

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 8:30 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 June 16, 2019 At-A-Glance

Sunday, June 16

8:30 & 10 a.m.

9 a.m.

Monday

11:30 a.m.

3:30 p.m.

5 p.m.

5:15 p.m.

7 p.m.

Tuesday

6:30 a.m.

11:30 a.m.

Noon

1 p.m.

5 p.m.

5:30 p.m.

6:45 p.m.

Wednesday

10:30 a.m.

11:30 a.m.

Noon

6:15 p.m.

8:15 p.m.

Thursday

9:30 a.m.

11:30 a.m.

Noon

Friday

6:30 a.m.

8:15 a.m.

Sunday, June 23

8:30 & 10 a.m.

9 a.m.

DS = Downtown Site NS = North Site

Father's Day

Worship, DS Sanctuary

Worship, NS Sanctuary

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

Men's Ministry, NS Library
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
Middle School Youth Group: Pizza & Board Games, NS
Executive Committee, DS Lounge
Finance Committee, DS 110

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
Wednesday Worship, NS Sanctuary
FELC Pool Party for All!, Mead Pool

Leadership Transition, DS 221
Kid's Life (Grades K-6) Lunch (Bring Your Own), DS & NS
Kid's Life (Grades K-6) Program, DS & NS

Men's Ministry, NS Library
Noah's Ark Trip, Meet at DS Parking Lot

Worship, DS Sanctuary

Worship, NS Sanctuary



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 June 16, 2019

Love Jesus. Live your call.

First English is committed to being a welcoming, inclusive congregation.

Sunday at FELC

Day on the Mission Field

June 22 is sponsored by Bob and Anita Damon in honor of their wedding anniversary.

Cruise with the 50+ Group!

The 50+ Group invites you to cruise the Fox River on the Rivertime2 on Wednesday, July 24. The cruise, which begins at noon and lasts about an hour and a half, costs \$22 per person, which includes the tip. Tickets must be purchased in advance. Watch for ticket sellers at both sites today, June 23, and 30. After the cruise you will have the option to attend a dutch treat meal at a restaurant in the area. The boat is not wheelchair accessible but anyone with a walker will be fine. For more information on the Rivertime2, please visit their website at: <https://www.foxrivertours.com/public-cruises/appleton-public-cruises/>.



Confirmation Photos - New & Old - Now Available

The Confirmation photos have arrived! Check the bin in the Gathering Area in which your student was confirmed for this year's photos or the bin with the bright pink sign for photos from previous years that have not been claimed. Photos from past years that are not claimed by July 31 will be discarded.

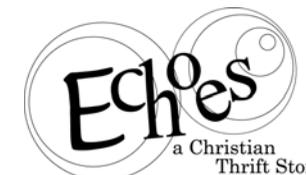
Looking Ahead

Dinner Concert to Benefit the Summer Intern Program

Reserve a spot for a concert and dinner at Pastor Mary's house on June 23. The evening begins at 5:30 p.m. and tickets are \$30 each. Enjoy a great meal in beautiful surroundings. There will be an entertaining combination of music including sacred, classical, secular show tunes, country and popular songs. Call the office to reserve your spot - you can pay at the event.

Happy 15th Anniversary Echoes!

June 24, Echoes, A Christian Thrift Store, celebrates its 15th year of operation. With your donated unused or unneeded items, Echoes has supported several non-profit organizations in the Fox Valley including the Emergency Shelter, St. Joseph Food Pantry as well as many other outreach agencies. Next Sunday, June 23, a special coffee hour in honor of Echoes will be served by the Echoes Committee members. Please remember Echoes with your donations of items or volunteer hours. Call Kathy Hoffman at the store if you have any questions, (920)882-8172.



You're Part of Our Impromptu North Site Brew Crew

Sometimes our Sunday morning coffee hosts have an unavoidable conflict on the weekend they are scheduled to host. We always try to find folks to fill in, but on mornings none can be found, we happily invite you to brew a few pots in the kitchen of our communal church home and grab some cookies for the coffee table, if you're so inclined. (Don't be shy about asking for help with set-up or clean-up. We're all friends here!) We'll post a notice on the coffee hour table if we don't have a host. Thank you ahead of time for helping out!

We Need Your Feedback - "Imagine Fox Cities" - Will You Please Join Us?

Imagine Fox Cities is a community-wide initiative that seeks input from those in the Fox Cities. If you live or work here, they need your opinion. Your responses will help influence the future of our communities. FELC is proud to have just been added as a host site for 2 of the series of 72 sessions that will be wrapping up shortly, from all across our communities.

