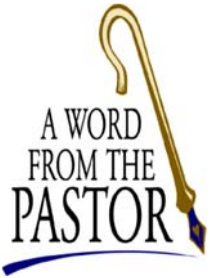


The Messenger

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

October 2018
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On Sunday, September 30 our worship service was quite different. We used alternate readings including the story of Tamar found in 2 Samuel chapter 13. Tamar was the daughter of King David who was raped by her brother Amnon, told

to be silent by her brother Absalom, and ultimately ignored by her father. There then was opportunity for those who wished to discuss the texts in small groups in the pews.

Afterward, someone asked me why we included this particular story in worship. For anyone else who may wonder here are three reasons why:

- A colleague of mine, Pastor Rebecca Bourret brought the readings and the invitation to discuss them to a worship service at a recent clergy gathering. I found the experience to be deep, powerful, and Spirit led. Following, I had the sense that this should be offered to our church community as well. After conversation with others on the worship leadership team (Vicar Athena and Cynthia Niiler) we decided to offer the experience as part of our worship.
- I have been reading and listening to a variety of sermons related to abuse and domestic violence from a variety of pastors in a variety of traditions; including Mainline Protestant and Evangelical. I was made aware that there are certain stories that we traditionally have not read in worship because they may make some people uncomfortable and because they are not part of our lectionary cycle of readings. I realized that by not ever reading the story of Tamar, we join with her brother Absalom in asking her to stay quiet. By reading and engaging in her story publicly, we acknowledge that after 3,000 years she is still speaking, and she speaks to us.

- I believe the community of the Church needs to be a place for nurture, for encouragement, and at times for difficult conversations. Issues of sexual assault are very much in the news and many of us are having conversations with others in our families, workplaces, and elsewhere in daily life. By being willing to enter difficult conversations in Church, by listening to the witness of Tamar and others in the scriptures, by listening to the witness of others in our own faith community, and by seeking to speak our own truth - we give the Holy Spirit more opportunity to transform us.

I am grateful for this congregation and in particular for the care taken in our relationships with one another. We will continue to consider ways in which we might provide opportunities for deep conversation on retreats, Bible studies and forums, Lenten services, and elsewhere. May God direct us, give us eyes to see and ears to hear, and form us for life that is faithful and steadfast.

Faithfully, Pastor Maehl

Reformation Sunday, October 28

**One Service at 9:30 am
Pot-luck Luncheon Following**

Please bring food to share

Nurturing Faith

Adult Forum Schedule Sundays 9:15 am

October 7: The Lutheran Church in Holy Land

Early in September, President Trump made the decision to withhold \$25 million earmarked for six hospitals in East Jerusalem, even though these funds had already received congressional approval. One of those, the Augusta Victoria Hospital on the Mount of Olives, is central to the Palestinian Lutheran community there *The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordan and The Holy Land*. At this adult forum we will discuss our synod's relationship with that church body, the ministry of Augusta Victoria Hospital, and ways we might advocate for medical care across political lines.

October 14: New Ways of Giving

Members of our Finance Team will talk about new ways for online and automatic giving that may make contributions easier to make, and for individuals to track. In the months ahead we will be raising up the need for more people to share in the funding of the intern program and we are hoping that a wider variety of options for giving will help facilitate that.

October 21: A Conversation with Pastor Rafaela Morales Rosa

On this Sunday Pastor Maehl will be away at a family gathering and Pastor Morales will be our guest preacher and presider in worship. During the adult forum she will share some stories of her journey to becoming a Lutheran pastor at a time when the ordination of women was quite new.

October 28: Luncheon Following 9:30 Worship

Please join us for a pot-luck luncheon following our single service at 9:30. During the meal, we will share some photos and highlights of a variety of ministry from the past year; including VBS, the youth trip to Houston, the service trip to El Salvador, and more.



El Salvador Celebration Sunday, October 14 11:30 am

Join us on October 14th following the 10:30 worship service to celebrate this past summer's service trip to El Salvador. The group who participated will be serving food, there will be stories and pictures of their experiences, along with gratitude offered to the congregation for supporting their endeavor.

All are welcome!



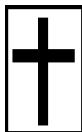
First Communion Instruction

On October 14, Pastor Maehl will be leading the lower elementary school in a conversation about Holy Communion. We will gather in Founder's Hall and parents are invited.

Two notes that I (Pastor Maehl) want to share about our practice and understanding of communion. The first is that communion instruction is life long. It is included in Sunday school, confirmation, children's and adult sermons. We believe that what happens in communion is multi-dimension. Understandings include that the risen Christ is there with us (real presence), offering us forgiveness, working his Holy Spirit in us; and connecting with one another, with God, and with all who have gone before us in the faith. That can mean different things at different ages; thus we keep teaching and talking about it.

