

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

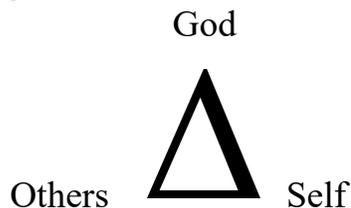
November 2019
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Over the years our congregation has been gradually growing and deepening. Signs of growth have included the addition of a second Sunday morning service (2016), new members and partners, and this fall we are beginning a more formalized youth program that will include both confirmation-age and post-confirmation age youth.

Growth is exciting. Through new people and new initiatives we may receive God's blessings, and may serve as a conduit for God's blessings to others, in meaningful ways. Yet there is also a spiritual danger; namely that we may grow wide with ever more busyness, but not deep; and that we may end up with a faith and/or a congregation that is rather shallow.

As pastor of a gradually growing congregation, my need for discernment about what to do and what to leave undone also subtly grows (*as it does for Cynthia Niiler our parish secretary and musician*). Several years ago, I had two insights that have greatly helped me. One is about me, the other about you all in the congregation.



First about me. I discerned that the focus of my work would be attending primarily to those places where my best gifts for ministry might be of use to the Holy Spirit in nurturing three primary relationships: our relationship with God, our relationship with others, and our relationship with our own complicated inner selves. Note the triangle above. I have come to believe that it's all connected and you strive to work deeply on any one, the other two will be impacted; (*for God does not intend that we go-it alone*).

Thus, I continue to put a great deal of effort into such things as worship, education opportunities, and retreats, keeping the triangle on the left ever before my eyes. All this, so that God might have ample means to deepen us.

Second, about you. I have come to believe that the primary ministry of the Church is to equip the people for living out their faith in everyday life. Churches from time to time may engage in justice, service, and/or healing related initiatives. These are important and good; yet my sense is that the primary place of importance for engaging in issues of power and injustice, and the primary place for practicing empathy and compassion is in our homes, in our workplaces, in our neighborhoods. God needs you and your particular gifts, not just in church but out in the world. We need God and one another in the community of faith to be strengthened and deepened for this!

In just a few weeks Advent will be here, that four week season of preparation for Christ's coming: his coming at Christmas, his coming at the end of time, and his coming in the midst of our daily lives in the world now. If you sense a need to be strengthened or deepened, I invite you to keep Advent with your church community. If you are able, come to worship on Sundays, participate in our Wednesday night contemplative Advent services, pick up a copy of an Advent devotional book; and around the edges of those, risk having deep conversations with others about your questions, joys, and challenges of daily life.

May God continue to hold us, deepen us, and equip for living life that really is life.

Faithfully, Pastor Maehl

Nurturing Faith

Adult Forum Schedule Sundays 9:15 am

November 10: Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM*)—Part 1

We will have a guest presenter this day. Bryn Koskinen will discuss her experience as a YAGM serving for a year in Madagascar.

November 17: Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM*)—Part 2

Vicar Courtney Smith will discuss her experience serving as a YAGM in South Africa.

** The ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission program invites ELCA young adults ages 21-29 into a transformative, year-long journey in international service. As they offer themselves in service, ELCA young adults are shaped by the witness of our global neighbors. They share in the journeys of companion churches and organizations in one of nine countries around the world.*

Last Sunday Learning Experience AMMPARO Sunday, November 24

Following our Single Service at 9:30 pm we will have a presentation on the ELCA AMMPARO program led by Doreen Rinas, a member of the New England Synod who has great experience with advocacy. AMMPARO stands for "Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation, and Opportunities. Come and learn how the ELCA is work to assist unaccompanied children and youth from Central America, and how work is also being done to change the root causes that force children to flee their homes and communities.

Note: snacks and coffee will be provided by the justice and service team.



Advent Wednesdays

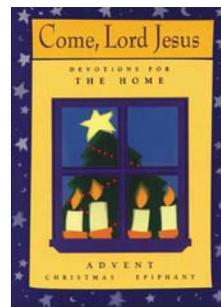
December 4, 11, 18
7:15 pm

As in years past we are planning on having a contemplative evening prayer service on the Wednesdays of Advent. Mark your calendars and try to make this part of your Christmas preparations.



Fall Retreat November 8-10

We have 13 people signed up to attend our annual fall retreat at the Blue Gentian Lodge in Londonderry, Vermont. Pastor Angelika Zollfrank will preach and preside at both worship services that day.



Advent Devotions Book "Come Lord Jesus: Devotions for the Home Advent/ Christmas/Epiphany"

Scripture readings and brief meditations serve as the backdrop for poetry, new seasonal blessings, mealtime prayers, songs and activities that prepare the home for the celebration of the Savior's birth. Simple blessings enable children to participate in prayer at the Advent wreath, around the Christmas tree, and by the manger. Seasonal customs from around the world expand the possibilities for celebrating the advent and nativity of the Lord.

