

## *From the* **PASTOR**—

Dear Fellow Members:

Keep on reading if you are a member of Faith Lutheran Church....

This is my last summer as your Pastor! The next few months will quickly pass. Come October 1<sup>st</sup> I need to separate myself from your presence so that you can look ahead with clear eyes and visualize what you will look for in your new Pastor. I won't have the pleasure of greeting you at the door, worshiping at Faith, or participating in your special occasions. Maybe this isn't important to you, but it is to me. Each of you has a special place in my heart and life. I've been your Pastor for 29 plus years; many of you were here when I arrived in April 1977. Many of you have joined during my pastorate. And many of you claim to be a member of Faith but never attend Services or support Faith's programs. The next year is a time of transformation, not only for you but also for Carolyn and me.

At the Ordination Service (Synod 6/03) Bishop Margaret Payne talked about a family of beavers who set to work damming up a stream and creating a pond. Their work transformed that field into wetlands, creating a totally different environment than was there before. "Last week I sat by that pond and thought about rivers of living water and realized the ways in which the church is a beaver pond—a place where living water puddles in a big way and transforms the landscape at the same time that it continues to flow and cleanse." Beavers create a new environment. Trees die. But we know that it is not possible to grow new life unless there is loss and death. "But if we only care about the trees...we will not have the courage for God's transformation and new life, and there is no doubt that the work of beavers and the Holy Spirit is always transformation. When our church is a life-giving pond and not a stagnant pool, when the water of the Spirit pulses through it—that will mean some death, but the Spirit hearts always creates a new, life-giving environment and it will bring a diversity that has never existed before."

Yes, the landscape of Faith will be transformed. You'll have an interim Pastor, someone specially trained to help you through the process of finding a new Pastor. Your church has a tremendous need for all of you—the old timers, the new comers, and those not yet "hooked up." All of you need to attend church, read the Voice of Faith, support Faith's programs; it's the only way to stay in the loop. While you're at it give your full support to the Transition Committee as they look to you for your vision of what Faith needs in the person of a Pastor. During the interim phase work like beavers. Have courage for God's transformation and new life at Faith.

Faithfully yours,

Paul E. Henry, Pastor

ALL ARTICLES FOR THE OCTOBER VOICE OF FAITH NEED TO BE IN THE  
OFFICE BY SEPTEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup>



Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Ed Larson Karen Lamontagne Marilyn Haas Adell Kenyon  
June Johnson Cathy Howell Tess Cummings Michael Kay  
Norma Sandberg Marlene Nixon Carrie Heuser-Spruill  
Penny Hodgkin Linda Hartl



#### SEPTEMBER

02 Carol Johnson  
04 Kurt Christensen  
06 Kevin Schiemer  
13 Allen Ryea  
17 Maggie McKenzie  
21 Eric Carlson  
22 Kimberly Long  
24 Hilda Schiemer  
Diana McVicker  
27 Cathy Kay  
28 Leslie Ann Furbush

## Faith Council Structure:

### COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Kent Tedford

### DIVISION I VICE PRESIDENT

Hans DePold

### DIVISION II VICE PRESIDENT

Annette Bolt

### COUNCIL SECRETARY

Barbara Lewis

### DIVISION I COMMITTEES

#### **Worship and Music:**

Merlin Christianson

#### **Christian Education:**

Denise Turner

Ursula Delemos

#### **Youth:**

#### **Evangelism:**

Joyce Lamontagne

#### **Social Ministry:**

Lynn Tobin

**Youth Deacons** Eric Bolt - Alaina Tobin

### DIVISION II COMMITTEES

#### **Stewardship:**

Joe Carlson

#### **Finance:**

Jim Bevins

#### **Property:**

Alex Madda

#### **Publicity:**

Caryn Furbush

## Faith Lutheran Church Upcoming Events

- 9/8-9/10 - Youth Gathering @ Hammonaset
- 9/24 - Pastor's Retirement & Reception
- 10/24 - German Organ Concert @ Faith @ 7:30
- 12/3 - Merrimack Bell Choir concert @ Faith @ 4:30
- 12/10 - St. Lucia Festival

## SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL

Sunday Church School will begin on September 10<sup>th</sup> at 9:15.

