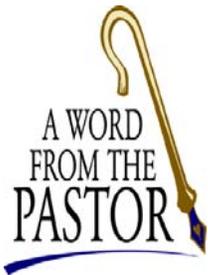


The Messenger

A newsletter of the people of First Lutheran Church, Waltham

The First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waltham
The Rev. Thomas E. Maehl, Pastor
www.firstlutheranwaltham.org

November 2016
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'With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with tens of thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?'

He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

(Micah 6:6-8)

On Tuesday mornings, Wednesday evenings, and on Facebook folks from First Lutheran have been discussing Brian McLaren's book, We Make the Road by Walking. Part of the conversation has focused on how in the scriptures the people's assumptions and understanding of God evolve over time. So for instance, Brian McLaren writes,

"The dominant theory of God in Abraham and Sarah's day taught that the gracious God who gives human life would also demand human life as a sacrifice. So when Abraham believed God was commanding him to kill his son Isaac, [Genesis 22] he was being faithful to the traditional model of how God and life worked... [However, in the experience of God providing the ram caught in the thicket] Abraham was being given a powerful new insight! Animal blood could please or appease God as a substitute for human blood."

Through this experience, for the people of Israel, their assumptions and their understanding of God changed. What then developed over successive generations was a massive animal sacrificial system; centered in the temple in Jerusalem. "But then," McLaren writes, "Prophets and poets arose among Abraham's descendants who made the shocking claim that God doesn't need animal sacrifices, either. They realized that God could never need anything *from* us, since God provides everything *for* us. Not only

that, but they realized God isn't the one who is angry and hostile and needs appeasement. We humans are the angry ones! Our hostile, bloodthirsty hearts are the ones that need to be changed."

I write this only a few days before the national election for president. By the time many of you read these words the election will be over. However, the anger, the hostility, and the bloodthirsty hearts will remain. *What are we to do?*

We will pray for our own hearts, "*Create in me a clean heart O God.*" (Psalm 51) So too, we will keep lifting up the words of our scriptures that call us to an understanding of God that we *still* have yet to fully embrace. Micah states that what God requires of us is not animal sacrifice, but instead sacrifices made for the sake of justice, kindness, and humility.

I wonder; what if others saw Christians acting passionately in support of what they believe to be a path to justice; and then also with surprising kindness toward those with whom they disagree?

I wonder; what if others heard Christians perhaps heartily endorsing one candidate or another, but then also in our prayers to God humbly lamenting the hostility and hatred, and in our public witness humbly speaking the truth that God is our only hope for peace and well-being?

I gaze at the image of the cross of Christ in my office and I am convinced that God is not the bloodthirsty one, God is the one whose blood is shed and who is present in all this world's suffering. Justice, kindness, and humility - these we see in Jesus who also reveals that practicing justice, kindness, and humility requires sacrifice. May God grant us the wisdom and the courage to follow our Lord's example.

Faithfully, Pastor Maehl

Nurturing Faith



Christmas Children's Choir

Who: Children in grades 2 - 6.
What: Singing, Praising, Friendships and Fun!
Where: Downstairs in the Sunday school rooms.
Why: Prepare to sing at the Christmas Eve service.
When: Wednesday evenings during Advent
 6:30 - 7:15 pm
 11/30, 12/7, 12/14, 12/21
How: Talk to Cynthia if you are interested. We need about 6 kids in order to go ahead with our Christmas Children's Choir.

There will also be an Advent program for adults during Children's Choir rehearsal, followed by our candlelit Advent Evening Prayer at 7:30 pm

Chancel Choir

About 2 Tuesdays a month
 7:15 - 8:45 pm



You are welcome to join the choir at any time.
 November rehearsals are 11/1, 11/15 and 11/30.

Nursery Help Needed!



We are down to a four week rotation for nursery attendants during our 10:30 worship. We prefer to have a 6-8 week rotation, spreading the work out to make it easier for all involved. You'll notice on the Ministry Schedule that there are two Sundays during December where there is no one assigned to the nursery. If we can fill those two spots we will have a 6 week rotation. Not sure what's involved? Talk to one of the current nursery attendants or contact the church office. We would be happy to discuss it with you. There is a sign up sheet in the Pearson Room at church or you can contact the church office at cnilerchurch@rcn.com. Thanks!

