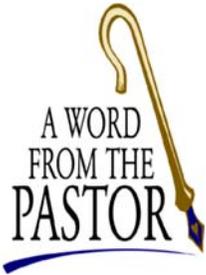


# The Messenger

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

January 2019  
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At our annual meeting on January 27, the Church council will be presenting a balanced budget. This for me is a miracle of sorts; that is, a blessing from God!

Several months ago we were facing a potentially huge deficit for 2019, on the order of \$40,000. This was due primarily to the Korean Hope Church leaving, several in the congregation having moved or died within the past year, and others facing significant challenges. However, several extraordinary things then took place. First, another Korean speaking congregation came to us out of the blue and asked to rent space on Sunday evenings. Second, the congregational response to our annual fall stewardship appeal was stronger than ever. Third, when the members of church council saw that there was still a deficit to address, each one raised their pledge and drafted a letter to the congregation asking others to respond if able; and others did. Through these means an additional \$34,000 was pledged (over 2018 figures) and \$8,000 is being shared with us by the new congregation.

I am so grateful for the ways this challenge was carefully and faithfully addressed in community. I am reminded of words from Saint Paul,

*I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance ...*

*As it is written,*

*'The one who had much did not have too much,  
and the one who had little did not have too little.'*

(2 Corinthians 8:13, 15)

I offer my thanks to all who share in supporting the ministry God has entrusted to us in and through First Lutheran; with special thanks to the members of the church council who have led by example and have led well. Most especially I thank God who continues to provide for our needs. As a new year begins, once again I look forward to seeing what God has in store for us.

Faithfully, Pastor Maehl



## Meeting of the Congregation

Sunday, January 27, 2019

Worship at 9:30 m

*Meeting follows*

At this meeting we will adopt a budget for 2019 and receive written annual reports from the pastor, president and committee chairs. We will hold elections for church council and other leadership positions.

Also, we will be voting to accept revisions to our constitution and bylaws.

**All members are encouraged to attend.**

**Please bring a food item to share at our potluck brunch.**



## Nurturing Faith

### Adult Forum Sundays at 9:22 am

#### January 13: Constitution & Bylaws

During the adult forum we will discuss changes to the constitution and bylaws that will be voted on at the annual meeting. Note that all changes to the constitution are based upon a model ELCA constitution; and that changes to bylaws were made chiefly to reflect ways in which our committee structure has changed over the past 25 years. Copies of proposed changes will be available.

#### January 20: First Lutheran Structure

During this adult forum we plan to continue a conversation begun a week earlier based upon descriptions in our bylaws. We will discuss the current responsibilities of committees and teams, and how we might continue to evolve and grow.

#### January 27: No Adult Forum

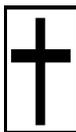
Join us for worship at 9:30 am with our annual meeting following.

### Christmas Thanks

Our thanks to LuAnn Kimker, Isabella van der Weide, Emily Sjodin, Mary Ellen Adams, and Cynthia Niiler for pulling together the wonderful Christmas pageant during the Sunday school hour on Dec. 23.

Thanks also to those who decorated the church and grounds, sang and played instruments, purchased poinsettias, provided food, and gathered for worship at Christmas. So too, a special thanks to Diana Dupuis, Joan Niiler, and others from the Thursday knitters who made Christmas Eve gifts for all the children.

It was all a blessing!



*From the  
Vicar*

It is a New Year! 2019 is here whether we are ready for it or not. The New Year often brings a time of self-reflection, resolutions, words of the year, and schemes for improving our lives. Resolutions to eat better, have less screen time, join a gym, we know them all. These are all important things to do and it is great to be involved in some practices of introspection and personal growth.

However, in this season of introspection, it is important to be careful of our own internal critic. The one who shows up after we ate too much during the Holidays, fell behind on work emails, or just needed a day to stay in our pajamas. In some ways, the New Year can be equated to the Law that convicts us. A season where we are not good enough, not skinny enough, not present enough, not hardworking enough.

Nevertheless, in this year of 2019 and every year, we are enough. We have the Gospel promise that in Christ we are always enough. As the Apostle Paul writes, "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38-39)."

Our lives are full of Law and Gospel, both have their place and sometimes we need to be convicted. But it is important to remember that no matter what, we are Beloved just as we are. In light of this truth, my resolution, my word of the year is GRACE. I will be striving to be graceful with myself and my inner critic, to be graceful with others I encounter, and to trust in God's promise of Grace through Jesus Christ.

