



The Grapevine

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

—Volume 1, September Issue—

FROM PASTOR TOM

I'm sure you'll join me in thanking God for the energy, the joy, and the focus emerging here in our parish family. As we become more joyfully secure in our faith, I've noticed that we begin reaching out and inviting others into our church. **It's happening. I can see it!** So, if we want our congregation to grow...the first step to take is to become involved in a regular Bible study experience. Then we all continue to grow in our faith, in our knowledge, in our spirit of devotion, and in our determination to reach out and invite others into our church family.

Join us on **Sunday mornings at 8:30AM in Goehring Hall** as we currently explore **life issues** that affect us all. We are exploring medical technology and the Word of God. Medical technology is a blessing from God when the quality of life is improved and extended...when it offers us freedom from needless suffering. We are reviewing what the Bible has to say about healing...about quality of life...about the place of suffering...and what true freedom is all about.

Pastor John offers a Bible study on **Tuesday afternoons at 1:00PM in the Conference Room**. This group reads through the Scriptures in one year and will resume their study of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, beginning at chapter 12, on September 2nd.

A large, enthusiastic group meets with me on **Thursday evenings at 6:30PM in Goehring Hall** as we continue our exciting study of the book of all beginnings...The Book of Genesis. The stories are lively, the meanings profound, and the applications always very personal.

The women of our congregation (of all ages and life situations) will soon be gathering for our first major Women's Retreat. As of this moment 52 women have signed up, and we are still in the process of recruiting! What will emerge from this Retreat will be **three new Bible studies for the women at Faith**: a morning study, an afternoon study, and an evening study spread throughout the month. God's women have unique challenges and opportunities in life, and these Bible study experiences will provide Biblical insight and encouragement.

So you can see, the opportunities for growth are expanding here in our parish. Remember this fact of life . . . **the churches that grow** in numbers, in grace, in joy, in peaceful focus, **are those churches where most people are involved in regular Bible study**. I'm not making this up. It's a fact of life and a fact of faith. Are you growing? Will you be able to help Faith Lutheran Church grow?

Pastor Tom
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FROM OUR CONGREGATIONAL PRESIDENT

SUGGESTION BOX...Have you noticed the mailbox hanging on the wall outside the church office? It's not used for the daily mail delivery. The postal carrier delivers the church's mail in the mailbox located at the parking lot exit on Arnold Drive. So, why would a mailbox hang near the office? When the office was remodeled, Dick McComb thoughtfully hung the box there to encourage parishioners to leave suggestions and comments. What a great idea! Unfortunately, not many suggestions have been deposited in the box.

Some of our committee chairpersons have asked me to remind everyone that they want input from parishioners. These leaders serve and represent every member of our congregation, and they encourage and appreciate your suggestions. It only takes a moment to jot your comment on a piece of paper and drop it in the box any day of the week, including Sundays. Valerie or Pastor will check the box regularly and get the notes to the appropriate people.

You may remain anonymous, or include your name and phone number for further feedback. Gerhard would appreciate receiving suggestions for the buildings and grounds, or if a task needs attention. Janice would love to receive information and articles for The Grapevine. And, all committee chairpersons would appreciate receiving a note from anyone expressing an interest in volunteering for a particular project or to serve on a committee.

Who will be the first to deposit a note?

Cheryl Casciani

RETREAT FOR ALL WOMEN OF FAITH—YOUNG MOTHERS...YOUNG CAREER WOMEN... MID-LIFERS...GRANDMOTHERS, AND SENIOR LADIES...You are **ALL** invited to attend a special Women's Retreat to be held on Saturday, September 6th, from 9:00AM – 2:00PM. The focus of this retreat will be "You And Me, Lord" which celebrates the opportunity women have to serve God. The day's festivities include worship and prayer, special Bible study, and individual quiet time. Please bring a bag lunch; beverages and dessert will be provided. For more information, please call Judy Hill at 935-7441 or Shirley Engelman at 933-8069.

WHAT CAN I DO? There are many ways in which God calls to us to answer our question, "What next?" Indeed, it's a question I have been asking for quite some time. Last autumn, I was given a way to my answer, and not yet the answer itself: I learned of JustFAITH.

Born out of a Louisville, KY, Roman Catholic Church, the JustFAITH small-group study program is now also offered as an ecumenical one which joins with Bread for the World in leading people through major parts of 12-14 books on problems of poverty in this country and around the world over a period of 30 weeks. It seeks to open our eyes to problems of injustice. It encourages each of us to find our own way of helping in problems of social, political, and economic justice that we, in faith, might help others of God's children.

I invite each of you to consider joining such a small group: 8-10 people. Possibly we could start a group in September. All Christian churches in the Valley are being invited to join. This is an exciting prospect to those of us nearing the end of our own study. Do call if you have questions or want more details.

In love,
Sharon Forrest
938-5060

SHARE YOUR RECIPES . . . Our goal is to compile as many recipes as possible and publish them in our very own Faith Lutheran Church Cookbook, to be available at the 2009 Tea. We would like all types of recipes from as many members and friends of Faith as possible—that includes men, women, teens, and kids!

