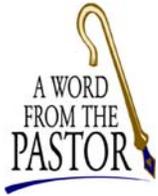


The Messenger

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

September 2022
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I am thankful to have returned from a fruitful 16-week sabbatical. Before I left, I had stated the following as my sabbatical goals: *“Through rest & prayer, reading & writing, travel & play; with time alone, time with family, and time with friends; to experience renewal: spiritually, mentally, emotionally, & physically.”* I am happy to report that, thanks be to God, I experienced just such a renewal. On September 25, during the learning hour I will share in more detail about my sabbatical experiences. Here, briefly, are a few words about four of the primary parts.

Bicycling in Europe: Back in 2007, I applied for, and was awarded, a sabbatical grant from the Eli Lily Foundation. A key part of the application was answering the question, “What would make your heart sing.” Two years ago I asked the same question and this trip to Europe was the answer. My spouse Meg and I, with only a few changes of clothing in rear panniers, plotted our own course and rode bicycles approximately 650 miles along the Rhine and Mosel Rivers. We started in Swiss Alps and ended in Trier, Germany. With an often-sedentary job, I knew that I wanted to get back into my body; and both Meg and I love a good adventure. While away, I continued to pray for many in the First Lutheran community and beyond, however, my mind was totally disengaged from the normal demands of my vocation, I was very much in my body, and it was a delight.

Reconnecting with friends, family, and former interns: My mother became ill in 2001 and died in 2006; my father mourned her death, grew older and frailer, and died in 2020. I was so grateful to be able to visit them several times a year, over the past 20 years; however, this meant that I was seldom able to see friends

from my childhood, college, seminary, etc. On this sabbatical I took trips to Pennsylvania, New Jersey, California, and North Carolina where I shared meals with family, friends from college and seminary, and many of our former interns.

Writing: During the weeks that I was not travelling, most every weekday I wrote for many hours. This is for a writing project that has been brewing inside of me over the past few years. The project is still a long way from being complete, and may take several more years; and as I reengage my work at First Lutheran, I am mostly putting it aside. Yet, I am very grateful to have had the space to write, and I believe the experience has helped me to prepare for the next quarter of my ministry.

Worship: I was away for 16 Sundays and ended up worshipping 20 times. I attended worship in Maine, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, France, and Austria. Many of my experiences were in churches where I did not understand the language. What I found most meaningful was saying the Lord’s prayer together and receiving Holy Communion when offered. I could see that many, many churches are in decline. I experienced a reconfirmation of my belief that hospitality is essential. I came away with a deeper sense that in addition to explicitly welcoming guests, hospitality also includes doing the liturgy well, choosing music that resonates with the congregation, offering communion to all who desire it, and proclaiming the Word of God in such a way that we who worship sense a deep welcome that is flowing from the heart of God.

I am deeply grateful for this experience. Additionally words of thanks are on page 4.

Faithfully, Pastor Maehl

Nurturing Faith



Return to Fall Schedule

September 11

Worship at 8:15 & 10:30
Learning Hour at 9:15

We continue to ask that all wear masks while in worship; this given that: there is so much singing, there continue to be new variants of COVID that are not yet covered by former vaccines and boosters, and that we have so many vulnerable people in our worshipping community.



Adult Forum Schedule

We are excited to restart our adult forums in September! This fall we are going to engage in conversations about what it means to be the Body of Christ and how that impacts the ways we are a welcoming and inclusive community. These conversations will be facilitated by Vicar Samantha. Here is our schedule of topics for the coming weeks:

Sept. 11 - Rally Day: See right column

Sept. 18 - What does it mean to be the Body of Christ?

Sept. 25 - Pastor Maehl's sabbatical presentation

Oct. 2 - TBD

Oct. 9 - What is Reconciling Works? A presentation by Ashlei Buhrow focused on the inclusion of LGBTQIA+ persons.

Oct. 16 - What do we do with scripture that's been used to hurt others?

Rally Day

September 11, 9:15 am

Please consider joining us for a special learning hour with two options.

Option 1: Re-envisioning faith formation on Sunday mornings. Pastor Maehl will be facilitating a conversation about what we might offer for children. We are asking for parents of children and other adults who are willing to collaborate to participate.

