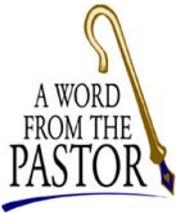


The Messenger

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

June 2019
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On Sunday, May 12 we noted in worship the death of a young, prominent Christian author by the name of Rachel Held Evans. Rachel, who died on May 4 at the age of 37 was a passionate follower of Jesus whose writings inspired many people across generations.

On that Sunday I shared three snippets from her book, Searching for Sunday, Loving, Leaving, and Finding the Church and invited conversation in small groups. Though I could not hear what was discussed, afterwards I heard someone state that one of the reasons she needs the community of the church is so that she might better learn how to love. That resonated deeply with me. I too need the Church to see differently, hear differently, trust differently, so that I might learn better how to live into Jesus' one and only command which is to love.

Below are the three snippets from Rachel Held Evan's book that I offered on May 12, with questions for reflection. I invite you to read them, sit with them, perhaps have a conversation with someone else about them. I pray something may resonate. So too I pray that God might comfort and support Rachel's husband, her two young children, and all who mourn her death.

Faithfully, Pastor Maehl

Quote #1: "Millennials aren't looking for a hipper Christianity we're looking for a truer Christianity, a more authentic Christianity. Like every generation before ours and every generation after, we're looking for Jesus – the same Jesus who can be found in the strange places he's always been found: in bread, in wine, in baptism, in the Word, in suffering, in community and among the least of these." (page xiv)

*What are you looking for in your Church?
Where do you encounter Jesus?*

Quote #2: "It was the sacraments that drew me back to church after I'd given up on it. When my faith had become little more than an abstraction, a set of propositions to be affirmed or denied, the tangible, tactile nature of the sacraments invited me to touch, smell, taste, hear, and see God in the stuff of everyday life again. They got God out of my head and into my hands. They reminded me that Christianity isn't meant to simply be believed; it's meant to be lived, shared, eaten, spoken, and enacted in the presence of other people. They reminded me that, try as I may, I can't be a Christian on my own. I need a community. I need the church." (page xvi)

Why does the world need the church?

Why do you need the church?

Quote #3: "Ultimately, I can't be a Christian on my own. Like it or not, following Jesus is a group activity, something we're supposed to do together. We might not always do it within the walls of church or even in and organized religions, but if we are to go about making disciples, confessing our sins, breaking bread, paying attention, and preaching the Word, we're going to need one another. We're going to need one another's help." (p. 255)

Name one way you rely on others as part of your Christian journey.

Name one way that others in the church are blessed by you.

Nurturing Faith



Vacation Bible School July 8 - 12

We are excitedly preparing and are grateful to have most all of our lead teachers identified.

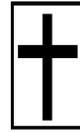
We still have openings for elementary aged children. If you know of anyone whom you may invite, please do so.

As is the case each year we ask that you please keep our Vacation Bible School program in your prayers. Pray that God will bless us with the resources we need, keep everyone safe, and inspire all the leaders.

VBS Art Kits

We will again be collecting materials to include in "Art Kits" that will be assembled by the VBS children and then given to families participating in the Waltham Family School. The cost of one kit is about \$20. Over the next month we welcome contributions of cash (mark "Art Kits" on your donation) or the following:

- White Glue (individual bottles) 4 ounce size
- Glue sticks
- Colored markers---washable only, pack of 10
- Colored pencils--packs of 12 or 24
- Children's scissors--blunt tips
- Water color sets--sets of 8 colors
- Extra paint brushes for the watercolors
- Pencil sharpeners
- Colored tissue paper (for crafts)
- Sheets of stickers (appropriate for either gender)



From the Vicar

In May we explored different justice related topics in our learning hour between services.

Topics we discussed included the Holy Land, environmental stewardship, prison reform, and colonization. These are all incredibly complex issues with many layers. However, our goal for was to highlight many of the social justice issues that are relevant and pressing in our world. This list of issues is by no means exhaustive, but it is a starting place.

In several of his works, Martin Luther wrote about two kinds of righteousness, first and foremost that we are loved by God and justified/saved by nothing we have done or can do. Second, out of that justification, we cannot help but care for our neighbor. Our neighbors include all of those in need and all people suffering in the midst of oppressive systems. We are called to do justice in our world and we cannot do that if we do not have a foundation for doing so. Therefore, these adult forums were meant to be a starting place for justice and service in our world and alongside our neighbors.

