

## 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](mailto:felc@felc.com); 733-2303) or email Pastor Mary ([mbauer@felc.com](mailto: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](http://www.felc.com), or check the bulletin boards and kiosks in the Gathering Area.

## The Week of Oct. 15, 2017 At-A-Glance

### Sunday, Oct. 15

8:50 a.m.  
9:10 & 10:30 a.m.  
9:15 a.m.  
9:15 a.m.

### Monday

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

### Tuesday

6:15 a.m.  
6:30 a.m.  
5:30 p.m.  
6:45 p.m.

### Wednesday

10:30 a.m.  
Noon  
5:30 p.m.  
6:15 p.m.  
6:30 p.m.  
6:30 p.m.

### Thursday

6 a.m.  
9 a.m.  
Noon  
8:05 p.m.

### Friday

6:30 a.m.  
6 a.m.  
9 a.m.  
Noon

### Saturday

8 a.m.  
8 a.m.

### Sunday, Oct. 22

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

### Stewardship Brunches; Reformation Book Sale, Both Sites

Cherub/Angelus Choir Rehearsal, DS 220/Choir Room  
Stewardship Brunch, DS Fellowship Hall  
Adult Learning Time, DS Lounge  
Stewardship Brunch, NS Gathering Area

Monday Morning Quilters, DS Fellowship Hall  
Congregational Life Ministry Team, DS 114  
Pick Up Basketball, NS Activity Center

High School Girl's Breakfast Club, *Queen Bee*, College Ave.  
Men's Ministry, Angel's Restaurant  
Executive Committee, DS Lounge  
Finance Committee, DS 110

DS=Downtown Site  
NS=North Site

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  
Knitting for Charity Life Group, DS Lounge  
Confirmation General Session, DS Assigned Large Group Rooms  
Kid's Life, DS 014  
reFUEL Grades 10-12, DS Youth Room  
Seraphim Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room

Early Risers Women's Study *Together by Grace*, DS Lounge  
Adult Bible Study *Together by Grace*, DS Lounge  
50+ Annual Soup Buffet, DS Fellowship Hall

Men's Ministry, NS Library

LWR Truck Load, NS Parking Lot

### Troop 12 Christmas Wreath Sale; Reformation Book Sale, Both Sites

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

## Community Prayer & Healing Service

Thursday, Oct. 19, 6:30 p.m., Faith Lutheran Church  
601 E. Glendale Ave., Appleton

Join us for Biblical reflection, meditation, testimonial, music and personal or group prayer opportunities. Invite your friends and family to join us as we praise and thank our heavenly Father for our many blessings and speak to Him through an extended time of prayer.



STEWARDSHIP  
SUNDAY

## First English Lutheran Church

[www.felc.com](http://www.felc.com) [felc@felc.com](mailto: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. 15, 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

### Stewardship Brunches Today!

Even if you didn't sign up ahead of time, you and your family are encouraged to attend one of the Stewardship Brunches this morning, being served at 9:10 and 10:30 a.m. at the Downtown Site and 9:15 a.m. at the North Site. Enjoy some delicious food and wonderful fellowship! See today's insert for more information.

### Back for a Limited Time Only!

### Reformation 500 Bookstore

Today and Next Sunday, Oct. 22

All Morning, Both Sites

Wednesday, Oct. 18 & 25

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

The 500<sup>th</sup> 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. See you there!

### 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.

### 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 Pastor Bob Herder will be leading the chapter entitled "Being Lutheran Together in a Wider World." Calling on his experience as a former Bishop of the ELCA, Pastor Herder will be able to speak of a long history of promoting understanding between different denominations and different faiths.

**At the North Site:** Come to our stewardship brunch this morning!

## Looking Ahead

### Ukulele Combo Rehearsal

Join the First English Ukulele Combo. As you may have noticed, the name is slightly different. We want to meet multiple needs of our ukulele players, so the Ukulele Combo is being formed to focus on learning songs to play for Worship. The next rehearsal is Thursday, Oct. 26 at 7:30 p.m. in the Downtown Site Choir Room.

Those of you who would feel more comfortable with continued learning, please contact us so that we can work with you. For more information please contact Rodney McComb at [rmccomb@felc.com](mailto:rmccomb@felc.com).

## 50+ Annual Soup Buffet

The Annual 50+ Soup Buffet is being held on Thursday, Oct. 19, at noon in Fellowship Hall. Please sign up on the sheet on



the Kiosk in the Gathering Area at the Downtown Site. To be a success, we will need some folks to bring their favorite soup or a new soup you would like to share with everyone. There is a space on the sign-up sheet to write in the name of the soup you will bring. We will be privileged to watch a video on Martin Luther (this year is the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation). Looking forward to seeing many of you there and hopefully some will want to share their favorite soup.

