

CROSS AND CROWN LUTHERAN CHURCH  
CROSS AND CROWNICAL

Volume 40, Issue 11—December, 2008

DECEMBER

Pastor: Newton W. Kerney  
Web Site: [www.crossandcrownrp.org](http://www.crossandcrownrp.org)

As the season between Thanksgiving and New Year's gets incredibly busy, so does our church and worship schedule. Many activities have been planned to enhance the wonder and meaning of the season for our members and friends. Here is the schedule of church and school activities for December. Please use it to enhance your own worship as we prepare for the coming of the Christ child.

December 7—5:00 p.m.



Annual Church-wide Christmas Dinner

December 10—7:00 p.m.



CCLS Pre-K-1st grade  
Christmas Program

December 14—9:15 and 10:45 a.m.



Chancel Choir presents cantata  
"Holy Night of Miracles"

December 21—9:15 and 10:45 a.m.



Sunday School Christmas Program

December 24—Christmas Eve



5:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.  
Christmas Eve Services

December 25—10:00 a.m.

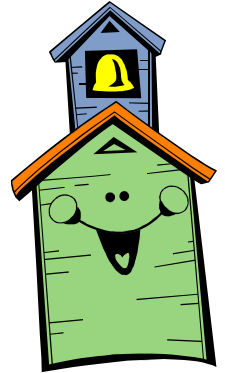


Christmas Day Worship  
with Communion

## *Cross and Crown School News*

*"Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Luke 3:4*

Preschool, Junior Kindergarten, and Kindergarten/First Grade are busily preparing for the Christmas season. Painted hand prints, glittered paper, and macaroni decorations fill the classrooms while Christmas songs play in the background in preparation for our December 10th Christmas program. Our school is unique in that we are able to share with the children the true meaning of the season. And from the mouths of the children we proclaim the gospel of our Lord and Savior.



*by Sierra Squires, 4 years old*

Thank you for your continued prayers and support throughout the year.

Jean, Administrator



## *A Theological Dictionary—A Different Way of Preaching*

Each year we look at a different gospel for the primary texts that we hear on Sunday morning. We just concluded the Gospel of Matthew and the texts from the Gospel of Mark will begin the first Sunday in Advent, November 30<sup>th</sup>. Those texts generally form the basis for the sermons each Sunday.

In 2009 I'm going to do something different during the sermon time. Together, we're going to create a "theological dictionary", which will be the basis for the sermons in 2009.

Over the course of the year, I'm going to suspend the normal reading of the texts. I want you to phone or e-mail me with words you would like to have as the basis of a sermon. I'll then structure the service with texts that will tie into the "theological dictionary word" that will be presented that day in worship.

How will this work? Let's take some easy words. Christmas; Eucharist, Baptism, Grief. I'll let you sort the P's, Q's, X's and Z's, because I know there are some faith-related words that begin with those letters.

We won't go alphabetically through the year and there may be some letters that will have a couple of important words for us to look at. Over the year, I expect we will still hear plenty of the words of Jesus, some helpful words of the Apostles, and cover some important events from the Old Testament, just like we do each year. Except we'll use a different lens to look at our faith life.

Based on what we come up with, I'll use that material to teach the Brown Bag Bible Study from September of 2009 through June of 2010.

So get to thinking! I'll start the first Sunday in January. Whose letter will be first?

Pastor Newt

### ***STEWARDSHIP DRIVE UPDATE***

The Congregational Council is in the process of determining our budget and ministry plan for 2009. Please help them by completing your pledge card and time and talent survey, and either mail it to the church or place it in the offering plate on Sunday. In case you've misplaced your packet, pledge cards and time and talent surveys are located on the back table in the Narthex.

✚ ***CHERISH***  
 ✚ ***CHALLENGE***  
 ✚ ***CHOOSE***

**Totals to this point are:**

<b>Packets sent out</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>Packets returned, to date</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Packets Returned Last Year</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>Total Pledged, to date</b>	<b>\$297,664.00</b>
<b>Total Pledged Last Year</b>	<b>\$386,208.00</b>		

If you haven't returned your stewardship forms yet, please return them as soon as possible. *Thank you for your participation and your faithful support of our shared ministry at Cross and Crown.*

## ***NOAH SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES***

### **CHRISTMAS, 2008 AND JANUARY, 2009**

It's almost time for Christmas again! And, it's time to start planning for our involvement in NOAH and how we can help those of our community who need our help during the holiday season.

This year NOAH is going to repeat what we did in 2007: all six member organizations will help during December and over the New Year. The plan is that food will be distributed as usual the Wednesdays of December 3, 10 and 17. No distribution will take place on Christmas Eve Day, Wednesday, December 24, nor on New Years Eve Day, Wednesday, December 31. NOAH will be "closed" those two weeks. Activities will start again on the week of January 5, 2009, with food distribution on January 7.

