******THE GRAPEVINE**

 **Faith Lutheran Church 4010 Williams Drive**

 **Website: flcms.org Georgetown, Texas 78628**

**July 2017**

**FOR ALL GENERATIONS**

*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

 (Hebrews 13:8, NIV)

Otto Warmbier, Dan and Fran Keller, Greg Kelley, Bill Cosby—these are not just names in the news, currently making headlines for crimes they may or may not have committed; they are real people so passionately loved by Jesus that He sacrificed His very life for them. Should they be exonerated? I don’t know. Should they be lifted before God in fervent prayer? Absolutely! God longs to bless the real people called by these names, just as He longs to bless all the real people called by all other names.

Along with His willingness to lay down His life for the sheep, the goodness of the Good Shepherd is demonstrated in this: He calls His own sheep by name. (John 10:3) Jesus is so intimately familiar with each individual that He calls each by name. To God, no one remains anonymous, that is, unknown by name, unrecognized, or dismissed as unimportant. Rather, each man, woman, and child, is personally identified and so highly prized that if even one becomes lost the Shepherd goes in search, expending Himself, regardless of danger or cost, until that one has been found. If this is how highly God esteems us, that He calls us name, then perhaps we can do better than name-calling.

It is coarse, small-hearted knavery to label people, particularly without knowing them personally. Despite all protests of “freedom of speech,” it remains sinful (yes, sinful, and therefore damaging unto everlasting salvation) for Christians to turn social media, for example, into forums for hate, bigotry, partisanship, and self-adulation. The Bible, the revealed, holy, eternal truth of God, calls us to refrain from every kind of gossip and innuendo, and even silence it, by putting the best construction on everything. That isn’t always easy, but it’s always right.

No matter the excuse, and headlines notwithstanding, it is less than godly to demean Muslims, belittle Democrats, excoriate Republicans, insult homosexuals, slander Communists, defame liberals, pillory conservatives, mock females, ridicule males, or vilify transgendereds. All, including all of these, are the objects of Jesus’ care. With the Father and the Holy Spirit, He would have none to be lost but all to be saved—in fact so much was this His will that Jesus went to the cross for all, praying for the forgiveness of those crucifying Him and promising Paradise to a criminal.

Since Jesus construed his executioners’ actions as ignorance and discerned repentance beneath a convict’s prayer surely we, His disciples, can, in imitation of our Savior, put the best construction on the words and actions of others. And what is that best construction? That Jesus shed His blood for them! The real people behind names and labels are precious and dear to God, not because of who they are or what they have or haven’t done but because His Son, Jesus, Whose name means, “The Lord saves,” really suffered death for them, even as He really suffered death for everyone. Don’t be overly beguiled by headlines, tweets, or facebook postings. Hold to the gospel, which insists that every life has value as a unique creation of the God Who desires to embrace all, saying through the Shepherd’s voice, “I have called you by name; you are Mine.” (Isaiah 43:1)

Prayerfully,

Pastor Walt Pohland

One Year and Counting!

On the 24th of July, at 3:45 P.M., I will have served as your pastor for one whole year! It has gone by so quickly! And now that I have one year under my belt, I can say without hesitation, that this is by far the best job I have ever had! I still pinch myself every so often just to make sure I'm not dreaming. ☺

To this day, I still marvel at how it all came together. Five years ago I was sitting in my first seminary class, called Pastoral Ministry, and the professor said something that I will never forget. The professor introduced himself and proceeded to have us open our Bibles to 1 Timothy 3:1, and to read together, "The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task." He went on to unpack the Greek phrase "noble task," kalou ergou. "Why is it a noble task, you might ask?” said the professor. To which he answered, "It's a noble task because you are making an eternal difference. You have never met a mere mortal; everyone lives forever. The question is, where. As a pastor (overseer), you get to perform this ‘kalou ergou’ (noble task) at such a time as this with those who live forever."

