

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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"O Come Let Us Adore Him," the beloved Christmas carol explicitly invites us once a year.

"O Come let us listen to him, learn from him, lean on him, attune our hearts to him," we are implicitly invited week after week through regular Sunday worship. It is there in worship as we encounter the Word of God read, preached, prayed, sung, and embodied in others that Christ meets us. Through our communal worship, over time, we find our faith deepened, our love kindled, and our hope renewed.

Regular worship, however, can be a challenge. Post-COVID it's harder to be in community. With many facing stressful work, life, and home situations there is the need for more sleep. More and more sports are being scheduled for kids on Sunday morning; and so on. Online worship certainly can be a helpful aid for adults, especially for those who simply cannot be present; but over time it is our physical presence with one another that deepens our connections.

Having said this, it may seem odd that we are suspending the 8:15 service; thus, taking away one option. But attendance was dwindling, and we are going to experiment with a Sunday afternoon service. If Sunday mornings are difficult, I invite you to give dinner church a try. One way or another, I urge you to continue to make time for God to meet you in communal worship.
- Faithfully, Pastor Maehl

September Schedule

September 3: - Worship at 9:30 am

September 10 (and weeks following):

- Learning hour at 9:15 am
- Worship at 10:30 am

Note: We are **not** offering a service at 8:15 am this Fall. Instead, we will be experimenting with bi-weekly Dinner Church starting on September 24 (see page 4 for more details).



Community Celebration

Saturday, September 9
11:00 am to 2:00 pm

At First Lutheran

We will be welcoming neighbors, the family from Haiti whom we are helping resettle, and others who regularly use our church building; including participants of Infancy to Independence, Integral Steps, Nashville Songwriters, Siloam Church, and Santuario Luterano.

We will provide hamburgers, veggie burgers, hot dogs, and beverages. You are invited to bring a side dish or dessert to share. Come and enjoy food and fellowship. Here's a schedule of activities:

- 12:00 - 12:15: Music and movement for children by Integral steps.
- 12:20ish: Celebrating the birthdays of the children in our resettlement family.
- 1:00 - 2:00: Live music by The Nashville Songwriters.

Help Needed: If you are willing to help in the kitchen or with grilling (even for just one-half hour) please contact Pastor Maehl or sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0A4FADA62CA5F49-flccommunity>.

Nurturing Faith



Sunday's at 9:15 am
Beginning September 10
Pearson Room

Life, Scripture, & Story

Throughout our lives, certain pieces of the Biblical text begin to stand out to each of us as favorites. Perhaps a reading gave solace in a challenging time in your life, or you chose a verse as part of a celebration like your Confirmation or wedding.

Join us for Adult Forum (beginning on Sept. 10) as we get to know one another with a dive into some of your favorite verses of Scripture, and the ways they intertwine with our lives.



Sunday School Beginning Sept. 10 9:15 am

We welcome children ages 5 through 6th grade to join us. We meet in the basement and will be focusing on classic stories of the Bible.

Our thanks to members of the Sunday School team who are teaching and coordinating: Pat Clem, LuAnn Kimker, Meg Maehl, Inpakala Pandian, Isabella van der Weide, and Krishonda Waters.

Confirmation

We begin a two-year confirmation program on Sunday, September 10 for youth in 7th, 8th, and 9th grade. Class generally meets on Sunday mornings at 9:15 am. Pastor Maehl will lead the class in the fall and Vicar Eric will lead the class in the new year.

National Youth Gathering July 16-20, 2024 New Orleans

Every three years, 30,000 high school youth and their adult leaders from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gather for a week of faith formation known as the ELCA Youth Gathering. Through days spent in interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, young people grow in faith and are challenged and inspired to live their faith in their daily lives. We are participating! Here are some important details.

Who can go? Those currently in 8th grade through 12th grade.

Who will be leading the trip? Vicar Eric Jensen and Jennifer Lambert are the key leaders. Our plan is that along with Jennifer and Vicar Eric, one or two other adult chaperones will be attending.

What is the cost? We ask all participants to contribute something, however the bulk of the cost will be carried by the congregation through fund raising efforts and individual gifts. Note that donations marked "Youth Gathering" are welcome any time!

When is registration? We are planning to register in early October. Thus, we need to know by October 1 who are planning to participate.

Note: we will be planning an information session in mid-September, watch the "This Week" for more details.

Walking Together in God's Love



*From the
Vicar*

Late Summer Greetings,

It's hard to believe that I've already been in Massachusetts for more than a month! I do consider it a small personal achievement that I'm now able to get to Dunkin, Market Basket, and Moody Street without a GPS, and I'm surprised how quickly Waltham has begun to feel like home.