Sunday Schedule Worship 8:15 am and 10:30 am Adult Forum 9:15 am

- November 6 Sermon: The Power of Hope
 Adult Forum: Hosea Part II
- November 13 Sermon: The Power of Endurance
No Adult Forum:
 Annual Fall adult retreat in Vermont
- November 20 Sermon: Power hidden in Weakness
 Adult Forum: Hosea Part III
- November 27 Advent I: Power hidden in the Present
 Adult Forum: Micah & Mission
- December 4 Advent II: The Power of Promise
No Adult Forum, set up for Silent Auction
 Luncheon and Silent Auction at 11:30
- December 11 Advent III: The Power of Patience
 Adult Forum: Malachi & Expectation
- December 18 Advent IV: The Power of God w/ Us
 Christmas Pageant during learning hour
- December 24th Christmas Eve worship at 7:00 pm
 December 25th Christmas day worship at 10:00 am



Advent Wednesdays November 30 December 7, 14, 21 7:30 pm

On the Wednesdays of Advent we will have a contemplative evening prayer service beginning at 7:30 pm, followed by refreshments. Amidst the increased pace and demands of the season, consider participating in this opportunity to attend to the waiting, prayer, and hopefulness to which the season of Advent calls us ... and at the same time mysteriously offers.

Doing Justice, Serving All



You've been challenged!

Join First Lutheran Church-Waltham in the **2016 Thanks For Giving Challenge** as we collect critical needs items for *Ascentria Care Alliance* (formerly Lutheran Social Services).

It's easy! Fill one of the "Thanks For Giving" bags available at church (or any bag!) with items from the list below and bring it to First Lutheran Church in Waltham by November 27.

- **Socks and underwear**
- **Diapers and wipes**
- **Feminine products**
- **Bath towels, baby and kid bath towels, baby shampoo**
- **Toiletries (including toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo, soap, razors, etc.)**

Not in Waltham – no problem! We challenge you to fill a bag of your own and donate it to a local charity in your area or go to ascentria.org and make a donation.

Once you've filled a bag it's your turn to challenge your friends, family, and neighbors! Feel free to take extra bags from church and offer them in your challenge of others. Let's keep this challenge going throughout the month of November and from coast to coast. **Challenge your friends on social media using #2016thanks4giving** and follow us on Facebook or on Twitter and Instagram @flcwaltham.



Stewardship Update

As of November 1, we have received 32 written pledges totaling \$156,368. Thank you to all who have responded thus far! Our goal is \$215,000 and we encourage others who have not yet done so to provide an estimate of giving so that we might prepare a faithful budget for 2017. Also, if you've never practiced regular giving to the church before, perhaps now might be a time to begin. Everyone's contributions to this ministry that God has entrusted to us is important and appreciated.

Estate Planning

Our thanks to Brad Nederhoff who at our reformation Sunday luncheon playfully led us in an engaging trivia game that lifted up the great benefits for the ministry of the church that can come through people making a provision for the church in their estate planning. The finance team invites all of us to consider leaving First Lutheran or another ministry of the Church in our wills. It would bless future generations greatly and is another way that we can faithfully share with others out of thanksgiving for all that God has given us.

The **Simply Giving**® Program



Simply Giving

If you have not already done so, you might consider electronic giving. Through Simply Giving, contributions can be debited automatically from your checking or savings account. Please contact the church office if you would like an authorization form.

Doing Justice, Serving All



Luncheon and Silent Auction December 4

Mark your calendars! Following worship on December 4 we are planning a pot-luck luncheon, silent auction and bake sale. The money raised will support our Camp Calumet Scholarship Fund. Please consider donating items in good condition, gift certificates, services, etc. and please consider inviting a friend to join you for worship and the luncheon. Items for the silent auction may be brought to the church. For the time being we will be storing them in the youth room, and then eventually on the stage in Founder's Hall.

SERRV Fair Trade Sale November 20

Barbara Nikolajczyk, a member of Grace Lutheran Church in Needham, will be hosting a fair trade sale in the Pearson Room on November 20, before and after the 10:30 worship service. She will have items on consignment from Serrv, a nonprofit, fair trade organization dedicated to lifting disadvantaged artisans, farmers, and their families out of poverty. Serrv pays a living wage for those who produce the goods for sale. If you are interested, please bring cash or checks (no credit card reader available.)

