

February 4, 2011

Dear Bethel Family!

I would like to briefly introduce myself to you in writing before we will have a chance to meet in person.

My name is Gabriele (“Gabi”) Schroeder. I was born in the very North of Germany in Kiel, but spent my childhood and youth in West Berlin, surrounded by the constant reality of the Berlin Wall. Since May 2005, I have been serving as the pastor of Our Redeemer’s Lutheran Church in South San Francisco. Prior to serving in parish ministry, I worked as hospital chaplain, as seminary adjunct faculty, and in non-profit fundraising.

Since 1995, I am married to Kumar Dasari who currently works in network administration in Santa Clara. Our marriage has been richly blessed with two wonderful daughters – Naomi (10) and Anna (8). More than anything and anybody else, they have made my life and my faith authentically real and complete.

My faith journey began as a high school senior while travelling to Poland in 1980 with a youth group from church. Upon return from that tour, I really wanted to find out more what this “faith thing” is and how I might become part of it. Soon after, I enrolled as a university student to study theology (in Berlin, Heidelberg, and Jerusalem/Israel). Upon graduation with a Master in Theological Studies, I came to Berkeley in 1990 to pursue doctoral studies at the Graduate Theological Union, graduating in 1997 with a Doctor of Philosophy degree in church history.

Ever since I left Germany, I have learnt that a person’s faith is more than the sum of its doctrines. Faith, rather, entails that I listen to God’s “still small voice” among the multiple noises of the world. Faith also entails that I witness to God’s grace in the midst of an ungraceful world. And faith entails that I learn to see God’s face in the faces of our neighbors – especially when they may not behave very lovingly toward me. Most of all, though, faith entails that I trust in the transforming power of God’s redeeming love.

In my free time, I love reading, writing, gardening, jewelry making, horse-back riding, photography, cooking, travelling, playing with our two rabbits ... and being just plain silly.

I look forward to meeting with you,

*Pastor Gabriele*