

FELC Friendship Pads

Please fill out the Friendship Pad when asked during worship. If the church office does not currently have your contact information or it has changed, please indicate that in the appropriate column.

Nursery Care

The Downtown Site Nursery (located across from the Library in the Gathering Area) is open for family use during all services and staffed during the 9:15 a.m. service. The North Site Nursery (off the main hallway, across from the restrooms) is staffed at both services. Please ask an usher for assistance.

Hearing Assistance

If you are in need of a personal receiver, ask a Downtown Site usher, or a North Site soundboard technician.

Large-print Resources

If you are in need of a large print Bible or bulletin, ask an usher at the Downtown Site, or a greeter at the North Site.

AED Units on Site

Automated external defibrillators are outside the Downtown Site Usher's Room and next to the North Site sound booth.

Video Recording

The 8 a.m. Downtown Site worship service is video-recorded to share with our homebound members upon request.

In Need of Prayer?

For additions to the prayer chain, email or call the church office (felc@felc.com; 733-2303) or email Pastor Mary (mbauer@felc.com).

More Information

For detailed information on these and more FELC events, opportunities and ministries, pick up a newsletter in the Gathering Area, visit our website at www.felc.com, or check the bulletin boards and kiosks in the Gathering Area.

The Week of Nov. 12, 2017 At-A-Glance

Sunday, Nov. 12

8:50 a.m.
9:15/9:25 a.m.
9:15 a.m.
9:15/9:25 a.m.

Monday

9 a.m.
Noon
5:15 p.m.
8:15 p.m.

Tuesday

6:30 a.m.
5 p.m.
6:30 p.m.
7 p.m.
7 p.m.
7 p.m.

Wednesday

10:30 a.m.
Noon
5:30 p.m.
6:15 p.m.
6:30 p.m.
7 p.m.
7 p.m.
7:05 p.m.
8:05 p.m.

Thursday

6 a.m.
9 a.m.
11 a.m.
1 p.m.

Friday

6:30 a.m.
7:30 a.m.

Sunday, Nov. 19

8:50 a.m.
9:15/9:25 a.m.
9:15 a.m.
9:15/9:25 a.m.

DS = Downtown Site NS = North Site

Youth Scrip Sale; Salvation Army Bell Ringing Sign Up

Cherub/Angelus Choir Rehearsal, DS 220/Choir Room
Adult Learning Time, DS Lounge/NS Library
Confirmation Youth Group, NS Activity Center & Youth Room
Children's Learning Time, DS/NS

Monday Morning Quilters, DS Fellowship Hall
Intern Enrichment Ministry Team, DS Lounge
Stephen Ministry Meeting, DS Lounge
Pick Up Basketball, NS Activity Center

Men's Ministry, NS Library
Invitation & Hospitality Ministry Team, NS Library
Youth Connections Ministry Team, Osorio's
Learning Ministry Team, DS Library
Men's Ministry, DS 221
Worship & Music Ministry Team, DS Lounge

Bible Study with Pastor Mary, DS 221
Noon Hour Philosophers, DS Fellowship Hall
Handbell Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room
Wednesday Worship, DS Sanctuary
Parish Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room
Confirmation General Session, DS
Kid's Life, DS 014
reFUEL Grades 10-12, DS Youth Room
Pastor Jeff's Study of ELCA Social Statement, DS 114
Seraphim Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room

Early Risers Women's Study, DS Lounge
Adult Bible Study *Together by Grace*, DS Lounge
50+ Norwegian Cooking Demonstration, DS Fellowship Hall
Daytime Women's Book Club, DS Lounge

Men's Ministry, NS Library
Endowment Committee, DS 110

Cherub/Angelus Choir Rehearsal, DS 220/Choir Room
Adult Learning Time, DS Lounge/NS Library
Confirmation Youth Group, NS Activity Center & Youth Room
Children's Learning Time, DS/NS

Sign Up for the Weekly Update

Weekly Update is an email sent each Thursday or Friday with upcoming events and news from First English. If you haven't already, please send an email to Meri Hujet at mhujet@felc.com and simply request that you be put on the *Weekly Update* mailing list. Sign up today!



