

# mmutes weekly from Ogden



Photo courtesy of RICHARD HARROLD

church, Mike Butler, makes 90-mile trek to serve Preston congregation

gation in central Utah whose church had been burned. The only expense was the \$450 charged by piano movers to bring it from there to Preston. Accompaniment for services is provided by Mike Bosen and Larry Spears, both Latter-day Saints.

"When you're so outnumbered, you look for a place to hold on to," Butler said. "Nearly everyone (in the congregation) has an LDS relative. I don't Mormon bash."

The church now serves a monthly Share A Meal, held the last Wednesday evening of the month. "We have very few church members involved," he said. "We don't want to bury

people with religion. It's not an ecumenical thing, nor a chance to preach, just a meal. We have food donated by the Idaho Food Bank and local residents, in addition to church members. There is no out-of-pocket expense." There will be one this evening (June 27) at the Lion's Shelter in Preston City Park.

Butler completed a two-year training program offered online by the Dubuque, Iowa, Theological Seminary. It consisted of eight classes, ranging from pastoral care and visiting to reformed theology. Traditionally, pastors have to complete three years of training following a bachelor's degree.

"People can't take that

much time out," he said. Butler is a Commissioned Lay Pastor, of which there are about 10 in the Utah Presbytery, which includes Preston. The program largely involves pastors who serve in rural parishes away from the Salt Lake City/Ogden, Utah area, or other parishes, as needed.

A female member of the congregation is currently completing CLP training. "She wants to do it once in a while, where needed," Butler said.

Butler met his wife in Southern California, and they have three children, all grown. In his spare time, he likes to travel with his family to Yellowstone, in particular.