The reason this statement rang so loudly in my ears all has to do to the fact that I was in the technology industry for almost 20 years before I went to seminary. And for the record, I loved every minute of it. I entered the field when the field was emerging on the scene. It was exciting beyond imagination. Everything was new and every year was a new frontier just waiting to be explored. For example, I was working for Sprint on a new network device that was going to allow Sprint’s customers to make Push-to-Talk calls nationwide. Prior to that moment, the idea of pushing a button and talking (ala, walky-talky) was called science fiction. And against all odds, the company I was working for did it! We celebrated for a whole week after the first call was placed on the network.

Within five years, however, all that technology – that I had poured my heart and soul into – was replaced. As time went on, and as I worked on more and more projects like that, I came to realize that everything I did was "temporary." If it was specialized enough, or an "engineering marvel" enough, it could stand for five or six years. If it had anything to do with the web, well, it was good for about two years. This started to really bothered me. I didn't like pouring my whole being into temporal solutions. I yearned to work with eternal matters. And that's when it really struck me. I yearned to work with people, not technology.

So, when I heard those words "kalou ergou" (noble task) in that Pastoral Ministries class, I began to smile. I was definitely in the right place. God had already gone before me and transformed my heart for eternal matters - His people. And now, that I have been at Faith for a year, I stand in amazement that He has placed me among you, to serve you, and to perform the "kalou ergou" (noble task) as one of your pastors. Now I am privileged to serve you and to remind you of the eternal Good News of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who gave His life on a cross for you. It is my joy to remind you of the eternal truth that "the will of [Jesus'] Father [is], that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day." (John 6:40).

Yes, indeed, the best job I have ever had. I can't wait to see what the Lord has in store for us this next year, as we together work toward eternal matters!

Shalom!

Pastor Bill Crowe

**Faith’s Meals on Wheels Team Needs Volunteers**

Faith Lutheran is one of ten local churches that keep the wheels rolling to deliver hot meals to Georgetown seniors Monday through Friday. The Meals on Wheels program helps to keep seniors living independently in their homes with healthy meals. And for the volunteers, it is an awesome opportunity to bring smiles to the faces of folks who may not otherwise have human contact for the entire day while at the same time providing a valuable service. Volunteers unanimously say it is a rewarding experience!

Faith delivers meals five weeks of the year. When it is our week, we deliver around 145 meals each day divided into twelve routes, organized geographically. We are in need of volunteers to drive and to ride with a driver – we strive to have two people on each route. You do not have to volunteer for the whole week or for all five weeks – we would be happy to have you for whatever time you can give. The time commitment for each day during our week is from 10:15 am until 11:30 am or 12 noon, depending on the route.

If this volunteer opportunity is something you would like to try, please contact Billie Dalrymple.

**JOYFUL NOISE...I MEAN NEWS!**

**Joy Mission Circle** will not meet in July, but will gather together August 1st at 6:30 pm in B116 for a regular meeting. All are invited! We have a short business meeting and then a Bible Study and prayer.

Here are some interesting facts that we learned from Brittany Herrin, Executive Director of the Pregnancy Help Center of Williamson County.

* The PHCWC empowers women to choose life.
* They offer free pregnancy tests.
* There is an “Earn while you learn” program.
* The majority of the women served are in their ’20s, not teenagers.
* The PHCWC sees about 30-40 clients in a month.
* In the past year there were more than 200 classes offered and more than 2000 diapers distributed.
* This is their 20th year of operation.
* VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED!!! Monthly Partners, Church Liaisons and Board Members.
* Their website is phcwc.com

**“*COUNT* YOUR BLESSINGS”...and mark your calendars!**

1. Ladies Retreat…Saturday August 19th 9am-2pm…right here at Faith!
2. Hosted by both of Faith’s LWML groups…Helping Hands and Joy Mission Circle!
3. Food! Light breakfast items and a yummy lunch provided!
4. Bible Study! (The word “bless/blessing” occurs over 400 times in the Bible!)
5. Arts & Crafts (a Quilt!)
6. Fellowship!
7. Skits!
8. Free!
9. ALL ladies invited…Faith members, friends, neighbors, visiting relatives ☺
10. RSVP by Wednesday Aug. 16th!