First English Lutheran Church
www.felc.com felc@felc.com

Downtown Site

Sunday Worship: 8, 9:15, & 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday Worship: 6:15 p.m.
Office Hours: M-Th: 8:30 a.m.- 4 p.m.
F: 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Love Jesus. Live your call.

Sunday at FELC

Altar Flowers

The Downtown Site altar flowers are provided by Jim and Joanne Moard in honor of their 61st wedding anniversary on Nov. 10.

The second altar flower arrangement at the Downtown Site is provided by Gardner and Sharon Orsted in honor of the baptism of their grandson, Solomon Gardner Bowden.

Salvation Army Bell Ringing Red Kettle Campaign

Signup for FELC Bell Ringing for the Salvation Army is happening TODAY. Please visit the signup table in the Gathering Area to sign up for this important ministry. The one hour time slots traditionally fill fast. FELC bell ringing will take place at various locations on:

- Saturday, Dec. 9 from 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
- Monday, Dec. 11 from 6-8 p.m.
- Wednesday, Dec. 13 from 6-8 p.m.

Some confirmation students will be ringing bells on Wednesday, Dec. 13, their service night. Please consult small group leaders for more information. Thank you.

Looking Ahead

Advent Wreath Lighting

Advent Wreath Lighting is a worship volunteer opportunity that can be done by yourself, with family, or even with a group of friends. In this role you will read a short excerpt and light the advent wreath. If you'd like to volunteer, a Sign Up Genius link has been posted to the front page of the FELC website, you can call the church office, or sign up in the Gathering Area. Questions? Contact Hannah Sprenger at hsprenger@felc.com.

Announcements

Week of Nov. 12, 2017

North Site

Sunday Worship: 8:15 & 10:30 a.m.
Office Hours: M-Th: 3-6:30 p.m.

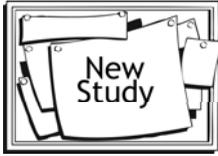
Shop With Scrip to Support FELC Students

Shop With Scrip (or as most people call it "Scrip"), is an easy way to fundraise as you shop. You can buy gift cards from our list of 28 retailers and receive 100% what you pay for while the Annual Youth Trips fund receives rebates anywhere from 2.5-14%. This year's profits will go toward costs for the ELCA Youth Gathering next summer. Scrip order forms can be found in today's bulletin as well as on the homepage of www.felc.com. The orders and payments (cash or check only) can be placed in the offering plate today. Forgot your checkbook? Please contact Heidi Schreiner at hschreiner@felc.com to make arrangements for payment. Orders will be submitted tomorrow and after processing, the gift cards will be ready for pick up on Sunday, Nov 19. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Heidi.



New Study: Freed in Christ

We at First English are somewhat unique in the degree of differing political and social views that exist among us. Consequently, we have a responsibility to model the civil discourse that we hope would exist in society at large.



We continue our study looking at the ELCA's Social Statement on Race and Culture: *Freed in Christ*. This Sunday morning we will define some terms that help deal with race and ethnicity, while Wednesday evening Pastor Jeff will look into our Biblical call. May we model a world where we work together toward the Christian ideal of justice for all.

- Today, 9:15 a.m. with Prof. Alyssa Hakes Downtown Site Lounge
- Wednesdays, 7:05 p.m. with Pastor Jeff Downtown Site Room 114

New Email Addresses Needed

Many FELC announcements are sent via email so it is extremely important to have the correct email address. Please email any new information to Hannah Sprenger at hsprenger@felc.com or to Kathy Larson at klarson@felc.com.

