

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 nurseries at both sites are open for family use during all services. The Downtown Site Nursery is located across from the Library in the Gathering Area. The North Site Nursery is off the main hallway, across from the restrooms. 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 Oct. 1, 2017 At-A-Glance

Sunday, Oct. 1

8, 9:15 & 10:30 a.m.
8:15 & 10:30 a.m.
8:50 a.m.
9:15/9:25 a.m.
9:15 a.m.
9:15/9:25 a.m.
Noon

Monday

9 a.m.
6:30 p.m.
8:15 p.m.

Tuesday

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

Thursday

6 a.m.
9 a.m.

Friday

6:30 a.m.
6 p.m.

Saturday

8:30 a.m.

Sunday, Oct. 8

8, 9:15 & 10:30 a.m.
8:15 & 10:30 a.m.
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

New Member Sunday/Bake Sale/Equal Exchange Product Sale

Worship, DS
Worship, NS
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
Third Grade Bible Class, DS Fellowship Hall

Monday Morning Quilters, DS Fellowship Hall
Life Group: Board Games Guild, NS Library
Pick Up Basketball, NS Activity Center

High School Girl's Breakfast Club, Leo's Diner, Greenville
Men's Ministry, Angel's Restaurant
Judith Circle, DS 114

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 Assigned Large Group Rooms
Kid's Life, DS 014
reFUEL Grades 10-12, DS Youth Room
Together by Grace-Introducing the Lutherans, DS 114
Seraphim Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room

Early Risers Women's Study *Together by Grace*, DS Lounge
Adult Bible Study *Together by Grace*, DS Lounge

Men's Ministry, NS Library
7th Grade Kick-off to Confirmation Lock-in, NS

7th Grade Kick-off to Confirmation Lock-in Ends, NS

Worship, DS
Worship, NS
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

The Grateful Plateful

Join us at the Fox Valley Warming Shelter's annual fundraiser, the Grateful Plateful, Wednesday, Oct. 4, from 5-8 p.m. at Liberty Hall in Kimberly. Meal, silent and live auction, entertainment and a program, all for only \$50; a table of 10 for \$450. Register on our website at www.foxvalleywarmingshelter.org or call Connie at 419-0928.



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.

Announcements
Week of Oct. 1, 2017

North Site

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

Love Jesus. Live your call.

Sunday at FELC

Altar Flowers

The Downtown Site altar flowers are provided by the Bakken family to the glory of God and in honor of Marit Bakken Stratton's birthday.

The North Site altar flowers are provided by Kevin and Lori Hartz in honor of their 25th wedding anniversary on Oct. 3.

Equal Exchange Coffee Project

When considering having a cup of coffee, give some thought to the plight of the small farmers who produce it. Equal Exchange cuts out the middlemen and provides fresh coffee to you by always paying a fair price to the farmer co-ops, EE helps build and protect sustainable farming communities in Latin America and Africa. We are selling fairly traded products today in the Gathering Area. Hope to see you!



Bake Sale Today!

Stop in the Gathering Area for some tasty treats. Proceeds go to the kids participating in the ELCA Youth Gathering next summer. Thank you for your support!

Fox Valley Lutheran Homes Annual Pie, Ice Cream, & Silent Auction

Today, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Check out the wonderful silent auction items and have your dessert before dinner! FVLH is located at 425 N. Linwood, Appleton. Please stop by and enjoy!

Welcome New Members

Please take the time to welcome to the congregation the newest members of FELC! Each new member will be wearing a flower boutonniere so that you can easily find and greet them.

- Joe and Molly Bernhardt, Alex and Michael
- Austin and Judy Boncher
- Jon and Alyssa Hakes, Malcolm and Ricky
- Steve and Sue Heil
- Megan Kettner
- Stacey Klug
- Jim Lain
- George and Susan Meyer
- Jacob Moldenhauer
- Michele and Jim Moldenhauer
- Paul and Susie Nelson, CJ, Matthew, and Elaina
- Cherri Nikolai
- John and Carol Palmquist
- Mary Poulson
- Jon Schneider
- Kathy Schneider
- Dave and Joni Shellabarger, Finley and Drew
- Jason Skowen and Heather Schultz, Cael, Ashton, and Derek
- Jim and Sandy Starr, Olivia (granddaughter)
- Jack and Jan Wolters

Sunday at FELC

Sunday Learning Time

At the Downtown Site: The adult learning time (9:15 a.m. in the Lounge) is focusing on teachings in the book *Together by Grace*. Each week is independent, so come and learn any of the weeks that the topic appeals to you. This week, Roberta Albrecht will guide us through the chapter, *Worship and the Arts*, which shows (among other things) how the music of Bach and the art of Cranach were influential in spreading the faith.