Blessings,

Vicar Athena

## Doing Justice, Serving All



### Congregational Retreat to Camp Calumet February 22-24 Mark your calendars!

Our annual retreat for the entire congregation is scheduled for Feb. 22-24 at Camp Calumet, located 2 ½ hours north on Lake Ossipee in Freedom, NH. We have spots reserved for 60 people and hope members and friends of all ages will come. The retreat begins after dinner on Friday and ends after lunch on Sunday.

**Cost:** The actual cost depends upon whether one is staying in the conference center, staff house, or village cabins. To make it simple we are asking each participant to use the following as a guide:

Adults \$160

Students \$80 (7-18 years)

Children \$0 (0-6 years)

Maximum family fee is \$500

Note that the above guide gives most everyone a discount, some smaller, some greater. We invite all participants to pay an amount that you believe to be within your means. For some that might mean the guide-amount or a bit more, for others a bit less, for others an amount significantly less.

Watch for a sign-up sheet in the Pearson Room and please consider joining us. If you are planning on attending, **please sign up by February 10** so that we can plan accordingly. Thank you.



### Puerto Rico Learning & Service Trip June 19-25, 2019

We are currently making tentative plans for a trip to Puerto Rico June 19-25. This trip is open to all adults, and youth in middle school and older who would be travelling with a parent or guardian. During our trip we plan to:

- Meet members of a Lutheran Congregation there.
- Engage in one day of service coordinated through a local congregation
- Learn about the Puerto Rican culture, ecology, and the effects of colonialism

It is our hope that through this trip we might build relationships among ourselves and with members of another Lutheran congregation; and that we may also grow in ways that might help deepen our relationships with members of Santuario Luterano here in Waltham.

The cost of the trip is estimated at \$1,200 per person (this includes airfare, lodging, meals, and other travel costs). However, we have applied for a grant that would significantly subsidize the trip for youth and young adults. If you are interested in participating, please contact Pastor Maehl, Jennifer Lambert, or Vicar Athena.

### Maker Sale

Thanks to all who donated and purchased items, and helped with the setup and clean-up. Through the sale (held on December 9) we raised over \$1,500 that will go to our Camp Calumet Scholarship Fund.

## Walking Together in God's Love

### Prayer Concerns



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

**Friends and Family:** Christiansen family (*friends of Jennifer Lambert*); Donna (*friend of LuAnn Kimker*); Magnus Forsman (*great-nephew of Rut Johnson*); Susan Goslin (*friend of Joan Clemens*); Norma Huisman (*aunt of Brad Nederhoff*); Miriam Klapper (*friend of Paul & Susan Pintus*); 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*); 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 Curt 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 Ernie Gaiser; the family and friends of Pelle Geholm (*twin brother of Rut Johnson*).

**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.*

### Gifts for Others

I am grateful for gifts to the Pastor's Discretionary Funds over the past year. This has allowed me to help persons in need with meals and groceries, lodging and rent, car repairs, and more. Also, thanks too to all who donated gift cards to, McDonalds, and Dunkin Donuts in December. The folks at Chaplains on the Way were deeply grateful to have these to share with people in need over the bitter cold holidays.

- Pastor Maehl

## Walking Together in God's Love



We had a wonderful Christmas party with roughly 20 of us on Thursday, December 20. Thanks to Ardeith for bringing a delicious ham, to Rut for

the yummy meatballs, to Jane for the fabulous chocolate mousse, to Larry for the home baked croissant, and to all who brought a variety of other foods to share. Our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 17 at 11:45 am. Bring a sandwich and join us.



Thank you for coming to my house and singing the carols. It was very much enjoyed. Also the plate of cookies (an added treat) was very much appreciated.

Thank you,  
John & Ruth

### Thanks from the Staff ...

We are thankful for the many, cards, remembrances, and expressions of care that came to us at Christmas. We thank God for the First Lutheran community and all the love and support we receive from through you.

Pastor Maehl, Vicar Athena, and Cynthia

### 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  
firstlutheranwalthamoffice@gmail.com

Vicar Athena Bless, Intern  
abless@ses.plts.edu

#### Sunday Worship:

8:15 and 10:30 am

9:30 am on January 27—last Sunday

#### Sunday 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](http://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.*