

# Remembering and Rejoicing

**A History of the Faith Lutheran Pre-school  
and Kindergarten based on an address on its 10th  
Anniversary, July 16, 1989 by former director  
Jeanne Gehrke**

Any successful endeavor starts with a dream and a willingness to work. Such a dream began with a plan on a McDonald's napkin some 13 years ago. A Dream -- but a dream that was to become a reality because of the willingness and vision and determination of many people to work, and sacrifice time, and yes, even money.

Few are those who realize what it takes to begin a day care center. It doesn't happen overnight. Thousands of hours go into the planning and carrying out of ideas, dreams, hopes and expectations. Along with this you have the county, city and state regulations, rules and laws to comply with before you can ever say "it's done, our dream is fulfilled."

So it was with Faith Day Care as it began. In the 2 or more years prior to its opening, Faith Day Care was a fragile dream.

Here was an opportunity for Faith Church to provide a service to the community, offer a constructive way of ministering to young children, and open the door of opportunity for the evangelization of young families and unchurched families as well. Faith Lutheran met that challenge on July 16, 1979, the day it opened the doors of the day care center to 3 little ones and one director - teacher, Mrs. Brenda Frantz, who possessed the vision, ability and desire to pioneer a new field.

Within a few short months we had reached capacity (24) and it became necessary to bring in an additional teacher, an assistant, plus volunteers. And so the center grew from month-to-month, year-to-year. Waiting lists were set up and we began looking at the possibility (another dream) of a kindergarten, but not before the Church and Day Care undertook a new dream: a building unit that might house 3 or 4 classrooms, an office, a storage area and additional rest rooms. A challenge which we met within months under the theme: WATCH US GROW - INVEST IN FAITH. Enough notes had been sold to finance the construction of the new building and the remodeling of the existing multi-purpose room which had served as the day care center.

In September, 1984, the new building was completed, furnished and ready for occupancy. The first Kindergarten class met, with Mrs. Kathy Rivard as teacher, and we were ready for an exciting time. Within a very short span of time a new growth was seen -- parents came, children began filling space and before we knew it, we were at capacity, and were serving with a staff of 10, 5 days per week, year 'round.

So it continues to today. Growth is seen daily, waiting lists are developed and the future holds for more building, more planning, more dreaming and, yes, more sacrifice.

Dreams do happen, and dreams are fulfilled when God's people are willing to listen and respond to His directives.

Faith Day Care-Kindergarten is well-known in the area, but not because of its fine buildings, or its grounds and equipment. Those help, but the real reason is simply because of the dedicated Christian director, teachers and assistants who daily meet and minister to your pre-schooler or kindergartner and who introduce him to the great God who made him or her and take care of him/her. These are the people who help your child grow in his/her understanding and appreciation of God through various experiences in the classroom and on the play yard.

I know of no greater challenge or important roll in life than preparing our children to take their place in society as responsible, contributing citizens. It begins HERE -- in the pre-school & kindergarten. Parents, do not relinquish this great responsibility to gang leaders or drug dealers, for if you guide your children and help them become aware of their real strengths, and raise their self-esteem, I firmly believe their future is secure. You have already demonstrated your concern for their welfare just by enrolling them in a Christian atmosphere. Parents -- help keep the dream awake - be willing to sacrifice for their sake.

And so I remember and rejoice with you for the last ten years of Faith Day Care -- and say with the psalmist:

May He grant you your heart's desires,  
And fulfill all your dreams.  
May we shout for joy over your victory,  
and in the name of our Lord,  
set up our banners. Amen

**NOTE: Our school has since adopted the name Faith Lutheran Pre-school and Day Care to project the educational element of our program..** Our Kindergarten was replaced by an expanded pre-school ministry. Mrs. Marion Shuck became our director in 1987. Mrs. Gehrke served as interim director following Mrs. Shuck's December 1990 retirement. Our director from 1991 to 1994 was Rene' Mata. Mrs. Shuck came out of retirement to direct our school following Miss Mata's resignation and remained until the end of 1995. Mrs. Gladys Lewis was our director for the first half of 1996. Mrs. JoAnn Evans was our FLC Pre-school and Day Care director until mid-1997 and redeveloped and greatly enhanced our program; she resigned to follow her husband's job. Our current director is Mrs. Gail Balandran. She is a committed Christian and an excellent director and leads a dedicated staff. Our enrollment is typically at or near capacity, with a waiting list in most classes.