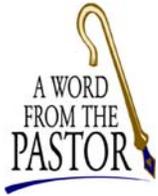


The Messenger

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

October/November 2022
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Welcome and Inclusion

We are at the beginning of a process leading toward us crafting a formal statement of welcome and inclusion; as hundreds of other congregations have done. We as a church council had planned on beginning this process in 2020, but when the pandemic hit and we were no longer meeting in person, we chose to wait until now. Here is a brief overview of our anticipated process:

1. Over the next two months, we will be sharing information: in newsletters, forums, and via email.
2. Beginning with the Justice and Service team we will start crafting a welcome statement, drawing upon examples from other churches.
3. Our welcome statement will be shared with the congregation and there will be opportunity for feedback, editing, and amending.
4. Eventually we will have a statement that will be voted on at a congregational meeting. Once voted, this statement will then be registered with an organization called Reconciling Works, making our explicit welcome public.

Here are some questions that have been raised and links to places with more information (Note: I will also include links in a *This Week* email):

1. Who or what is Reconciling Works?
<https://www.reconcilingworks.org/about/>
2. We're already welcoming, why do we need to say so? <https://www.reconcilingworks.org/ric/becomer/whysayso/>
3. What difference does this make?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7ujMW0i9F0>

I invite you to learn more, come to adult forums if you are able, and pray for this important process.

Faithfully, Pastor Maehl

Refugee Resettlement

An exploratory meeting via zoom Wednesday, October 26, 7:00 pm

We are beginning to explore the possibility of joining with 2 other Lutheran congregations in our area to resettle a refugee family in collaboration with Ascentria Care Alliance (formerly Lutheran Social Services). To do this, each congregation would need to identify 5-8 people to serve on a Neighborhood Support Team. The roughly 20-person Neighborhood Support team would then work together to organize fundraising efforts, find housing, build relationships, help navigate school enrollment, and more.

There will be an informational meeting on Wednesday, October 26, at 7:00 pm held via zoom for people in the three congregations who are interested in learning more about the process (with no obligation to commit to anything). A zoom link will be shared closer to the event via email.

If we do discern that God is calling us to move forward with this, it would be a means for God to work through us in blessing a new American family, nurturing relationships among several congregations, and weaving us more deeply into mission of healing, holding, and homecoming.

For more information on how Ascentria is active in the resettlement of refugees see their website: <https://www.ascentria.org/> If you have questions or interest, please speak with Pastor Maehl. May God bless our discernment.

Nurturing Faith

Adult Forum Schedule

Our adult forums this fall are primarily focused on inclusion and welcome; with information being shared about the Reconciling in Christ process (see "From the Pastor"). These conversations will be facilitated by Vicar Samantha. Here is our schedule of topics for the coming weeks:

October 9 – What is Reconciling Works? A presentation by Ashlei Buhrow from Reconciling Works.

October 16 – Continued conversation about the Reconciling in Christ process.

October 23 – A conversation about belonging and not belonging (a universal thread that we have all experienced).

October 30 – No Adult Forum. Come for the community concert after 10:30 worship with Melt food truck (see next page).

November 6 – All Saints: sharing stories about the saints in our lives.

November 13 – No Adult Forum. Pastor and Vicar will be away on Fall Retreat

November 20 – Discussing a welcome statement as part of the Reconciled in Christ process

November 27 – Bible study: Peter, swords, and ears in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Youth Overnight, October 14-15

Our overnight for youth in grades 6-12, will kick off at 6pm on Friday with pizza, followed by some fun, games, conversations, worship, campfire, and community time. Be sure to pack your pillow and a sleeping bag! In the morning we will have a small continental breakfast available and then go in peace. Please RSVP to Vicar Samantha by Oct. 12th!



Sunday School Prayers Requested

COVID has affected us deeply, making life more complicated and demanding for many people, including many parents. When the pandemic shutdown began in March of 2020 we suspended Sunday school. Beginning in September of 2022, we have been striving to resume; but now in a modified, more collaborative way.

Now, we are putting all of the children together in a one room schoolhouse model, and instead of trying to find one or two teachers who will commit to teaching every Sunday, we are seeking many adults and youth who are willing to teach once or a few times a semester. In other words, we are seeking to share the joys and challenges, the blessings and responsibilities more broadly.

For this, I am now asking your help. First, please pray! Please pray for our children and their faith formation. Please pray for those who are discerning whether or not to teach and how often. Please pray that those who do offer to teach will be granted strength and insight, and will experience blessings themselves.

Then too, I ask for those of you in a position to do so to consider helping. Might you be willing to teach a class once or a few times? If so, we have links to online curriculum, many costumes for reenacting stories, art supplies, helpers, and more. Also, if teaching feels like too much of a stretch, might you be willing to help out occasionally as another adult or youth in the room when someone else is leading? (And if there is a youth in your household might you encourage them to share their gifts in this way).

I pray the Holy Spirit will be part of our collective discernment, that we will adapt to new models of enacting essential ministries, and that God will help us fulfill our responsibility to pass on the faith to new generations.

- Pastor Maehl

Nurturing Faith

Sharing our Gifts

Community Lunch and Concert Sunday, October 30

We are partnering with Integral Steps (a music program that uses our church) in a celebration of music and community. We are providing a Melt food truck, and Integral Steps is coordinating the music. Lunch begins after our 10:30 worship service, and the music portion begins at 12:30 pm. This is a child friendly event! (adult friendly too)

During the lunch hour, all are welcome to enjoy art tables with drawing and decorating supplies - help us make a giant collaborative collage! Then, enjoy a community concert, with performers ranging from musicians as young as 4 years old to professional musicians. We will hear music from Integral Steps students, a few members of the First Lutheran and neighboring organizations, as well as music on Native American flutes, Marven-to Flute & Piano Duo, and a few other surprises. Performers and audience members are invited to dress up in costume if they like. All are welcome - bring your friends and neighbors!

