

## FELC Friendship Pads

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

### Nursery Care

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

### Hearing Assistance

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

### Large-print Resources

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

### AED Units on Site

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

### Video Recording

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

### In Need of Prayer?

For additions to the prayer chain, email or call the church office ([felc@felc.com](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 Apr. 29, 2018 At-A-Glance

### Sunday, Apr. 29

8:50 a.m.  
9:15 a.m.  
9:15/9:25 a.m.  
9:30 a.m.

### Monday

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

### Tuesday

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

### Wednesday

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

7 p.m.

7 p.m.

### Thursday

6 a.m.  
9 a.m.  
7 p.m.

### Friday

6:30 a.m.

### Sunday, May 6

8:50 a.m.  
9:15 a.m.  
9:15/9:25 a.m.  
9:30 a.m.  
1:30 p.m.

DS = Downtown Site    NS = North Site

### Volunteer Appreciation Sunday

Cherub/Angelus Choir Rehearsal, DS 220/Choir Room  
Adult Forum, DS Lounge  
Children's Learning Time, DS/NS  
Women's Study Group, NS Library

Monday Morning Quilters, DS Fellowship Hall  
Intern Enrichment Ministry Team, DS Lounge  
GriefShare, DS 221  
Pick Up Basketball, NS Activity Center

Men's Ministry, NS Library  
Judith Circle, DS 114

Bible Study with Pastor Mary, DS 110  
Handbell Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room  
Wednesday Worship, DS Sanctuary  
Parish Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room  
reFUEL Grades 10-12, DS Youth Room  
VBS Planning Team Meeting, NS Library

### National Day of Prayer

Early Risers Women's Bible Study, DS Lounge  
Adult Bible Study, DS Lounge  
ATC Open Basketball, NS Activity Center

Men's Ministry, NS Library

Cherub/Angelus Choir Rehearsal, DS 220/Choir Room  
Adult Forum, DS Lounge  
Children's Learning Time, DS/NS  
Women's Study Group, NS Library  
Music Matinee: Chamber Fest Preview; Reception to Follow, DS Sanctuary & Gathering Area

## Mark Your Calendars: FELC Church Picnic!

The Congregational Life Ministry Team invites you to the FELC Church Picnic on Sunday, June 3, from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the North Site. We'll have a cookout with picnic fare and activities for children, including inflatables and games. If you're a gardener, participate in the plant exchange. Plan on bringing your family and friends to this fellowship event. If you're able to assist in planning or help out on the day of the picnic, please sign up in the Gathering Area or visit [www.felc.com/forms](http://www.felc.com/forms) to access the online sign-up.



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.

### North Site

Sunday Worship: 8:15 & 10:30 a.m.

*Love Jesus. Live your call.*

## Sunday at FELC

### Volunteer Appreciation Sunday

In honor of the dedicated volunteers at First English, there is a special coffee hour at both sites today to celebrate. Thank you for your service to not only our congregation, but other organizations you support as well.

### Downtown Site Adult Forums

Join us Sundays at 9:15 a.m. in the Downtown Site Lounge for Adult Forums as we explore some wonderful topics. Come every time you can to learn about the wonderful things that God is doing through ordinary people in the Fox Valley.

- **Today, Apr. 29:** The Rev. Dr. Linda Morgan-Clement - Religion and Spirituality Among College Students.
- **Next Sunday, May 6:** Bruce and Julie Doerfler - The Fox Cities Warming Shelter.

## Echoes, A Christian Thrift Store

Echoes, a Christian Thrift Store, is seeking to fill a 10-20 hour per week role assisting with a variety of tasks. The primary work day would be Saturday from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. If you have questions or are interested in this position, please contact Kathy Hoffman at (920)882-8172 or [echoes@felc.com](mailto:echoes@felc.com). Interested high school students are encouraged to apply.



Announcements  
Week of Apr. 29, 2018

## Welcome Back -

### FELC "New" Life Group Coordinator

We are pleased to announce Jeanne Gronholm has rejoined the staff at First English. Jeanne has taken over both the new Life Groups Coordinator position and the Downtown Site Administrative Assistant role. Jeanne's excellent office skills and welcoming smile are a wonderful addition to our staff. She will be attending a small group ministries conference with Pastor Mary in May and together they will be working on ways to revitalize our own Life Groups. Their goal is to help people make meaningful connections in church. If you have any ideas for Life Groups, feel free to contact Jeanne at [jgronholm@felc.com](mailto:jgronholm@felc.com).

