

## 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 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 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).

### 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 Jan. 13, 2019 At-A-Glance

### Sunday, Jan. 13

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

### Monday

9 a.m.  
5:15 p.m.  
8:15 p.m.

### Tuesday

6:30 a.m.  
5:30 p.m.  
6:30 p.m.  
6:45 p.m.

### Wednesday

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

### Thursday

6 a.m.  
9 a.m.  
12:30 p.m.

### Friday

6:30 a.m.

### Sunday, Jan. 20

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

DS = Downtown Site    NS = North Site

### Scrip Sale

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

Quilters, DS Fellowship Hall  
Stephen Ministry, DS Lounge  
Pick Up Basketball, NS Activity Center

Men's Ministry, NS Library  
Executive Committee, DS Lounge  
Small Group Ministry HOST Training, DS 111-113  
Finance Committee, DS 110

Bible Study with Pastor Mary, DS 110  
Noon Hour Philosophers, DS Fellowship Hall  
Handbell Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room  
Wednesday Worship, DS Sanctuary  
Parish Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room & Sanctuary  
Confirmation General Session All Grades, DS  
Kid's Life, DS 014  
refuel (grades 10-12), DS Youth Room

Early Risers Women's Study, DS Lounge  
Adult Bible Study, DS Lounge  
50+ Planning Committee, DS 114

Men's Ministry, NS Library

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

### Cancellations Can Be Found at [www.felc.com](http://www.felc.com)

Check the FELC website under the Facebook section, lower right hand margin on the homepage for any cancellations. The church calendar will also be updated. In all instances, use your best judgment when deciding on driving to church for a scheduled worship, class or activity.



First English Lutheran Church  
[www.felc.com](http://www.felc.com)    [felc@felc.com](mailto:felc@felc.com)

### Downtown Site

Sunday Worship: 8, 9:15 & 10:30 a.m.  
Wednesday Worship: 6:15 p.m.  
Office Hours: M-Th: 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
F: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

### North Site

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

# Love Jesus. Live your call.

*First English is committed to be a welcoming, inclusive congregation.*

## Sunday at FELC

### Altar Flowers

The Downtown Site altar flowers are provided by Lou Chicquette.

### Day on the Mission Field

Jan. 13 is sponsored by Bob and Anita Damon in honor of Stephanie Olson.

### Special Guest at the Downtown Site

We thank Ken Olson, Ph.D., PAS (Professional Animal Scientist) for bringing a message about his daughter, Stephanie Olson, to the Downtown Site this morning. First English financially supports Stephanie in her role as Country Coordinator for the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) Cambodia Program. Ken is a native of Black River Falls, where he grew up milking cows, and he earned his Ph.D. in dairy cattle breeding from UW-Madison. Among many roles, he has been married to Barb for 46 years and is currently a Mission Interpreter Coordinator for the Metro Chicago Synod - ELCA.

### The Parables of Jesus in Luke

On Sundays at 9:15 a.m. in the Downtown Site Lounge, we take a look at the parables in Luke from a Middle Eastern cultural view. With short teaching videos by Dr. Kenneth E. Bailey, this study will inform participants about the culture in which the parables were told. Please join us!

Announcements  
Week of Jan. 13, 2019

### Exciting Opportunity at FELC: Small Group Ministry Beginning Jan. 20!

What is Small Group Ministry? Small groups are more than just a study - they will become a faith formation focus at First English. Not only will multiple new studies each year give you a way to grow in your faith, they will also help you form confidential and caring relationships with new friends. Small groups will give you an opportunity to put some structure and accountability into the desire to live out the Great Commandment to love God and to love your neighbors. In addition, each meeting will have snacks! Join a small group today!

### Winter 2019 Small Group Focus, *Fearless Faith*

Please see the enclosed insert to find out more about *Fearless Faith*, and to sign up for a small group. Drop it off in the Gathering Area or place it in the offering plate. You may also sign up at [www.felc.com](http://www.felc.com). The insert has a list of some potential groups for you to join.



### Scrip Sale and Update!

Today is the monthly Scrip Sale. With this program you purchase gift cards from various retailers and get your full money's worth, while the youth going on the mission trip receive a rebate from that purchase. Since Sept. 2018, we have raised \$1,400 from the Scrip Fundraiser for the annual youth summer trips budget. We hope to have that number reach \$3,000 by May of this year. Please get involved by completing your Scrip order (found in the insert of today's bulletin) and dropping it in the offering, or the Scrip Table in the Gathering Area between services. If you have any questions, please contact Heidi Schreiner at [hschreiner@felc.com](mailto:hschreiner@felc.com).