It will be a wonderful *BLESSED* time…you can *COUNT* on it!

***Don’t Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart***

Our Stephen Ministers recently completed a book study on *“Don’t Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart”* by Kenneth Haugk. This book gives practical suggestions of how to relate to people who are suffering. We want to comfort and express our love to those who are suffering, but what do you say or do that helps and doesn’t hurt? This book shares, based on research, what causes more hurt and should be avoided and what actions are most meaningful and comforting.

7 Statements to Avoid

1. **“I know how you feel”** When you say this, it robs the other person of their own feelings and identity. You don’t know what the other person is feeling and others do not know how you feel.
2. **“It’s for the best”** and other statements such as “He’s at peace now. It’s a blessing. It’s good he’s not suffering anymore.” These phrases are hurtful, not healing. The suffering person may feel admonished for not feeling or seeing the bright side of the situation.
3. **“Keep a stiff upper lip”** This statement tends to pile unrealistic and unhealthy expectations on the hurting person.
4. **“At least…”** This type of state tends to minimize the pain of the hurting person by saying it is not as bad as it could be or that someone else has experienced worse.
5. **“You should/shouldn’t…”** These statements tell the hurting person how they should/shouldn’t feel and shift the focus from the hurting person to yourself which tends to shut down communication.
6. **“God doesn’t give you more than you can handle”** This is not a biblical truth but rather a misinterpretation. God does say He will be there with people through their suffering and grief.
7. **“It’s God’s Will”** Using this statement minimizes or explains away feelings or hurts and can even cause people to not feel like God values them or their suffering. Suffering hurts, and we have the right to feel the way we feel. God is there with us through our suffering

Instead of these statements, suffering people need you to just be there to listen and support them. When you don’t know what to say, try saying nothing. Just be present for the other person. The following are some actions that have a profound effect on those who are hurting.

7 Meaningful Actions

1. **Genuine Prayer** – Pray for and with those who are hurting. Before praying, make sure you have listened to the person to know their needs and ask permission to pray with them.
2. **Showing Up** – Just be there for the other person. Don’t put the burden of the first step on the hurting person but instead take the initiative to arrange a time to get together.
3. **Naming the Elephant** – Acknowledge and speak of the situation or event. Don’t ignore or pretend it isn’t there. Be willing to listen and talk with them.
4. **Reminiscing** – Grieving people want others to remember their loved ones. It tells others that the deceased loved one is not forgotten and their lives continue to carry significance. Reminiscing means sharing your memories but more importantly, listening while the grieving person shares their memories.
5. **Asking Others How They Are Doing** – Ask not only the person most directly affected but other people affected, such as family members or friends, how they are doing.
6. **Practical Help** – Avoid telling the hurting person, “Call me if you need anything” but rather, offer help with something specific. Ask questions to find out what help the person needs right now so you are helping and not intruding.
7. **Following Up** – Most people are there to help during the initial crisis but suffering is not a short process. Follow up with the hurting person especially on significant days such as birthdays, holidays, and anniversaries. This provides support to hurting people while acknowledging the fact that pain and suffering can last a long time. These simple acts of genuine concern can make a great difference.



To learn more about how to relate to hurting people, you can check out a copy of “Don’t Sign Songs to a Heavy Heart” from the church library or order a copy on Amazon. Above all, please continue to provide loving care to those in need. Or, if you or someone you love is hurting with a heavy heart, Stephen Ministers are available to listen and walk with you during this time. Contact a Pastor or a Stephen Minister for more information.

by Carla Silber, Stephen Minister - Faith Lutheran Church

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“Children’s children are a crown to the aged.”