Cross and Crown practically gets a "bye" during December this year. **Our December duties are to share the week of December 15 with Rohnert Park Bible Church. Cross and Crown does the shopping on Tuesday of that week and Rohnert Park Bible does the December 17 distribution.** Anyone who wants to help me shop on Tuesday the 16<sup>th</sup> can give me a call at 588-9044 and I'll be happy to show you the ropes.

**Rohnert Park Bible may have trouble fielding enough helpers to do the food distribution on December 17<sup>th</sup> and would greatly appreciate a few volunteers to help unload the Food Bank truck at 1:00 p.m., sack groceries until 3:00, then help hand out groceries from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. I'll post a sign-up sheet in the Welcome Center the first week in December in case you want to lend a hand with the Christmas week's work.**

In addition, NOAH will be getting lots of food donations from Rancho Cotate High School and from most of the Rohnert Park secondary schools again this year, probably starting right after Thanksgiving. If you contact me, I'll be happy to have you assist with collecting donated food at the schools, taking it to the Firehouse on Southwest Blvd., and helping sort it at the Firehouse. Just let me know you're available.

**Cross and Crown's regular turn at NOAH happens in January, 2009.** We're responsible for the four weeks of January and one other month in 2009 (probably July). Now that the Cotati Rotary Club has agreed to help, we have six organizations who can share in a regular rotation of the duties. That should mean just two months a year from now on.

Once again, I'll post a January sign-up list in the Welcome Center in late December for our January rotation. So please help in both December, a little bit, and January as a regular month. It's for a good cause!!

Dick

Cross and Crown NOAH Coordinator



### **WOULD YOU LIKE TO ASSIST THE 2009 MEXICO MISSION TRIP?**

There are many ways to help, some that don't even require you to leave home. Some of the ways you can get involved include help with fundraising, being part of a prayer team, baking cookies, making calls to remind people of the Mexico Dinner, and other tasks that will develop as the planning continues. **December 7 will be "Mexico Sunday."** A short video will be presented at the worship services, there will be a sign-up table in the Welcome Center for some of the tasks that have been identified, and there will be an information meeting in the Welcome Center at 12:15 p.m. for folks who might be interested in going on the trip. If you definitely want to go and haven't gone before, you need to apply for your passport soon. It takes a while to complete the process.

## *Fall Garden News* by Teri Clark

*“Those Who Plant a Garden Work Hand in Hand with God”*



Fall is my favorite time of the year in the garden. The air in the morning and evening feels crisp, while the days are still warm. You can see the garden change right before your eyes. The leaves, once vibrant green, begin to wilt and transform into hues of gold, red and yellow; the rainbow of flowers start to fade; the vines no longer stretch their limbs toward the sun, but fall to the ground; the flaming red flowers on the pineapple penstemon seems to scream out to all the humming birds, “Last chance for some sweet nectar! Come quick!” and the robins fly through the garden looking for remaining seeds on sunflower heads or hunt for bugs that are unable to hide among the remaining foliage. There is a feel of urgency in the air. Winter is

coming, get ready!!

Fall is the end of a season of growth and life. It’s a bittersweet time for a gardener. It is a time to reflect on the garden’s abundance and to look ahead at tomorrow’s potential. My heart sighs knowing that the juicy sweet tomatoes are no longer available, or that the prickly yellow cucumbers will no longer brighten up our salads until next year. As I slowly eat the last heirloom tomato from the vine, I find myself savoring each and every bite. I give thanks to God for providing us with a bountiful harvest and pray that we may be able to grow more food in the coming year. Fall is a time to say good-bye to the bountiful summer and get ready for the winter. We pull up our old crops, save our favorite seeds from the summer crops, cover boxes and prune back our vines. However, we also keep our eyes ahead, planting our winter crops while anticipating the arrival of the new “seed catalog” (arriving in December!), which gives us the promise of new life for our garden. I am always amazed to find new life as I am composting the old and dying vines and plants. Under leaves, I find ladybug larva, and as I pull up the roots, insects are tunneling through the dark, moist, soil, composting all the decaying matter, which will provide much needed nutrients for next season’s crops.

This past summer has been a time of change in our garden. We said good-bye to the school’s garden and welcomed the opportunity to grow a community garden. We have been grateful to have a committed group of people help water, plant, do garden chores, and harvest and deliver produce to those in need. As a result of these dedicated individuals, we harvested over **200 lbs** of produce during the summer! The majority of this produce was delivered to NOAH in Rohnert Park for their weekly food distribution to local families. We also provided fresh garden produce to Petaluma Bounty to assist with their local food distribution.