### Looking Ahead

#### Collection for St. Joseph's Food Pantry

Thank you to Gary and Kathy Larson who have volunteered to deliver the donations from both sites for St. Joseph's Food Pantry! Please be sure to take advantage of this generous offer, and fill the boxes for St. Joe's. They are looking to collect:

1. Non-perishable food items
2. Handled paper bags
3. Empty egg cartons, both cardboard and Styrofoam

Drop off your donations in the designated boxes at both sites. Thank you!

#### Small Group HOST Training

If you have signed up to be a Small Group HOST for the six-week *Fearless Faith* study, plan on attending the training meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 15 in Room 111 at the Downtown Site or watch the fun and informative instructional videos online. To watch them, and for more information on Small Group Ministry and being a host, visit [www.felc.com/smallgroup](http://www.felc.com/smallgroup).

### Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

**Saturday, Feb. 23; 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

#### Downtown Site Fellowship Hall

Youth Mental Health First Aid is designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addiction challenge or is in crisis. Youth Mental Health First Aid is primarily designed for adults who regularly interact with young people. The course introduces common mental health challenges for youth, reviews typical adolescent development, and teaches a 5-step action plan for how to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations. Topics covered include anxiety, depression, substance use, disorders in which psychosis may occur, disruptive behavior disorders (including AD/HD), and eating disorders. This event is open to the community. Please register in advance for this free training at [www.felc.com/forms](http://www.felc.com/forms). Lunch will be provided. Contact Kirsten Owens, FELC Faith Formation Coordinator, at [kowens@felc.com](mailto:kowens@felc.com) or (920) 733-2303 ext. 312.

#### New & Review New Member Classes Coming Soon!

Are you interested in becoming a member of First English? There will be a *New & Review* new member session beginning in March. Please join us! If you have an interest or have any questions, please contact Karen Kneisler at [kkneisler@felc.com](mailto:kkneisler@felc.com) or (920)733-2303.

#### Baptismal Workshop Set for Jan. 22

The next Baptismal Workshop is at 6:15 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 22, in the Downtown Site Lounge. Please RSVP by calling the Church Office and indicating if child care is needed. God comes to us through our baptism. Meet others in your church family as together we explore the meaning and practice of baptism.

### Noon Hour Philosophers 2019

The Noon Hour Philosophers will resume meeting in 2019 on Jan. 9. They meet for an hour at noon in the Downtown Site Fellowship Hall each Wednesday.

If you have questions, contact Mary Poulson at [mmaryjep@att.net](mailto:mmaryjep@att.net) or (920)734-8137.

#### • Jan. 16: We Need to Change the Dynamics of the Health Care Market in the Fox Valley

Merton D. Finkler, John R. Kimberly  
Distinguished Emeritus Professor of Economics

#### • Jan. 23: Thorton Wilder, An American Classic

Rev. Dr. Stephen Savides, Senior Pastor  
First Congregational United Church of Christ  
Appleton

#### • Jan. 30: Timefulness: How Thinking Like a Geologist Can Save the World

Marcia Bjornerud, Professor of Geosciences and Environmental Studies  
Lawrence University

### 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, talk to a pastor.

### AA Corner

If you are or someone you know could use some confidential help with stopping drinking, please call Nancy A. at (920)734-9580.

### 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
- Laurie Niles
- Debra Boushley
- David Heindel
- Doug Hansen
- Amy Ponomarev
- Moore Peregrine
- Paul Henrikson
- Juanita Gauerke
- Robb Schaefer
- Kim Norland
- Carol Peterson
- Bev Hoff
- Cindy Schneider
- Alex VanMaren
- Debra Nuthals
- Mitzi Hansen
- Syllas Garcia
- Caryl Bates
- Lloyd Cohen
- Hellen Opsahl

#### Prayers of Comfort Families of:

- Jane Moe

#### 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

- **Compassus Hospice & Palliative Care**  
*Karen.ganiard@hospicecompassus.com*  
(920)321-2004; [www.compassus.com/volunteers](http://www.compassus.com/volunteers)



# High School Youth News

Grades 9-12

Jan. 13, 2019



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

1/16 Worry/Stress activity-prepping for special 8<sup>th</sup> grade refuel night

1/23 Special event 8<sup>th</sup> grade refuel night. This will be a chance for our current refuelers to show the youngens what they can expect as they continue their faith journeys as a participant of refuel after their years of Confirmation. 10-12<sup>th</sup> graders will be giving the 8<sup>th</sup> graders a taste of what refuel is like through various activities/stations.

