

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 July 28, 2019 At-A-Glance

Sunday, July 28

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

Monday

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

Tuesday

6:30 a.m.
9 a.m.
1 p.m.
5 p.m.
7 p.m.
8 p.m.

Wednesday

9 a.m.
9:30 a.m.
10:30 a.m.
Noon
12:15 a.m.
4 p.m.
6:15 p.m.
7:15 p.m.

Thursday

9 a.m.

Friday

6:30 a.m.

Sunday, Aug. 4

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

DS = Downtown Site NS = North Site

Art at the Park Parking Lot Fundraiser, DS

Worship, DS Sanctuary
Worship, NS Sanctuary

Vacation Bible School, NS
Buffalo Wild Wings Grades 9-12, BWV 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
Vacation Bible School, NS
FVLH Visit (All Ages), 425 N. Linwood Ave, Appleton
Middle School Youth Group Dinner Out, Culvers West
Imagine Fox Cities, DS Fellowship Hall
Vision Planning Meeting, DS

Vacation Bible School, NS
Leadership Transition, DS 221
Bible Study with Kirsten, DS 110-111
Stewardship Committee, DS Lounge
Lunchtime Organ Recital, DS Sanctuary
Wednesday Worship Rehearsal, NS Sanctuary
Wednesday Worship, NS Sanctuary
refuel (grades 7-12), NS

Vacation Bible School, NS

Men's Ministry, NS Library
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

Crossways Camping Ministries Matching Grant

As the result of a very generous donor, Crossways Camping Ministries Campaign is pleased to announce that the next \$50,000 in new pledges and gifts will be eligible for a matching grant. This is a wonderful 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.



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 July 28, 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 Lou Chicquette.

Looking Ahead

Flights and Dates Confirmed for Trip to Holyland!

Pastor Jeff and Barb are hosting an information meeting to learn more about their trip to the Holy Land. If you are interested in learning more about this once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage, please join them in the Downtown Site Lounge on Sunday, Aug. 18 at 9:35 a.m. A video will be shown, plus questions answered.

Having been to Israel twice, Pastor Jeff and Barb are hosting this 11-day trip from May 19-29, 2020, with an optional extension to Jordan and Petra. For a long while, a return to the Holy Land has been on Pastor Jeff's heart. He is now looking forward to seeing old and new sights with old and new friends.

More information (flyer, registration form, and travel insurance) is available in the Gathering Area or at www.felc.com/IsraelTrip2020. There are a limited number of spots available. You can reserve a spot with your down payment as indicated on the registration form. AIRFARE and MOST MEALS are included. The trip will also include an affirmation of baptism in the Jordan River and Holy Communion near the Garden Tomb.

Feel free to contact Pastor Jeff if you have any questions at jtengesdal@felc.com.

City Band Concert and Dinner!

On Aug. 6 the 50+ group is planning an outing at the City Band Concert at Pierce Park.

We will gather at the park for a box-lunch dinner from Heavenly Ham at 6 p.m. and the concert begins at 7 p.m. The summer interns will be joining us and they have kindly offered to bring lawn chairs to the park for us. **No need to bring your own chair.** Sign up is available today at the Downtown Site or call Nancy Strebe at (920)851-0345. Cost for the box lunch is \$10 which needs to be paid when you sign up. Box lunches will include sandwich, chips, cookie and water. There will be choices of bread and meat with condiments on the side.

FELC
50+

VBS Begins Tomorrow!

Calling all kids age 3-grade 6: join the summer interns for Vacation Bible School beginning tomorrow and running through Thursday, Aug. 1 at the North Site from 9 a.m. to noon. This year's theme is *Kingdom Rock*, and it promises to be an educational, faithful and fun time! Sign up online at www.felc.com/summer, or just come to the North Site tomorrow morning and register then. Hope to see you there!

Chamber Music Next Sunday

The Downtown Site will be blessed next Sunday, Aug. 4, 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 will be selling fairly traded coffee, tea and chocolate bars on Sunday, Aug. 4. Please continue to support this important outreach project.

God's work. Our hands.

Save the date: Sept. 8 is *God's work. Our hands*. Sunday. If you are able to help oversee one of the project areas or help with planning, please contact Pastor Mary at mbauer@felc.com or call the Church Office at (920)733-2303. And visit www.felc.com/forms if you would like to order a GWOH t-shirt.

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!

Confirmation Photos

Confirmation photos will remain available until Wednesday, July 31, at which time all Confirmation photos except those from this year's class (2018-19) that have not been taken will be given to CHART, FELC's historical records team. Please check in the Gathering Area if you have had a child confirmed sometime in the last four years and aren't certain if you have your photos.

