

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 Sept. 3, 2017 At-A-Glance

Sunday, Sept. 3

8, 9:15 & 10:30 a.m. Worship, DS
9 a.m. Worship, NS

Monday, Sept. 4

8:15 p.m. Labor Day, Offices Closed
Pick Up Basketball, NS Activity Center

Tuesday

6:30 a.m. Men's Ministry, NS Library
1 p.m. Judith Circle, DS 114

Wednesday

10:30 a.m. Bible Study with Pastor Mary, DS 221
5 p.m. Council Focus Group, DS 110
5:15 p.m. Confirmation Grades 7 & 8 Small Group Leader Orientation, DS 114
5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room
6:30 p.m. Parish Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room
6:15 p.m. Wednesday Worship, DS Sanctuary
7 p.m. Confirmation Grades 9 Small Group Leader Orientation, DS 114
7 p.m. reFUEL Grades 10-12, DS Youth Room
8 p.m. NYG Meeting (Grades 9-12), DS Youth Room

Friday

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

Sunday, Sept. 10

God's Work, Our Hands Sunday
Fair Trade Coffee Sunday

8, 9:15 & 10:30 a.m. Worship, DS
9 a.m. Worship, NS
11:45 a.m. New & Review Session One, DS 220

DS = Downtown Site NS = North Site

Fall New & Review Series

If you are interested in becoming a member of First English, the first step is to attend the *New & Review* series beginning on Sept. 10. Over the course of these three sessions you will learn all about First English, what it means to be a Lutheran, and how to get involved in the congregation. The itinerary is listed below:

Week One, Sept. 10, 11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m., Downtown Site Room 220

FELC/the ELCA and You and Downtown Site Building Tour

Week Two, Sept. 17, 11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m., North Site Lower Level

What It Means to be Lutheran and North Site Building Tour

Week Three, Sept. 24, 11:45 a.m. - 2 p.m., Pastor Jeff's Home

Love Jesus. Live your call. and New Member Luncheon

Sunday, Oct. 1, Worship Service of Choice - Either Site

New Member Sunday

It is very important to register for the *New & Review* session so please do so online at www.felc.com/forms, or by calling the church office at (920)733-2303. Please direct any questions to Hannah Sprenger at hsprenger@felc.com.



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 Sept. 3, 2017

North Site

Sunday Worship: 9 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 Pastor Jeff and Barb Tengesdal in honor of their 24th wedding anniversary today.

Looking Ahead

A Message from the Pastors

There is something new happening at the Downtown Site 9:15 a.m. worship service beginning on Sunday Sept. 17. Sunday School children will join their parents and 9:15 a.m. worshipers for the final 10 minutes of the service in the Sanctuary. This means that shortly after 10 a.m. the children will enter the Sanctuary, and together we'll have a recap of their scripture story for the day. This will not only reinforce what worshipers and students have heard in that hour, but give families food for conversation on the way home and throughout the week. It is a new thing we are trying in order to bridge the disconnect there seems to be between Sunday School and the worshipping community. Our goal is to enrich the faith life of both children and adults. Most importantly, it helps fulfill the promise that the church makes to each child at baptism: "We promise to support and pray for you in your new life in Christ."

~Pastors Jeff and Mary

Please note: Sunday summer worship time (9 a.m.) will stay in effect at the North Site through Sept. 10. On Sept. 17 worship times will return to 8:15 and 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School and Confirmation Registrations Needed ASAP

If you haven't already, please register your child(ren) for Sunday School and Confirmation. We are buying classroom materials and would hate to be short.

Visit www.felc.com/forms to select and complete the registration forms for your family. Please contact Kirsten Owens at kowens@felc.com or (920)733-2303 ext. 312 with questions and concerns.

Sunday School Teachers and Storytellers Needed

Sunday School begins soon! Please consider being a Sunday School teacher. We have a need for a 4 year old/Kindergarten co-teacher, grades 1 & 2, and grades 3 & 4 teachers at North Site. We are also looking for a variety of people to be storytellers. We are putting together a rotation of storytellers to give an animated telling of the story covered in Sunday School curriculum. These stories are ones most people are familiar with (Noah, Adam and Eve, etc.) and will take only about 10-15 minutes at the start of Learning Time in a large group format for all Sunday School students. We are looking for a wide variety - men, women, young, old, etc. - to help affirm our baptismal promise as a congregation to raise our children in faith and show them their religious education is important. Please contact Kirsten Owens at kowens@felc.com to help with this vital work in the church.