Option 2: Gift baskets for first responders. Vicar Samantha will be leading this intergenerational activity. We will be packing baskets and writing notes, cards, and pictures for police, fire fighters, and EMTs.. Our hope is that older hands can join in and help with younger ones.

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

7:00 pm

10/5, 10/19, 11/2, 11/16

We are experimenting with a new every-other-week Wednesday evening Bible study. We will gather in-person, read and discuss scripture texts appointed for the coming Sunday, and pray. In our complicated lives and times, consider joining in conversation to better ground our lives in God. Note: we are experimenting with every-other week for now, based upon interest we'll consider what we choose to do in the months ahead.

Youth

We are excited to be restarting youth gatherings once a month this fall. We are looking forward to getting the youth all together again for time in community, conversation, service, and fun! Any youth in **6-12th grade** is welcome! Mark your calendars: Sept. 18 for lunch at the park following 10:30 am worship, and Oct. 14-15 for a youth overnight.

Nurturing Faith



Choir is Back!

Are you ready to sing?

First rehearsal
Tuesday 9/13 at 7:15 pm
All are welcome!

Hello Singers of First Lutheran,

Our choir is a group that:

- Musically praises God and prays to God on behalf of the congregation.
- Supports congregational singing
- Perhaps most importantly: a group that gathers regularly to breathe together, sing together, and support each other.

COVID precautions

We will begin singing masked and spaced out and will reassess our COVID protocol with those singing in the choir and the guidance of First Lutheran's reopening team.

Chancel Choir is a group with an ongoing commitment to our every other week schedule of Tuesday evening rehearsal (7:15—8:45 pm) and Sunday morning singing.

Quick Choir is anyone who can show up for 9:45 am rehearsal on a given Quick Choir Sunday.

Fall Schedule

Tuesday Rehearsal/Sunday Worship

September 13/September 18

September 27/October 2

October 11/October 16

October 25/October 30 - Reformation

November 1/November 6 - All Saints

November 15/November 20 - Christ the King

November 29/December 4 - Advent 2

December 13/December 18 - Advent 4

December 20/*December 24 - Christmas Eve

Which Sundays will be Quick Choir Sundays is still to be determined based on interest.

Contact Cynthia at firstlutheranwalthamoffice@gmail.com if you want to talk about choir or just come to rehearsal on 9/13 and try us out!



From the Vicar

What an absolute gift this sabbatical summer has been for me, and I cannot thank you all enough for all your support, grace, and care. This summer while Pastor Maehl was away on sabbatical, I learned so much about ministry, leadership, community, and faith. I had the opportunity to experience so many firsts, from co-leading our VBS program, to covering pastoral care visits on my own. These experiences were life-changing for me; they helped me to grow in confidence in myself, in claiming my own voice, and in my call to ministry.

Not only did I grow in confidence in my call, this summer also gave me the opportunity to grow in my own faith journey. Throughout our time together, I really learned what it means for me to trust and rely on God, who truly is always with us. We are not called to this work in community alone, we need Christ's presence and love to rely on. Through the grace and trust shared with me this summer, St. Paul's words could not resonate more deeply with me now: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me," (Philippians 4:13).

Thank you all for your support this summer. I am incredibly excited to see where the Spirit leads us this next year together.

Peace, Vicar Samantha

Sabbatical Thanks

My thanks to Vicar Samantha and Cynthia Niiler for all their (mostly) behind the scenes work caring for many aspects of our ministry during my absence. Also I give thanks for Pastors Angelika Zollfrank and Kristian Koehler who shared Sunday morning worship leadership; their fine preaching and grounded leadership was a great blessing. Also my thanks to the members of the church council and the Vacation Bible School team for all their faithful care and efforts. I am truly grateful,

Pastor Maehl

Walking Together in God's Love



New England Synod & Churchwide Assembly By Vicar Samantha

This summer, I had the opportunity to represent First Lutheran at the New England Synod Assembly, held June 9th -11th in Worcester, MA. While there, I learned more about how our wider Church is organized at a synodical level, as well as current issues the Church is wrestling with. One of the resolutions discussed was the ongoing work of anti-racism in the ELCA and in our synod. Part of that work was listening to the many voting members who identify as persons of color, who expressed concerns and desire for their voices to be heard. The Synod Council then held a meeting after the Assembly with those persons of color and pledged continued anti-racism work. Additionally, our very own Sammy Kalisa was elected to serve on the Synod Council. Sammy, we are grateful for the gifts you will bring to the council and for your service. If accessing online and you want to read more about the New England Synod Assembly, [click here](#).

