

THE ENGLISH STEW

Monthly Newsletter of the

FIRST ENGLISH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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FROM OUR CHURCH COUNCIL PRESIDENT- Hello First English Family, As Pastor Patrick is on paternity leave, I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you more information regarding Bishop Elect Tim Graham who will assume the office of Bishop of the IK Synod on September 1. Below is an article that was published in the Living Lutheran Magazine; it gives a lot of insight as to who Pastor Graham is and what he will bring to the IK Synod. Later in the STEW I will share with you information as to how you can receive this information free of charge online.

“Timothy Graham didn’t plan on becoming a bishop. “I knew my name would be lifted up, but I didn’t have any expectations,” said Graham, who serves as a pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne, Ind.

Although he knew he was under consideration for bishop of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, Graham didn’t fill out his biographical information for this year’s assembly ahead of time. “Well, if the Holy Spirit wants it to happen, [it will],” he thought. “I could not have planned it.”

When Graham found himself on the ballot for bishop, he shared his life passage with the assembly: 1 Timothy 12-17, which centers on Paul’s transformation, made possible through God’s grace. “I said I could think of a million reasons why I shouldn’t be bishop—that’s the way I started [my remarks],” he said. “I meant it wholeheartedly.”

But Graham also shared some of his accomplishments and experiences in ministry, including bringing the financially struggling congregation of Messiah to stability, partially through alternative revenue methods. He successfully completed a \$2.3 million building renovation there without debt, and now serves alongside nine staff members“

It wasn’t my plan to be standing up there,” he said of the assembly election process. “The overwhelming response I’ve heard from people was that I was just down-to-earth, and they didn’t feel like I was pushing to be there in that moment.” (continued on page 2)

For the last three years, Graham has served on the synod council, to which he was reelected—as well as elected to its executive team—on June 6. On June 8 he was elected the synod’s bishop. (“A trifecta,” he said.)

“It was a surprising journey.”

Deep roots in the church

Graham was adopted as a child while his adoptive father was enrolled at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. “So I’ve been part of the Lutheran church my whole life,” he said. When his father became a pastor, Graham went with him on ministry visits and to assemblies and other church events. “I certainly had a familiarity with how the church functioned at a broader level,” he said.

Graham’s father ran a ministerial alliance of ecumenical congregations in Fort Wayne, growing the group from 80 congregations to 150. “What I saw was how he worked with leaders from other places, and that was very important to him,” he said. “In part, what the ELCA is about is that, aside from the differences we may have, we’re bridge builders. So I think I learned some of that from my dad, just witnessing his work and watching the things he did.”

About eight years ago, Graham’s father died. “When I was elected, my initial thought was, ‘I wish he could have been here,’” he said. “It was a whole range of emotions.”

“Maybe there are some things I can share that I’ve learned along the way to help them renegotiate their path or find new ways to thrive.”

Graham’s first call was as redevelopment pastor of Light of the Cross Lutheran Worship Center in Fort Wayne, where his father had also served. “I knew the ladies,” he said of the congregants. “They remembered me as a little boy.”

Light of the Cross would ultimately close two and a half years later. “That was brutal for me,” Graham said. “Closing that ministry was a hard reality for me.”

It’s a reality the synod is regularly confronted with. “Indiana-Kentucky is mostly a rural synod,” he said. “You have some larger cities, but the majority of congregations are rural, smaller congregations. Like many of the other synods, and probably like many other denominations, the rural areas and smaller congregations have really struggled.”

Graham sees meeting the needs of those congregations as a top priority for his ministry as bishop. He expects to be “navigating the realities of some decline in the church, some challenges that smaller churches have, and making sure that we can help them to thrive the best that they can in their communities,” he said. “Maybe there are some things I can share with them that I’ve learned along the way to help them renegotiate their path or find new ways to thrive.”

Servant leadership

Graham identifies two aspects of his life that are critically important to his leadership and to his ministry: family and recovery.

“Dad, you should be a pastor!” It was a sentiment Graham’s daughter shared with him at the dinner table when she was 6 years old. At the time, he appreciated her encouragement but hadn’t yet seriously begun to consider ministry. That path began through his participation in Alcoholics Anonymous.

“I’m a recovering alcoholic, so that’s a big thing for me,” he said. “I’ve been sober 24 years, but in the last couple years I’ve been going to more meetings and helping more people there. That’s been a big gift that gives me life outside of the church. I really enjoy being part of that community, because I’m not ‘Pastor,’ I’m not ‘Bishop,’ in that meeting. I’m just Tim, an alcoholic. And then it’s an opportunity for me to help people in another way.”