The Sun Sets on Faith Family Sundays

In the past couple of years the Sunday School curriculum has included Faith Family Sundays in an attempt to encourage families to worship together. The hope was to let children develop a greater level of comfort with the Sanctuary, songs, and components of worship. Yet, Faith Family Sundays usually had lower attendance and meant we had to forego a Sunday School lesson on the first week of each month. Knowing that church attendance has become more difficult for families we have decided to ensure that there are learning opportunities every week. Instead of taking the first Sunday of each month off for Faith Family Sunday, we have incorporated "no Sunday School" dates in the calendar when families can celebrate our common mission together as a faith family by attending Stewardship Brunch and Palm Sunday Brunch or on holiday weekends when we know people are scattered far, like Thanksgiving. This new structure says when we are together we worship and learn together as a community every chance we get. When you come, we will meet you.

Wednesday Worship

This 6:15 p.m. worship service with music, message and Holy Communion moves to the Downtown Site this week. What a great option if you are going to be out of town on a Sunday, or would just like a midweek worship experience. Invite your friends and neighbors to this Spirit-filled evening.



Stewardship Brunch

The Stewardship Committee is seeking assistance with the fall campaign Sunday brunch. Similar to last year, the Stewardship campaign will kick-off with a delicious Sunday morning brunch for the entire family at both sites. The committee is looking for help in making this event a success. For more information, or if you'd like to express interest in helping, connect with Brenda Smongeski in the church office at bsmongeski@felc.com or (920)733-2303.

Board Games Guild Life Group

The Board Games Guild life group meets this month on Monday, Sept. 11 at 6:30 p.m. in the North Site Library. This group is for all ages so bring your friends, co-workers, grandparents, and your favorite board game. Hope to see you there!

"Martin Luther: The Idea that Changed the World" Tuesday Sept. 12 at 7 p.m. on Wisconsin Public TV, WPNE

In the year of the Reformation's 500th anniversary, this film examines Luther's life, and the profound impact his ideas had on the course of Western history. It's narrated by Hugh Bonneville, of *Downton Abbey*.

In 1517, power was in the hands of the few, thought was controlled by the chosen, and common people lived lives without hope. On Oct. 31 of that year, a penniless monk named Martin Luther sparked the revolution that would change everything.

This movement, the Protestant Reformation, changed Western culture at its core, sparking the drive toward individualism, freedom of religion, women's rights, separation of church and state, and even free public education. Without the Reformation, there would have been no pilgrims, no Puritans, and no America in the way we know it.

50+ Event: LaClare's Goat Farm

Sept. 19 is the date to visit the LaClare Goat Farm. Please meet at the Downtown Site parking lot at 9:30 a.m.; the group will leave at 9:45 a.m. A buffet lunch is scheduled for 11 a.m. at a cost of \$9.95 plus beverage, tax, and tip. After lunch we will board a wagon and tour the farm: goat barn, cheese making house, and gift shop. A fee of \$5 is charged for the wagon ride. Then it is back to Appleton. There is a sign up sheet on the kiosk in the Downtown Site Gathering Area. Please join us if you can. If you can drive, please sign up on the sheet also.



Lutheran World Relief Coffee Project Sunday



When you drink a cup of fairly traded coffee from LWR/ Equal Exchange, you are supporting one, two or three small scale farmers on the other side of the world so that they can have a better life and education for their children. When farmers can't get a fair price for their coffee, it has a ripple effect in their communities, their country and even the world. Choosing fairly traded coffee can make an enormous difference. First English will be selling Fairly Traded Coffee, Tea, Hot Cocoa and Candy bars next Sunday, Sept. 10. The simple pleasure of a cup of coffee can be a vital source of income for thousands of small farmers and their families in some of the poorest countries in the world. We look forward to seeing you then.