This garden/food mission outreach program can only be accomplished with the commitment of our church community. I want to take this opportunity to thank *everyone* who helps out in our garden. Your commitment to the garden is *greatly appreciated!!* I would like to especially acknowledge **Suzi** and her commitment to coordinating the watering schedule. She has a dedicated group of volunteers who diligently water our garden 3 to 4 times a week. Thank you Suzi!! I also wish to thank **Jay**, who graciously delivers all our produce to NOAH. My heartfelt thanks to **Barb** for her behind the scenes help with garden announcements for bulletins and newsletters. And finally, I wish to thank **Pastor Newt** for his support and encouragement of this mission outreach opportunity.

*(Continued on next page)*

## *Fall Garden News* (Continued)

“Whatever the season, plant possibilities” is one of my favorite garden sayings. As each season brings about changes in our garden, there are seasons in our lives, which also bring about change and personal growth. I find myself in the midst of a seasonal change in my own life. I have decided to finish the remaining pieces of my education and obtain The State of California’s ECE Site Supervisor’s-Teacher permit. Sadly, with the schedule demands of my new job (I work late every day ‘til 6) and my school schedule, as of January 2009, I will no longer be able to physically dedicate my time to work in the community garden.

If you are interested, or know of anyone interested in helping to coordinate the community garden, please give me a call. The following is a short description of the responsibilities. The time involved is seasonal – some weeks nothing (as in winter), but generally about 6 hours per *month*. The following is a list of the general responsibilities of the garden coordinator:

Coordinating Harvest (as produce becomes available), seed & seedling planting, seasonal work days, bulletin & newsletter announcements, sending out emails to garden contact group

Planting schedule – what and when to plant crops

Helping anyone who wants an individual raised bed for personal use – assign box, show them our garden, shed, supplies, etc.

Delivery - As produce becomes available, notify delivery person to arrange delivery to NOAH

If you are not currently involved in our community garden, please prayerfully consider ways that you can to participate in this outreach ministry - there are many ways to help! Thanks again to all those committed people who help out on a regular basis!

Blessings!



### THE LORD’S LUNCHESES

*“Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom...For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink.” Matthew 25:34-35*

Last winter the Sunday Morning Women’s Spiritual Growth Group, together with the Confirmation Youth began a program called “**The Lord’s Lunches.**” We collected food items, placed them in a bag and distributed them to someone in need each time we came to a stoplight where someone was asking for help. We are launching this program again this winter, together with the Confirmation and High School Youth. These lunches consist of a pop top can of pasta, a juice box, snack bars, towelette, napkins, spoon/fork and a list of telephone numbers of Sonoma County organizations in place to help the homeless.

We are now asking you, the congregation, to help our Youth with supplies for these “**Lord’s Lunches.**” There is a basket in the Narthex for any donation you can make. And if you feel moved, you too can take a completed bag or two to keep in your car and pass out at the next stoplight.

Thank you in advance for helping our Youth help others. If you have questions, please contact Jean at the school.

**Women's Activities, etc.**

**Superstition or Faith**  
**Where does your power come from?**



or



Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> of March  
 to  
 Sunday the 15<sup>th</sup> of March,  
 2009  
 Walker Creek Ranch  
 Registration cost Dec. 7-Jan. 25  
 \$230

Brochures are available on the Women's table  
 in the Welcome Center.

**Annual Christmas**

**Dinner**

**Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**at 5:00 p.m.**



Join us for an evening of good food, good friends and good fun.

We gather together at 5:00 for a delicious dinner of marinated pork tenderloin, green salad and rolls provided by the Fellowship Committee.

To make this an extra special meal we are asking you to bring either a side dish or a dessert to share.

If you have a special Christmas table cloth and a centerpiece please bring it to help decorate the Fellowship Hall.

After dinner we will gather in the sanctuary for our annual Twelve Days of Christmas sing-a-long.

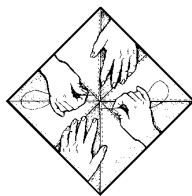
**The Women's Book Club Will Not Meet in December**

The next meeting will be a Book Exchange Party on January 7. Details will follow.



**It Isn't Too Late To Enter the Drawing for the Quilt...**

... is on display in the welcome center on Sunday, and in the hallway outside the church office during the week. Tickets are available from the Quilters or from the church office during normal business hours on Monday through Friday. The drawing for the quilt will be held at the Church Christmas/Celebration dinner on Sunday, December 7. Tickets are \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. Proceeds from the sale of the quilt will go to support several of the many charities supported by the Quilters.



*Dear Cross and Crown Family,*

*Thank you so much for the prayers, cards and good wishes after our Dad passed away. You make things much easier.*

*Love in Christ,*

*Connie P.*

**Thank You for Donating Milk Cartons BUT...**

The Altar Guild now has enough to last for several months, so no additional ones are needed at this time. Thank you for meeting this need once again.