## FELC Needs Your Help

### Loading the LWR Kits and Quilts

On Saturday, Oct. 21 at 8 a.m. at the North Site, help load the trucks with all the Lutheran World Relief quilts and kits



that have been created this past year. These items will be distributed to people in need throughout the world. Students grade 11 and up, and adults are encouraged to help, along with students in grades 7-10 if accompanied by a parent. Please note: the time that help is needed the most is 8:15-9:30 a.m. Added incentive: treats will be provided! Please sign up online at [www.felc.com/forms](http://www.felc.com/forms). Thank you for doing God's work with your hands!

## Christmas Wreath Sales

Troop 12, one of the FELC sponsored Boy Scout troops, is again selling Christmas wreaths. They will be in the Gathering Area at both sites on Oct. 22 and Oct. 29 with delivery on Nov. 26. Payment will be collected upon order. Detailed information is located on the Gathering Area Kiosk.

## Echoes News



**Echoes - Assistant Store Manager:** *Echoes* 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 return completed application to [bsmongeski@felc.com](mailto:bsmongeski@felc.com). Application forms can be found online at [www.felc.com/forms](http://www.felc.com/forms), in the church office, or contact Kathy Hoffman at [echoes@felc.com](mailto:echoes@felc.com) or 882-8172 during store hours.

**Echoes Hours Back to Normal:** *Echoes* is again open Monday-Friday: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., and Saturday: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. The store is closed Sunday. If you are interested in volunteering at *Echoes*, please call Kathy at the store, 882-8172 or email [echoes@felc.com](mailto:echoes@felc.com).

## AAUW Book Sale

The Appleton branch of the American Association of University Women will be holding its 81<sup>st</sup> 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.

## 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](mailto:mmaryjep@att.net) or (920)734-8137.

### Oct. 18: Progress in Demential Inclusion: A Report from Berlin

Susan McFadden, PhD.  
Professor Emerita of Psychology  
University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh

## That We May Be One

The East Central Synod of Wisconsin and the Diocese of Green Bay will be joining together to commemorate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation! Join us on Sunday, Oct. 29 at 3 p.m. for a prayer service, with Bishop Gerald Mansholt and Bishop David Ricken, preaching. Following worship, there will be an hour-long workshop entitled, "Ecumenical Marriages: A Mirror of Lutheran - Catholic Sharing."

As the Lutheran - Catholic document "From Conflict to Communion" has so powerfully observed, there have been a number of key things in our modern world that have led to the need for greater dialog and cooperation between Lutherans and Catholics. One of those key things is the reality of ecumenical marriages between Catholics and Lutherans. Few things illustrate the potential for greater unity among Christians than ecumenical marriages. With this in mind, this workshop will consist of a panel discussion led by two Catholic-Lutheran ecumenical couples. Everyone is invited to this workshop as we glean from those in ecumenical marriages how to live into greater Christian unity.

**Date:** Sunday, Oct. 29

**Place:** St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Green Bay (2771 Oakwood Drive)

**Worship:** 3 p.m.; **Workshop:** 4:15-5:15 p.m.

## 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
- Paul Brinkman

### Prayers of Comfort

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

### 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

## 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.



# High School Youth News

Grades 9-12

Oct. 15, 2017

## reFUEL

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

10/18: Nacho average  
Youth Group Night  
Special speaker:  
Rodney McComb

10/25: Fruit of the Spirit  
Discussion

11/1: \*Special Event & time\*  
Halloween Party  
Movie night 6:30-8pm

### *Sisterhood of the Traveling Breakfasts Club*

For girls grades 9-12  
Tuesdays at 6:15am  
Oct. 17: Queen Bee  
(216 E College Ave. Appleton)  
Oct. 24: Schreiner's Diner  
(2437 S Oneida St, Appleton)  
Friends welcomed!



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

### Outreach Opportunity:

**Bridging the Gap**  
Saturday, Oct. 21  
2-4pm

Join fellow high school  
students and tenants of  
Peabody Manor for creating  
Halloween themed crafts  
Supplies are provided.

### Seraphim Choir

Wednesdays, 8:05-8:30pm  
DS Choir Room  
Open to 7-12 grade students



We are excited to  
announce that 28 students  
will be attending  
this summer's  
ELCA Youth Gathering in  
Houston, TX! Please keep  
these students in your  
thoughts and prayers as  
they prepare for this  
event.

