

# 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

May 2019  
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## *From the Vicar*

During Lent we tried a new experimental Bible study pairing the confirmation students with adults in the congregation. The idea for this study came from my Field Education congregation that required confirmation students to do a final project based on a book of the Bible they had read. Some students arranged a piece of music, some created paintings, some made Power-Points, and others wrote poetry. I thought this was a neat idea to encourage young people to read scripture and learn to apply it in different ways. Therefore, Pastor Maehl and I worked together to come up with a plan to create this intergenerational Bible Study during the season of Lent.

There were ten pairs and they meet four times over the course of the Lenten Season. Each confirmation student got to pick which book of the Bible they were interested in and we provided a Biblical Commentary for each pair to read alongside the book they picked. Aside from trying something new, there were two main goals for this experimental study. One was to cultivate connections in the congregation across generations. The second goal was to empower confirmation students and adults to read scripture for themselves and to look deeper by discussing with another person and using a commentary.

We had a final meeting together on Good Friday, with a lively discussion and time for each pair to share some of their learnings. Some of the books of the Bible that the pairs read were Genesis, Esther, Luke, and Philippians. There were discussions about culture, betrayal and forgiveness, authorship of the different books, and the question "where is God?" in books like Esther where God is never mentioned. Multiple people expressed an interest in continuing to study scripture deeper and utilize commentaries alongside scripture. We have several commentaries in the Pearson Room that anyone is welcome to use. I am incredibly grateful to those who participated in this study and wanted to share with you all one of the many things that is happening behind the scenes with the faithful folks of First Lutheran.

Blessings, Vicar Athena

*Dear First Lutheran Friends,*

*I want to extend my deep appreciation for all the prayers, notes, words and gestures of support given me following the sudden and tragic death of my sister Jane Shuster on April 7.*

*In particular I am so grateful to Vicar Athena who covered many things in my one week absence. I left church suddenly on April 7, between worship services, and I'm thankful for the way Vicar Athena immediately and assuredly assumed the duties of leading worship, leading our mid-week Lenten Bible study and evening prayer service, and addressing various matters of pastoral care in my absence.*

*Also, I am grateful to Brad Nederhoff, the president of the congregation, for his careful and care-filled checking in on me during my week absence on behalf of the council and congregation; and to Cynthia Niiler for taking on the lion's share of Holy Week preparations. Also, I am grateful for the flowers that were sent to the memorial service from my First Lutheran Community.*

*My sister Jane was a wonderful human being and our family will miss her greatly. I do ask that you keep her husband Clark and our father Don in your prayers.*

*I give thanks to God for you all, and for the Easter promise of resurrection that is the source of my hope.*

*Blessings, Pastor Maehl*

## Nurturing Faith

### Adult Forums in May

#### *A focus on Justice*

9:15 am

#### **May 5: Lutherans in the Holy Land**

Presenter: Pastor Elizabeth Nees

Pastor Nees is serving Grace Lutheran Church in Needham and will be visiting this day while Pastor Maehl goes to lead worship in Needham. Pastor Nees served for one year in Egypt as part of the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program of the ELCA; then served for several months in Beit Jala a Palestinian Christian town in West Bank (6 miles south of Jerusalem). She will speak of her experiences and of the Lutheran presence in the Holy Land.

#### **May 12: Environmental Justice**

Presenter: Vicar Athena Thomasson-Bless

When we discuss issues of justice we tend to think primarily of people, but justice extends to all of creation; and people need the earth, clean water, and clean air to thrive. Vicar Athena will help us reflect upon our role as stewards of creation and the interconnectedness of all things living.

#### **May 19: Prison Ministry**

Presenters: Pastor Tim Stein and  
Seminarian Samantha Melton

Both presenters have experience with prison ministry and will discuss the impact of ministry in that setting. On this day we will also write notes to a relative of one of our members who is incarcerated.

### Last Sunday

#### **Conversation on Colonization**

May 26

#### **Worship at 9:30 with conversation following**

In preparation for our June service-learning trip to Puerto Rico we will have a guest speaker, Steven Rizzo, coming to address the on going legacy of colonization and how it impacts other countries and territories of the US like Puerto Rico. Steven Rizzo is a current MDiv student at Harvard Divinity School with hopes to pursue a PhD in theology and post-colonial studies. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. **Food will be provided!**

### Vacation Bible School

July 8-12

Registration forms are now available. If you are planning on participating, please sign up your children by May 15 so that we can plan accordingly. Also:

- Do you have one or more mornings or afternoons to come and help during VBS week? Or
- Might you be able to help with decorating beforehand? or
- Do you have neighbors whom you might invite?