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

Prayers of Comfort

- Families of:
- Dawn Burandt
 - Mary Pirsig
 - Sandra Raasch
 - Clarence Richter
 - Bill Schwister

Prayers for Those Called to Serve in Other Countries

- The Leiseth Family (Pastor Tessa Moon, Jon, Isaac and Sophia)

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

Sept. 3, 2017

reFUEL

WEDNESDAYS 7-8pm
DS Youth Room
10-12 GRADE
Beginning in 3 MORE DAYS

- 9/6: WELCOME BACK!
Activity/reflection
- 9/13: "Being Labeled"
Activity and discussion
- 9/20: *Special event refUEL night* 5:30-6pm
Meet at Hofacker's Hillside Orchard (W3964 Wege Rd, Appleton) 6-7pm bonfire at NS for caramel apples with tons of toppings
- 9/27: "When Jesus hits you in the face"

Save the Date Octoberfest Parking Lot Fundraiser!

Sept. 29: 5:45-8pm
Sept. 30: 8:30am-4pm



**National Youth Gathering
Houston, TX 2018**
June 27-July 1
Open to students currently in grades 9-12
Student Meeting
Wednesday, Sept. 6
8pm, DS Youth Room
Parent Information Session
Wednesday, Sept. 13
7:45pm, DS Fellowship Hall

Have a blessed Labor Day

Almighty God, you have linked our lives with one another that what we do, for good or ill, affects all other lives. Please guide us in the work we do, that we may do it not for self alone, but for the common good. Amen.

facebook.com/felcyouth | Instagram: @felc.youth

Sept. 3, 2017



Information for FELC Youth and Families
Grades K-12

Celebrating God's Work, Our Hands on Service Rally Sunday!

**God's work.
Our hands.**



Sept. 10, Rally Sunday we will not be starting the kick-off to Sunday School with classroom time. Instead we will be doing service together as part of the ELCA-wide event called *God's Work, Our Hands*. Families are encouraged to meet their teachers briefly before the start of the 9 a.m. worship at North Site or the 9:15 a.m. worship at the Downtown Site. Then families attend an abbreviated worship service together as they are commissioned to do God's work for our community! There will be three on-site work areas and three off-site tasks available for families to take part. Come join us to the start a great new tradition as we live our congregational call to serve our community!

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



Summer Has Flown the Coop It's Time to Learn!



⇒ **Sept. 10**

God's Work, Our Hands Service Rally Sunday!

Unlike Rally Sundays of years past, this year we will be part of an all ages service event. Stop to briefly meet your Sunday School teacher before 9 a.m. (NS) or 9:15 a.m. (DS) worship. Attend the brief worship service as a family and then join in one of our on-site or off-site work projects to help our community. Or choose a service project of your own and send us some pictures (email to mhujet@felc.com) to put up on the FELC Facebook page. We want to celebrate your God's work!

⇒ **Sept. 17 Choirs & Class Begin**

Our first day of singing and Sunday School class!

Angelus Choir (grades 3-6) meets in the Downtown Site Choir Room and **Cherub Choir** (K-grade 2) meets in Downtown Site Room 220. Both meet at 8:50 a.m.

Sunday School students (age 3-grade 6) will be meeting for an opening assembly in either the Downtown Site Fellowship Hall or the North Site Lower Level. Then during the last 10 minutes of class students will go upstairs to sit with their families in the Sanctuary, hear the Pastor Chat for a recap of the Sunday School story of the day and give a prayer and blessing for families to use. *Please note that all sign-in of children will be done at the opening assembly, sign-out will be done up by the altar at the end of Pastor Chat.*

Sunday School Teachers Are Still Needed at North Site

Plus, middle & high school students are needed
as classroom helpers at both sites.

Contact Kirsten Owens (kowens@felc.com) a.s.a.p. to help.
We hate to cancel classes for kids without a teacher.



Confirmation and Middle School Scoop



Confirmation Activities Start Sept. 11

Incoming 7th grade students have family and pastor meetings starting Sept. 11. From that point on we are running full throttle with student and parent meetings, worship assistance training, and regular classes! If you haven't registered your Confirmation student (especially if they have not attended before) please do it a.s.a.p. at www.felc.com so your student has important start-up info., a small group leader assignment, and curriculum materials.



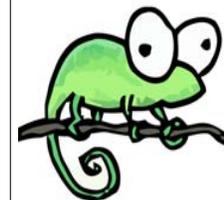
Confirmation Youth Group

First English is starting up a Confirmation Youth Group (CYG) at the North Site running from 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. every Sunday. CYG Sessions will begin at 9:15 a.m. in the Activity Center for open gym. At 9:45 a.m. we will shift to the Youth Room for discussions, small service projects, and other fun activities. It's a great way for students to explore their faith outside of the Confirmation classrooms. If interested please contact Hannah Sprenger at hsprenger@felc.com or just come to our first session Sept. 17. Hope to see you there!