At the North Site: Join Pastor Mary in *Connecting with the Word* in the Library at 9:25 - 10:10 a.m. Bring the *Engage Page* from your bulletin as we connect the weekly texts for the week with our day to day lives. Get to know people from church and enrich your faith!

Looking Ahead

Echoes - Assistant Store Manager

Echoes, A Christian Thrift Store, is seeking a person with a heart for this ministry. This 10-20 hour per week, part time role will support the manager in the daily operations of the store. While guiding store volunteers in their roles, a primary function of this role is to provide exceptional customer service. Must be able to multi-task and enjoy working with people. Please complete an application found online at www.felc.com/forms, in the church office, or contact Kathy Hoffman at echoes@felc.com or (920)882-8172 during store hours.

Calling all Creative Writers!

We are bringing back the FELC Advent Devotional booklet - written by, and for, the FELC community. If you are interested in writing a short devotional based on a chosen scripture verse, please contact Alyssa Douglas at 364-0006 or douglas.alyssa@gmail.com. Thank you for your consideration.

Board Games Guild (Site Change)

The Board Games Guild Life Group will meet on Oct. 2. Due to road construction at the North Site, we will be meeting in the Downtown Site Lounge from 6:45 - 8 p.m. Bring a board game and a friend!

Christ in our Home

The October-December 2017 issue of the *Christ in our Home* devotion books are available in the Narthex at the Downtown Site and the Gathering Area at both sites. Please feel free to take one home with you.

Back for a Limited Time Only!

Reformation 500 Bookstore

Sunday, Oct. 15 & 22

All Morning, Both Sites

Wednesday, Oct. 18 & 25

4:30-7:30 p.m., Downtown Site

The 500th Anniversary of the Reformation is almost here! Discover a variety of resources on Martin Luther and the Reformation for readers of all ages. Thirty-five of the most recently published books about Martin Luther will be available to order at half price, and with NO shipping charge. What a great Christmas gift idea!

Stop by the tables in the Gathering Area on the dates, times and locations above. Hope to see you there.

50+ Annual Soup Buffet

Oct. 19 is the date for the annual soup buffet. After lunch, the video *Rick Steves' Luther and the Reformation* will be shown. A signup sheet is on the kiosk in the Downtown Site Gathering Area. Please sign up if you know what kind of soup you will be sharing. This event will begin at noon in the Downtown Site Fellowship Hall. Don't miss this delicious annual event!

Noon Hour Philosophers

The Noon Hour Philosophers begin their 2017/18 season this week. The group meets for an hour at noon in the Downtown Site Fellowship Hall each Wednesday. If you have questions please contact Mary Poulson at mmaryjep@att.net or (920)734-8137.

Oct. 4: Generation Differences in Work Places

Barb Tengesdal, Ph.D, Executive Director
Wisconsin Head Start Association

Need for NS Communion Bread Bakers

The North Site is in need of two volunteers to bake communion bread. The commitment is only one month out of the year, and the recipe calls for only a few common household ingredients. This is a great volunteer opportunity that can be done out of the comfort of your own home. Please contact Hannah Sprenger at hsprenger@felc.com or call the church office if interested.

New Worship Volunteer Schedule

In preparation for the upcoming worship volunteer schedule, please enter your 'can't serve' times. The next schedule will run from Nov. 5 - Jan. 28, into Ministry Scheduler Pro no later than Oct.9. Are you interested in becoming a worship volunteer? Contact Hannah Sprenger at hsprenger@felc.com or Kathy Larson at klarson@felc.com if interested.

AAUW Book Sale

The Appleton branch of the American Association of University Women will be holding its 81st annual used book sale, Oct. 19-22 and 26-28 inside the Northland Mall. They are accepting contributions - hardback & paperback books, books on cd, sheet music, CDs, DVDs, puzzles and games. For book pick-up or drop-off, please call 427-6655, 734-6750, 843-8888 or 739-6469. Profits are used to provide scholarships for women.