Your Congregation Council is welcoming these sessions as an introductory exercise, with the insights from these sessions helping FELC in preparing its vision and values for a new strategic planning effort, to be starting soon.

You can participate, easy-peasy, right after church! There will be two sessions, facilitated by long-time FELC member, Walt Rugland.

Please register on the FELC homepage, www.felc.com, or by calling the Church Office (733-2303), so we can properly prepare for you to share your thoughts and experiences. Each session is highly structured, and will take one hour to complete. Choose from these two opportunities:

• **Downtown Site:**
Sunday, June 23, 9:40 -10:45 a.m.

• **North Site:**
Wednesday, June 26, 7:20 - 8:25 p.m.

To help us plan for space and materials for participants at each of these sessions, please complete your registration, ASAP, so we can better prepare to accommodate everyone who is interested. Make your voice heard - join us!

Let's share in the "Light" Work

Did you know that FELC Downtown Site worship services are filmed and shared on our website? You can find a link to the recorded services on our FELC Home Page, www.felc.com.



In order to continue to provide this wonderful enhancement to our website, we need more volunteers willing to be trained to help film the services. You've heard the saying, "Many hands make light work." Filming of our worship services is "Light" work indeed! It is bringing the Light of God to those who cannot be with us in person on a Sunday morning. Please prayerfully consider becoming trained on how to film the worship service. Please contact Kathy Larson at klarson@felc.com or 733-2303.

Calling all Bakers

Calling all bakers! FELC needs Coffee Hour baked goods. Please consider sharing a gift of baking and indicate by completing the sign-up sheet located near the Coffee Hour tables. Each baker should plan on bringing approximately 4 dozen goodies. Not only does this gift enhance the coffee hour but it goes a long way in helping to control congregation expenses. Thanks for your generosity!

Fox Valley Lutheran Homes News

Join FVLH Activities: Check out the webpage at www.fvlhomes.org and follow the monthly calendar. Bible study on Sunday, Sheepshead on Sunday and Wednesday, Tai Chi on Monday, Dominoes and Cribbage on Tuesday, Exercise for Seniors on Wednesday, Bingo on Thursday, Dominoes on Saturday. Check the calendar for times. Always room for one more. Come and join the fun!

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. through the summer at local churches in the larger Fox Valley area of Northeast Wisconsin. This week:

June 19: Stephen Schnurr
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
804 Grignon Street, Kaukauna

Three, Three, We Need Three! (And Maybe One More)

There are two things that are certain about the 7th grade Confirmation class starting in September. 1) They are going to be awesome! 2) They need two, possibly three (depending on class size), small group leaders to join their leadership crew! We're looking for three adults or teams that are open to sharing their gifts to take the three year Confirmation journey with their small group of six to eight students. Most weeks there is class on Wednesday evenings from 7-8 p.m. from fall to spring plus a couple of other events throughout the time in the program. You don't need to be a Biblical expert to be a great small group leader. You just need the desire to connect with youth, explore questions of faith, share your own Christian experience, and foster trust in your group. Wish you knew more? Please contact Kirsten Owens, Faith Formation Coordinator, at kowens@felc.com or (920)733-2303 to discuss this super opportunity!

Do We Have Your Registrations?

If you haven't yet registered your kids for Sunday School or Confirmation, now is the time! Go to www.felc.com/forms to let us know we'll have the pleasure of learning about Jesus together this fall!

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
- Tom Passehl
- Jake Wilson
- Nico & Sarah Tournant
- Brooke Bauer
- Michael Anderson
- Chad Koepsel

Prayers of Comfort

Families of:

- Nancy Belling
- Joan Bizer
- Marjorie Buchanan
- Linda Codd
- Robert "Bud" Hoepfner
- Mitch Lundgaard
- Bonnie Prodoehl
- Cindy Schneider
- Joan Spaulding

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

This Week's Community Care Focus

- **Rebuilding Together Fox Valley**
contact@RTFV.org; (920)733-1272
www.rtfv.org



Kid's Life Summer Schedule Held at Both Downtown & North Sites

Tuesdays-Thursdays

11:30 a.m. - Noon: BYO Lunch

Noon-3 p.m.: Program

Join the summer interns for songs, Bible stories, skits, crafts, games, and this year: fun weekly themes!