Is there a friend your child would like to invite to attend? This is the perfect time to reach out to our friends and neighbors!!!

## **An update from the Council President – My 1<sup>st</sup> 6 months in the Captain's Chair**

As we approach the fall and the retirement of Pastor Henry, I thought it might be helpful to provide an update on what your council has been focused on, some insight into what's coming over the next 6 months and some thoughts on how you'll need to be involved.

Our primary focus has been on planning. We've spent significant time during March, April & May working with the new Mutual Ministry Committee to identify the most important issues facing our congregation and outlining a course of action to address them. Here are the 4 objectives we'll be focusing on over the next 18 months:

***Spiritual Growth*** - Encourage and Strengthen the Spiritual Growth of all members of Faith Lutheran Church in all aspects of the Church's Life, with a special emphasis on Children, Youth and Young Adults.

***Pastoral / Church Transition*** - Guide Faith Lutheran Church through a successful transition following Pastor Henry's retirement in Sept., 2006, to a new permanent pastor by the end of 2007.

***Member Growth*** - Increase the active membership of Faith Lutheran Church by 20 family units by 12/31/2007 and establish programs that enable continued growth of at least 10 family units / year going forward.

***Improve Communication*** - Improve the information sharing within the family of Faith Lutheran Church so that all its members are aware of and have the opportunity for input into important discussions and decisions impacting Faith's operation and future.

In addition to these 4 overall objectives, each of our church committees has developed their own plan. These individual plans identify the actions that they will take to support and help achieve these objectives. It hasn't been easy, but your leaders have put in the time, effort and thought required to complete this and chart the course.

Having these coordinated plans also provides us as a congregation, the opportunity to see how we can become the Faith Family we want to be, the motivation to get involved and excited, and the bench marks to measure our progress.

### ***So how are we doing and what's coming.***

With respect to expanding our spiritual growth opportunities, we're planning multiple adult education and bible study opportunities in addition to integrating spiritual education into our Youth Ministry program.

With respect to managing our Pastoral Transition, we've made the preparations for Pastor's retirement celebration, we've identified a full time interim Pastor to work with us and help guide us during the transition period (an official announcement and introduction will be coming soon) and the Mutual Ministry committee has identified the things that need to be addressed during the transition process and a plan to accomplish them.

With respect to expanding our membership, we've identified the levels we need to reach to sustain our ministry, but haven't begun to realize the actual gains that need to occur. This is an objective that we all need to actively support. Although we have an Evangelism Committee Chairperson, everyone in the congregation is a member of the Evangelism

committee and needs to be active in it. If Faith Lutheran is the right place for you, it's also a good place for someone you know to share in the word of the Lord.

Finally, with respect to improving our communication, we've begun redesigning our website so it can be both an internal and external focal point for what is happening at Faith, the Mutual Ministry Committee is scheduling "Cottage Meetings" for all our members to attend and provide their thoughts on what the future Faith should be and what characteristics we are looking for in our future Pastor, we're building a "Transition Mural" to display in the entryway so people can have a quick "visual" on where we're at and what's coming next, we've asked each of our Committees to actively use the Voice of Faith to share what their working on, and we're working to build an email directory for our church members so everyone can stay up to speed with unfolding events.

As you can see, much is happening and over the next 6 months there will be many opportunities for you to be involved in ensuring Faith Lutheran continues to thrive and grow. In addition to some of the things I've mentioned above, we'll be re-activating the Stain Glass Window Committee as we design and build windows for our new entry way and the new building for our friends in Christ up the street – a great opportunity for those that haven't had the opportunity in the past to participate to get involved! We've also got a special organ concert planned to celebrate the organ's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in October and a return of the Merrimack Bell Choir for a special Christmas concert in December.

I realize the task before us is large, no one person or group has all the answers. Our success will be determined by how many of our members get actively involved. Together we can chart the course and provide the horsepower to get there. Faced with change of this magnitude, we can fall back to our comfort zones and just let things happen or we can embrace it as an opportunity to try new approaches and expand our horizons. I'm looking forward to embracing this opportunity and expanding on the foundation of our 1<sup>st</sup> 50 years and I hope you are too.