Cancellations

If wondering about cancellations, please check the FELC website (www.felc.com) under the Facebook section, the lower right hand margin on the FELC homepage. You do not need a Facebook account to view this. The church calendar will also be updated. In all instances, use your best judgment when deciding whether or not to drive to church for a scheduled worship, class or activity.

Early Risers Advent Study

Early Risers will be exploring a three-session series by Rick Warren, *The Purpose of Christmas*. Rick Warren is author of the #1 best-selling book, *The Purpose Driven Life*. In this series he focuses on the Gospel of Luke and helps us see not one but three purposes of Christmas announced by the angel at the birth of Jesus. Christmas is:

1. *A Time for Celebration* - Nov. 16
2. *A Time for Salvation* - Nov. 30
3. *A Time for Reconciliation* - Dec. 14

Early Risers Bible Study meets weekly at 6 a.m. in the Downtown Site Lounge. If you wish to participate in this study and would like both a book and study guide, contact Jean Monson ASAP at (920)731-8805 or jeanmonson2324@gmail.com.

One other bit of Early Risers news: Dec. 7 the Early Risers will be holding their annual Krumkake activity in the Downtown Site Kitchen at 6 a.m.

New Study Group for Women Beginning Next Sunday, Nov. 19

Join us Sundays from 9:30-10 a.m. in the North Site Library as we prepare our hearts and minds for the upcoming holiday season by defeating the "dirty villains of motherhood." Our group will read and discuss *The Supermom Myth* by local Christian author Becky Kopitzke. Grab a coffee, the book and a fellow imperfect mom as we learn to break free from the joy killers of motherhood and marriage and "rest in the grace and power of our one true Superhero God."

Books are available in the Gathering Area for \$9. Please contact Deni Kuchler at deni.kuchler@gmail.com for more information or sign up at www.felc.com/forms.

Noon Hour Philosophers

The Noon Hour Philosophers meet for an hour at noon each Wednesday in the Downtown Site Fellowship Hall. If you have questions please contact Mary Poulson at mmaryjep@att.net or (920)734-8137.

Nov.15: 299 Days, But Who's Counting? The Trump Presidency So Far

George Waller,
Assistant professor of Political Science
University of Wisconsin, Fox Valley

Calling all Bakers

Calling all Bakers! We are in need of Sunday Morning Coffee Hour baked goods at the Downtown Site. Please consider sharing your gift of baking and indicate by completing the signup sheet located near the Coffee Room. Each baker should plan on bringing approximately four dozen goodies. Thank you for your generosity!

Fox Valley Lutheran Homes Apartments for Rent!

Linwood Place Apartments has openings: large 2 BR with 1½ bath, large 2 BR, and 1 BR. Our waiting list is empty-this is the time to act! Call now to see an apartment or to secure a spot for the future. Call Becky (734-7225), John (419-5754), or Brian (840-3578.)

God's Work: Quilting With Our Hands

The Monday morning quilters meet weekly from 9-11:30 a.m. in the Downtown Site Fellowship Hall. Please drop by any part of the morning to help cut fabric, tie knots, iron, lay-out fabric squares or sew seams. All quilts made are donated to those in need in the local community and world.

AA Corner

If you are or someone you know could use some confidential help with stopping drinking, please call Dale R. at (920)419-2794.

Prayer Connection

Prayer connects us to each other in this community of faith and to Christ. To be included in the list of prayers, submit names to the church office or the First English staff. Names are removed after one month, but can always be extended by request. Please remember these First English members, friends and families in prayer in the coming week:

Prayers of Healing, Wholeness & Peace

- Nathan Meissner
- Angel Manos
- Todd Hollenberger
- Mary Lou Garnsworthy
- Brooklyn Ann Converse
- Jacob Schwab
- Justin Schwab
- Laurie Niles
- Lynn Boenker
- Debra Boushley
- David Heindel
- Doug Hansen
- George Krempin
- Amy Ponomarev
- Moore Peregrine
- Harold Rohlfing
- Jacob Frerking
- Tom Roy
- Melissa Heins
- Je'Ann Johnson
- Paul Henrikson
- Kathy Skaar
- Bob Gauerke
- Juanita Gauerke
- Shana Weber
- Todd Kauti
- Dianne Droster
- Debra Nuthals

