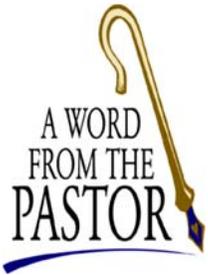


The Messenger

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 2017
781-893-6563
tmaehl@rcn.com



*"There is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his **grace** as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Romans 3:22b-24)*

This as you many know is the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. At the heart of the Reformation was a renewed understanding of **grace**. What is grace? More importantly, what does it mean to live a life shaped by grace?

The dictionary defines grace as:

1. *elegance or beauty of form, manner, or action:*
2. *a pleasing or attractive quality or endowment:*
3. *favor or goodwill.*
4. *a manifestation of favor, especially by a superior:*
5. *mercy; clemency; pardon*

Martin Luther, who formerly had been plagued by his own sense of unworthiness, came to see that when it comes to our relationship with God, it's not about our own worthiness, rather it's all about grace: God's *favor and goodwill*; God's *mercy, clemency, and pardon*; an *elegant and beautiful* gift from our loving God. And so we come to worship where in Word and Sacrament, grace is spoken, sung, washed over us, and poured into us.

But what about when we are not in church, what about in our daily life? What does it mean to live a life shaped by grace? What might it mean to have homes and workplaces where along with appropriate expectations and accountability, there is also an ample measure of grace?

It seems to me that being bearers of grace is more of an attitude rather than a rule. When I reflect on the particularly gracious people I know, those who come to mind are people of faith who have a humility and gentleness about them, and who strive to re-

sist the sinful tendency to judge others; even while they may be strong advocates for justice who carry high expectations for accountability. One way to grow into a life shaped by grace is strive to follow the example of people such as these.

On Sunday, November 5 we celebrate All Saints Sunday. This is a day we formally remember loved ones who have died. So too, it is a day for paying attention to "the saints" living and dead; that is those who have served as examples of living a life shaped by grace. Who is that for you?

One of my "saints" is the author Frederick Buechner, whose writings have shaped me for decades now. He speaks of grace and strives to live a life shaped by it. In his book, *Now and Then, A Memoir of Vocation*, he writes,

"Listen to your life. See it for the fathomless mystery it is. In the boredom and pain of it, no less than in the excitement and gladness: touch, taste, smell your way to the holy and hidden heart of it, because in the last analysis all moments are key moments, and life itself is grace."

In this time of angry, polarized politics, I pray for grace. Particularly I pray that in our ongoing life together as church, God will continue to bless us with a spirit of grace; and that this will flow through us to others in our homes, our work places, and our communities; (even as we continue to set high expectations for accountability in ourselves and our leaders).

Lastly, I pray that grace may surround you, abound in you, carry you, and deliver you.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

Faithfully, Pastor Maehl

Nurturing Faith

Adult Forum Sundays 9:15 am

On November 5 and 19 - Vicar John will lead a program on Martin Luther. Using portions of a recent PBS Documentary on Luther, the discussion will center on the events leading up to the Protestant Reformation, Martin Luther's role, and the how it expanded beyond Luther and his German homeland.

November 12 - This is the weekend of our annual fall retreat; thus Vicar John and Pastor Maehl will be away. Pastor Ángel Marrero will lead a discussion centered on the effects that the storm and relief efforts have had upon his family, his church community, and the peoples of Puerto Rico. Note that the confirmation students will join with the adult forum on this day.

Proverbs and Provisions

Tuesday November 7 & December 5

We gather at 6:30 pm at Garcia Brogan's, 240 Moody St, Waltham. With \$2 tacos available, our conversation centers on living our faith in daily life. We begin with a brief reading from Proverbs and then discuss how it intersects with the events facing our lives and our world today. Join us.



Fall Retreat November 10-12

FALL RETREAT We have 16 people signed up to attend our annual fall retreat at the Blue Gentian Lodge in Londonderry, Vermont. Pastor Ángel Marrero will preach and preside at both worship services that day.



Evening Prayer

Advent Wednesdays

December 6, 13, 20

Time?

