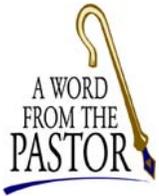


The Messenger

A newsletter of the people of First Lutheran Church, Waltham

The First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waltham
The Rev. Thomas E. Maehl, Pastor
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May 2021
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Every now and then, something unexpected happens. Sometimes, I suppose it is simply happenstance. Sometimes, I truly believe, it is the work of the Holy Spirit.

On the morning of Tuesday, March 2, I arrived at church and checked my voice mail. There was one message. I listened and heard the speaker say that he was the owner of the apartment building abutting the church on Eddy Street. He wanted to sell, and remembered that years ago in a casual encounter I had said, "If you ever want to sell call us first," He said if we would meet his firm asking price, he would patiently wait for us and work with us.

Immediately I called him. I thanked him and said we would certainly discuss this. When I hung up, I had such a deep sense of the Holy Spirit surprising us with an extraordinary opportunity. I offered a prayer that went something like this, "Wow God! This is extraordinary, and this a lot of money, way more than we can possibly muster on our own. If you want us to have this building, you'll have to make it happen." Then I contacted members of the Nelson Board to share the news.

Over the next few days, the board of the Nelson Memorial Apartments (caretakers of our congregation's affordable housing ministry) communicated via email, then at their March 18 board meeting they formally voted to apply for Community Preservation funds and to pursue the purchase of this property. We immediately went to work drafting a formal proposal for the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) and exploring mortgage options.

Since then there has been a whirlwind of activity. Much of it coordinated by Kathryn McCowan (a member of the congregation and our realtor extraordinaire), Geri Nederhoff (Nelson Board president), and Janice Ostrander (Nelson Board treasurer). My deep thanks to each of them!

Here are some milestones along the way:

March 19 - Kathryn McCowan begins the formal process of working with current owner.

March 22 - Initial walk-through

March 26 - Inspection

March 29 - A purchase and sale agreement is signed (contingent upon securing a mortgage and Community Preservation Funds)

April 6 - The Waltham Community Preservation Committee meets and approves our application for \$420,00 in CPC funds.

April 20 - The Waltham Long Term Debt Committee takes up the CPC recommendation and tables a vote until a formal appraisal is received.

April 21 - We receive the formal appraisal

May 3 - The Long Term Debt committee votes to approve the project

What's next? The project still needs to be voted upon by the Waltham City Council (they meet on May 10), we need to register with the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds indicating that the four apartments in the building will be kept affordable in perpetuity, and we need to secure a mortgage. If that all goes through smoothly we hope to close sometime in the next 2-3 months. We then will have created four more units of affordable housing, helping to address what is perhaps the greatest current need in our community.

My prayer to God persists, "If you want us to be stewards of this building, you will have to make it happen." Thus far, our often surprising God has been making a way for just that. I am grateful.

I am deeply thankful for all who have served on the Nelson Board in years past and currently, patiently showing up for monthly meetings, preparing the way for this surprise from the Holy Spirit. As you continue to show up to the varied responsibilities and challenges of your own life, I pray that God might guide, provide for, and surprise you too.

Faithfully, Pastor Maehl

Nurturing Faith

An Update on VBS this Summer

“Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power” Ephesians 6:10

We are beyond excited to be able to offer a VBS program this summer! This summer’s theme is “Knights of North Castle.” Due to COVID-19, we will be offering a take-home program created and assembled by our confirmation and post-confirmation youth. The program will run Monday, July 5th, through Saturday, July 9th. Each day, there will be a YouTube video with learning the music and actions, hearing Bible stories, and instructions to complete age-appropriate crafts. We invite you to participate at your own pace. We will explore how we can put on God’s power by armoring up with truth, justice, peace, faith, and salvation. On Saturday, we will have an afternoon full of fun activities, food, and music in the park to end our week.

We look forward to armoring up together as we learn more about God! To help with our planning, please fill out the Google Form if you would like to participate:

<https://forms.gle/1ALFchQkW2HiF1tm6>

- Vicar Wylie

Worship Update

We continue to offer worship in-person in the parking lot on Saturday afternoons (4:30 pm) and virtually on Sunday morning (10:30 am). Members of the church council, in cooperation with a small ‘reopening Team’ will be making plans for the fall, taking into account CDC guidelines. In the meantime we give thanks for your patience and participation. Here are some ideas for engaging worship now:

- If feeling restless, engage virtual worship using a smart phone and ear buds while walking in a quiet neighborhood or woods.
- Come to outdoor worship at least once each month in order to commune.

