



The Grapevine

A Monthly Newsletter For The Family And Friends
Of Faith Lutheran Church Of Sonoma Valley

—Volume 2, June 2009 Issue—

*Let the Second
Half Begin . . .*



Dear Family of Faith:

Time flies when you're having fun! Can you believe that the first half of another Christian year of worship and service is over?! The first half of the Christian year begins in December and concludes at the end of May. During these six months, we deliberately retrace the life of Jesus Christ and relive all of the principal experiences of His holy life lived for you and me. Consequently, we call this first half of the Christian year **THE FESTIVAL HALF**.

It seems like only yesterday that we joined with the Old Testament Prophets to relive the prophecies of the coming servant Savior shepherd Messiah during the weeks of **HOLY ADVENT**. It seems like only yesterday that we stood in the cold, drafty, smelly cattle cave outside of Bethlehem and welcomed the Lord who took on human flesh for you and me at **CHRISTMAS**. It seems like only yesterday that we watched Him go about His work of preaching, teaching, healing, comforting, and rescuing as He demonstrated His Lordship to us in the weeks of **EPIPHANY**. It seems like only yesterday that we journeyed with Jesus to Jerusalem and to the cross in the spring of the year, which became for us at Faith a springtime of the spirit known as **LENT**.

It seems like only yesterday that we joined the palm-waving crowd shouting Hosanna to the Son of David as we entered Jerusalem to begin that last and terrible week for you and me. We were with Him in the upper room as the Lord's Supper was begun. We stood with the weeping women beneath the cross on Good Friday in the climax of **THE GREAT AND HOLY WEEK**.

It seems like only yesterday that we stood with Mary Magdalene outside the empty tomb and the full impact of the resurrection made its way into our hearts and our minds as we shouted, "Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!" on Easter Sunday. And during the next six weeks of **EASTER** we discovered the growing impact of the resurrection on the lives of many people 2000 years ago and right here and now for you and me in Sonoma Valley. On the fortieth day of Easter, Jesus reclaimed His glory and promised the coming Holy Spirit as He was taken from the disciples' sight on the day of our Lord's **ASCENSION**.

Now we begin the second half of the Christian year together. **No longer reliving the high points Christ lived for you and me. Instead, during the next six months, the focus shifts to His teaching, His sermons, His parables, His guidance, His direction for you and me as we become little-Christos to our world today.** This second half is called the **NON-FESTIVAL** half of the year. Now it's our turn. We discover how to live our lives in response to Him. The work of worship is vital to our personal relationship to the Lord: that it stay healthy and nourished and growing. I commend to you the enriching experiences of worship in Word and Sacrament, Bible study, Christian witness, and service as the second half of the church year begins to unfold for us all.

Pastor Tom
G

Gerhard Dohse

We're all still recovering from the news of Gerhard's sudden and unexpected death a couple of weeks ago. It makes us realize and remember, "all things in God's time."

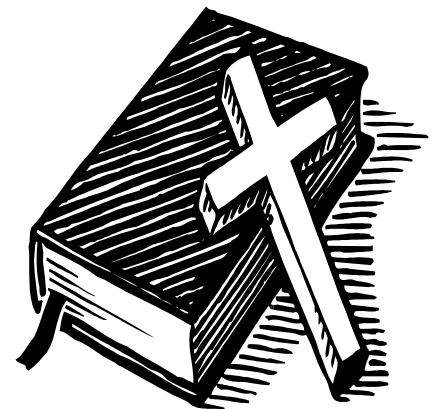
He and Anna have been members of Faith Lutheran for many years. Anna frequently volunteered to help with projects and Gerhard was always willing to help when asked. Then a year ago, Gerhard was asked to chair the Property Committee. This was a huge task following in the footsteps of Scott Bamford, but Gerhard accepted the nomination without hesitation. Scott accomplished several worthwhile projects, but with a facility the size of ours, there are always ongoing maintenance and improvement projects. We are so grateful that Gerhard was willing to share his construction skills and expertise with his church family. He successfully repaired the on-going leak above the covered walkway, added motion sensor lights in the patio, improved the lighting (with Al Martinson's help) in the sanctuary, had the parking lot paved before the rains deteriorated it further, cleared the property of tree hazards and was planning repairs to the steeple. Gerhard was quiet at council meetings, but when he spoke everyone listened. His sound, common sense advice and approach to church business were greatly appreciated and will be missed.

Can one person really make a difference? Yes, just look around our church grounds and buildings. You will see Gerhard's mark. We will never forget him.

On behalf of the congregation, I offer our sympathy to Anna and her family. May it comfort her to know how much we appreciated Gerhard.

In love and service,
Cheryl Casciani

THURSDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY. . . . NOW WHAT? Our Thursday evening study of Revelation has gone extremely well! We are grateful for the high level of interest and attendance throughout the series. It's almost over and the Thursday evening class will need to make some decisions. We will probably undertake a study of the Book of Jonah (which will only be two weeks long). Following that, choice will be (A) to continue throughout the Summer with a major new study on the Gospel of John or (B) to take a brief break during the summer months and start fresh in the Fall. Either way, we relish the opportunity to get together under the umbrella of God's Word and to grow in knowledge in faith and in fellowship.



FROM HARRY AKRE, OUR DISTRICT CONVENTION REPRESENTATIVE

Do I matter?? Is anyone listening to me?? Many of us here at Faith Lutheran are parents. As such, many of us have gone through the child rearing phases where our children hang on almost every word from our mouths when they're preschoolers - to the adolescent years when other voices weigh more heavily in their daily thoughts, attitudes and decisions. When our children reach adulthood, how little our influence can become. What about "The Church" -- ? What about "our church" here in Sonoma? Who's listening?