Middle School Youth Group (MSYG) Is Changing Shape

Middle School Youth Group seemed to suffer from T.M.T.D. (Too Much To Do). Students had so much packed into their weekends that monthly attendance was tough. So, instead of monthly MSYG we will be offering a few events throughout the year for easier participation. Got an idea for a fun event? Contact Kirsten to pass on ideas you think would be fun to try.



Have questions or want to volunteer?

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

Get Ready to Rally for *God's Work, Our Hands!*

On Sept. 10, First English will be participating in the ELCA-wide service event known as *God's Work, Our Hands*. We will be offering three on-site service activities and three off-site activities to benefit our community. In addition, we will be providing information that day on how folks can engage in the larger social justice initiatives that the ELCA Advocacy Action Center identifies as important ways to live our call in a world-wide way.

Although First English has participated in this event in the past, we have not included it as part of our Rally Sunday celebration before. This year Rally Sunday, also Sept. 10, will not have traditional class time. This is in order to promote family, as well as congregation-wide participation in using our time in service.

Here are some important notes about what to expect on Sept. 10:

- **Off-Site Service opportunities (these require advance sign-up):**
 - ⇒ Spreading dirt and reseeding areas of City Park
 - ⇒ Painting balconies at Fox Valley Lutheran Homes (families w/older children and adults please)
 - ⇒ Doing garden work at Scheig Center in Appleton Memorial Park
 - ⇒ Painting at Iris Place
- **On-Site Service Opportunities include:**
 - ⇒ Making Project Linus no-sew blankets - Both sites
 - ⇒ Free carwash station for all - Both sites
 - ⇒ Baking apple crisp - *Downtown Site only* (Note: this activity is already full - thank you!)
 - ⇒ Butterfly houses - *North Site only* (Limited number of participants)
 - ⇒ Building a butterfly garden at North Site

Sign-up sheets are available in the Gathering Area or via the Sign-Up Genius link found on the First English homepage at www.felc.com.

Please sign up for FELC off-site activities in the Gathering Area or online as soon as possible to ensure we have enough volunteer hands and supplies for the service in the right places. Contact Kirsten Owens (kowens@felc.com) or Kathy Larson (klarson@felc.com) with questions.



God's Work Can Only Be Done With Our Donations Too!

Maybe you can't be here on Sept. 10 to be part of the *God's Work, Our Hands* work crew. That's ok. We can't do the work unless we have the materials to complete the projects, and that's where you can help!

Various items will be needed for the *God's Work, Our Hands* service event. Please take a look at the list below and consider donating these items. Contact Kirsten Owens (kowens@felc.com) or Kathy Larson (klarson@felc.com) with questions.

- Disposable buffet pans (9" x 13" or larger) **need met - thank you!**
- Twelve dozen baking apples (bring to church on Sept. 3 and 10)
- Old fashioned oats
- ~~Butter~~ **need met - thank you!**
- ~~Flour~~ **need met - thank you!**
- Brown sugar
- White granulated sugar
- Fleece for no-sew blankets (1½ yard pieces, 50-60"wide) - **need is great**
- Cutting mats & scissors/circular cutters to borrow- **need is great**
- Car soap - **need is great**
- Large sponges for washing cars - **need is great**
- Old towels for drying cars - **need is great**
- Paint brushes - FVLH & Iris Place painters please bring one to use
- Wheelbarrows, shovels and rakes to borrow for the City Park & Scheig Center projects
- ~~Wooden butterfly house kit materials~~ **need met - thank you!**

At the Downtown Site we will be baking apple crisps for the Salvation Army and other organizations and at the North Site we will be making butterfly houses & a garden for the diminishing monarch population. At both sites we will be offering a free car wash to any passing by, and creating blankets for Project Linus (no-sew fleece). Our off-site events will be helping *Iris Place*, a sanctuary home of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) general upkeep, painting balcony railings at Fox Valley Lutheran Homes, and spreading dirt and reseeding parks in the City of Appleton.