We pray for a return to regular worship soon.

Confirmation - May 23

Six of our youth are completing a two-year confirmation program and will be affirming their faith during worship on May 23; they are: Lukas Binggeli, Lea Dugan, Deidre Fahey, Betsy Hoff, Alison Jerram, and Eegan Pandian. We thank God for their lives and the blessing they are to our community.

New Confirmation Class Forming

A new confirmation class will begin in September, meeting on Sunday mornings.. We welcome students who have entered 7th grade and older to participate. This is a two-year program with the following format:

Fall 2019 - *Who is this Jesus?* An examination of Jesus through a close reading of portions of the Gospel of Mark.

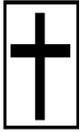
Spring 2020 - *The basics of Christianity.* Focusing on the principal parts of the catechism: Ten Commandments, Apostles Creed, Lord’s Prayer, Baptism, Communion, Confession and Forgiveness.

Fall 2020 - *Red Threads of Scripture.* Exploring major stories of creation, deliverance, prophetic voices, exile and return, the life of Jesus, and the early Church.

Spring 2021 - *Lutheran Emphases.* Focusing on Justification by Grace Through Faith, Saint and Sinner (100% each); also Law and Gospel and Theology of the Cross (as lenses for interpreting God’s communication); and Vocation in the world. This quarter we also discuss human sexuality, war, and the continual need for reform.

Please contact Pastor Maehl if interested and feel free to invite others in your wider community.

Walking Together in God's Love



*From the
Vicar*

Soon and very soon. We are in this strange place of seeing the light at the end of the tunnel while also

realizing we still have a mile left to run. At the end of the tunnel, the light is vaccines, summer break, gathering with friends and family. We are so close. At the same time, we still have a mile left to run. We still need to mask up and practice social distancing. We still have to help others get their vaccine to reach herd immunity. We still need to go to school, wear our masks, study hard, and pass tests.

God is luring us to the light at the end of the tunnel. God desires us to be at peace, that life may be lived abundantly, that all will be fed, that power is no longer used over people but with people. Through Christ on the cross, God has done all these things, yet we still continue to run the last miles as we help God bring about the kingdom.

Frankly, my dog Cosmo and I have been annoyed by the cold and rain that has come to fill our days. The other night, I was taking Cosmo out for the last walk of the night. We stepped off the patio to go down the stairs to the sidewalk. As Cosmo stepped onto the sidewalk, I saw a rain drop fall on his head in slow motion. As soon as the raindrop hit his head, he abruptly turned around and ran back into the house.

The light is at the end of the tunnel, there is a mile left to go, and it is raining. God is at the end of the tunnel, God is with us in the beloved community as we run this race, and God is in the rain, showering us with grace, mercy, and even some annoyance at times. Let us persist, let us do what we must to keep on moving on, let us remember that we have each other and God to accompany and guide us. *Soon and very soon.*

- Vicar Wylie

Intern Update

I continue to give thanks to God for the ministry of Vicar Wylie Cook among us. Vicar Wylie has been so very conscientious, particularly in sharing worship leadership duties that have expanded during the pandemic. Currently we are offering evening prayer each Wednesday, outdoor worship each Saturday, and Virtual worship each Sunday. Along with sharing leadership for these services, we are also sharing in the teaching/leading of confirmation and post-confirmation classes that continue to meet in person on Sunday mornings. Vicar Wylie will continue to serve us until the end of July.

I am also grateful to God that we will be hosting another intern, named Samantha DiBiasco, who will be joining us in September. Vicar Samantha is coming from Trinity Seminary in Columbus, Ohio and, as is the practice with all students from Trinity, her internship will be two years long. Thus, she will be with us before, during, and after my 2022 Sabbatical (May 2 - August 21).

