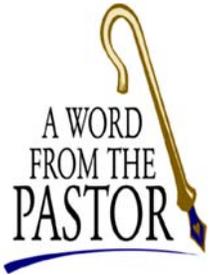


The Messenger

A newsletter of the people of First Lutheran Church, Waltham

The First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waltham
The Rev. Thomas E. Maehl, Pastor
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February 2018
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*The Spirit of Christ is within you.
Ponder that truth for just a moment.*

Paul makes this point in his letter to the Galatians saying, *“God has sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts.”* He then goes on to chastise the Christian community there for teaching that there are pre-requisites for this; for insisting the Christ comes only to those who keep certain holy days, dietary laws, or festivals. *“No!”* says Paul.

The season of Lent is approaching and once again we hear the annual Lenten call to repent; that is to strive to turn back to God. This call comes with the invitation to consider taking on traditional Lenten practices of prayer, self-denial, and generosity. *“Is this so that we may make our hearts worthy of Christ’s entry?”* someone may wonder. *“No,”* we hear Paul cry, *“We are never worthy, yet the Spirit of Christ is already within us!”*

So why recommit to prayer? Why give up something like alcohol, impatience, or a certain food? Why give more away? *Why?* Because along with the Spirit of Christ at work in us there are other forces too, what Paul lumps together and labels, *“the Flesh.”* According to Paul, the forces of *“the flesh,”* lead us toward jealousy, enmity, anger, strife, empty sexuality, quarrels, factions, drunkenness, and the like (Galatians 5:19-21). This is what imprisons us and robs us of life. *“On the other hand,”* Paul continues, *“the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, and self-control.”*

Here’s a suggestion for Lent. Pick one of the negative fruits of the flesh to deny, and/or one of the positive fruits of the Spirit to embrace. For instance, you may choose to try giving up jealousy for Lent, while at the same time taking on patience. If you do, have regular conversations with Jesus about how things are going and ask him for help; after all his Spirit is already at work in you.

Blessed Lent, Pastor Maehl

Keeping Lent

February 14 - Ash Wednesday, 7:30 pm

A bi-lingual (English and Spanish) service will be held jointly with the Santuario congregation, with Pastor Maehl and Pastor Marrero leading. The service will include confession and the optional imposition of ashes; and the receiving of Holy Communion.

February 15 - "Ash Thursday," 11:30 am

We will offer a service with the optional imposition of ashes. This is offered for those who come either for the Thursday knitting group and/or Senior Classics, and for anyone else who might find this service meaningful.

Lenten Wednesdays Conversation & Evening Prayer

We join with Santuario Luterano and Korean Hope Church in a joint mid-week Lenten program. Over the first three weeks, a pastor of one congregation will speak about the ministries of the congregation he serves.

Feb 21: Santuario Luterano

Feb 28: First Lutheran

Mar. 7: Korean Hope Church

The schedule is as follows:

6:45 Finger Food (Founder’s Hall)

7:00 Conversation (Founder’s Hall)

8:00 Evening Prayer (Founder’s Hall)

Please consider making Wednesday nights at First Lutheran part of your Lenten discipline.

Nurturing Faith



*From the
Vicar*

Discipline in a
Long-Distance Race

Do you see what this means—all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we'd better get on with it. Lay aside distractions, start running—and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honor, right alongside God. When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he plowed through. That will shoot adrenaline into your souls!

(Hebrews 12:1-3 The Message)

The Olympics are coming! The Olympics are coming! On February 9th, the Winter Olympic Games will open in Pyeongchang, South Korea. Growing up, it was always an exciting time when either the Summer or Winter Olympic Games rolled around. Each person in my family had their favorite events whether it was gymnastics or volleyball in the Summer Games, or figure skating and ski jumping in the Winter Games. The Olympics were always something to be looking forward to and cherished together as a family.

Nowadays, the Olympics still hold just as much of my attention and admiration. As I have grown, I increasingly appreciate having an event which simultaneously celebrates the diversity and interconnectivity of the world's multitude of people. This kind of peaceful, cooperative event is refreshing change up from the intercultural conflict and hate that seems to feature in world news all too often. Even the Olympic flag moves forward the idea of multicultural partnership. The flag shows the five equal, intertwined, multi colored rings signifying the five continents of the world, and with the white background, it also represents the six colors which appear on every national flag today.