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE HURRICANE HARVEY

AUGUST 2017

ELCA.org/disaster

Hurricane Harvey hit the Gulf Coast of the United States on Aug. 25, 2017, threatening millions of people in coastal Texas and Louisiana with multiple days of heavy rain, winds and rising tides. While many have evacuated, significant damage is still expected, and thousands of people may be housed in shelters for an extended period of time.

be there to accompany those affected through every phase of this disaster.

We invite you to stand by our neighbors on the Gulf Coast during this time. Your gifts ensure that our church will be able to provide help and hope for those left homeless or otherwise affected by this disaster for years to come.

Lutheran Disaster Response's affiliate is actively present, collaborating with community leaders and officials to initiate the proper responses, particularly the long-term recovery efforts. Together, we have a strong history of working with Disasters in the Gulf Coast area. The road to recovery will be long, and Lutheran Disaster Response will

Gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response designated for "Hurricane Response – United States" will be used entirely (100 percent) for this disaster until the response is complete. Together, we can help provide immediate and long-lasting support. Give today to support the needs in this response and others like it.

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YES, I WANT TO HELP!

Lutheran Disaster Response: *Hurricane Response, U.S.* \$ _____ DDG0073

Lutheran Disaster Response: *Where Needed Most, U.S.* \$ _____ DDG0010

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP code _____

Email Address _____

Give through your congregation or make your check out to Lutheran Disaster Response and send to: **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, ELCA Gift Processing Center P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009**

Write "*Hurricane Response, United States*" or "*Lutheran Disaster Response, U.S.*" on your check's memo line.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

FELC DS Engage Page: September 3, 2017

Matthew 16:21-28 *From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you." But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life? For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."*

Sun., Sept. 3: Family Project: As Jesus tells the disciples of the suffering he will endure, he is in the process of setting up a team to help him through the difficult days ahead. Instead, Peter basically tells Jesus, "Let's not talk about those things." Sometimes our words give the impression that we aren't available to help others through difficulties. As a family, come up with responses to friends who are talking about their fears or problems. Which of those responses would you most like to hear when you share your own problems.

Mon., Sept. 4: In the play "Little Women", Jo makes a request of her sister, Beth. "Give me a task," she says, wanting to prove her love. Sadly, her task becomes letting go as Beth's health gives way and she dies. It's similar for Peter. He does not want to let go. He does not want to hear about death and suffering. Taking up our cross is less about performing some task than it is about realizing our weaknesses as humans and choosing to love and accompany one another anyway. Take up your cross, loving others through the messiness of no control.

Tues., Sept. 5: Mitzi Smith, writes, "*Jesus...sided with those who are defenseless from the daily onslaught of violence...Jesus calls us...to commit to following him while fully accepting how vulnerable our humanity will be if we choose to be revolutionaries. Jesus was willing to be God's revolutionary Messiah knowing the violence that could be done to his body as a consequence of pursuing justice, love and peace instead of the privileges of empire.*"* Are we revolutionaries? Take up your cross by and let go of power that comes at the expense of justice.

* http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3362

Wed., Sept. 6: Ezekiel 33:7-11 Recently I heard a radio show on how to be a good boss. The guest related insights learned by being a bad boss. She had ignored the poor performance of a team member because he was so well-liked by everyone in the office—herself included. When it reached the point where his inadequate performance was compromising the entire team, she brought him in to fire him. After she gave the reasons for the decision, he looked her straight in the eyes and said, "Why didn't you tell me?" In this passage the Lord is speaking to Ezekiel and basically saying, "You have to tell people that they need to change their ways! If they can say "Why didn't you tell me?", you are the one to blame." Let's not be so concerned about keeping the peace that we avoid candor that can help others experience the joy of living under God's word.

Thurs., Sept. 7, Psalm 119:33-40 Psalm 119 was written in a way to aid memorization. It is divided into sections with eight verses, and every line of each successive section begins with the next letter of the alphabet. In order to understand how radical Jesus was in his teachings, we need to realize that only men would have been expected to memorize these words or been given opportunity to study the law. Jesus' conversation about theological matters with the woman at the well was extraordinary! How thankful we can be for Jesus' new law that invites all people to sing, "*Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes, and I will observe it to the end.*" (v. 33)

Fri., Sept 8: Romans 13:8-14 Paul teaches that all the commandments—those against adultery, murder, stealing and coveting, "*are summed up in these words, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.*" (v. 9b-10) I don't remember being taught that adultery or coveting are examples of loving too little. However it's clear that the aftermath of adultery or coveting can be chaos in the lives of those we claim to love. Paul challenges us to "put on the armor of light". The world needs Christians to spread the light of grace and forgiveness. We must live, act and even breath out of love. May we always take time to consider the course of action that demonstrates true love.

