

## 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 Feb. 25, 2018 At-A-Glance

### Sunday, Feb. 25

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

### Monday

9 a.m.  
Noon  
6:30 p.m.  
8:15 p.m.

### Tuesday

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

### Wednesday

9:30 a.m.  
10:15 a.m.  
Noon  
4:45 p.m.

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

7 p.m.

7 p.m.

7 p.m.

7 p.m.

7 p.m.

### Thursday

6 a.m.  
9 a.m.  
6:30 p.m.

### Friday

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

### Sunday, Mar. 4

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

### MacDowell Male Chorus, NS

Cherub/Angelus Choir Rehearsal, DS 220/Choir Room  
Adult Learning Time, 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 Lounge  
Pick Up Basketball, NS Activity Center

Men's Ministry, NS Library  
Congregation Council, DS 221

Lenten Morning Service, DS Sanctuary  
Lenten Study with Pastor Mary, DS 221  
Noon Hour Philosophers, DS Fellowship Hall  
Lenten Meal, DS Fellowship Hall  
Handbell Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room  
Lenten Evening Services, DS Sanctuary  
Lenten Study & Panel: *Shaped by the Cross*, DS Lounge  
Parish Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room  
Confirmation General Session, DS Assigned Small Group Rooms  
Kid's Life, DS 014  
reFUEL Grades 10-12, DS Youth Room

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

Men's Ministry, NS Library  
*Make an IMPACT!* Fundraiser, The OuterEdge Stage

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

## Lenten Series

This Lent, allow yourself to be *Shaped by the Cross*! Drawing on analogies from Michelangelo's statue, *The Pieta*, we will focus on how God uses struggles to conform us to the image of Christ. On Wednesday, Feb. 28, invite friends to hear Jim Lain speak about challenges in dealing with Cerebral Palsy at the Downtown Site (9:30 a.m. or 6:15 p.m.). Join a morning study on the book *Shaped by the Cross* by Ken Gire (10:15 a.m.). Attend the evening panel discussion where you can ask questions about Jim's journey (7 p.m.). And for fellowship, join us for the Lenten supper from 4:45-6 p.m.



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.  
Office Hours: W: 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Announcements  
Week of Feb. 25, 2018

*Love Jesus. Live your call.*

## Sunday at FELC

### Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Meditations on Psalms

Join others for an ongoing discussion of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book *Meditations on the Psalms* on Sunday mornings from 9:15-10:15 a.m. in the Downtown Site Lounge.

### Help for the Homeless

FELC is collecting NEW hygiene and cleaning items for local crisis agencies through The Family radio's annual *Help for the Homeless* hygiene drive, today through Mar. 11. Please place your donations in the *Help for the Homeless* collection box located in the Gathering Area by Mar. 11. Most urgently needed items are cleaning supplies, laundry soap, garbage bags, dental and hair care, baby diapers, paper products, and feminine care. Thank you!

## Looking Ahead

### Engage Page Writers Needed

The First English Engage Page has become important to many in our congregation. As Pastor Mary prepares for a sabbatical this summer, she is hoping that many in our congregation would be willing to write one or two 110 word devotions for the time that she is gone. If you would be willing to help out by writing a short devotion, please contact Pastor Mary at 733-2303 or [mbauer@felc.com](mailto:mbauer@felc.com).

### Fair Trade Coffee Project Sunday

When having a cup of coffee, give some thought to the plight of the small farmers who produce it. For if you buy an ordinary brand of coffee, you are inadvertently maintaining a system which keeps small farmers poor, while lining the pockets of powerful middlemen. Equal Exchange, provides an alternative. It cuts out the middlemen and provides fresh coffee for you. By always paying a fair price to the farmer co-ops, EE helps build and protect sustainable farming communities in Latin America and Africa. Coffee Project Sunday is next Sunday, Mar. 4. See you there!

### Attention New Mothers!

Did you know that First English has a Cradle Care Ministry? Sharon Morgan, a long time member of First English and retired after 35 years in obstetrics, offers visits, advice or prayer to families of newborn babies in the congregation. If you'd like a call or a visit or know someone that would benefit meeting Sharon please contact Hannah Sprenger at [hsprenger@felc.com](mailto:hsprenger@felc.com).

