



# The Grapevine

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

Volume 2, November 2009  
Advent Issue

## THE FESTIVALS ARE COMING. . .

With the arrival of **ADVENT SUNDAY, November 29<sup>th</sup>**, a brand new Christian year of celebration and remembrance unfolds here at Faith Lutheran Church. **The entire first half of this new year of grace contains lots of wonderful festivals and celebrations.**

In order to get you thinking and anticipating these enriching worship events, we lay out for you the holiday schedule through the end of 2009. May God bless your worship, your thanksgiving, your confession and repentance, your life of forgiveness and growth, and your hope for a blessed future in God through Jesus Christ our Savior.

*Pastor Tom*  
G-



## **THANKSGIVING DAY** Thursday, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 a.m.

Turkey with all the trimmings and the annual football games are a wonderful part of American cultural Thanksgiving experience. We invite you to begin your Thanksgiving Day celebration in the house of the Lord with the heartwarming harvest hymns, Scriptures, proclamation of the Word, and Christian fellowship. Invite your friends, and especially your house guests!

## **WEDNESDAY ADVENT SERIES** Three Advent Wednesdays, 7:00 p.m.

This year, as planned, we add our third Advent Wednesday service, making our observance complete. The **Advent Wednesday liturgies** are intended to focus our spirit on preparation for "Christian Christmas." Dates and themes include:

**December 2<sup>nd</sup>** Our annual **Advent Healing Service** including anointing with oil for all.

**December 9<sup>th</sup>** **A Celebration of the Blessed Virgin Mary.** This Advent Wednesday service will highlight the Scripture's witness of Mary and place her within an appropriate worship context for Evangelical Lutheran people.

**December 16<sup>th</sup>** **A celebration of Joseph** St. Joseph, the forgotten man of the Scriptures, actually plays a significant role which is explored with reverence and devotion on this particular Wednesday worship experience.

(Remainder of 2009 worship schedule on following page)

**CHRISTMAS EVE Thursday, December 24<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 p.m.**

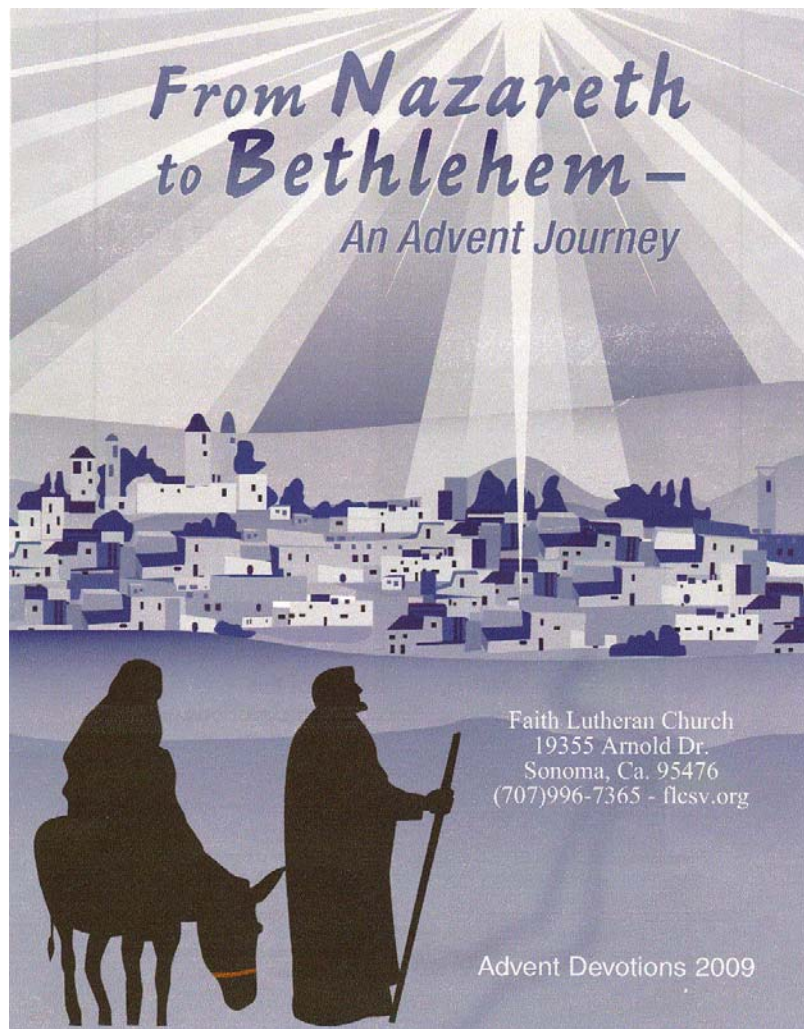
Please note the calendar word for Christmas always ends with a single “s.” When we refer to the actual services, we add an additional “s” so that the services of the Eve and the Day are spelled **Christmass**. Christmass is a worship word which when taken apart reveals the words “Christ” and “Mass,” that is, the annual celebration of Word and Sacrament observing the birth of our Savior.

