

COUNTY-WIDE CHAPLAINCY

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"There to Help
When it Hurts"

February 2009

Dear Friends of Chaplaincy,

February is a special month as our oldest son Brian was born on Feb. 14th. I was in Seminary in Portland at the time, working as a meat-cutter at Tradewell stores to support my little family. Well, this little baby has grown some in the last 39 years; and this past Sunday we had a reception in honor of his graduation from Police Academy. He is now



a sworn in officer with Longview Police Department. I had the honor of pinning on his badge; and at the official ceremony, was asked by the Seattle Police Chaplain to give the invocation. It is always an

honor to be asked to pray at police and fire occasions. I guess that these organizations still feel that they have need of God in the midst of the many traumas they face in their duties.

During my 48 hour shift this past week, I was requested to accompany Tony Lopez, (medical examiner) to inform a mom and dad that their 23 year old son had been killed in a one-vehicle accident-pick-up into a pole. I personally cannot fathom what it must be like to hear a knock on the door at 2 am, and get that kind of news. We stayed there, answering as many questions as we could, helping them think through what to do next.

As I left their home, a call came to assist at a double homicide where a sister and brother were both shot and killed the night before. When I arrived at the scene and got some information from the officer in charge, I waited for the arrival of family members. The area was cordoned off by police tape, and the detectives were hard at work trying to process the crime scene. The lady who was killed had just lost her husband when he died on the plane trip home from Hawaii in September. Her brother came to stay with her for a few nights as she had some fear

issues; and they were both killed on the driveway while either coming home from or going out to eat. When the family started to arrive, having just learned of the deaths on the media, they were understandably very upset. The wife of the deceased brother came up to me, tears streaming down her face, and said, "You were the chaplain that came to our house when my mom died 5 years ago." My long tenure as a chaplain does have some advantages as I had an instant rapport with her.

Sunday night, after a busy day at church and the reception in the afternoon, I was ready to get an early start on a good long night's sleep. But my friend Denton Harlan from Layne's Funeral Home called to ask me to go with him to bring back a man who had been depressed and had been missing for 4 days. I had seen the notice in the newspaper regarding his missing, and now he had been located way up in the hills on a logging road where he had hung himself. Our director of chaplaincy Sam LaPore and another chaplain, Dean, who is in training, went to the family home to inform them that the body of their loved one had been found.

UNSUBSCRIBE OFFER!

Once a year I like to give you an opportunity to "opt out" of this monthly ministry update. Throughout the year I add people I think may be interested in these reports; and if you are like me, sometimes I wish for an "unsubscribe" option. I am well aware that sometimes interests can change, and I sincerely do not want to burden you with yet another piece of mail that you may not want.

SO, here's the deal.

This one month, go down to the post office, buy a stamp, put it on the envelope and let me know if you wish to continue to receive this monthly contact. (or e-mail me). If I do not hear from you, I will no longer bug you with these sad letters!!

Joyfully serving together with you,
Chaplain Landis Epp



COUNTY-WIDE CHAPLAINCY INTRODUCING THE TEAM!

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Lyle Coblentz has served as a volunteer chaplain for the past almost 2 years. His life started in Oregon; and with a dad who was a logger, Lyle got to move around Oregon and Washington for his dad to find work. He attended college at Northwest Nazarene in Nampa, Idaho, where he managed to find his wife of 43 years. Lyle has a great sense of humor; and in speaking of finding a wife, he said that Bible College is like a shoe factory. "God takes a couple of heels, fixes their soles, and they come out in pairs!" They have 2 daughters and 4 grandchildren.

Lyle felt called to ministry from early on, but didn't particularly feel called to be a pastor. So he worked in a sawmill for some time, and then got a job working for Northwest Airlines in Alaska where he spent 9 years. His next place of employment was working for Nordstrom's in the vault, "Counting up money," he said. During these years he was always very involved as a layman in the churches he and Anna were involved in.

He went back to college in Nampa and finished his Master's degree in Pastoral Counseling. For the next 9 years he pastored in Alaska, then to Renton, Washington, for 13 years. He pastored in Alberta, Canada, for a little over 5 years, then came to Vancouver **Fourth Plain Church of the Nazarene** in 2005.

It was after a brutal murder of a mother and her son, who attended Lyle's church, that he heard of **County-Wide Chaplaincy** through our then director, Ell Loney. Ell recruited and trained Lyle, and he has served faithfully covering a 24 hour shift on Mondays. His past experience as a hospital and prison chaplain has been a real asset as he helps people with big needs.

Thank You, Lyle, and thanks to your church who see chaplaincy as a vital ministry to touch our community as we are "there to Help, when it Hurts!"