



# 50



## Golden Anniversary

# GREETINGS

### From James Lokken for Borgny Lokken

Grace and Peace,

September 20, 2015

Thank you for the invitation to attend the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of Trinity, Brooks. Unfortunately no one in our family is able to attend. It was so very nice to receive the letter from Leona Rasmuson (as we knew her) and whom we, of course, remember very well.

The Lokken family arrived in Brooks in late July 1965 following a month of travels in Canada and the United States after leaving our previous home in Lethbridge (Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd). Pastor John Lokken had accepted a call to develop a new Home Mission congregation. There was no formal congregation and no church building, but there was a diverse group of local Lutherans with a desire to come together and there was a beautiful brand new parsonage for the Lokken family to move into after a first night in a local motel. The Lokken family consisted of John and Borgny, Naomi (16), Philip (14), Timothy (11), James (10) and Paul (5) plus a kitten found abandoned on the day of arrival at the Highway 36/Red Deer River campground. The treed church property on the edge of town with horses still grazing on it was a welcome move to a country-like setting for the family.

A group of dedicated and praying Christians, many originating in Scandia, Tilley, Duchess and Iddesleigh welcomed us to the work they had begun. Worship services began immediately, held on Sunday afternoons at the Christian Reformed Church and a formal congregation soon was organized. Sunday school was held Sunday mornings in the parsonage – every room was used – by about 40 children and teachers. There was wonderful fellowship as we studied God’s Word, prayed and sang together. Numerous meetings were held in the parsonage in those early days with many cups of coffee consumed.

Meanwhile, the new congregation decided to not build new but, instead, buy an old hangar building from the Claresholm military base. One day, here it came down the road by truck looking like it had flapping wings and was lowered onto the previously-built basement. Concern and even consternation from the town council and some residents over this old building had to be met and dispelled. Work to recreate this building into a church home began immediately. Dedicated volunteers with an impressive variety of building skills and even more enthusiasm first worked on the basement – it was the warmest and brightest in town. Bathrooms were built and soon we were meeting there for Sunday school and worship. Boxes were transformed by white sheets every Saturday night into pulpit and altar, chairs appeared and we praised God and worshipped Him with jubilant song and healing word.

*“Serve Christ our Lord by welcoming, equipping & sending disciples”*

As the work proceeded on the rest of the church, again almost completely volunteer, our pre-school son, Paul, could not be confined to the house but spent most days with the volunteers asking endless questions, the audience often held captive on ladders as they sided the church. Clarence Bengtson bestowed the name *Yakkerpuss* on him. The volunteers (there were so many who worked so hard I hesitate to name any, for I will certainly miss someone) worked day after day - one even skipped the rodeo, that major community event, to continue work on the church. Dr. Holfeld, the president of our Canadian church, came to visit and was impressed.

Finally the church building could be dedicated and again we rejoiced and gave thanks, singing and praying together, this time upstairs in our beautiful new church home with its lovely chancel furnishings built with congregational care and skill. The mayor attended to congratulate us and recalled the building with the flapping wings that had come to town only a short time before - the transformation was amazing. And so the congregation flourished and grew rapidly both physically and spiritually.

The Lokkens remained in Brooks for six years. It was a busy time with Sunday services and provision of the sacraments not only at Trinity but for extended periods at Scandia and Idlesleigh. Confirmation, youth work, music, home and hospital visits and all of the other facets of pastoral ministry in a growing congregation demanded much of John and our family but also were very rewarding. We did find time to enjoy our children's participation in school activities, hockey, music and varied summer employment in town and on farms. The experience and memories of that time, place and, especially, the people held a special place in John's heart throughout the rest of his life and continue to do so for me and the family.  
May God bless you all,

Borgny Lokken

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#### **A few quick memories (among many):**

