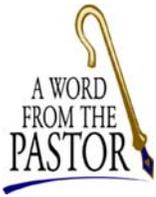


The Messenger

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

February/March 2020
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At our annual meeting I was completely surprised by a video montage that included words of appreciation in celebration of my 20th anniversary as pastor of First Lutheran, and also by the news that \$16,000 had been pledged toward my 2021 sabbatical. I am so blessed and grateful!

- Thank you to all who have participated in the life of First Lutheran over the past 20 years, adding to the vitality of the congregation, blessing me and others.
- Thank you to all who shared words of love and appreciation on the video, doing it with joy and a measure of humor. Note: I consider it the greatest of compliments that in answer to the question, "Who would play Pastor Maehl if there was a movie about his life," one person answered, "a combination of Mr. Rogers and Buddy the Elf squished together."
- Thank you to all who have pledged financial gifts toward my 15-week sabbatical in mid-2021. I truly believe that it is vitally important for me and for the congregation that I go away every seven years for a time of re-creation, rest, and retooling. Also my going away, it serves as an important reminder that this is Jesus' church, not mine, and the church can function just fine without me.
- Thank you to God who led each one of us to this community via many different paths, who has given us over into one another's care, and who provides for us in myriad ways only some of which we can see, fathom, and understand.

I pray that as we continue this journey together, God will continue to deepen us, helping us to become not more God-like, but more human; and that God will continue to broaden us, stretching the bounds of our care; and that God will continue to surprise and delight us even in the face of suffering. Christ be our Light!

In Gratitude, Pastor Maehl

Keeping Lent

Feb 26 - Ash Wednesday Worship, 7:30 pm

A bi-lingual (English and Spanish) service will be held jointly with the Santuario congregation, with Pastor Maehl preaching and Pastor Marrero presiding. The service will include confession, the optional imposition of ashes; and the receiving of Holy Communion.

Feb 26 - Ash Wednesday for kids , 6:00 pm

We will offer a children's program where we will first burn the palms from last year to make ashes; then in a simple service, offer prayers of thanksgiving and a confession of "what we are sorry for."

Feb 27 - "Ash Thursday," 11:30 am

We will offer a service with the optional imposition of ashes. This is provided for those who come for the Thursday knitting and for any who find it difficult to drive at night.

Lenten Wednesdays Conversation & Evening Prayer 7:00 pm

We are joining with Christ Episcopal Church (750 Main Street) in a joint mid-week Lenten program. Each Wednesday we will have conversation focused on an aspect of environmental justice, followed by a service of evening prayer. The schedule is as follows:

- March 4 - Christ Episcopal
- March 11 - First Lutheran
- March 18 - Christ Episcopal
- March 25 - First Lutheran
- April 1 - Christ Episcopal

Nurturing Faith

Adult Forum Schedule

February

February 9: A representative from Chaplains on the Way will come to discuss their ministry of spiritual accompaniment with persons in need.

February 16: Techniques for non-violent communication led by Pastor Maehl

February 23: No adult forum

March

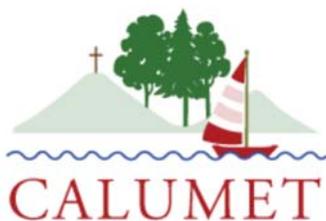
During this month we will read and discuss four stories from the Gospel of John. Each story will appear one week in the adult forum and then the following week in worship. These stories deal with themes of light and darkness, outsiders and insiders, health and unhealth, life and death, and are meant to stimulate our imaginations. The stories are as follows:

March 1: John 3 - The story of Nicodemus

March 8: John 4 - The story of the woman at the well.

March 15: John 9 - The story of the man born blind.

March 22: John 11 - The story of the raising of Lazarus.



Congregational Retreat Camp Calumet February 21-23

We currently have 61 people signed up for our annual congregational retreat to Camp Calumet in Freedom, NH. Pastor Angelika Zollfrank and Ms. Sandy Hebert will be leading worship on Sunday, February 22. **Please remember that there is one service at 9:30 am on this day.**



From the Vicar

February is an interesting month. It's always the shortest, which has always been a strange idea to me, but I find more and more that it is often one of the busiest. We try to pack so much into, this year, only 29 days. I'm excited in the next 29 days to have the opportunity to engage more with both the Waltham community and our church community outside the walls of the church.