### Summer Chamber Music

Are you or your child interested in being in a summer chamber music group? Download a registration form at [www.felc.com/forms](http://www.felc.com/forms). Sponsored by The Arthur Krempin School of Music & Art.

## North Site Women's Study Group to Start New Book!

Beginning Mar. 4, the North Site Women's Study Group will begin to discuss Brene Brown's book, *The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are*. The group meets at 9:30 a.m. and works its way through the 10 guideposts that Brown uses to help us "engage our minds, hearts and spirits" and help us "explore how we can cultivate the courage, compassion, and connection to wake up in the morning and think, *No matter what gets done and how much is left undone, I am enough...I am worthy of love and belonging.*" Books are available for \$9. Mar. 4 will be an overview of the book and a video introduction of the author. We hope to see you there! For more information, contact Deni Kuchler at [deni.kuchler@gmail.com](mailto:deni.kuchler@gmail.com).

### We Need Faith Interviewers!

Each 9<sup>th</sup> grade Confirmation student is required to participate in a faith interview as part of their final preparation for Affirmation of Baptism. This is an important opportunity for students to give voice to their ideas about faith. Every interview is given by two or three members of the congregation that have given their time to have kind, open ears to hear our students' thoughts. We need interviewers for the evenings of Tuesday, Apr. 3 and/or Wednesday, Apr. 4 at the Downtown Site. Select your preferred times via the First English webpage at [www.felc.com/forms](http://www.felc.com/forms).

### Monthly Women's Book Club

Are you a reader? Join other women on Thursday, Mar. 22 at 1 p.m. in the Downtown Site Lounge as we discuss *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd. Come and enjoy time talking with other women whether or not you've had a chance to finish the book.

## Direct Thrivent Choice Dollars® by Mar. 31

Eligible Thrivent Financial members who have available Choice Dollars® have until Mar. 31 to direct them. If you are an eligible member, don't miss this opportunity to recommend that Thrivent Financial provide outreach funding to First English Lutheran Church. Go to [Thrivent.com/thriventchoice](http://Thrivent.com/thriventchoice) to learn more. Or call (800)847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt.

### CASA of the Fox Cities

Children enter Child Protective Services through no fault of their own. Every abused or neglected child deserves a voice in the court system and you can help through CASA of the Fox Cities. We pair volunteer advocates with children to ensure they are not lost in the system and support them by providing a strong, consistent presence in their lives. We are accepting applications for our nine-week spring training session held on Thursdays beginning Mar. 22 from 6-9:30 p.m. Becoming a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) is a unique opportunity to truly make a difference in the life of a child. Consider attending one of our upcoming informational sessions:

- Wednesday, Mar. 7, Noon-1 p.m.
- Monday, Mar. 12, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

All sessions will be held at Abby Bank Building, 1500 N Casaloma Drive, Appleton. To RSVP or have your questions answered contact Jill at (920) 257-4733 or [jill@casafc.org](mailto:jill@casafc.org).

### 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 the months of March and April. 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.

## Noon Hour Philosophers

The Noon Hour Philosophers meet for an hour at noon in the Downtown Site Fellowship Hall each Wednesday. If you have questions please contact Mary Poulson at [mmaryjep@att.net](mailto:mmaryjep@att.net) or (920)734-8137.

### Feb. 28: The Latest and Greatest in Integrative Medicine

Elizabeth Kimbrough, MD

### Don't Miss Out on Wednesday Lenten Meals at FELC

Each Wednesday during the Lenten season, a meal is sponsored by one of the church ministry or fellowship teams. The meals are served from 4:45-6 p.m., followed by worship in the Sanctuary at 6:15 p.m. All are welcome. A free will offering will be collected.

### Feb. 28: Homemade Lasagna, sponsored by the Sarah Circle at the Downtown Site.

### Fox River Chamber Fest

The Fox River Chamber Fest, hosted by The Arthur Krempin School of Music & Art returns to First English this summer. The Fest's musicians are accomplished professional, presenting four different free concerts in eight days: Friday, July 13, Sunday, July 15, Thursday, July 19 and Saturday, July 21. All performances will be at the FELC Downtown Site at 7 p.m., except Sunday's which will be at 3 p.m. Make plans now to attend!