I did not attend, but will report that the ELCA Churchwide Assembly also gathered this summer. This year the Assembly gathered in Columbus, Ohio on August 8th-12th, with the theme "Embody the Word." One of the major elements of this year's Assembly was a public apology given to Iglesia Lutherana Santa María Peregrina for the harm they experienced by actions taken by the Sierra Pacific Synod and the ELCA as a whole. Additionally, Imran Siddiqui was elected as the vice president of the ELCA, the first Asian American vice president of the ELCA. Moving forward, the Church Council moved to establish a Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church; this commission will be reassessing statements of purpose for expressions of the church, reconsidering the organizational structure of the church, and reviewing our commitment to dismantle racism, all of which are to be presented at the next Assembly in 2025. If online and you would like to read more about the assembly, [click here](#).



Fall Retreat November 11-13 Blue Gentian Lodge, Londonderry, VT

Our annual adult-only retreat is scheduled for November 11-13. We will begin on Friday evening after travel and dinner and conclude before lunch on Sunday. This weekend is open to all those who are beyond high school age and will include time for conversation and reflection, worship and prayer, fellowship & fun.

The full cost is \$200 per person; however, we invite college/graduate students, and others with financial uncertainty to contribute less (*Speak with Pastor Maehl for more clarity*). The Cost includes 2 nights lodging and 4 meals. Note: as was our protocol last year, we will ask participants to take an at-home COVID test before travel. You may sign up using the following link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080b44a8af2ca75-fall2>

Eye Glasses Needed

The Boston University Department of Ophthalmology is planning their second trip this year to Lesotho in October and we again need any new or gently used glasses to take with us for our patients there. We especially are in need of new reading glasses in the powers of +2.00, +2.25, +2.50, +2.75, +3.00, and +3.25. These can be found cheaply at the Dollar Store, Ocean State Job Lot, Marshall's, TJ Maxx, and other retail outlets. You can drop these glasses off anytime between now and September 25th. Of, if you prefer, you can donate towards buying glasses through the offering plate. Just mark your donation towards "Lesotho" and the glasses will be purchased with those funds. Last February your generous donations made a huge impact on so many people. Thank you so much for your continued support of this ministry.

First Lutheran Ministry Schedule

If you are unable to serve when scheduled please *find a replacement* and contact the office.

September

	September 4 Pentecost 13 9:30 am	September 11 Pentecost 14	September 18 Pentecost 15	September 25 Pentecost 16
8:15 Lector	N/A	Julie Weeden	Kevin Dickert	Tom Neal
10:30 Asst. Min.	LuAnn Kimker	Sammy Kalisa	Ann Sjodin	Inpakala Pandian
10:30 Lector	Cathy Sukow	Holly Diaz	Emily Codner	Vicki DeVault
10:30 A/V	Curt Schroeder	Ted Sjodin	Eegan Pandian	Steve Hoff
Altar Care	Catherine & Peter Pinch	Marquette & Penny Alexander	LuAnn Kimker	Geri Nederhoff
Counters	Norman Adams Meg Maehl		Mary Ellen Adams Ted Sjodin	

October

	October 2 Pentecost 17	October 9 Pentecost 18	October 16 Pentecost 19	October 23 Pentecost 20	October 30 Reformation
8:15 Lector	????	Julie Weeden	Kevin Dickert	Tom Neal	????
10:30 Asst. Min.	Emily Codner	Rachel Nederhoff	Geri Nederhoff	LuAnn Kimker	Sammy Kalisa
10:30 Lector	Jennifer Lambert	Brad Nederhoff	Anthony Rivera	Cathy Sukow	Holly Diaz
10:30 A/V	Emily Citrone	Prakash Pandian	Curt Schroeder	Ted Sjodin	Eegan Pandian
Altar Care	Doris Speer	Ann Sjodin	Peter & Catherine Pinch	Marquette & Penny Alexander	LuAnn Kimker
Counters	Jennifer Lambert Alan Sieving		Bill Meaney Norm Adams		Meg Maehl Mary Ellen Adams

Can you help?