Handmade Boutique Fundraiser

On Sunday, October 30 during our Reformation Day Luncheon, members of the Thursday knitting group set out a variety of beautiful handmade sweaters, hats, scarves, and more. We're delighted to report that the *Handmade Boutique* raised \$500 for our Camp Calumet Scholarship Fund. Our thanks to Diana Dupuis and Rut Johnson for coordinating this effort!



Diaper Drive

Thanks to all who have already brought in diapers in celebration of two baptisms that will be held on November 20; for Zander Diaz and Annabella Faria.

We welcome others participating by bringing diapers (preferably sizes 5-6) any time between now and November 27. All diapers will be donated to the Diaper Depot housed at Christ Episcopal Church in Waltham.

We rejoice as Zander and Annabella are baptized into Christ and pray that their lives will be blessed and that in many and various ways they shall be a blessing to others!

Senior Retreat



On October 11-13, a group of ten seniors (actually nine seniors and their middle-aged pastor) traveled to Londonderry, Vermont for two days of rest and fellowship. We stayed at the Blue Gentian Lodge where our hosts, Ken Alberti and Lisa Sciotte, served wonderful meals and took very good care of us. Highlights included:

- A fabulous lunch on the way at the Old Mill Restaurant in Westminster, MA; and we are so grateful to the board of the Nelson Memorial Apartments for treating for our lunches!
- A lovely time looking around the quaint shops in Chester, Vermont.
- Playing games in the evening, reading, walking, and conversing.
- Lovely rooms, each with private baths; and all the meals served by our hosts were wonderful.

We are hoping to do it again sometime next year and hope that others might join us!

Walking Together in God's Love



On All Saints Sunday, November 6, we remember those in our congregation who have died and those whom have been on our prayer list this past year and who have died. We give thanks to God for the promise of eternal life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Those in our congregation who have died:

- Alice Johnson

Those on our prayer list who have died:

- Virginia Adams (*Norm Adams' mother*)
- Mike Arena (*friend of the Sjodin family*)
- Richard Coluzzi (*Seth Coluzzi's father*)
- Virginia DeRosa (*friend of Connie Danielson*)
- John Hollenbach (*cousin of Susan Pintus*)
- Hazel Keeney (*grandmother of Emily Codner*)
- Erika Klemm (*friend of the Gaisers*)
- Rita Lemon (*friend of Susan and Paul Pintus*)
- Andrew Rundle (*cousin and nephew to the Nederhoffs*)
- John Schezer (*father of J.D. and Delsi Castellano*)
- Arian Wiley (*Penny Alexander's Aunt*)
- Norman Wroe (*cousin of Carol Hansen*)



One year ago, on November 29, 2015, our sister congregation Santuario Luterano held its first worship service. November 27 of this year, the first Sunday in Advent, will mark their first anniversary. Santuario is doing very well offering Spanish language worship every Sunday at 5 pm, a confirmation program for youth; and they are helping to coordinate an ESL program on Mondays and Wednesdays in cooperation with the Waltham Public Schools. Pastor Angel Marrero will be leading worship on Sunday morning, November 13 when Pastor Maehl is away leading the annual Fall retreat. You may wish him, and others, a happy anniversary!

Election Eve Worship

Monday, November 7
6:30 PM

Christ Episcopal Church
750 Main Street, Waltham

Join us as we gather for prayer, reflection on scripture, and joining together in the Lord's Supper on the eve of the election of a new president of the United States.

This service is a collaboration among Christ Episcopal Church, First Lutheran Church, and Santuario Luterano; with Pastor Maehl preaching, Padre Ángel Marrero presiding at Communion, and The Rev. Sara Irwin from Christ Church hosting.

Walking Together in God's Love

Editors Note: Two members of the congregation shared a piece of their faith story at the beginning of our 10:30 am worship service on two Sundays in October. Their words are printed below. Our thanks to Susan and Eben for their courage to speak and their faithful witness to God.

Temple Talk by Susan Pintus

Given Sunday, October 16

Like many in this congregation, I did not grow up Lutheran. In fact, as a Quaker growing up in a Catholic neighborhood in Baltimore, Lutherans seemed more similar to Catholics than to my denomination and faith beliefs. But that was before I came to First Lutheran, where I found more emphasis on God's grace and love, on social justice, and on living one's faith, and where I also found a church where the members of the congregation shared actively in the ministry.