On Friday February 7th I am excited to spend some time at Mighty Squirrel Brewery getting to know people and talking about what the church means to you and how it has impacted your lives. On Sunday February 2nd we had a great presentation from the trip to Puerto Rico last summer, and this week on February 9th we will engage in conversation around our upcoming trip to El Salvador. I'm excited to hear about the history of the trip and learn about the ways First Lutheran explores God and service through this service opportunity. On Tuesday February 11th I have the opportunity to join students, staff, and other clergy at Brandeis University for a conversation around race and religion. From February 21-23 I am so excited to get to go to Calumet with all those going on our congregational retreat to spend more time talking about community within our congregation, and ways we can foster that among people of all age groups.

I am constantly learning about the people of First Lutheran and the many ways we can work together to provide support and growth for one another. You are passionate about so many different things and that passion shines through in the ways you serve the church, the community, and the world. Each of you is blessed and continues to be a blessing to others.

May this next month be filled with opportunities for you to explore and engage with the various communities you participate in.

Peace, Vicar Courtney

Annual Meeting Update

Our annual meeting was held on Sunday, January 26, highlights include:

Budget: We voted a budget of \$304,806; a 7% increase over last year. This budget includes raising local benevolence from 0.75% to 1.0% and continuing our practice of tithing our income to the wider church (10%). We also increased funds for youth and VBS staffing and provided a 4% raise to staff.

Intern: We voted to host an intern for the 2020-2021 academic year. The cost of an intern is expected to be roughly \$41,000. We were able to do this because of pledges to the Intern Fund of \$30,124 from individuals and \$11,000 from the Nelson Board.

2019 Accomplishments include:

- The establishing of a post-confirmation youth group.
- A successful service learning trip to Puerto Rico .
- A measure of growth (11 new members received).

2020 Goals Include:

- A focus on nurturing community (to be discussed and envisioned at the congregational retreat in February).
- A Habitat for Humanity group build in El Salvador to be held in early August.
- A continued striving to deepen connections between faith and daily life.

Elections: We elected Sammy Kalisa, Curt Schroeder, and Julie Weeden to the church council; and Steve Hoff, Dianne Poulos, and Paul Weeden to the Board of the Nelson Memorial Apartments. We also offered thanks for four persons who were completing council terms: Erika Jerram, Angela Neal, Brad Nederhoff (president), Eben Rauhut (Secretary), New officers of the church council include: Ann Sjodin (President), LuAnn Kimker (vice-president), Susan Pintus (secretary), and Scott Niemann (treasurer).

Special Thanks: We offered special thanks to Scott Niemann and Peter Pinch for their diligent service as Treasurer and Financial Secretary; and to Pastor Maehl marking his 20th Anniversary. Thanks to all who contributed to gifts. Thanks also to LuAnn Kimker, Jen Lambert, and Rachel Nederhoff for overseeing the video montage for Pastor Maehl.

2019 Benevolence Update

Also at our annual meeting we shared some of the ways we have given beyond our own congregation:

\$27,448 given to the New England Synod to support the mission of the wider church.

\$40,786 given to support the hosting of Vicar Athena Bless and Vicar Courtney Smith our seminary interns. (\$10,000 of this from Nelson Board)

Over \$6,000 in Pastor's Discretionary funds used to assist persons in our community with: tuition, rent, retreats food, medicine, and auto repairs.

Over \$4,300 in scholarship aid for First Lutheran and Santuario children and youth attending Camp Calumet summer camp.

\$2,200 in our budget for Vacation Bible School so that neighbor children may be welcomed with no tuition charged.

\$2,059 from our annual budget designated for local benevolence shared with: Chaplains on the Way, The Waltham Family School, The Waltham Alliance to Create Housing, Lutheran Campus Ministry in the Fenway, The Waltham Farmer's Market, Waltham Fields Community Farm's outreach Market, Waltham Newcomers Academy, and more.

Over \$1,000 in donations to feeding programs; including ELCA World Hunger, Project Bread's Walk for Hunger supporting Massachusetts feeding programs, the Waltham Community Food Walk (led by our children) supporting feeding programs in Waltham, and food pantries at Brandeis and First Lutheran.

Gifts of art supplies through our VBS program used to assemble art kits for Waltham Family school families

Donations of food given through our food pantry; and contribution to assemble food bags that were distributed via the Waltham Boys and Girls Club.

Via our November Thanks4Giving drive, over 30 bags filled with personal care items donated to Ascentria for refugees resettled in Massachusetts.

Donations of winter wear shared with international students at Brandies.

McDonald, Dunkin Donuts, etc. gift cards, collected during December and shared with persons experiencing homelessness in our community.