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

7:00 pm

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

Join us as we gather to 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.

Retreat Updates

We currently have 20 people signed up for our November 11-13 adult only retreat. Our biggest attendance ever. Mark your calendars for our congregational retreat at **Camp Calumet** in Freedom, NH scheduled for **February 24-26, 2023**.



*From the
Vicar*

During the week of Sept. 19, I had the opportunity to travel back to my seminary in Columbus, OH for my week-long intensive course. Each semester I take one course as a part of my Master of Divinity program at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, which allows me to be on internship for two years here at FLC.

This semester, my intensive course was called Theological Leadership. Throughout the week, we spent our days in class exploring the challenges and opportunities for theological leadership in the twenty-first century, particularly during this time of pandemic. This exploration took place through the lens of hope. We wrestled with the distinctions between optimism and hope, how the opposite of hope is despair, and how the presence or absence of hope shapes our capacity for leadership.

One of my biggest takeaways from the course was starting every class session with a story about hope from one of my classmates. Each one of the stories, from classmates finding something that was once lost to them sharing poems that carried them through devastating losses, brought tears to my eyes. With so much despair and injustice in the world, these glimpses of God's movement in the world gave me hope. Throughout the week, what I found is that hope is a gift, given to us by God that we get to share with one another. Hope cannot be achieved alone; it must be an act of community, one that will not disappoint us (Romans 5:5).

As Andy in the movie *Shawshank Redemption* says, "Hope is a good thing, maybe the best of things, and no good thing ever dies. I will be hoping that this letter finds you and finds you well."

In Christ,
Vicar Samantha

Walking Together in God's Love

Stewardship Appeal

In October we will be gathering financial pledges for the coming year. Specifically we are asking for pledges for the General Fund first, (*which pays for the basic operating of the church*), and then from those who are willing, additional pledges are welcomed for the Intern Fund. These are the two Funds that most impact our budgeting process. Gifts to other funds like the Capital Improvement Fund, Pastor's Discretionary Fund, Memorial Fund, or Calumet Scholarship Fund may be made at any time.



In preparation, we ask that each person prayerfully consider the age-old, enduring question of Christian stewardship, *"Of all that God has given me, what am I being led to use for myself, what am I being led to share with the church, and what am I being led to give away in the care of others."*

On Tuesday, October 18, pledge cards will be mailed. To save on postage we invite the emailing of pledges before that date to our Peter Pinch our church treasurer at: pdpinch94@post.harvard.edu

Thanks to all who contribute toward the ministry that God has entrusted to us through First Lutheran. Your gifts are a blessing!

Property Update

Office Repairs: We have selected a contractor and hope work might begin this fall to replace the flat roof over the offices. This roof has been leaking and we know that we will need to do some mold remediation once the new roof is installed. Also, we will be replacing the out-sized and outdated air conditioning unit. The old AC provided cooling for the church offices. We are planning on installing a unit big enough to provide cooling for the offices and the Pearson Room, and have learned that this will require substantial electrical work. With this major project we are using significant Capital Improvement Funds. We give thanks for those who have contributed to this fund, and welcome continued contributions.



Clean Up Day
Saturday, October 29,
9 am to 2 pm

We are holding a fall clean up day. We invite any who are able to come help with leaf raking, window washing, and other clean up tasks. Come for an hour or more. *We welcome your help!*

First Evangelical Lutheran Church 2023 Estimate of Giving

Names(s) _____

In thanksgiving to God who richly blesses us, I/we commit* to give back to God through the ministry of our church:

General Offering \$ _____ per _____

Intern \$ _____ per _____

* Financial circumstances do change, this commitment may be revised at any time.

Lawn and Garden Thanks

Our thanks to Norman Adams, Jason Felsch, Paul Pintus, and Peter Pinch who shared in lawn mowing over the summer months.

And to Marianne Brown, Pat Clem, Augusto Arevalo, Samantha DiBiasco, Stacy Fatale, Meg Maehl, Kathryn McCowan, Cynthia Niiler, Alan Sieving, Leslie Waters, Helen Yarbrough for watering and caring for the church gardens.

Walking Together in God's Love

Prayer Concerns



Members of our First Lutheran Community: Sarah Allen; Jen Biter; Joan Clemens; 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); Kate 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 Jerram*); Skip Moyer (*grandfather of Samantha DiBiasco*); 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 Sukow (*father of Cathy Sukow*); Tara Waters (*family of Penny & Marquette Alexander*); Jim Wroe (*cousin of Carol Hansen*).

For those who grieve: the family and friends of:

Carol Sukow (*mother of Cathy Sukow*)

Roger Dupuis (*husband of Diana Dupuis*)

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.

Coffee Hour Hosts Needed



Central to our Sunday hospitality is our coffee fellowship following worship. We are in need of hosts to make coffee and bring goodies for after our 10:30 am service. Hosting entails bringing simple food to share (baked goods and/or fruit), setting up, making and serving the coffee, and cleaning up. (The coffee itself is provided by the church). More detailed instructions are available in the church office and the sign-up sheet is in the Pearson Room or online at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080b44a8ac2ca64-coffee>

Your help would be appreciated.

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:

Sundays:
8:15 am in person
10:30 am in person and Facebook Live

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.