My sincere thanks to all who have made contributions and pledges to the intern fund. When this two year assignment was proposed three weeks ago, we only had funding for the next academic year. Since then many members of the congregation and Nelson Board have stepped forward, and we now have the full funding pledged for the two years! This is such a blessing!

I am so grateful to God for the extraordinary gifts that our interns bring to our congregation, and for the part we get to play in helping to shape the next generation of Lutheran pastors. My thanks all who support our interns with prayer, encouragement, and financial support.

- Pastor Maehl

Doing Justice and Serving Others

Walk For Hunger

For many years, First Lutheran has supported Project Bread's annual "Walk for Hunger," and also the efforts of Waltham Fields Community Farm. This year, we supported both together in what was mostly a virtual event. Here's how it worked.

Waltham Fields Community Farm (WFCF) entered a team in Project Bread's virtual walk for Hunger (held on May 2). Anything donated to WFCF Team would be divided with 40% being used for Project Bread's regional feeding efforts, and 60% returned to WFCF for their local work.

LuAnn Kimker then joined the WFCF team as our First Lutheran representative. We then invited members of First Lutheran to donate to LuAnn's account. Through this the WFCF team raised over \$14,000 from 24 team members, and our part was \$1,250 in contributions to LuAnn who walked several laps around Waltham Fields Farm on May 2. Thanks to LuAnn for serving as our representative and for all who made donations.

ELCA World Hunger

The ELCA World Hunger program continues to reach communities in need throughout the world. The following comes from their web site, "From health clinics to microloans, water wells to animal husbandry, community meals to advocacy, your gifts to ELCA World Hunger make it possible for the ELCA to respond." Recently we contributed \$500 to World Hunger for relief efforts targeted in Rwanda and Malawi. This was from funds contributed during Lent. More information about the ELCA World Hunger program can be found at: <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/ELCA-World-Hunger>

Diapers

We continue to use Pastor's Discretionary Funds to purchase diapers in collaboration with Christ Episcopal Church's Diaper Depot. In May we are donating 1,800 size 6 diapers. Thanks to Jen Lambert for coordinating the purchase.

Holy Week and Easter Thanks to ...

All who came for outdoor worship on Maundy Thursday and enduring the cold and hail stones falling on our bulletins

All the youth who read lessons and/or acted out one of the Biblical stories of deliverance. These include: **Eliza Dickert, Betsy Hoff, Nick Hoff, Alison Jerram, Isaac Maehl, Julia Niemann, Maggie Niemann, Kayali Pandian, Justin Sjodin, and Jake Villalta,**

Ann Sjodin and LuAnn Kimker who decorated the chancel of the sanctuary for Easter.

Additional thanks to...

Doris Speer for baking communion bread for our Saturday afternoon outdoor worship services.

Isaac Maehl, Curt Schroeder, and Alan Sieving for continuing to coordinate the set up and break down of A/V equipment for our outdoor worship services.

The **Flinner/Hoff, Maehl, Nederhoff, Pandian, and Sjodin** families for assisting with our Sunday morning virtual worship services throughout this time of pandemic.

Jason Felsh for overseeing the lawn and **Cynthia Niiler** for overseeing the gardens (they sure do look beautiful!)

Penny and Marquette Alexander for the creation of masks emblazoned with our First Lutheran logo. If you would like one, come to outdoor worship some Saturday where we set them out for anyone who would like.

Walking Together in God's Love

Prayer Concerns



Members of our First Lutheran Community: Marquette Alexander; Penny Alexander; Sarah Allen; Jen Biter; Connie Danielson; Ardeith Froeberg; Rosy Hebert; June Jahrling; Erika Jerram; Steve Latter; Lorne MacArthur; Kathryn McCowan; Cynthia Niiler, Joan and Jüri Niiler, Sandra Schwab, Pam Sperry.