As in years past we are planning on having a contemplative evening prayer service on the Wednesdays of Advent. We'd like input on the time 7:00 pm? 7:30 pm? Other? If you might be coming we'd appreciate your input?

Wednesday Morning Bible Study

10:00 - 11:30 am

We are discussing keys stories of the faith. No preparation is necessary. All are welcome to join us, regularly or occasionally. Our schedule for November is as follows:

November 1: God Calls David

1 Samuel 16:1-13

November 8: God Speaks to Elijah

1 Kings 19:1-18

November 15: Amos: Justice Rolls Down

Amos 1:1-2; 5:14-15, 21-24

November 22: *Off for Thanksgiving*

November 29: Jeremiah Letter to Exiles

Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14

Doing Justice, Serving All



Sharing God's Abundance!

Join First Lutheran Church-Waltham in the **2017 Thanks For Giving** as we collect critical needs items for *Ascentria Care Alliance* (formerly Lutheran Social Services). These items will be shared with refugees who have been re-settled through Ascentria in Central and Western Massachusetts.

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 26.

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

Furnace Update

The new furnace has been installed! It is now up and running. There still are some small details to attend to, like the installation of new programmable thermostats; nevertheless, we have heat and we are grateful! Our thanks to Norman Adams for overseeing the project and for all who have made contributions. For those who have not already done so, if you have made a pledge to the furnace fund we ask that you please fulfill it, if you are able, by the end of November. Thank you!

Stewardship Update

As of November 1, we have received 30 pledges totaling \$170,000. Thank you to all who have responded thus far! Our goal is \$225,000 and we encourage others who have not yet done so to please 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.

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. Along with ease for the giver, Simply Giving contributions make the job of the counters and the financial secretary easier. Please contact the church office if you would like an authorization form.

Balcony Renovation

The renovation of our balcony has begun. We are turning the balcony into a "Prayer Loft." The renovation includes the building of two level platforms to alleviate the slope, the removal of old carpets, and the refinishing of the hardwood floors. We also plan to have new furnishings. This project has been funded by a private donation designated for this purpose.

The Immigrant Experience Panel & Potluck

Wednesday, November 14th 6:00-8:00pm
First Parish, 50 Church Street, Waltham

First Parish Church invites us to join in an evening of compelling discussion about the immigrant experience in Waltham. You are invited to bring a dish to share from your cultural heritage. If attending, please send your RSVP to office@watchcdc.org or register online at www.watchcdc.org.

Doing Justice, Serving Others

El Salvador Trip Update August 11-19, 2018



We now have our dates confirmed. The plan is to help in the construction of a home in partnership with Habitat for Humanity.

The work will take place Monday through Friday and we will have time for sightseeing on the Sunday before and the Saturday following. If you have any interest in attending please contact Jennifer Lambert. Note that we welcome adults and youth age 16 or older if accompanied by a parent.

Our thanks to:

Ken and LuAnn Kimker and **Jennifer Lambert** for coordinating our fall trivia night held on October 21. We raised \$1,000 that was split between Puerto Rico relief efforts and our 2018 service trip to El Salvador. Thanks to all who participated.

The **Thursday morning knitters** for coordinating the handmade goods sale at our Reformation Day Luncheon. Through this, we raised \$540 to support our 2018 youth trip to the ELCA National Youth Gathering in Houston, Texas. In particular, our thanks to **Diana Dupuis** for the gorgeous quilts that were raffled.

Vicar John, Kevin Dickert, and **Lauren Frail** for leading the confirmation class sleepover on October 14th. All 10 confirmation students participated and report has it that they had a wonderful time.

Holly Diaz and **Ann Sjodin** for sharing stories from their faith journey during worship in October.



Luncheon and Silent Auction November 26

Support our Youth!

Mark your calendars! Following worship on November 26 we are planning luncheon and silent auction. The money raised from both the silent auction and the free-will lunch offering support the 2018 trip to the National Youth Gathering in Houston, Texas.

Lunch Will Be Provided using funds from a Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Action Grant. So instead of bringing pot-luck food to share, please bring a contribution for a free-will offering.

