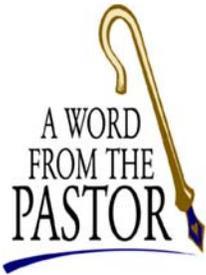


The Messenger

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

September 2017
781-893-6563
tmaehl@rcn.com



We have nothing, but ...

I find myself thinking about the story recorded in Matthew 14:31-21 often titled "Jesus feeds the multitudes" (5,000 men plus women and children). The backdrop of this story is the violence of this world, as Jesus has just learned that his cousin, John the Baptist, has been unjustly beheaded for daring to criticize Herod, a man with great political power. Someone might expect Jesus to respond by calling down fire from heaven upon Herod; but instead Jesus withdraws for a time of prayer and then emerges, filled with compassion, and begins healing those suffering from illness, disease, and the effects of the political oppression of the day.

In the center of the story we find a dialogue between Jesus and his disciples. They point out that the crowds who have come for healing are getting hungry and they ask Jesus to dismiss them in order that the crowds might go somewhere else to get food. Surprisingly, however, Jesus replies, "You give them something to eat." To which the disciples respond, "*We have nothing, but ...* these five loaves of bread and two fish." Jesus then says, "Bring them to me." Jesus then takes the little the disciples have offered; he blesses, breaks, and distributes it; and behold all are fed.

It seems to me that this is an apt image for our life together as church. The backdrop to our life together is the violence and the suffering of this world; with thousands displaced in Houston, Texas and elsewhere; with hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants who came to the US as young children and who are now teenagers and adults living in fear of deportation; with some in this nation unshamed to publicly wave a Nazi flag, and the list could go on.

And our response? We withdraw Sunday after Sunday for worship together, praying that God will intervene in the affairs of this world; and, at least for some of us, praying that God would inspire a measure of Christ-like compassion and courage in our own hearts. Then too, we keep bringing to Jesus our "*Nothing, but.*" *Nothing but* our small voice in worship and in the workplace. *Nothing but* a bit of time for another person in our church, neighborhood, family, school, or workplace. *Nothing but* our modest offerings of participation, talents, and money.

"Bring them to me," Jesus instructs. Then he blesses them and they are shared; and somehow, in ways beyond our ability to fully grasp, not only are we fed, but something of this world's fear, brokenness, and suffering is addressed. Jesus does this! Nevertheless, it is our "*Nothing but ...*" that he uses to do so.

Thank you for the gifts you offer for Christ to bless and share with our church community and with the world; especially for the gift of your presence. Please, I urge you, make an effort to participate in worship life of First Lutheran (as you are able) this fall. The "*nothing but your presence*" in the life of the church is significant!

I pray that God will continue to use our faith community for the sake of the healing of the world. I pray that God will bless each of you in the burdens you carry. So too, I pray that God will continue to lead each of us into places of quiet communion with God where, like Jesus, compassion and courage is stirred, in order that and our lives too may be an a pleasing offering to God for the sake of the world.

Faithfully, Pastor Maehl



Sunday Worship Schedule

8:15 and 10:30 am on September 10 & 17

9:30 on September 24 followed by:

- **Fall Clean Up**, for one hour only
(*washing windows, polishing pews, etc.*)
- **Church Picnic** (see page 2)

Nurturing Faith

Sunday School 9:15 am

We offer three Sunday school classes for children: ages 3 through Kindergarten led by Heather Fahey and Emily Sjodin; 1st - 3rd grades led by Isabella van der Weide and Marquette Alexander; and 4th - 6th grades led by LuAnn Kimker. Roughly once a month the classes combine for an "Art Sunday" project.

Sunday school begins on September 10. Note, there is no Sunday school on the last Sunday of the month when we have one worship service at 9:30 am followed by a community event.

If you have Sunday school aged children, please consider bringing them regularly to worship and Sunday school, so that their engagement with the Biblical stories in community might nurture their faith and shape their view of themselves, God, and the world.

Confirmation

We begin a two-year confirmation program on Sunday, September 10 for youth in 7th, 8th, and 9th grade. Class meets on Sunday mornings at 9:15 am, with a Sunday afternoon trip or activity roughly once a month. Pastor Maehl will lead the class in the fall and Vicar John will lead the class in the new year.