## Looking Ahead

### The First VBS Planning Meeting: May 2

If the idea of being part of the Vacation Bible School (VBS) planning crew is exciting to you then we hope you are able to make our first meeting on Wednesday, May 2, from 7-8:30 p.m. in the North Site Library. Even if you are busy the week of VBS (Aug. 6-9) we would still love your help developing ideas and activities. All are welcome. Can't make it? No problem! Contact Kirsten Owens at [kowens@felc.com](mailto:kowens@felc.com) to be included in future planning sessions.

## Sabbatical Prayers

A 3-month sabbatical is one of the ways First English nurtures the well-being and dedication of its pastors. Blessed by this, Pastor Mary has set aside May 7 through Aug. 6 as her sabbatical. She has designed this time around these goals: relaxation, health, family, and small group ministries. (More details are available in the April newsletter on our website: [www.felc.com](http://www.felc.com).) During these three months, please hold Pastor Mary and her family in your prayers. Also, even though First English staff and Pastor Jeff are prepared for Pastor Mary's absence, we can all help in the ministry of First English by volunteering where needed, praying, caring for one another, keeping staff informed of unmet needs, and offering a huge thanks to the guest preachers who will share God's good news throughout this summer.

## Fair Trade Coffee Sale

Coffee is often the centerpiece of church social life and a daily ritual for many Americans. Many people feel called by their faith to do justice, to treat neighbors with love and respect, and to be good stewards of God's earth. We can put that faith to action in many ways - even with our morning cup of coffee.

Through fair-trade, farmers earn enough to cover their production expenses and also gain access to much needed pre-harvest financing. The stability that comes from fair trade makes life better for the farmers and their families and enables farmers to make a long-term difference in their communities.

Next Sunday, May 6, is the next Coffee Project sale day. We have a good supply of the different types of coffee, plus tea, hot cocoa and chocolate bars.

**Sign up for summer at  
[www.felc.com/summer/](http://www.felc.com/summer/)**

## North Site

### Discipleship Coordinator Role

FELC is seeking to hire a North Site Discipleship Coordinator. This person will work closely with Pastor Mary and the Invitation and Hospitality Ministry Team. A main responsibility of this part-time staff role is to foster the discovery of FELC members' personal calls and empower them to live out those calls in their personal lives, in our congregation and our community. Interested or have questions? View the job description at [www.felc.com/forms](http://www.felc.com/forms) or speak to Pastor Mary. Submit your cover letter and resume to [bsmorgeski@felc.com](mailto:bsmorgeski@felc.com) or mail to the Church Office at 326 E. North St., Appleton, WI, 54911.

## Pentecost Sunday is May 20:

### Let's Celebrate with

### Red Flowers and Garments

Help brighten the Sanctuaries with red geraniums by buying one (or more!), placing them on the table in the Gathering Area between Sunday, May 13 and Friday, May 18. Following worship, they will be planted in the church gardens to remind us of the Holy Spirit throughout the summer.

Also, please wear red to worship May 20 to celebrate the fire of the Holy Spirit that comes into our midst at Pentecost. The flames of the Spirit will ignite our hearts and lives once again.

## Summer Gardening Project

As mentioned above, the geraniums donated for Pentecost will need to be planted and cared for this summer. FELC is looking for a person or persons who would take on this short-term task. If you like to be outdoors, have a slightly-greenish thumb and take pride in the appearance of our lovely facilities, this may be a fit for you. If you are interested or want to find out more, please contact Kathy Larson at [klarson@felc.com](mailto:klarson@felc.com).

## Help for the Homeless Thank You

Using the Activity Center at the FELC North Site, the Family Radio Network broke the record again as an extraordinary number of new hygiene and cleaning products were donated to local crisis programs in 15 Northeast and Central Wisconsin communities in their 2018 *Help for the Homeless* hygiene drive. The 83 crisis agencies benefiting from these donations are sincerely grateful for this generous help! In its 26<sup>th</sup> year, *Help for the Homeless* has provided \$3 million worth of hygiene supplies to local crisis programs and those they serve. Thanks to those FELC members who donated products and participated in the two day pack at the North Site.

## GriefShare

GriefShare is a nation-wide ministry that helps people cope with the death of a loved one. This 13-week video curriculum is followed by a discussion each week. The spring session of GriefShare runs through May 7. You may join at any point in the curriculum. Sessions are on Monday evenings from 6:30-8 p.m. in the Downtown Site Lounge.