A Christmass Family Candlelight Eucharist with music for instruments, choir, and God’s people.

**CHRISTMAS DAY Friday, December 25<sup>th</sup> 10:00 a.m.**

A Christmass festival of lessons, carols and Holy Communion will be celebrated.

**AN ADVENT DAILY DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET** is prepared for you courtesy of Lutheran Hour Ministries and downloaded locally for our use during the holy season of Advent. Take time, make time, each day to spend a few moments in quiet meditation, focusing your attention on the great events of faith that will unfold throughout the season of Advent and the twelve days of Christmas. Devotional booklets will be placed in your mail file with additional copies on hand in the Narthex.



## Election of Officers

What's the saying—"All good things must come to an end?" We, at Faith, have been blessed with many fine people capable of serving on Council. When elected, each enthusiastically accepts the commission to attend to the business of our church and to provide a variety of missions and ministries within our congregation and outreach to our community. Some council positions are more time-consuming than others, but all are equally important.

When elected, each person commits to serving for two years and is eligible to serve two terms, for a total of four years. Five positions are due for election in January. Three of the people holding those positions have agreed to serve another term. However, we will bid two an appreciative adieu and welcome new people to council. Ilse Eichler and Henry Hanson are working diligently to fill the two vacant positions and will soon offer nominations. Ilse and Henry would appreciate hearing from anyone interested in being considered for these positions.

Vice President - Harry Akre

Financial Secretary - Lucy Musick

Mission Outreach - Sharon Forrest

Social Ministry -

Worship -

How do we fully express our thanks to Sandra Thompson for the last four years of tireless Social Ministry activities? She took us to a new level with the holiday dinners, ladies' annual tea, game day, book club, just to mention a few. Every detail was lovingly attended to, especially the decorations. She taught us that Goehring Hall can be transformed into a lovely, festive arena. Thank you, Sandy, for your dedication and enthusiastic service.

The Worship Committee has been effectively led by Alfa Rachuy. Her attention to detail and extensive knowledge of all aspects of the worship service and needs has provided a meaningful worship experience each Sunday. The Worship Committee draws from more parishioners than any other committee to fulfill all the needs: ushers, communion assistants, Altar set up, music, lectors, and Acolytes. Even during a serious illness, Alfa made sure things ran smoothly. Thank you, Alfa, for sharing your expertise and knowledge.

I appreciate the council members who are willing to continue for another term. We have a great group of people dedicated to serving the congregation. Please keep Ilse and Henry in your prayers as they seek to find people to fill the Social Ministry and Worship positions.

In love and service,  
Cheryl Casciani

---

**CHRISTMAS COOKIE EXCHANGE** The Women's Bible Fellowship would like to invite all women to attend their annual cookie exchange on Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, at 1:00 p.m. in Goehring Hall. For more information about this joyous Christmas event, flyers will soon be available in the Narthex.