Sat., Sept. 9: Matthew 18:15-20 Have you ever offended someone and been totally clueless about it? We may feel as though we are wandering in the dark in a relationship, wondering what we have done to cause so much pain. It is when we experience the situation described in Matthew 18 from this other end that we realize how important it is to go to someone in private if they have offended us. It gives them the opportunity to clarify their intent or simply to apologize when they realize the implications of their actions. Most importantly, it gives them the opportunity to change. When we spread stories about others before giving them the chance to explain, we sow seeds of discontent. Let's be people of love and forgiveness.

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: September 3, 2017

Matthew 28:16-20 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Sun., Sep 3: Family Project: When I was young, we did a party trick. I would go to a different part of the house, the people upstairs would pick a card and a helper would get me on the phone. The helper would then ask two questions, not revealing the card. Finally, I would come upstairs and name the correct card. It was so impressive! But when my friends figured out how it was done, we lost interest in doing the trick. The Trinity is a mystery. All of our analogies are incorrect. (For a funny and entertaining video on how analogies are wrong, watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KQLfgaUoQCw>) In the end, we choose what to believe not because we understand, but because we have experienced the presence of God in these very distinct ways, and because we have experienced the truth of the Bible. Do a magic trick with your children. Talk with them about if they understand how it was done. Talk about how we can enjoy experiencing something even if we don't understand it.

Mon., Sep 4: Have you ever thought about how intensely practical Jesus is in the Great Commission? He tells the disciples things that they can do: go, make disciples, baptize, teach, and finally, remember that I am with you. Lots of times we want to make Christianity about what goes on inside our head, minimizing the importance of our actions. If you are struggling with your faith, consider getting out of your head by doing some of the things Jesus calls us to do. Often, faith follows our actions!

Tues., Sep 5: Many songs have been written about our creeds (Here's one by Hillsong United: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-m9sRRN9MA>) Maybe it is easier to sing a song about what we believe than it is to sing about what we understand. If you were to write a creed, what would be included? What parts of the church's creeds do you find most important? Meditate on those teachings you find most challenging. How do you treat the parts you don't understand?

Wed., Sep 6: Genesis 50:15-21 If there is anyone who had a right to be vindictive to his brothers, it would be Joseph. He was his father's favorite, and his brothers had allowed jealousy to rule their hearts, eventually selling Joseph into slavery. So years later when the brothers are dependent on the good will of Joseph, they are scared and vulnerable. Joseph forgives them, saying "Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people." (v. 20) Is there someone in your life who you are unable to forgive? Perhaps God is calling you to do so. This doesn't mean you should remain in an abusive situation. Instead, realize that forgiveness is in your grasp, even if you were clearly wronged. The gift of forgiveness frees both giver and recipient

Thurs., Sep 7, Psalm 103:8-13 Read this psalm several times, meditating on your place in God's heart. I've replaced "us" and "those who fear him" with "me", and "our" with "my". That's how much God loves you!

"The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with me according to my sins, nor repay me according to my iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward me; as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes my transgressions from me. As a father has compassion for his children, so the LORD has compassion for me."

Fri., Sep 8, Romans 14:1-12 Paul asks us, "Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand." He reminds us to welcome others, "but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions." How often have we allowed differing opinions to taint our relationships, judging others because they think differently? Are we in love with the rush of righteous indignation and the belief that the superiority of our argument gives us personal superiority as well? Instead, let us pursue God's kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy.

Sat., Sep 9, Matthew 18:21-35 For Sunday School this fall, this text is the first in a series of lessons on the practices of our faith. These are the things we do that allow us to experience God's grace and love more fully. And the first one—forgiveness. Why not just start out with one of the hardest! Have you gossiped about me and tainted my reputation: forgiveness. Have you encouraged my spouse to leave me: forgiveness. There is no question about blame here –there is no need to justify the act of the other. This is about the way we want to live our lives and the focus of our hearts. May we relish the forgiveness we have received from Christ so greatly that it flows out in waves of mercy toward others.

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>.