The Olympic ideal is summarized by the term Olympism, which the Olympic organization defines as follows: "Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will, and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy found in effort, the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles." Olympism and the Olympics work against divisiveness and corruption present within all of its participating entities while celebrating their cultures and traditions that make them unique and special. This mentality of working for peace is something that can be universally accepted and supported, but in recent times seems to have not been seen as much.

With so many ethnicities, religions, and unique peoples coming together working towards the Olympic ideal, we as Christians can simultaneously appreciate the diversity and sportsmanship displayed in the Olympics as well as remembering our own traditions that make up the fabric of peoples there. We remember the example shown in Hebrews 12 that we have our own heroic figure who has also worked to promote peace and end division. Jesus has run the race and experienced the struggle which we have before us in making peace a reality. We can use his teachings and example to both have a great time rooting for our American athletes and then root for everyone else in the same race. That's the great thing about the Olympics and that's the great thing about our faith; we stand in our own reality and support those around us. And when we find it hard to do either we lean on Christ as our biggest fan and greatest supporter.

Vicar John Barton

Walking Together in God's Love

Annual Meeting Update

Our annual meeting was held on Sunday, January 28, highlights include:

Budget: We voted a budget of \$281,653. This budget allows for a sustained level of funding for all programs, along with a 3% raise for staff. We also are continuing our practice of sharing 10% of our offering and rental income with the wider church, and 0.75% with local organizations.

Intern: We voted to host an intern for the 2018-2019 academic year. The cost of an intern is expected to be roughly \$38,000. We currently have nearly \$25,000 in funds already given or committed; note this figure includes a generous pledge of \$10,000 from the board of the Nelson Memorial Apartments. We welcome donations to the "Intern Fund" at any time!

2017 Accomplishments: These include Cynthia's sabbatical, a return to hosting an intern after a 3-year hiatus, significant justice and service related projects, and major capital improvements. Justice and service efforts include: coordinating our 2nd annual children's community food walk, the installation of a "blessings box" outside the church for neighbors in need of food, and delivering more than 50 bags of personal care items to Ascentria (our ThanksForGiving drive). Capital Improvements include: (roughly) \$54,000 for the new furnace, \$20,000 for the new tower doors and related work, and \$10,000 for balcony renovations.

2018 Expectations: In the coming year we are looking forward to two major trips with five youth attending the National Youth Gathering in Houston in June, and a group participating in another Habitat for Humanity build in El Salvador in August. Also, we plan on continuing our strong support of programs for children and youth including: VBS, Sunday school, confirmation, and Camp Calumet summer camp scholarships. So too, we plan on maintaining our current schedule with two Sunday worship services except on the last Sunday of the month.

Elections: We elected Ann Sjodin, Janice Ostrander, and Susan Pintus to the church council; and Matt Jerram, Kerry Meaney, Geri Nederhoff, and Janice Ostrander to terms on the Board of the Nelson Apartments.

Annual Meeting Thank You's

Along with budgets, reports, and business, at our annual meeting we also had the opportunity to say thank you to several people for particular service.

Jennifer Lambert: Jennifer was thanked for her faithful service given through her vocation and the Church. A letter of commendation given her reads as follows:

With gratitude to God we offer special recognition to Jennifer Lambert for her faith which she lives out through dedicated leadership, service, and care: On Church Council, Justice & Service Team, and Intern Committees; as Coordinator of trips to El Salvador & National Youth Gatherings; as a servant and advocate of the wider Church (ELCA); through her vocation as an Orthoptist; and as a witness to Christ's Care of the poor in her daily life. Given this day, January 28, 2018 by First Lutheran Church, Waltham.

Jennifer was surprised with a video that was shown at the meeting that included greetings and words of thanks from: Bishop James Hazelwood (Jennifer serves on our synod council); two former interns, Pastor Timothy Ness and Pastor Ian Hill; Alexa Kimker and Katie Maehl (who both have participated in National Youth Gathering trips); a colleague who paid tribute to Jennifer's care-filled work as an Orthoptist, and a group from Habitat for Humanity in El Salvador. We gave Jennifer a gift bag that included a gift certificate to Mead Hall Restaurant in Cambridge and a year's subscription to the British magazine "Royalty" so that in between all her work and volunteer efforts she can indulge her delight in the upcoming wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle.