Oct. 15, 2017



Information for FELC Youth and Families  
Grades K-12

## LWR Trailer Load Helpers

**Saturday, Oct. 21**

**8 a.m., North Site Parking Lot**

Replace your workout on Saturday with some hauling of boxes at FELC's annual Lutheran World Relief (LWR) Trailer Load! This is a great opportunity to serve those in need of school supplies, baby care kits, health kits and quilts. Reward yourself with donuts and coffee after the work is done.

This is open to anyone who is a junior in high school or older; students grades 7-10 are also encouraged to help if accompanied by a parent. Sign up at [www.felc.com/forms](http://www.felc.com/forms). If you have any questions, please contact Gary Haberland at [gary.haberland@plexus.com](mailto:gary.haberland@plexus.com).



### 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](mailto:kowens@felc.com)  
Heidi Schreiner, Youth & Summer Ministry Coordinator: [hschreiner@felc.com](mailto:hschreiner@felc.com)

***Love Jesus. Live your call.***



## Elementary Sunday School, Song, And Special News



### WE INTERRUPT OUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED PROGRAM FOR SOME IMPORTANT DATES

This year the dates that Sunday School does not meet for regular class is matched with either important church-wide events when participation as a family is very valuable or holiday dates when people are often out of town. Here are some of these important dates when Sunday School time is either abbreviated or replaced with church-wide events or holiday vacation:



- \* **Oct. 15:** Have a great morning at the Stewardship Brunch!
- \* **Oct. 29:** Sunday School class occurs as usual but at the Downtown Site class ends early at 9:55 a.m. to celebrate Reformation Sunday.
- \* **Nov. 26:** Thanksgiving weekend. No Sunday School class but it is Christ the King Sunday. Look it up and read about it together.
- \* **Dec. 24 & 31:** Christmas and New Year's break. See you in church!
- \* **Mar. 25:** All families are encourage to attend FELC Palm Sunday Brunch together.
- \* **Apr. 1:** Easter weekend. No class. See you in church!

### Storytellers Make Our Lessons Come Alive!

New to the Sunday School program this year is the addition of storytellers, a wide variety of FELC folks that tell the story of the lesson in an interactive way. This has been a joy to watch as students help act out, shout chants, or closely listen to the story they will work on in their classrooms. Want to be one of our storytellers?



Contact Kirsten at [kowens@felc.com](mailto:kowens@felc.com) to choose your date(s)!

### Our Choirs Sing

On Nov. 5 the Cherub Choir sings at the 9:15 a.m. worship. On Nov. 12 the Angelus Choir sings at 9:15 a.m.



Worship. Singers should go to their rehearsal rooms at the regular time of 8:50 a.m. to practice before we sing our hearts out in church!



## Confirmation and Middle School Scoop



### Large Group This Week



- ⇒ 7<sup>th</sup> grade families should have read chapter 3
- ⇒ 8<sup>th</sup> grade families should have read chapter 4
- ⇒ 9<sup>th</sup> grade students & families have their first Faith on Trial session in Fellowship Hall.

### Time to Get Truckin'!

Help with the Lutheran World Relief Truckload Pack on Oct. 21. This is a great opportunity to help fill a truck with relief items to be distributed throughout the world! Plus, it's an excellent family assignment! Fill out the interest form at [www.felc.com/forms](http://www.felc.com/forms).



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



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### CYG Has the Day Off!



Confirmation Youth Group (CYG) is taking a break **today** in honor of the Stewardship Brunch. Please try to attend the brunch with your family. We'll be back at it Sunday, October 22. Can't wait!

Have questions or want to volunteer?  
Contact Kirsten Owens at [kowens@felc.com](mailto:kowens@felc.com) or 733-2303.

*You will be enriched in every way  
so that you can be generous on every occasion,  
and through us your generosity will result  
in thanksgiving to God.  
2 Corinthians 9:11*

## YOU ARE INVITED TO THIS MORNING'S STEWARDSHIP BRUNCH

### *Giving as a Way of Life*

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. This brunch is for the entire family\*. 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 attend!

