

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) and the North Site Nursery (off the main hallway, across from the restrooms) are open for family use during all services. Please ask an usher if you need 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

At the Downtown Site, if you are in need of a large print Bible or bulletin, please ask an usher.

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 8:30 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).

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 Aug. 26, 2018 At-A-Glance

Sunday, Aug. 26

8:30 & 10 a.m.

Worship, DS Sanctuary

9 a.m.

Worship, NS Sanctuary

Monday

8:15 p.m.

Pick Up Basketball, NS Activity Center

Tuesday

6:30 a.m.

Men's Ministry, NS Library

6:30 p.m.

Congregation Council, NS Library

Wednesday

10:30 a.m.

No Wednesday Worship

Bible Study with Pastor Mary, DS 221

7 p.m.

Sunday School Teacher Orientation, NS Library

Thursday

11:30 a.m.

Men's Ministry FREE Neighborhood Picnic,

Seeds of Grace Learning Garden (DS)

Friday

6:30 a.m.

Men's Ministry, NS Library

Sunday, Sept. 2

8:30 & 10 a.m.

Worship, DS Sanctuary

9 a.m.

Worship, NS Sanctuary

Monday, Sept. 3

Office Closed

DS = Downtown Site

NS = North Site

Fox Valley Lutheran Homes

- Apartments for rent: 1 BR & 2 BR; Call Becky at 734-7225.
- Volunteers always appreciated: If you like to visit with people, work in the yard, help with property projects, help in the kitchen, bake once in a while, drive people to appointments, play games, etc., call 734-7225; ask for Becky, Katie or Cheryl, and we'll find the perfect spot for you to help make a difference at Fox Valley Lutheran Homes.
- Look for our poster about the *Vacation-Sports-Quilt Auction* on Oct. 14. Tell your friends and family! Bring them to it. Help us put a new roof over the heads of our tenants!

Take Up Your Cross; Walk God's Justice Sisters Together Retreat

Sept. 21-22. Imago Dei Bible Camp, Clintonville

Guest Speaker: Pastor Angel Khabebe from

Ascension Lutheran Church, Waukesha

In Kind Gifts of LWR School Kits and Cross Weaving Art Project

For registration, please contact Carol Cleveland

at (920)982-4835 or cacleveland50@gmail.com.



First English Lutheran Church

www.felc.com felc@felc.com

Downtown Site

Sunday Worship: 8:30 & 10 a.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: 9 a.m.

Announcements

Week of Aug. 26, 2018

Love Jesus. Live your call.

First English is committed to becoming a more welcoming, inclusive congregation.

Sunday at FELC

Altar Flowers

The Downtown Site altar flowers are provided in honor of Bill & Beth Padget's Aug. 29 wedding anniversary.

Looking Ahead

Wednesday Worship Resumes Sept. 5 at the Downtown Site

Please note: There will be no Wednesday worship on Aug. 29. Wednesday worship resumes at the Downtown Site at 6:15 p.m. on Sept. 5.

Fall Worship Times Resume Sept. 16

FELC will maintain the summer worship schedule through Sept. 9. On Sept. 16, the fall worship times will resume which are:

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

North Site: 8:15 & 10:30 a.m.

50+ Group Tour in September

The 50+ group will tour the 1000 Island Nature Center in Kaukauna on Sept. 13. The group will meet in the Downtown Site church parking lot at 9:45 a.m. to carpool, and leave promptly at 10 a.m. for the nature center. They will stop for lunch after at Landreman's Restaurant in Kaukauna. Please sign up in the Gathering Area if you would like to participate in this fun activity.



FELC Employment Opportunities

• 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 in our community. Submit your cover letter and resume to bsmongeski@felc.com or mail to the Church Office at 326 E. North St., Appleton, WI, 54911. Have questions? Call Pastor Mary in the Church Office (733-2303).

• **Facilities Technician:** FELC is offering the part-time position of Facilities Technician. The technician maintains the buildings, where their duties may include performing carpentry, painting, general upkeep and repair, landscaping, HVAC, plumbing and electrical maintenance, and other duties as needed. If this rewarding role would be something you'd be interested in, contact Rich Erickson at lefseman@charter.net or Brenda Smongeski at (920)733-2303 or bsmongeski@felc.com.

The job descriptions for these positions can be found at www.felc.com/employment.