1/30 Game night Sardines and Christian jam sesh.



## High School Mission Trip Blue Ridge Mountains, NC

### Next Fundraiser:

Jan. 13: Scrip Sale Today

Jan 20: Scrip Pick Up

### Next Payment Due:

Wednesday, Jan. 30

\$100/student

Watch for upcoming bonding events being scheduled.

Sign up for upcoming fundraisers at [www.felc.com/highschool](http://www.felc.com/highschool)

*Be joyful in hope  
Be patient in affliction.*

*Be constant and  
faithful in prayer.*

*-Romans 12:12*

Social Media: Facebook: FELC YOUTH; Instagram: felc.youth

Jan. 13, 2019



Information for FELC Youth and Families  
Grades K-12



### Learn How To Help

Saturday, Feb. 23, from 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. in the Downtown Site Fellowship Hall we will be offering a FREE Youth Mental Health First Aid training session secured through a generous grant. Youth Mental Health First Aid is designed to teach those caring for youth how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addiction challenge or is in crisis. The course introduces common mental health challenges for youth and teaches a 5-step action plan for how to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations. Topics covered include anxiety, depression, substance use, disorders in which psychosis may occur, disruptive behavior disorders (including AD/HD), and eating disorders. This event is open to the community. A certificate of completion will be given to each participant at the end of the eight-hour training (please register only if you are able to attend the full training time). Lunch will be provided. Please register in advance for this free training at [www.felc.com/forms](http://www.felc.com/forms) as we must have no less than 15 but no more than 30 participants.

### Find us on Social Media Outlets

Instagram: felc.youth Facebook: FELC YOUTH

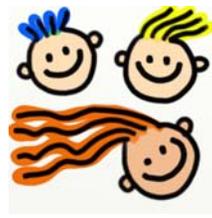
### Connect with FELC Youth Staff

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



### Combat Cabin Fever With Family Open Gym Sundays At North Site



All are welcome to burn off some steam and meet for some winter fun during Family Open Gym Sundays. On Jan. 27, Feb. 10, & 24 from 1:30-3:30 p.m. we'll hang out and play with new and old friends! No advance reservation is required. We ask that children attend with an adult. Hope to see you there!



### You May Be a Super Confirmation Small Group Leader

Ever think that you might be interested

in experiencing the small group journey with a fantastic group of six to nine students during their 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> grade years? If you have the slightest bit of wonder then come to the Confirmation Small Group Leader Info Meeting on Feb. 13 from 7-8 p.m. in Downtown Site Room 114.

We'll talk about the mission of this important work and the logistics of small group leadership to help you decide if this role might be a blessing for you. No commitment for next year is required from those who attend this meeting. So, let's spend some time together and decide if small group leadership is a good fit for you!



### Choir Corner

We're back at it!

Angelus Choir sings on Jan. 27 at the 9:15 a.m. worship service.  
Cherub Choir sings today at the 9:15 a.m. worship service.

### Storyteller Spots Open For Winter & Spring

This fall we had a great line-up of storytellers for Sunday School. Various spots remain available at both sites for the winter and spring. Sign-up for a date that works for you at [www.felc.com/forms](http://www.felc.com/forms). We'd love for you to tell us the story!



## Confirmation and Middle School Scoop



### RAISE THOSE HANDS HIGH! WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR ANSWERS IN LARGE GROUP



This week Confirmation will meet for large group.

7<sup>th</sup> grade families should have chapter 7 read before Wednesday

8<sup>th</sup> grade families should have chapter 7 read before Wednesday

9<sup>th</sup> grade students will hear Hannah Keesler, MS, LPC, SAC-IT, a counselor from Samaritan Counseling speak about how to identify when addiction begins.

Remember to keep journaling your devotions and things you're thankful for in your journals even on large group weeks.

### Missed the Boat?

Have a student beginning 7<sup>th</sup> grade Confirmation in September and you missed the *Welcome to Confirmation* meeting last week? Connect with Kirsten at [kowens@felc.com](mailto:kowens@felc.com) so you can receive necessary forms and don't miss important deadlines!



### Start Stockpiling For the Compassion Pantry Drive



On Feb. 27 we begin collecting basic hygiene items and quick/no prep food items for our annual Compassion Pantry project. Consider buying granola bars, feminine hygiene items, fruit cups, dental care, etc. and stockpiling them away to help local high school teens meet their basic needs.