Secondly, I want to point out that in our tradition there is no set age for 1st communion. Each family can decide when they feel a child is ready. Baptized into Christ, each child is part of his body and welcome at his table.

Nurturing Faith



From the Vicar

Hello, I am Athena Thomasson-Bless, also known as Vicar Athena. I from North Carolina origi-

nally, but coming most recently from California where I did my Lutheran year of study at PLTS. I am married to my wife Sam, we met as counselors at a Lutheran church camp in the mountains of NC. I enjoy being outdoors and exploring new places, playing soccer, reading, gardening, and watching 30 minute comedies. I am passionate about equality for all people, protecting the environment, and Biblical and theological literacy in church. I am excited to be at First Lutheran this year and already enjoying my time here!

One thing that I am really excited about for the coming year is starting a young adults group, that will meet for the first time this week. I am also excited about having so many youth in the confirmation class and working towards forming a youth group with activities like a youth sleepover coming up. I am thrilled that this congregation is one that loves to think critically and engage deeply with the Bible and theology, and I am looking forward to leading some adult forums and having thought provoking conversations with you all. Also, I am hoping to work with Pastor Maehl on revamping the social media presence of First Lutheran. These are just a few of the reasons that I am energized for the year ahead and am excited to be a part of the wonderful ministry of First Lutheran Church.

Sharing Space

A new (to us) Korean speaking congregation is now worshiping at First Lutheran on Sunday evenings. The name of the congregation is The Boston Jusrang Korean Methodist Church. Their pastor, Pastor Ko, met with Pastor Marre-ro and me and we are all grateful for the opportunity to share together in the use and care of our building.

Note this is a much smaller congregation than the Korean speaking congregation that was worshipping here formerly, and they will be using the building significantly less. Thus, their contributions toward utilities, maintenance, etc. will also be significantly less. Thus, in order to maintain our current budget levels for 2019, many of us, myself included, will need to contribute a bit more. - Pastor Maehl

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 October is as follows:

October 3: Covenant & Commandments
Exodus 19:3-7; 20:1-17

October 10: Joshua Renews Covenant
Joshua 24:1-26

October 17: David and Bathsheba
2 Samuel 11:1-5, 26-27; 12:1-9

October 24: Solomon's Wisdom
1 Kings 3:4-28

October 31: Elisha Heals Naaman
2 Kings 5:1-15a

Doing Justice, Serving All

Financial Commitments



On Reformation Sunday, October 28, there will be an opportunity, during worship, to make a financial commitment to the church. Our financial commitments are one important way we live out our faith, and they are essential for developing a budget for 2019.

This budget is initially crafted by the Finance Committee in November, further edited by the Church Council in December, and brought to the congregation for discussion, possible amendment, and ratification in January.

In preparation, we ask that each person prayerfully consider the age-old, enduring question of Christian stewardship, “Of all that God has given me, what am I being led to use for myself, what am I being led to share with the church, and what am I being led to use in the care of others.” Many have found that thinking in percentages is often helpful in this discernment. A copy of the 2019 commitment card is printed below and will be mailed in early October.

First Evangelical Lutheran Church 2019 Estimate of Giving

Name(s): _____

In thanksgiving to God who richly blesses us, I/we commit* to give back to God through the ministry of our church:

\$ _____
per week/month/quarter/year (circle one)

* Financial circumstances do change, this commitment may be revised at any time.

In addition to regular offering we welcome gifts at any time to the Capital Improvement Fund (caring for our building), Pastor’s Discretionary Fund (serving the poor), or Intern Fund (raising up future leaders).

Food Pantry Contributions



Would you help by bringing **one** item on a regular basis?

We will have a sign up at church and will be inviting any who are willing to sign up for one item from the following list.

- Canned or dry chick peas, lentils, beans
- Nuts
- Raisins and other dried fruits
- Canned tuna, chicken
- Bags of rice
- Canned tomatoes/sauce
- Spaghetti sauce
- Canned vegetables and fruit
- Crackers of all kinds
- Applesauce
- Cereal bars
- Canned soups
- Peanut butter
- Any kind of pasta
- Macaroni and cheese packages
- Individual packets of oatmeal

We then invite you to bring that one item on a regular basis; for instance if you signed up for soup, you could bring several cans once a month. By doing this we hope it will help encourage more participation and ensure that we are providing a variety of foods. The food collected will be shared with the Brandeis Food Pantry and our own at First Lutheran.