Prayers of Comfort Families of:

- Nancy Brunette
- Donald Schabo
- Lance Schmidt

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Baptism of:

- Solomon Gardner Bowden

Prayers for Those Called to Serve in Other Countries

- Stephanie Olson

Prayers for Those in Seminary

- David Shudy

Prayers for Those in the Military

- BM3 Kyle Kramer, USCG
- LCPL Robert Kopesky II
- PFC Samuel Sinclair

The Downtown Site Church Office will be closed on Monday, Nov. 13, until 12:30 p.m. for a staff retreat.



High School Youth News

Grades 9-12

Nov. 12, 2017

reFUEL

DS YOUTH ROOM
WEDNESDAYS 7-8PM
For Grades 10-12

11/15: FELC Pastor Trivia—
Bring your 'A' game!
11/22: NO reFUEL
Happy Thanksgiving!
11/29: Thanksgiving Potluck
Dinner (more details
to come on FELC
Youth Facebook
page and bulletin)

High School Breakfast Club

Watch next week's bulletin
for more information for a
boys' and girls' breakfast club
that's brewing up!



ELCA Youth Gathering Fundraiser today

Scrip Sale

11/12

Card Pick Up

11/19

Next fundraiser:

Honey Sale

Dec. 3 and 10

Please contact Heidi
(hschreiner@felc.com) if you
have not received the sign up
or have additional questions.

Happy Thanksgiving

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever.
1 Chronicles 16:34

May your stuffing be tasty, may your turkey be plump.

May your potatoes and gravy have nary a lump.

May your yams be delicious, and your pies take the prize.

And Thanksgiving bring blessings of monster size!

Follow **felc.youth** on Instagram and **FELC YOUTH** Facebook!

Nov. 12, 2017



Information for FELC Youth and Families
Grades K-12



ROMANS 8:16

Find us on Social Media Outlets

Instagram: [felc.youth](https://www.instagram.com/felc.youth) Facebook: [FELC YOUTH](https://www.facebook.com/FELCYOUTH)

Connect with FELC Youth Staff

Kirsten Owens, Faith Formation Coordinator: kowens@felc.com

Heidi Schreiner, Youth & Summer Ministry Coordinator: hschreiner@felc.com

Love Jesus. Live your call.



Elementary Sunday School, Song, And Special News



Keepin' It Simple & Close To Christ

This year our Christmas program will look a little different. On Dec. 17 we will still see our beautiful FELC children in their Sunday finest singing and celebrating the birth of Christ. Yet, this story belongs to us all as a community. Similar to some of the new elements we have included in Sunday School this year, we are

inviting and encouraging folks of all ages to be part of telling this important story, one that binds us together as a community. Kids need to know that joyfully sharing these stories isn't just up to them. There is no "graduation" out of connecting to one another through these special times in the church. Instead, all of us, at any age, should be hearing, learning, and re-telling these stories to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ (fancy duds are optional).

So, if you feel called to be a reader, singer, or leader of stars, shepherds, angels, or magi, let Kirsten know. For most it will mean you only need to be there for rehearsals on Dec. 10 & 17. There is a place for everyone this year in the telling of Jesus' birth. Even though there will (hopefully) be more folks of different ages we are keeping the story and music simple because, ultimately, it's just about keeping close to Christ and community.

Hope to be singing next to you!

Doin' That Singin' Thing

The next time Downtown children's choirs sing:
> Cherub Choir-Dec. 3 at the 9:15 a.m. worship
> Angelus Choir-Today at the 9:15 a.m. worship,
and Dec. 6 at the 6:15 p.m. Advent Vespers worship
Remember, it's never too late to join choir.
Any and all are welcome!