Friends and Family: Adekemi (*friend of Sarah Rauhut*); Greta Carlson (*friend of Connie Danielson*); Cleo Carsten (*relative of the Biters*); Christiansen family (*friends of Jennifer Lambert*); Emily Clemens (*niece of Joan Clemens*); Lavara Clemens (*mother of Joan Clemens*); Leslie Crowe (*friend of Connie and Jeanette Fagone*); Heather Budd (*friend of LuAnn Kimker*); Donna (*friend of LuAnn Kimker*); Chuck Flinner (*father of Kat Flinner*); Norma Huisman (*aunt of Brad Nederhoff*); Ellen Katterheinrich (*LuAnn Kimker's mother*); Sheila Landsman (*knitting group friend*); Sylvia and Chris Lee-Thompson (*friend of Susan Pintus*); Chris Lochran (*friend of Connie and Jeanette Fagone*); Myles Martins and parents (*infant nephew of Cat Niemann*); Mary Ann (*friend of Carol Hansen*); Tom Maxwell (*brother-in-law of Meg and Tom Maehl*); Peter Melanson (*brother-in-law of Matt and Erika Jerram*); Jason Mihalko (*friend of Matt Jerram*); Sally Raymond (*Jen Biter's mom*); Stacey Reed (*sister of Penny Alexander*); Margarita Rivera (*friend of Rachel Nederhoff*); Margie and Roger Schroeder (*Curt Schroeder's mom*); Ann Sewich (*sister of Meg Maehl*); Doug Sewich (*brother-in-law of Meg and Tom Maehl*); Maria Silva (*aunt of Olga Jimenez*); Sophy (*roommate of Alexa Turner*); Matthew Stanhope (*partner of Jane Danielson*); Wayne & Carol Sukow (*parents of Cathy Sukow*); Jim Wroe (*cousin of Carol Hansen*).

For those who grieve: the family and friends of: Marlin Emschweiler and his family (*cousin of Joyce Anderson and Bud Crouse*);

For our partners: Santuario Luterano, the Spanish speaking Lutheran congregation in Waltham, and for their interim leaders: Pastor Cassandra Chavez and Vicar Hector Lugo Cuadrado. 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, Camp Calumet, 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.

May 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>2</p> <p>9:00 am Confirmation <u>FH</u> 9:00 am Post-Confirmation Youth <u>PR</u> 10:30 am Worship via Facebook Live</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>7:00 pm Evening Prayer via Facebook Live</p>	<p>6</p> <p>10:00 am Knitting Group</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>1</p> <p>4:30 pm Parking Lot Communion</p> <hr/> <p>8</p> <p>4:30 pm Parking Lot Communion</p>
<p>9</p> <p>9:00 am Confirmation <u>FH</u> 9:00 am Post-Confirmation Youth <u>PR</u> 10:30 am Worship via Facebook Live</p>	<p>10</p> <p>7:30 pm Council via Zoom</p>	<p>11</p> <p>7:15 pm Chancel Choir via Zoom</p>	<p>12</p> <p>7:00 pm Evening Prayer via Facebook Live</p>	<p>13</p> <p>10:00 am Knitting Group</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>4:30 pm Parking Lot Communion</p>
<p>16</p> <p>9:00 am Confirmation <u>FH</u> 9:00 am Post-Confirmation Youth <u>PR</u> 10:30 am Worship via Facebook Live</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p> <p>7:00 pm Evening Prayer via Facebook Live</p>	<p>20</p> <p>10:00 am Knitting Group 7:30 pm Nelson Board</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <p>4:30 pm Parking Lot Communion</p>
<p>23</p> <p>Day of Pentecost/Confirmation Sunday 10:30 am Worship via Facebook Live</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p> <p>7:15 pm Chancel Choir via Zoom</p>	<p>26</p> <p>7:00 pm Evening Prayer via Facebook Live</p>	<p>27</p> <p>10:00 am Knitting Group</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>4:30 pm Parking Lot Communion</p>
<p>30</p> <p>10:30 am Worship via Facebook Live</p>	<p>31</p>					

First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waltham

Ministers: The people of the congregation

Staff: The Rev. Thomas E. Maehl, Pastor
tmaehl@rcn.com

Ms. Cynthia Niiler,
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Vicar Wylie Cook, Intern
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Council: President: Ann Sjodin
Vice-President: LuAnn Kimker
Secretary: Julie Weeden
Treasurer: Susan Pintus

Holly Diaz
Sammy Kalisa
Jennifer Lambert
Beth Mellilo
Curt Schroeder

Worship:

Sundays: 10:30 am

Wednesdays: 7:00 pm Evening Prayer
both via Facebook Live

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.