life on a reservation and Indian culture. It also opened my eyes to true spirituality."

Dick said his favorite part of the week was the trip to the Hay's Powwow. "The drive through Mission Canyon was spectacular, and it was great seeing the dancers and drum circles during the celebration."

David, from Maryland, had these memories: "I will never forget the hospitality of the people at Rocky Boy, especially Gordon Gray! My favorite part of the trip was the Pow Wow and the trip to Fort Belknap. I am thankful for the experience, especially the Sweat Lodge experience. The week at Rocky Boy changed me by the fact that I learned more about the Chippewa, Cree, Assiniboine, and other Indians. I still think about Montana and the Indian culture. My cowboy boots help me remember the trip (and they are comfortable)." Nana told me she loved the new experience and meeting and making new friends. What most awed her were the wide-open spaces of Montana.

This year our projects were painting the outside of the chapel (see pictures and chapel details on page 5), doing lawns for elders, fixing a sink and repairing a cabin roof. Hopefully all were lasting improvements. Another project was prayer as we tried to walk with the members of Our Saviour's through their difficult time of transition. We continue this project praying for Our Saviour's, its members and its leaders every week in our worship service and regularly in our personal daily prayers.

I am always amazed at how much of Rocky Boy we bring home with us each year. It is not only the memories, but new ways of thinking and being and praying. At Rocky Boy we are reminded of the important role our elders play in our lives and how to respect them. We are taught to give thanks for all things for everything is a gift from the creator and must not be taken for granted. We are encouraged to listen to the wind and ignore our watches. And we are reminded that our family and our God extend far beyond our own homes and churches. For giving us these opportunities we all would like to say thank you. May God continue to bless you and your ministry even as you have been a blessing to so many.



A first-time Servant Group came from Kent Lutheran in Kent, Washington. Pastor Jane Prestbye is pictured with her group and with Vern Gardipee. The group provided a Vacation Bible School for 30 children and here are gathered inside the new church. They also served by cleaning yards and painting for residents, and learned the basics of Native bead-work.

Reflections from Summer Servant Groups 2007

Pastor Chad Kline, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Maryland

It's always great to return to Rocky Boy, and Our Saviour's Lutheran Church! Having been there more than once, going back now seems in some respects like a kind of home-coming. I get to see people I met in previous trips. It's always good to share about old times and catch-up on the latest news. But I go knowing I'm going to meet new friends each new trip, new friends I'll create history with and look forward to seeing again sometime soon!

There are many more things I can say about my on-going 8 year relationship with Our Saviour's Lutheran Church; the people, the friends, the activities, the experiences. But I think the thing that draws it all together is its enduring timelessness. Some experiences I've had there have been some of the most formative of my adult life. Spiritually, I've experienced God in deep ways, ways that challenge intellectual description. And maybe that's why I'm having difficulty explaining this. Because of the setting, there nestled in the valley, as the hills and mountains around watch, there seems to be more time for God. Intellectually, I know that's not true. Certainly God can be found ANYWHERE... ANYTIME! But, I think here at Rocky Boy, we're not so much distracted by all the other noises in our lives, and more available to hearing God's "small" voice. Certainly, we're there for a purpose. We get a lot of work done. But in the midst of that there seems to be a pervasive sacredness. We leave having touched, and having been touched by, something ancient and sacred, that part of the divine that helps us remember the things we each need to remember in our lives to stay whole.



During one of the "Mini Pow Wows," Chontay Mitchell demonstrated the men's traditional dance for the Servant Group.



Mia Lame Bull demonstrated the women's traditional dance for the Servant Groups with the Little Cree Drum Group shown behind her..



R E T R E A T M E M O R I E S F R O M L S S U T A H

Before we begin our 2007 story, thank you to the Cree and Chippewa tribes, Stone Child College and Our Saviour's Lutheran Church for more than gracious hospitality and welcome. To make the trip more affordable, now and in the future, we drove from the Salt Lake City area to Rocky Boy Indian Reservation arriving late at night, and yes!, Our Saviour's did have the light on for us! We worshipped with the Our Saviour's Lutheran congregation, renewed old friendships and made some new ones too!

Our Lutheran Social Service (Utah) retreat in September is formed with community principles that those who are supposed to come, will come, and that whenever two or three gather in the name of the Holy all that is needed to accomplish what God intends is present. Angie, Kevin, Leslie, Mitchell, Rae. W. and Rae Stewart (Coordinator) formed the group with the accompaniment of Nolan Billy, Council President.

