

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. 8, 2017 At-A-Glance

Sunday, Oct. 8

8, 9:15 & 10:30 a.m.	Worship, DS
8:15 & 10:30 a.m.	Worship, NS
8:50 a.m.	Cherub/Angelus Choir Rehearsal, DS 220/Choir Room
9:15/9:25 a.m.	Adult Learning Time, DS Lounge/NS Library
9:15 a.m.	Confirmation Youth Group, NS Activity Center & Youth Room
9:15/9:25 a.m.	Children's Learning Time, DS/NS

DS=Downtown Site
NS=North Site

Monday

9 a.m.	Monday Morning Quilters, DS Fellowship Hall
Noon	Intern Enrichment Ministry Team, DS Lounge
5:30 p.m.	<i>God's Work. Our Hands.</i> Task Force, DS 114
8:15 p.m.	Pick Up Basketball, NS Activity Center

Tuesday

6:15 a.m.	High School Girl's Breakfast Club, <i>Mary's</i> on Richmond St.
6:30 a.m.	Men's Ministry, Angel's Restaurant
5 p.m.	Invitation & Hospitality Ministry Team, NS Pastor's Office
6:30 p.m.	Youth Connections Ministry Team, Schmidt Home
7 p.m.	Men's Ministry, DS 221
7 p.m.	Worship & Music Ministry Team, DS Lounge

Wednesday

10:30 a.m.	Bible Study with Pastor Mary, DS 221
Noon	Noon Hour Philosophers, DS Fellowship Hall
Noon	Sarah Circle, DS 114
5:30 p.m.	Handbell Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room
6:15 p.m.	Wednesday Worship, DS Sanctuary
6:30 p.m.	Parish Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room
7 p.m.	Confirmation General Session, DS Assigned Large Group Rooms
7 p.m.	Kid's Life, DS 014
7 p.m.	reFUEL Grades 10-12, DS Youth Room
7 p.m.	Miriam Circle, DS Lounge
8:05 p.m.	Seraphim Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room

Thursday

6 a.m.	Early Risers Women's Study <i>Together by Grace</i> , DS Lounge
9 a.m.	Adult Bible Study <i>Together by Grace</i> , DS Lounge
Noon	Stewardship Committee, DS Lounge
5 p.m.	Arts & Environment Committee, NS Library

Friday

6:30 a.m.	Men's Ministry, NS Library
-----------	----------------------------

Sunday, Oct. 15

8, 9:15 & 10:30 a.m.	Worship, DS
8:15 & 10:30 a.m.	Worship, NS
8:50 a.m.	Cherub/Angelus Choir Rehearsal, DS 220/Choir Room
9:10 & 10:30 a.m.	Stewardship Brunch, DS Fellowship Hall
9:15 a.m.	Stewardship Brunch, NS Gathering Area

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.



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. 8, 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 Bob Damon in honor of Anita's Oct. 10 birthday.

TV Ministry

Oct. 8 is sponsored by Merlin and Joan Keller in honor of their 53rd wedding anniversary on Oct. 3.

Thank You Drivers, Bakers, and Sweet-toothed Church Family!

The FELC high school youth heading to the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston, TX, next summer would like to thank the congregation for supporting a busy weekend of fundraising. Whether it was parking your Chevy in our lot for Oktoberfest, putting your oven to use by dusting off your grandma's secret recipe, or indulging on that triple chocolate brownie, we thank you for your involvement in these fundraisers. All in all, \$2,660 was raised! Every dollar helps toward getting our high school youth to the gathering. Thank you!

Enter your 'Can't Serve' Dates TODAY!

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

Downtown Site

Fair Trade Coffee Sale is Today

Sorry to report that a mistake was made and last week's Downtown Site coffee sale did not occur. Instead, we will be selling delicious Fair Trade Coffee today. We apologize for any inconvenience this might have caused.

Thank You from FVLH

Fox Valley Lutheran Homes thanks you for your support of their annual Pie and Ice Cream Social and their Silent Auction. We couldn't do it without the support of our many friends and donors!

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 Steve Olson will be leading the chapter entitled "Faith Active in Love." His years working for Lutheran Social Services help him teach about an area of great importance to Lutherans: our call to faithful service outside of the walls of the church.

At the North Site: We will take a two week break from our pastoral study - Pastor Jeff is out of town this week and our stewardship brunch will be next week.

Looking Ahead

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.

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.

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 500th 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. Thank you for doing God's work with your hands!

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 return completed application to bsmongeski@felc.com. Application forms can be 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.

Need for North Site Communion Bread Baker

The North Site is in need of ONE volunteer to bake communion bread. The commitment is just 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.