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 as our congregation embarks on using the Narrative Lectionary. The structure will be altered (more so at Downtown Site), new curriculum is being used, and the calendar is being revised as we work to strengthen our comfort with and knowledge of the Bible and build deeper bonds in our faith community benefitting God's work in our lives and the world. 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!

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. *This week, First English hosts!*

July 31: Dr. Paul Weber

First English Lutheran Church
326 E. North Street, Appleton

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. At 2 p.m., first time visitors can get a tour of the Masjid (mosque). 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.

RSVPs would be appreciated by today. Email fvivis.interfaith@gmail.com. In case of bad weather, the Gathering will be held at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 140 S. Green Bay Road, Neenah.

Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministers are members of our congregation who listen, care, and provide emotional and spiritual support to people who are facing a crisis or going through tough times. To learn how you or someone you know can receive care, please speak with a pastor.

AA Corner

If you are or someone you know could use some confidential help with stopping drinking or if you are being affected by someone else's drinking, call Dale at (920)419-2794.

Prayer Connection

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

Prayers of Healing, Wholeness & Peace

- Mary Lou Garnsworthy
- Nathan Meissner
- 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
- Nancy Thiele
- Anna Stencil

Prayers of Comfort

Families of:

- Keith Batley
- William Frea
- Rebecca Nara

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Wedding of:

- Sara Frazier and Josh Gallagher

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

• SOAR Fox Cities

volunteer@soarfoxcities.com
(920)731-9831



Youth News

July 28, 2019

Fox Valley Lutheran Homes

Students AND adults: Join the interns as they visit the residents of Fox Valley Lutheran Homes (425 N. Linwood Ave., Appleton) on Tuesdays from 1-3 p.m. Play dominoes, bean bag toss, cribbage or just chat with the residents. They would love to see you, and you are bound to make some awesome new friends!



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: Dinner with Interns

This coming week the interns will be having dinner with middle schoolers. At Culvers, on Westhill Blvd. at 5 p.m. Great food, great conversation, and a great time!



Vacation Bible School Begins Tomorrow!

Vacation Bible School is almost here! This upcoming event will be held at the North Site TOMORROW, July 29 through Thursday, Aug. 1 from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Those ages 3 to grade 6 are all welcome. The cost for this week of fun is \$5 per student and \$15 max per family. Be ready for a week of songs, movies, crafts, studying the Bible and games!

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

July 28, 2019

From the Desk of Summer Intern Noah Lichosik

Hello my name is Noah Lichosik and I am one of the summer interns here at First English. I have grown up in this church for the majority of my life and have always tried to stay connected through the youth programs.

With a recent change in my college major to education, I felt like this job was the perfect route to go. This is my first summer as an intern and it really has been an eventful one. It started with things like Day Camp and Christmas in July Camp. These were great opportunities to work directly with so many wonderful kids. I have also been working at Kids Life

which has been very rewarding as I've been able to build on the relationships I've made.

The summer is starting to wind down but this doesn't mean our programs are. I will have the privilege of taking part in some areas I have not explored yet such as Buffalo Wild Wings Mondays and Middle School Youth Group. I'm especially excited to work with the elders of our community at Fox Valley Lutheran Homes. One very notable program coming up (tomorrow!) is Vacation Bible School. This is sure to not only be a blast for the kids but for all the interns as well.

-Noah Lichosik

FELC Confidence Code for Girls

The female interns continue hosting a book study on *The Confidence Code for Girls* this summer for girls who have completed grade 3 and up. Every 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.

refuel on Wednesday

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.

AUGUST 12-16, 2019

ARTS CAMP

9:00AM-12:00PM

3 YEARS THROUGH COMPLETED 5TH GRADE

NEW THIS YEAR: 2 LOCATIONS!

3 YEARS-1ST GRADE: FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH (326 E NORTH ST, APPLETON)

2ND-6TH GRADE: THE MISSION CHURCH (314 N APPLETON ST APPLETON)

A program of The Mission Church

Visit www.felc.com to learn more and to register!



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.



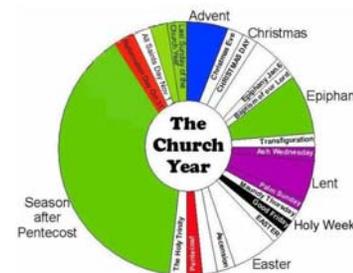
Sunday School Starts at Age 4



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.