Grace, Peace, and a Picnic in the Garden

Provided for the FELC Downtown Site Neighborhood

Thursday, Aug. 30

11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

FELC Seeds of Grace Learning Garden on the corner of North and Durkee streets

This free meal - a brat or a burger, chips and a bottle of water - is open to the community and is sponsored by the Men's Ministries of First English. Last month the group served over 90 people! Come and enjoy some food and fellowship with the neighborhood.

Senior Living Expo: Celebrating Life after 50

Seniors, their families and all interested are invited to attend this interactive tradeshow with 70+ exhibit booths on Wednesday, Sept. 19 from 8 a.m. - noon at Players Choice, County Rd. JJ, Appleton. Admission is free, and no advance registration is required. Enjoy the following and more:

- FREE coffee and rolls while supplies last.
- FREE blood pressure readings and skin screening.
- FREE seminars: *Traumatic Falls* by Dr. Ray Georgen and *Social Security* by Tim Gierke.
- Prizes, prizes, prizes!

The event is sponsored by Appleton Noon Lions Club. All proceeds go to charitable organizations. For more information, please visit appletonnoonlions.com.

Update Your Contact Information

Have you moved? Dropped your land line? Got a new cell phone? Changed your email address? Please help FELC stay current by updating your contact information for us. It is fast and easy - just visit www.felc.com/update and fill out the short form. It would be very much appreciated!

Religious Education Is Out of the Gate

The first round of information emails for Confirmation and Sunday School students has been sent to families that have registered for fall. Haven't enrolled yet? No problem! Go to www.felc.com/forms so you're in the communication loop and ready for class in September!

God's Work, Our Hands: Let's Get At It! Advocacy for Justice in Today's World

Saturday, Sept. 8, 8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Good Shepherd Lutheran

2000 Roosevelt Drive, Plover, WI 54467

Many of us want to help solve the problems in today's world but we don't know exactly what to do. This workshop - which will follow *Cherish All Children's* model of pray, educate, connect, act - will empower you to help make a difference. Pastor Cindy Crane, Director of the Lutheran Office of Public Policy, will speak on the Christian roots of advocacy; Women of the ELCA Director for Justice Jennifer Deleon will speak on immigration; and State Representative Katrina Shankland will provide practical tools to help you advocate effectively through Civic Engagement 101.

After lunch (included), breakouts will address topics such as immigration, human trafficking, gun violence, domestic violence, and poverty and hunger. The event, co-sponsored by Good Shepherd and Women of the ELCA, ECSW, is free and open to the public. High school students are welcome to attend. A free will offering will be taken to cover expenses.

To register, visit www.eventbrite.com and type "Advocacy for Justice Plover" in the search bar. Please contact Shirley Paulson at spaulson1949@gmail.com with questions or for more information.

Lunchtime Organ Recitals

Our prayers go out to the family of Frank Rippl, who died Aug. 11. Frank served as series coordinator for the Lunchtime Organ Recitals which is currently in its 23rd season. He was an organist and former music director at All Saints Episcopal Church, Appleton where he served for 42 years. His love of organ music in the Fox Valley area will long be remembered through these lunchtime recitals. We are grateful for his dedication to the arts and for sharing his gifts with our community.

This Wednesday is the final recital of the season. Thank you to all who have participated as well as attended.

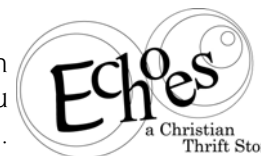
- Aug. 29, 12:15-12:45 p.m.:
Ralph & Marillyn Freeman
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Neenah

Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministers are members of our congregation who listen, care, encourage and provide emotional and spiritual support to people who are facing a crisis or going through tough times. The help you'll receive is free and confidential. To learn how you, a friend, neighbor, co-worker or relative can receive care, speak with a pastor, or contact Pastor Mary at mbauer@felc.com or 733-2303.

Echoes Needs You

Echoes, a Christian Thrift Store needs you to donate and to shop.



This vibrant First English ministry is in need of your donations and your shopping dollars. With neighborhood garage sales, Echoes sales typically slow in the summer. Please don't forget Echoes!

