

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

April 2019
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Lent is the Church's springtime, the time for turning the soil of our lives, trusting that God's Word planted in us will grow. In the centuries old traditions of the Christian Church, Lent has been a time of intentionally **turning**, ... turning away from those things

that lead us away from God, and turning back toward God through such practices as self-sacrifice, prayer, and increased giving to those in need.

I have been pleasantly surprised at how many people I encounter, inside and outside the church, who mention taking on a Lenten discipline. Most often they tell of giving up some sort of less-than-healthy food: sugar, sweets, red-meat, snacks, etc. This is a fine thing, and for the record one of my Lenten disciplines is on that list.

However, I've been wondering why the "increased giving to those in need," part of the Lenten experience seems less widely practiced. Why is that?

- Is it because it is harder?
- Is it because we have an internal sense that giving up bad-food is good for us, but that somehow giving up money is bad for us? Or dangerous?
- Is it because the line between some of us and "those in need" is very narrow indeed?

I write this because I sense this is a season when God is laying an extra measure of community need at the doorstep of our congregation. We are collecting food for food-insecure children, and financial contributions for high-school aged parents. So too, just this week I cleaned out the Pastor's Discretionary Fund (*and then some*), helping a family of four avert eviction after a major health crises.

I write this to ask others to prayerfully consider joining me, if not too dangerous, in giving up for Lent, along with whatever else, a measure of our income for others. And may God provide for us all.

Faithfully, Pastor Maehl

Holy Week Schedule

Join us as we retell, reengage, and celebrate the central story of our Christian faith, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

April 14 - Palm Sunday



8:15 & 10:30 am A traditional Palm Sunday service with palms.

9:15 am Adult Forum & Sunday School

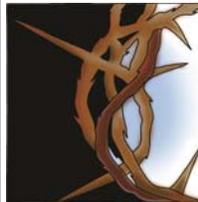
April 18 - Maundy Thursday



11:30 am at First Lutheran
5:30 pm in Cambridge
7:00 pm in Lexington

(see page 2 for details)

April 19 - Good Friday



7:30 pm Solemn worship including Saint John's passion account.

April 20 - Easter Vigil



7:15 pm We join with Santuario Luterano in celebrating Christ's Passover from death to life in a bi-lingual worship service.

April 21 - Easter Sunday

9:15 am Potluck Breakfast

8:15 & 10:30 am Festive worship with Holy Communion, flowers, and bells. With choir and brass at 10:30.

Nurturing Faith

Lenten Wednesdays Conversation & Evening Prayer

Each Wednesday we are joining with members of Santuario Luterano for Bible Study and evening prayer. Each Bible study focuses on a story of deliverance, and each service of evening prayer lifts up stories of people who are scattered, dispersed, or separated; are walled in or walled out; and/or are working to break barriers and end divisions. We will meet through Wednesday, April 10 (not on Wednesday of Holy Week). Join us if you are able for:

7:00 Conversation

8:00 Evening Prayer

Last Sunday of the Month March 31 One Service at 9:30 am

Followed by Spring Clean Up!



Following worship we invite you to stay and join in helping with one hour of Spring Clean up. We will provide pizza! Tasks to choose from include: dusting, polishing pews, washing windows, etc. Children and adults are encouraged to work together.

Camp Calumet - Summer Camp July 28—August 3

Our assigned week will be Sunday, July 28 through Saturday, August 3. Camp Calumet is reserving 12 spots for our two congregations (First Lutheran and Santuario). The full cost is \$665 and we are hoping to be able to underwrite one-half the cost for our campers through our Camp Calumet Fund. May we reserve a spot for your child/children ages 8-16? If so, please contact Pastor Maehl.

Maundy Thursday Worship



“Maundy” comes from the Latin “Mandatum” from where we get the English word Mandate. This is the night in which we retell the story of Jesus’ last supper during which he gave us his commandment or mandate that we should love one another. As in the past few years, we are again offering several options for worship on this day.

11:30 am: There will be a service at First Lutheran for those who prefer to travel during the day

5:30 pm: We will gather at a pub in Cambridge, with several people from Faith Lutheran Church in Cambridge. Note the precise location will be determined, and communicated in early April.