## **SOCIAL MINISTRY UPDATES:**

**BOOK CLUB** We have approximately 16 active participants in our book club which meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month in the Family Life Center in Goehring Hall at 10:00 a.m. This group has gathered to discuss readings for the past four years! The meeting is open to the public and we read lots of current offerings.

I have placed a copy of everything we have read to date, plus future readings, in your member folders. We invite you all to join us (including men!)—it is not just a women’s book club. If enough men are interested, we could start a separate Men’s Book Club—just let me know.

**LENDING LIBRARY** We have an exceptionally good lending library located opposite the Sunday School office in the Family Life Center in Goehring Hall. We would appreciate a \$1.00 donation for loaned books. However, if you cannot make a donation, please feel free to borrow and return books. The books are property of Faith Lutheran Church, so please remember to return them. Thank you.

## **UPCOMING**

- 📅 On **Sunday, November 1<sup>st</sup>**, we will be co-hosting a **light luncheon/coffee fellowship** with **Julius & Mercedes Vegvary**, followed by **Pastor Tom’s “Afternoon in Thailand”** presentation.
- 📅 **Christmas Party** will be on **December 6<sup>th</sup>** following the service. Plans are in progress, but I’d like this to be the biggest party of all since it will be my last function as Social Ministry Chairperson. The Choir will provide entertainment, including a sing-along. The rest of the festivities will remain a surprise. Let’s dress up and wear our Christmas clothes, and most importantly, bring the children!
- 📅 **Cookbook sales** will continue weekly during coffee fellowship until **December 20<sup>th</sup>**. Remember, these books make great gifts!

**Now I have a bit of a complaint**—only 17 people signed up to bring something for the Reformation Dinner. I know food appears, but it would be nice to know what we can plan on, as these parties tend to be large. If there is a void, our committee can fill in, but we need to know in advance who is bringing something and what they are bringing. So, again, I’ll mention the importance of sign-up sheets, not just for Social Ministry functions, but whenever a sign-up sheet is posted for any event. I especially want to bring this need to everyone’s attention since there will be a new Social Ministry chairperson taking over the position in January.

God Bless Each and Everyone!  
Sandra Thompson, Social Ministry Chair

## **PLEASE SAVE**

**Clean plastic bags** (large and small) are needed for packing Braille books and packing FISH produce. Please put the bags in or near the FISH collection bin.

**Pop Tabs** are needed for the Ronald McDonald House. Drop them in the “House Box” in the Narthex.

Thanks for your help!  
Mary Piller



**ADOPT-A-STUDENT** As you may recall, our 2009 budget allocated a portion of funds to assist a seminarian student.

We have been blessed with first year seminarian Joseph John Barlau. We recently received this photo of Joseph along with a warm letter of introduction. The letter is posted on the Connections Board in Goehring Hall for all to read.

May we keep Joseph and other seminary students in our prayers. Feel free to contact him with good wishes at 801 N. Seminary Place, #11, St. Louis, MO 63105.

**NEW PASTOR’S CLASS SERIES SET FOR THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR** Due to the variety of special evening experiences here at Faith in November and December, we are planning the next Pastor’s Class Series to begin in **early January 2010**. This eight week series is intended to prepare folks for membership within Faith’s household and also as a fine “refresher” for on-going members as we all seek to continue to grow in faith and knowledge. Anticipate the unfolding of this special series and please consider taking part in it yourself.

**CHRISTMAS AT THE MISSION, DECEMBER 12<sup>th</sup>, 5:00, 6:00 and 7:00 P.M.**

This year, three services will be held for the community at the Mission San Francisco de Solano, off of Sonoma Plaza. Rev. Nancy Taylor of the Congregational Church will be leading the 5:00 service, **Pastor Tom will be leading the 6:00 service**, and Rev. Pam Cummings of the Methodist Church will be leading the 7:00 service. In preparation for “our service leadership,” we’ll need to recruit several readers from the congregation to participate in this delightful annual experience of readings and carol singing. Interested? If so, contact Pastor Tom.