This was the main thrust of this year's triennial district convention, recently held May 15-17 in Fremont. Our culture in America in general, and in CA in particular, acts like the church doesn't matter. It acts like the church has no voice in determining personal attitudes, people's actions, the development of policies or law, and that it has no particular attraction to people to influence day to day life. We live in a "*post church*" world. If this is true, we are akin to the earliest of New Testament churches, like the ones St. Paul established on his missionary journeys. Just like those early Christians, the rest of their cities, and their society, didn't listen to them. The large masses of people didn't check in with them for advice on how to live. They were a small church in a "hostile society". Would you think that describes the church in CA? Does that describe the church in Sonoma County?? If it does, what are the implications for us?

Perhaps, if you agree with the preceding, it might mean that you and I are living in a huge mission field. Just like the earliest churches, we might be living in a time when most of the people around us are unsaved and need to be introduced to the message of Jesus, the Gospel. How will we do this? Who are the "targets"? Where are our energies and resources going?

The majority of the resolutions presented and passed at the convention related directly to mission work of one kind or another. The district wants to be viewed as a supportive partner for congregations, providing encouragement and resources to equip us in this mission work.

OUR WOMEN'S BIBLE FELLOWSHIP would like to express its appreciation to our Faith family for the generous support of our most recent project of providing "Welcome Baskets" for the Mosaica Housing Program in San Francisco for homeless families and seniors. Having checked the list of suggested items in your past Grapevine, members of Faith graciously provided so many of the requested items for homeless people starting out on their life as residents, as well as items for seniors in need of assistance. The project was a great success and we do appreciate your kindness!



COFFEE FELLOWSHIP, ANYONE? Everyone enjoys the time of fellowship following the Sunday service in Goehring Hall. We continue to invite individual families and/or groups within the church to "sponsor" a coffee fellowship on a particular Sunday. It can be as simple or elaborate as you choose. All kinds of approaches to our coffee fellowship are so appreciated. Be sure to sign up on the reservations poster in the Narthex, and if you have any questions, please call Sandy Thompson at 935-0958.



It has pleased Almighty God in His loving wisdom to call unto Himself the soul of our beloved **GERHARD DOHSE** who died peacefully on Monday, May 11, 2009 at the age of 73. We express our sincere condolences and our confidence in the resurrection promise of our Lord Jesus to his dear wife, Anna, and to his children Patricia, Michelle, Terry, and Joe.

A memorial service was celebrated here at Faith Lutheran Church on Friday, May 22nd. A private reception is being planned for early June.

His ashes will be publicly entered into Faith's Memorial Garden some time during the month of June following a Sunday morning service. The congregation will process to the Memorial Garden for a brief ceremony.

Rest eternal, grant to him, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon him for Jesus' sake.
Amen.

POVERTY IN OUR VALLEY?! It is known that lack of education is one of the greatest factors in poverty. Recognizing that fact and the fact that their school has many children who are at risk of being at a low level in academic achievement, officials at El Verano Elementary School have given us a resounding "Yes!" when asked if we might "adopt" their school. Our Mission Outreach Board has agreed that this is, indeed, an idea which fits our concept of mission outreach, and we now ask your support. What has been suggested is as follows:

- Reading with 1st / 2nd graders in the library after school, 2:30-3:10 p.m.
- Lunchtime chess or checkers club in the library or picnic table area
- Be a mentor for a single student (one hour commitment per week - half hour tutoring and half hour relationship building or games).
- Assist in labeling books in the library to help students self-select appropriate books at their reading level.
- Support teachers who want extra helpers to run a small group station.
- Volunteer reader or one-on-one tutor in the classroom.

This is just a start. If you see here something you would like to do, even for just one hour per week, please do volunteer. Perhaps there is something different that you would like to do. Let us know, and we'll work it out.

Yes, it's now nearly the end of the school year. What we ask at this time is that you consider whether you are interested in helping with this project. If so, what you might offer beginning now and/or in the Fall? Having this information will help us know how to proceed.

The staff at El Verano is excited at this prospect, and we hope that many of the members of this congregation will participate. If you have offerings, questions, or suggestions, please contact me.

In His service,
Sharon Forrest
938-5060/damawuss@hotmail.com

FAITH'S NEW CHOIR under the faithful leadership of Peggy Carroll, with Mark Rasmussen as accompanist, will continue its ministry right straight through mid-July. They will break for just a few weeks throughout the summer and then begin again after Labor Day. So, if you enjoy the developing ministry of music at FLC and would like to join us, even for the remaining weeks of the current season, **please come on board!** We rehearse Wednesday evenings in the choir area of the church at 6:30 p.m.

SAVE THE DATE—JULY 5, 2009 for a good time for all. On Sunday, July 5th, we are planning a BBQ lunch here at FLC following our 10:00 a.m. service to celebrate our freedom and independence. Please invite your family and friends to enjoy a bunch of good lunch foods, including hot dogs, salads, and all the amenities. We may even throw in a few games, etc. If you need a ride, please contact Sandy Thompson at 935-0958. For those who wish to make a salad or dessert, we will have a sign-up sheet on the Connections Board in the near future.

THE BOOK CLUB IS GOING STRONG Our next meeting will be on Saturday, June 30th at 10 a.m. We will be taking a summer break and will resume on the second Saturday in September. Over the summer we're reading JOHN ADAMS by David McCullough and will discuss it at our September meeting. Please feel free to join in the fun and vibrant discussions.

LENDING LIBRARY Please remember that it's located in the Family Life Center (across from the Sunday School office). We have a large supply of excellent books. Feel free to borrow one and return it after reading. There is a donation box on the wall if you are able to donate funds; a \$1.00 donation is suggested.

Each night before you go to bed complete the following statements:
"I am thankful for _____. Today I accomplished _____."