Adult Forum Faith by the Senses

Vicar John will be leading a five part series on exploring faith through the five senses: touch, taste, sight, hearing, and smell. These senses are how we interact with the physical world around us, but they are also major parts in how we perceive our faith. The series will start on September 10th with the sense of touch to compliment God's Work, Our Hands Sunday. Join us on Sundays at 9:15 am. Come! Taste and see... touch, smell, and hear that the Lord is good!

Wednesday Morning Bible Study

Our midweek Bible Study is moving from Tuesday to Wednesday mornings at 10:00 am. This year we will use what is called the Narrative Lectionary as a guide for our study and conversation.

The Narrative Lectionary is a four-year cycle of readings. The texts include the major episodes in Scripture. They are arranged in a narrative sequence to help people see Scripture as a story that has coherence and a dynamic movement:

- From September to mid-December the texts begin with the early chapters of Genesis, move through the stories of Israel's early history, the exodus, the kings, prophets, exile and return.
- From Christmas to Easter there is sustained reading of one of the four gospels.
- From Easter to Pentecost the texts are chosen from Acts and Paul's letters.

All are welcome to join in.

First Lutheran Church Picnic

Sunday, September 24
12:00 – 4:00 PM



Hosted by the Maehls and
Nederhoffs
in their adjoining yards
between 1714 Trapelo Rd and
1 Leslie Rd, Waltham.

Hamburgers, hot dogs, rolls, etc., provided
Please bring the following:
A dish to share, your own drinks and chairs
Lawn games are welcome, too.

Drop off can be done at either house.
Main parking on Hobbs Brooks Rd or Leslie Rd.

Nurturing Faith

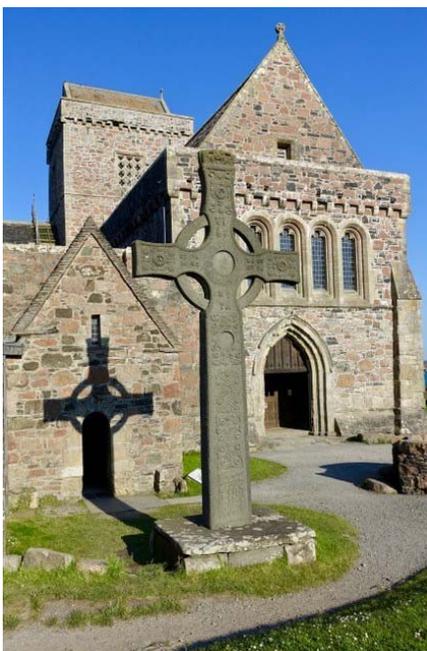
Sabbatical



The evening before my first day back at church, I felt like a kid, excited about the first day of school. After being away for 3 months, I was looking forward to seeing my church family and getting to work. I am truly thankful for the community I have here. I return, refreshed and excited for creative ministry.

Study

I spent three weeks in St. Paul, MN, where my primary focus was the organ. I took 6 lessons during this time and spent about 5 hours a day practicing the organ. Also—between travel segments—I spent about 4 weeks at home where again, my primary focus was on the organ. What a privilege to have the time to do this! I feel I got a good start on some new repertoire and a foundation for some new technique. In addition I thoroughly enjoyed some guidance in ways to work creatively with hymns. I am excited about sharing some of the music I have learned and about building on this foundation.



Worship

Over the three months, I had the opportunity to worship with 15 different communities. I worshipped with local Lutheran and Episcopal congregations. I worshipped in grand cathedrals in London and Edinburgh. I worshipped in an ancient abbey on the tiny Isle of Iona. Each experience was unique, and yet at the core the same. Each experience provided insights, some small and more logistical in nature, others, perhaps, more profound. After worshipping every Sunday, in the same place for 21 years, at a service that I helped to plan and lead, having this varied worship experience was amazing!

Travel

I spent a week in England and a week in Scotland, traveling with my sister. In England we were part of an organized tour, exploring English summer gardens. In Scotland, we rented a car and set off on our own, exploring the Scottish highlands. Then Elise and I made our way out to the Isle of Iona, she stayed for the day and then left me for my week at the Abbey with the Iona Community. Each day held many wonders. I often couldn't believe I was actually having a chance to do this.