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
- 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
- Bev Hoff
- Dennis Paisar
- Tresor
- Linda Van Berkel
- Cheryl Laabs

Prayers of Comfort Families of:

- Cassie Laabs
- Lauren Laabs
- Kenny Reinholz
- Frank Rippl

Prayers for Those Called to Serve in Other Countries

- Stephanie Olson

Prayers for Those in the Military

- Lt. Josh Anderson
- Christian Cramer
- BM3 Kyle Kramer, USCG
- LCPL Robert Kopesky II
- SPC Samuel Sinclair

This Week's Community Care Focus

- Community Foundation of the Fox Valley Region, Inc.
(920)830-1290; info@cffoxvalley.org



High School News

Grades 9-12

Aug. 26, 2018

reFUEL

For Grades 10-12
Wednesday nights
DS Youth Room
7-8 p.m.

9/19: DS Youth Room
Welcome back!

9/26: **5:30-6pm** *Special event reFUEL night*
Meet at Hofacker's Hillside Orchard (W3964 Wege Rd, Appleton).

6-7pm bonfire at NS for caramel apples with tons of toppings. If it rains we will hang out at NS Youth Room.

Social Media Corner

Follow us at FELC YOUTH on Facebook and felc.youth on Instagram!
#justdoit



High School Mission Trip Blue Ridge Mountains, NC July 20-July 27, 2019

Open to students currently in grades 9-12

Commitment Form can be found at www.felc.com/highschool and informational video will be posted there and on FELC YOUTH Facebook Page by Sept. 5.

Registration and \$100 Deposit due Sept. 20 to DS Office
Questions? Contact Heidi hschreiner@felc.com.

Upcoming fundraisers for 2019 Mission Trip:

License to Cruise/Octoberfest

Parking Lot fundraiser:

Sept. 28: 5:45-8pm

Sept. 29: 8:30am-4pm

Bake Sale:

Sept. 30: Between all services at both sites

Sign up for shifts at www.felc.com/highschool or email Heidi.

Elementary and Middle School News



Get Ready to Rally and Serve!

On Sunday, Sept. 9, we kick-off another awesome year of Sunday School with meet 'n' greets and congregation-wide service.

Families meet their Sunday School teachers in their classrooms at

8:15 a.m. at Downtown Site and at 8:45 a.m. at the North Site. Then head to a short worship service at 8:30 a.m. at the Downtown Site or 9 a.m. at the North Site as we are blessed to head

out and serve the community with on and off site service projects. Time to rally and celebrate a new season as a faith family spreading God's light in the world!

(The standard Learning Times of 9:15 a.m. at the Downtown Site or 9:25 a.m. at the North Site will begin Sept. 16)

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



Those who have registered for Sunday School and/or Confirmation are already receiving info emails. It's not too late to enroll! Go to www.felc.com/forms to be in the know before we giddy-up and go!



Bibles & Using Your Bible Class for 3rd Graders



All 3rd grade students receive a Whirl study Bible as a gift from the congregation. This year Bibles will be given with a blessing at all worship services on Sunday, Sept. 16. Don't miss *Using Your Bible Class* for 3rd Graders on Sunday, Sept. 30 from noon - 1:15 p.m. so you know how to put the Good Book to good use!

Please r.s.v.p. for this meeting at www.felc.com/forms as pizza will be served.



“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) - one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor.

ONSITE PROJECTS AT EITHER DOWNTOWN SITE OR NORTH SITE

- Making Seed Bombs:** Assemble, create and plant in community. All ages.
- Painted Rocks:** Paint, add art work and hide in community. All ages.
- No Sew Blankets:** Create blankets for Project Linus. All ages.
- Seeds of Grace Butterfly Garden - Corner of North & Durkee Streets (DS):** Implement new design for butterfly garden. Dig and plant new plants. Ages 8+.
- Apple Crisp (DS):** Assemble and distribute unbaked to area shelters. Ages 6+.
- LWR School Bags (NS):** Assemble donations for October boxcar load. All ages.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- Apple Creek YMCA** at 2851 E. Apple Creek Road. Trail maintenance, litter pick up. Ages 12+.
- Loaves & Fishes** at St. Therese Activity Center 213 E. Wisconsin Avenue. Work with raised gardens, add compost, harvest gardens. Ages 12+.
- Fox Valley Lutheran Homes** at 425 N. Linwood Avenue. Underground Parking Cleaning : **THIS PROJECT IS FULL.** Yard Cleaning:: Prune and clear yard waste. Ages 12+.
- Jake’s Diapers** at 139 E. 2nd Street., Kaukauna A 501(c)3 that provides cloth diaper kits for children in the Fox Valley, within the US and globally. Assemble diaper kits for distribution.
- Building for Kids** at 100 W. College Avenue. Painting and cleaning needed due to renovation taking place at the children’s museum. Ages 12+.