June 18-20

Theme: Game Show/Trivia Week

June 25-27

Theme: Health Week

July 2-3 (NO Kid's Life on July 4)

Theme: Dream Job Week

July 9-11

Theme: Music and Unique Instruments Week

July 16-18: NO Kid's Life

(July 15-17: Christmas in July Camp, Plamann Park*)

July 23-25

Theme: Nature and Environment Week

July 30 - Aug. 1: NO Kid's Life

(July 29 - Aug. 1: VBS, North Site*)

Aug 6-8 (Final Week)

Theme: Culture Week

**watch for more information in upcoming announcements*

This is a FREE drop in program. Be sure to have a Youth Ministry Release form on file which can be found at www.felc.com/summer. Questions? Contact Youth and Summer Ministry Coordinator, Heidi Schreiner at hschreiner@felc.com.

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

June 16, 2019

From the Desk of Summer Intern Kent Van Beek

Hello my name is Kent Van Beek, and I am thrilled to be serving as a Summer Intern. This has been a position I have looked forward to ever since I was a kid participating in the intern-led events each summer.

This past week I gave the first sermon of the summer at Wednesday Worship (6:15 p.m. at the North Site each Wednesday through the summer) and would like to extend a massive thank you to Pastor Jeff Tengesdal who gave me a lot of help and support. As I have never given a sermon on a Gospel reading before, I was a bit nervous about analyzing the reading and coming up with information to talk about. Pastor Jeff helped me to do just that. I would also like to express my gratitude to all of the congregation who supported my fellow interns and me at the first

summer worship service and the intern panel that followed.

I am very excited to play cards (specifically Sheepshead) at Fox Valley Lutheran Homes in a couple of weeks. As of the time that I am writing this, Day Camp has not yet happened, but I am looking forward to meeting all the kids there and know that we are going to have a great week. As of the time this will be available to read, Day Camp will sadly be over, so go ahead and ask any of the interns about our week with the kids. We'd be happy to share! As well, pictures from Day Camp will be available on our FELC Facebook and Instagram accounts.

I hope to continue to grow in this intern family as the summer progresses and can't wait to grow in my own relationship with God.

-Kent Van Beek

Pool Party for All on June 19!

After worship on Wednesday, June 19, is the free FELC Pool Party for All at Mead Pool from 8:15-10:15 p.m. Just like the name says, this event is for any and everyone at First English! Swim, dive, play games, or feel free to stay dry and just enjoy the early summer evening breeze. Students that were in grades 3 and higher this year can attend without a parent. We ask that all younger students attend with an adult. First English will have exclusive use of the facility and we want to celebrate the start of an FELC summer together!



Youth News

June 16, 2019

More Intern-led Programming Begins This Week!

Buffalo Wild Wings

Hey students grades 9-12: join the interns for food, fellowship and fun Mondays beginning June 17 at 11:30 a.m. at Buffalo Wild Wings on Calumet St. in Appleton. Bring money for your own lunch and be ready to have a great time!

Young Adult Fellowship

Young adults ages 19-25, join in a study without homework but WITH dinner! Meet at the North Site Gathering Area at 5 p.m. on Mondays beginning June 17, and enjoy quality time with interns and other young adults.

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!

Did You Know?

In order for individuals under the age of 18 to participate in First English programs, FELC must have a Youth Ministry Release Form on file. Haven't filled one out yet for your child? Pick up a form in the Gathering Area or the Church Office, or visit www.felc.com/summer. There you can download a form and fill it out by hand, or fill it out online and email it to the church. This form will cover all events for the 2019-20 school year.

Be a Part of Wednesday Worship

Do you play an instrument? Enjoy singing? Do you like to read in front of people? Are you interested in ushering or greeting? The interns would love you to be a part of the Wednesday Worship team. Middle and high school students, if you are interested in participating in this meaningful ministry, please contact Abbey at adesrochers@felc.com, or Carmen at cdanz@felc.com. Get involved!

Middle School Youth Group

Students in Grades 6-8 meet on Tuesdays beginning June 18, for a variety of activities and service projects. Times and locations will vary each week so watch the bulletin and the church calendar for information. Feel free to bring friends!

This week: Pizza and Board Games

5-7 p.m. at the North Site. Bring a favorite board game if you have one!

Learning Luke With Worship, Beaded Bible Bracelets, & Mobiles This Summer

The summer is busy and sometimes we don't make it to worship but any time we come together as God's people we should be praying, supporting, and learning no matter if the congregation is large or small. This summer the majority of the readings will be from Luke. We invite anyone attending service on Sunday mornings or Wednesday nights to mark our worship times as we string a bead of that week's assigned color on a bracelet that will grow over the course of the

14 weeks. On the final summer worship we will add a cross charm and people can take their Beaded Bible Bracelet home as a reminder of this summer's lessons. In addition, students can color a new mobile piece that includes the color of the week, the symbols, and a small poem about the focus word each week which will be assembled the final worship of the summer. Let's string together the lessons of Luke and enjoy coming together as a faith family this summer!