FELC DS Engage Page: July 28, 6th 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. July 28: 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. July 29: 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. July 30: 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., July 31, 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. 1, 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. 2, 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. 3, 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 Downtown Site FELC Engage Page. <https://www.facebook.com/FELCEngagePage>.

FELC NS Engage Page: July 28, 6th Sunday after Pentecost

Luke 10:38-42 *Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."*

Sun. July 28: Family Project: Take time to put your own name into the caution that Jesus gives Martha. In my case it would be, "*Mary, Mary, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing.*" Have everyone to share their worries & distractions – the things that wake them up at night. Then have each person write them on a piece of paper and put them in a "worry" bowl. Pass the bowl around again and have everyone take out a slip of paper and pray, out loud in turn or silently for the concerns listed. Then take some time ask yourself, "*What is the "better part" that the Lord is calling me to do?*"

Mon. July 29: Professor Caroline Lewis says, "*By pitting the sisters against each other, women for centuries have had to justify their discipleship...as either following Mary or Martha. As if these two women in Jesus' life are the only way women can imagine what it looks like to be a disciple of Jesus in the present day; an assumption that both limits the faith of women & the role of women's ministry today, but moreover, constrains Mary & Martha to positions & tasks that stereotype & scapegoat ...I have no doubt that this story has exacerbated the antagonism between women.*" There can arise a sense of resentment between those who express their faith in service versus in worship. We are called both to worship & service, & to honor others for being faithful disciples. <http://www.workingpreacher.org/craft.aspx?post=5366>

Tues. July 30: My to-do list is endless. Like Martha, in my need to accomplish, I can forget to put first things first. Prof. Lewis writes, "*Perhaps Jesus is simply trying to get Martha's attention so that she can know the Kingdom of God is near –really near. Jesus needs Martha to hear this truth. Time is of the essence...There is not a lot of time left to be in the presence of the Kingdom of God. There is an urgency here that necessitates a reset. Now is the time to set aside duty and sit beside Jesus.*" Rather than turning this admonition into a competition, let us simply be sensitive to what God is asking us to do each moment.

Wed., July 31, Genesis 18:20-32 In self-righteous indignation, many of us can decry the ability of those in Nazi Germany to look the other way in the face of evil & to do nothing. And yet, in this passage, we see the tension between God looking the other way in the face of evil, and of God executing judgment over that evil. We have a niggling feeling that it is wrong for God to act in judgment against Sodom. And because we know that most human beings are a mixture of good and bad, we –along with Abraham –find it difficult to condemn anyone. Similarly, since we recognize that there are self-serving tendencies in even the most "righteous" person, we are not at all surprised that God could not find even 10 righteous people. God's desire to love and forgive are at odds with God's need to do something about evil. Here we are brought face to face with the need for the cross! God solved the dilemma by sending Jesus to give us messy humans a way to experience Jesus' righteousness through faith.

Thurs. Aug. 1, Psalm 138 Steadfast love (*hesed*) is not common, but occasionally parents exhibit it. It is the sort of love that doesn't let go –that keeps giving second chances and showing forgiveness. It is the sort of love that God shows toward us. James Limburg writes, "*This psalm is framed by references to the Lord's hesed, or steadfast love, or amazing grace (vv. 2, 8). The psalmist is thankful for the hesed (v.2) and trusts that it will endure (v. 8). At the heart of the psalm is a declaration illustrating that steadfast love. The Lord who is high and exalted cares for the lowly (v. 6). The New Testament centers on a dramatic illustration of the shape of that divine hesed, in the Gospel stories of a Son sent into the world (John 3:16) and of One who was God's equal and then became a servant who suffered, died, and was exalted (Phil. 2:5-11)*" James Limburg, *Psalms* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 470.

Fri., Aug. 2, Colossians 2:6-19 Verses 12-13 say, "*When you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses.*" Baptism is first about death –the death of our need to prove our worth by following rules, or by being smarter, cuter, or more popular than the next person. Next it is about abundant life. We are free to love & serve others without worrying about our worth since it is established in Christ. We live in Christ and Christ's identity surrounds and sustains us.

Sat. Aug. 3, Luke 11:1-13 The word that is translated persistence in this parable can also be translated shamelessness. The man who goes to his neighbor in the middle of the night & keeps asking even when he knows his friend is in bed is being shameless. Perhaps the asker knows his neighbor well enough to bank on his being soft-hearted. Rather than looking at this parable as a license to coerce God into giving us what we want, consider using it as a nudge to be shameless in your requests. Rely on the loving nature of God, and bring to God all your concerns –even the most trivial. You will not always get what you want, but be assured the Lord is ready to give good things to those who ask.

*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/FELC Engage Page>.