

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 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 Oct. 13, 2019 At-A-Glance

Sunday, Oct. 13

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

Monday

9 a.m.
1:30 p.m.
5:15 p.m.
8 p.m.

Tuesday

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

Wednesday

10:30 a.m.
Noon
4:15 p.m.
5:45 p.m.
6:15 p.m.
6:30 p.m.
7 p.m.
7 p.m.

Thursday

6 a.m.
9 a.m.

Friday

6:30 a.m.

Saturday

7 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 20

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

Celebration Day; Scrip Pick Up

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

DS=Downtown Site
NS=North Site

Quilting, DS Fellowship Hall
Intern Enrichment Ministry Team, DS Lounge
Stephen Ministry, DS Lounge
Pick Up Basketball League, NS Activity Center

Men's Ministry, NS Library
Property Oversight Committee, DS Office Workroom
Executive Committee, DS Lounge
Finance Committee, DS 110
ATC Basketball, NS Activity Center

Bible Study with Kirsten, DS 110-111
Noon Hour Philosophers, DS Fellowship Hall
Mental Health Ministries, DS 221
Handbell Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room
Wednesday Worship, DS Sanctuary
Parish Choir Rehearsal, DS Choir Room
Confirmation General Sessions, DS Assigned Rooms
refuel (grades 10-12), DS Youth Room

Early Risers Women's Study, DS Lounge
Adult Bible Study, DS Lounge

Men's Ministry, NS Library

Hymn Festival/Reception, DS Sanctuary/Gathering Area

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

Help at the Pillars Adult Shelter

Pillars Adult Shelter (formerly Fox Valley Warming Shelter) provides safe overnight shelter, meals, and hospitality for homeless people in the Appleton area. On Friday, Nov. 1, FELC members will provide dinner for about 60 shelter guests. (Thank you to the Tuesday Morning Men's Ministry for hosting the FELC Nov. 2 evening.) Sign up with link on www.felc.com or in the Gathering Area next Sunday. Sign up to bring part of the meal (lasagna, garlic bread, green salad, and bars and cookies; or serve dinner and clean up. Volunteers must be 18 years old, but 14 to 18 year-olds may help if accompanied by a responsible adult. Children under age 14 are not allowed at the Shelter. Questions? Contact Diane Putzer at dkputzer@yahoo.com or text or call (920)284-9228.



First English Lutheran Church
www.felc.com 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 being a welcoming, inclusive congregation.

Sunday at FELC

Altar Flowers

The Downtown Site altar flowers are provided by Roberta Roloff and family in honor of AJ Frea's birthday today.

Celebration Sunday!

Thank you to all who have already turned in a *2020 Statement of Intent* cards. Our *Creating Ripples of Faith* fall stewardship campaign is off to a great start toward reaching the \$77,000 goal for new ministry initiatives. So far, the more than 160 completed cards show a nearly 6.5% increase in pledged revenue for 2020. We are \$30,000 towards our goal of \$77,000 in increased giving for 2020, with an increase in the number of electronic givers and in the pledged giving for next year. Please join in this day of celebration with some special treats in the Gathering Area.

Visioning Survey: Your Input Needed

First English is going through a visioning process to guide our long range planning for the future. We want to hear from you, even if you've already participated in one of the previous input gathering sessions! This is the remaining congregation-wide effort to collect feedback for this extremely important endeavor. Each confirmed household member can participate online at www.felc.com by clicking the survey link (hardcopies available by contacting the Church Office). Responses must be received by Oct. 20.

Announcements
Week of Oct. 13, 2019

Join a Small Group

A Counter-Cultural Community sermon series begins today at the Downtown Site and Oct. 20 at the North Site. There is still time to begin your own small group or join with an existing small group to get the most out of this sermon series and to deepen your own relationships. Sign up in the Gathering Area, call the Church Office or email Jeanne at jgronholm@felc.com to get connected.

Fox Valley Lutheran Homes (FVLH) News

Pie & Ice Cream Social & Auction: Today, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., Linwood Commons, 425 N Linwood Ave., Appleton. Enjoy pie and ice cream and bid on a special item! All proceeds support the Ministry of FVLH.

Looking Ahead

Heaven and Earth Awake and Sing Hymn Festival This Saturday

Join us in singing hymns old and new with guest organist Daniel Schwandt and FELC's Parish Choir with Director, Nathan Birkholz. We celebrate the 40th anniversary of our beloved pipe organ this Saturday, Oct. 19 at 7 p.m. at the Downtown Site. A free-will offering will be taken to support future restoration of the organ and a reception will follow.