Over the past few years, I've been blessed to live in many amazing places: I was born and raised on the plains and Flint Hills of Kansas, where I fell in love with our thunderstorms and wide sunsets. During my architectural design studies at Kansas State University, I was able to spend four months abroad living in the small Italian hill-town of Orvieto – a scene straight out of a movie. I spent most summers in college doing outdoor ministry in Kansas, but after graduation decided to work for a few months at a camp out among the redwood trees of the Santa Cruz mountains in California. And from California I left for a year of service with Young Adults in Global Mission, where I lived at a L'Arche community for disabled adults in a suburb of Buenos Aires, Argentina. But now I have come to you all from Chicago, having finished my three years of seminary classes and prepared (by God's grace) for internship.

So why lay out this roadmap? I've shared many hellos and goodbyes with peoples and places over the years, but I must say something has felt unique about the kindness of First Lutheran Church and the town of Waltham. I am overjoyed to spend this next year with you all in this time and in this place – that it has so quickly felt like home feels like a blessing over the months to come.

Peace,
Vicar Eric



Choir is Back!

Are you ready to sing?

First rehearsal
Tuesday 9/12 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.

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. *Note: this could be a seasonal commitment—it doesn't have to be for the whole year.*

Quick Choir is anyone who can show up for 9:45 am rehearsal on a given Quick Choir Sunday. *We will start the year with a Quick Choir Sunday on 9/17!*

Fall Schedule

Tuesday Rehearsal/Sunday Worship

September 12/September 17

September 26/October 1

October 10/October 15

October 24/October 29 - Reformation

October 31/November 5 - All Saints

November 14/November 19

November 28/December 3 - Advent 1

December 12/December 17 - Advent 3

December 19/*December 24 - Christmas Eve

Contact Cynthia at firstlutheranwalthamoffice@gmail.com if you want to talk about choir or just come to rehearsal on 9/12 and try us out!

Nurturing Faith



VBS Thanks

We had a wonderful week of Vacation Bible School (July 10-14). Our thanks to all all who helped lead, all who participated, and all who prayed for the children and adults.

Our particular thanks to the following leaders:

Sarah Rauhut, director
 Anne Dugan, registrar
 Susan Lindberg Haley, small group leader
 Kat Flinner, small group leader
 Penny Alexander, arts and crafts
 Lynne Parker, arts and crafts
 Inpakala Pandian, science
 Jackie Zuniga, music
 Holly Gonzalez, music
 Isabella van der Weide, opening skits
 Rosa Santiago, kitchen and lunch making
 Catherine Sukow, floater
 Susan and Paul Pintus, art kits coordination
 Rachel Nederhoff, decorating coordination
 Emily Citrone, decorating and food purchase
 Signe Johns decorating and food purchase
 Sunghye Ye, decorating
 Steve Hoff, tent and fencing

Also thanks to our lunch making team:

Bethany and Gillian Adams; Luz Angela Al-icea, Sarah, Milena, and Aiden Rauhut; Rafaela Radcke, Rosa Santiago, and Larry Yarbrough

So too we are grateful for our teaching moment leaders:

Sarah Rauhut, environmental care
 The Rev. Matt Carriker, mindfulness
 Ann Callahan, Zumba
 Jillian Harvey, diversity, equity, and inclusion

Finally, thanks be to God for guiding and providing.

*Our next VBS is scheduled for **July 8-12, 2024.**
 Mark your calendar.*

Dinner Church

A Holy Experiment

September 24 at 5:00 pm
 Founder's Hall

On Four Sundays (Sept. 24, Oct. 8 and 22, and Nov. 5) we are going to offer Dinner Church; an experience that blends worshipping God and eating together. This is modelled after the practice of many in the early Christian church. This is not meant to replace the Sunday morning liturgy, but augment it with another option particularly for those who find it difficult to be in worship on Sunday mornings.

Who is this for?

- Those who start gearing up for the work week on Sunday nights and might want to do so with prayer and a communal meal.
- Those with kids whose sports commitments make Sunday morning worship a challenge.
- Those who are looking to deepen their faith and are open to exploring a new way of being church together.

What will happen?

- We will share bread and wine/juice during the meal in a way that integrates communion into the sharing of a meal.
- We will read one of the lessons appointed for the day and via table conversations seek ways in which scripture connects with our daily life.
- We will sing and we will pray in a less formal way, inviting prayers from any who want to offer them.
- We will clean up together.

What is meant by the term Holy Experiment?

- We will learn as we go and adapt as we see fit.
- We will offer this four times, if it is well supported than we will keep doing it.
- If this is to continue, we will figure out how food prep and provision is to be shared.

Doing Justice, Serving All

Property Committee Update

Office Renovation: The office renovation is complete! With mold remediation followed by new paint, floors, furnishings, lighting, and air conditioning. It was a big job with many helpers. Special thanks to Alan Sieving for overseeing the renovations, and to LuAnn Kimker for coordinating new furnishings. Thanks too to the group who assembled new furniture after worship on Aug. 27.