What's **your** specialty? Be it Appetizers, Soups, Salads, Vegetables, Side Dishes, Main Dishes, Breads & Rolls, Desserts, Cookies & Candies, or "This and That," we want to include as many recipes as possible. Start thinking about 3 or 4 of your favorites to add to this memorable collection. Your help in contributing recipes will ensure that our cookbook will be a success.

We're very excited about this endeavor and hope you will be as well.

Tea Committee:

Sandra Thompson, Cheryl Casciani,
Lucy Musick, Janice Meneken

NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS FOR FAITH As of September 1st, we will begin using our new e-mail address FAITHLUTHERANSV@ATT.NET as our main address. Please update your records. The vom.com address will remain active through the month of October to ensure that everyone is aware of this change.

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP We have a very successful fellowship after church each Sunday. Thank you to all who have volunteered to host. If you haven't signed up to host in the past, or feel it's too much for you to do by yourself, call a friend or two and do it together. Any and all volunteers are welcome!

In the past few years, attendance has doubled, and sometimes tripled. Social Ministry has been providing everything one needs to set up, i.e. coffee, tea, cream, napkins, plates, etc. However, due to the rise in prices, the Committee's budget no longer allows us to provide all of these items. As of October 1, 2008, the person/persons who host coffee hour will need to furnish their own paper products. Social Ministry will continue to supply the coffee, tea, cream, etc. I hope everyone understands that with all the other activities we sponsor, it is necessary for the Committee to monitor expenses.

Thank you one and all for this function. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me.

OKTOBERFEST We are going to celebrate Reformation this year with an Oktoberfest to be held on Saturday, October 25th 2008, at 12:00 noon. There will be plenty of German food—beer—entertainment—pumpkins for the kids—and loads of fun! Please come in your German attire or Halloween costumes!

BOOK CLUB The book club will be meeting on Sept. 13th at 10:00AM in the Conference Room. Please join us to discuss our summer reading: The Pillars Of The Earth.

LENDING LIBRARY The lending library is up and running. Great books are available to read – It is open during coffee hour each Sunday.

God Bless,
Sandy Thompson

THE OLD RUGGED CROSS The chancel cross that used to be in the Sanctuary has been completely refinished and reinstalled in Goehring Hall. Scott Bamford has taken on this project and brought it to beautiful conclusion. The cross was in terrible shape and once it was stripped down we discovered that it was actually made of California redwood. (Did you know that?) Now, it occupies a place of honor in our facilities (as well it should) and we are glad for Scott's careful attention to this delightful addition.

LOOKING AHEAD TO OCTOBER Two special activities await us at Faith in the month of October: on two Sundays (separated by two weeks), we will read, address, and hopefully **pass our brand new Constitution and Bylaws**. (Times will be announced very soon.) Also in October, a **Saturday retreat is being planned** for the Church Council, the Board of Elders, members of all boards and committees and anyone else in the congregation who is interested in attending...for the purpose of exploring (1) What is currently working at Faith, and why? (2) What is currently not working at Faith, and why? (3) What concrete steps can be taken to further our growth numerically and spiritually as a congregation? The retreat should prove to be a valuable experience and we alert you to its arrival...the date to be announced shortly.

THIS IS PRICELESS!! After being interviewed by the school administration, the teaching prospect said, "Let me see if I've got this right: You want me to go into that room with all those kids, correct their disruptive behavior, observe them for signs of abuse, monitor their dress habits, censor their T-shirt messages, and instill in them a love for learning. You want me to check their backpacks for weapons, wage war on drugs and sexually transmitted diseases, and raise their sense of self esteem and personal pride. You want me to teach them patriotism and good citizenship, sportsmanship and fair play, and how to register to vote, balance a checkbook, and apply for a job. You want me to check their heads for lice, recognize signs of antisocial behavior, and make sure that they all pass the state exams. You want me to provide them with an equal education regardless of their handicaps, and communicate regularly with their parents by letter, telephone, newsletter, and a report card. You want me to do all this with a piece of chalk, a blackboard, a bulletin board, a few books, a big smile, and a starting salary that qualifies me for food stamps. You want me to do all this and then you tell me. . . **'I CAN'T PRAY'?**"

NINETY YEARS VERY YOUNG A special birthday luncheon and fellowship to celebrate the 90th birthday of Warren Bamford will happen here at Faith on Sunday, September 21st. The luncheon is scheduled in Goehring Hall from 12:00 until 2:00PM. Please RSVP to Scott Bamford at 935-1256 by Sunday, September 14th. No gifts, please. A special prayer and blessing will be included in the Sunday morning liturgy on that date as well. Our joy-filled congratulations to Warren!

SANCTUARY RENOVATIONS JUST ABOUT COMPLETE Our planned sanctuary renovations are almost complete. A new bronze adjustable flower stand has been added beneath the new chancel cross made possible by the remainder of the combined memorial funds. In addition to the new chancel cross, Ty Krauss is fabricating two free-standing candle stands of matching red oak which will soon be in place. They are a gift to Faith by Pastor Tom in loving memory of his father, Thomas J. Windsor (✕ 1975), and his mother, Esther Gladow Windsor (✕ 2003). Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them for Jesus' sake.