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) Thank You!

Thank you to ALL who donated items, skills and time to create the LWR kits and quilts, and to those who helped load the trailers yesterday to ship these blessings to persons in need around the world. All totaled, FELC donated:

- 42 baby care kits
- 55 personal care kits
- 130 School kits
- 200 quilts

A special thanks to Gary Haberland who has organized the trailer load for many years. As Gary steps away from the role, FELC is in need of a replacement. If you are interested in this once-a-year project, please contact Meri Hujet in the Church Office at 733-2303 or mhujet@felc.com.

Advent Devotional Writers Wanted!

Christmas bells aren't ringing yet, but work is underway for this year's FELC Advent Devotional booklet - a daily devotional written by and for FELC members to enhance the Advent season. If you'd like to be involved by writing a devotion, please contact Alyssa Douglas at douglas.alyssa@gmail.com or (920)364-0006.

October Wreath Sale Fundraiser

Boy Scout Troop 12 is selling Christmas wreaths and will have a table set up in the Gathering Area after all services on Oct. 20 and 27. Cash or check payment will be required at the time of sale. Product is expected to be available for pick-up at the church location where purchased, on Sunday, Nov. 24. Scouts BSA Troop 12 appreciates your support!



50+ News

October is the perfect time for soup! You're invited to a Soup and Sweets Buffet on Oct. 24 in the Downtown Site Fellowship Hall. A social time begins at 11 a.m. with a buffet of delicious soups and tasty desserts served at 11:30 a.m. No need to sign up and there is no cost but a freewill offering will be taken for the Good Samaritan Fund. Join us for great fellowship and great food!

Little Dresses for Africa Final Push!

Thanks to all who have sewn pillow case dresses for this project. We are pleased that we are able to send 12 dresses in our final shipment. If anyone wants to add to that donation please turn in any completed dresses to the Church Office before Nov. 1. The dresses will then be sent to Nancy's Notions in Beaver Dam where they re-package them according to size and ship to an orphanage in a third world country.

Crossways Harvest Gala

Since camping ministries play such a vital role in engaging young people with their faith, First English has accepted the opportunity to serve as the Partner Congregation for the Crossways Harvest Gala. The event to support Crossways Camping Ministries is Saturday, Nov. 2, from 5-8:30 p.m. at Liberty Hall in Kimberly. FELC youth will be volunteering at the event. If you have a heart for camping ministry, contact Pastor Mary at mbauer@felc.com to attend this meal and silent auction.



A Peaceful Purpose at FELC North Site

Join us on Saturday, Oct. 26, 9 a.m.-noon at the North Site to knit and/or sew hats for individuals that experience hair loss either through cancer treatment or other medical conditions. Patients are invited to Peaceful Purpose, Inc., to help regain their confidence and feel their best inside and out. Open to all skill levels. Join us!

Noon Hour Philosophers (NHP) 2019

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

- Oct. 16: *Building Community Engagement in an Increasing Digital World*
Chad Dorn, Communications Coordinator, City of Appleton

Former Wisconsin Governor Martin Schreiber To Speak

Join us on Oct. 23 for a special presentation: Martin Schreiber will speak on Alzheimer's caregiving. Martin has written a book entitled *My Two Elaines*, the love story of Marty and his wife Elaine that began in the 1950s when they were high school freshmen, and began to take the cruelest of twists some 14 years ago. Don't miss this insightful, informational and emotional program.

Sibiu Adventure

Eleven members of FELC will be in Sibiu, Romania on a mission adventure with members of the Lutheran Congregation in Sibiu. The focus is one of coming to know our Friends of Transylvania and discovering the varied aspects of ministry initiated by the late Pastor Joel Schlachtenhaufen and his wife, Susan. One of the hoped for fruits of this venture is to line up an internship exchange with the college-age youth of Sibiu and the interns here at First English. Additionally, this trip affords the opportunity to share the exciting news of our ability to purchase up to five wheelchairs for their use.

Please keep the following travelers in your prayers: Dan Baumbach, Linda Baumbach, Diane Bemis, Jeff Bemis, Jon Hagen, Joy Hagen, Amy Henderson, Dayton Henderson, Cheryl Quello, Chris Quello, and Heidi Schreiner.

