

# New Church Building Will Also Support the Community



By Cathy Dausman



Shovels in hand, from left: Associate Minister Joshua Serano, Orinda Mayor Steve Glazer, and groundbreaking Master of Ceremonies Jack Pease. Chris Avant looks over the shoulders of Serano and Glazer. Photo Andy Scheck

Church members, dignitaries and guests gathered July 23 at Orinda's Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church for a groundbreaking ceremony for a new Community Support Building – the church's first new structure since the 1960s that will double as a post-disaster emergency center for Lamorinda. The inspiration for that use came after church members volunteered to aid Hurricane Katrina victims and found it difficult to access bathing facilities.

The Holy Shepherd building will accommodate temporary showers and have a generator.

"It's absolutely a wonderful program," said Moraga Orinda Fire District Chief Randy Bradley. Bradley applauded church members "who had the foresight to think about this kind of building." He hopes this will encourage more emergency responder/faith based group partnerships for the area.

"I join you in the excitement and pride in reaching this milestone," said Orinda Mayor Steve Glazer, who spoke about the power of community to achieve great things and the capacity to expand "not only physical space,

but faith, tolerance and love." Soon after honored guests hoisted golden shovels and posed for the camera a backhoe took its first bite into the soil. A slab will be poured and the walls will go up within the next few weeks.

The building will be LEED certified with evaporative water cooling system, indirect lighting, low-E glass, and ADA compliant bathrooms and will exceed state-mandated seismic requirements.

The structure will be built of ICF (Insulating Concrete Form) concrete with an R-50 insulation value (the highest resistance to heat flow), and will feature 60-foot steel trusses. The 7,200 square foot addition will hold offices for clergy and church board, a library, a chapel, and conference room, coffee kitchen, meeting hall and storage space.

Its construction should alleviate the now daily reconfiguring of existing church spaces, said Tom Gilbertson, project manager for the church. Chapel pews are movable. A three pane etched glass window depicting The Good Shepherd will be placed behind the altar. One exterior wall will feature a cubit-sized metal rod, 18-inches long.

Canyon Construction of Moraga is the general contractor. "There is nothing sweeter than to build in the community in which we live," said Chris Avant, Canyon Construction owner and president.

"This building's a long time coming," said Gilbertson. Eight years in the planning, the building should stand complete by mid-November.

Although the best is yet to come, church property manager Gerry Perry saw one immediate bonus: "We don't have to weed this [property] anymore!"

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