I continued to come to First Lutheran because of Pastor Maehl's thoughtful and thought-provoking sermons, the music, fostered by Cynthia's talent, and the world view shared by so many here. I fell in love with the Wednesday night gatherings and children's choir (this was 6+ years ago). At the end of each evening, the children actively led the evening worship, which included prayers they offered for their own community and world. I found a deeper understanding of the church seasons through the Advent and Lenten midweek services and the Easter Vigil. In periods of stress especially, I realized how participation in this church community had enriched me.

I am amazed at the richness of activities of this congregation. I admire those who insisted not that long ago that a small struggling congregation should continue and could grow, and it has! I loved the fact that our last capital campaign included a tithe to support a struggling church in Dorchester. I have been enriched by the internship program. As a gardener, I like the metaphor of nurturing seeds here that bear fruit and spread, enriching other communities. And I see the impact that each of those interns and every member of this community has had on the life and growth of this congregation.

In a moment of weakness and leap of faith, I agreed to teach Sunday School early in my time here. I

Temple Talk by Eben Rauhut

Given Sunday, October 23

I grew up as a Pastor's son. You've probably heard how this feels like living in a fishbowl. There were certain things that were always implicitly expected: ways I should behave in public, views I should espouse, and of course being there faithfully every Sunday morning (though going with my friends to the Lutheran church across the street once in a while was never discouraged). I was confirmed in the church where my father served for eight years, and had Christian values instilled in me my whole life, yet my faith journey really began when I left for college and was no longer under pressure to conform to my expected role. While in college, a personal crisis in my own family back home and the response of the community forced me to confront the reality that Christian or not, we are all flawed, and that deeply held convictions sometimes cause otherwise well intentioned children of God to behave in very un-Christian ways. During this same time, I was trying to figure out what I really believe, and what bearing that has on my life. While away from home, I had drifted from the habit of attending worship regularly, though I had occasionally explored other Christian faith traditions mostly out of curiosity. The inexplicable feeling of "missing something" kept me coming back; perhaps in small part because of my love of music, but more likely because of a spiritual need was not being met.

I had been surrounded by community during my formative years, but had somehow along the way forgotten how important being in community is to personal happiness. In a secular context, prior to moving to Massachusetts, Sarah and I have lived in

(Susan Pintus Temple Talk Continued)

learned that I do not have a passion for teaching. And I could have used one of those five-year-olds to help a

craft-challenged adult with the craft setup! Luckily, the kids all survived the experience, relatively unscathed, I believe. The gift to me was the opportunity to know those children better and I have enjoyed watching each of them grow into amazing young adults.

It has been a pleasure to watch all the kids mature over the years, including being able to vicariously experience the national youth gatherings. I've enjoyed getting to know other parishioners, especially through the Tables of Eight dinners where we could gather socially and informally for a longer time, and also through retreats, the El Salvador Habitat trip, the choir, and the Justice and Service Team activities.

This community is rich in diversity and deep in faith. A few years ago, I considered a job which would have meant moving to another state. Thinking about how much I would miss the community of First Lutheran was one of the most important factors in not pursuing the opportunity.

My upbringing emphasized a responsibility to support religious, social justice, and environmental causes. My parents, in turn, were influenced in this belief by their parents and grandparents. I believe God calls me to share my resources, which have come through God, to help make the world a better place and this support is as fundamental a responsibility as my food and shelter. Central to that sharing is an obligation to support my church as it spreads the gospel message.

While words like responsibility and obligation carry a whiff of coercion, that is not at all what I experience. Such sharing might have started as a challenge to myself. But I have found, especially in my support of First Lutheran, that my financial support of this community rewards me immeasurably with rich blessings. I see all that we have accomplished and all that we could accomplish, and this propels me to want to increase my support each year. I invite you to prayerfully consider growing your support to this ministry as well.

(Eben Rauhut Temple Talk Continued)

one of the most densely populated regions of the US for 5½ years, yet felt more lonely and disconnected than ever before simply because people didn't spend the time and effort to establish and maintain personal connections.