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
- George Krempin
- David Heindel
- Doug Hansen
- Amy Ponomarev
- Moore Peregrine
- Harold Rohlfing
- Jacob Frerking
- Tom Roy
- Melissa Heins
- Je'Ann Johnson
- Paul Henrikson
- Kathy Skaar
- Bob Gauerke
- Juanita Gauerke
- Judith Schmidt
- Murl Hahs
- Karen Schultz
- Walter Seacotte
- Andrew Peterson

Prayers of Comfort

- Families of:
- Diane Brey
 - Phyllis Brown
 - Ada St. John

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Baptism of:

- Henry Allan Laabs

Wedding of:

- Shannon Wiesler and Michael Ropella

Prayers for Those Called to Serve in Other Countries

- Stephanie Olson

Prayers for Those in the Military

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



High School Youth News

Grades 9-12

Oct. 1, 2017

reFUEL

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

10/4: Prayer, obedience,
and following Jesus
National Mental
Illness Awareness
Week

10/11: Trivia Night:
Bible Stories
Emoji Edition



10/18: Nacho average
Youth Group Night
Special speaker TBD



ELCA Youth Gathering
Houston, TX

June 27-July 1, 2018

Open to students currently
in grades 9-12

**Commitment form
deadline extended
to Oct. 9**

Questions? Contact Heidi
hschreiner@felc.com

Seraphim Choir

Wednesdays, 8:05-8:30 p.m.

DS Choir Room

Open to 7-12 grade students

*Sisterhood of the
Traveling Breakfasts Club*

For girls grades 9-12

Tuesdays at 6:15am

Oct. 3 Leo's Diner (Greenville)

Oct. 10 Mary's Restaurant
(Richmond St. Appleton)

BAKE SALE

TODAY!

Between all services
at both sites
Make a free will donation
and pick up
something sweet!

Oct.1, 2017



Information for FELC Youth and Families
Grades K-12

*Hey, Hey, Hey, Stewardship Brunch
Is On The Way And We Need Helpers!*

Oct. 15 is Stewardship Sunday and it is a celebration for our entire congregation as we find ways to share our gifts! Regular Sunday School time is replaced with a call to all families to join us that morning at either site as we dine and dream together.



To make the brunch a success we need helpers to set-up, make assigned dishes, and clean-up at both sites. This is a great opportunity for a Confirmation family assignment and another way for any and all to get together and enjoy doing God's Work.

Contact Kathy Larson (klarson@felc.com) today and let us know how you'd like to help!

Find us on Social Media Outlets

Instagram: felc.youth Facebook: FELC YOUTH

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



Why Are We Mixing It Up?

Some families are asking, why are we changing the structure of Sunday School? The answer is based in the realization that significant reduction in regular worship and Sunday School attendance nationwide has led many churches to reconsider the way Sunday School has been done for the last few decades.



At FELC we are working on:

- >Bringing our faith family together on Sundays versus dividing into small groups
- >Having a clear focus of the message across all ages on Sunday so the curriculum mirrors the reflections from the pulpit.
- >Equipping families with tools to become more familiar and comfortable with talking about faith in the home during the entire week.

God is always calling us to be a people open to change as we journey through His unfolding story. Have some great ideas that could help? Contact Kirsten Owens (kowens@felc.com) to share them.

Kids Life Is Too Fun To Miss

Don't forget to come on down for Kids Life on Wednesday nights! Kids Life is for students K-grade 6. We talk about faith, do cool service projects, art activities, watch movies, play games, have parties, and more! Meet us from 7-8 p.m. in Downtown Site Room 014 for a super night with friends!



Next Week

Angelus Sing

Next Sunday, Oct. 8, the Angelus Choir (grades 3-6) will be singing the song, *I will Sing a Sunday Song* at the 8 a.m. worship at the Downtown Site. Please meet in the Choir Room at 7:40 a.m.

At the Downtown Site on Sunday mornings, both the Cherub Choir (K-grade 2) and Angelus Choir (grades 3-6) meet to rehearse at 8:50 a.m. Cherub meets in Room 220 and Angelus meets in the Choir Room. All kids welcome anytime!



Confirmation and Middle School Scoop



Keep Your Head in the Books and Your Heart in Christ in Confirmation

- ⇒ 7th grade families should have read Chapter 2. The student should have one of the Questions to Ponder completed in their journal for small group.
- ⇒ 8th grade families should have read Chapter 3. The student should have one of the Questions to Ponder completed in their journal for small group.
- ⇒ 9th grade students will be learning about why we do good works as Christians.



Talk to your student about what they're learning. Good info. for all.

Cool Things

Coming Up

Oct. 6-7: Confirmation Start-Up Lock-In for 7th grade students from 6 p.m. - 8:30 a.m. at the North Site



Oct. 15: Stewardship Brunch at both sites for all families

Hey, 6th Graders! We are heading to Confirmation Camp June 10-15, 2018 at Pine Lake in Waupaca. Save the date!!!