Confirmation and Middle School Scoop



Large Group
All Grades
This Week



Large Groups For All

⇒7th grade families should have read chapter 5 together.

⇒8th grade families should have read chapter 6 together.

⇒9th grade students and families will be attending the *Faith on Trial* presentation on God and Science.
Students should continue journaling 4 entries a week.

Ho! Ho! OH NO! Our Christmas Parties NEED HELP

All of our class Christmas parties need parent helpers.



- > 7th grade needs 3 party planners and 1 treats person
- > 8th grade needs 4 party planners (there are currently none), 2 treats people, and 1 drink person.
- > 9th grade needs 5 party planners (there are currently none), 4 treats people, and 5 drink people.

Christmas is closing in fast, without helpers there are no parties so sign up soon so we can get our reindeer in a row! Contact Kirsten if you need the Sign-Up Genius link.

If you attend the Downtown Site let Kirsten know if you can help with the Christmas program. Easy & fun!

What's CYG Up To This Week?



This week Confirmation Youth Group is making sandwiches to be delivered to the Homeless Shelter. We will talk about the stresses of losing a home and how it can be difficult to trust God and have faith after something like this happens. Want to help out? Join us today!

Have questions or want to volunteer?
Contact Kirsten Owens at kowens@felc.com or 733-2303.

First English Lutheran Church SCRIP Order Form

Benefitting FELC Youth Annual Trips

Order Date: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Check one: Pick up at DS Pick up at NS

General Information

Please return completed form to the Church Office or email to Heidi Schreiner at *hschreiner@felc.com*. Payment is required at time of order. Orders placed by **SUNDAY, NOV. 12** will be available for pick up on **SUNDAY, NOV. 19**.

Questions? Contact Heidi Schreiner at (920)733-2303 or *hschreiner@felc.com*.

(Turn this sheet over to select your gift cards.)

Totals

Total # Scrip Purchased: _____

Total Amount Due: _____

Circle Payment Option: (Make checks payable to FELC. Please put "Scrip" in the memo line.)

Check # _____ Cash

Retailer	\$ (Choose)	Credit	Qty	Total Cost
Amazon.com	\$25 \$100	2.5%		
Applebee's	\$25	8%		
Barnes & Noble	\$25	8%		
Bath and Body Works	\$25	13%		
Buffalo Wild Wings	\$25	8%		
CVS	\$25 \$100	6%		
Dick's Sporting Goods	\$25 \$100	8%		
Festival	\$50 \$100	3%		
Fleet Farm	\$25 \$100	3.5%		
Funset Boulevard	\$25	9%		
Gap	\$25 \$100	14%		
HomeGood's	\$25 \$100	7%		
Kohl's	\$25 \$100	4%		
Kwik Trip	\$25 \$50 \$100	4%		
Little Caesars	\$20	8%		
		TOTAL		

Retailer	\$ (Choose)	Credit	Qty	Total Cost
Menards	\$25 \$100 \$500	3%		
Motomart	\$50	5%		
Nike	\$25	12%		
Old Navy	\$25 \$100	14%		
Pick N Save	\$50 \$100	4%		
Piggly Wiggly	\$50 \$100	3%		
Sams Club	\$50 \$100 \$250	2.5%		
Starbucks	\$25	7%		
Target	\$25 \$50	2.5%		
TJ Maxx	\$25 \$100	7%		
Uno's Pizzeria	\$25	12%		
Walgreen's	\$25 \$100	5%		
Walmart	\$50 \$100 \$250	2.5%		
		TOTAL		

Turn this sheet over to provide your contact information.

FELC DS Engage Page: November 12, 2017

Matthew 25:1-13 *"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, & five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you & for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.*

Sun., Nov. 12: Family Project: The song *"Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning"* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IWcgwUJPOF0>) paints a picture of this story that Jesus tells. The song encourages us to keep faith even through difficult times. The lyrics *"Darker midnight lies before us"* and *"Children don't be weary"* make it clear that life can include hardships. Talk as a family about some hardship you have had. How can you prepare for future hardships? What are ways your faith can be like keeping a lamp trimmed and burning.