7:00 pm: There will be a gathering at the home of Ann and Ted Sjodin, 24 Freemont St. in Lexington. Children and adults are most welcome!

At these gatherings we will read the story of Jesus’ Last Supper; then share in conversation about how his love for us and his commandment that we love one another give shape to our daily life. We will also engage in a brief order of confession and forgiveness* and share Holy Communion.

*Did you know? Lent officially ends with the confession and absolution offered on Maundy Thursday. Then we enter into the great three days where we along with many other Christians throughout the world attend to the central story of our faith; namely, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Please engage in our Holy Week services at Church and gatherings out in the world as you are able.

Walking Together in God's Love

Beautification Committee Proposed Changes

At our annual meeting on January 27, 2019, we approved changes to our constitution and bylaws. The matter of a "Beautification Committee" was the one issue for where there a good deal of conversation and no clear consensus. At that meeting an amendment was proposed and narrowly passed to make beautification of the church property a responsibility of the Property Committee. Due to the lack of clear consensus, the church council discussed the matter at its meetings in February and March.

The church council is offering the proposal below for members of the congregation to consider. We welcome your feedback. Comments, suggestions, and questions may be directed to the pastor or any member of the church council. We ask that you please give any **feedback on or before April 30**.

Proposal

1. We are proposing that beautification NOT fall within the responsibilities of the Property committee, but rather would be free a standing group like all other committees and teams. Note that collaboration with the property committee (*and other committees*) will be a key part of the group's responsibilities, so that their work will continue to be done in conversation with the Property Committee.

2. We are proposing a new name – The **Interior Care Team**. The council discussed lots of options for a new name and did not come up with one that was deemed to be a perfect fit. However, the council feels that the name "Interior Care" might be better suited to the actual tasks (*which do not include gardens*), and the new name conveys a fresh start. Also, the terms "Team" and "Committee" are for the most part interchangeable, yet the group felt that "Team" was better suited for a group that would not be meeting on a regular schedule, but rather on an as-is-needed basis.

3. The bylaws state that members of the committees and teams shall be appointed by the pastor and/or the Congregation Council. This is what we propose. Also, we imagine a team of 4-6 persons that includes representation from a variety of other committees/groups.

4. We are proposing the following for language to be added to the bylaws.

The Interior Care Team shall:

a. Be responsible for decisions regarding permanent appointments to the church, such as carpeting, paint, light fixtures, etc.

b. Review and approve proposed donations and placement of furnishings and substantial décor.

c. Collaborate with the Property Committee.

d. When decisions affect the library, Sunday school, or other education programs, collaborate with the Faith Formation Team.

e. When decisions affect the worship space, or worship life of the congregation, collaborate with the Worship Team.

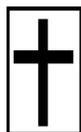
f. Should a temporary team be established for a major renovation project, cede authority with respect to the major renovation project to the temporary team for the duration of the project.

5. We are proposing the following language be removed from the Bylaws, Section C 13.06.01(e), stating that the Property Committee Shall:

7. Be responsible for beautification of the church property.

Formal changes to the Bylaws can occur only at a congregational meeting, and unless a special meeting is called, the next meeting will not occur until January. However, we wanted to continue the discussion now instead of waiting until nearer to the time of the next annual meeting. If you have thoughts about this proposal, please do feel free to share them the pastor or church council member.

Doing Justice, Serving All



From the Vicar

I saw something on a friend's Facebook wall recently that said, "Stop telling yourself that the grass is greener on the other side, because it's not. It's greener where you water it. So, take control of your life and start watering your own pastures and grow your own greener grass." Then others commented by saying clovers and dandelions are better for the soil, the air, and pollinators anyway, and weeds grow in concrete and other hard to grow places in defiance of those who try to obstruct their progress. This person jokingly exclaimed "BE THE WEEDS!"

In light of last week's Gospel lesson from Luke 13 where Jesus tells the parable of the fig tree and in conjunction with the start of Spring I have been thinking a lot about plants and growth lately. Also, in light of my journey towards ordination coming to a close, I have been thinking about the grass on the "other side." Therefore, this internet post struck me. The grass is not greener on the other side, but wherever we water it. Not to mention, grass is not even the most ecological plant to use in our aspirational images anyway, weeds are much better for the environment and they are resilient.