This year our theme was: "Remembering to remember" --- to remember the real histories and make healing primary in our daily walk. Our prayerful request? To heal our own hearts; be a healing presence in the best way we can as sinnerandsaints; and pray our daily footsteps provide greater justice in the world. This year, as Northern European people here on retreat, we are alternately very aware, and sometimes terribly unaware, that unlearning racism will be a lifelong walk. We ask your forgiveness and honesty when we wander from the healing path.

Some highlights for us were the Health Fair, RJ Redwater's humor and words of wisdom, and the Raffle. (Our group won a dinner set and popcorn maker for Our Saviour's Lutheran Church to use in its ministry here!); the poetry and music afternoon on campus with Menudo and stew; evening conversation and a meal with Nolan, Rae, and Sheridan and another meal with Pastor Arden and Carol and a Birthday celebration with Angie; worship here at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church on the reservation and at the 5-point Parish service held at Kremlin Lutheran Church in Kremlin, Montana.

On Thursday night, we combined to become a group of seven women and we enjoyed watching the film which opened the Native American Museum in Washington, DC plus a film locally produced regarding burden basket making. We all received a gift from Dr. Merilee Russell from the Museum – a book on the history and styles of baskets which are so much a part of everyday living, eating, cooking and carrying; and frankly, an intricate art form. On Friday night we met Rae and Nolan's numerous uncles at the hand game and saw the new Casino which we had heard about in many discussions throughout the week. Saturday night was the highlight of our trip experiencing a healing sweat lodge with Tina and Gordon --- their prayers together were so beautiful we still hear them.

It is beautiful to be here and hard to leave. Each year, I swear, the community heart here seems stronger and grace wider because of the beauty here in the land, the ever faithful Spirit, the real conflicts and intentional ways of healing that are a part of this life. Healing is always available to us through our Creator. Wisdom increases. One day soon we will all be fully embraced by the wide arms of Wisdom; a vision you can see every day when you really take a minute to look at Vernon the Boy's Jesus sculpture in front of the round church.

We love you!
Leslie Whited, Director
The LSS of Utah Annual Retreat



Vern Gardipee (pictured) has played the flute for Servant Groups and for congregation events. Vern often wins area contests in both flute and hand drum. He is a singer with the traditional drum as well, and often sings at Pow Wows and Round Dances with more than one group. The Indian flute may be made of different woods, and produces a clear, inspirational sound. The flute is usually played "from the heart" and expresses the mood and spirit of the one playing at the time. Visitors are always grateful when Vern or others share the spirit of the flute.

UPDATING THE FINANCIAL PICTURE

Finances have been the challenge for the past several years. A review of data in the grant-writing process last summer revealed that the reason the mission has been able to continue has been the receipt of a large bequest in 2004. That fund has been able to provide enough resource to 'fill the gaps' when monthly income has not been adequate. In light of the efforts of a number of projects coming and going, this resource helped to hide the fact that we were not receiving enough support on a regular basis to maintain the number of buildings that now make up our ministry setting as well as the staff to provide new ministry for new opportunities on and beyond the reservation, serve the people through existing programs, and maintain and complete the facilities already here. In the Summer of 2007, we reached the end of the availability of those extra funds.

This proved the need for the implementation of the Funding Campaign begun in 2005 called *Ambassadors 1000* which was designed to seek one thousand new partners at least a regular giving commitment of \$25.00 per calendar quarter. This program produced approximately 60 new giving units in two years, some with more than the requested minimum support. However, that sum fell way short of the anticipated need for \$100,000 in new support dollars.

The comparative income for the last two years is shown in the following table.