## VSA Choir Concert

The VSA Choir's annual Spring Concert will be held on Tuesday May 15 in the Downtown Site Sanctuary. The VSA choir has members with and without disabilities and will present some upbeat and fun songs for spring. Several members of FELC are members of the choir and FELC has been generous in providing space for our rehearsals and concerts. Please join us for this awesome concert. If you have any questions please contact Nancy Strebe (851-0345) or Kathy Larson (731-4969).

## AA Corner

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

## Prayer Connection

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

## Prayers of Healing, Wholeness & Peace

- Mary Lou Garnsworthy
- Nathan Meissner
- Brooklyn Ann Converse
- Angel Manos
- Todd Hollenberger
- Jacob Schwab
- Justin Schwab
- Laurie Niles
- Lynn Boenker
- George Krempin
- Debra Boushley
- David Heindel
- Doug Hansen
- Amy Ponomarev
- Moore Peregrine
- Tom Roy
- Je'Ann Johnson
- Paul Henrikson
- Juanita Gauerke
- Robb Schaefer
- Kim Norland
- Taylor Vivian Thompson
- Carol Peterson
- Elaine Gareau
- Bev Hoff
- Dean Peterson
- Sharon Stoike
- Nancy Boettcher

## Prayers of Comfort

Families of:

- Steve Grothe
- Elaine Krueger
- Kathy Putzer

## 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
- SPC Samuel Sinclair

## This Week's Community Care Focus

- Brewster Village  
(920)832-5409; [lisa.pingel@outagamie.org](mailto:lisa.pingel@outagamie.org)



# High School Youth News

Grades 9-12

Apr. 29, 2018

## HEY GRADUATING SENIORS!

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS ARE DUE TO THE DS OFFICE MAY 1.

Applications and their qualifications can be found on the FELC website [www.felc.com/forms](http://www.felc.com/forms) under the high school column. Contact Heidi with any questions ([hschreiner@felc.com](mailto:hschreiner@felc.com)).

HS Senior Recognition Sunday is May 20. Your RSVP for the lunch, along with 2 senior pictures, are due May 8 to the DS Office or to Heidi at reFUEL (one picture to display for each site). Thanks!

## reFUEL

DS Youth Room

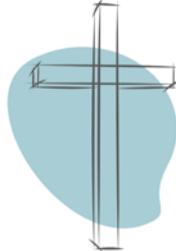
WEDNESDAYS 7-8 P.M.

For 9-12 Grade Students

Friends are always welcome!

May 2: Guess that Church Song—Emoji Edition

May 9: Pizza and Psalms



## ELCA Youth Gathering Updates

### May Calendar

Friday, May 4: Movie Night at NS 7PM  
Bring pillows/blankets

Sunday, May 13: Mother's Day Rose Sale and Scrip Sale Sunday

Sunday, May 20: Scrip Distribution



Apr. 29 2018



Information for FELC Youth and Families  
Grades K-12

## Save the Date for Youth Mental Illness 101 In May

We will be hosting a NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) presentation entitled, *Youth Mental Illness 101*, on May 16 from 7-8 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall at the Downtown Site. This presentation will help us answer these basic questions - What is mental illness? What is mental health? It is an informative, 50-minute presentation which provides an overview of mental illness and its impact, treatment and recovery, the adverse effects of stigma, the importance of advocacy and NAMI Fox Valley's role in the community to educate, support and empower those affected by mental illness. All are warmly encouraged to attend this free program.

Let's learn 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](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



Confirmation and  
Middle School Scoop



## Easter: 50 Days To Remember, Celebrate, and Build Something New

The Day of Pentecost isn't just a random name given to the time Jesus ascended into heaven after briefly walking amongst His people after resurrection. Pentecost comes from the Greek word meaning 50. The Jewish harvest festival of Shavout was 50 days after Passover. What does this countdown have to do with Easter? The Season of Easter is also 50 days mirroring this Jewish observance. Christianity was birthed out the Jewish tradition. Even though we embrace Jesus as our Savior we continue to have Jewish custom interwoven in our calendar. For followers of Christ today we don't countdown to a harvest festival but instead revel in the joy of a risen Lord and the building the church. For us, these 50 days of Easter are about remembering where we came from but also creating something new through Christ from resurrection to ascension.

*HEY YOU!*

## Are You Going To The Pool Party?

The Confirmation  
end-of-the-year pool party is  
Tuesday, June 19, from  
8:30-10:30 p.m. at Mead Pool. Any  
and all of this year's Confirmation students and those planning  
to start Confirmation in the fall are invited to this fun event to  
get into the summer swim. Please RSVP to attend and, if you  
like, bring snacks at [www.felc.com/forms](http://www.felc.com/forms). Even if you can't make  
it we would appreciate a response so we can best prepare for  
evening. Confirmation fees help pay for this event so  
there is no additional charge to students.