Please sign up in the Pearson Room or call the church office by November 17 to reserve your copy at \$7.00.

We Serve and We Give



Sharing God's Abundance!

Once again we are collecting critical needs items for *Ascentria Care Alliance* (formerly Lutheran Social Services). These items will be shared with persons in need in Central and Western Massachusetts.

It's easy! Fill one of the "Thanks For Giving" bags available at church (or any bag!) with items from the list below and bring it to First Lutheran Church in Waltham by December 1.

- **Socks and underwear**
- **Diapers and wipes**
- **Feminine products**
- **Baby and kid bath towels, baby shampoo**
- **Toiletries (including toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo, soap, razors, etc.)**

Note: Thanks4Giving bags will be available on Sundays November 10, 17, and 24 at church.

Maker Fair Sunday, December 8

On December 8th we will be holding a "Maker Fair" where handmade items, baked goods, (and other gift items) will be offered for sale; with proceeds going to support the Camp Calumet Scholarship Fund. We invite the contribution of handmade items, baked goods, and other goods or items in good condition that might be offered for sale. Items may be donated between now and the day of the sale. Items may be purchased beginning at 9:15 am (after the early service) through noon on the day of the sale.

Stewardship Update

To date, we have received 38 pledges totaling \$253,560; plus \$28,124 has been pledged to the intern fund. This is a wonderful response. Thank you to all who have responded thus far, and to many who have offered increases in their pledge. We are grateful!

Also, we are still hoping for a few additional pledges so that we can address increased program projected costs ***if you have not yet pledged and are part of the First Lutheran community would you consider doing so?*** May God continue to provide all we truly need, and use us to bless others.



Search "GivePlus Church" to quickly find and download the giving app today!



There are multiple ways to give to First Lutheran.

1. **Cash or Check in the offering plate or through the U.S Mail.** Tried and true and always welcome!
2. **Automatic regular debits from your bank account (previously known as Simply Giving).** Forms are available in the church office. Forms may be filled out, returned to the church office, and your recurring donation will come out of your bank account automatically.
3. **"GivePlus Church" mobile phone app.** This can be used for one time donations, retreat payments, Equal Exchange purchases **and** it can also be used to manage your recurring donations, including existing Simply Giving accounts. Search on "GivePlus Church" wherever you get your mobile Apps. Be sure the company is Vanco and the logo is as above. In order to link with an existing Simply Giving account, you will need the email associated with the account. Please contact the church office if you need to confirm that mail. New users can get help with the app from Susan Pintus.
4. **Online giving from your bank account through our website.** You can make a one-time donation or set up a recurring donation by going to the Donate page at our website. The link takes you directly to the secure Vanco ("GivePlus Church") site. However, you will not have access to past history.

Walking Together in God's Love

Our thanks to:

Vicar Courtney Smith and Anthony Harrison for leading a youth sleepover on Oct. 12.

Norman and Mary Ellen Adams for coordinating the property committee's work day on Oct. 26; and thanks to all who came to clean, polish, and perform light maintenance tasks.

LuAnn Kimker, Brad Nederhoff, and Norman Adams for overseeing the purchase and installation of a new electric stove for our Founder's Hall Kitchen. Along with selecting and ordering, the process also included removing an old gas line, electrical work to accommodate the new stove, and removal of the old stove. Our thanks also to **Juan Montenegro** for help with installation. And to **Connie Danielson** for a generous contribution enabling this project to go forward.

Post Confirmation Youth

Last June, nine youth were confirmed; and in September a new six-person confirmation class began. In years past, we have not had a sizeable enough cadre of post-confirmation aged youth for any formal programming, but now we do. Thus, there will be gatherings on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month during the learning hour. The group will be meeting in the newly renovated meeting space in the basement of the Nelson Apartments. **Our thanks to the Nelson Board for offering to share this space!**

This group will meet for conversation and service. Our thanks to Vicar Courtney Smith and Emily Kobak for their coaching and leadership.



Parent Night Out
Saturday, December 7,
5:00-8:00 pm

Our youth (confirmation and post-confirmation) will be hosting a parents night out on December 7. Parents are invited to drop children off at 5 pm and pick them up by 8:00 pm. The youth are suggesting a donation of \$30 per family. Please RSVP to Pastor Maehl if you plan on participating.



2020 Service/Learning trip to El Salvador

August 1 - 9, 2020

We have finalized dates for our next Habitat for Humanity build in El Salvador. Our First Lutheran team will be going Saturday, August 1st-Sunday, August 9th. We invite all adults and youth age 16 or older (travelling with an adult) to participate.

New Members

We rejoiced that the following were received in to membership during worship on Sunday, October 27:

- Conrad (Connie) and Jeanette Fagone
- Steven and Karen Mischke
- Victoria (Vicky) Devault

We thank God for weaving us together into this particular community of faith, for providing for us so lavishly, and for equipping us to be a blessing to others.



