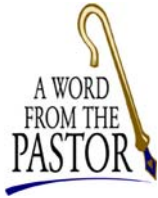


The Messenger

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

May 2023
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In our Mission Statement we declare that we discern Jesus Christ calling us to:
Walk together in God's love,
nurturing Faith,
doing Justice, and serving all.

That third part, the "Doing Justice" part I find to be the most challenging. How do we do that? I believe one way is simply to name injustice when we see it. I will describe two ways I have seen injustice, one on this page and another on page 4.

In my line of work, I have many occasions to visit nursing homes and assisted living facilities. One day, in 2012, I journeyed to a luxurious assisted living facility with our then new intern Ian Hill. We walked passed the gym, music room, and lovely dining room with crisp linen table clothes on all the table. Wide-eyed, Ian asked me, "How do people afford this." A few minutes later he got his answer.

The man we were going to visit was in a lounge; we sat with him there. A few moments later, an old woman in a wheel chair wheeled herself over. With no introduction, she looked at Ian and excitedly said, "Do you know what? I bought a house in 1958 for \$15,000 and sold it for \$1.5 million." (I'm unsure of the exact figures, but these are close). A bit later I said to Ian, that is why everyone here is white, because in 1958 most black people were shut out of home ownership in the suburbs, and therefore blocked from this generator of astounding wealth. *(It makes me wonder now if, as some sort of reparations, Black people's stay in assisted living and nursing homes could be financed by suburban property sales.)*

Recently, a dozen or so of us have gathered via Zoom to discuss episodes of The 1619 Project on Hulu. I have learned so much, both from the program and from the others engaging in conversation. Our last session will be on May 14. This, however, cannot be the end of our engagement with the enduring legacy of slavery and Jim Crow, and the systemic racism that infects our society still. I pray that God will help us to see injustice more clearly and name what we see.

Faithfully, Pastor Maehl



Trivia Night, Saturday, May 20

We invite you to join in our Trivia Night to help us raise funds for our family resettlement efforts (*see update on page 3*). You can gather a team beforehand, or simply come and be assigned to a team on the night of the event.

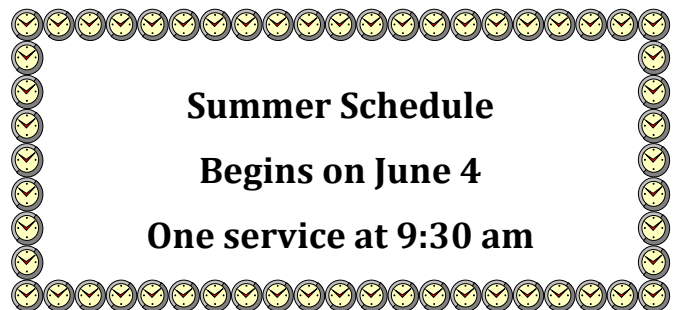
In order that we might have an idea of attendance, we do ask that if you plan on participating you sign up by May 19 either by emailing Pastor Maehl or using the following link:

[First Lutheran Church: Trivia Night](#)

Here's more details:

Gather at 7:00 pm,
Trivia begins at 7:30
\$35 per person
(cash, or check at the door)
Refreshments will be served
& raffle will be held
Prize for winning team.

**Invite friends,
Come for fun and laughter,
Support our family resettlement efforts!**



**Summer Schedule
Begins on June 4
One service at 9:30 am**

Nurturing Faith

Adult Forums

Sunday 9:15 am in the Pearson Room

May 7 Baptism - We will discuss the sacrament of baptism (what it is, why we do it, what promises come with it); and we will read and discuss the story of the baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch.

May 14 Justification by Faith - We will discuss this central tenet of our theology (what does it mean? What promises come with it? How is it meant to shape our daily lives?).

May 21 A Conversation About Transgender Issues With Emma Pinch

Emma Pinch (they/them) is a sophomore at American University who identifies as non-binary and transgender. They have been a part of First Lutheran all their life. On this day, they will be holding a conversation about what it means to be transgender and answering any questions that people may have on the subject.

May 28 The Cross and Discipleship - We will discuss Jesus' call to take up our cross (what does this mean? How has call impacted us in the past? What might this mean for our future?)

Join us for any or all of these adult forums either in person or via zoom. A Zoom link is shared in our weekly e-news.

Confirmation

On Sunday, May 28 at our 10:30 service several of our youth and one adult will be confirming their faith. Join us that day if possible as together we rejoice and show our support for Laila Dugan, James Neal, Jake Villalta, Tage Weeden, and Anthony Rivera.



Vacation Bible School July 10-14, 2023

We will again be offering a Vacation Bible School this summer.

Here are some general details:

- The program will run from 11 am to 3 pm (same as last year)
- We are welcoming children ages 5 and older

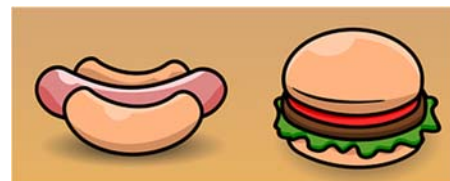
We are thankful that Sarah Rauhut is serving as VBS director and Anne Dugan as registrar.