Let's end the year with a splash!

## Are You Ready For the Summer?

FELC summer activities are open  
for registration. Go to  
[www.felc.com/summer](http://www.felc.com/summer) to sign-up.  
Don't miss all the summer fun!



## Choir Corner Cherub Choir sings

**TODAY at the 9:15 a.m.  
worship.**

**Angelus Choir sings  
on May 6 at the 8 a.m.  
worship**

**All are welcome so come**

## School's Almost Out but Our Church Life Is Only Getting Sunnier

This summer there is tons to do at  
First English (including an awesome  
Noah's Ark trip!) Go  
to [www.felc.com/summer](http://www.felc.com/summer) to get in the  
know then giddy-up  
and go!



## Don't Run Out of Gas When You Can reFUEL!

For 9<sup>th</sup> graders there  
are no more Wednes-  
day night Confirma-  
tion classes but there's a lot of fun to  
fill up on in reFUEL from 7-8 p.m. in  
the Downtown Site Youth Room.  
Don't miss the fun!

*Have questions or want to volunteer?*

*Contact Kirsten Owens at [kowens@felc.com](mailto:kowens@felc.com) or 733-2303.*

## FELC DS Engage Page: Easter 5, April 29, 2018

*John 15:1-8 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.*

Sun, Apr. 29: Family Project: How do we abide with Jesus? According to Wikipedia, Francis H. Lyte wrote the words to the great hymn "Abide With Me" as he lay dying of tuberculosis. He lived only three weeks after its completion. After listening to or singing with this hymn, talk about your most difficult struggles. How has God helped you through these trials? If you have young children, you can certainly speak in more general terms. However all will grow in faith as you openly share the ways God's presence has sustained you in life's difficulties. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84YASWe3\\_2Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84YASWe3_2Q)

Mon, Apr. 30: Recently, I was shown a great new key on my computer –the home key. (*Ok, it was only new to me.*) It brings me back up to the top of whatever page I'm visiting on the internet. This experience reinforced a very simple and apparent truth: You cannot use what you do not know. When Jesus asks us to abide in him, he asks us to know his words and promises. In the Bible, Peter asks us to cast all our cares on Jesus; the author of Hebrews reminds us Jesus will never leave us; we hear in Jesus' words in Matthew that we will find rest for our souls. We experience these promises because we know them and abide in them. Spend time abiding in Jesus each day!

Tues, May 1: Where have you felt safest? When I was a little girl, I felt safe whenever I was near my Dad, sitting on his lap, resting in his love. At other times it was when the tires of my car turned into the driveway at home, or when I was surrounded by friends and family—resting in love and acceptance. Abiding in God's words in the middle of struggles is like coming home, like resting with my dad's arms around me, or seeing the smile and feeling the hug of a long absent friend. Be renewed as you abide in Jesus' love.

Wed., May 2, Acts 10:44-48 On vacation in Mexico, my husband and I went to a musical review that honored the music and dance of various regions in the country. The songs were well known by those Mexicans in attendance and they sang along with gusto. It was an ah-ha moment for me. I was thankfully jolted out of my prejudice –my cloud of cultural superiority– discovering that the Mexicans were proud of and loved the culture and history of their own country. Living in a cloud of religious superiority, the Jews (*the circumcised believers*) are astounded when Gentiles receive the same gift of the Holy Spirit that they had received at Pentecost. But thankfully –maybe even miraculously– they are quick to accept that God loves and favors those who aren't Jews as much as those who are. May we be quick to accept God's abiding love for all humanity!

Thurs, May 3, Psalm 98 For the last three years, my family has had the pleasure of presenting a family concert to help raise funds to benefit the Intern program here at First English. It is a fair amount of work, organizing a meal and planning and preparing the music –but it's the sort of work that has blessed me immeasurably. There is something so pleasing, so wonderful about the act of making music together. Last year we all joined together at the end to sing "*Oh God, we adore you. O God, we bow down. We exalt and we praise you, led by your Spirit, O Holy One.*" Surrounded by family, placing our hearts in communion with the God of the universe –it was a blessed moment. With the psalmist, we call all of God's children to discover the immense joy of singing a new song to our Lord.

Fri, May 4, 1 John 5:1-6 I love preparing meals for family, but if I start to look at it as one more thing on my "to do" list, I lose the sense of joy that cooking can give me. Some of my most precious conversations have occurred when I'm elbow deep in dish water, cleaning up with loved ones after a meal. But if I convince myself that I shouldn't have to cook and clean, I miss out on my blessing. John says that God's commandments are not burdensome, because he knows that in obeying God's commands, God helps us conquer the world. Hope and meaning come from trusting Jesus and knowing that God's commandments bring joy.

