

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 (off of the Gathering Area) and the North Site Nursery (across from the restrooms) are open for family use during all worship services. Please ask an usher if you need assistance. At the North Site, the child-friendly space just inside the Sanctuary doors is supervised by staff and available to children during worship services.

Hearing Assistance

If you are in need of a personal receiver, ask a Downtown Site usher, or a North Site sound-board 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. 4, 2019 At-A-Glance

Sunday, Aug. 4

8:30 & 10 a.m.
9 a.m.
11:15 a.m.

Monday

12:30 p.m.
3:30 p.m.
5 p.m.
7 p.m.

Tuesday

6:30 a.m.
10 a.m.
10 a.m.
11:30 a.m.
Noon
1 p.m.
1 p.m.
5 p.m.
6 p.m.
6:30 p.m.

Wednesday

10:30 a.m.
11:30 a.m.
Noon
1 p.m.
1 p.m.
3:30 p.m.
4 p.m.
6:15 p.m.
7:15 p.m.

Thursday

6:30 a.m.
11:30 a.m.
Noon

Friday

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

Sunday, July 28

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

Summer Chamber Music Groups at Both DS Services

Worship, DS Sanctuary
Worship, NS Sanctuary
Summer Chamber Music Recital (Reception to Follow)
DS Sanctuary & Gathering Area

Buffalo Wild Wings Grades 9-12, BWW on Calumet St.
Wednesday Worship Rehearsal, NS Sanctuary
Young Adult Fellowship (Ages 19-25), NS Gathering Area
Pick Up Basketball League, NS Activity Center

Men's Ministry, NS Library
Arts Camp Meeting, DS Lounge
Confidence Code for Girls, College Ave. Copper Rock
Kid's Life (Grades K-6) Lunch (Bring Your Own), DS & NS
Kid's Life (Grades K-6) Program, DS & NS
FVLH Visit (All Ages), 425 N. Linwood Ave, Appleton
Judith Circle, DS 114
Outreach & Social Ministry Team, DS 114
Middle School Youth Group: Paint Night, DS 014
Arts Camp Meeting, DS Fellowship Hall

Bible Study with Pastor Mary, DS 110-111
Kid's Life (Grades K-6) Lunch (Bring Your Own), DS & NS
Kid's Life (Grades K-6) Program, DS & NS
50+ Planning, DS 114
Intern Enrichment Ministry Team, DS Lounge
Neighbor Network Planning Meeting, DS Library
Wednesday Worship Rehearsal, NS Sanctuary
Wednesday Worship, NS Sanctuary
refuel (grades 7-12), NS

Office Closed, Staff at Global Leadership Summit

Early Risers, College Ave. Copper Rock
Kid's Life (Grades K-6) Lunch (Bring Your Own), DS & NS
Kid's Life (Grades K-6) Program, DS & NS

Office Closed, Staff at Global Leadership Summit

Men's Ministry, NS Library
Revive the Hive Benefit Concert, College Ave. Copper Rock

Worship, DS Sanctuary
Worship, NS Sanctuary

DS=Downtown Site
NS=North Site

God's work. Our hands.

Save the date: Sept. 8 is *God's work. Our hands.* Sunday. Sign up begins soon! If you are able to help oversee one of the project areas please contact Pastor Mary at mbauer@felc.com or call the Church Office at (920)733-2303. See today's insert or visit www.felc.com/forms if you would like to order a GWOH t-shirt (Aug. 11 deadline).



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.
Wednesday Worship: 6:15 p.m.

Announcements
Week of Aug. 4, 2019

Love Jesus. Live your call.
First English is committed to being a welcoming, inclusive congregation.

Sunday at Altar Flowers

The Downtown site flowers are provided by Doug and Sherrill Moard.

Day on the Mission Field

Aug. 9 is sponsored by Bob and Anita Damon in honor of Sara Huhman.

A Musical Treat

The Downtown Site is blessed today with special music from the Summer Chamber Music students. Thank you to these musicians and their instructor, Laura Kenney-Henckel, for this beautiful addition to worship. The students will also provide a recital in the Sanctuary at 11:15 a.m. after the 10 a.m. worship, followed by a reception in the Gathering Area. All are welcome to this free event.



Summer Chamber Music is a program of The Arthur Krempin School of Music & Art.

Coffee Project Sunday

When you drink a cup of fairly traded coffee from Equal Exchange, you support small scale farmers on the other side of the world so they can have a better life. First English is selling fairly traded coffee, tea and chocolate bars this morning in the Gathering Area. Please continue to support this important outreach project.