Walking Together in God's Love



*From the
Vicar*

November is the time of Thanksgiving: not just a time to eat my favorite foods of stuffing and mashed potatoes, but it's a time to be thankful for all that we have and all that we are. As the fall colors fade and the cold chill settles in, I am thankful for the visual reminder of growth and change that nature provides us. Fall Foliage in New England was a beautiful experience and reminded me of all the growth and change we have experienced here over the last few months.

Our new post-confirmation youth group has hit the ground running, the Thursday Knitters celebrated anniversaries and birthdays, our book study group dove deep into the systemic ways the world works, and Adult Forums have been wrestling with new ideas and topics around immigration. Like the fall colors that change, our church is constantly changing.

Amidst the growth, we have much to be thankful for. We had a beautiful All Saints Sunday service where we honored those Saints who we hold close to our hearts. We discovered the varied and diverse spiritual gifts of our members and gave thanks for the ways we can work together to meet the needs in the church. I am thankful for this church and this congregation, for welcoming me with open arms, with challenging me to grow, and allowing me to be part of the community.

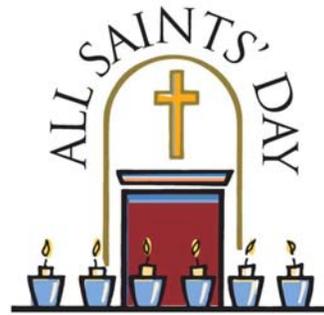
May you find joy and thanksgiving with the upcoming holiday season.

Peace, Vicar Courtney

Prayer Wall

At the October youth lock-in, we talked about prayer and the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. This sparked the Great Wall of Prayer project that has brightened up the entrance with the prayers of the people. We talked about the importance of praying together and individually, and the various ways we can pray. We invite you to pray out loud by hanging a post-it note for all to read, or silently by writing a prayer and sticking it in a pocket. The prayer wall will be available until December 1st.

- Vicar Courtney



On Sunday November 3, we remembered those in our congregation who have died and those whom have been on our prayer list this past year and who have died. We give thanks to God for the promise of eternal life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Those in our congregation who have died:

Christina Danielson (*daughter/granddaughter of Jane and Connie Danielson*)

Ernie Gaiser

Lorraine Livingston (*mother of Meg Maehl*)

John Russell (*husband of Nancy Russell*)

Helene Walker

Those on our prayer list who have died:

Pelle Geholm (*twin brother of Rut Johnson*)

Susan Goslin (*friend of Joan Clemens*)

Miriam Klapper (*friend of Paul & Susan Pintus*)

Terri Koopman (*aunt of Matt Jerram*)

Joy Lewis (*friend of Joan Clemens*)

Glen Luce (*Christine Barrington's partner*)

Judi Paradis (*friend of LuAnn Kimker*)

Betty Schroeder (*aunt of Curt Schroeder*)

Jane Shuster (*Pastor Maehl's sister*)

Charles Wilson (*bro-in-law of Joan Clemens*)

Walking Together in God's Love

Prayer Concerns



Members of our First Lutheran Community: Marquette Alexander; Penny Alexander; Sarah Allen; Connie Danielson; Rosy Hebert; Steve Latter; Lorne MacArthur; Kathryn McCowan; Cynthia Niiler; Joan and Juri Niiler; Pam Sperry.

Friends and Family: Adekemi (*friend of Sarah Rauhut*); Christiansen family (*friends of Jennifer Lambert*); Donna (*friend of LuAnn Kimker*); Magnus Forsman (*great-nephew of Rut Johnson*); Norma Huisman (*aunt of Brad Nederhoff*); Nancy Jewell (*cousin of Joan Clemens*); Eudeen MacSweeney (*friend of Rut Johnson*); Myles Martins and parents (*infant nephew of Cat Niemann*); Jason Mihalko (*friend of Matt Jerram*); Sally Raymond (*Jen Biter's mom*); Stacey Reed (*sister of Penny Alexander*); 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.



Letter writing

On December 1, following worship, the Justice and Service team will provide the opportunity to write notes to woman and children in detention, parents of Waltham Family School students, and one friend of the congregation who is currently in prison.

Sometimes prayer takes the form of a handwritten note.



Senior Classic

Twelve of us plus Bentley (pastor's dog) enjoyed a windy day secure and warm in the Pearson Room.

Thank you to Larry Yarbrough for his delicious sourdough, asiago cheese, peperoni bread and great turkey casserole. We are being spoiled with Larry's culinary skills and generosity. So too, thanks to all who brought food to share. This group is supposed to be a "brown bag" lunch, but all the contributions are lovely. There was a discussion about the Pearson Room and its history. Carol Hansen had the idea of perhaps a church history program for new members and Sunday school students.

First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waltham

Ministers: The people of the congregation

Staff: The Rev. Thomas E. Maehl, Pastor
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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 am & 10:30 am
Last Sunday (11/24) at 9:30 am

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.