Please consider:

- inviting friends and/or neighbors who have elementary aged children.
- Offering to help one or more days of VBS week.
- Offering to help with decorations or other preparations before VBS begins,

Also, please, please pray for this program. Pray that God will lead to us the children who need to be here, that God will raise up leaders for the varied components of the program, and that God will bless all those who participate.

For more information, or if you would like to offer to help, please contact Sarah Rauhut.



Thursday Cookout June 1 at Noon

Any who are available are invited to join us for a cookout lunch on Thursday, June 1. Hotdogs and hamburgers will be provided. We'll have tables set up in Founder's Hall and some seating outside (weather permitting).

Walking Together in God's Love



*From the
Vicar*

Time really does fly when you are having fun. Back in August of 2021 when I began my internship, I thought 2 years would feel like forever. But now that my time as an intern at First Lutheran is coming to a close, I see how these last 2 years have flown by; and boy have they been a lot of fun.

We have done so much together over the last two years. We've worshiped in all kinds of ways together, even in 100-degree weather. We've made music together, singing Joyous Light during Advent. We've shared meals together, including a whole lot of pastries with the Thursday Knitters. We've laughed together sledding at Camp Calumet, and cried together as we shared in life's joys and challenges.

All of these memories, and then some, are ones I will deeply cherish as I embark on the next phase of my journey. On May 20th I will be graduating with my Master of Divinity at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Ohio and then June 4th will be my last Sunday at First Lutheran. From there I will move back home to Virginia and continue engaging in the first call process.

Although I don't know exactly where I will be as my first call process continues to change, I am excited for wherever God is going to call me next. I am excited because I know that I am ready for ministry, thanks to you all. You all as a community have helped shape me into the pastor I am becoming, and it is a gift that I cannot thank you all enough for. It is a gift that gives me a whole lot of hope for the world, because it is one that you will continue to give to so many future leaders of the church.

What an absolute gift. Thank you.

In Christ,
Vicar Samantha

Family Resettlement Update

The family of four from Haiti has settled in Waltham and is pleased with their spacious apartment. Over the last several weeks, the Transportation Committee has provided many trips to grocery stores and food pantries, conducted bus system lessons, and driven for appointments in Boston. The Health Care Committee has scheduled and accompanied the family to medical appointments and dental visits. The Education Committee has arranged for evaluations and registrations with Headstart and the Waltham Public schools for the children, have enrolled the parents in ESL classes, begun informal English conversation visits, and have helped the family to explore the Waltham Library and get library cards. Our thanks to all who have helped on the varied committees and in particular to Catherine Sukow for her extraordinary coordination and communication efforts!

Can you help????

Physical Needs: There is an online needs list that is updated regularly. If you are able and willing to donate diapers and/or other items, please sign up using the following link (also published in the "This Week"):

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0A4FADA62CA5F49-ongoing>

Transportation Needs: We are also in need of additional daytime drivers to help get family members to appointments. If you are able to help, please contact Pastor Maehl.

Financial Needs: First Lutheran is one of our three partner churches on the NeST Team, and we are committed to help support the family for their first year (and rent is expensive). Contributions marked "Family Resettlement" are welcome anytime.

Please continue to keep this Family and our resettlement efforts in your prayers.

Doing Justice, Serving All

Good News to Share (and a second justice issue)

I am delighted to report that our former intern, Pastor Athena Thomasson-Bless and her wife Sam are expecting their first child in July. Thankfully, Athena's pregnancy is going well (and they are not revealing the gender until after the birth).

Athena and Sam were asked by the large congregation Athena serves to put together an online wish list, so parishoners, along with friends and family, could share their joy with baby-shower gifts. If anyone would like to signup for a gift the link is here:

<https://www.babylist.com/list/baby-athena-thomasson-bless>.

I followed the link and found that the the third item on their list reads as follows, "**Sam's Adoption Fees:** *Once our child is born, Sam will have to legally adopt them to ensure she has the same parental rights as Athena. Fun fact: This is NOT true for straight couples who use donor sperm to build their families - the husband is "presumed" the father. This will cost \$3,000.*"

This for me is a Justice Issue. I thought marriage is marriage; but apparently there is one kind for straight couples (who at times due to fertility, genetic, or other reasons choose a sperm donor), and another for same-gender couples.

My wife Meg and I are sending along children's books (we love doing that); we are also contributing toward the adoption fees. If any would like to join us, use the link above; and if you are reading this in hardcopy and would like me to email you the link, just ask.

Let us rejoice with Athena and Sam. May God bless them and their soon to be born child! And may the same rights of marriage be afforded to all.

- Pastor Maehl

Fire at Faith Lutheran Church

We continue to keep the people of Faith Lutheran Church in Cambridge, MA in our prayers following the devastating fire that occurred in their building on the evening of Easter Sunday.