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

Join the summer interns as they lead a worship service with music, message and Holy Communion. This service is a great option if you travel on the weekends or would just like a midweek worship experience. Bring your family and friends. Hope to see you there!



FELC DS Engage Page: June 16, Holy Trinity Sunday

John 16:12-15 *"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you."*

Sun. June 16: Family Project: We want to be engaged in our faith, but our devotion can turn into a seriousness that borders on somberness. On Trinity Sunday, this somber attitude becomes apparent as we use various analogies in an attempt to explain the unexplainable in a 4-minute children's sermon. Instead, this article of faith is best when simply enjoyed. Yes –enjoyed! From the joyful dance of creation described in Proverbs 8, we learn that God operates in community. The ego of the individual gives way to a playful relationship described by words like rejoicing and delight. As a family, talk about what you enjoy doing together. In the same way, God desires a joyful relationship with us. Discuss what it means to come to God with a playful heart.

Mon. June 17: Prof. Karoline Lewis points out our desire to take the mystery out of the Holy Trinity. *"An easy litmus test for determining those who have replaced the living God with a systematic God is to listen to the language. It's a slippery slope between theological hope and doctrinal certitude; from believing in God's promises to absolute claims about what God is saying and what God wants; from awe and wonder to dogmatic determination.* Whenever you think about the wonders of the universe, consider the Trinity. Forgo explanations & stand in awe of the Good News of grace, love, forgiveness and hope that overwhelms us through the workings of the community of the Trinity.

<http://www.workingpreacher.org/craft.aspx?post=5354>

Tues. June 18: My husband raises peacocks and must put a netting over their fenced-in area to prevent their flying away. After many years, we had to get a new netting this spring. The netting was held up by ropes that ran through eye-bolts that were on top of numerous tall posts. By trial and error we ran the ropes, and inevitably, a post would fall over our out of place as we added new posts. (It must have resembled a scene from Laurel and Hardy.) It wasn't until we had at least three ropes running through many posts that we began to attain stability. God supports us through the Holy Community of Three, giving our lives stability through the love of the Triune God.

Wed., June 19, Isaiah 65:1-9 This passage reminds me of a football game. So often, one of the receivers will be downfield, wildly waving his arms' trying to get the attention of the quarterback. You can just imagine him back in the huddle, telling the quarterback, *"I was wide open."* The trouble was, the quarterback wasn't looking at him. Perhaps he had a preferred receiver, or perhaps there were linemen breathing down his neck making it nearly impossible to get a pass off. In Isaiah, the Lord says, *"I said, 'Here I am, here I am,' to a nation that did not call on my name."* (v. 1) What is keeping you from seeking the Lord? Is your attention fixed elsewhere? Are you being distracted by life's struggles? Be assured the Lord is with you, waiting to hear your cry for help.

Thurs. June 20, Psalm 22:19-28 In his book, *Psalms*, James Limburg contends the "why" questions from this psalm go unanswered. He shares *"Elie Wiesel's account of a young student going to a synagogue to hear a particularly powerful rabbinic teacher. When the young man returned he reported, 'My questions remained questions. But somehow I could go on.' There are questions that we shall never have answered. Many of them begin with 'Why?' ...The psalm suggests that the place to bring these questions is before God, in the company of the gathering of believers. The questions may well remain questions. But we may discover that, somehow, we shall be able to go on with life."* If you are dealing with persistent questions, take time to be with the community of faith! *Psalms*, Limburg, James, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000) p. 71.

Fri., June 21, Galatians 3:23-29 Paul points out the radical inclusion experienced in Christ. *"As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."* (v. 27-28) Historically, the church is known for excluding people from the grace and love of Christ, especially those in the LGBTQ community. Here Paul makes it clear that this is a non-issue. In Christ these differences simply do not exist. When we create roadblocks to ministry; when we exempt ourselves from listening to others based on any of these criteria, we are standing in the way of the unity that we are called to experience in Christ.