In Christ,

Kent Tedford  
Council President

**HYMNAL ORDER FORMS**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Hymnals \_\_\_\_\_

Dedication: \_\_\_\_\_

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Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

The cost of each Hymnal is \$20.00 Please make a notation on your check that it is for Hymnals. These can be mailed in, given to Pastor Henry, or left on Kathy's desk. Special envelopes are in the narthex.

## Joint Lutheran–Episcopal Bible Study: Moses

The fall Adult Bible study series will begin **Friday, October 6<sup>th</sup>** at **Faith Lutheran** and will conclude **November 17**. The study will focus on how **Moses** is depicted throughout the Old Testament. Each session is from **7:00 – 9:15 PM**

This will be **10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** of Faith's participation with the four Episcopal churches comprising the Greater Hartford Ministry. All are welcome and you don't have to be a Biblical scholar – just someone eager to know more about God's Word. The series are free of charge and refreshments will be served at each session.

## Mutual Ministry

The Mutual Ministry Committee has been meeting regularly and keeping our congregational family close to our hearts. When the committee formed we knew there would be a lot of work to do and some of the tasks would bring about open and honest discussions. That is what should happen, because change is challenging and the unknown is frightening. As a committee we have put our faith in the Lord, and pray that His guidance will bring us along the right path.

We are thankful to Pastor Asta, who has led us with a clear vision of where our journey will take us and how we will travel. The stops along the way will stir a variety of emotions that we need to acknowledge and understand in order for our trip to continue. One such stop occurred at the end of June when the committee met with Pastor Asta and the Synod's choice for our interim pastor.

Meeting **Pastor Henry Morris** was both apprehensive and exciting. We wanted to know who would guide us the next 12 – 18 months, but we also kept our faith that the Synod would know where we are as a congregation and how we need to grow and change. We spent over two hours that evening talking to Pastor Morris, getting to know each other. His mission is to lead congregations through the Call Process while growing in faith. As we went around the group discussing Pastor Morris' background and experiences we discovered that they echoed our very own goals and objectives. We left that evening realizing that we are truly on the same path.

While Pastor Morris has been leading a congregation that is at the end of their journey enabling him to come to Faith, his background spans 22 years. He comes to us with a diverse background; beginning as a baptized Catholic, to receiving a BA in Music, to being ordained in 1984 as a Lutheran Pastor. The details intertwine with us in so many ways. One in particular is that he has known Pastor Henry since 1980!

In September Pastor Morris will be visiting our congregation and having a chance to see who we are prior to Pastor Henry's retirement. It is also an opportunity for our congregation to be introduced to him. This is a glimpse of the coming months, it is a time to ease anxiety and be reassured that the Lord is watching over us.

God Bless,

Janina Johnkoski  
Mutual Ministry Chairperson

## Namaste! Welcome to Our Cottage Meetings Coming in October

But before I mention the cottage meetings I need to correct a sizable error I made in the last article I wrote for the VOF. I said something like "Faith is a magnet church attracting people from as far west as Farmington." However it turns out that Keethi Stephen flies in from San Diego, California. That distance indicates a very faithful member and it is so extraordinary that it certainly deserves a mention here! What a testimony he is to the ministry of Pastor Paul Henry.

In this VOF we need to talk about our upcoming Cottage Meetings. There are at least three reasons for having Cottage meetings next month in October.

1) First, we haven't had any Cottage Meetings for over three years, when we wanted to make the plans for our beautifully completed sanctuary improvements and for the entrance improvements that Jay Stolzenthaler has faithfully shepherded through all the design and permit phases. Pastor Henry thought it was a great way to inform the congregation and it was just one of the many ways he empowered individual members of Faith to lead us forward with great challenges. Many of us didn't think it was possible with our finances, but we did it! Thank you pastor, thank you Russ, and thank you Jay.

2) After October we have our stewardship campaign and two holiday seasons where it will be difficult to schedule cottage meetings. We really need to know some of God's plan for us before the annual church meeting in February. October is the best time to start.