### Prayers For Community Care

Each week we lift up an organization that works to provide vital services in our community. Consider praying and possibly volunteering for the groups we mention. If you would like more information on any of these groups, please visit [www.felc.com/outreach](http://www.felc.com/outreach). This week's focus:

### Appleton Public Library

Contact: Colleen Holz, Volunteer Coordinator  
(920)832-6346; [cholz@apl.org](mailto:cholz@apl.org)

## 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
- David Heindel
- Doug Hansen
- George Krempin
- Amy Ponomarev
- Moore Peregrine
- Tom Roy
- Je'Ann Johnson
- Paul Henrikson
- Karen Reeck
- Juanita Gauerke
- Robb Schaefer
- Karen Schultz
- Walter Seacotte
- Barb Kuenzi
- Dean Peterson
- Kim Norland

### Prayers of Comfort

- Families of:
- Roy Bartz
  - Bob Hinkens
  - Roger Karn
  - Ruth Rucks
  - Bill Vanden Elzen

### Prayers for Those Called to Serve in Other Countries

- Stephanie Olson

### Prayers for Those in Seminary

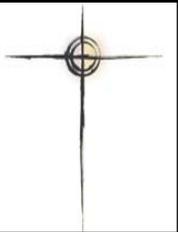
- David Shudy

### Prayers for Those in the Military

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

### AA Corner

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



# High School Youth News

Grades 9-12

Feb. 25, 2018

## reFUEL

DS YOUTH ROOM  
WEDNESDAYS 7-8 P.M.  
For Grades 10-12



During the season of Lent, we will be expanding on topics that each speaker gives messages on during the Wednesday night worship services

- 2/28: Lent Topic: We Are Becoming the image of Christ  
Speaker: Jim Lain  
Taco night! Nacho average youth group!
- 3/7: Lent Topic: Our Wounds Open Us to Christ's Mercy  
Speaker: Megan DesRochers

*"Lent is a call to renew commitment grown dull, perhaps, by a life more marked by routine than by reflection."*

*—J. Chittister*

## ELCA Youth Gathering Updates

### March Calendar

- Mar. 11:** Scrip Sale
- Mar. 18:** Scrip Pick Up
- Mar. 25:** Palm Sunday Brunch Helpers  
Sign up Geniuses are out!



**Questions? Contact Heidi**  
([hschreiner@felc.com](mailto:hschreiner@felc.com))

## Support Summer Intern Ministry by participating in the Pre-Event Raffle

Today is your last day to purchase your raffle tickets for your chance to win the Apple Watch Series 3 valued at \$349. Winner will be drawn tomorrow at noon at the Downtown Site.

Feb. 25, 2018



Information for FELC Youth and Families  
Grades K-12

## LOOKING FOR A WAY TO SERVE TOGETHER?



- ◆ Help with the Communion Class Educational Seder Meal on Mar. 12. Make a simple dish in advance, set tables and do basic clean-up.

- ◆ Help with the 9<sup>th</sup> grade Confirmation Rehearsal Meal on Apr. 11. Help with set-up, serving, & clean-up.



Both are great service opportunities for Confirmation Family Assignments. Even if your child isn't in Confirmation service is always a great thing to do together! Sign-ups are available at [www.felc.com/forms](http://www.felc.com/forms).

### Find us on Social Media Outlets

Instagram: felc.youth Facebook: FELC YOUTH

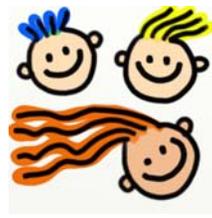
### Connect with FELC Youth Staff

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



### Turn Around in Lent

During Lent we will be offering a different one day family activity each week to help focus on this special time of year. The activity will be on the back half of the Pastor Chat sheet.

This week we are focusing on stripping away distraction. Try to go without tech for a day (no phones, tablets, computers, television, etc.). How does it feel? Does going without these things give you time to focus on other things (reading, walking the dog, having discussions, playing a musical instrument...?). If you find it created space to do these other things (use your gifts) did you enjoy it?