We like to have a 6-8 week rotation for each of our Sunday morning ministries. Right now we particularly need:

- **10:30 Usher** (welcome people, distribute bulletins, collect the offering, help people up to communion). It's time to start having ushers again, so we need to fill our roster with 12—16 people.
- **8:15 Lector** (read the first lesson and lead the psalm): We need 3-5 more people for a 6-8 week rotation.
- **Counter** (count the collected offering and make the bank deposit after the 10:30 service)

Contact Cynthia in the church office if you can help! firstlutheranwalthamoffice@gmail.com.

Many hands make light work! We always welcome help in any of the Sunday morning ministries.

Walking Together in God's Love

Prayer Concerns



Members of our First Lutheran Community: Sarah Allen; Jen Biter; Joan Clemens; Heather Fahey; Eddie Hughes; June Jahrling; Erika Jerram; Steve Latter; Kathryn McCowan; Don & Britta McNemar; Kerry Meaney; Cynthia Niiler, Joan and Jüri Niiler, Sandra Schwab; Leslie Waters.

Friends and Family: Adekemi (*friend of Sarah Rauhut*); Lauriana Arevalo & Eustaquio Dubon (parents of August Arevalo); Kat Benbenek (*friend of Inpakala Pandian*); Elaine Chan (*aunt of Catherine Pinch*); Emily Clemens (*niece of Joan Clemens*); Lavara Clemens (*mother of Joan Clemens*); Pam &

Ken Cochran (COTW partner); Steve Codner (father-in-law of Emily Codner); Leslie Crowe (*friend of Connie and Jeanette Fagone*); Emily Dallman (*friend of Dianne Poulos*); Donna (*friend of LuAnn Kimker*); Chuck Flinner (*father of Kat Flinner*); Norma Huisman (*aunt of Brad Nederhoff*); Betty Kaufman (*great-aunt of LuAnn Kimker*); Ellen and Duke Katterheinrich (*LuAnn Kimker's parents*); Sylvia and Chris Lee-Thompson (*friend of Susan Pintus*); Marybeth; Peter Melanson (*brother-in-law of Matt and Erika Jer-ram*); Skip Moyer (*grandfather of Samantha DiBiaso*); Pappas family (*friends of Jennifer Lambert*); Cathy Platfoot (*cousin of LuAnn Kimker*); Sally Raymond (*Jen Biter's mom*); Susan Raymond (*sister-in-law to Jen & Bill Biter*); Stacey Reed (*sister of Penny Alexander*); Margie and Roger Schroeder (*Curt Schroeder's parents*); Ann and Doug Sewich (*sister and brother-in-law of Meg Maehl*); Maria Silva (*aunt of Olga Jimenez*); Wayne & Carol Sukow (*parents of Cathy Sukow*); Tara Waters (*family of Penny & Marquette Alexander*); Jim Wroe (*cousin of Carol Hansen*).

For our partners: Santuario Luterano, the Spanish speaking Lutheran congregation in Waltham, and for their interim leader: Rafaela Radcke. 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.

Sundays on the Lawn

September 11, 18, 25

2-4 pm

On three Sundays in September we will be gathering on the church lawn (weather permitting), from 2-4 pm, for fellowship. We are explicitly inviting people from First Lutheran, Santuario Luterano, and neighbors too; but this is open to anyone. We'll provide hot dogs and tofu dogs, along with non-alcoholic beverages. There will be corn-hole too. Come and join us as we strive to strengthen community ties.

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 Samantha DiBiaso, Intern
sdibiaso@capital.edu

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:

9/4 9:30 am in person and Facebook Live

Beginning 9/11

Sundays:

8:15 am in person

10:30 am in person and 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.