*Have questions or want to volunteer?*

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



## ***Fearless Faith***

Life can be so busy and chaotic that we are easily overwhelmed. How do we deal, not only with the day to day worries, but also the larger fears that come our way? The study, *Fearless Faith*, will give you tools for dealing with those fears.

The study follows a six-week sermon series that begins at the Downtown Site on Jan. 20 and the North Site on Jan. 27 and includes the following topics:

### **Six-week *Fearless Faith* Sermon-based Study**

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Listening to Act for the Good</i> | 4. <i>The Fear of Failure</i>   |
| 2. <i>What is the Good?</i>             | 5. <i>The Fear of Suffering</i> |
| 3. <i>The Fear of Loneliness</i>        | 6. <i>Willing One Thing</i>     |

The sermons will also be viewed in your small group, with thought-provoking questions included. Each participant will receive a free study guide to assist in making the most out of the time together in the discussion.

Once you sign up for a group, you will be contacted with your group confirmation and any other necessary information to get you on your way to enjoying your time with your group.

### **Sign me up to join a Small Group!**

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

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**If you are signing up with others and wish to be in the same group, please list their names below:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Available Study Times**

Below is a list of small group HOSTs, along with the demographics of the groups they are hosting. If you haven't already done so, find a time and a group that works for you and sign up!

There is one more set of HOSTs, Dave Anderson and Cecil Canlubo with a flexible schedule. If you need a different time, list it here and we'll see what we can work out.

Day of Week: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Sunday**

- \_\_ 6 p.m.: Deni & Dan Kuchler (Parents of Young Children)
- \_\_ 6:30 p.m.: Alyssa & Aaron Douglas (Parents of Young Children)
- \_\_ 7 p.m.: Dan & Kitty Doersch (Open to All)

### **Monday**

- \_\_ 6 p.m.: Eran Heike (Women of all Ages at the North Site)
- \_\_ 6:30 p.m.: Jen & Jeff Wageman (40s-50s)

### **Tuesday**

- \_\_ 1:30 p.m.: Anita Damon (Open to All)
- \_\_ 7:15 p.m.: Hollie & Matt Holtebeck (Open to All)

### **Wednesday**

- \_\_ 7 p.m.: Kathy & Doug Freeman (Open to All)

### **Thursday:**

- \_\_ 1 p.m.: Nancy Allen (60+ Women)
- \_\_ 7 p.m.: Karen & Dale Volkman (Open to All)
- \_\_ 7 p.m.: Joyce & Paul Schreiner (Open to All)
- \_\_ 7 p.m.: Liz & Jerry Lokensgard (Open to All)

*(Turn over and choose a group, or a day and time that works for you.)*

Retailer	\$ (Circle)	Credit	Qty	Cost
HomeGoods	\$25 \$100	7%		
iTunes	\$25	5%		
Kohl's	\$25 \$100	4%		
Kwik Trip	\$25 \$50 \$100	4%		
Little Caesars	\$20	8%		
Marcus Theatres	\$25	8%		
Meijer	\$50 \$100	3%		
Menards	\$25 \$100	3%		
Motomart	\$50	5%		
Nike	\$25	12%		
Noodles & Co	\$10	8%		
Old Navy	\$25 \$100	14%		

Total Amount Due: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Option:  Check# \_\_\_\_\_  Cash  
 Make checks payable to FELC (please write Scrip in the memo)

*Turn this sheet over to provide your contact information.*

Retailer	\$ (Circle)	Credit	Qty	Cost
Panera	\$25	8%		
Pick 'N Save	\$50 \$100	4%		
Sam's Club	\$50 \$100	2.5%		
Scheels	\$25	8%		
Starbucks	\$25	7%		
Subway	\$10	6%		
Taco Bell	\$25	5%		
Target	\$25 \$50	2.5%		
T.J. Maxx	\$25 \$100	7%		
Uno Pizzeria	\$25	12%		
Walgreen's	\$25 \$100	5%		
Walmart	\$50 \$100	2.5%		
		<b>SUBTOTAL PG 2</b>		
		<b>SUBTOTAL FROM PG 1</b>		
		<b>TOTAL PGS 1 &amp; 2</b>		

***First English Lutheran Church SCRIP Order Form (New Retailers added as of December 2018) Benefitting FELC Youth Annual Trips***