Mon., Nov. 13: According to Greg Carey, *"The parable of the virgins ... calls Jesus' disciples to a state of constant alertness, of perpetual openness to God's dramatic future. We all know a few people, just a few, who tend to live that way. I think especially of some cancer survivors I know ... We're talking about living with a keen awareness of Jesus' return, an alertness tempered by preparation for a long haul."* Since Jesus was expected to return nearly 2000 years ago, it's hard to anticipate it happening soon. If we are to keep awake, we must live with an understanding of the import of each moment in being about God's work as we await God's return. http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2207

Tues., Nov. 14: Matthew recorded this parable during a time when the future for Christians was uncertain. Jesus' return was delayed, and the political climate brought persecution. The people who heard this parable might easily be tempted to leave the faith, and not prepare for Christ's return. We still have temptations to desert Christianity. The growing irrelevance of faith in our society can move us to deny or minimize our beliefs. Be prepared with extra oil for your lamp by cherishing and prioritizing the centrality of Jesus in your life.

Wed., Nov 15: Zeph. 1:7, 12-18 Most of this passage predicts evil that will come upon the people of Judah and Jerusalem. The main reason for this judgment is their complacency. The Lord says, *"I will punish the people who rest complacently on their dregs, those who say in their hearts, 'The LORD will not do good, nor will he do harm.'" (v. 12)* Helen Keller once said, *"Science may have found a cure for most evils; but it has found no remedy for the worst of them all—the apathy of human beings."* Our job while on earth is clear: we must take a stand for justice; we must not be apathetic. As we do, we know that the day is coming when God will take things in his own hands. While thoughts of judgment can scare us, it is hard to understand the Bible without acknowledging that one day God will wipe away the evils of humanity. *"[T]o know God as God is, one must experience the future revolution."* Until that day, let us work for justice.

Thurs., Nov 16, Psalm 90:1-8, 12 Let's take this Psalm to heart when it says, *"So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart."* (v. 12) What would it look like if we were to count our days? Perhaps we would ask ourselves, "If my days on earth are numbered, is this a good way to use my time?" or "If my contacts with this person are limited, is it worthwhile to get angry about this particular incident?" or "Am I making enough time in my life for celebration and joy?" Pray today that you might recognize the fragile nature of life, and gain a wise heart by counting your days.

Fri., Nov 17: I Thessalonians 5:1-11 Every so often there is a renewed interest in the end times, "the day of the Lord"—a time of judgment and destruction. Even when Thessalonians was written, people could become worried about their readiness. In this passage, Paul is basically saying, "Don't worry. Be ready." He reminds the Thessalonians that there is no way to know exactly when this day is coming, but they are not in the dark about how to prepare for its arrival. *"Put on the breastplate of faith and love and for a helmet the hope of salvation."* (v.8b) When we are feeling upended by differing accounts of how to prepare for God's presence, we are reminded of the basics. Have faith in God and love and encourage one another!

Sat., Nov 18: Matthew 25:14-30 I have always felt sympathy for the poor slave who only got one talent. Firstly, the narrator tells us that he doesn't have as much ability as the other two. Secondly, it's not like he stole the money—he gave it all back. And finally, I feel at a total loss in the business world. I would just as likely lose money as gain it without advisors. And perhaps that is a point. Rather than fall prey to our worries while thinking the worst of others (look at how this guy describes his master in verses 24-25), we should band together and help one another to reach our potential. May all of us who fear others will belittle our efforts be assured that God has given us the talents to accomplish the task He has called us to do.