Noon Hour Philosophers

The Noon Hour Philosophers began their 2017/18 season last 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. 11: Contemplative Travel

Father Patrick Twomey,

Episcopal Priest For 30 Years

That We May Be One

The East Central Synod of Wisconsin and the Diocese of Green Bay will be joining together to commemorate the 500th 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, Mary Ann and Jeff Otto, and Maria and Tom Nelson. 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 the Military

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

Echoes Hours Back to Normal!

Echoes is again open on 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, 920-882-8172 or email echoes@felc.com.



High School Youth News

Grades 9-12

Oct. 8, 2017

reFUEL

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

- 10/11: Trivia Night: Bible Stories Emoji Edition 
- 10/18: Nacho average Youth Group Night
Special speaker: Rodney McComb
- 10/25: Fruit of the Spirit Discussion

Sisterhood of the Traveling Breakfast Club
For girls grades 9-12
Tuesdays at 6:15am
Oct. 10: Mary's Restaurant (2312 Richmond St. Appleton)
Oct. 17: Queen Bee (216 E College Ave. Appleton)



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



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

Thank you to those who assisted with the Octoberfest Parking Lot Fundraiser and the Bake Sale Fundraiser! Over \$2,600 was raised!

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

Oct. 8, 2017



Information for FELC Youth and Families
Grades K-12

Come One , Come All To the Stewardship Brunch on Oct. 15. at Both Sites!



This event is an important one for our congregation. As a faith family we come together to break bread and work on ways to continue to maintain and build the future of our church. The regular

Sunday School program and Confirmation Youth Group (CYG) is replaced on the morning of Oct. 15 with a call to all families to attend this delicious event! Please sign up in the Gathering Area so we have an accurate count for brunch. We look forward to a great Sunday morning together!

Find us on Social Media Outlets

Instagram: felc.youth Facebook: FELC YOUTH

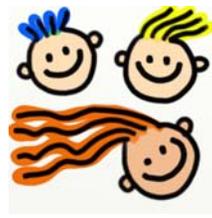
Connect with FELC Youth Staff

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



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:** All families are encouraged to attend the Stewardship Brunch together. Please let us know you are coming by adding your name to the attendance list in the Gathering Area or at www.felc.com.
- * **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. 16:** 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!

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!



Choir Is Fun For Everyone!

At the Downtown Site on Sunday mornings both the Cherub (K-grade 2) and Angelus (grades 3-6) meet at 8:50 a.m. Cherub meets in Room 220 and Angelus meets in the Choir Room. We have a great time singing our hearts out! Join anytime!



Confirmation and Middle School Scoop



Small Group This Week

- ⇒ 7th grade students should have one of the Questions to Ponder from chapter 2 completed in their journal for small group.
- ⇒ 8th grade students should have one of the Questions to Ponder from chapter 3 completed in their journal for small group.
- ⇒ 9th grade students should have been searching online for possible devotional sites to use for their journaling assignments this year. We will also search for sites in small group.

The first outside presenter for our 9th grade class was Kelly Reyer from Fox Wolf Watershed. We also watched the local documentary, "Fox2-O." Talk to your student about what they learned and how they think Christians are called to interact with their environment.

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

Need Family Assignment Ideas? We've Got You Covered.

- Help with the Stewardship Brunch on Oct. 15. Contact Kathy Larson at klarson@felc.com.
- Help with the Lutheran World Relief Truckload Pack on Oct. 21. Fill out the interest form at www.felc.com/forms.



What's CYG Up To This Week?



This Sunday Confirmation Youth Group (CYG) will help decorate the youth room to get us excited for fall and for Jesus! Topic for the day: God will never "leaf" us. Curious? Join us to learn more! Contact Hannah Sprenger at hsprenger@felc.com for any questions.

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

Next 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 next 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.