Especially during Lent doing no-tech days can provide an opportunity to think about Jesus and how the crucifixion and resurrection have impacted our lives. Add a prayer of gratitude for the gift of Jesus during Lent. Consider doing a no-tech day once a week until Easter.

### Communion Class Is Filling Up

If you have a student grade 2 or higher that is ready to learn about and receive this sacrament, please register in advance at [www.felc.com/forms](http://www.felc.com/forms). This class is on Monday, Mar. 12 from 6-8 p.m. for students & parents at the Downtown Site.



Remember Kid's Life on Wednesday Nights,  
7-8 p.m. Downtown Site Room 014.

### Choir Corner

Come sing with us!  
Cherub Choir for K-grade 2 meets in Downtown Site Room 220.  
Angelus Choir for grades 3-6 meets in the Downtown Site Choir Room.



Both practice at 8:50 a.m. on Sundays.



## Confirmation and Middle School Scoop



### Confirmation Grades 7 & 8 Large Group



**Grade 7:** Families should have read chapter 9

**Grade 8:** Families should have read chapter 9

**Grade 9:** Small group discussion about QPR  
Suicide Prevention Training



### Compassion Pantry Drive on Mar. 7 & 14

Now's the time to start stocking up on basic hygiene items and quick or no prep food products for our Compassion Pantry Drive on Mar. 7 & 14.

This has been an extremely popular service event in the past where we donate items for local students that have a gap in their basic needs. This year our donations will be going to students at Appleton East High School.

Here are some items that are needed:

Toothbrushes, tooth paste, deodorant, soap, feminine hygiene products, and granola bars are in greatest demand for this school, as well as, fruit cups, microwave noodle or soup cups, single serving cold or hot cereal, fruit leather, individual packages of crackers, etc.

Please, no items that need an oven or stove to prepare.

### Confirmation Camp Registration Deadline is Mar. 5!



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

**Last Chance to Buy Your Tickets is Today!**

# Make an **IMPACT!**

Benefiting the Summer Intern Ministry of First English Lutheran Church

**An evening of Celebration, Fellowship and Fundraising**  
**Friday, Mar. 2, 6:30-9:30 p.m.**  
**Outer Edge Stage in Appleton | \$25/Ticket**

### **Celebrity Appearances:**

Bartending, Music, and Special Speakers:  
**Hailey Birling, Ben Cieslik, Abbey DesRochers,**  
**Megan DesRochers, Tyler DesRochers, Sally Eronson,**  
**Jordan Gross, Laurie Gross, Morgan Haefner,**  
**Joe Hujet, Julia Hujet, Dave Lyle, and McKenna Rakestraw**

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### **Can't make the event?**

**Everyone can participate in the**  
**Pre-event raffle!**

Drawing held at noon on Feb. 26!  
Ticket Prices: 1 for \$5, 5 for \$20 or 15 for \$40!

Purchase tickets now through Feb. 25:

**Apple Series Watch 3**  
**Valued at: \$359**

\*Water Resistant up to 50M \*Built-in GPS \*Capacity 8GB  
\*Easy to Use \*Great Display \*Speaker and Microphone  
\*Heart Rate Sensor \*Faster Dual-core Processor  
\*Accelerometer, Altimeter, and Gyroscope

# Make an **IMPACT!**

Benefiting the Summer Intern Ministry of First English Lutheran Church

## **How YOU Can Help Make an IMPACT!**

Although the deadline to donate items for the fundraiser has passed, your monetary donations are very appreciated and will help ensure the Summer Intern Ministry will be funded for the summer of 2018!