For an online discussion of these and other questions concerning the texts, go to our Facebook FELC Engage Page: https://www.facebook.com/FELC_Engage_Page—Downtown Site

FELC NS Engage Page: November 12, 2017

Matthew 25:14-29 *"For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave 5 talents, to another 2, to another 1, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the 5 talents went off at once and traded with them, and made 5 more talents. In the same way, the one who had the 2 talents made 2 more talents. But the one who had received the 1 talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the 5 talents came forward, bringing 5 more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me 5 talents; see, I have made 5 more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one with the 2 talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me 2 talents; see, I have made 2 more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' Then the one who had received the 1 talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the 10 talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ...*

Sun., Nov. 12: Family Project: Spend some time talking about talents—the ways that each member of the family is gifted. It might be a good sense of humor, mathematical aptitude, or one of the arts. Then spend some time discussing ways that you can use your talents to honor God.

Mon., Nov. 13: Whenever I read “weeping and gnashing of teeth” (v. 30), I get pretty uncomfortable. Prof. David Jacobsen writes, “This pronounced... judgment seems far from our world these days and does not comport well with the cozy glow of churchy stained glass windows and padded pews.” It isn’t ours to determine the exact relationship between judgment and grace, but may we take comfort in knowing the God of judgment is the merciful God who gave his life on the cross.

http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3469

Tues., Nov. 14: The third servant in this parable KNOWS the master is to be feared, and he acts on that belief. We may be tempted to act on the fears we have of those who hold power over our jobs or security. God grant that our fears don't get in the way of wise and generous actions.

Wed., Nov 15: Amos 5:18-24 Sometimes we are almost delighted when those who were in places of esteem are “found out” in some sort of compromising action. It is as if their falling short excuses all the times when we do not live up to the ideals of our faith. This sort of self-justification is far removed from the call of God to act with justice, not allowing the actions of others to support our own apathy. When we pray with Amos, “*Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream*” (v. 24), we are asking that God would first send a flood of caring and love through our own lives. We ask that God would wash away our need to be seen as better than others, and would reveal the ways we deny God’s call on our lives even as we put on an outward show of faithfulness. May our humble worship call us to acts of justice and love.

Thurs, Nov 16, Psalm 70 “God is good, all the time; all the time, God is good.” I’ve heard this call and response at many Christian music concerts. Perhaps it began after someone took to heart Psalm 70:4. “*Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you. Let those who love your salvation say evermore, “God is great!”*” However, this Psalm does not ask us to ignore the harsh realities of life. The psalmist acknowledges their need for help, confessing that they are poor and needy. Praising God helps us get through adversity, but we are never expected to leave our troubles at the door.

Fri., Nov 17: I Thessalonians 4:13-18 This passage sends shivers up my spine as I think about various songs from my youth that anticipated Christ’s coming. The Gaithers’ *The King Is Coming* includes, “*I can hear the trumpet sounding and now His face I see.*” Or we would join together in the last verse of the well-known hymn *It Is Well with My Soul*. “*Lord, hasten the day when our faith shall be sight, the clouds be rolled back as a scroll, the trumpet shall sound and the Lord shall descend; even so it is well with my soul.*” While this passage has often been used to instill fear, Paul’s tone here is meant to encourage. May we joyfully anticipate being brought into the presence of Christ, and into a time when peace and justice will reign.

Sat., Nov 18: Matthew 25:1-13 Every November the texts deal with end times, which can be disconcerting during an election year. It can look as though the texts and songs about the apocalypse are chosen in anticipation of the horrors that will come since the pastor’s suspected candidate did not win. So in a non-election year, let us reflect on the reason for this yearly routine. After spending the entire summer and fall studying the miracles and teachings of Jesus, we become aware that Christ’s kingdom will only come to this earth after a time of struggle and judgment when the evils of humanity are swept away. In anticipation of that day, we are told to “*keep awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour.*” (v.13) With lamps trimmed and burning, we prepare for and anticipate Christ’s coming.

For an online discussion of these and other questions concerning the texts, go to our Facebook FELC Engage Page: <https://www.facebook.com/FELCEngagePage—NorthSite>