**Downtown Site - Fellowship Hall**

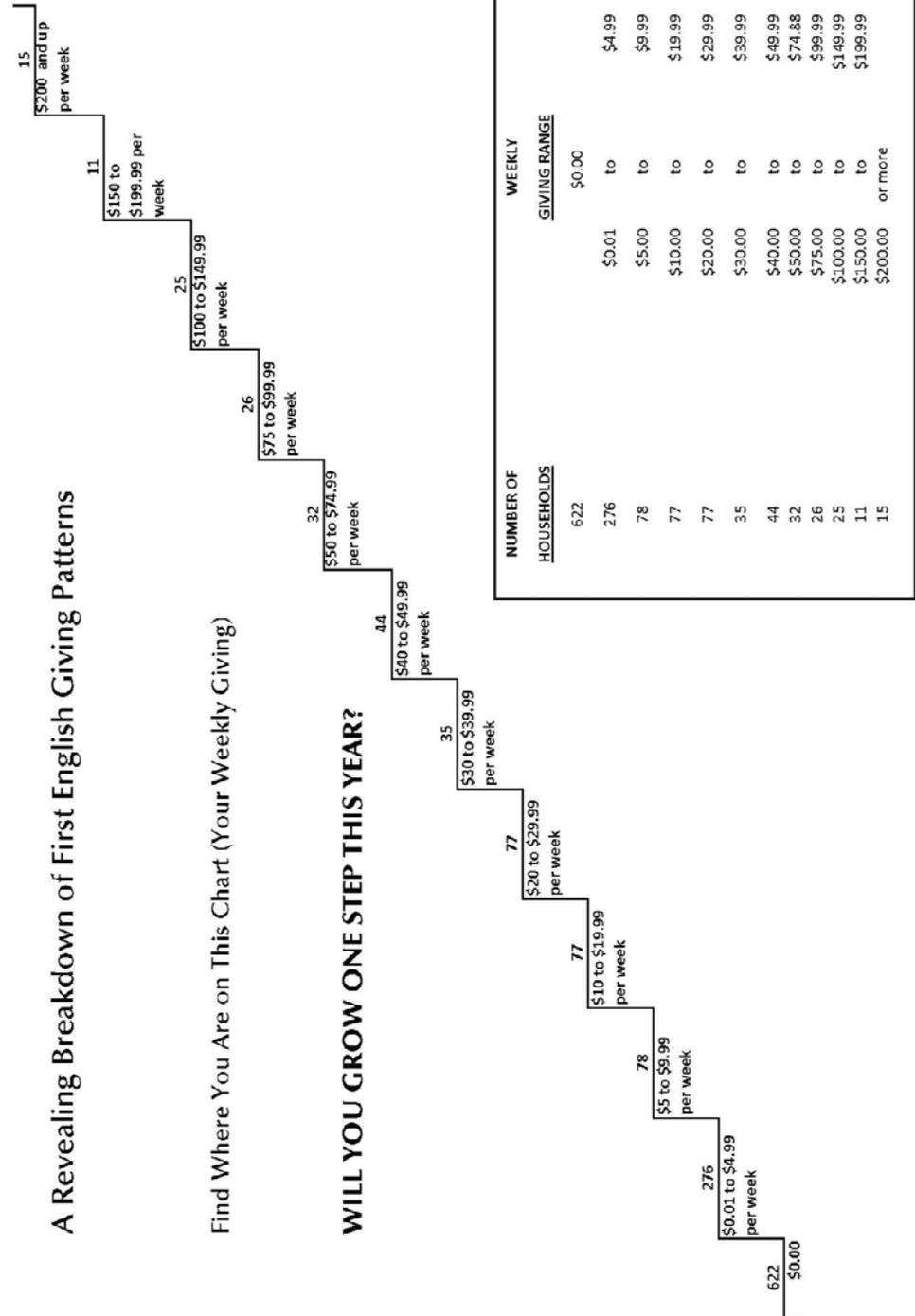
Serving at 9:10 & 10:30 a.m.

**North Site - Gathering Area**

Serving at 9:15 a.m.

Didn't RSVP? Attend anyway.  
We have lots of breakfast goodies!

*\*Note: There are no Sunday School classes today so that families can attend the brunch together.*



## FELC DS Engage Page: October 15, 2017

**Matthew 22:1-14** *Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again he sent other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.' But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.' Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests. "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."*

Sun, Oct 15: Family Project: It's time to throw a party! It might be an evening eating popcorn and watching a movie or something more elaborate. Spend some time making invitations, and talk about who will be invited. Things like preparation time, cost, and space all have to be considered. Discuss how the kids feel if they are left out of being invited to a party. End by giving some cheers for a God who invites all and that there is room for all in God's love.

Mon, Oct 16: We live in a society that is commitment averse. We can be like those who do not come when they are invited to the wedding, thinking we may be able to squeeze a bit more meaning or fun or productivity into other activities. Today, in every encounter, be truly present in a way that demonstrates love and respect. If your mind wanders to the next meeting or the next day or to other people, pray that your attentive presence will be a demonstration of God's love.