You're Invited

The 2019 Fox Valley Islamic Society Interfaith Gathering is Sunday, Aug. 4, from 2:30-5 p.m. with a dinner to follow at the Fox Valley Islamic Center, 103 Kappell Drive, Neenah. This year's topic is *Moving From Fear Toward Mutual Trust*. Learn, interact, feast...for free! Speakers include Dr. Jon Pahl, Younis Zaidan, and Rev. Thomas Willadsen.

Forgot to RSVP? Attend anyway. There's always enough food! In case of bad weather, the Gathering will be held at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 140 S. Green Bay Road, Neenah.

Looking Ahead

Ready To Make A Big Impact?

Do you remember one or maybe a few of your Sunday School teachers? Many people do and that's because Sunday School teachers make a significant impact on our faith journeys. Right now we have a few teaching vacancies to fill in our Sunday School program. We are looking for a teacher for the grades 3-4 class at the Downtown Site and a team teacher for the grades 3-4 and/or grades 5-6 class at the North Site. Contact Kirsten Owens, Faith Formation Coordinator, at kowens@felc.com or (920) 733-2303 for more information. God may be calling you to show the love of Jesus in young lives!

FELC Staff Retreat

The FELC Staff will attend the Global Leadership Summit being held on Aug. 8 and 9 at Pathways Church in Appleton. This leadership and education summit is simulcast across the country and led by a world-class faculty. We are thankful to be able to attend again this year. Due to this event, the church office will be closed this Thursday and Friday.

On the Hunt for a Kid's Life Leader

From fall to spring on Wednesday nights at the Downtown Site the joint is jumpin'! Worship, Confirmation, various meetings, and...KID'S LIFE! Students from grades 1-6 meet from 7-8 p.m. for games, service and art projects, prayer, and fun. We are currently looking for a leader, or team of leaders, for this group to spend some casual time connecting and creating with Christ at the center. Please contact Kirsten Owens, Faith Formation Coordinator, at kowens@felc.com for more info!

Lots Cookin' In Sunday School This Fall - Don't Miss the Memo

This September there will be some significant changes to the Sunday School program at each site. Check the insert for more info. If you have a child(ren) that will be participating in Sunday School NOW is the time to register for September. Go to www.felc.com/forms so you don't miss out on important information as the Holy Spirit moves us forward!

New & Review New Member Series

Are you or someone you know interested in joining First English? New member classes begin on Sept. 15. Watch for more information in upcoming announcements and in the August newsletter, or visit www.felc.com/newmember.

Garden Splendor

Have you moved into a condo or apartment and miss your gardens? Bring your gardening skills to FELC any time of the day. The church needs your weeding and maintenance skills to keep the garden beds in tip top shape. Gloves, tools and weeds will be supplied! Thanks so much for helping to keep the grounds so lovely. If you have any questions, please call the Church Office, 733-2303.



Revive the Hive
A BEE-NEFIT CONCERT

Revive the Hive is to raise awareness for the declining bee population and its impact on the environment. The concert will benefit a local organization and include live music, raffles, & fun!

Aug 9, 2019
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
At College Ave.
Copper Rock

Benefiting the **Appleton Pollinator Project**
Sponsored by **First English Lutheran Church**

BEE there or BEE square...

Matching Grant

As the result of a generous donor, Crossways Camping Ministries Campaign is pleased to announce that the next \$50,000 in new pledges and gifts are eligible for a matching grant. What an opportunity for your gift to have an even greater impact on the future of our camps. Gifts can be sent to Crossways Camping Ministries, 912 N. Oneida St., Appleton, WI, 54911 (Attention: Campaign) with a note that you are a member of First English. For further information or assistance in making a pledge or a gift, call Bob Herder at 738-6640.

2019 Lunchtime Organ Recital Series

The Lunchtime Organ Recital Series celebrates pipe organs and literature with live free performances by a variety of organists at a variety of churches. As envisioned by founder Frank Rippl, the recitals last one half hour on Wednesdays at 12:15 p.m. (unless otherwise noted) through the summer at local churches in the larger Fox Valley area of Northeast Wisconsin.

