

Prairie District PROFILE

Winter 2012



*Superintendent
Tim & Lynn Seim*

The district office will be closed Dec 19 through Jan 2.

It's Christmas. Have you noticed? But it's more than our church programs, banquets, songs, family gatherings, and gift giving, isn't it? Sure, we know that in our hearts, but to truly enter into the message of Christ's coming requires some intentional action. In our small group Bible study here in Okotoks, we took three weeks to examine God's Story of Christmas. We asked the Lord for fresh perspective to learn from the over familiar. Those weeks have been a great blessing in our lives, to examine real people struggling with what it would mean for them to enter into the great incarnation story.

Christmas is the story of God's loving intervention in our hurting world through Jesus Christ. Don't miss it! On behalf of the district office (Tim and Lynn, Tracy and Steve), we wish you a Christ-filled Christmas celebration in your lives!

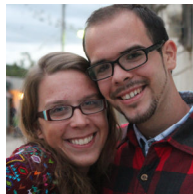
Tim Seim Tracy Morris

WELCOME TO THE DISTRICT!



Julian Erb began on October 9 as assistant pastor of youth and Christian education at Bow Island EFC. Born and raised in Seven Persons, AB, Julian received a B.A. degree from Moody Bible Institute in 2012. He has served with Torchbearers in Japan as well as youth ministries in Seven Persons, Washington State, and New Zealand.

Marshall Banting is the new youth pastor at Saskatoon EFC. He and his wife, Mallory, have recently returned to Saskatchewan following missions service. They are very excited to see young people follow Jesus and have high expectations of how God is going to work. Their family includes an infant son, Malcolm.



CHURCHES SEEKING PASTORS

- Calgary Chinese EFC (English pastor)
- Northeast Calgary Chinese EFC (pastor)
- South Calgary Chinese EFC (Cantonese pastor, associate English pastor)
- Delia Christian Fellowship (pastor)
- Foremost EFC (pastor)
- Manitou EFC, Neilburg SK (youth pastor)



PRAIRIE DISTRICT STAFF / SPOUSE RETREAT

February 10-12, 2013 ~ Cypress Hills Resort Inn (*Register by January 10!*)

Save the date and plan to be refreshed with other staff members from the Prairie District! Our theme is "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus." In the discouragements and relentless pace of ministry, some days we wonder "Is it worth it?" Leading our discussion is Lyndon and Marlene Wall from *Refresh Ministries* of Sexsmith, AB.

WHEN GOD MOVES (submitted by Pastor George Budd, Okotoks EFC)

What if we removed the requirements we have built around the ordinance of baptism – the classes and testimonies and hoops – and just baptized whomever wanted to be baptized?

We decided to try something different at Okotoks EFC in October, at least different for us. We concluded our sermon series *What is the Gospel?* with a challenge to be baptized. There were four people who had asked to be baptized and had met with a pastor in preparation. But we decided to open the baptism challenge to anyone who wanted to confirm their faith as a follower of Jesus Christ through the act of baptism.

Pastor Steve Regier was charged with finding shorts and t-shirts in various sizes to meet the needs of those who might respond. We had no idea what God would do, or if anyone would respond. Steve was 'gifted' with pants, shirts, and a whole lot more from a local store that was getting rid of old stock. The church sent clothes to El Salvador, parkas to Ukraine, and used the leftovers to fill our clothing needs for the baptism. It was a timely gift.

After preaching on 'An appropriate response to the Gospel' from the conclusion of Peter's sermon in Acts 2 ("repent and be baptized"), we challenged people to do it *today*. The congregation sang while people made their way out. An elder or his wife spoke with each candidate, to make sure they knew why they were being baptized. Others helped them find clothes to fit.

The congregation continued to sing while each candidate was asked about their desire to make their faith public through baptism. In our three services that day, 28 people were baptized! Tears were shed all over the auditorium. People clapped and sang and laughed. It was an awesome ending to an amazing day as we watched God move. People from their teens right into their 70's were baptized, and all 28 people received a follow-up phone call or visit from an elder after the service.

CHURCH CLOSURE

On November 18, 2012 our District Advisory Church Plant Team for EnCompass EFC ended our church planting efforts in Chestermere, AB. Our pastoral couple, Paul and Dale Jansen, were being overworked and our momentum in all areas of ministry declined severely this fall. Thanks to Mount Olive EFC in Three Hills for all their support in this work. Church plants are fragile and need our prayer support.

Prairie District

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