Vacation

In August I spent 2 weeks in Maine and New Hampshire, hiking, kayaking, swimming, and generally just relaxing. This was time where I wasn't trying to be productive—time to recharge the battery.



I can't express enough how thankful I am to all who made my sabbatical possible. To those who first suggested that this could happen, to those who contributed financially and those who filled in the gaps while I was away—**THANK YOU!!!**

Cynthia Niiber (Director of Music & Parish Secretary)

Doing Justice, Serving Others

God's Work Our Hands Sunday, September 10

On this day we join with thousands of other Lutheran congregations in engaging in acts of service. Specifically we will be:

Packing gift baskets for 1st Responders in Waltham. Following each worship service there will be an opportunity to sign cards for police, fire fighters, and EMTs. Following the second service food baskets will be prepared for the six fire stations, the police headquarters, and for the Cataldo Ambulance company in Waltham.

Preparing Blankets for Lutheran World Relief. During the adult forum there will be opportunity to help prepare blankets to be shared with others through Lutheran World Relief.

Blessing Art Kits. During the children's sermon at each service, children will be invited to bless art kits that were prepared at Vacation Bible School and will be shared with families of the Waltham Family School in Waltham.

Hurricane Relief

We continue to pray for those affected by Hurricane Harvey, even as (on the day of writing this) we are praying for those who might be effected by Hurricane Irma. For those seeking to make donations, Lutheran World Relief is one efficient way to do so as 100% of all gifts received are used for relief efforts; (whereas some other agencies spend large sums in advertising and marketing). Also, if you are a member of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans you may give through Thrivent and have your gift matched. Any gifts given to First Lutheran marked "Hurricane Relief" will be forwarded to Lutheran World Relief. May God bless those who are suffering the effects of the storms.

National Youth Gathering June 27 - July 1, 2018 Houston, Texas

Every three years, 30,000 high school youth and their adult leaders from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gather for a week of faith formation known as the ELCA Youth Gathering. Through days spent in interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, young people grow in faith and are challenged and inspired to live their faith in their daily lives. We are participating! Here are some important details.

Who can go? Youth who will be preparing to enter high school next summer (current 8th graders) and older, up to and including those who will have just graduated from high school (current 12th graders).

Who will be leading the trip? Vicar John Barton and Jennifer Lambert are the key leaders. Our plan is that along with Jennifer and Vicar John, Pastor Maehl and another female chaperone will also be attending.

What is the cost? We ask all participants to contribute something, however the bulk of the cost will be carried by the congregation through fund raising efforts and individual gifts. Note that donations marked "*Youth Gathering*" are welcome any time!

When is registration? We are planning to register in early October. Thus we need to know by October 1 the youth who are planning on attending.

What about the effects of Hurricane Harvey? Every National Youth Gathering includes opportunity for community service. Over the coming year the event planners will be working with the City of Houston to find appropriate ways for our youth to be engaged in helping others as Houston cleans up, repairs, and rebuilds after the recent devastating storm.

Doing Justice, Serving Others

Property Committee Update



New Tower Doors have been installed! Our thanks to Bill Treiss the master craftsman who built them, to Norman Adams for coordinating the project, to members of the Nelson Board who initiated this project in honor of Reinhold Carlson, and to all who made donations.

Additional Door Related Projects: New exit hardware was installed on the new doors, and we have contracted with Paul Danielson to refinish the doors to Founder's Hall so that they too will look new.

A New Sewer and Water Line were installed to the Parish House (the building that includes our nursery, the music director's office, and a second floor Nelson Apartments tenant. The sewer line was paid for by the city of Waltham, whereas the water main was paid for by the Nelson Apartments. Our thanks to Dennis Ostrander for overseeing this project; and to the members of the Nelson Board for the funding this project

Lawn and gardens: Our thanks to those who have helped with our gardens over the summer particularly to Helen Yarbrough, Michelle Landstrom, Ardeith Froeberg, and Susan & Paul Pintus. Also our thanks to Richard Pinch and Isaac Maehl who have mowed the lawn over the month of August.

Furnace Update: We are still working through bids for the replacement of our heating system. We have suitable bids from firms that could perform the work next summer, and we are still in conversation with one firm that might be able to do the work this year (before the cold sets in). We'll keep you posted.