3) We can't have any long-range church plan until we have your prayerful input. We need to ask you some important questions. We need you to prayerfully tell us what you think are the important things Faith Lutheran Church should be doing, how we measure up in the important things, and what opportunities we have for improvement. Alex Madda emphasizes that we must follow God's plan, not plan A or plan B. Alex has a story he can tell you about what happened at a Baptist church in India that followed a different plan. Alex emphasizes that God's plan requires a lot of prayer and a lot of faith.

So how will we be able to have cottage meetings in October? We already asked for volunteers and have started a list of people who can be hosts or facilitators. We will keep the list in the narthex as more people decide that they are ready to participate. Just sign up and check off what you would like to do. The remainder of the congregation will become the guests at the cottage meetings. Hosts will invite the guests, and the facilitators will help lead the discussions and will submit the record of the results.

There will be a meeting of the hosts and facilitators before the cottage meetings start. There they will prayerfully review our objectives for the cottage meetings and guest surveys, and the kinds of discussions and prayer meetings we need to have along the way.

Since he travels so far, I asked Keethi what it is that is most important about attending Faith Lutheran whenever he visits his family here, roughly every other week. He said it *was first the content, substance, or meat of the spoken word*, (Pastor Henry's sermons). Secondly he said *the friendliness of the congregation was also very important*. I asked Alex Madda what has attracted him to Faith Lutheran and he said, *"In my opinion (and it is open fact), Faith is a small family with a big heart. The congregation is friendly and hearty."* Many of us remember that Paul and Carolyn Henry introduced our congregation to hug therapy long before it caught on nationally. If I recall correctly they initially prescribed a minimum of three hugs a day. Save some up for September 24.

Joe Carlson thinks it would be good to put the Indian word for welcome on our church sign. Alex said, "NAMASTE is not 100% equal to welcome, but every Indian can understand this word. The word "namaste" means addressing the person heartily or with respect." That is how we want to welcome everyone to Faith Lutheran Church.

So, Namaste! Welcome to our Cottage Meetings coming in October. Pastor Henry has great expectations for us in the future. Pray about it and help us realize God's continuing plan for Faith Lutheran Church.

-Hans DePold

## **SOCIAL MINISTRY**

**“Our Missions”** – On August 19, several of us met at church to go out and pick up donated furniture to deliver to a father who was reuniting with his two daughters. Thanks to the generosity of Faith members and employees of The Hartford, we delivered a full size bed with mattress, a queen bedroom set with bed, mattress, night tables, and 2 dressers, as well as a kitchen set, miscellaneous chairs, a kitchen buffet, microwave, dishes, coffeepot, can opener and other miscellaneous household items. This was done at the request of Tawanda, our adopted social worker through Covenant to Care. Thank you to Melissa Golden, Chuck Sack, Jim Bevins, Marc Scoles, and Donna Hubbs for spending a Saturday morning fulfilling this request.

**School time is here** and thanks to Tawanda, we had 30 backpacks to fill this year for children ages 4-16 in and around the East Hartford area. This is twice as many backpacks as we’ve ever been asked for so it was quite a challenge to get them filled especially in August when many of us are on vacation. While those of you who were in church were very generous, to complete them, Melissa & Bill Golden finished purchasing the backpacks that were left over and Social Ministry supplied the balance of the accessories. A team met on Monday, August 28 to get the backpacks set to go and then delivered them to Tawanda at the Manchester DCF office just in time to get those kids off to school in style! If you were not able to help due to being away and would like to, Social Ministry funds seriously need replenishing if we are to have any monies for Fourth Quarter emergencies. If you would like to donate, please see Donna Hubbs. Thanks.

The Social Ministry Committee at Faith is always looking for willing volunteers and worthy projects. All are welcome at our meeting on Tuesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> to plan for Thanksgiving baskets and Christmas gifts, and to discuss other possible ongoing projects. Please join us at 7pm in the church office!

Sincerely,

Donna Hubbs & Lynn Tobin  
Social Ministry Co-Chairs