Doing Justice, Serving All



Waltham Family School Fiesta Thursday, March 19

The annual Fiesta fundraiser for the Waltham Family School (WFS) is being held on Thursday March 19 from 6:00 - 8:30 pm at the Solea Restaurant on Moody Street in Waltham.. The WFS is one of our partner organizations and we have had a group attend in past years. We are joining with the Nelson Board in sponsoring. If you would like to join us, please contact Pastor Maehl. You may also register on your own. Tickets are \$75 per person and we have several *gratis* spots available through our sponsorship.

Church Clean Up Day Saturday, April 4 9:00 am - 12:00 noon

We invite you to come on Saturday, April 4 to help with our Spring clean up day in preparation for celebrating Holy Week and Easter. There will be jobs inside and out. Come anytime between 9:00 am and noon, and stay for as little or as long as you'd like. Note, over the course of the year, the care of the building falls primarily on a few dedicated persons. Your participation would help share the load.

2020 Service/Learning trip to El Salvador

August 1 - 9, 2020

There is an informational meeting following worship on February 9. If you are interested in this trip, please speak with Jennifer Lambert or Pastor Maehl. We invite all adults and youth age 16 or older (travelling with an adult) to participate.

Lenten Collection

Lutheran Church of the Reconciliation Disaster Fund

The traditional spiritual practices of Lent include additional gifts of money to those in need. Each year we like to lift up one particular organization for special offerings.

This year we are lifting up the Lutheran Church of the Reconciliation in Toja Baja Puerto Rico. This is the church that hosted our congregational trip this past June. While there, we learned that the congregation had built up a disaster fund over more than two decades; however the fund had been wiped out following Hurricane Maria in 2017. That storm also negatively effected the economy, leaving their congregation with a greater challenge in funding its ministry.

Given where we live, we do not require a disaster fund for our own congregation. Thus, in solidarity with the community there, we are hoping to send a significant gift at the conclusion of Lent that would help rebuild their disaster fund. If you would like to make an offering at any time during Lent, you can simply mark your gift, "Lent Offering" or "Disaster Fund."



Drinks with Vicar! February 7th from 6-9pm

Join Vicar Courtney at Mighty Squirrel Brewery for conversation and drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic available). Stop by any time between 6pm and 9pm.

Mighty Squirrel Brewery:
411 Waverly Oaks Road, Waltham, MA 02452
www.mightysquirrel.com

Walking Together in God's Love

Prayer Concerns



ve Hoff); Norma Huisman
terheinrich (LuAnn Kimker's mother); Myles Martins and parents (infant nephew of Cat Niemann); Jason Mihalko (friend of Matt Jerram); Ralph Platfoot (uncle of LuAnn Kimker); 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).

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 Jüri Niiler, Pam Sperry.

Friends and Family: Adekemi (*friend of Sarah Rauhut*); Christiansen family (*friends of Jennifer Lambert*); Emily Clemens (*niece of Joan Clemens*); Lavara Clemens (*mother of Joan Clemens*); Donna (*friend of LuAnn Kimker*); Marlin Emschweiler (*cousin of Joyce Anderson*); Carolyn Hoff (*mother of Ste-*

aunt of Brad Nederhoff); Nancy Jewell (*cousin of Joan Clemens*); Ellen Katterheinrich (LuAnn Kimker's mother); Myles Martins and parents (*infant nephew of Cat Niemann*); Jason Mihalko (*friend of Matt Jerram*); Ralph Platfoot (uncle of LuAnn Kimker); 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 those who grieve: the family and friends of Mildred Care (grandmother of Sarah Rauhut)

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



Our former intern **Athena Thomasson-Bless** will be ordained on February 29, 2020 at Augsburg Lutheran Church in Winston-Salem, NC. Athena has been called to serve part-time as associate pastor of Christ the King Lutheran Church in Cary, NC and as part-time Social Justice and Advocacy Coordinator for the North Carolina Synod of the ELCA. Please keep her and her new ministries in your prayers.



Senior Classics February and March

Seniors had a fun visit on January 16th with delicious chili, quiche, fuzzy green Jello - treats from our past church memories. Thank you all for your generous sharing. Bentley says thank you for treats too. He is our official greeter. Thank you Paul and Susan for the delicious birthday cake.

Join us February 20th, 11:45 for another fun time. All are welcome.

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 Courtney Smith, Intern
csmith@uls.edu

Council: Ann Sjodin, President
LuAnn Kimker, Vice President
Susan Pintus, Secretary
Scott Niemann, Treasurer
Holly Diaz
Sammy Kalisa
Curt Schroeder
Janice Ostrander
Julie Weeden

Sunday Worship:

8:15 and 10:30 am
9:30 am on 2/23 & 3/29—last Sunday

Sunday Learning Hour:

9:15 am

Visit us on the Web at:



Find us on
Facebook

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.