General Information

Please turn in form with payment to the table in the Gathering Area, offering plate, Church Office or email to Heidi Schreiner at [hschreiner@felc.com](mailto:hschreiner@felc.com). Payment is required at time of order. Orders placed by **Noon on Monday, Jan. 14**, will be available for pick up on **Sunday, Jan. 20**. **After that, they will be available in the Downtown Site Office.** Questions? Contact Heidi Schreiner at 733-2303 or [hschreiner@felc.com](mailto:hschreiner@felc.com).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Order Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Check one: \_\_\_ Pick up at DS \_\_\_ Pick up at NS

Retailer	\$ (Circle)	Credit	Qty	Cost
Amazon.com	\$25 \$100	2.5%		
Applebee's	\$25	8%		
Barnes & Noble	\$25	8%		
Bath + Body Works	\$25	13%		
Best Buy	\$25 \$100	4%		
Buffalo Wild Wings	\$25	8%		
Chipotle	\$25	10%		

Retailer	\$ (Circle)	Credit	Qty	Cost
CVS	\$25	6%		
DICK'S Sporting Goods	\$25 \$100	8%		
Domino's	\$25	8%		
Festival Foods	\$50 \$100	3%		
Fleet Farm	\$25 \$100	3.5%		
Gap	\$25 \$100	14%		
Home Depot	\$25 \$100	4%		
		<b>SUBTOTAL PG 1</b>		

***Turn sheet over for more shopping options.***

## FELC DS Engage Page: Jan. 13, 2018—Baptism of Our Lord

**Luke 3:15-17, 21-22** *As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." ...Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."*

Sun, Jan. 13: Family Project: It's a great day to remember your baptism. Bring out pictures of the day each member of your family was baptized. Talk about the fun and/or funny things that happened that day. Christmas Eve we told the story of Fayette, who could not hear enough times that when she was baptized, she became a, "*Beloved, precious child of God, and beautiful to behold.*" After talking about baptism, make the sign of the cross on each child's forehead and let them know they too are a, "*Beloved, precious child of God, and beautiful to behold.*"

Mon, Jan. 14: This passage reminds me of the song "Holy Fire" by Danny Daniels. The chorus goes, "*Holy Fire, spirit of mercy, Holy Fire, power of God. Consume us now and take away All that you have not made. Make us pure, Holy Fire.*" What a wonderful reminder that each of us have habits or characteristics that do not honor God. Perhaps it's materialism, or an inability to forgive, or a tendency to belittle others. Whatever it is, pray that in mercy, Jesus would burn away the chaff in your life.

Tues, Jan. 15: Epiphany is a time in the church that we traditionally focus on missions. Probably because of the Great Commission to go into all the world and baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, baptism is very much associated with missional outreach. More than something we do to prove to others that we are Christians, baptism is commanded by God as a way of claiming us and naming us as God did with Jesus on his baptismal day. Start each day remembering your baptism and knowing that you are a child of God. Then spread the news!

Wed., Jan. 16, Isaiah 62:1-5 It is a core teaching of our Christian faith that we are not to look for worldly acclaim. Blessed, Jesus says, are those who are poor and reviled. He does not say that those people will receive their reward here on earth or that one of their central tasks should be making non-Christians respect them. Perhaps that is why it is so disturbing to read this passage. The prophet is vitally concerned about how Jerusalem and Zion are seen by other nations. Whether or not we are disturbed by the words, the prophet saw God's favor as a sign of God's love—love that he compares to a groom rejoicing over his bride. May we have faith in God's unfailing love without giving in to a spirit of superiority.

Thurs, Jan. 17, Psalm 36:5-10 Billowing clouds, mighty mountains, deep seas—this psalm is filled with amazing images and ends with the acknowledgment, "in your light we see light." Creation itself calls us to recognize that through God's gifts our eyes are opened to eternal truths. Praise God through this psalm. "*Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your judgments are like the great deep; you save humans and animals alike, O LORD. How precious is your steadfast love, O God! All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings. They feast on the abundance of your house, and you give them drink from the river of your delights. For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light.*"

Fri., Jan. 18, I Corinthians 12:1-12 A few years ago, we needed some people to join the committee to bring our church constitution into compliance with the larger church. We put an announcement in the bulletin and I was certain it would be ignored and we would be left twisting arms to get this chore completed. I was amazed when people not only volunteered, but went above and beyond, organizing the bylaws and hashing out the meaning of each conjunction and punctuation mark. This is not my gift. This would be torture for me. But this is an example of the body working well, the varied gifts of the Spirit united for the common good. Take time today to thank those who are using their gifts to help others.