Furnace Appeal & Capital Improvements

Our thanks to all who have made pledges and or contributions to our furnace appeal and/or to our capital improvement fund over the past three months. We are grateful to have \$61,911.35 in our Furnace Fund, and enough in our Capital Improvement Fund to complete the Tower Doors Initiative. Thanks to the following donors:

Charles Benson
 Bud Crouse
 Susan Cutright
 Daniel Adams
 Norman and Mary Ellen Adams
 Connie Danielson
 Donald Maehl
 Tom and Meg Maehl
 Anne and Marty Dugan
 Diana and Roger Dupuis
 John and Ruth Elander
 Don and Natalie Frail
 Ernie and Marielu Gaiser
 Cindy Gelinis
 Mimi Ham
 Steve Hoff and Kat Flinger
 Rosy Hebert
 June Jahrling
 Dick and Rut Johnson
 Christine Kelleher
 Jennifer Lambert
 Kathryn and Derick McCowan
 Britta and Don McNemar
 Bill and Kerry Meaney
 Scott and Cat Niemann
 Cynthia Niiler
 Juri and Joan Niiler
 Dennis and Janice Ostrander
 Prakash and Inpakala Pandian
 Peter and Catherine Pinch
 Paul and Susan Pintus
 Sarah and Eben Rauhut
 Rod Rietze
 Gail and Rick Sanders
 Ted and Ann Sjodin
 Doris Speer
 Clarisse van der Feltz
 Christy and Matt Warner

Encouraging One Another



Chancel Choir

Have you wondered about joining the choir? Here's what you need to know.

- Men and Women, post-confirmation and up (If you sing hymns on Sunday you can sing in the choir.)
- We are a group that Sings, Prays, Laughs, Cares, and Leads
- Rehearsals are held at church in Founder's Hall
- First rehearsal, Tuesday 9/12
7:15 - 8:45 pm
Continuing about every other week
- We sing to praise and pray to God; in joy, in distress, in good times and bad. In singing we can express more than we can with words alone. We all are invited to sing during worship (parts of the liturgy and hymns); the choir adds to that singing by preparing special music that may let the listeners enter into a psalm, or experience a prayer in a different way. The choir's main task is preparing music to enrich our worship; however, the choir is also a small group that cares for each other. It is a good way to get to know others by working together towards a common goal.

We need you! Please consider singing with the choir this year. If finding time is a challenge, choose a season and join us for just part of the year.

Join us!

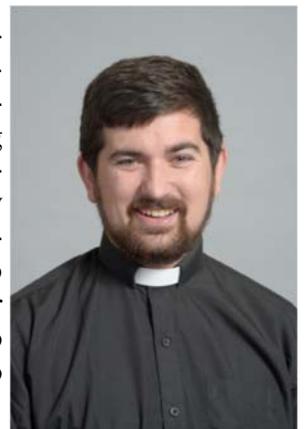


From the Vicar

Hi! My name is John Barton and I will be the intern this year at First Lutheran Church. I am a final-year student in the Masters of Divinity program at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (PLTS) in Berkeley, California. I grew up in the Lutheran Church and am a member of University Lutheran Church in Tempe, Arizona. I am engaged to my fiancé Sarah and have a cat named Bentley. I am originally from Tempe where I was born and raised and where I attended undergrad at Arizona State University. Also, although I am not from New England my family has roots here as ancestrally I am a descendant of William Brewster, one of the elders for the pilgrims of the Mayflower and who is the namesake of Brewster, MA.

As an important part of my faith journey, I was a camp counselor for five summers at Lutheran Retreats, Camps, and Conferences in Southern California. My time as a part of camping ministry was a major part of hearing and discerning my call to ordained ministry. Camping and campus ministries were great fun and foundational for my faith formation, connection with faith communities, and relationship with God. Since I was young, I have split my professional sports allegiances between my Arizona Diamondbacks and Arizona Cardinals with the Boston Red Sox and New England Patriots. Some of my other passions are playing soccer and volleyball, creating and viewing art, and everything Star Wars.

I am so excited to be serving the people of First Lutheran this year! I am looking forward to learning everything about the congregation and especially our mutual passion for justice and service! Please do not hesitate to come over and introduce yourself to me, I cannot wait to get to know you all!



