

district news



Brooks
Jon Chalmers and his wife, Amie, began serving as lead pastor at the end of August. Jon has served in various ministry capacities at several churches in Western Canada. The

Chalmers family also served as full-time missionaries in Kenya with AIM. Jon and Amie have three children: ages 15, 14, and 10.

Picture Butte

Anthony Vink began serving as associate pastor at Cornerstone Community EFC on November 1. He and his wife, Kathleen, have served in a variety of church and para-church ministries during their 21 years of marriage.



Evangelical Free Church of Canada

PRAIRIE PROFILE

strengthening pastors encouraging leaders developing churches



Fall 2019

Superintendent Rob & Cherise Cave

South Calgary Chinese EFC

The church has seen many changes to their staff team as pastors Kenny Wong, Edward Wong, and Sean Cook have retired or are pursuing other opportunities. New staff include Marco Chen



(assistant Cantonese pastor, *above*) and Jerria Wang (assistant Mandarin pastor, *left*), as well as pastoral interns Ken Chan, Calvin Sun, and transitional pastor Bonnie Lee.



Pastoral Searches

Pray for the following churches who are in the process of looking for their next pastor:

- Manitou EFC (Neilburg SK)
- Delia Christian Fellowship
- Okotoks EFC
- South Calgary Chinese
- Osler Community Church
- EFC of Regina
- EFC of Enchant



Send your ministry staff
to the Prairie District
Staff & Spouse Retreat

at the Resort at Cypress Hills

February 28-March 1, 2020
(Friday night through Sunday noon)

These days away to rest and reflect with other pastoral staff will have a lasting impact in the life, health and ministry of those who serve your church!

We have changed the format to hold the retreat over a weekend to accommodate more people and truly give pastors a break.

Registration info has been sent to your pastoral staff. Please encourage them to attend!

Child-Like Faith

We hadn't been at the church when a couple asked our family to attend their adopted son's birthday party. Their son was physically and mentally challenged, and he expressed such great joy in an empty ice cream bucket! I remember thinking "I have never found joy in an empty ice cream bucket." In a full one, definitely, but not an empty one. He found joy and contentment in what I would consider "less," not "more." His simplicity was convicting and inspiring. There is great peace to be found in being unencumbered by the things you find in life.

I think that is one of the reasons why Jesus highlighted the necessity of being like a little child if we hope to enjoy eternity with God.

Matthew 19:13-14 says, "Then little children were brought to Jesus for Him to place His hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them. Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.""

Child-like faith allows us to rest in the presence of Jesus, and not just when we get to heaven. Too many followers of Christ take pride in their hectic life-styles—in the hours spent "ministering" for the Lord. I'm not saying we shouldn't serve the Lord, but sometimes the pace of ministry life actually moves us away from enjoying the presence of Jesus.

But shouldn't we be busy? It depends what we're busy with. Are we busy trusting Jesus? Are we busy resting in His sovereign care and love? Are we busy crying out to Him in prayer for those God has placed around us? Will we learn too late that a part—not all—but a part of our faith journey is learning to pursue Jesus SO we can rest in His presence?

Matthew 11:25 says, "At that time Jesus said, "I praise You Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was Your good pleasure."

Child-like faith also grants us the understanding to know what pleases and blesses our Father. Are there times when we miss pleasing the Lord and miss knowing "hidden" things because we're too busy with what we would consider "important"? Jesus was very busy in ministry, but He also took time to be with friends and enjoy their company. He regularly practiced the art of displacing Himself from the frenetic pace of life in order to be by Himself and pray.

If the busyness of life is wearing you out, maybe it's time to be a little more like a child and simply rest in the presence of your heavenly Father.

A New Home

Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, "...I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it." Our only boast is in Jesus Christ as He has indeed been building His church through the ministry of the Evangelical Free Church of Medicine Hat. As we have sought to be faithful to the Word of God and lift high the name of Jesus, He has brought increase to the size of our church to the point that on February 3, 2019 we held our first service in our "new" building. Because of the increase, we had outgrown our previous facility which had been our home for over 53 years! The dedication service for that building took place on January 16, 1966, and we are grateful for the faithful men and women (some who are still a part of our body) who laid the foundation for what we are reaping today.

The size of our congregation has fluctuated over the years; however, four years ago our congregation grew to a size that required additional space for our Sunday service and Sunday School classes. To make due for the time, we purchased portable dividers to make

temporary classrooms and additional seating in our basement. It was our desire not to go to two Sunday services and run the risk of somehow fragmenting the body, so we bought audio/video equipment and had people sitting downstairs for the Sunday service. Following the service we had weekly fellowship time so that the whole body could spend time together.

As that was going on, the congregation began setting aside money annually for a building "expansion fund" (what that expansion would be we did not know). We talked about expanding our present location, but doing that would have required as much resources as a new facility. We were in contact with other churches in the city to see if they would be interested in some form of swap or purchase of their building. We also looked at several industrial or commercial buildings to see if they could be made to suit our needs. Although there was "smoke" from time to time, nothing caught fire and over the course of a few years we remained

where we were, content to wait on the Lord's timing.

It was a year ago that Unity Lutheran Church approached us about possibly swapping buildings. Unable to stay at their current location due to a shrinking congregation, and wanting to keep their pastor, they approached us about a potential deal. All throughout the process we saw

the grace of our Saviour on display as both congregations worked together to complete the deal.

Interestingly, we had approached Unity Lutheran about three years ago about a potential building swap. Despite their financial difficulty at that time they wanted to try and stay where they were at. Our patience for two years allowed God to prepare both of our congregations for this opportunity and the deal closed in January of 2019.

Over the last seven months we have been busy making the facility "our own" by painting both the inside and outside of the building, purchasing new chairs for the sanctuary, resealing the parking lot and doing some general clean up and maintenance.

We have marveled continuously at the blessings of our Triune God and where He has brought us this past year. We have experienced the departure of a pastor, the provision of a new facility, and the welcoming of a new pastoral couple who faithfully ministers the Word of God to us. And all the while we continue to grow in numbers and "in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." What more can we say but to agree with Paul in his letter to the church in Ephesus:

"Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen."

by Justin Braun



District Conference Highlights

The EFC of Meadow Lake (SK) did a fantastic job of welcoming delegates and attendees to the annual Prairie District Conference in mid-October.

Excellent times of worship, fellowship over delicious meals, and challenging messages on mission drift by Alvin Bueckert (pastor of Mount Olive EFC in Three Hills AB) and compassion by George Mills (pastor of Bow Island EFC in Alberta) were well received. One highlight was a panel discussion on pastoral search teams from Meadow Lake and Brooks. There was also a presentation on EFCC structure by George Budd, chair of the national EFCC Board.

Discussions took place on several proposed by-law changes which the board will continue to pursue. Make plans to attend the 2020 district conference in Three Hills in October!

Prairie District Board 2019-2020

George Mills (chair); Keith Boschman (secretary); Richard Friedt (AB rep); Percy Lee (AB rep); Evans Hundermark (AB rep); Bill Klumpenhower (SK rep); Glenn Gerbrandt (SK rep); Matt Thiessen (SK rep); Doug Munton (treasurer); Rob Cave (district superintendent)

Finances

August 1, 2019—October 31, 2019
Equal Shares Budget \$ 20,800.00
Equal Shares Giving \$ 30,268.38

Thank you for your faithful giving!

Equal Shares (district donations) are \$5 per member per month (\$60 per member per year).

Send all gifts to financial secretary:

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