Tues, Oct 17: This story represents what had been done to God's prophets through the years. We can recognize in its tone and violence the antagonism that Matthew felt for the Jewish leaders. Jesus had died and the temple had just been destroyed. Jewish elders blamed Christians for provoking Rome & Christians blamed the priests for being complicit with the occupying Romans. Throughout the chaos, God's kingdom spreads as those without power, good and bad, are welcomed into the kingdom. Praise God that his welcome is not dependent on earthly powers, but his banquet is spread for all of us who are not worthy.

Wed., Oct. 18: Isaiah 45:1-7 This is a passage that I quote often when speaking to young families preparing for the baptism of a child. We talk about the life of faith resembling a downward pointing arrow –we only know God as God comes down to us. Because of that, we can never expect or feel entitled to God speaking through us, no matter how hard we pray or study. Our posture must always be one of listening. We expect to hear God's voice speaking through others: our children, our friends, people of other religions and denominations, and even our pets. In this passage God uses Cyrus to do his work, even though he says of Cyrus, "you do not know me." Famously, Balaam is instructed by God through the words of his donkey! May we listen with humility, using prayer, scripture, and the community to discern the truth of what is said.

Thurs, Oct 19: Psalm 96:1-9 It is amazing to see a beautiful sunset, or to hear great music, or taste our favorite food. However, it is even more wonderful to be able to share these moments with others. Shared experiences carry deep meaning. The psalmist encourage the Israelites to "*Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.*" (v. 2) The psalmist knows that the wonder we feel when thinking about our Lord is even sweeter when we are able to share the experience of praise with others. Of course we experience God's presence in solitude, but that wonder is driven deep into our hearts as we lift our voices in praise as a community.

Fri., Oct 20: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 In the Suzuki method of learning, music is a regular part of family life. Children learn instruments by imitating just as they learn language by imitating. Paul commends the Thessalonians by saying, "*you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit*" (v. 6) Their witness shows why it is important to be in community. When we see someone walk through hardships with faith and joy, we are inspired to do the same. We are not limited to our natural tendencies. May we become powerful witnesses of the Holy Spirit as we are imitators of the saints.

Sat., Oct 21: Matthew 22:15-22 Jesus gives such a clever response to the Pharisees! We may find some degree of assurance in knowing that our Lord could hold his own in a verbal exchange. But as Lance Pape points out in his commentary, more is at stake here than winning an argument. "*Whatever we render unto Caesar, or to the retirement fund, or to the offering basket at church, we can never afford to forget this: we belong entirely to God. We may divide our budget, but we must never divide our allegiance. The coin of our realm bears the image of dead presidents, but each of us bears another. Our Emperor said: "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness." We must never forget to render unto God the things that are God's.*" [http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2201](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2201)

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](https://www.facebook.com/FELC-Engage-Page-Downtown-Site).

## FELC NS Engage Page: October 15, 2017

**Matthew 22:15-22** *Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" They answered, "The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.*

Sun., Oct 15: Family Project: One of the most famous memes from the Star Wars series is when Admiral Akbar yells, "It's a trap." (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNI-ID10BZw>) Watch it and try to come up with as many examples as you can (*in movies, TV shows, or books*) of traps being set—both for good and bad. The trap the Pharisees set for Jesus would cause him to get in trouble either with the Roman authorities (*if he says it is not lawful it is sedition*) or with the Jewish teachers of the law (*if he says it is lawful, he is helping the Roman occupiers*). Why would they want to get Jesus in trouble? Talk about times you may have felt trapped between two bad decisions.

Mon., Oct 16: Pastor Erick Thompson relates the uneasy relationship between our obligations to civil authorities and those to the spiritual realm. In the civil realm, we are called to good works for the betterment of society and for orderly governing. Our spiritual righteousness, however, is a free gift from God. Thompson calls on us to avoid assigning to ourselves spiritual righteousness because of an ethical stance taken in the civil realm. Conversely, we must avoid feeling so content about spiritual matters that we duck involvement in the running of society. Pray for wisdom in deciding how to be in the world but not of it. [http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=3458](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3458)

Tues., Oct 17: The psalm for this past week was Psalm 96—a powerhouse of praise. It calls us to live a life of worship, exclaiming that even the heavens and seas and fields praise God and the trees themselves sing for joy. The reason that the psalmist gives for this eruption of praise: *"for he (the Lord) is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth."* (v. 13) Perhaps more than the selfish joy we find in knowing others will be punished, may we joyfully await the day when the entire world will know justice and equity.

Wed., Oct 18: 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 19, Psalm 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 20: 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 21: 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-North-Site>.