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
- Rev. Kathryn Kuhn
- Barb Olson
- Shirley Larson
- Paul Wait
- Fred Russler
- Violet Havel

Prayers of Comfort

Families of:

- Irma Koehneke
- Jim Lain

Prayers for Those Called to Serve in Other Countries

- Sarah Bauer-Myanmar
- Jack Kent-Slovakia
- Spencer Wentland-Japan

Prayers for Those in the Military

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

Prayers For Community Care

- Valley Packaging Industries & Community 2000

mlebeau@vpind.com; (920)749-5859



High School Youth News

Grades 9-12

Oct. 13, 2019



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

10/16: Special FELC Speaker Walt Rugland, Imagine the Fox Cities discussion

10/23: Discussion on narrative lectionary, the story of Ruth, and writing to college freshmen

10/30: Halloween party - food and games! Costumes highly encouraged!



**Mission Trip 2020
NASHVILLE, TN
June 14-19**

Fundraiser and payment calendar was sent to your email. If You haven't received this, please contact Heidi.

(hschreiner@felc.com)

Group Texting App

Do you ever forget the little details about what's going on in the life of high school ministry at FELC?

Contact Heidi (hschreiner@felc.com) to be added to FELC's 10-12 grade **free** texting group.

Social Media

Follow us at FELC YOUTH on Facebook and felc.youth on Instagram!



October 13, 2019



Information for FELC Youth and Families
Grades K-12



EXCITING STUFF! Now We Need Some Hosts Just For the Basics

Quite a few families have expressed interest in a Birth-to-Preschool Nursery group on Sunday mornings during Learning Time at each site. This is super exciting news! Our original goal was to get this ministry going by January but with just a few folks willing to greet, point out coloring sheets, name tags, and Bible stories, and end our time with a prayer, these groups can get rolling! Contact Kirsten Owens at kowens@felc.com to be a host or part of a host team. With this much interest we hate to wait!

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
Heidi Schreiner, Youth & Summer Ministry Coordinator: hschreiner@felc.com

Love Jesus. Live your call.



Elementary & Sunday School News



Confirmation and Middle School Scoop



Sunday School is Forming for Reformation Sunday

For the last few years we have not held Sunday School the last weekend of October as Appleton Area School District is out of session and the attendance is historically low. But this year, true to our if-we're-coming-together-we're-learning-together mantra, we will be meeting at both sites on Oct. 27 for religious education and learning about David



Becoming King, The Kingdom Divided, and Reformation Sunday. In the Narrative Lectionary and our Lutheran heritage we are talking about changes in thinking and leadership. If you're in town we sure hope to see you Oct. 27!



Small Group This Week

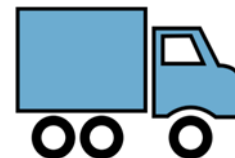
Wednesday is a small group night. Make sure to bring your journal, Bible, and catechism each week.

7th grade: Students should have a chapter 2 Question to Ponder answered in their journals.

8th grade: Students should have a chapter 2 Question to Ponder answered in their journals.

9th grade: Students & parents should have a question or thoughts about how they think God & science work together. Also, students should continue to work on their faith story exercise.

Thanks LWR Truck Loaders!
We couldn't have done it without you!



Luther Roses Needed

Keep a lookout for an email this week with a Luther Rose coloring page attachment. If you're able, color this sheet as a family in the traditional colors and talk about the symbolism of each. Then bring them to church sometime in the next couple of weeks and drop them in the marked bin in the Gathering Area so they can be used on Reformation Sunday. Thanks a bunch!

Never Too Late To Add Your Voice!

At the Downtown Site it's never too late for students to participate



in either the Angelus (grades 3-6) or Cherub Choirs (K-2) on Sunday Mornings from 8:50 to 9:10 a.m.



Seraphim Choir Sings & Keeps Singing!

Seraphim Choir sings during the 6:15 p.m. worship at the Downtown Site, Wednesday, Oct. 23. Who should be there? Anyone who has enjoyed learning the Katie Adams/ukulele led songs during the end of Confirmation large group. Meet in Fellowship Hall at 6 p.m. for a quick run through before worship. Want to keep singing with Seraphim? Head on up to the Choir Room on large group nights during music time. A reminder to parents, those students participating in Seraphim Choir will be dismissed at 8:15 p.m. following choir practice.

Have questions or want to volunteer?
Contact Kirsten Owens at kowens@felc.com or 733-2303.