CYG Today!

Any 7th - 9th graders looking for something to do on Sundays? Come to Confirmation Youth Group at the North Site! We meet in the NS Activity Center for open gym from 9:15-9:45 a.m. then move to the Youth Room downstairs until 10:15 a.m. Please direct any questions to Hannah Sprenger at hsprenger@felc.com.



Have questions or want to volunteer?

Contact Kirsten Owens at kowens@felc.com or 733-2303.

YOU ARE INVITED! STEWARDSHIP BRUNCH

Family friendly event open to all ages

Sunday, Oct. 15, 2017

Enjoy the company of your church family along with the pastors for a special time of fellowship, reflection and giving thanks to God in celebration of our FELC ministries. Brunch for the entire family* will be served at both sites on Sunday, Oct. 15. During this fellowship event, we will reflect upon our own faith life and share how we are called to give as a way of life. Please plan to attend!

Downtown Site - Fellowship Hall

Serving at 9:10 & 10:30 a.m.

North Site - Gathering Area

Serving at 9:15 a.m.

To RSVP, please visit www.felc.com, call the church office, sign up in the Gathering Area or return the form below. Nursery care will be provided upon request.

Name _____ Number Attending_____

Brunch Location and Time:

_____ Downtown Site - 9:10 a.m.

_____ Downtown Site - 10:30 a.m.

_____ North Site - 9:15 a.m.

**Note: There will be no Sunday School classes on Oct. 15 so that families can attend the brunch together.*

FELC DS Engage Page: October 1, 2017

Matthew 21:23-32 *When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.*

Sun., Oct 1: Family Project: In this passage, one brother says no to his father and goes to work anyway, while another says yes and doesn't go. In it we are strongly challenged to have the words we speak about our faith match the actions that we do in our lives—a sentiment expressed in this reggae song by Rocky Dawuni. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVpENCdxpEs> Listen to the song and then discuss ways to make your faith walk match your talk. How do we incorporate messages from sources that aren't explicitly Christian, but live out and express Jesus' teachings?

Mon., Oct 2: My daughter started talking later than most (she has since made up for lost time), and when she was in Early Childhood classes wasn't speaking much at all. Over half way through the year, she made a breakthrough when a classmate took her spot at the front of the line. "You are not the leader!", she said clearly and forcefully. There isn't much that angers us more than someone usurping authority that isn't rightfully theirs. Jesus' authority, however, is firmly established on the cross. At the foot of the cross, we can say to Jesus, "You are my leader!"

Tues., Oct 3: I am struck by how hard the chief priests and elders have to work to come up with a response to Jesus' question. How can they speak truthfully without offending anyone? Instead, they avoid the question. I have to admit to trying to be "not offensive to anyone". The trouble is that the gospel often offends in its radical inclusion and grace. May we have the strength to proclaim it compassionately but truthfully.

Wed., Oct 4: Isaiah 5:1-7 The similarities between the story told in this "love song" and the parable Jesus tells of the man who planted a vineyard and leased it to evil tenants are striking. In both cases, those who have been given care over the vineyard act with neither righteousness or justice. As we think about the effects that our actions have on those with less resources and the planet itself, we cannot help but feel the call to think about the needs of our neighbors near and far and on the care we owe the planet we call home. Are we like the vineyard that doesn't yield good fruit after all God has done for us? Are we like the tenants who take a land that is not our own and deplete it for our own gain, never giving the creator honor for the gifts of land and harvest? Honor God today by determining to support just land use for the planet and all its inhabitants.

Thurs., Oct 5: Psalms 80:7-15 My father told stories of the hardships growing up on a small farm in northern Minnesota during the 1930's. He told of a dreadful moment when geese fattened for butcher would flew away. Another time a herd of cows walked across a hidden peat fire and were lost. It is with these stories in mind that I read the psalmist's cry for God to come and have regard for his vineyard, the plants that he planted. As human beings we see hurricanes and fires destroy and devastate. It is easy to ask God "Why?" This psalm invites us to cry out to God in our hardships, praying for help and sustenance when tragedy strikes.

Fri., Oct 6: Phil. 3:4b-14 Where do I look to get my sense of self worth? It would be telling for each of us to make a list of those accomplishments or traits that we take pride in. My list would include going back to seminary after my youngest started school, working hard for 7 years, graduating, and becoming a pastor. How difficult it would be to look at that accomplishment and say, "I count this as dung (*rubbish or excrement in the Greek*) in order that I may gain Christ." (v. 8b) Here is where Paul's passion for Jesus comes to life. He had been on the road of respectability and honor when he was blinded by the light of Christ. His entire world turned upside down and he saw that nothing meant as much as his relationship with Christ!