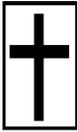
Please consider donating items in good condition, gift certificates, services, etc. and please consider inviting a friend to join you for worship and the luncheon. Items for the silent auction may be brought to the church. For the time being they will be stored in the youth room, and then eventually on the stage in Founder's Hall.

Winter Clothing Drive

We invite donations of winter clothing (*coats, hats, gloves, boots, etc*) to be shared with international students at Brandeis University (*many of whom have come from countries with warmer climates*) and with the children of the Waltham Family School. We will be accepting donations through November 19.

*"If you have two coats give one away,"
John the Baptist (Luke 3:11)*

Walking Together in God's Love



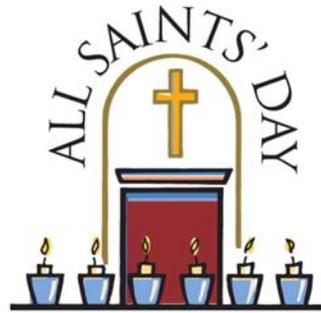
*From the
Vicar*

Happy November!

Again, thank you all for making my first two months serving the congregation warm and welcoming. In addition to enjoying the fall colors and activities, it has been a fun and busy time. Over the month of October, I had the honor and joy to do my second sermon for the congregation at the Baptism service for Charlotte Ostrander. As I said in the sermon, moments like that service of baptism and community are wonderful reminders of the light and love that God shows all of us and that God is with us, even amidst times of trouble that we have been seeing in the world. The weekend after that, all ten confirmation youth came together with Lauren Frail, Kevin Dickert, and me for the fall sleepover! We all joined together in sharing pizza, pumpkin carving, and playing games. The reports are in and the event was a success, thanks again to Lauren and Kevin for helping to pull it off.

Pastor Maehl has continued to help me get to know local organizations such as Chaplains on the Way, WATCH, and the Waltham Family School. It has been incredible to see all of the good people and groups doing such caring work in this community. It has been great to work with Pastor Marrero and Santuario Luterano, collaborating on the Evening Vespers service. It has been great to have discussion and learn from Pastor Marrero at the weekly "Two Priests and a Rabbi" group with Rabbi David Finkelstein and other members of the Waltham community. I am so thankful for and continue to be inspired by the many opportunities and ministries connected with First Lutheran that I have been able to plug into and learn from. Finally, I look forward to the Fall Retreat, Advent preparation, and everything else coming up in November.

Blessings, Vicar John



On Sunday November 5, 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:

- Grace Dahlin
- Joanne Guernsey
- Ray Jahrling
- Bill Kalke
- Cheryl Ricci

Those on our prayer list who have died:

- Chet Cole (uncle of Cynthia Niiler and brother-in-law to Joan and Juri Niiler)
- Marge DeRosa (*friend of the Kimker family*)
- Michael Kelleher (*cousin of James Kelleher*)
- Kurt Kresge (*step-father of Peter Pinch*)
- Robert McNemar (*father of Don McNemar*)
- Paul Oates (*friend of the Kimker's*)
- Vicki Ostoff (*sister-in-law of Geri Nederhoff*)
- Steve Pacifico (*friend of the Kimkers*)
- Bob Rediehs (uncle of Ann Sjodin)
- Jean Schmitz (*grandmother of Sarah Rauhut*)
- Michael Veit (*friend of Paul and Susan Pintus*)

Walking Together in God's Love



Prayer Concerns

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

Friends and 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); Norma Huisman (aunt of Brad Nederhoff); 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); Stacey Reed (sister of Penny Alexander); Doug Sewich (brother-in-law of Meg and Tom Maehl);

For those who grieve: the family and friends of Marge DeRosa (*friend of the Kimker family*)

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.



October 19th brought 12 of us together for sharing food and conversation. Pastor Ángel Marrero joined us for some of Rut's birthday cake and gave us an update on conditions in Puerto Rico. Our donations were gratefully received thanks to Padre Ángel's connections there. Good to know it went into needy hands.

Next month we may have lunch at Minuteman Technical School. They have delicious and reasonably priced meals served by the students. All are welcome to join us.



**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 3

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