***Did You Know...?***

...that no one submitted anything for the Did You Know column this month? We know that interesting things are happening in your family that you'd like to share with others so that they may rejoice with you. All items should be submitted by the 15th of the month for inclusion in the next newsletter.

*Thank you to the members of Cross and Crown for all the cards, telephone calls and prayers we received during this difficult time on the loss of my daughter and sister.*

*Our appreciation is beyond all words for such kindness.*

*God Bless You,*

*Del and Family*

Mark Your Calendars  
Next  
Financial Peace University  
Begins  
February 21



"See? The church is full now, but after you shake it and make it snow, the church is empty."

**CALLING ALL BELL RINGERS...**



...who are interested in starting a bell choir, please contact Jean at CCLS, 795-7853 ext. 32, or e-

mail to [beadsbybashi@yahoo.com](mailto:beadsbybashi@yahoo.com).



## *Etc.*

### **The 2009 Flower Calendar is Posted...**

...on the bulletin board outside the church office. Now is the time to reserve your "special" place on the calendar for next year. The cost of the flowers is \$25.00, and you will be reminded when it is your turn to provide the flowers. You are welcome to take home the flowers after the third service, or donate them for distribution to our homebound and hospitalized members.



### **Our CD Ministry Is Working Well**

Several of our homebound members are now able to participate in worship, thanks to this ministry. If you would like to receive recordings regularly (or a recording of a special service) contact the church office and we will send them to you. Thanks to Mark who graciously provides the weekly recordings. Donations to the Media Fund are also welcome but not necessary to defray the cost of this ministry. If you would like to assist with recording, contact Mark Gangl or the church office.



## Looking Back Forty Years



### *Memories from Pastor Leon Holm:*

In these last brief comments of the beginnings of Cross and Crown Lutheran, you might be interested in a few human interest stories.

We arrived in Rohnert Park-Cotati on May 15, 1968. The first service in the Cotati Veterans Building was the first Sunday in August, 1968. What did we do during these months?

We did not know one person on our arrival. The motel was our home until July 1st. We had no Church, no building, no Church Council, nothing but the bare land purchased by The American Lutheran Church, which it was named at that time. Day after day we walked the streets of both cities knocking on every door, leaving a brochure explaining the new Church, and talking to the house friends about the Church and spiritual needs for all people with Jesus as Lord, Master and Savior.

As we talked with people all kinds of responses were received. Most of them were very cordial and friendly. Many people said "not interested." Some were so happy to hear the good news, especially those of Lutheran background. A few doors were gently closed and did not want to hear anything about a Christian Church. Others said they would attend. Mostly, at the end of the day it was discouraging. Not many interested souls. Would the Church become a reality? How many would come to the first service? Perhaps a few, and maybe no one. We had already secured the Veteran's Building for our worship center so we could tell them when and where the first service would be held. Much prayer went to the Throne of Grace for the new Church.

One visit was exciting. The lady of the house wanted to talk and talk about the new Church. Finally she said, "May I be the Church organist?" My false teeth almost dropped with awe and wonder. What was she saying? She wanted to be the organist. With thanks and appreciation I said that would be wonderful but we had no funds to pay her. With a smile on her face she said, "I will gladly volunteer." An answer to prayer. So this soul, a Catholic lady, became our first organist and served the Lord for several years. I went to the motel that night with a deep spiritual joy in my heart. It lifted my faith to carry on.

The days and months went by with much prayer for the Spirit of God to work in the lives and hearts of the people visited.

Many more details could be given but at the first service the Lord brought 89 adults and 12 children to worship Him. We were filled with thanksgiving and awe at the mercy and blessings of our Lord.

The Veteran's Hall was used for many parties in those days. One Sunday morning we arrived to set up for worship and the evening before party had accidentally spilled beer and I imagine some liquor all over the floor. We began to mop the floor and clean it before the service. It was the Lord's Supper Sunday so the Body and Blood of our Lord were served with the odor of beer permeating the atmosphere. Some people with laughing, cheerful comments wondered if the new Pastor and family had been tipping the bottle. Many good laughs were exchanged.

We look back today and see how God has blessed Cross and Crown. There have been some hard but wonderful days of His Grace. The Church, meaning the whole Lutheran Church, has changed over the years. Are we becoming more molded after this world, or are we still the Church in the Book of Acts that stood in amazing wonder at what Christ can do? Let it ever be said that we must follow as the Scripture says so many times "thus says the Lord" and not what the times say or do. Then the Church will continue to be Christ's Church and receive His blessings. God Bless our Pastor and all of you.