There’s a line in the “Big Book” of Alcoholics Anonymous that is read in the program: “Our very lives, as ex-problem drinkers, depend upon our constant thought of others and how we may help meet their needs.” It resonated deeply for Graham. “Interestingly, that was the reason I went to seminary,” he said. “When I read that, it made me think that my life could be used in a greater way to serve other people.”

After following in his father’s footsteps by also attending Wartburg, Graham began pastoral ministry. When Light of the Cross closed, he began a call as an associate pastor of Messiah. Four years later, he became senior pastor. “Servant

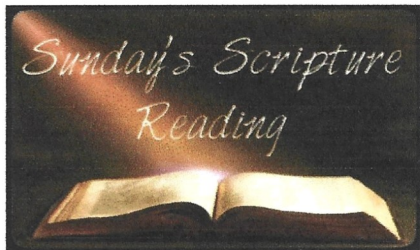
leadership is a big part of how I approach ministry,” he said. “Even to my staff, I’m there to serve them and to help them thrive, as opposed to the other way. I think it’s mutual.”

Although it will be an adjustment for Graham and his wife to move from Fort Wayne—where their four adult kids and seven grandkids also live—to Indianapolis, he is eager to begin serving in his new role, which he will do when he takes office Sept. 1.

“I don’t have all the answers by any means, but I’ve had a broad range of experiences, from closing a congregation to helping one reestablish itself,” he said. “I think that will lend itself well to serving as bishop.”

—written by John G. Potter who is content editor of Living Lutheran. He lives in St. Paul, Minn.”

BIBLE READINGS FOR SEPTEMBER -



Sept. 1—Pentecost 15

Deuteronomy 4.1-2, 6-9

Psalm 15

James 1.17-27

Mark 7.1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Sept. 8—Pentecost 16

Isaiah 35.4-7a

Psalm 146

James 2.1-17

Mark 7.24-37

Sept. 15—Pentecost 17

Isaiah 50.4-9a

Psalm 116.1-9

James 3.1-12

Mark 8.27-38

Sept. 22—Pentecost 18

Jeremiah 11.18-20

Psalm 54

James 3.13-4.3, 7-8a

Mark 9.30-37

Sept. 29—Michael & All Angels

Daniel 10.10-14; 12.1-3

Psalm 103.1-5, 20-22

Revelation 12.7-12

Luke 10.17-20

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR SEPTEMBER -

On Sunday, the 29th, we will join Gloria Dei at their building for worship at 10:00 am.

Assisting Minister:

Barb Finley

Lector:

1—Audra Hershberger

Acolyte:

1—Lynn Hixenbaugh

Ushers:

Barbara Dietz

8—Jeff Nickerson

8—Eric Petersen

Mitch Walls, Jr.

15—Doug Streich

15—Judy Nickerson

22—Celia Walls

22—Charlotte Walls



Counters:

1—Lynn Whittaker, Eric Petersen

8—Jean Whetstone, Mark Kobold

15—Sharon Engstrom, Barb Finley

22—Eric Petersen, Jill Schultz

Fellowship Hostess:

1—Sharon Engstrom

8—Pat Teverbaugh

15—Sherry Lambert

22—Audra Hershberger

Altar Guild:

1, 8, 15—Barb Dietz

22—Sherry Lambert

Communion Bread:

Audra Hershberger

Gratitude Corner:

1—Jean Whetstone

8—Lynn Whittaker

15—Sharon Engstrom

22—Eric Petersen

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES-

Birthdays:

1—Jamie Hershberger
2—Charlotte Walls
7—CeCelia Walls
9—Tina Stedman
10—Steve Schultz
17—Jeff Nickerson
20—Tony Hershberger
21—Kaylee Hershberger
23—Judy Nickerson
27—Alison Kjoller
30—Valerie Eckenberger

Anniversaries:

9-3-1966—Don & Kathy Coleman—58 Years!!
9-27-1974—Lee & Roxanne Ewing—50 Years!!



NEWS FROM W/ELCA- After much prayer and consideration, WELCA has made the decision to end the Rummage Sale. After 27 years, it seems sad but necessary. Our congregation has grown smaller and older. The amount of work necessary to have a successful sale is now beyond our capabilities.

This does not mean that WELCA is disbanding. We have already started planning for our Advent and Christmas programs. Just as a reminder, WELCA is a national/international organization. We support programs in our church but also in our community and beyond.

Thank you for your support in the past and in our continuing endeavors.

Respectfully submitted, Barbara S. Dietz, Coordinator

GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS.—Plan to stay after 10:30 service on Sept 8 as we assemble our Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief with our Gloria Dei friends. These kits will then be delivered to St. John's Lutheran church in Fort Wayne on Oct. 19 and from there they will be distributed to people in need of these items around the world. This is a wonderful opportunity to be able to help fellow Christians around the world and to let them know we care about them. THANK YOU to everyone who so generously donated items for these kits.