### **Be a Sponsor:**

**Gold \$1,000 Cash Sponsor:** Listed as major sponsor on event advertising, Recognized in event digital presentation, Website exposure, 4 admission tickets

**Silver \$500 Sponsor:** Listed as sponsor on all event advertising, Recognized in event digital presentation, Website exposure, 2 admission tickets

### **I would like to be a Cash Sponsor**

\_\_\_ Gold \$1,000 Cash Sponsor  
\_\_\_ Silver \$500 Cash Sponsor  
\_\_\_ Cash Sponsor in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_

### **Contact Info:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, State, Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please deliver this form and donation to the Downtown Site Office. Please make checks payable to FELC, and write IMPACT in the memo line. **We are grateful for your support!**

## FELC DS Engage Page: Lent 2, February 25, 2018

**Mark 8:31-38** *Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "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, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."*

Sun, Feb 25: Family Project: Names are important! Simon's name is changed to Peter and Abram and Sarai become Abraham and Sarah when they are caught up in the work of God. What names define you? Listen to "Hello, My Name Is" by Matthew West. Then make nametags for yourself, both what you would like to be called and what you fear being called. Finally make a nametag for each person, using names they are given by God. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZuJWQzjfU3>

Mon, Feb 26: In truth, I would probably be right there with Peter, reprimanding Jesus, and asking him to quit talking about death. I would be tempted to place my trust in the positive reputation and respect that Jesus was being given by those he had healed or taught or freed. Instead, Jesus demands that we walk right past prestige and right towards our cross. When we lay down our lives to follow God's plan; when we lay down worldly acclaim in pursuit of humble service; when we pick up our cross and walk after Jesus, it's then that we realize the joy of finding our life hidden in Christ

Tues, Feb 27: Prof. Michael Rogness discusses what it means to take up your cross. *"The 'theology of the cross' or 'to deny oneself' does not mean a contrived kind of humility. We do not follow Jesus by demeaning ourselves. We are called upon to do the very best we can with the talents and abilities God has given us. To 'deny oneself' means to keep one's priorities in harmony with what Jesus told us in the two 'great commandments' -- love God and love your neighbor."*  
[http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2316](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2316)

Wed., Feb 28, Exodus 20:1-17 The 10 Commandments are so important to a faithful life that Martin Luther made them a part of his Small Catechism—a book most Lutherans study in order to be confirmed. There are two things that stand out in his descriptions of the commandments. First, each teaching section begins with, "We are to fear and love God so that..." Our reason for obedience comes as we recognize the great power God has and realize the great love shown when He settled love and grace on humanity. Next that love motivates us not only to obey the commandments, but to go the next step in showing love to humankind. We not only hear God's word, but we hear it gladly; not killing becomes helping a neighbor with any physical needs; not stealing becomes helping a neighbor improve and protect their property; not bearing false witness becomes explaining our neighbor's actions in the kindest way. May our love for God propel us to go the extra mile.

Thurs, Mar. 1, Psalm 19 Have you ever been in a situation where you wish someone would just take control? Many years ago, I was out west at a "Dude Ranch". The wranglers were all very adept at getting novice horse riders onto and off of horses, matching skill levels to animals. However, one evening there was a square dance—and no one seemed to be in charge. We fumbled around, various people with various ideas tried to get us all on track but we never got much past organized chaos. Psalm 19 describes the amazing dance that God has orchestrated in the cosmos. The psalmist calls humanity to follow God's choreography so life on earth can be just as beautiful. May we treasure God's instruction and find our spot in the dance of loving care.

Fri, Mar. 2, I Cor. 1:18-25 Perhaps like me, you left Ash Wednesday services to discover the horror of another school shooting. Many of us couldn't help but be struck by the image of the woman with the ash cross on her forehead who was at the scene. What does the cross mean in the face of senseless tragedy? We are tempted to question God and wonder, what is the message of the cross in a situation like this? Paul knows it can look foolish from the outside, but insists that to us who are being saved, the cross is the power of God. In truth, what could reassure us that God is present in all our own tragedies except knowing Christ's willingness to suffer death so we could be united in his resurrection? Praise God for the foolishness of the cross.

Sat, Mar. 3, John 2:13-22 A recent NPR show featured the author of nonfiction book on the Russian mafia. He described how important money laundering is to mafia enterprises. Bankers profit from handling illegal money while staying removed from the horrors of the crimes of drug dealing and sexual exploitation. In throwing the moneylenders out of the temple, Jesus is making a powerful statement against any profit made by taking advantage of those who are vulnerable. As a society we must ask how we accept comfort and security in ways that victimize others—whether through unfair wages or unhealthy land use or tolerance of violence against vulnerable peoples.