FELC DS Engage Page: Oct. 13, 18th Sunday after Pentecost
Counter-Cultural Community: Community of Love

Ruth 1:1-17 *In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, & a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he & his wife & 2 sons...They went into the country of Moab & remained there. But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, & she was left with her 2 sons. These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah & the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there ...10 years, both Mahlon & Chilion also died, so that the woman was left without her 2 sons & her husband. Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had considered his people & given them food. So she set out from the place where she had been living, she & her 2 daughters-in-law, & they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. But Naomi said to her 2 daughters-in-law, "Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead & with me. The LORD grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband." Then she kissed them, & they wept aloud. They said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight & bear sons, would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the LORD has turned against me." Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. So she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people & to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." But Ruth said, "Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, & your God my God. Where you die, I will die-- there will I be buried. May the LORD do thus & so to me, & more as well, if even death parts me from you!"*

Sun, Oct 13: Family Project: According to Pastor Jeff, "Food is a significant ingredient in shaping community." Talk together as a family about your favorite food memory. What made it significant? Plan together for a meal that incorporates food that reminds you of someone you love.

Mon, Oct 14: Pastor Jeff writes, "In the first chapter of Ruth, an Israelite & a Moabite unbelievably form a deep community." Though an unusual pair, by "mutual acts of caring, they form an ever-stronger sense of belonging." Community flourishes when committed love is seen in caring acts.

Tues, Oct 15: In "Deepening Community", Paul Born explains the importance of listening to one another's stories. We demonstrate caring by getting to know the back-story for the actions of others. To create a community that nurtures life, we must invest time listening and pray for understanding.

Wed., Oct 16, 2 Samuel 5:1-5, 6:1-5 Though a refugee in a new homeland and a converted follower of Yahweh, with Naomi's help, Ruth does find a new husband in Jerusalem. She marries a relative of Naomi's late husband. Years later, her great-grandson, David, will become the most honored king of Israel. Over and over again, God takes what is least and last and uses it in his plan. In the great genealogy of Jesus in the first chapter of Matthew, there are five women. Tamar participated in an unholy relationship with Judah. Rahab was a prostitute. Bathsheba was seduced by King David while still married to Uriah. Finally, there is Mary, an insignificant resident of Nazareth. God does not wait for people to become holy and important to use them. God is at work making his kingdom a reality with ordinary and fallen people. In the process, God shines a light on their brokenness, helping them become seeds for hope.

Thurs, Oct 17, Psalm 150 There have been many moments in worship when I have felt God's presence. Though faith is not dependent on our emotions, it's nice to know that God doesn't expect us to always be calm and serious. For those of us from a Scandinavian background, the jubilation that is expressed in this psalm can seem foreign to a church setting –describing the sort of craziness seen only at sporting events. If you haven't had a chance to participate in a celebration at church lately, picture in detail the exuberance that inspired the writing of this psalm. Tambourines, dance, organs and clashing cymbals – all coming together to make a joyful cacophony of praise to God!

Fri., Oct 18, 2 Samuel 6:1-5 Community parades often cause me to have a surge of emotion –sometimes causing tears! Marching bands seem to elicit a sense of well-being –a belief that, at least for this moment, all is right with the world. That certainly must have been evident as the people of Israel marched down the dusty road with the Ark of the Covenant, their sign that God's presence was with them. As they were bringing it home to Jerusalem, "dancing before the Lord with all their might," they were also renewing their commitment to Israel's covenant with the Lord. Each Sunday, we have the opportunity to do the same. As the cross is carried into the chancel, or as the praise team or organ begins the first song, we have an opportunity to "dance before the Lord", renewing our commitment to live lives worthy of God's calling.

Sat, Oct 19, Mark 11:8-10 As Jesus enters Jerusalem, the people cry out, "Hosanna", which means "save now." William Barclay teaches that this is the same cry people would use to ask a king to help & protect them. "It was a cry to God to break in & to save His people now that the Messiah had come." It's chilling to realize that people were expecting Jesus to come and reign as a king on earth. When this expectation wasn't met, they turned violent. They had no idea that their cry would be answered on a far greater level with Jesus' saving work on the cross. Their limited vision and earthly expectations kept them from seeing God's glory break in. Do you have unmet expectations? Pray you would have the vision to see how God is working to save all God's children –now.

