

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

April/May 2024
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Perseverance



Over the coming month we will be discussing portions of a small book called *Perseverance*, by Margaret Wheatley.

The author notes that: *The word, "perseverance" in Latin means, "one who sees through to the end," "one who doesn't yield. In English, it describes how we maintain our activity in spite of difficulties. Tenacity, steadfastness, persistence, doggedness—these are all common synonyms.*

Recently re-reading this book and thinking of members of our own church community, I was struck by the many challenges people have lived through and/or are facing now, and the blessed examples of perseverance all around us. We have church members who have lived through war, faced the death of loved ones, failed in job ventures, experienced divorce, known poverty, and have made mistakes—yet who persevere. So too we have those among us who carry frailty and illness in their own body, struggle with depression, carry great responsibilities for aging parents and/or struggling children, shoulder burdens unknown to most others, yet carry on steadfastly.

Reflecting on the witness of these people fills me with gratitude and so I pray, *"Thank you God for such shining examples of tenacity, and for helping so many of us endure times of trial."*

I am also aware, however, that at times our perseverance wavers. It can be a fragile thing. So I also pray, *"Help, O God! Take not your Holy Spirit from us. Send to us wise counselors and give us what at times we cannot muster in ourselves."*

I believe that God does offer us help to persevere. Sometimes that help comes through private means like prayer; yet I sense that more often God strengthens us through the love and encourage-

ment of others; others who become the means for God to renew our hope, even when we falter or fail.

This for me is yet another reason why the faith community is so important. Through worship, fellowship, shared service together, (with times of leaning on one another), we provide means for the Holy Spirit to deepen us and strengthen our communal capacity to persevere.

If you're interested in reflecting more on the dynamic of perseverance, author Margaret Wheatley offers some questions to consider. She writes:

Think of all the people you know—family, friends, strangers—who have just kept going, who didn't yield, who were tenacious, steadfast, patient.

- *How would you describe them?*
- *What were some of their traits?*
- *What was it like to be around them, to listen to their stories?*
- *At the end of their lives, how were they?*
- *What do their lives offer you as lessons on how to persevere?*
- *What do we all need to learn from them now?*

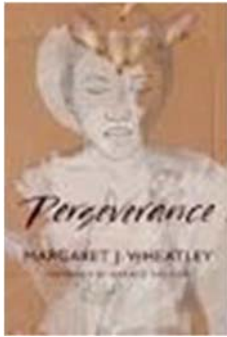
Thank you for your part in the First Lutheran community. May God continue to equip us all to persevere.

- Pastor Maehl



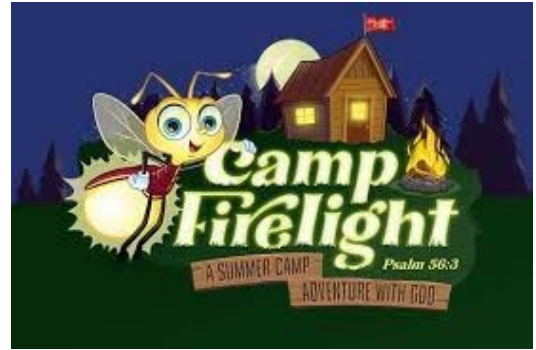
Summer Schedule
Begins on June 2
One service at 9:30 am

Nurturing Faith



Adult Forums Sunday 9:15 am

Join us on Sunday mornings at 9:15 am in the Pearson Room we share and discuss readings from the book **Perseverance**.



Vacation Bible School July 8-12, 2024

In this book, bestselling author Margaret Wheatley offers guidance for how to persevere through challenges in our personal lives, with families, at workplaces, in communities, and in our struggles to make a better world. Drawing from a variety of traditions, she provides hope, wisdom, and perspective for learning the discipline of perseverance. Copies of the book will be on hand and no pre-reading is required.

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

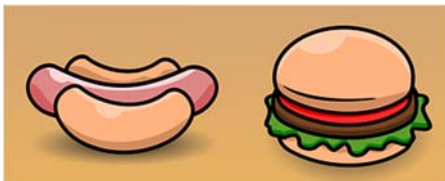
Here are some general details:

- The program will run from 10 am to 3 pm (starting one hour earlier than last year)
- We welcome children who have completed **kindergarten** through those who have completed **6th grade**. Older youth may apply to be a youth helper.