Proverbs 17:6a

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**SAG Seminars – What’s Ahead?**

Our 2017 SAG (Senior Advocacy Group) Seminars have featured an outstanding array of professional speakers covering topics designed to provide essential information to our mature population at Faith and our invited guests. The SAG Seminars are on hiatus for the summer and will return in September.

Some may think the SAG Team is basking in the sun on a tropical beach during the summer seminar hiatus. Quite the contrary, we are already working on another slate of outstanding speakers and topics for the balance of seminars in 2017. Start marking your calendars for the following seminars:

**SEPTEMBER 21, 2017**

LEGAL SOLUTIONS FOR MATURE ADULTS & THEIR FAMILIES

Presenter: Elder Law Attorney

**OCTOBER 19, 2017**

SEVERE WEATHER FORECASTING & HOW SENIORS CAN PREPARE

Presenter: National Weather Service Severe Weather Warning Meteorologist

**NOVEMBER 16, 2017**

A THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON END-OF-LIFE ISSUES

Presenter: Dean - College of Arts and Sciences, Concordia University Texas

**Free Phones for the Hearing Impaired**

Are You Aware that the State of Texas will provide a free phone especially for the hearing impaired, every five years?

Be sure to ask your hearing aid provider for information. They will give you the forms required by the state. It’s very simple. Once the forms are mailed in, you will receive a voucher for the phone, which you can get at any participating hearing aid provider.

**SENIOR SOCIAL GROUP** will enjoy a 1 PM lunch at the highly rated **George’s on the Town on** Monday, July 17. Located on the I-35 frontage road (708 South I-35) (Look for the Walmart/Wells Fargo/George’s sign at the road between Rivery Blvd and IHOP and go around behind the building for the entrance). We can also carpool from FLC at 12:40 PM. They have a full menu plus daily $10 specials, including Chicken Fried Chicken on Mondays**.** Sign up at the Ministry Center July 2 or 9 so we can have a count.

**ALL FAITH SENIORS ARE INCLUDED IN THIS GROUP**.

**The Texas District Church Extension Fund**

**100Plus1**

Texas Partners in Mission and Texas Church Extension Fund are teaming up to increase the financial resources available for planting new congregations. Both contributed dollars and invested dollars are needed to meet the challenge of planting 10 new ministries a year. The 100PLUS1 Anniversary Challenge Program seeks to multiply your gifts and your investments to accomplish the important work of bringing the Gospel to more and more people.

Make a gift of $1,000 or more to Texas Partners in Mission and open a new fixed-rate CEF investment of $5,000 or more. CEF will match your gift to Texas Partners in Mission 100% and CEF will pay you a bonus 1% for the term of your investment. The investment amount earning a bonus 1% is limited to 10 times the gift amount (e.g. a $50,000 investment, earning a bonus 1%, equals a gift of at least $5,000).

Contact Larry Moore, TPIM Director of Development, at 1-512-762-2374 for a 100Plus1 form and complete details. You can download an application online at www.TexasCEF.org.

To learn more about investing in CEF and make ministry happen, go to www.texascef.org, or call

1-888-951-1233, or call Calvin Spencer.

The current CEF investment rates are:

Flex Savings 0.500%

Fixed-rate notes - 1 Year 1.500%

Fixed-rate notes - 3 Year 1.750%

Fixed-rate notes - 5 Year 2.250%

Floating-rate notes - 1 Year 1.000%

Floating-rate notes - 3 Year 1.500%

Floating-rate notes - 5 Year 1.875%

TESS TODD’S TIDBITS

“All God’s Creatures”

Celtic Thunder sings: All God’s creatures got a place in the choir, Some sing low some sing higher, Some sing out loud on the telephone wire, some just clap their hands, or paws, or anything they’ve got now… I love it! Makes me smile and clap my hands just to listen.