Aug. 7: Derek Nickels

First Presbyterian Church
200 Church Street, Neenah

Ethan Mellema Recital

All are invited to attend Ethan Mellema's organ recital as part of the Lunchtime Organ Recital Series. Ethan's recital will be on Wednesday, Aug. 21 at 12:15 p.m. He will play the Austin organ at First United Methodist Church located at 325 E. Franklin Street (down the street from the Downtown Site).

Ethan is currently the choir collaborative keyboardist at First English and an organ student at Lawrence University. He will be playing a recital of J. S. Bach, Johannes Brahms, Stephen Paulus and Jean Langlais. The recital is free of charge, however there will be a free will offering taken during the recital to benefit the series. Please see www.lunchtimeorganrecital.org for Ethan's biography and other recitals in the series.

AA Corner

Hello - Dale Rude here, recovered alcoholic since May 29, 1988, sober today by the grace of God and the amazing program of Alcoholics Anonymous. If you or someone you know is interested in not drinking alcohol or taking any other mood or mind altering drugs, please call me at (920)419-2794 for a 100% anonymous phone conversation or a face to face meeting. *One day at a time.*

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
- Angel Manos
- Jacob Schwab
- Justin Schwab
- Debra Boushley
- David Heindel
- Doug Hansen
- Amy Ponomarev
- Moore Peregrine
- Juanita Gauerke
- Robb Schaefer
- Carol Peterson
- Bev Hoff
- Alex VanMaren
- Debra Nuthals
- Mitzi Hansen
- Syllas Garcia
- Anna Stencil

Prayers of Comfort

Families of:

- Keith Batley
- William Frea
- Rebecca Nara

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Baptism of:

- Vivian Christine Lindenstruth

Prayers for Those Called to Serve in Other Countries

- Sarah Bauer-Myanmar
- Stephanie Olson-Cambodia
- Spencer Wentland-Japan

Prayers for Those in the Military

- Christian Cramer
- Cpl. Alex Grebe
- BM3 Kyle Kramer, USCG
- LCPL Robert Kopesky II
- SPC Samuel Sinclair

This Week's Community Care Focus

• St. Elizabeth Hospital

sehvolsvs@ascension.org
(920)738-2425



Youth News

Aug. 4, 2019

Middle School Youth Group

Students in grades 6-8 meet on Tuesdays for a variety of activities and service projects. Times and locations will vary each week so watch the bulletin for information. Feel free to bring friends!

This week, Aug. 6:

Paint Night with Bob Ross

The interns will be holding a Bob Ross paint session where we will follow a Bob Ross tutorial and paint something special! This event will be held at the Downtown Site in room 014, from 6-8 p.m. Be ready to paint some happy little trees!

refuel on Wednesday

Through Aug. 14 immediately following the weekly 6:15 p.m. Wednesday Worship at the North Site, students grades 6-12 are invited to join the interns at **refuel**. Enjoy learning and fellowship with campfire discussions, outdoor volleyball and more! Parents can pick their kids up at 9 p.m.

Revive the Hive Benefit Concert

This years benefit concert is Revive the Hive and benefits the Appleton Pollinator Project which supports the Fox Valley's local bee populations. The concert will be held on Aug, 9 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Copper Rock on College Ave. Special music includes local bands, and special music from the interns. Hope to see you then!

Arts Camp

This year FELC and The Mission Church are joining forces to hold Arts Camp. This event is for kids age 3 to those who have completed grade 5. It will be held here at FELC as well at The Mission Church Monday, Aug. 12 to Friday, Aug. 16 from 9 a.m.-noon. Free sack lunches will be made available to all kids in attendance. Each day will be filled with art projects and new ways to express creativity! An Art Show to showcase some art from the week will be held on Friday, Aug. 16 at 6:30 p.m. at the Red Lion Paper Valley Hotel. Registration for this event is available online at www.themissionchurch.us/events/arts-camp.

Wednesday Worship Wednesdays, 6:15 p.m. North Site Through Aug. 14

Join the summer interns as they lead a worship service with music, message and Holy Communion. Hope to see you there!

What's Important Now - Weekly Intern News... It's a WIN WIN!

Aug. 4, 2019

From the Desk of Summer Intern Olivia Newhouse

Hello I am Olivia Newhouse and am one of the current summer interns here at First English. I have grown up in this church, always being known as one of the "Newhouse twins" and consider FELC to be a home away from home. I am so glad I am able to leave my mark within this church and intern program.

I applied for this job so I could grow in my faith and learn about what it would be like to work in a church and within a non profit organization. Throughout my work here I have realized a future goal for me would be to work within some sort of nonprofit field, especially within the communication sector. I am thankful this summer has given me entry to my future and what I can do with my life.