In this in between time, between winter and spring, between Ash Wednesday and Easter, between seminary and ordination, between not knowing and knowing, how can I make sure my pastures are watered. How can you make sure your pastures are watered? There will always be something that we look ahead to, someone we compare ourselves to, some time frame we have created around the seasons of life. But God is with us now, in Lent, in the desolate, dry, brown pasture. It is okay to look ahead to Easter, to be excited and wait with anticipation for new life and resurrection. But how can we tend to ourselves now? And in what ways is grass overrated anyway? Our grass may not be as green as our neighbors, but maybe we have resilient weeds that are good for the soil and attract bees right in front of or right inside of us. Our weeds, and our desolate brown patches are where God meets us to accompany us in the pruning, the tending to, and the watering. God sees the greener pastures within us already, only we can cultivate them and see for ourselves.

Blessings, Vicar Athena



Waltham Community Food Walk

**Sunday April 28
11:00 am**

How to Participate:

- If walking, sign up on the sheet in the Pearson Room.
- Donate by going to the Farm Web Site: <http://communityfarms.org/calendar/event/waltham-community-food-walk>
- Or Donate by making a donation to First Lutheran marked, "Food Walk"
- If walking gather at Waltham Fields Community Farm on Beaver Street at 11:00 am on the 28th and walk to Waltham Common. Only 1.5 miles.
- Join us at 11:30 am on the Waltham Common to share food and conversation with others.
- Spread the word, invite others.

Lenten Collection

We continue to collect financial gifts to share with students in the New Comer's Academy at Waltham High School. We are also now collecting food items to share with other students in Waltham schools who are food insecure. We welcome donations of:

- Shelf stable milk (needs no refrigeration)
- Easy Mac-n-cheese (microwavable)
- Individual boxes of cereal
- Granola bars
- Fresh fruit (clementines and apples)

Walking Together in God's Love

Prayer Concerns



Members of our First Lutheran Community: Marquette Alexander; Penny Alexander; 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*); Terri Koopman (*aunt of Matt Jerram*); Eudeen MacSweeney (*friend of Rut Johnson*); Myles Martins and parents (*newborn nephew of Cat Niemann*); Jason Mihalko (*friend of Matt Jerram*); 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: family and friends of Glen Luce (*Christine Barrington's partner*).

In Thanksgiving for healing: Carolejeanne Care (*mother of Sarah Rauhut*); James Clemens (*brother of Joan Clemens*); Joy Lewis (*friend of Joan Clemens and Curt Schroeder*).

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.

ORDINATION

Congratulations to John Barton,
our former intern,

Who has been called as pastor of

Faith Lutheran Church
Menifee, California

John will be ordained on
Saturday, April 13, 2019

At University Lutheran Church
Tempe, Arizona

*May God bless John and the people of Faith Lutheran
in their new relationship as pastor and congregation.*



**2019 Easter Plants
Order Form**

I/we would like to make a contribution to:

- Easter Lily(s) Tulip(s)
 Daffodil(s) Hyacinth(s)

At \$7.50 a plant for a total of \$ _____

I/we would like to make a donation
to support the church's gardens of \$ _____

As a Memorial Gift
In Memory of _____
Given by _____

As a Living Tribute
In Honor of _____
Given by _____

Name _____

Phone Number or email: _____

***You can take your plants home after the 10:30 service
on Easter morning.***

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

**THE DEADLINE FOR ORDERING EASTER PLANTS IS
MARCH 31**

Donations to the church gardens in memory of someone,
given by **April 14,**
will be recognized in the Easter Day bulletin.

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

Council: Brad Nederhoff, President
Ann Sjodin, Vice President
Eben Rauhut, Secretary
Scott Niemann, Treasurer
Holly Diaz
Erika Jerram
LuAnn Kimker
Angela Neal
Janice Ostrander
Susan Pintus

Sunday Worship:

8:15 and 10:30 am
9:30 am on 3/31 & 4/28—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.