Sat. June 22, Luke 8:26-39 As soon as the demon identifies itself as "Legion", the people's minds would turn toward the occupying Romans, and the meaning of this story would expand. Prof. Judith Jones explains, *"The region of Gerasene is the setting of a horrifying historical event. According to Josephus, during the late 60s CE, toward the end of the Jewish revolt, the Roman general Vespasian sent soldiers to retake Gerasa (Jewish War, IV, ix, 1). The Romans killed a thousand young men, imprisoned their families, burned the city, and then attacked villages throughout the region. Many of those buried in Gerasene tombs had been slaughtered by Roman legions."* When dealing with occupying forces of any kind, be they demons, Roman soldiers, memories, or addictions, we can rest assured that Jesus comes to cast out any power of evil.

http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=4108

*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: June 16, Holy Trinity Sunday

John 16:12-15 *"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you."*

Sun, June 16: Family Project: We want to be engaged in our faith, but our devotion can turn into a seriousness that borders on somberness. On Trinity Sunday, this somber attitude becomes apparent as we use various analogies in an attempt to explain the unexplainable in a 4-minute children's sermon. Instead, this article of faith is best when simply enjoyed. Yes –enjoyed! From the joyful dance of creation described in Proverbs 8, we learn that God operates in community. The ego of the individual gives way to a playful relationship described by words like rejoicing and delight. As a family, talk about what you enjoy doing together. In the same way, God desires a joyful relationship with us. Discuss what it means to come to God with a playful heart.

Mon, June 17: Prof. Karoline Lewis points out our desire to take the mystery out of the Holy Trinity. *"An easy litmus test for determining those who have replaced the living God with a systematic God is to listen to the language. It's a slippery slope between theological hope and doctrinal certitude; from believing in God's promises to absolute claims about what God is saying and what God wants; from awe and wonder to dogmatic determination.* Whenever you think about the wonders of the universe, consider the Trinity. Forgo explanations & stand in awe of the Good News of grace, love, forgiveness and hope that overwhelms us through the workings of the community of the Trinity.

<http://www.workingpreacher.org/craft.aspx?post=5354>

Tues, June 18: My husband raises peacocks and must put a netting over their fenced-in area to prevent their flying away. After many years, we had to get a new netting this spring. The netting was held up by ropes that ran through eye-bolts that were on top of numerous tall posts. By trial and error we ran the ropes, and inevitably, a post would fall over our out of place as we added new posts. (It must have resembled a scene from Laurel and Hardy.) It wasn't until we had at least three ropes running through many posts that we began to attain stability. God supports us through the Holy Community of Three, giving our lives stability through the love of the Triune God.

Wed., June 19, Isaiah 58:9b-14 A great saying by former President Ronald Reagan has been making the rounds on Facebook lately. He said, *"There is no limit to the amount of good you can do if you don't care who gets the credit."* A corollary might be, *"There is no limit to the amount of good you can do if you don't care about who to blame for failures."* In this passage, the Lord says, *"If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry & satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness & your gloom be like the noonday."* (vs. 9b-10) In other words, if we stop pointing the finger of blame at others, and if we do the good that we can without worrying about being honored for it, we become a source of refreshment for the entire community. Consequently, we find that we, too, are comforted and find living water in the parched places of our lives

Thurs, June 20, Psalm 103:1-8 Adam Hearlson writes, *"We humans have a complicated relationship with memory. We are the only species that has conceived of history & has made any attempt to catalogue that history for the sake of remembering it. The whale does not care about yesterday. The jackal is not plagued by regret. The mollusk does not write books for posterity's sake. Part of what it means to be human is to remember. ...The Psalmist remembers the forgiveness, the healing, the redemption, the coronation, the satisfaction, the vindication, the justice, the teaching. The Psalmist speaks in generalities but we could fill in these actions with stories of Israel's past."* May we fill in stories from our pasts, too, until we are moved to cry with the psalmist, *"Bless the Lord, O my soul!"* https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2940

Fri., June 21, Hebrews 12:18-29 The covenant that was mediated by Moses on Mt. Sinai was between the children of Israel and God. The Israelites were so fearful of the presence of God that they asked Moses to intercede on their behalf. The author of Hebrews compares that covenant based on the Law with the covenant through Jesus whose blood "speaks a better word than the blood of Abel." It is through the sacrifice of Christ that we are invited to the city of God, to stand in a company with innumerable angels and the assembly of firstborn enrolled in heaven. We need not fear, since God, the one who would judge us, has made us perfect and has numbered us among the first-born! Our proper response is reverence and awe. The most mighty, most holy God has offered us a new and living covenant.

Sat, June 22, Luke 13:10-17 It's a little hard to believe that anyone would be so heartless as to complain about a healing on the Sabbath. Apparently, Jesus' works of healing did not fit into the leader of the synagogue's neat box of proper temple proceedings. It is similar to when one pastor in a congregation throws obstacles into the work of an associate pastor, because they are intimidated by the honor or following that pastor is getting. (I am NOT speaking from my own experience but from that of friends.) We must pray that we do not impede, but rather rejoice in the Spirit's work, even when that work lessens the light that shines on our own efforts or contradicts our preferences.

*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>.