If so, please speak with Holly Diaz our VBS director or Pastor Maehl.

### Holy Week and Easter Thanks To:

**Ted and Ann Sjodin** for opening their home and providing wonderful hospitality for our Maundy Thursday evening gathering.

**Brett Fahey, Diedre Fahey, Betsy Hoff, Nick Hoff, Alison Jerram, Maddy Jerram, Abby Neal, James Neal, Henry Niemann, Jake Villalta, Vicky Villalta, LuAnn Kimker and Cathy Sukow** for helping to enact stories of deliverance during our Easter Vigil.

**Lori Hrdlicka, Vicki & Jake Villalta, LuAnn Kimker, Geri Nederhoff, Ann Sjodin, Doris Speer, Helen Yarbrough** for the beautiful decoration of the sanctuary.

**John Barton** (our former intern) and **Diana Dupuis** for the design and creation of the new Easter Banner.

**Carol Hansen** for the beautiful display of flowers at the parking lot entrance.

Our brass players and choir members for glorious music.

## Doing Justice, Serving All



### Lawn Care

Once again we are inviting the community to share in the care of our lawn. As we did last year, we will have a sign up in the Pearson Room for the weeks in May, through mid-September.

**Youth:** You are welcome to sign up for one or more weeks this summer. For whatever weeks you sign up, you will receive \$15. This is open to any youth on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Adults:** You are welcome to mow the lawn too on a purely volunteer basis, simply sign up in the Pearson Room.

**Supporters:** If you would be willing to support one of our youth mowers, simply put \$30 in the offering plate marked "Lawn mowing." We will then pay \$15 to a youth mower, with the remaining \$15 used to support our youth programs. *Note, this year, we are not asking that you specify which week you are sponsoring.*

### Spring Clean Up Thanks

Many thanks to everyone who helped with our one hour of clean up following worship on March 31. Our particular thanks to Norman and Mary Ellen Adams for preparing all the cleaning supplies and lists of tasks.

### Community Food Walk

Thanks to all who participated in this year's food walk on April 28. Our cadre of walkers was small this year, but together we ended up raising nearly \$1,000 in support of the farm's Outreach Market.

Note the Waltham Fields Mobile Outreach Market is a once-a-week farm market for low-income households operating on Tuesday afternoons, **July 16 - October 8, 4:00 pm-6:30 pm, at the Corner of Cherry and Crescent St.** At the market, customers can fill their bags with a share of fresh, Waltham-grown vegetables. These vegetable shares are free with a voucher from one of our partner organizations or for \$5, using cash or SNAP benefits.



### Basket Raffle Sunday, June 2

On this the last Sunday before our Summer schedule begins we will be holding a basket raffle. All money collected will be used to support our June learning and service trip to Puerto Rico and our sending youth to Camp Calumet in July.

We invite you to participate in any of the following ways:

- Prepare a basket to be raffled. Some past themes have been: "Chocolate Lovers" "Summer Fun" "Baker's Delight" .... use your imagination.
- Tickets may be purchased anytime after the early service ends. Drawings for basket winners will be over coffee hour after the late service. You do not have to be present to win.

Please help support as you are able.

### Lenten Gifts

Thanks to all who contributed money, food, and other resources to be shared with local school children in need. Thanks to our combined donations we were able to donate:

- \$600 in gift cards to be shared with students in the Waltham High School New Comers Academy
- \$600 plus a car-load of food to help educators in another school provide for students who are food insecure in their own homes.

We also collected \$2,800 in gifts to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund, much of which was used to help a family in crises avoid eviction. *Thanks to all who gave so generously!*

## 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:** the family and friends of Jane Shuster (*Pastor Maehl's sister*), the family and friends of Judi Paradis (*friend of LuAnn Kimker*)

**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.*



### Graduates!

Is someone in your family graduating? Please let us know so we can list graduates in the June Messenger. It is nice to have the following information: Name, where graduating from, degree received (if appropriate), and plans for next year.

## JOIN US FOR TRIVIA NIGHT!

Saturday night, May 11<sup>th</sup>  
First Lutheran Church

Gather at 7:00 p.m.  
Trivia begins at 7:30 p.m.

\$175/table or \$25/person  
(8 person max/table)

To reserve a table or seat,  
please contact Jennifer Lambert or the church office.

*\*\*Proceeds support upcoming trip to Puerto Rico and continued rebuilding efforts\*\**

**Invite friends, come for fun and laughter,  
support our Justice & Service Efforts.**

### 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 5/26—last Sunday

**Sunday Learning Hour:**

9:15 am

**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.*