INFORMATION ABOUT THE LIVING LUTHERAN MAGAZINE- As I mentioned earlier, there is a magazine Living Lutheran which a number of us had sent to our homes over the years. There is now a digital copy available to you at no cost. Go to their website: Livinglutheran.org. to learn about how to subscribe. You may choose how often you receive it, read past articles and explore the other opportunities they have available. Sharon



PRAYER GARDEN REDEDICATION- The Faith in Action (FIA) Ministry Team has chosen September 22, 2024, for the Rededication of the Prayer Garden. This FIA Ministry Team, along with other dedicated volunteers has worked many hours this spring and early summer to overhaul the garden, bring it back to its glory and make it a quiet place to offer personal prayer. It is also a simple place to get your mind off the busyness of life, the to-do lists, the chaos of relationships, and the world crises long enough to connect with God.

As a congregation we will commune with nature outside in the Prayer Garden for our Sunday Service on September 22, 2024, at 10:30 am. This special service will be followed by an outside Fellowship hour. If the weather doesn't permit, we will convene in the sanctuary as usual. (Bring your umbrellas just in case!).

NEWS FROM OUR FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL—September means the return to preschool! Although staff have put in many hours before their first official school days begin. They had Professional Development hours to complete with our Conscious Discipline video, book study and discussion. Each teaching team met with me to talk about the beginning of the year as well as attending the first staff meeting, mid August. The last week of August, our teaching teams traveled to children's homes for a personal visit. This helps the start of the school year by meeting in a location that children feel comfortable with.



Most noticeably, teachers have been preparing their classroom with changes to the learning spaces for this new year. We are so excited that our chair painting project is over but it did lead to a few shelves needing a coat (or two) of paint! We are thrilled with our teaching teams this year and we finally have our website updated to reflect our new teachers. It will be a new adventure for me as I settle into being the Director only this school year; I am looking forward to being able to fully support teachers (and children) in various ways in all classrooms as well as have time in the office with Marsha (and Pastor when he returns)!

Our September activities will include an Open House on Thursday, Sept. 5 from 3:30-5pm for new and returning families to see the classrooms. New children have had individual visits as well to help the home to school transition. Families can participate in our Meet and Greet Picnics after school on Sept. 18 and 19 to get acquainted with other families attending their child's school day. We will also be doing some community service our first month of school as we donate food for Hunger Action Month. Once we get our first days of school routine settled in, it will be time to plan and gain volunteers for our Fall Fun Fair, Oct. 4th from 5-7pm

We hope September weather will be sunny and warm to help us adjust to the school routine as we enjoy time inside and out!

First English Lutheran Preschool Director,

Tracy Gleissner



JOINT WORSHIP SERVICE, SEPT. 29th— MARK YOUR CALENDARS! On Sunday, Sept. 29th, we will join our friends at Gloria Dei at **10:00** for a joint worship service. At this service Cheryl Avery, our Thrivent representative is going to be giving a short presentation on several things that Thrivent has to offer; many of these items can result in a significant tax savings, especially for folks on fixed incomes. Be sure to plan to worship that day with our Gloria Dei friends to hear what Cheryl has to say.”

JOIN US TO WATCH "THE CHOSEN" - Watch "The Chosen" together over at Gloria Dei. On Tuesday, Sept. 3rd, Pastor Ken Peterson is leading a group in watching and discussing the TV series "The Chosen", the fifth episode. The show is a dramatization of the Gospel narrative based upon the life of the disciples. The group will meet weekly in the fellowship hall of Gloria Dei from 7 p.m. to about 8:30 p.m., watching one episode per week and having discussion afterward. It will take eight weeks to get through the first season, after which we will take a break and reconvene to watch the second season sometime later.



KUEHNERT FALL FESTIVAL AND KUEHNERT MILKHOUSE - A number of you have expressed an interest in taking a "field trip" to Fort Wayne to visit the Kuehnert Fall Festival and Milkhouse. The Festival starts Sept 13 and runs through Oct 27; Friday 5 - 10, Saturday 10 - 10 and Sunday 12 - 5. If you are interested in going, speak with Sharon about what dates might work for you so that we can try to organize this event. For more information on this opportunity visit: Kuehnertdairy.com. Thank you. Sharon

IT'S TIME TO PLAN FOR OUR JINGLE BELL HOLIDAY BAZAAR!

Our holiday BAZAAR will be held this year on Saturday, NOVEMBER 2nd, 9:00—3:00 p.m. We are looking for more vendors to fill our tables. If you know of anyone or yourself who has a craft or product to sell, please let them know about our bazaar. One 6 foot table is \$30.00, any additional tables, \$25.00 more. Audra Hershberger will chair this fundraiser again for us this year. On that same day we are also planning to have our NELSON'S PORT-A-PIT fundraiser!