- the great pleasure John took in forming a brass band together with several experienced instrumentalists – Clarence Bengtson, Eugene Torgunrud, Dean Hendrickson, Dan Ledene, Todd and Randy Olson, Philip Lokken and a variety of beginners over the next years.
- the opportunity and space to plant trees and garden extensively (although weeding was not always loved by the children) – John had grown up in a fertile, forested mountain valley on the West Coast. I had grown up on a Saskatchewan farm always with a large garden.
- the summer Sunday afternoons spent at Lake Newell with fellow congregational members; the winter Sunday afternoons gathering in various homes for visiting and games
- the \$25 1951 Austin John bought for the children to learn to drive weaving among the trees on the vacant church property. Somehow though, John did not always appreciate the skid marks left by “squealing out” on the concrete pad in front of the church for congregational members to see on Sunday morning.
- Philip dressing up as his father and going over to the church to meet Dr. Holfeld, president of the Canadian Lutheran Church, then losing his nerve and fleeing before he could be recognized – leaving a perplexed Dr. Holfeld wondering what had gotten into Pastor Lokken.

#### **Where we are now:**

John died in 1999 of complications from pulmonary fibrosis. I have lived since then in Saskatoon in LutherCare Communities residences. I am now 91. I do not walk anymore but am quite able to get around on my own in my wheelchair to all my activities. I attend church and Bible study regularly, visit with my two older sisters who live in the same complex, and still follow both local and world news.

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**Where we are now: continued**

Naomi is a retired school teacher who continues to teach music lessons. She is married to David Parker, retired economist, currently a city transit driver, in Edmonton. Their son Erik (32) and his wife Courtenay are both ordained Lutheran pastors in the Winnipeg area. They have a 16 month old son, Oscar, my first great grandchild. Naomi's daughter Ingrid (29) teaches music and French immersion, Beaumont AB.

Philip, a self-employed lawyer in Slave Lake AB, is married to Laura, a retired schoolteacher and currently a real estate appraiser.

Timothy also lives in Slave Lake and works with Philip's law office.

James, a research officer in agricultural economics, University of Saskatchewan, is married to JoAnn Nilson, a physiotherapist. They have 4 sons – Nils (28), master's degree in environmental anthropology, is a National Parks firefighter; Olaf (26) is studying pipe organ performance at the University of Saskatchewan (married to Catherine, a registered nurse); Torbjorn (23) is studying resource management, University of Saskatchewan; and Knut (18) just graduated from LCBI high school and is attending folk school in Norway.,

Paul, a Latin American History professor, Bryant University, Lincoln, Rhode Island is married to Paula van der Veen, a French and Italian language specialist. They have two daughters: Annelise (22) recently graduated from the University of British Columbia in English and works in the Vancouver mayor's office; Martine (19) is studying astrophysics at the University of Virginia.

**\*Please note that the full letter and accompanying pictures are posted on the bulletin board by the office.**

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**From Pastor Ken & Noreen Grambo**

Dear Friends,

Greetings to you as you gather to worship and celebrate 50 yrs of ministry in Brooks. I thank God for the 13 yrs I was privileged to serve your congregation. Through all the joys and sorrows, those years were a treasure for me as I shared the Word and Sacraments among you. We celebrated a lot of new life with wonderful joy and also grieved deeply together when death in several of its forms invaded our space. My memories of Trinity are warm, vivid and rich. We shared some of life's highest highs and lowest lows together and I thank God for His never failing presence and Grace through it all.

I think my favorite times were to look out the office window, and see people coming to church on Sunday morning and celebrating as we welcomed the newcomers. I'm so very grateful for being able to share the Gospel with you in word and through my music.

My wife Noreen and I regret not being able to be with you as I have other commitments here this weekend and was not able to change things after recently receiving your invitation.

May the peace of God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with you all.

Blessings to you all!

Pastor Ken & Noreen Grambo

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**From Rosemary Mennonite Church**

We at Rosemary Mennonite Church are happy to wish you all God's blessings as you celebrate your 50 years of service. You are in our bulletin and we will be praying for you on Sunday. May you have a wonderful celebration!

Liz Retzlaff  
RMC Administrator

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**From Duchess Mennonite Church**

On behalf of the Duchess Mennonite Church, we wish to extend congratulations to you and your congregation as you celebrate your 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. May you continue to experience the Lord's grace and truth in profound and life-changing ways as you seek him and his vision for you as a church body. Blessings on you!

Nathan