



From Dairy Princess to Pastor:

Pastor settles in at Shelton Church

"I love it here. I can't say enough about the friendliness and small town values," Shelton United Methodist Church Pastor Melody Adams said of the people of her congregation and the people of Shelton.

The New York native has been pastor at Shelton UMC since July 1, moving from Arapahoe where husband, Mike, is employed helping to run the family business, Adams Construction. Pastor Adams, the daughter of a dairy farmer, was once crowned the "New York State Dairy Princess" in high school. She said that her brother, who had been running the family dairy, sold the business and moved with his wife and daughter and he and Pastor Adams' parents, to Arapahoe. She says that Mike spends most of his time in Arapahoe and comes to Shelton when he can and that she visits her family in Arapahoe frequently, also.

Pastor Adams said that Shelton UMC is her first appointment as a pastor. She and Mike have moved around the country some while Mike was in the Air Force and National Guard and returned to Arapahoe to his family business where they lived until last July. She said that she has always been involved in the church but in a lay person's capacity. She has been a

delegate to the Worldwide General Conference on three occasions before she became a pastor and felt blessed to be able to bring that experience, learning and tradition into her pastoral work. "God has always called me to be in service, but I didn't feel called to the pastorship until about a year and-a-half ago," she intimated.

Through helping the families after the death of a family member and a friend, Pastor Adams said she began seeing God's hand at work calling her saying, "Look at what you can do for people." She said in the past people had asked why she wasn't a pastor. She replied that at that time, she didn't feel called to. Prior to being a pastor, Adams was the marketing director of a bank with five branches in southwest Nebraska.

The Adams' have two daughters, Becki, married to Air Force pilot Kevin Selin, who is working on her doctorate in atmospheric science and youngest daughter, Katie, is a tax accountant for BKD in Lincoln. The family also includes Greta Garbo, the Adams' long haired daschund, whom her husband named.

Pastor Adams said she greatly appreciates the warmth and welcome she has received from the church and the community.

She said she does find time for hobbies such as exercising, crimes shows, reading and playing the piano. "I play the piano, I won't say well, but it's kind of a stress reliever." She says she sometimes slips into the sanctuary, opens up the hymnal and plays when no one is around to hear.

"It's a good fit," Pastor Adams said of her post at Shelton UMC. "I love it here."



Pastor Melody Adams

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TO CELEBRATE ANNIVERSARY

The Paxton United Methodist Church will celebrate its 125th anniversary during the Sept. 4 church services and subsequent activities.

A special worship service begins at 11 a.m., followed by dinner, special music and entertainment.

The public is invited to attend.

For further information, contact Laurie Stevens at (308) 239-4765.



Workshop to prepare churches to protect kids

Communities of faith and professionals working with children are both concerned with child safety but often do not know how to collaborate to protect children.

Which is why Jeanette Harder, associate professor of the University of Nebraska at Omaha School of Social Work, will offer a free workshop Thursday to help churches and community professionals work together to prevent child abuse and neglect, to strengthen families and to protect children. The program for faith leaders and social service professionals runs from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Child Advocacy Center, 5025 Garland St.

Harder will present the results of her research on faith communities' work with children and outline opportunities for churches and community professionals to work together.

The program also will feature a panel discussion with local representatives: Lynn Ayers, executive director of the Child Advocacy Center; Troy Cockle of the Lincoln Police Department; the Rev. Jessie Foster, director of Christian Leadership Development of the United Methodist Conference Nebraska; and Tina Fardella of Orr Psychotherapy Resources.

The workshop is free. Professionals can earn 2.0 CEUs through the course. Participants are asked to register by Monday at www.DovesNest.net.



Church collects new shoes for orphans

Monday is the deadline to donate shoes to Trinity United Methodist Church's "Shoes for Orphan Souls" shoe drive.

The church has teamed with Buckner International and is seeking new shoes, socks and shoestrings for orphaned and at-risk children in the United States and 68 other countries.

Donated items should be for children and teens. Because of customs regulations, shoes and socks need to be new. For people who prefer to donate cash, \$25 will buy a new pair of shoes and cover distribution costs.

Donations can be dropped off at the church, 7130 Kentwell Lane (one block east of 56th Street and Pine Lake Road), anytime through Monday.