Walking Together in God's Love



Prayer Concerns

Members of our First Lutheran Community: Ernie Gaiser; Christina Danielson; Connie Danielson; Mimi Ham; Rosy Hebert; Lorne MacArthur; Kathryn McCowan; Cynthia Niiler.

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); Peggy Codner (Tristan Codner's mother); Steve Connearney (friend of First Lutheran); Magnus Forsman (great-nephew of Rut Johnson); Pelle Geholm (twin brother of Rut Johnson); Joann Green (mother of a colleague of Sarah Rauhut); Ray Hauck (great nephew of Rosy Hebert); Gail Hoftender (sister of Geri Nederhoff); Norma Huisman (aunt of Brad Nederhoff); Duke Katterheinrich (LuAnn Kimker's father); Ellen Katterheinrich (LuAnn Kimker's mom); Eudeen MacSweeney (friend of Rut Johnson); Stephen Manz (nephew of Paul and Susan Pintus); Helen Marquedant (friend of Paul and Susan Pintus); Sally Raymond (Jen Biter's mom); Martha Rediehs (aunt of Ann Sjodin); Stacey Reed (sister of Penny Alexander); Doug Sewich (brother-in-law of Meg and Tom Maehl);

Thanksgiving: Dale Walsh (friend of Paul and Susan Pintus, recovery from back surgery).

For those who grieve: the family and friends of Bob Rediehs (uncle of Ann Sjodin); the family and friends of Chet Cole (uncle of Cynthia Niiler and brother-in-law to Joan and Juri Niiler).

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/remove a name to/from the prayer list, please inform the church office.

Our Thanks to ...

Sarah Rauhut for providing secretarial duties, and to **Catherine Pinch, Sandra Hebert, Adam Smith,** and **Lindsay Albert** for playing the piano in worship during Cynthia's sabbatical.

Jennifer Lambert for facilitating Vicar John's move; and for all those who donated and helped transfer furniture and food into the apartment.

To those who have offered to serve on the Intern Support Committee over the coming year: **Jennifer Lambert, Erik Diaz, Eric Korpalski, Britta McNemar, Prakash Pandian, and Susan Pintus.**

Celebrations



Fall Adult Retreat

November 10-12

Our annual Fall Retreat is scheduled for November 10-12, Friday evening through Sunday morning. As in years past the event will be held in the Blue Gentian Lodge in Londonderry, Vermont. The full cost is \$165 per person, though we invite participants to pay whatever they choose with any deficit being made up through scholarship funds. The fee includes two nights lodging and four meals.

With times of fellowship, study, prayer, discussion, quiet, (and for some moments of raucous laughter in the evening) it is a wonderful opportunity for rest and renewal. It's also a good opportunity to deepen relationships with God and with others. Please sign up in the Pearson Room if you plan on attending.

Coffee Hour Hosts Needed

Central to our Sunday hospitality is our coffee fellowship following worship. We are in need of hosts to make coffee or bring goodies for after our 10:30 am service. Hosting basically entails bringing simple food to share (baked goods and/or fruit), and/or setting up, making and serving the coffee. (The coffee itself is provided by the church). More detailed instructions are available in the church office and the sign-up sheet is in the Pearson Room or online at

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080b44a8ac2ca64-coffee>

Your help would be appreciated.

First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waltham

Ministers: The people of the congregation

Staff: The Rev. Thomas E. Maehl, Pastor
tmaehl@rcn.com

Ms. Cynthia Niiler,
Director of Music and Parish Secretary
cniilerchurch@rcn.com

Vicar John Barton, Intern
jbarton@ses.plts.edu

Worship:

8:15 and 10:30 am
(9:30 am on September 24)

Learning Hour:

9:15 am

Council:

Kevin Dickert, President
Brad Nederhoff, Vice President
Eben Rauhut, Secretary
Scott Niemann, Treasurer
Erika Jerram
Jennifer Lambert
Angela Neal
Janice Ostrander
Susan Pintus
Ann Sjodin

Visit us on the Web at:

www.firstlutheranwaltham.org



and on Facebook at First Lutheran Church - Waltham, MA

Our Mission: We discern that Jesus Christ is calling us to:

Walk together in God's love: nurturing faith, doing justice, serving all.