Sound Panels: A group gathered in July to install a series of sound panels in Founder's Hall to help dampen the echo. Thanks to Brad Nederhoff for spearheading the project.

Kitchen Lighting: One Sunday one of the florescent fixtures started smoking and sparking. Thanks to Alan Sieving and Ted Sjodin for installing new LED fixtures that day.

Lawn Care: Our thanks to Norman Adams, Jason Felsch, and Ted Sjodin for their many weeks of lawn mowing. We still have a few dates where we could use help before the mowing season is over. Sign up at church or here:

[First Lutheran Church: Lawn Mowing \(signupgenius.com\)](https://www.signupgenius.com)

Garden Care: Thanks to Cynthia Niiler for hours and hours of working to make our gardens look so beautiful. Also, thanks to Pat Clem, Bethany Carland-Adams, Diana Dupuis, Meg Maehl, Mary Taghizadehavandi, and Helen Yarbrough for garden watering.



Coffee Hour Hosts Needed

Sign up below (or contact the church office) if you would be willing to make coffee and bring simple goodies for one of the Sundays in September. Thank you.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080B44A8AC2CA64-coffee#/>

1619 Project - Episode #1

Sunday, October 1

Lunch and Watch-Party after Worship

Part of our calling as Christians is to resist all forms of oppression and discrimination. Last Spring a group of a dozen or so gathered to discuss the six part documentary entitled the 1619 Project that chronicles ways in which African Americans have been at the heart of American culture, politics, music, and more; in spite of 400 years of systemic oppression.

The first episode focuses upon how the courage, determination, and resistance of Black people have helped shape and deepen our democracy; and how even now the struggle continues as there are those who are working actively to restrict voting, intimate voters, and undermine democracy. As we approach a presidential election year, members of the Justice and Service team felt this would be a timely and important episode to watch together.

We will provide pizza for lunch, and will have arts and craft materials for children. Please join us if you are able.

Upcoming Retreats



FALL RETREAT

November 10-12
Blue Gentian Lodge
Londonderry, VT

Our annual Fall adult-only retreat two months away. Join us in Vermont for a weekend of adult fellowship, study, discussion, and renewal.



WINTER RETREAT

February 23-25, 2024
Camp Calumet

Our annual congregational retreat is scheduled for Feb. 23-25. People of all ages welcome. Mark your calendars!

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*); Dean Borst (*cousin of Ann Sjodin*); 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*); Hank Sukow (*uncle of Catherine Sukow*); Tara Waters (*family of Penny & Marquette Alexander*); Jim Wroe (*cousin of Carol Hansen*).

For those who grieve: the family and friends of DeWayne Reed, son of Stacey Reed. Stacey is the sister of Penny Alexander, Valarie Waters, and Leslie Waters; the family and friends of Peggy Codner (*mother-in-law of Emily Codner*)

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.



First Lutheran's RIC Welcome Statement:

Walking together in God's love, we rejoice in the diversity of God's wonderfully made children. We celebrate lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and non-binary people and all members of our human family regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, age, marital status, physical and mental ability, faith history, economic status, education, family configuration, or immigration status. We renounce the sin of racism and all forms of discrimination. We welcome all to join us in worship, leadership, participation in rites and sacraments of the church, and fellowship on our journey of nurturing faith, doing justice, and serving all.

In Memoriam: We give thanks to God for the life and generosity of **Raymond Bendetto** who died on June 30, 2023 at the age of 95. Raymond founded a musical instrument rental company in New Jersey where I worked during college summers. Though he never visited First Lutheran and was a life-long Roman Catholic, he was a generous supporter of First Lutheran. For over a decade he has been sending us \$10,000 each year from a foundation he established. Over the years his contributions have been used for several major projects including: renovating space to create "La Casa" and a music office, installing lawn irrigation, and renovating the balcony. Also, these blessed annual gifts were used to make up gaps in income for such things as the intern fund, VBS, Calumet Scholarships, National Youth Gathering trips, and service trips to El Salvador. Over the past few years, his annual gift has been directed to the Incarnation Mission Fund which has been drawn upon for food trucks, a social media coordinator, and expenses for our upcoming Community Celebration on September 9.

Now his gifts are at an end, and he is at peace with Christ his Lord and ours. What a wonderful blessing he has been to us. Thanks be to God who inspired such generosity in him and continues to do so with many others in this congregation. I hope and pray that gifts to the Incarnation Mission Fund will continue to come, and that God will continue to inspire us to give and serve so that God's blessings may freely flow.

- Pastor Maehl

First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waltham

Ministers: The people of the congregation

Staff: The Rev. Thomas E. Maehl, Pastor
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Vicar Eric Jensen, Intern
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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:

Summer Sundays:
9:30 am in person and Facebook Live
10:30 am starting 9/10/23

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.