**Sign up in the Gathering Area or at www.felc.com.
Don’t wait too long-many projects fill up fast!**

God’s work. Our hands.

**Donations Needed;
Introducing the Casserole Ministry**

Going to be out of town on Sept. 9 or have other plans? There is still a way you can help and participate. Donations are still needed plus it is the kickoff for the new “casserole ministry” that will be a year long ministry at FELC.

DONATIONS NEEDED

APPLE CRISP

- ___ 3-5 lb. bag of apples
- ___ Butter x 2 lb.
- ___ White sugar x 4 lb.
- ___ Brown sugar x 2 lb.
- ___ Oatmeal, quick oats
- ___ Foil baking pans (9x13)

LWR SCHOOL BAGS

- ___ Notebooks
- ___ Scissors
- ___ Sharpeners
- NO SEW BLANKETS**
- ___ 4 yards of fleece (2 yards each of complimentary fabrics)

**BRING DONATIONS TO
THE GATHERING AREA
BY SEPT. 4**

SEED BOMBS/PAINTED ROCKS
___ Egg cartons (paper or foam)

CASSEROLE MINISTRY

The Invitation & Hospitality Ministry team will begin requesting FELC members to make casseroles that can be frozen and then distributed to those in need. Casseroles will be collected at the Downtown Site. Any FELC member could then distribute to anyone in need.

Currently, the team is collecting names of people who may be interested in learning more. Sign up in the Gathering Area or at www.felc.com. People can either use a recipe that will be provided OR make a family favorite. Baking instructions and a complete listing of ingredients would be needed. Baking pans will be available beginning on Sept. 9.

FELC DS Engage Page: Pentecost 14, August 26, 2018

John 6:56-69 *Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever." He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum. When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?" But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, "Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father." Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."*

Sun, Aug. 26: Family Project: Learn about the armor of God by watching this fun video together. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7eC-W_XNyw Discuss the ways the armor of God protects us from the lies the devil tells us and prepares us to share the good news of God's love.

Mon, Aug. 27: Rarely will we be totally invested in any commitment. We continually evaluate the chance of success for any endeavor. In this passage, we are reminded that some things are worth committing to whether or not they lead to success. The Czech statesman, Vaclav Havel, put it this way. *"Work for something because it is good, not just because it stands a chance to succeed."* When Jesus asks the disciples if they will also abandon him because of his teachings, their answer shows a willingness to commit totally, *"We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."*

Tues, Aug. 28: When asked what type of men become navy seals, one leaders pointed out it wasn't the strongest, the best athletes, or the lone individual trying to prove personal excellence. Rather it was those who, when they had reached the end of their strength, were able to reach inside to help the person next to them. Similarly, the "armor of God" passage in Ephesians 6 is directed in the plural to a community. May we be a community that reaches deep within to protect and fight for those around us.

Wed., Aug. 29, Deut 4:1-2, 6-9 "No TV until your homework's done!" "No desert until you eat your meal!" "Only one hour on the computer." What are your family rules? What are the rules that you heard of from others and decided they would be good to employ? The rules we have in our households say something about our values. Whether it's believing in the importance of hard work, of education, of exercise, or of kindness. Our hope is that rules of action will instill good habits—a learned and intentional wisdom in all we do. We are called to practice and pass along the laws of the Lord, enhancing the reputation of all who follow God.

Thurs, Aug. 30, Psalm 15 If you are a Monty Python fan, you will remember the scene where the four knights are trying to cross the bridge of death and are asked three questions. Correct answers will allow them to cross safely while wrong responses will send them hurtling into a deep chasm." Psalm 15 begins similarly with the writer asking for entrance requirements.. (*"O LORD, who may abide in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy hill?")* We get to the first requirements—"those who walk blamelessly, and do what is right, and speak the truth from their heart"—and we can't help but feel despair. God is asking too much from us. When we realize that our acceptance by God comes because Jesus walked blamelessly and Jesus did what is right and spoke the truth, we can't help but feel deep relief and gratitude. May our lives of thanks be directed toward accomplishing the righteous goals that the Psalmist gives.