By the time we were looking for a congregation in this area, we had a fairly good idea what was important to us: a strong music program, a good diversity in age and background of the congregation, inspiring and thought-provoking sermons on Sunday morning, but most importantly, a church family connected with the local and world community in meaningful ways. We've found this and so much more at First Lutheran; a tight-knit yet welcoming and inclusive community, always changing as new people join and bring in new ideas and talents. We're a congregation that is not afraid to try new things, and of course fail sometimes, and we're empowered and encouraged to lead in efforts about which we're passionate. As it relates to stewardship, we all have demands on us outside of church; but we're encouraged to give freely of our time and talents when we can and recognize when it's "our turn"; not out of a sense of obligation, but out of a joyful heart. I believe also that we are stewards of our own faith tradition. The process of innovation as it relates to worship and interactions with the local and global communities within the confines and guidance of our church doctrine is a very healthy sign of a congregation that is poised to remain relevant in the community in the long run, and this is something that we seem to do so naturally at First Lutheran.

I'm still a work in progress, as we all are, but I feel that First Lutheran has taught me so much already about what it means to belong in community and to share joyously with that community and to the greater work of the church, and I thank all of you for this opportunity and privilege.

Walking Together in God's Love

Prayer Concerns



Members of our First Lutheran Community: Fran Albrecht; Christina Danielson; Mimi Ham, Rosy Hebert, Ray Jahrling; Bill Kalke; Kathryn McCowan; Cynthia Niiler; Pamela Sperry.

Friends and Family: the Barazi family (*friends of the Biter's*); Brown family (*friends of the Flinner/Hoff family*); Christiansen family (*friends of Jennifer Lambert*); Steve Connearney (*friend of First Lutheran*); Patricia Eversole (*aunt of Peter Pinch*); Irma Fox and family (*Gloria Atherton's sister*); Gail Hoftender (*sister of Geri Nederhoff*); Norma Huisman (*aunt of Brad Nederhoff*); Duke Katterheinrich (*LuAnn Kimker's father*); Ellen Katterheinrich (*LuAnn Kimker's mom*); Kurt Kresge (*step-father of Peter Pinch*); Tom Lividoti (*friend of Susan and Paul Pintus*); Eudeen MacSweeney (*friend of Rut Johnson*); Ann Manz (*niece of Susan and Paul Pintus*); Helen Marquedant (*friend of Paul and Susan Pintus*); Vicki Ostoff (*sister-in-law of Geri Nederhoff*); Sally Raymond (*Jen Biter's mom*); Bob and Martha Rediehs (*uncle and aunt of Ann Sjodin*); Stacey Reed (*sister of Penny Alexander*); Doug Sewich (*brother-in-law of Meg and Tom Maehl*); Brian and Debbie Stoops (*parents of Eben Rauhut's sister-in-law*); Carol Sukow (*Cathy Sukow's mom*); Michael Veit (*friend of Paul and Susan Pintus*).

For those who grieve: the family and friends of Ed Kalke (*brother of Bill Kalke*)

For our partners: For the Rev. Ángel Marrero and Santuario Luterano, the Spanish speaking Lutheran congregation in Waltham. For other organizations we actively support: the Waltham Family School, The Waltham Community Day Center, Chaplains on the Way, the Waltham Alliance to Create Housing, and ELCA World Hunger.

If you would like to add (or remove) a name from the prayer list, please inform the church office

Gottesdienst

German Language Worship Service

When?

Every 1st Sunday of the Month
Worship at 2:00 pm and Coffee Hour at 3:00 pm

Where?

Faith Lutheran Church
311 Broadway
Cambridge, MA

Why?

To worship God, to bring together cultures,
and to be a community following Jesus' example



Order Your
Poinsettias

I/we would like to make a contribution to:

- Red Poinsettia(s)
 White Poinsettia(s)

At \$7.50 a plant for a total of \$_____

As a Memorial Gift
In Memory of _____
Given by _____

As a Living Tribute
In Honor of _____
Given by _____

Name _____

Email (or Phone #) _____

Poinsettias will be used to decorate the sanctuary for our Christmas Eve service. You may take them home afterwards.

THE DEADLINE FOR ORDERING POINSETTIAS IS
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4

Please complete this form and return it with your payment to the church office or you may put it in the offering plate.