There is a document being added to the church website that contains resources for further study around each of these issues. Some of the resources are documentaries, podcasts, books, and articles. In the meantime, here are some resources that I along with the Justice and Service team recommend:

For more information on the ELCA presence in the Holy Land check out www.elca.org/peacenotwalls

For more information on environmental stewardship and creation care there is a link to a curriculum called "Awakening to God's Call to Earthkeeping" at www.elca.org/Resources/Caring-for-Creation

For more information about prison reform and some of the injustices in our prison system there is a book called [The New Jim Crow](#) by Michelle Alexander

We lift up these resources with the hope that we can all continue to learn about different issues of injustice in our world and become well equipped to live into our calling to care for our neighbor, not because we have to, but because out of God's unending love for us, we are compelled to.

Blessings, Vicar Athena

Walking Together in God's Love

Puerto Rico Trip

On June 20-27, a group of 26 will be travelling to Puerto Rico for a learning/service trip. While there we will meet members of Lutheran congregation on the Island, visit historical sites, and learn more about the legacy of colonialism. Please keep the group in your prayers. Also, we welcome gifts to help underwrite the cost for youth and young adults. Gifts may be marked, "Puerto Rico Trip."

Confirmation - June 9

Nine of our youth are completing a two-year confirmation program and will be affirming their faith during worship on June 9; they are: Sally Ann Biter, Nick Hoff, Isaac Maehl, Julia Niemann, Maggie Niemann, Kayali Pandian, Emma Pinch, Richard Pinch, and Justin Sjodin. We thank God for their lives and the blessing they are to our community.

Summer Camp Update

We now have 11 children and youth from both First Lutheran and Santuario Luterano signed up for a week at Camp Calumet Lutheran over the week of July 28 through August 3. We continue to provide financial support to our campers and welcome gifts to the Calumet Scholarship Fund at any time.

Sunday School Thanks

Our Thanks to our dedicated team of Sunday school teachers: Heather Fahey, Emily Sjodin, Isabella van der Weide, and LuAnn Kimker; and our Sunday school coordinator Lori Hrdlicka. Also, our appreciation to our wonderful Sunday school support staff: (art Sunday leaders, *substitutes*, *readers*, *librarians*, *musicians*, and *more*).

Trivia Night

On May 11, we had another enjoyable night of trivia through which we raise nearly \$1,000 for our summer learning/service trip to Puerto Rico. Our thanks to Ken Kimker for once-again doing a fantastic job emceeding the event. Also thanks to Jen Lambert for her wonderful job coordinating.

Waltham Family School Showcase

Thursday, June 6, 10am - Noon
Waltham Community and Cultural Center
510 Moody Street, Waltham, MA
Enter Door #8

The annual WFS Showcase is a great opportunity to meet Waltham neighbors and to support and encourage them in their learning. All you have to do is talk!

The Showcase is a tradition each June for the parents to use their developing English skills to share their experiences and successes with community members. It is an open house, so you can drop in any time between 10 AM - 12 PM. The children will sing at 11:30 AM.

What does Waltham Family School do?

The Waltham Family School provides educational opportunities for families who want to learn English. The school prepares preschool children for success in school, empowers parents to be partners with the schools in the education of their children, and strengthens the parents' skills necessary for parenting, workforce, and community life.

Our members Britta McNemar, Meg Maehl and Anne Dugan are WFS staff, and our church supports the school in many ways.

You can learn more about WFS at:

www.walthamfamilyschool.org

Facebook: WalthamFamilySchool

Twitter: @Wal_Fam_School



Waltham Family School Fundraiser

WFS Family Fair

Saturday, June 8, 2019 -- 11 AM - 2 PM

\$5 per child

Waltham Community & Cultural Center
510 Moody Street, enter Door 8
More details: walthamfamilyschool.org

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*); Henrique (*friend of the Rauhuts*); 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 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.

Congratulations to Our Graduates

Sylvia van der Weide

BA in Computer Science
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Sylvia will be moving to Seattle to start work with Microsoft, Corp in August

Will Sanders

BA in English combined with Pre-Med
Bates College

Will will be working as a Clinical Research Coordinator at the Lab for NeuroImaging of Coma and Consciousness at MGH

Katie Maehl

BA in Molecular Biology & Biochemistry, and Hispanic Literatures & Cultures
Wesleyan University

Katie will be working for the next year as an Ophthalmic Assistant at the Boston Medical Center.

Isabella van der Weide

Lexington High School

Isabella will be attending Muhlenberg University in Allentown, PA in the Fall.



First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waltham

Ministers: The people of the congregation

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Director of Music and Parish Secretary
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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 June 2
9:30 am beginning June 9 for the summer

Sunday Learning Hour:

9:15 am on June 2

Visit us on the Web at:

www.firstlutheranwaltham.org



Find us on
Facebook

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.