Fri., Aug. 31, James 1:17-27 James is not content to let lip service to high ideals be the norm for those who follow Jesus. Faith should be born out in action and action should be informed by listening. He tells us to *"be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger."* He admonishes that any who want to call themselves religious *"and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless."* In particular, he calls followers of Christ to care for widows and orphans. In a country with an increasing number of widows from our overseas wars or from the PTSD of our soldiers following multiple deployments, we need to be a people who not only speak loving words, but also turn those words into action.

Sat, Sep. 1, Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23 Maya Angelou has a great quote. *"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."* As a person who loves the church, I can get caught up in religious rules. Jesus teaches that external rules of faith aren't important if our hearts are filled with anger, pride, slander... Those emotions will always leak out into our relationships with others and often diminish their sense of worth. It is by acting and speaking in love that we shine God's grace and love to 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-Downtown-Site-Engage-Page>

FELC NS Engage Page: Pentecost 15, August 26, 2018

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23 *Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.' You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition."... Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile."...For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."*

Sun, Aug. 26: Family Project: James teaches, *"let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger;"* (v. 19b) Have there been times when you have been misunderstood –when people get angry and judge you without taking the time to listen? Talk about how we can practice our listening skills to help us understand one another.

Mon, Aug. 27: There are religious rules that carry meaning for me. I like keeping the altar clear of decorations as it reminds me that we can do nothing to improve on Holy Communion and Jesus' sacrifice. However, I have to admit that nothing I do can take away from the wonder of Jesus' gift - not even putting flowers on the altar! The rule only has meaning when it is followed out of a sense of love and reverence. May all our rules point to Jesus grace, not our own rigidity.

Tues, Aug. 28: Because of the call to be a priestly nation, the Pharisees took many of the rules given for priests and applied them to daily life in order to *"build a fence around the law"* and *"preserve the Jewish faith and life."* Jesus' anger is not directed at the law itself– he does not disrespect the law. His anger was with a focus on the externals of faith rather than internal faithfulness. *"Ritual purity became a means of excluding people considered dirty."** We must never be tempted to believe that by keeping the law we are more worthy of God's grace than others. *<http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?>

Wed., Aug. 29, Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18 Have you always had a clear idea of what you wanted to do in life? Or, like me, did you try to keep your options open for as long as you could during your training? Considering various careers in the sciences, I wanted to be able to pursue either a career in the medical field or one in research and teaching. I took classes that would fulfill both requirements so I could put off decision making. And after all that scheming, what happens? I end up being a pastor! Joshua tells the Israelites, *"choose this day whom you will serve."* He asks them to throw away the tendencies to keep feet planted in two camps and to make a clear decision. He himself says, *"but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."* (v.15) Follow Joshua's example and choose this day to serve the Lord.

Thurs, Aug. 30, Psalm 34:15-22 When we lose a close friend, parent, or spouse to death, of course we miss them, but we feel that loss more keenly when going through struggles. We are used to having their help, support, and love to strengthen us when someone has us questioning our value. In this passage, we are reminded that our Lord supports us through all our struggles –even death doesn't keep God from being near to strengthen us. The psalmist writes, *"The Lord is near to the broken-hearted, and saves the crushed in spirit."* (v. 18) Whenever you are going through heartbreak or life has crushed your spirit, remember that the Lord is near to help restore your soul.

Fri., Aug. 31, Ephesians 6:10-20 I love the image of putting on the armor of God and going into battle against the *"spiritual forces of evil."* The articles of our armor don't include a quick tongue or a loud, argumentative demeanor. Instead, we are covered with truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace (not war!), faith, salvation, and the word of God which are judiciously employed as we pray in the Spirit. How can we have confidence? My favorite verse in this section highlights the reason. Paul writes, *"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power."* Our confidence doesn't come from our own strength, but from the Lord's.

Sat, Sept.1, John 6:56-69 This passage talks about the impact that the words of Jesus have for *"spirit and life"* even though they are hard words. There have been times that someone has thrown words at me that break my spirit –words that make me feel as though the air is being sucked out of my lungs, leaving just the ache of hurt, confusion, and self-doubt. The words of Jesus are hard not because they leave us feeling worthless, but because they demand that we recognize our own worth and calling. We are alive in Christ. Death and meaninglessness are conquered and Christ's body and blood strengthen us for a life of service.

*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>