Churches join forces to grow food for needy

By Suzi Nelson

ASHLAND – One Ashland area garden is yielding more than produce.

A joint effort between Carol Joy Holling Camp, American Lutheran Church and United Methodist Church produced hundreds of pounds of vegetables, fruits and herbs this summer that were donated to Table Grace Ministries in downtown Omaha.

Table Grace Ministries is a nonprofit organization founded in 2008 by Matt and Simone Weber. They feed the needy through a personal chef service for single parents and by serving meals at the restaurant they opened in April, Table Grace Café at 1611 1/2 Farnam Street.

Matt Weber said his restaurant's purpose is to provide delicious food to anyone who walks through the door, regardless if they can pay.

"The difference between us and mainstream restaurants is we don't any prices or a menu," he said.

The café also doesn't have a cash register. Diners put whatever they can afford in a donation box. Those who can't pay money are asked to donate an hour of community service. Weber said those who can pay often give generously, helping fund meals for those who are in need.

The menu is based what he has on hand on any given day. The end result is gourmet soup, pizza and salad made with fresh ingredients.

Nearly 85 percent of the

produce lining the café's shelves and stocking Weber's refrigerator is donated by Trader Joe's and Wohlners, two Omaha-area grocery stores. Weber said he also receives about 15 percent of his produce from donations like the ones made by the Carol Joy Holling Camp gardeners, as well as from Omaha churches and local farmers. Due to health department restrictions, however, Weber is not able to use these donations for the café, but he always makes sure they are given to the needy through his local church.

"We process donations that come from the gardens, and if we can't use it, we distribute it through the food pantry at First Lutheran Church," he said.

While the produce from the Ashland garden may not be used in the café, Weber is appreciative of the efforts of a small town to provide for those in need in a different community.

"It is pretty cool that folks clean out in Ashland are working hard to support our mission in downtown Omaha," he said.

The garden donations from Ashland are not Weber's first connection to the area. His first job out of culinary school in 2005 was as head chef for the Swanson Retreat Center at Carol Joy Holling Camp, which is run by Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries.

It was Weber's first time in charge of a kitchen after attending the Natural Gourmet Institute for Health and Culinary Arts in New York. He learned not only how to run the kitchen and manage the staff, but also the impact faith can have.

"It was a blessing and an opportunity for

me to work for that organization," Weber said.

Weber said his three years at Carol Joy Holling Camp were a great stepping stone in his efforts to use his cooking expertise to help others. Soon after leaving the camp, he formed Table Grace Ministries. His first efforts were as a personal chef to single parents. Donations of produce aided him in these efforts, also.

Last year, 1,000 pounds of produce grown by the 1,450 youth campers and 70 counselors and staff members attending Carol Joy Holling Camp's summer camp program was donated to Weber, according to David Bragg, director of programs for Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries.

"The garden has been an annual part of our program for several years," he said.

A few years ago, members of American Lutheran Church began working in the Carol Joy Holling Camp garden. Two of the garden's many raised beds were offered. Bette McCoy, a member of the church, said the vegetables they grew were distributed to local churches as a stewardship project.

This summer, the Lutherans reached out to the Methodists for help in expanding the garden and their outreach. Amid the climbing tomato and cucumber plants, grew the roots of a new relationship between the churches.

"It's great to have a community project where we're involved with the camp and build a relationship between the Methodist church and American Lutheran and Table Grace," said Pastor Lori Morton of American Lutheran Church.

Pastor John Ewton of United Methodist Church said he has enjoyed working with the American Lutheran crew.

"It's a good feeling knowing we're doing something to help others," he said.

Ewton may have helped plant the seeds of helping others in Weber when he was the pastor in Weber's hometown of Dorchester over 30 years ago.

"To know he's gotten involved in a ministry caring about people and helping people in need is a true blessing," Ewton said.