**THRIVENT FINANCIAL FOR LUTHERANS UPDATE**

Thrivent allocated \$1020.00 to Faith Lutheran’s chapter in 2009. \$200 was used for supplies and paint to refurbish the Sunday School room. \$500 was added to the Tea earnings to purchase new flooring in the parish hall and the balance of \$320 will help the Youth Group fund another Mission Trip. Thrivent also supplies complimentary Baptismal medallions and Confirmation crosses to our congregation.

Please let us know if you have church or community project ideas for next year.

Thrivent Congregational Coordinators,  
Lynn Banfield, Valerie Kemp, Mary Piller

**HAVE YOU NOTICED. . . .** The bulletin boards in the Narthex have a fresh, new look, thanks to a secretive elf, whose identity will remain anonymous!

**LIFE**  
Life is a song—sing it.  
Life is a game—play it.  
Life is a challenge—meet it.  
Life is a dream—realize it.  
Life is a sacrifice—offer it.  
Life is love—enjoy it.

**WE ARE HAPPY TO INCLUDE** the following letter received on October 5<sup>th</sup>:

Dear Faith Lutheran Family...Enclosed is a check for Emily Garbarino to attend the summer mission trip with the Youth Group. Faith Lutheran has been very generous to the Youth Group and I just wanted to extend our heart-felt appreciation for the love and generosity given our kids. Emily has grown in faith and service due to her participation in the Youth Group. Thank you to John Casciani for his leadership and unfailing faith in these kids. John is a treasure and we are fortunate to have such a loving and kind man work with the youth.

Many Thanks,  
Terry Garbarino

**WE'RE LETTING OUR GUARD DOWN!!!** Scott Bamford, while working around the church two weeks ago, noticed the following: lights were left on in the mobile storage room; lights were left on in the Family Life Center restroom; the rear door was ajar and unlocked in the Family Life Center; and the rear door to the kitchen was unlocked. If you use the facilities or lead a group that is using the facilities, please take responsibility for seeing to it that the lights you turn on are turned off, and that the doors that you open are closed and locked. **In light of our recent experience**, we all need to do a better job of caring for the physical aspects of God's household.

**HAVE YOU CHECKED OUT OUR WEB SITE LATELY?** We're excited about our site, [flcsv.org](http://flcsv.org). Not only is it informative, it is reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Our most recent additions are photos and information on the new organ and dedication thereof (on the home Page, click on "Organ Dedication"), as well as a compilation of photos taken at the Reformation Dinner (click on Photo Gallery and then on "Reformation Sunday.") Check it out today—check it out every day!

**COLORFUL SAYINGS OF COLORFUL LUTHER**—A sample of the reformer's wit and wisdom.

**On humility:** God creates out of nothing. Therefore, until a man is nothing, God can make nothing out of him. If you perhaps look for praise and would sulk or quit what you are doing if you did not get it—if you are of that stripe, dear friend—then take yourself by the ears, and if you do this in the right way, you will find a beautiful pair of big, long, shaggy donkey ears.

**On the Bible:** The Bible is alive, it speaks to me; it has feet, it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold of me. I'd like all my books to be destroyed so that only the sacred writings in the Bible would be diligently read.

**On marriage and family:** Think of all the squabbles Adam and Eve must have had in the course of their nine hundred years. Eve would say, "You ate the apple," and Adam would retort, "You gave it to me."

People who do not like children are swine, dunces, and blockheads, not worthy to be called men and women, because they despise the blessing of God, the Creator and Author of marriage.

**On faith:** Faith is the "yes" of the heart, a conviction on which one stakes one's life. The truth is mightier than eloquence, the Spirit greater than genius, faith more than education. Our faith is an astounding thing—astounding that I should believe him to be the Son of God who is suspended on the cross, whom I have never seen, with whom I have never become acquainted.