JEFF & JUDY NICKERSON for trimming all the low hanging branches on our trees; these branches were making it difficult for our mowers to mow.

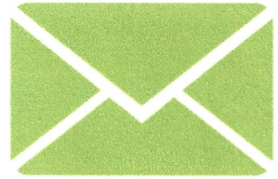
LEO LAMBERT for the use of his truck and for assisting SHARON ENGSTROM in picking up these branches and hauling them away.

In order for the Preschool staff and students to see more clearly through the windows, SHARON ENGSTROM washed the windows in the preschool rooms; there are still a few more that need to be washed, so reach out to Sharon if you would like to assist in the job.

Thank you to everyone who chose to enjoy an evening of fellowship at Four Winds Field. Even though it was a tough game for our Cubbies, it was a beautiful evening with 47 people attending.

A HUGE THANK YOU to the W/ELCA organization and everyone who has been able to help with our Rumage Sale for the past 27 years. It has been a great run but due to the amount of work and woman/man hours involved to set up and run it, the decision has been made to bring it to a close. Be watching for new opportunities for us to earn some money to support our local charities. If anyone has any ideas, please present them to a member of the W/ELCA board.

OUR GREEN ENVELOPE COLLECTION FOR SEPTEMBER—Our green envelope collection for September will be PET REFUGE. They are a nonprofit, (501c3), no-kill animal shelter located in South Bend. Backed by a group of amazing volunteers they strive to provide the best care possible for any animal in their care while working to find them a forever home. Their building is located at 4626 South Burnett Drive, and they also maintain several foster homes for both dogs and cats. Every cat or dog they adopt out is spayed or neutered to help control the large pet overpopulation problem. They are all up to date on needed shots, and are microchipped. Their cats are all Leukemia and FIV tested and their dogs are all heartworm tested. Here is a list of items they need if you would like to donate those instead of cash/check. Continue to make your check out to First English. The green envelopes can be found in your pew rack. Thanks!



Needed: Pro Plan wet & dry kitten food; Baby food in glass jars like chicken, turkey, ham; Temptations; Churu; KMR milk replacement; Peepads for animals (all sizes); cat trees; cat tunnels; 10” round scratching pads; clumping cat litter; laundry soap without fragrances; baby wipes; Dawn blue dish soap with the little ducks on the front label; paper towels; bleach; Windex; reams or cases of white copy paper; 2-pocket folders with cats or kittens on the front; Batteries, size AA & C.



FIRST ENGLISH RETURNS TO 10:30 AM WORSHIP—Beginning on Sunday, September 1st, First English will return to the **10:30 SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE**. We will continue this schedule through the end of December.

September

October 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 First English returns to 10:30 worship service Fellowship – 11:30 am	2 OFFICE CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAY	3 FELP Visitation and classes begin The Chosen shown at Gloria Dei, 7:00 pm	4 Bible Study at Gloria Dei, 10:00 am Worship & Hospitality mtg., 6:00 pm	5 Mah Jongg, 12:30-2:30 FELP Open House, 3:30-5:00 pm	6 Handmade Ministry, 1:00-3:00 pm	7
8 Holy Comm. – 10:30 am Fellowship – 11:30 am God's Work, Our Hands Sunday-Personal Care Kits	9 Stephen Ministry 7:00 pm	10 The Chosen shown at Gloria Dei, 7:00 pm	11 Bible Study at Gloria Dei, 10:00 am Mah Jongg, 12:30 FELP Board mtg., 6:30 pm Stewardship mtg. 6 pm	12	13 Handmade Ministry, 1:00-3:00 pm	14
15 Holy Comm. – 10:30 am Fellowship – 11:30 am	16 Stephen Ministry 7:00 pm	17 Communion service at Hellenic, 3:30 pm Faith in Action mtg. 3:30 The Chosen shown at Gloria Dei, 7:00 pm	18 Bible Study at Gloria Dei, 10:00 am Mah Jongg, 12:30-2:30 Council mtg., 6:00 pm	19	20 Handmade Ministry, 1:00-3:00 pm	21
22 Holy Comm. – 10:30 am Fellowship – 11:30 am Prayer Garden Re-dedication	23	24 The Chosen shown at Gloria Dei, 7:00 pm	25 Bible Study at Gloria Dei, 10:00 am Mah Jongg, 12:30-2:30 Council mtg., 6:00 pm	26	27 Handmade Ministry, 1:00-3:00 pm	28
29 Joint Worship service at Gloria Dei, 10:00 am	30	1	2	3	4 Handmade Ministry, 1:00-3:00 pm	5