FINANCIAL REVIEW AND COMPARISON

<u>Year-End Financial Report</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
<u>Total Income:</u>	\$ 202,741.08	\$122,396.61
Major Areas:		
General Donation	\$ 167,130.46	\$ 90,981.29
Servant Groups	\$ 7,534.54	\$ 18,762.00
Sunday Offering	\$ 19,381.80	\$ 7,579.70
Ambassador 1000	\$ 3,200.00	\$ 3,530.00
Other	\$ 5,494.28	\$ 1,543.62
 <u>Total Expenses:</u>	 <u>\$ 194,683.79</u>	 <u>\$151,989.08</u>
Major Areas:		
Benevolence	\$ 2,995.47	\$ 1,350.00
Scholarships	\$ 6,393.15	\$ 2,050.66
Capitol Improvement/Building Maintenance	\$ 31,272.55	\$ 8,763.82
Servant Groups	\$ 4,820.13	\$ 8,565.92
Payroll	\$ 48,299.66	\$ 43,836.84
Pastoral Related Expenses (Salary, pension and health, utilities, and travel expense)	\$ 72,379.21	\$ 42,931.76 (Jan.-Aug.)
Other categories of expenses	\$ 28,523.62	\$ 44,490.08
 <u>Net Income/Loss:</u>	 <u>\$ 8,057.29</u>	 <u>(\$ 29,592.47)</u>

Bishop Crist and Associate Peters Visit Rocky Boy's

On Epiphany Sunday, January 6, 2008, Bishop Crist and Associate to the Bishop Rev. David Peters worshiped with the Our Saviour's congregation. Many of the congregation as well as some additional visitors from the reservation attended the worship service.

Bishop Crist brought the message based on the texts for the day: Isaiah's prophecy of the Light coming to "People who have walked in darkness" [60:1-6] and of Matthew's Visit of the Three Wise Men [2:1-12].

Rev. Crist likened the experience of Indian people to those of Isaiah's time who had suffered invasion, indignities, defeat, exile, and despair. Into their darkness, she proclaimed, the Light has come: "As Christians we see this promise as a promise to all people everywhere fulfilled in Jesus, whose birth we celebrate and whose death gives us life. Jesus Christ is the light of the world, the light no darkness can overcome. Jesus Christ is the one who brings us out of the deepest darkness, out of despair because of his unprecedented love for us and for all creation."

She reminded people that the Wise Men were outsiders to the believers, indicating that God's love and salvation is for all people. "No longer are our brothers and sisters people just like us. We are all children of God, we are all brothers and sisters," she proclaimed.

She closed with reminding the people of the risks involved, as suggested by the actions of the threatened King Herod. She spoke to the congregation, "...we are at a turning point at Our Saviour's. We have been through some dark times, and we are not out of the woods yet. But God is with us....God is calling us to witness. God is calling us to live by faith. And God is calling us to take risks for the sake of the Gospel."

The visit brought encouragement to the people at Rocky Boy's, and the congregation looks forward to the support and guidance of the Montana Synod, especially Bishop Crist and Associate Peters.

Give-Away Trips from Afar



Many shipments of goods for the Give-Away Store arrived via UPS and Fed Ex. One was sent via Amtrak and one "delivery made" by connecting with a cross-country traveler from Illinois. Several individuals brought gathered items by car or truck from Oregon, California, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania. Pictured here are Donna and Tom Keblish from Chula Vista, South of San Diego, California. Thoughts about needs at Rocky Boy's prompted volunteer giving by friends, family and church members. A special trip was made to personally bring "the load."

Mission Parsonage Made New after Water Damage

Sometime in October or November, the heating system failed in the parsonage. By the time it was discovered, freezing and thawing weather had left frozen and broken pipes and subsequent flooding. The main water flowed from the upstairs bathroom, resulting in ceiling and wall damage. Clean up and repairs came to over \$20,000.00. Insurance coverage provided the basic restoration. This is the second incident of this kind, the first over twenty years ago.

Any additional work may await the arrival of the new pastor and donations to the parsonage renewal fund. A failed buried electric line required a new lead from the Mission House to the parsonage in June, 2007. Other needs for parsonage upgrading include improvement in the wiring and exterior and interior lighting, repair of siding and garage attachment to the house, restoration and sealing of the aging foundation, additional window replacement and storm doors, a new or upgraded woodstove, and drive way ditching, grading and graveling.

The crisis this winter threatened to delay further the calling of a pastor, but the quick action of the Church Council assured that the hot water heating system was restored to working order, the water pump repaired, and the ceilings, walls and floors renewed and ready-to-live-in. This house has served as home to many pastors who serve the Reservation Mission and the congregation of Our Saviour's Lutheran, and will be the home for a new pastor in Spring, 2008.

A blanket of snow illustrates one of many winter scenes for the parsonage since it was built in the 1930s. In the early 1990s cedar siding covered the log structure and later a garage was added.