A couple of days ago, I saw a doe in the tall grass in the greenbelt. She was hunched up. A few seconds later she was licking something small and brown. I had witnessed the birth of her fawn. From a distance, and in the tall grass. But I was pretty sure of what I had seen. Last evening, she was in my yard at the edge of the greenbelt. Her udder (do they call them that on a doe?) was apparent. She moved back into the tall grass and soon I glimpsed the tiny fawn moving beside her. Just fleeting glimpses because the grass is so tall. I grabbed my iPad to get a picture, but the little one had moved into a big clump of grass. Not this time!

I think on the verse of Scripture that says: For God so loved the world … And then I think back to Genesis and the story of creation. God’s creation! It tells how at the end of each day, God looked at what He has created, and it was good! God loves His world. So often we think of this verse as applying to the humans He created. And it does! But before He created people, God loved His world. I can’t even begin to appreciate the wonder of this world, not to mention the universe. I believe that even before He created it for us to enjoy, He enjoyed it. Just think of rainbows, butterflies, waterfalls, mountain peaks, beaches, rushing streams, flowers, wheat fields. And the moon and stars in the skies. What is man that Thou art mindful of him? This is my Father’s World!

Think of the animals. I often wonder what they think and feel. God must have created each with a special instinct. Why do some birds mate for life? Why do some grieve the loss of a mate? How do some know when to make the long journey from one hemisphere to the other? Sometimes flying thousands of miles only to make the return journey when the seasons change? And how about whales? What guides them from Alaskan waters to Hawaii? And how about salmon swimming from saltwater back upstream to the spot where they were born (hatched?) to spawn and reproduce their species? Why do elephants look after their young and old? Why do dogs love their masters? How about that little green lizard (gecko?) that watches me work in my flower bed? And the bluebird that nests in my birdhouse? Why do birds sing? Sometimes even in the still of the night? Are they there to bring me comfort when I can’t sleep and step out onto my back porch just to listen? All lovely and positive, adding to my joy of living. And He saw that it was good! All God’s creatures got a place in the choir!

And, yes, there are ‘yes buts’! But how about wasps, hornets, mosquitoes, gnats, ticks, chiggers, stinging nettles, poisonous snakes, man-eating alligators and crocodiles? Not to mention tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, droughts, famines, hot summers, freezing winters and the many miseries, including wars, we bring on ourselves? Are these just to remind us that this isn’t Paradise? Not just yet? That ‘There’s a better world a coming? In the sky, Lord, in the sky’?

To paraphrase, What is humankind that Thou art mindful of us? That You are with us from the moment we are conceived until we take our last breath and our spirit goes home to be with You? That You are with us in sickness and health, for richer and for poorer, in glad days and sad. For all the days we live on and enjoy (or endure) the World You love. That you give each of us a place in Your choir. Tess Todd



**Save the Date!**

Faith Lutheran’s annual Church Picnic is

Sunday, September 24th.

 Watch for

More Information this summer!!



**HEARTFELT STITCHERS WILL NOT MEET IN JULY OR AUGUST.**

**Helping Hands Lutheran Women’s Missionary League**

We will not be meeting for the months of June and July. Lois Howe will be leading our Bible Study on Tuesday, July 11, Life in God's Kingdom beginning on page 16 in the Lutheran Woman's Quarterly for Summer 2017. We will begin at 9:30 in room B116.

We will continue our quilting on the other Tuesdays of the month of June upstairs in the Activity Center beginning at 9:30

Once again, we will be collecting for the Pointe Store July 2nd - 30th. See the additional article in the July Grapevine for details.



LCMS NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING

ORANGE NATION

Young Adult Volunteer

**YOUTH SERVANT EVENTS:  Food & Drink Collections**

**We have one more Youth Event that will take place at Faith!**

***National Youth Gathering Orange Nation*** College-Age Volunteers will be housing at Faith July 20-24. Please DONATE Items and place them in the Orange Collection Buckets in the Narthex. Snacks; Granola Bars; Treats; Fruit Drink Boxes; Water bottles, Soda, etc... Monetary Gifts and Gift Cards may also be Donated.