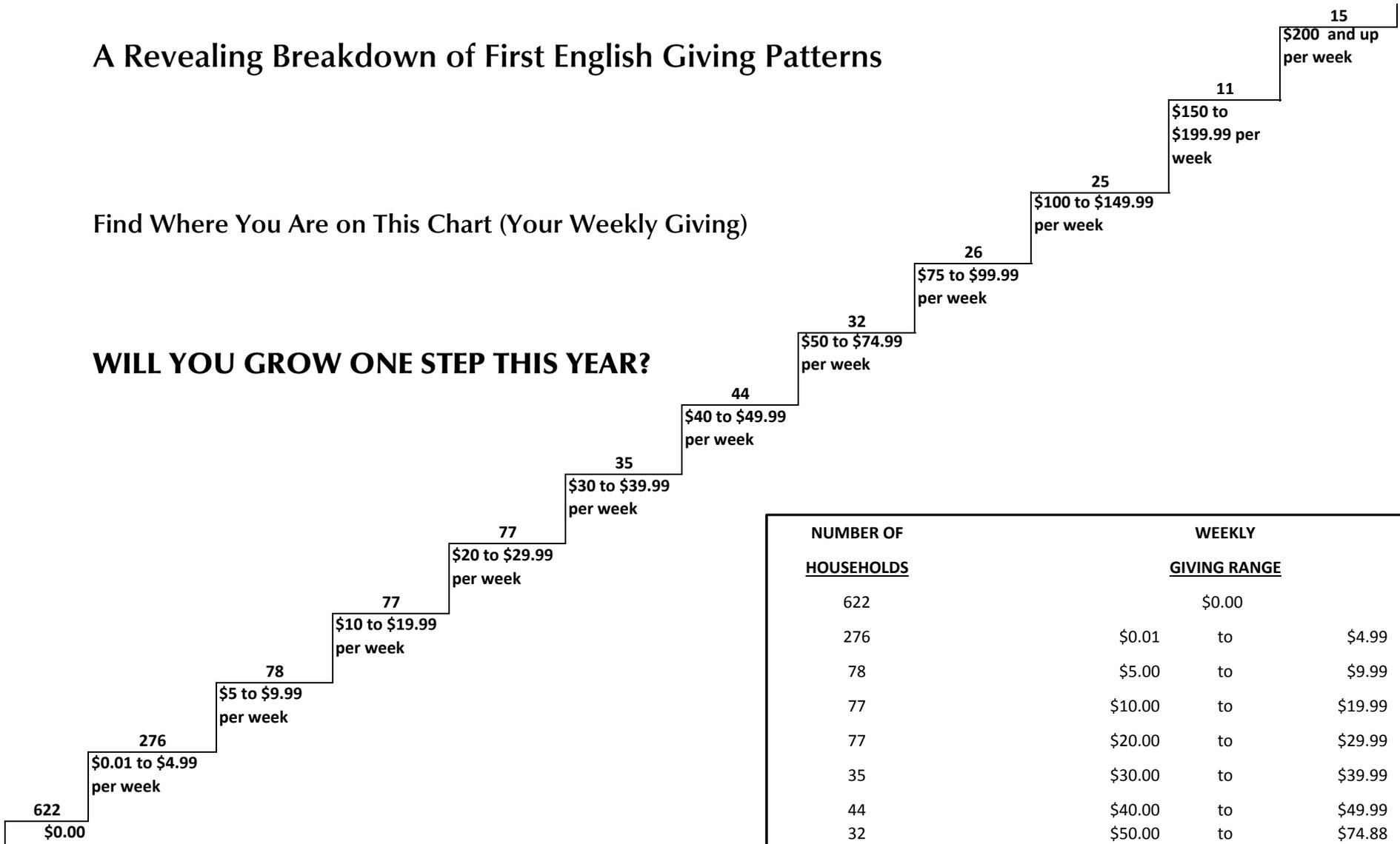
_____ North Site - 9:15 a.m.

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

A Revealing Breakdown of First English Giving Patterns

Find Where You Are on This Chart (Your Weekly Giving)

WILL YOU GROW ONE STEP THIS YEAR?



<u>NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS</u>	<u>WEEKLY GIVING RANGE</u>		
622	\$0.00		
276	\$0.01	to	\$4.99
78	\$5.00	to	\$9.99
77	\$10.00	to	\$19.99
77	\$20.00	to	\$29.99
35	\$30.00	to	\$39.99
44	\$40.00	to	\$49.99
32	\$50.00	to	\$74.88
26	\$75.00	to	\$99.99
25	\$100.00	to	\$149.99
11	\$150.00	to	\$199.99
15	\$200.00	or more	

FELC DS Engage Page: October 8, 2017

Matthew 21:33-46 *"Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.' So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes'? Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls." When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.*

Sun., Oct. 8: Family Project: Jesus points to the Old Testament prophecy, *"The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone."* Learn about a cornerstone by playing Jenga or building a tower out of blocks. Show that the building falls over when the cornerstone is removed. Come up with examples of the things that are less important—things that can be removed and leave the building intact. Praise God together that Jesus is a strong foundation for life!

Mon., Oct 9: Audrey Assad sings, *"If everything is yours, I'm letting it go. It was never mine at all."* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNfR3mQHxkk>) We are constantly tempted to claim ownership of the ministry that belongs to God, particularly when things are going well. By doing so, we make an idol of our own abilities, virtually kicking God out of his own vineyard. May the stumbling block of the cross continue to expose and then smash all pride and pretensions.

Tues., Oct 10: Hidden among the many teaching points in this parable are the servants who are sent and then rejected. Even when we follow God, doing as we are called, we may not be welcome or find acceptance. We do not go because we are assured success, but because our Lord calls us to a life of witness. May Christ help us deal with rejection and press on to help others know the love of 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/FELC Engage Page-Downtown Site>.

FELC NS Engage Page: October 8, 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 8: 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 9: 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 10: 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. 11: 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 12: 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 13: 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 14: 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

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>.