We also gave thanks to **Kevin Dickert** who has faithfully serves as president of the congregation; to **Scott Niemann** (treasurer) and **Peter Pinch** (financial secretary) for their efforts in coordinating the finances; and to **Norman Adams** for his tremendous efforts in overseeing our many and varied Capital Improvement Projects.

Doing Justice, Serving All

Justice & Service Update

Thanks to all who continue to donate food to our First Lutheran food pantry. We are now refilling the "Blessing Box" roughly once every week or two. For those who do not know, the "Blessing Box" is a former newspaper box, made of metal with spring loaded door. It was repainted by the upper elementary Sunday school class and installed outside by the main road. By putting it outside, neighbors have access to it anytime, day or night. Donations of non-perishable food may be brought to the church at any time and left in the Pearson Room. Thank you for sharing.

Mark your calendars for our next Children's Community Food Walk to be held at 11 am on Sunday, April 29. We began this two years ago and last year shared in the event with Temple Beth Israel in Waltham. This year we're hoping to expand to include other faith communities and organizations. The plan is to once again walk from Waltham Fields Community Farm on Beaver Street to Waltham Common, roughly 1.5 miles. Children may invite people to sponsor them; all money raised will support feeding programs in Waltham. Feel free to share with other organizations (like scouts); for more information, please contact Vicar John Barton.



Waltham Family School Fiesta

The annual Fiesta fundraiser for the Waltham Family School (WFS) is being held on Thursday March 15 from 6:00 - 8:30 pm at the Solea Restaurant on Moody Street in Waltham.. The WFS is one of our partner organizations and we have had a group attend in past years. We are hoping to sponsor a table and hope to have 6-8 people from First Lutheran participating. Tickets are \$75 per person. Please contact Pastor Maehl if you are interested.

Congregational Retreat to Camp Calumet March 9-11

Please consider joining this annual winter event. We currently have spots for 60 people. If you intend to participate, please sign up by February 11 so that we can request additional rooms if necessary.

Game Night Saturday, February 17 6:00 pm

We are planning an informal game night for February 17. We'll offer pizza and collect a free-will offering to cover the cost. Feel free to bring other snacks or drinks to share, as well as any games that spark your interest. The last game night had ping-pong, cards, Chronology, and dominos. What we play this time depends on the whim and will of those who come. Note that children are invited, however we are not providing designated child-care.

Last Sunday of the Month Sunday, February 25 9:30 One Service

Pot-Luck Luncheon following

Join us for worship and a fellowship event following. We are planning a fun inter-generational event that will help people of all ages get to know one another better. Please bring a food item to share for the pot-luck luncheon.



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.

Friends and Family: Robin Bordenca (*friend of Carol Hansen*); Christiansen family (*friends of Jennifer Lambert*); Steve Connearney (*friend of First Lutheran*); Donna (*friend of LuAnn Kimker*); Magnus Forsman (*great-nephew of Rut Johnson*); Pelle Geholm (*twin brother of Rut Johnson*); Norma Huisman (*aunt of Brad Nederhoff*); Terri Koopman (*aunt of Matt Jerram*); Emily Lewis and her parents (*friends of Paul and Susan Pintus*); 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*); Norma Jean Wiberg (*mother of a friend of LuAnn Kimker*).

For those who grieve: the family and friends of Walter Eisler (*friend of the Gaisers and the Pintuses*)

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.



Senior Classics

Our thanks to the Nelson Board for the delicious Christmas luncheon they provided for 28 seniors. The food, fun, songs led by Cynthia Niiler, and shared memories brought smiles to us all.

On January 18 we gathered with 12 seniors. Thanks to Helen and Larry Yarbrough for sharing a word game which brought quizzical faces and much laughter to all. Our next meeting is February 15, note the Ash Thursday service at 11:30 (*page 2*) and then we'll gather at noon. All are welcome.

Ardeith Froeberg

First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waltham

Ministers: The people of the congregation

Staff: The Rev. Thomas E. Maehl, Pastor
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Vicar John Barton, Intern
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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

Sunday Worship:

8:15 and 10:30 am
(9:30 am on February 25)

Sunday Learning Hour:

9:15 am

Visit us on the Web at:



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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.