\*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: Lent 1, February 25, 2018

**Mark 1:9-15** *In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; I with you I am well pleased." And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; I repent, and believe in the good news."*

Sun, Feb 25: Family Project: Today our Old Testament lesson told the story of Noah and his family getting off the ark and God's promise to them that there would never again be a flood to destroy all the earth. Do some rainbow art, and with your completed project, name some of the promises of God that we can remember whenever we look at a rainbow. (*online examples: <https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/gods-promises-verses-in-the-bible/>*) Write those promises next to your rainbow and discuss which the ones you find particularly comforting or meaningful.

Mon, Feb 26: Jesus is at the center of God's plan for the world. When God's heavenly voice proclaims Jesus is His Son, it's as if He is saying, "Watch out! Notice what is going on here." Then Jesus is sent out into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. This experience of hardship right on the heels of exaltation can be mirrored in our own lives. When we experience God in a significant way, we can begin to think that nothing will bother us any more. Lent reminds us to turn our hearts to God every day instead of trusting past experiences. What is God asking you to notice today?

Tues, Feb 27: Prof. Matt Skinner describes the gospel of Mark. "*We see that this gospel aims to paint Jesus' ministry as confrontational. He has come to combat and perhaps defeat forces determined to counteract God's intentions for human well-being. The first...incident of his public ministry in Mark will be an exorcism...The antagonists in Mark are not human ignorance and religio-political authority; they are spiritual forces, things that oppress human bodies and minds and defy human attempts to subdue them.*"\* Lent asks us to abandon the division between spiritual and worldly concerns and to confront all evil. [http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2342](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2342)

Wed., Feb 28, Numbers 21:4-9 I question that God actually let people die over complaints about the dinner menu. As a parent, incessant whining can make me crazy –but if I become violent, I am held to account by society. It's like that old saying, "Stop crying or I'll give you something to cry about," has been carried out to an unhealthy degree. Where are the social services to deal with this sort of dysfunctional parenting? Instead we recognize that losing people to snake bites was a tragedy that would force the Israelites to acknowledge their . In being brought face to face with a life and death situation, they are reminded that their OWNERS in Egypt had life and death control over them. The healing God sends wakes them up to the true source of life and hope and gives us a prophetic vision of the life and healing that will come through the cross of Jesus.

Thurs, Mar. 1, Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 When I read of those who are "sick because of their sinful ways," I think of those who suffer the effects of mistreating their bodies. It might be addictions or it might be laziness about following medical advice, eating too much/little or not exercising, refusing to get help to deal with mental health issues or being obsessive about computer use. Even though these aren't on the list of the seven deadly sins, if we mistreat our own physical bodies or emotional well-being, we are sinning as much as if we mistreat others. Confess your sins, repent and turn around giving thanks that God continues to call you into health.

Fri, Mar. 2, Ephesians 2:1-10 It is only great love that can overcome a wrong. If we are acquaintances with someone, a small slight can convince us that a possible relationship is not worth the risk. But if we have been wronged by our child, we keep hoping, we keep relenting, we keep on forgiving. This is the sort of love that God has for us –a love that began while we were sinners. That is why Paul's emphasis is not on works that we do, but on God's great work of forgiveness and grace that keeps calling us into relationship. Long before we seek to follow His invitation to good works, he saves us from the dominion of sin, -the death of sin. He allows us to catch a glimpse of the richness of a life of good works that spring out of thanks for the chance to walk in the light of grace and not slavery to sin.

Sat, Mar. 3, John 3:14-21 The verses before this passage tell the story of Nicodemus, a prominent Pharisee. His questions show he struggled with the teachings of Jesus that were drawing him away from relying on strict adherence to the teachings of the Pharisees. When Jesus tells Nicodemus, "For God so loved the WORLD..." it may have startled a man finding his identity in being one of the few chosen people. Hopefully these words will always push us away from feeling that we have any unique claim on God's love because of our religious identity. May we always rejoice in knowing that the life of Jesus centered on salvation and not condemnation.

\*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](https://www.facebook.com/FELC-North-Site-Engage-Page)