I have been able to make so many relationships this summer, with the FELC staff, the other interns, kids who attend Kids Life and Day Camp, and the residents of Eagle Point and Fox Valley Lutheran Homes. When this summer started I wasn't prepared to create the meaningful connections that have changed my experience here this summer.

In the coming weeks I am excited to be a part of the Benefit Concert, *Revive the Hive*. This concert will be on Aug. 9 (see back) and will benefit the Appleton Pollinator Project. I love being a part of this event and can't wait for the congregation to be a part of it!

Peace and Blessings

-Olivia Newhouse

FELC Confidence Code for Girls

The female interns host a book study on *The Confidence Code for Girls* for girls who have completed grade 3 and up. This Tuesday morning from 10-11 a.m. interns and girls alike will meet at Copper Rock on College Ave. to discuss the book, confidence, and faith.

Young Adult Fellowship

Young adults ages 19-25, join in a study without homework but WITH dinner! Meet in the North Site Gathering Area at 5 p.m. on Mondays through Aug. 12 and enjoy quality time with interns and other young adults.



First English Lutheran Sunday School Education Information

The summer's winding down and it's time to get fired up about all the new things we've been working on for Sunday School this fall!



Narrative Lectionary

We will be embarking on working with a new tool to share and learn Scripture in worship and Sunday School. The Narrative Lectionary provides Biblical readings in a story arc that makes connections between the Old and New Testaments easier to understand.



Downtown Site Sunday School Structure



We have had two great years with the congregation embracing the inclusion of Sunday School classes at the end of the 9:15 a.m. worship. Now that we have all generations talking, we will be changing the structure of Downtown Site Sunday School to begin in 9:15 a.m. worship versus end in the Sanctuary. This change will make the use of the Learning Time hour more streamlined with fewer transitions, more classroom time, and an expanded worship experience. Pick up at the end of Learning Time will be in individual classrooms.

Storytellers In Worship

In the past, our storytellers introduced the Bible lesson to children at the opening of Sunday School. These stories will now be shared as part of the worship service giving us the advantage of a shared experience of the Word and more classroom time.



Birth-to-Preschool Faith Formation Group

A group for families of children newborn to age 3 will begin in January but hopefully earlier if leadership comes forward sooner. This is an opportunity for families to spend Sunday mornings in the nursery during Learning Time sharing a quick prayer, stories, and coloring sheets for the day, and perhaps most importantly, develop community for faith to grow.



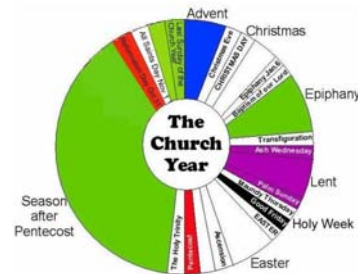
Sunday School Starts at Age 4



Since the structure and content of Sunday School class and curriculum has historically been difficult for the wide range of abilities of our age 3 students, we have moved children this age to the Birth-to-Preschool Group. This gives age 3 children the opportunity to make friends and spend most of their time in free play which is best for their stage of development. Sunday School will be available for age 4-grade 6.

Our Faith Education Calendars Will Be on Church Time

We are all familiar with our daily school schedules, national holidays, and seasonal changes. Yet the church has its own calendar based on observances that help us celebrate, reflect, worship, and foster continued growth in our relationship with Christ. For that reason, our Sunday School calendar will be influenced by the church year versus the secular year. We'll begin Sunday School classes on *God's work. Our hands.* Rally Sunday and always end on Pentecost. During the summer we will still have ways to grow faith connected to the Scripture. No matter the number of students there will be some opportunity to learn on Sundays even if in a more casual, condensed way. We know everyone cannot make it to church every week. Whatever it is you do we send our blessings, yet we continue to dig into the work God calls us to do every time we come together.



God's work. Our hands.

2019 T-Shirt Order Form

Maybe you have never ordered one, maybe the one you owned is in need of a replacement, maybe you have missed past t-shirt order deadlines. But now is the time to order a t-shirt for the 2019 *God's work. Our hands*. Sunday that is taking place on Sept. 8, 2019.

Payment is due at time of order.

Make checks payable to FELC. Thank you!