GROWING FOR OTHERS: A joint garden project between Carol Joy Holling Camp, American Lutheran Church and United Methodist Church grew vegetables, fruit and herbs for Table Grace Ministries, a non-profit organization in downtown Omaha that feeds the needy. Pictured at the garden site at Carol Joy Holling Camp are (from left) David Bragg, director of programs for Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries, Rev. Lori Morton of American Lutheran Church and gardeners Bette and Bill McCoy and Craig and Dean Spilker. (Staff Photo by Suzi Nelson)

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Hopewell Church to celebrate 145 years on Sept. 11

Hopewell United Methodist Church, 73131 607 Ave., Sterling, will celebrate 145 years in ministry on Sunday, Sept. 11. The congregation will host a birthday party at 3 p.m. with a short program. There will be memorabilia on display and a historical video, as well as homemade ice cream and cake.

The Hopewell congregation was organized in 1866 by a group of German Methodist homesteaders who came to Nebraska from Hopewell, Mo. They established a thriving

community about seven miles from the towns of Adams and Sterling and boasted a church, public school and local cemetery. At its peak, membership was well above 100.

The congregation is extending an invitation to former members and pastors, as well as friends and neighbors in surrounding communities to join them for an informal afternoon of visiting and reminiscing; to celebrate Hopewell's history in ministry and service and to celebrate the opportunities the future holds.

Further information can be obtained by contacting Cheryl Unvert at 402-866-4331 or Janae Bauer at 402-988-3805.

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CELEBRATES 125TH

Led by the Rev. Adam Davenport, Paxton's United Methodist Church members celebrated their 125th anniversary with special services on Sunday.

The theme for the celebration was "Celebrating the Past, Embracing the Future."

Andrea Coleman, granddaughter of members Velma Bailey, Frieda and Harry Coleman, provided music.

Following the service, members shared a meal and fellowship. Special guests included former Paxton United Methodist pastor the Rev. Eldon and Nancy Davis and District Superintendent the Rev. Kay Alnor and the Rev. Jean Alnor of Ogallala.

The history of the Paxton United Methodist Church dates back to 1885 when a Sunday school formed and first met in the local livery stable. The group also met in the local drug store during that first year after organizing. Many denominations belonged and helped support the Sunday school.

In 1886, a two-room school was built on the corner of Fourth and Oak

streets.

The Baptist, Methodist and Campbellite churches were formally organized and used the school building to conduct services.

The current building was dedicated in March 1969. In just a 25-month period, members of the Paxton Methodist Church raised \$56,000 to pay for and furnish the new church.

In the first 125 years of service, the Paxton United Methodist Church has provided a witness to Christ's love in the community. The church has provided a place to worship to many Paxton families.

The church provides many learning experiences and fellowship through youth Sunday school, United Methodist's Women's Organization, adult Bible study classes, dinner theater and help with the community's ecumenical vacation Bible school, Easter sunrise services and youth Christmas caroling.

The church also organizes and houses the Paxton Community Food Pantry.



(Lori Holmstedt)

CELEBRATE ANNIVERSARY – The Paxton United Methodist Church celebrated its 125th anniversary with special services on Sunday. (From left, back) Former Paxton United Methodist pastor the Rev. Eldon Davis and his wife, Nancy Davis, the Rev. Adam Davenport, District Superintendent the Rev. Kay Alnor of Ogallala and retired Pastor Jean Alnor of Ogallala.



Grant United Methodists will celebrate 125 years as a congregation

On Sunday, Sept. 18, the church will celebrate their quasiquicentennial with worship, catered meal and remembrance.

By Jan Rahn
Managing Editor

A special event will be taking place at the Grant United Methodist Church on Sunday, Sept 18, when the congregation celebrates 125 years in ministry.

Following worship at 10 a.m., the celebration will continue with a catered dinner and a time for remembrance in the afternoon.

Returning to deliver the

morning's message is former pastor of the Grant UMC, Rev. Harold Backus.

Rev. Backus pastored the church for several years and is now in Grand Island.

Those who have been members of the United Methodist (Methodist or Evangelical United Brethren) Church for 50, 60 or more years will receive special recognition.

An ice cream social will be held in the afternoon and parishioners can visit with

former pastors Julian Miguel, Sharee Johnson and Sally Ruggia-Haden who are making plans to attend.

Memorabilia and photos will be on display. New souvenir ornaments depicting the cross and flame logo of the UMC will be available for purchase as a keepsake of the 125th celebration.

Watch for further details about the anniversary of the church in next week's issue.