Recently, I sent them \$5,000 from the Pastor's Discretionary Fund to help with their rebuilding efforts. This is the same amount that one of their neighboring congregations shared with them, (a Pentecostal Church that has offered them space while they are displaced.)

I am grateful for all who make donations to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund, enabling our care to extend beyond our walls.

Pastor Maehl

Intern Update

As noted in her column on page 3, Vicar Samantha's last Sunday will be June 4. Please join us on that day as we celebrate her ministry, give thanks to God for her, and say goodbye.

Our next intern will be Eric Jensen, coming to us from the Lutheran Seminary in Chicago. Vicar Eric was born, raised, and attended college in Kansas (originally from the city of Wichita). He completed a master's degree in architectural design at Kansas State University in 2018. He was active in outdoor ministry during his college years (serving at camps in Kansas and California). He also served as a Young Adult in Global Mission in Argentina. Vicar Eric is engaged, and his fiancé Katie Linthicum will be serving as the intern at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Arlington. Vicar Eric will begin his internship in August and is excited to be with us over the coming year.

Our thanks to members of the intern support committee for their faithful care and support of Vicar Samantha: Erik Diaz, Jennifer Lambert, Birtta McNemar, Rachel Nederhoff, Peter Pinch, and Steve Waldron.

Walking Together in God's Love

Prayer Concerns



Members of our First Lutheran Community: Sarah Allen; Jen Biter; Eddie Hughes; June Jahrling; Erika Jerram; Steve Latter; Kathryn McCowan; Don & Britta McNemar; Kerry Meaney; Cynthia Niiler, Joan and Jüri Niiler, Wayne Sukow, Alexa Turner.

Friends and Family: Adekemi (*friend of Sarah Rauhut*); 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*); 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 DiBiaso*); Pappas family (*friends of Jennifer Lambert*); Sally Raymond (*Jen Biter's mom*); Stacey Reed (*sister of Penny Alexander & Leslie Waters*); Margarita Rivera (*mother of Anthony Rivera*); Margie and Roger Schroeder (*Curt Schroeder's parents*); Maria Silva (*aunt of Olga Jimenez*); Tara Waters (*family of Penny & Marquette Alexander*); Jim Wroe (*cousin of Carol Hansen*).

For those who grieve: the family and friends of: Eileen Mischke (*mother of Steven Mischke*)

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. And for our efforts to resettle a refugee family.

If you would like to add/remove a name to/from the prayer list, please inform the church office.



Our thanks to all who helped with Holy Week and Easter

To **Lori Hrdlicka, Vicki & Jake Villalta, LuAnn Kimker, Geri Nederhoff, Ann Sjodin, Doris Speer, and Helen Yarbrough** for the beautiful decoration of the sanctuary.

To our cantors: **Inpakala Pandian, Catherine Sukow and Isabella van der Weide** (Maundy Thursday), **Rachel Nederhoff** (Good Friday), **Jennifer Lambert, Cynthia Niiler, and Eben Rauhut** (Easter Vigil), **Emily Codner, Meg Maehl, and Ann Sjodin** (Easter Sunday); and to **Kat Flinner, Betsy and Nick Hoff** for Maundy Thursday stripping of the altar.

To our brass players: **Nick Hoff, Karen Mischke, Brad Nederhoff, and Ted Sjodin**, and to our choir members: **Emily Codner, Meg Maehl, Brad Nederhoff, Geri Nederhoff, Eben Rauhut, Ann Sjodin, Ted, Sjodin, Catherine Sukow**, with help from **Sandy Hebert** and **Isabella van der Weide** for glorious music on Easter morning.

To **Mia Binggeli, Laila Dugan, Abbie Neal, James Neal, Jake Villalta, Vicki Villalta, and Tage Weeden** for helping to enact stories of deliverance during our Easter Vigil.

And to all who helped set up, clean up, and provide food for our Easter breakfast. With over 150 people sharing in worship (in person) on Easter, it was a blessed day.



Lawn Care

Might you be willing to mow the church lawn once or more times over the next five months (May through September)? If so, please contact Pastor Maehl, or look for a sign up in the Pearson Room. Note: We provide the lawn mower and gas, and someone from the Property Team would be happy to show you what is needed.



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.

First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waltham

Ministers: The people of the congregation

Staff: The Rev. Thomas E. Maehl, Pastor
tmaehl@rcn.com
Ms. Cynthia Niler,
Director of Music and Parish Secretary
firstlutheranwalthamoffice@gmail.com
Vicar Samantha DiBiaso, Intern
sdibiaso@capital.edu

Council: President: LuAnn Kimker
Vice-President: Sammy Kalisa
Secretary: Julie Weeden
Treasurer: Susan Pintus
Pat Clem
Holly Diaz
Sammy Kalisa
Jennifer Lambert
Beth Melillo
Ann Sjodin

Worship:

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](https://www.facebook.com/FirstLutheranChurch-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.