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

FELC NS Engage Page: Oct. 13, 18th Sunday after Pentecost

Deuteronomy 5:1, 6-21 & 6:4-9 Moses convened all Israel, & said to them: Hear, O Israel, the statutes & ordinances that I am addressing to you today; you shall learn them & observe them diligently... I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the 3rd & 4th generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me & keep my commandments. You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. Observe the sabbath day & keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor & do all your work. But the 7th day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work -- you, or your son or your daughter, or your male or female slave, or your ox or your donkey, or any of your livestock, or the resident alien in your towns, so that your male & female slave may rest as well as you. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, & the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand & an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day. Honor your father & your mother, as the LORD your God commanded you, so that your days may be long & that it may go well with you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. You shall not murder. Neither shall you commit adultery. Neither shall you steal. Neither shall you bear false witness against your neighbor. Neither shall you covet your neighbor's wife. Neither shall you desire your neighbor's house, or field, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. ... (6:4) Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, & with all your soul, & with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children & talk about them when you are at home & when you are away, when you lie down & when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Sun. Oct 13: Family Project: God asks the Israelites to keep his words & to talk about them. Like discussing a good movie or book, through conversation the impact of God's words extends into our daily life. Discuss the 10 Commandments: Which is the easiest? Hardest? Most important?

Mon. Oct 14: The Sabbath is a gift! In his book, "Sabbath", Wayne Muller writes, "Sabbath time is not spiritually superior to our work. The practice is rather to find that balance point at which, having rested, we do our work with greater ease and joy, and bring healing and delight to our endeavors."

Tues. Oct 15: "Remember that you were a slave", the Lord tells the Israelites. Then he directs them to let all those under their authority enjoy Sabbath rest. Our ability to exercise compassion rather than authority is enhanced as we remember the times when we have been in need.

Wed., Oct 16, Ruth 1:1-17 Last week, we left Moses on the edge of the Promised Land, giving the 10 Commandments to the Israelites, who fought for and won possession of the land of Judah. For many years, they were ruled by judges, people who God raised up for a particular task and time. During the time of the judges, an Israelite couple took their 2 sons & traveled to the land of Moab to escape famine. While there, both sons married women of Moab. Life was precarious as a refugee family, and the husband and two sons died. The wife, Naomi, and her two daughters-in-law had dim prospects since she was a widow in a patriarchal land. She determined to make the journey back to her homeland—her safe arrival and welcome were uncertain; her future was precarious. Her daughter-in-law, Ruth, was young and strong and likely could have found a new husband in her own country of Moab. Out of love and loyalty, she stays with Naomi. Deep, loving relationships can sometimes call us to acts of selflessness. If we stay when it is easier to walk away, we are doing our part to create the kind of deep, loving community that God desires for all people.

Thurs. Oct 17, Psalm 85:7-13 Imagine being in the center of the wonderful storm described in Psalm 85. Steadfast love comes at you from the right, faithfulness from the left. Righteousness approaches from the front and peace from behind. Another measure of faithfulness springs up from below and you're drenched in a downpour of righteousness. It is the space where our spirits long to be—a place where just laws bring about lasting peace in the world and where righteous living draws people into lives of faith. Look for signs of God's presence, knowing "The Lord will give what is good." (v. 12)

Fri., Oct 18, Ruth 1:1-17 What causes Ruth's great love for Naomi? Ruth has no assurance of a welcome in Israel—the book of Deuteronomy forbids Moabites to enter the assembly of the Lord because of an incident dated back to when the Israelites were leaving Egypt (actually because the Moabites did not give the Israelites food and water). Both Ruth and the other daughter-in-law, Orpah, are crying when Naomi tells them to return to their homes. In spite of jokes to the contrary, God can use the great love and understanding shown by a mother-in-law to heal hurts a woman may have experienced in her own family. Take time to praise God for all the loving and loyal women in your life.

Sat. Oct 19, Mark 3:33-35 Modern American society tends to lift up family ties in a way that can devalue other connections. Ruth's love took her beyond her birth family to an expanded world and a new homeland. Jesus asks us to view all those who follow the will of God as brothers, sisters, and mothers. The term "family values" can be used as an excuse for behavior that is centered only on the good of our nuclear family, ignoring the needs of the larger community. While each of us is called to honor our father and mother, our actions also must show a connection to our larger family—all the children of God. Naomi's family became refugees in Moab, as they were in search of food. May we open our eyes and (along with our families!), help those in need.

*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>.