DEADLINE FOR T-SHIRT ORDER: SUNDAY, AUG. 11

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Pick up at: Downtown Site North Site

Size:

Youth (\$3) small medium large

Adult (\$3) small medium large
 x-large

Adult (\$5) 2XL Adult (\$6) 3XL

Adult (\$7) 4XL Adult (\$8) 5XL

Total quantity ordered: _____

Total due: _____ Check number: _____

**Drop off or mail this form with payment to the FELC
Church Office, 326 E. North St., Appleton WI 54911
or place order at www.felc.com/forms.**

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T-shirt distribution will take place in late August/early September in the Gathering Areas.

God's work. Our hands.

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FELC DS Engage Page: August 4, 8th Sunday after Pentecost

Luke 12:13-21 *Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." But he said to him, "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?" And he said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns & build larger ones, & there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."*

Sun. Aug 4: Family Project: Carolyn Brown suggests an activity to help children & adults realize that stuff can't bring lasting happiness. "Name several things that at different times in your life were "gotta haves" for you – a certain kind of bike or electronics or clothes. Identify reasons for wanting those things – everyone else had one, they looked really cool, you just knew they would make you special, etc. Tell about some things that turned out to be as great as you thought they would be AND some that were really disappointing." Even a discussion of what was on last year's Christmas list might be a great springboard into understanding that *"one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions."*

<http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.com/2016/06/year-c-proper-13-18th-sunday-in.html>

Mon. Aug 5: What I have noticed through the years is that the more stuff a person has, the more stuff a person has to take care of. Upkeep on two yards takes more time than one. An elaborate landscape takes more time than a few potted plants. And a huge home costs not only money to build, but also time to maintain and clean. And the time we spend taking care of our stuff cannot be spent twice. It cannot also be spent connecting with and caring for friends and family. When deciding what to buy, make sure that you consider not only monetary value, but also how God is calling you to use the time and relationships you have been given.

Tues. Aug 6: Out of all the requests that someone could have made of Jesus, this man thought Jesus' time would be best spent in trying to convince his brother to give him a share of the inheritance. He was in the presence of Jesus—someone who healed people, who freed people from demons, who fed thousands of people! But his lack in this one area had affected his ability to truly experience the wonder of the moment. If you find yourself obsessing over an issue you can't control, pray for the grace to let it go and experience the abundance of having enough.

Wed., Aug 7, Genesis 15:1-6 In this passage, God looks at Abraham's faith and counts it as righteousness. However Abraham was also making a choice—one about how much he believed in the trustworthiness of God. Professor Sara Koenig says, *"the heart of this interaction is faith and trust. If Abram understands God to be righteous, to be one whose word is firm and secure, to be one who will make good on God's promises, then Abram can believe. The same is true for us. Belief is hard enough when there is a delay between God's promises and their fulfillment. It would be nigh impossible if the God in whom we believe is not trustworthy, is not righteous."* If you struggle in waiting for God's response, be comforted as you remember the faithfulness of God.

http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1730

Thurs. Aug 8, Psalm 33:12-22 Professor James Mead points out that the repetition of words about God's watching helps us to recognize that God knows us completely. God *"looks down from heaven"*; God *"sees humankind"*; God *"watches all the inhabitants of the earth"*; God fashioned *"the hearts of them all"*; God *"observes all their deeds."* According to Professor James Mead, *"these explicit repetitions, ...seek to motivate believers to trust that God's knowledge of them is complete. That the God to whom we belong watches us so completely that we can therefore confidently "wait" for the Lord (verse 20).*

http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1745

Fri., Aug. 9, Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16 What does your ideal landscape look like? There are so many that I can enjoy—mountains, lakes, rivers, rolling plains, waterfalls, cliffs—the list goes on. But if we are looking for that specific place whose builder and architect is God, it has less to do with physical beauty and more to do with a state of heart. We long for a land where there is justice, peace, generosity, physical and mental well-being, forgiveness, and love. We are like those in this passage who have not received the promises, but from a distance we see and greet them. According to the book of Hebrews, this is what faith is. It is seeing the promises of God, the greatly desired future that we long for, and believing that God is moving us in that direction. We have hope for the future. All the things that seem "foreign" or wrong about this world will not exist in the city God is preparing, in our homeland

Sat. Aug. 10, Luke 12:32-40 Reading these sayings by Jesus, I have to wonder, "Who am I?" Am I part of God's little flock, loved and cared for? Am I the person who has sold out everything for the sake of the gospel? Am I the anxious servant, well prepared and waiting for my master's return? Am I a slave who has been invited to sit and eat while he serves me? And who is the thief and why does he make a sudden appearance in the text? Certainly I am part of God's little flock. That takes less imagination than seeing myself as someone who is totally prepared, whose heart is sold out to Christ, and who has abdicated all rights, seeing themselves as a slave for the sake of the gospel. This text calls us to devote ourselves to living into that sold-out identity, knowing that we can never control the amount of time we have to do God's work.