Sat, Jan. 19, John 2:1-11 It was a momentous occasion! The wedding at Cana has become even more singular since it was the place where Jesus performed his first public miracle. However, I'm struck by Mary's calm assurance that Jesus would be able to do something to fix the situation. Had he "helped out" at home before? Had meager provisions lasted longer than they should have? In any case, Mary knew that Jesus could and would help. As we start out on any new venture, and certainly as we begin with small groups in our congregation, may we carry the calm assurance that Jesus is willing and able to help and guide. We only need to listen to God's promptings in order to act for the good of all.

\*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: Jan. 13, 2018—Baptism of Our Lord

**Luke 3:15-17, 21-22** *As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." ...Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."*

Sun, Jan. 13: Family Project: It's a great day to remember your baptism. Bring out pictures of the day each member of your family was baptized. Talk about the fun and/or funny things that happened that day. Christmas Eve we told the story of Fayette, who could not hear enough times that when she was baptized, she became a, "*Beloved, precious child of God, and beautiful to behold.*" After talking about baptism, make the sign of the cross on each child's forehead and let them know they too are a, "*Beloved, precious child of God, and beautiful to behold.*"

Mon, Jan. 14: This passage reminds me of the song "Holy Fire" by Danny Daniels. The chorus goes, "*Holy Fire, spirit of mercy, Holy Fire, power of God. Consume us now and take away All that you have not made. Make us pure, Holy Fire.*" What a wonderful reminder that each of us have habits or characteristics that do not honor God. Perhaps it's materialism, or an inability to forgive, or a tendency to belittle others. Whatever it is, pray that in mercy, Jesus would burn away the chaff in your life.

Tues, Jan. 15: Epiphany is a time in the church that we traditionally focus on missions. Probably because of the Great Commission to go into all the world and baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, baptism is very much associated with missional outreach. More than something we do to prove to others that we are Christians, baptism is commanded by God as a way of claiming us and naming us as God did with Jesus on his baptismal day. Start each day remembering your baptism and knowing that you are a child of God. Then spread the news!

Wed., Jan. 16, Exodus 34:29-35

Sometimes an intense focus is actually scary. My son encountered his first music conductor when he was five. Even though she was dressed up as a cowgirl for a Halloween practice, there was no mistaking the intensity and passion in her eyes. My son certainly felt it -this person expected something from him –so he started to cry. When Moses came down the mountain after receiving the 10 Commandments, his face shown from being in the presence of the Lord. I imagine the people sensed that things were changing –something was expected of them.. May we run joyfully to God's presence, knowing that fulfilling the expectations of the law leads to a joy-filled life.

Thurs, Jan. 17, Psalm 99

Professor James Limburg writes, "The fundamental idea behind the Hebrew word qadosh which occurs three times in this psalm...is apart or separate. A place where the Lord once appeared may be called "holy ground" (Ex. 3:5). Or a place where God is especially present may be described as a "holy temple" (Psalm 11:4; Hab. 2:20). In modern Israel to this day, a place of special significance is called a maqom qadosh or "holy place." Thus to say that God is holy is to stress the otherness or separateness of God. Isaiah saw the Lord and heard the angels singing "holy, holy, holy" (Isaiah 6:3). The 20<sup>th</sup> century theologian Karl Barth liked to speak of God as "wholly other." What a wonder that our "wholly other" God loves us enough to become human. [http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=505](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=505)

Fri., Jan. 18, 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2

Paul writes in verse 18, "*And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.*" We understand this passage more fully having just read that Moses only took the veil off of his face when he was in the presence of God. As we are transparent with God, willing to unveil our faces and be honest about who we are, God can transform us into her image. God knows us better than we know ourselves, and the light of God's love can change our hearts.

Sat, Jan. 19, Luke 9:28-36

At a family reunion many years ago, we were sharing stories, talking the common language that families have. We heard exploits from when cousins got together and little known memories from those of my mom's generation. Feeling the connection to one another and a larger story was so wonderful that my grade school age son exclaimed, "Mom, I wish we could stay here always." This is certainly the type of feeling experienced by Peter as he saw Jesus, Moses, & Elijah. The connection to past history must have been awesome. However, God spoke to remind them that their call was into the future and the new work that Jesus was doing. May we look to the past for inspiration, but always be set towards the future, listening to Jesus.

\*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).