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

Confirmation Update

In May, the current class will finish their first year of our two-year confirmation program. Over the coming weeks there will be a conversation about prayer with several adults in the congregation, bread baking with conversation about the sacrament of Holy Communion, and a field trip to Temple Beth Israel in Waltham.



Thursday Cookout May 30 at Noon

Any who are available are invited to join us for a cookout lunch on Thursday, May 30. Hotdogs and hamburgers will be provided. We'll have tables set up in Founder's Hall and some seating outside (weather permitting).

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 or the church office.

Walking Together in God's Love



*From the
Vicar*

Easter Greetings!

In addition to all the excitement of Holy Week and the celebration of the resurrection, I've been at work preparing and rolling out the survey portion of my internship project. To help refine my questions and focus the content of the survey, I had conversations with many people from First Lutheran – I tried to cast the net as widely as possible across the diversity of the community, so that many different kinds of voices were being heard.

I pulled the survey together and prepared it for rollout during Holy Week. I received submissions from forty respondents. Though I have not yet fully analyzed the results, here are some initial observations:

1) There is a desire for a variety of social gatherings in the community, from volunteer opportunities to fun and games. (*Note that with that in mind, we are planning a game night for May 11—see column on right*).

2) The diversity of First Lutheran, especially when it comes to intergenerational relationships, is deeply valued here.

3) While the variety of ways we connect continues to evolve, there remains a strong interest in engaging in communal life at First Lutheran Church.

Note, these are only *my* initial reflections – and the real utility of this survey is for its use by *you* across the many wonderful groups and teams involved in our many ministries here. I'm gathering a small team of folks who will help me organize the results so that it can be seen and used by all of us, as we continue to imagine and engage in church together!

In peace, Vicar Eric



**Saturday, May 11
7:00 pm**

In order to keep strengthening our community life, we invite you to join us for a game night on May 11 starting at 7:00 pm.

Here's more details.

- This is for all ages!
- We will provide refreshments (snacks and soft-drinks)
- Feel free to bring a favorite game to share, (*actual game choice will depend on the will of the group*)
- A raffle will be held to raise funds for our family resettlement efforts.

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



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.

Doing Justice, Serving All



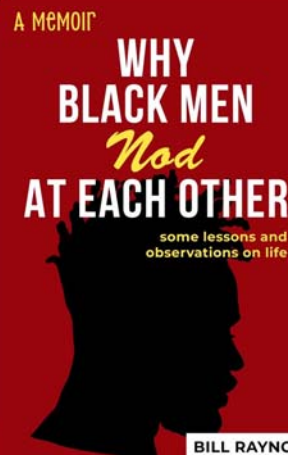
 SUNDAY, APRIL 28TH

 12PM - 1:30PM

 FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
6 EDDY STREET
WALTHAM, MA 02453

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

 raynorbooks@gmail.com
 www.raynorbooks.com



Clean Up Day
Saturday April 27
9:00 to 1:00 pm

Members of the property team invite you to help with Spring Clean up. Tasks to choose from include: dusting, polishing pews, yardwork, washing windows, etc. We will provide pizza! Note that you do not need to stay the whole time, an hour or two of help would be much appreciated.

Intern Update

We are thankful to have Vicar Eric Jensen with us through the end of July. In July, Vicar Eric will be helping with VBS (July 8-12) and helping to lead our youth trip to the ELCA National Youth Gathering (July 16-20). Then his last Sunday with us will be July 28.

I am pleased to announce that our next intern will be Makenna (Mak) Sanders, coming to us from Pacific Lutheran Seminary. Vicar Mak was born, raised in Ohio, not far from Cleveland and graduated from Thiel College in Western Pennsylvania. He will begin his internship in September and is excited to be with us over the coming year. In preparation, I will be travelling to San Francisco for a two day team building event in early May.