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

FELC NS Engage Page: August 4, 7th Sunday after Pentecost

Luke 11:1-13 *He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." He said to them, "When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us to the time of trial." And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, & you go to him at midnight & say to him, 'Friend, lend me 3 loaves of bread; for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.' And he answers from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs. "So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, & you will find; knock, & the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"*

Sun. Aug 4: Family Project: Martin Luther writes of the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father... With these words God tenderly invites us to believe that he is our true Father & that we are his true children, so that we may pray to him as boldly & confidently as dear children ask their dear father." Make a collage of things you are praying for: family members, children with clean water, or patients getting medicine. Then put it some place where it will remind you to confidently make your requests to the Lord!

Mon. Aug 5: Matt Skinner suggests that getting started at praying is less like learning how to drive a car or playing the banjo and more like learning how to kiss. "You learn some by watching others do it. You certainly make mistakes... And maybe you always worry deep in your head that you might be doing it wrong." Don't worry about technique. God loves you! Prayer is about opening your heart to God, believing that God has an open heart to you. <http://www.workingpreacher.org/craft.aspx?post=5367>

Tues. Aug 6: in a sketch on church life, Garrison Keillor described a "corrective prayer" given by his pastor. It was employed when a guest preacher had espoused some sort of theology that was unacceptable to a good Lutheran. "Help us to remember that we are all saved by grace and not what we do," might be said if someone had stressed works. Do your prayers indicate what you believe about God? Do you truly believe God forgives, loves, shows mercy? Your prayers are heard by a God of grace!

Wed., Aug 7, Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14, 2:18-23 This reading complements the gospel text for this week which finds the rich young fool striving after more and more earthly possessions, wasting all his time on pursuing riches that he will have to leave behind when he dies. This sense of futility is certainly not unique to those who have no faith life. We know what it feels like to clean a floor only to have it covered with dirty foot tracks, or to painstakingly plan an event just to have it cancelled by rain or illness, or to shovel a driveway right before the snow plow drives by and steals all progress. We can easily feel as though our work is done in vain. This text invites us to clearly state that the lack of control we have over all of life's eventualities can make our time here on earth so annoying! It is in these times, when we are tempted to resent work done in vain, that we are called to be faithful. That's when we sit back with friends & family to appreciate and enjoy the undeserved, free gifts of God.

Thurs. Aug 8, Psalm 49:1-12 If we are honest, I think most of us would agree with the premise of the 1964 movie, "I'd Rather be Rich". We try to avoid placing our trust in riches, or being overly proud and boastful of our possessions, but the level of security from worry that a large bank account gives is terribly comforting. I'm not sure that it is possible for us to be rich and not to place much of our confidence in our retirement account rather than in God's provision. This psalm reminds us that God is not impressed by our scurrying around in an attempt to make ourselves secure. "Truly, no ransom avails for one's life, there is no price one can give to God for it." We cannot buy another day. Our call is to cultivate a humble awareness of our dependence on God.

Fri., Aug. 9, Colossians 3:1-11 Do you remember your first crush? When the object of your affection was in the room, you were hyper aware of their presence. Out of the corner of your eye, you were able to keep tabs on what they were doing, who they were talking to, and how much they were enjoying themselves. Their every raised eyebrow or gesture was mulled over and meaning was assigned to it. When Paul says to "Set your minds on things that are above," he calls us to this sort of awareness. In all we do, Christ is always in the room. We consciously consider what His presence means, not out of duty but knowing the love Christ bears for each person we encounter –including ourselves. With the joy of a first love, live in Christ's presence today.

Sat. Aug. 10, Luke 12:13-21 This passage begins with a frequently repeated request. Someone says to Jesus, "Tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." How many families have been ripped apart by details of inheritance? When we are tempted to feel as though we are being treated unfairly, we are called to remember that Christ abandoned the splendor of heaven for our benefit. Our priority is always the people who God loves rather than our possessions. Take a step against idolatry of money by finding ways to share what you have. Take a step towards contentment and joy by practicing being satisfied with what you already have.

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