Sat, May 5, John 15:9-17 Very few people are universally good at working with others. Often times, disagreements center around who is in charge, who has more expertise, or whose ideas stink! Although clear lines of hierarchy can simplify relationships, Jesus calls us into the messy sort of love that friends have. We are not servants of one another, but must work through the give and take of mutually respectful and equal relationships. If Jesus can call us and love us as friends, we certainly ought to be able to do the same for each other.

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

## FELC NS Engage Page: Easter 4, April 29, 2018

**John 10:11-18** *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away -- and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."*

Sun, Apr. 15: Family Project: I love watching videos of farmers calling sheep. In this video, the farmer has various people try to call in the sheep who are grazing and the sheep barely lift their heads. But when the shepherd comes –the sheep know his voice. They associate the sound of his voice with food and comfort –good things. Talk together about how we recognize the voice of the shepherd.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e45dVgWgV64>

Mon, Apr. 16: In his book, "A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23", Phillip Keller writes, *"In memory I can still see one of the sheep ranches in our district which was operated by a tenant sheepman. He ought never to have been allowed to keep sheep. His stock were always thin, weak, and riddled with disease or parasites. Again and again they would come and stand at the fence staring blankly through the woven wire at the green lush pastures which my flock enjoyed. Had they been able to speak I am sure they would have said, "Oh, to be set free from this awful owner!"*(p. 23) As part of Jesus' flock, we enjoy the lush, green grass of acceptance, forgiveness, hope and grace. Why do we remain silent, buying into the belief that our faith offers only judgment? Others are looking over the fence. Share your abundant life in Jesus.

Tues, Apr. 17: When we read in the 23rd Psalm, *"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want"*, the psalmist is not saying that he will never suffer from poverty or that his every secret wish will be granted. Rather he will be satisfied with the control that the Lord has in his life. People from countries that suffer a lack of resources often carry an incredible amount of joy, accustomed to leaving their days in Jesus' care. May we all experience the peace of doing the same.

Wed., May 2, Acts 1:15-17, 21-26 I run into trouble when I start believing that God should not be using methods that make me uncomfortable. In this passage, the apostles want to find someone to replace Judas Iscariot, the man who betrayed Jesus. They use their intellect and wisdom to come up with two likely candidates –men who had travelled with Jesus during the entire time of his ministry. So far, so good. But then they pray and cast lots to determine who should hold this important position. What? God uses games of chance? The apostles seem fine with this risky course of action. Here I must recognize my own narrow-mindedness. God is not calling all of us to act according to one rigid set of rules –such as no gambling. I may never cast lots to make a decision, but I am thankful that God is able to use the most unlikely means to help us grow in faith.

Thurs, May 3, Psalm 1 The NRSV translation of this Psalm gives us the impression that it is written to a group since it uses pronouns like those, their, and they. This is done to avoid using only the masculine pronoun and devaluing half of humanity! However, we miss out when we don't realize that this psalm was written to individuals who were making decisions about how to live. Because of that, look at an NIV translation, and read the first three verses aloud. If you are a woman, substitute the words, "woman", "her", and "she" for their masculine counterpart. Make it a prayer and vow for holy living—the sort of living that brings happiness!

Fri, May 4, 1 John 5:9-13 Sometimes we try to differentiate between what Jesus did as a person and what Christ does as part of the divine God. Though we may be tempted to subdivide Jesus into his human and divine parts, 1 John is written to stop us from doing this. The faith that we are called to –one that proclaims the human Jesus as the true Son of God – does not allow us to divinize our response. We cannot act as though our only calling as Christians is to talk about our beliefs and to pray for others. We must understand that our life in Christ is a holy calling, but one that demands that we get dirty with the day to day messes of life.

Sat, May 5, John 17:6-19 Jesus prays of his followers, *"that they may be one, as we are one."* In coverage of the recent death of Barbara Bush, she was asked what it was like to be mother of a president. After stating that she loved all her children equally, she said that one of her greatest joys was the loyalty that all of her children carried for one another. She wanted to be able to look down from heaven and see that this love and loyalty continued. In this passage, our Lord shows that one of his greatest desires is that all of God's children would be one. Would God be able to look down from heaven and rejoice in our ability to be unified? Or would He have to despair about our jealousy and animosity? Let us commit to love and loyalty to each other –in spite of differences in theology.

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