My thanks to members of the intern support committee for their faithful care and support of Vicar Eric: Erik Diaz, Jennifer Lambert, Britta McNemar, Scott Niemann, Peter Pinch, and Isabella van der Weide.

- Pastor Maehl

The Justice and Service Team invites you to join us for this book signing with the author.

*Bill Raynor's memoir- **Why Black Men Nod At Each Other**- explores the themes of, education, athletics, coming of age and culture. Raynor takes the reader on an honest and passionate journey that navigates the road from Boston's Mission Hill and Whittier Street housing projects to the halls of Dartmouth College, to his international travels around the globe. Bill highlights the insidious nature of racism, the importance of purpose, the power of athletic competition and the brotherhood of men of color. Raynor's experiences as a student, athlete, coach, educator, artist, and higher education administrator detail how each of those roles shaped his personal philosophy. Raynor's insights into the shared experiences of men of color are encouragement for all to continue to do the uncomfortable work of removing walls that separate and assist in building bridges to common humanity.*

Walking Together in God's Love

Prayer Concerns



Members of our First Lutheran Community: Ash, Bethany, and Roland Adams, Sarah Allen, Joyce Anderson; Jen Biter; Eddie Hughes; June Jahrling; Erika Jerram; Steve Latter; Kathryn McCowan; Don & Britta McNemar; Kerry Meaney; Cynthia Niiler, Joan and Jüri Niiler, Marlene Nordstrom, John Shread, Wayne Sukow, Alexa Turner.

Friends and Family: Adekemi (*friend of Sarah Rauhut*); Kate Benbenek (*friend of Inpakala Pandian*); Doak Borst (*cousin of Ann Sjodin*); Emily Clemens (*niece of Joan Clemens*); Pam & Ken Cochran (*COTW partner*); Steve Codner (*father-in-law of Emily Codner*); Emily Dallman (*friend of Dianne Poulos*); Crystal Dixon; Donna (*friend of LuAnn Kimker*); Sylvia and Chris Lee-Thompson (*friend of Susan Pintus*); Ken Maehl (*brother of Tom Maehl*); Peter Melanson (*brother-in-law of Matt and Erika Jerram*); Skip Moyer (*grandfather of Samantha DiBioso*); 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 Chuck Flinner (*father of Kat Flinner*); the family and friends of Janet Kain (*cousin of Tom Maehl*)

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, Jake Villalta, LuAnn Kimker, Geri Nederhoff, Ann Sjodin, Doris Speer, and Catherine Sukow** for the beautiful decoration of the sanctuary.

To our cantors: **Vicar Eric Jensen, Meg Maehl, Eben Rauhut, Ann Sjodin, and Catherine Sukow** (Maundy Thursday), **Jennifer Lambert** (Good Friday), **Isabella and Sylvia van der Weide** (Easter Vigil), **Geri Nederhoff** (Easter Sunday); piano help from **Sandy Hebert** (Easter Vigil); and to **Marquette and Penny Alexander** for Maundy Thursday stripping of the altar.

To our brass players: **Karen Mischke, Brad Nederhoff, and Ted Sjodin**, and to our choir members: **Emily Codner, Brad Nederhoff, Geri Nederhoff, Eben Rauhut, Ann Sjodin, Ted, Sjodin, Catherine Sukow, Sylvia van der Weide**; with piano accompaniment from **Catherine Pinch** for glorious music on Easter morning.

To **Mia Binggeli, Kalyse Black, Penelope Codner, Ezra and Zander Diaz, Brett Fahey, Jayden Montenegro, Henry Niemann, Vicki Villalta, and Ethan Waldron** for helping to enact stories of deliverance for our Easter Vigil.

Finally, to all who helped set up, clean up, and provide food for our Easter breakfast.

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 Eric Jensen, Intern
eric.jensen@lstc.edu

Council: President: LuAnn Kimker
Vice-President: Holly Diaz
Secretary: Julie Weeden
Treasurer: Susan Pintus
Emily Citrone
Pat Clem
Signe Johns
Sammy Kalisa
Jennifer Lambert
Brad Nederhoff

Sunday Worship:

10:30 am in person and Facebook Live

Sunday Learning Hour:

9:15 am

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.