Walking Together in God's Love



FALL RETREAT

Once again we travel to Vermont for a weekend of adult fellowship, study, discussion, and renewal. There will also be shared meals, free time, games, and an opportunity to deepen our relationships with God and one another.

When: November 9-11 (Friday evening through Sunday noon)

Where: The Blue Gentian Lodge, Londonderry, VT

Cost: The full cost is \$165 per person; however, we invite college/graduate students, and others with financial uncertainty to contribute less (*Speak with Pastor Maehl for more clarity*). The Cost includes 2 nights lodging and 4 meals

Schedule:

- **Friday:** Car pools are available for the 3 hour ride on Friday afternoon or evening and we have dinner on the way. Then we check into our lovely motel style rooms and have a simple orientation all together..
- **Saturday Morning:** We will engage in activities and conversation intended to help us attend to, and deepen, our relationships with God, one another, and our inner selves.
- **Saturday Afternoon:** is free. Some people may hike the ski mountain in the back yard of the lodge, others explore Weston, VT (often in search of fudge, cheese, and other goodies), while others simply read or rest.
- **Saturday Evening:** After Evening Prayer, we have group games and there is a hot tub for any who desire it.
- **Sunday Morning:** We conclude our program with a brief activity followed by worship.

Confirmation Sleepover

The confirmation class will be having a sleep over on Saturday, October 13th at the church. There will be games, food, and a variety of activities for engaging our faith and one another. Our thanks to Vicar Athena, Sam Thomasson, and Kevin Dickert for leading the event!

Parents Night Out November 17

Parents mark your calendars. We are tentatively scheduling Friday, November 17 for a parents night out from 5:00-8:00 pm. Youth will provide activities for children ages 3 and older, and we will provide a simple kid-friendly meal. Parents may then have a night out for dinner, early Christmas shopping, or something else. The suggested donation will be \$10 per hour and the funds raised will be used for youth programming.

Our Thanks to...

LuAnn Kimker for purchasing all the goodies for our 1st responder gift baskets. Thanks to for all who made deliveries to police, fire, and EMT stations.

Kevin Dickert, Steve Hoff, and Kathryn McCowan for coordinating the church picnic on September 9. Thanks to Kathryn for purchasing the hamburgers and hot-dogs and to Kevin and Steve for grilling and serving.

Inpakala Pandian for coordinating children's activities after worship on September 30, freeing adults up to participate in a conversation about women and justice. Also our thanks to **Vicar Athena** for facilitating the conversation.

Walking Together in God's Love

Prayer Concerns



Members of our First Lutheran Community: Marquette Alexander; Sally Ann Biter; Ernie Gaiser; Christina Danielson; Connie Danielson; Rosy Hebert; Steve Latter; Lorne MacArthur; Kathryn McCowan; Cynthia Niiler, Joan Niiler.

Friends and Family: Christiansen family (*friends of Jennifer Lambert*); Donna (*friend of LuAnn Kimker*); Magnus Forsman (*great-nephew of Rut Johnson*); Pelle Geholm (*twin brother of Rut Johnson*); Susan Goslin (*friend of Joan Clemens*); Norma Huisman (*aunt of Brad Nederhoff*); Terri Koopman (*aunt of Matt Jerram*); Emily Lewis and her parents (*friends of Paul and Susan Pintus*); Joy Lewis (*friend of Joan Clemmens and Curt Schroeder*); Eudeen MacSweeney (*friend of Rut Johnson*); Stephen Manz (*nephew of Paul and Susan Pintus*); Helen Marquedant (*friend of Paul and Susan Pintus*); Jason Mihalko (*friend of Matt Jerram*); Nellie Pintus (*sister of Paul Pintus*); Ralph Platfoot (*uncle of LuAnn Kimker*); Sally Raymond (*Jen Biter's mom*); Stacey Reed (*sister of Penny Alexander*); Betty Schroeder (*aunt of Cury Schroeder*); Doug Sewich (*brother-in-law of Meg and Tom Maehl*); Maria Silva (*aunt of Olga Jimenez*); Judy Vichniac (*friend of Susan Pintus*), Jim Wroe (*cousin of Carol Hansen*).

For those who grieve: the family and friends of Dianne Seymour (*friend of Jim and Pam Sperry*); the family and friends of George Kelleher (*father of Jim and father-in-law of Christine Kelleher*).

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.



Clean Up Day Saturday, Oct. 27 9:00 - Noon

We invite any who are able to come help with leaf raking, window washing, and other clean up tasks. Come for an hour or more, anytime between 9:00 am and noon. *We welcome your help!*

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 Athena Bless, Intern
abless@ses.plts.edu

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 October 28—last Sunday

Sunday Learning Hour:

9:15 am

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.