Thank you in advance for your support!

For questions, contact the church office (512-863-7332).

**HELPING HANDS**

**New Life Treatment Center**

**“POINTE STORE” Collection**

 **(Girls ages 11-17)**

**The “Pointe Store” is a place the girls can “shop” using their “points” for good behavior. Helping Hands is privileged each year to collect some of the items they most like to buy. We invite you to purchase any of the items listed below and place them in the box provided in the mailroom.**

**If you would like to contribute, but would like to leave the shopping to us, you may make your check out to Helping Hands. Please indicate on the bottom left of your check that the check is for the Pointe Store.**

**A list of the items for collection will also be available at the Ministry Center. We thank you for participating in this important ministry to the girls at Canyon Lake.**

 **COLLECTION DATE: July 2nd thru July 30th**

 **COLLECTION PLACE: Ministry Center**

 **COLLECTION ITEMS: (ALL ITEMS SHOULD BE NEW. PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE ANY**

 **METAL OR GLASS.)**

* **Lip gloss (plastic containers only)**
* **Chapstick (plastic containers only)**
* **Stuffed Animals – To cuddle or use for decoration (Clean/New)**
* **Candy Bars (chocolate and non-chocolate) regular size bars only**
* **Pillow Cases – standard size**
* **Fun/Decorative Pillows – Any size or color**
* **Decks of Playing Cards**
* **Adult Coloring Books–** **(NO spirals on the spine.)**
* **Sudoku books, Word Puzzle, Crossword, etc. (NO spirals on the spine.)**

**Non-Pointe Store items that are needed:**

**Underwear - sizes 5, 6, 7 and 8 (most needed sizes are 5, 6 and 7) Ankle length socks (NO crew length or knee high allowed**

God’s Sense of Humor-SMH(Shaking My Head)

Grace Matlock

Six months into a divorce, I struggle with humor and sanity about 80% of the time. You might say ‘wow, that’s a lot!’ but compared to 100% of the time a month ago, I consider that an accomplishment. With a housing change, end of a few school terms, and a litany of other mentally challenging situations, I have learned the hard that God can be pretty crafty if He wants to be. What does that mean? It means that I have become unbalanced in my juggling act of life. Luxuries like pride, and grudges became impossible to keep track of. Did I say luxury? Yes, I did.

So much help has come to my little family’s aid over the last 6 months. An overwhelming amount. The opportunity to extend grace snuck up on me and completely knocked me senseless. I did not have the most spectacular childhood. In fact, quite bluntly, my father and I have been estranged for about 18 years. I was ok with that fact. I had no desire to revisit any of the past, in any manner. But………God has a sense of humor.

A few weeks ago, my father brought my mother and sister by my house. Cool. No big deal. Except that he stayed. For four hours. Ok, anyone can put up an act for four hours. As he left, he hugged me. A few days later, he contacted me again. He asked me if he could help. (Side note: The mental civil war in my head was in full force. Can I just say, 18 YEARS?!?!? Seriously God??? Are you joking???) I was at a fork in the road.

And then as if to answer my VERY irritated statement to Him, I realized; my children were watching. I had the opportunity to show them the true meaning of my name. I had the opportunity to say ‘It is forgiven.’ And leave the anger and almost two decades of hurt and resentment behind. I may have had some words with God. I was not pleased with this surprise on top of every other thing that I am not happy about this year. Why do I have to forgive? My Faith and Justice Course may have assisted with resolving this unpleasant dilemma.

Because my friends, I chose to forgive. I chose to accept God’s challenge. I didn’t want the luxury of knowing everything and being insulated from hurt and pain. Walls work two ways, they keep people out, but they also keep pain and hurt in. Well played God, well played….