Sat., Oct 7: Matthew 21:33-46 Who are these guys that rented this vineyard? We are shocked by their behavior as they assault those who come to collect the landowner's rent. Also beyond understanding is the landowner himself who keeps on sending emissaries when he has to realize that these people he is dealing with are beyond hope-devoid of humanity. Perhaps the Pharisees initially identified with the landowner, seeing themselves as wealthy enough to rent land. When they realize that they had been cast in the role of the evil tenants, they are understandably irate. But in the end the parable is not about who sees themselves as good or bad, but about a God with an unbelievable capacity for second chances.

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: October 1, 2017

Mat. 20:1-16 *"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; & he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, & I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. When he went out again about noon & about 3 o'clock, he did the same. And about 5 o'clock he went out & found others standing around; & he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers & give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' When those hired about 5 o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' So the last will be first, and the first will be last."*

Sun., Oct. 1: Family Project: Make a deal with your children, "I'll give you \$5.00 if you mow for 3 hours, \$5.00 for 2 hours, or \$5.00 for 1 hour. Which do you choose?" Then do the same with an activity they love—for example, "I'll give you \$5.00 and you can go swimming for 1 hour, for 2 hours, or 3 hours. Which do you choose?" In this parable, does it make a difference if we think of the payment being for something we enjoy? Our "work" for Jesus brings abundant life.

Mon., Oct 2: In his song "Broken Things", Matthew West reminds us that "Grace is a kingdom with arms open wide" singing that "the first will be last and the last get a crown." Let the words of this song heal your heart if you feel beyond the grace of God. God's economy isn't run on power and prestige, and his honor doesn't depend on popularity. If you feel you are among the last, take comfort that God uses "broken things." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WdUu6ZsdVfM>

Tues., Oct 3: In order to be fair, people should have to pay for the bad choices they make. We want to believe that living with integrity will be rewarded—if not in this life then in the next. However, keeping track of whether we deserve a reward or others deserve punishment can be exhausting, taking the joy out of the moment. Live as God calls, being generous with love and leaving judgment to God.

Wed., Oct 4: Isaiah 25:1-9 Shelter in the middle of the storm—that's what we hope for from our faith. As we have watched Houston and Florida and Puerto Rico and South Asia experience storm upon storm, these words take on new meaning. Our God promises shelter in the storm, refuge for the poor and needy, and a feast spread before us in our distress. When we experience the hardships of life, both physical and emotional, we hope for a time when God will wipe the tears from our eyes. Looking back, I see that most often God used the people around me to help me deal with heart-break or physical needs. Recently, a gospel group sang hope to those in a shelter dealing with the aftermath of hurricane Harvey. They sing, "I want to see your kingdom come". May God's kingdom come to us and flow through us to others. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOBfT73o2VA>

Thurs., Oct 5, Psalm 23 I was recently talking with new members who come from a different denomination—one that has mostly different hymns from those we sing. Though they are happy to sing new songs, their eyes perked up when they saw the service included something familiar. For all of us in the Christian tradition, this is the song—the Psalm—that is the most familiar. Its words have encouraged millions through dark times, whether it is the death of a loved one or the antagonism of others. As you read this psalm, picture yourself as one of a grand community of saints through the ages, led by your shepherd and being comforted by these words.

Fri., Oct 6, Philippians 4:1-9 I can step on a merry-go-round of anxiety as I obsess about strained relationships with family or friends. I turn the situation over and over in my mind, looking for the weaknesses in their position—the ways that they are wrong. Then Philippians 4:7 pops into my mind. *"The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."* (This is King James version of my youth.) I was taught that when you lose peace, God is speaking to YOU and drawing you back into relationship with Jesus. Many times my anxiety about relationships comes as I fixate on what is beyond my control rather than looking for the changes I can make. May you become an agent of reconciliation as you perceive God's peace teaching you when to make a change.

Sat., Oct 7, Matthew 22:1-14 Looking at this parable, I wonder if I am the person invited to the banquet who makes excuses and doesn't come. Am I the person who becomes defensive about my reasons for avoiding community? Am I one of the random lot (good and bad) feasting at the banquet? Or am I that person who finds myself alone in the crowd, trying to get by on my own worth and not wearing the robe of righteousness that Jesus gives me? For all called to Jesus, it is our brokenness that binds us to one another and God. If you recognize that you are one of the least and last, dependent on God's grace, your place at the banquet is ready.

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>.