

Prairie District PROFILE

Winter 2015

Do you remember the old gospel song *Deep and Wide*? No? Well, don't worry about it because that is not what I want to talk about anyway! I'm talking about a book by Andy Stanley, pastor at North Point Church in Georgia. Stanley's latest book, *Deep and Wide*, is a must read if you want to ponder the church in today's world. He asks two questions we all should be asking: what is the church and who is it for?

When Jesus first used the word we call *church*, it was His prediction of something which did not yet exist (Matthew 16:18). The word *ekklesia* is not a religious term; it is the common term which means "to gather for a purpose." It was to be a purposeful gathering. Stanley contends we moved church from an assembly to an assembly hall.

When was the last time we as local church leaders met and asked these hard questions?

- Are we moving or simply meeting?
- Are we making a measurable difference in our local communities or simply conducting services?
- Are we organized around a mission or are we organized around an antiquated ministry model?
- Are we allocating resources as if Jesus is the hope of the world, or

are the squeaky wheels of church culture driving our budgeting decisions?

Stanley also interacts with one of my favourite descriptions of Jesus in John 1:14 when it tells us Jesus was "full of grace and truth." The New Testament Church was comfortable living with the ambiguity and tension of grace and truth (Acts 15).

Who is the church for? Is the church for church people only? Have we thought of those whom we pray will come who are not "church" people? I well remember coming to Jesus Christ in high school and entering the foreign world of the church. I knew I did not really belong because I was not like them. But, fortunately for me, I walked into a strong "grace and truth" church that enfolded me, loved me as I was, and shared Jesus with me. Plenty of grace and the true truth.

Bottom line: don't be a church designed by Christians for a "Christians only" culture. Think on it and do some good reading on it.



*Superintendent
Tim & Lynn Seim*

March 15-17 Prairie District Staff/Spouse Retreat, Cypress Hills, SK

May 26-27 EFCC Theological Summit "The Bible" @ Okotoks EFC

DATES TO NOTE...

February 13-15 Youth Quake "Broken & Hopeful" www.briercrest.ca/yyq

February 20-22 MissionsFest Edmonton

DISTRICT NEWS

Men's Retreat, January 23-25 at SABC
Guest speaker: Mark Buchanan (author, former pastor, and professor at Ambrose Seminary).
Worship led by Jason Easterbrook, EFC pastor in Crowsnest Pass. \$160. www.sabc.ca



Picture Butte



Jorge Santana, originally from Chile, is the new part-time associate pastor of Cornerstone Community Church. For the past nine years, Jorge and his wife, Mandy, have been missionaries/pastors with *Youth with a Mission* and the *Methodist Pentecostal Church of Chile*.

Lethbridge

Joanne Penner Herron retired in December following eight years as parish nurse at the EFC of Lethbridge. We wish Joanne God's best as she devotes more time to caring for and spending more time with her mother and other family members.



Calgary First Free

Joshua and Jenessa McAuley ended their ministry in December as pastor to youth and young adults. The McAuleys will take time to regroup and seek future ministry opportunities. Tammy Picard has also ended her ministry as children's coordinator. Financial constraints facing the church have resulted in the McAuleys and Tammy moving on. Blessings and thanks to both leaders.

Prairie District Budget Update

Equal Shares Budget
October-December 2014
\$27,750

Equal Shares Giving
October-December 2014
\$29,010

Send all gifts to our financial secretary:

Yvonne Ling
yvonnewlingpc@shaw.ca
234 Schooner Landing NW
Calgary AB T3L 1X5

The Joy of The Lord
is Your Strength
(Nehemiah 8:10)

**2015
Pastors'
CONFERENCE**

**February 17-18, 2015
Ambrose University**

- **Rev. Mark Buchanan**
Ambrose University, Calgary
- **Rev. Darrell Johnson**
First Baptist Church,
Vancouver
- **Rev. Charles Price and
Mrs. Hilary Price**
The Peoples Church,
Toronto

\$59 includes lunches, coffee breaks, and parking. Limited on-site accommodation is available. Contact Marlene 403-410-2931 or specialevents@ambrose.edu

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