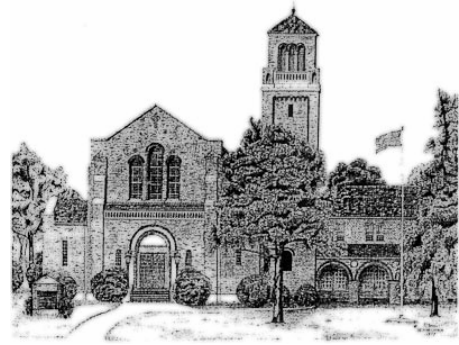


First Edition



First Evangelical Lutheran Church
Houston, Texas

November 2008
Volume 157, Number 11

STEWARDSHIP THANKSGIVING DINNER NOVEMBER 16

All members and associate members of First Evangelical Lutheran Church are invited to attend a Stewardship Thanksgiving Dinner on Sunday, November 16, at 12:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. The church is providing all the meat dishes—hot turkey with gravy, hot brisket with brown gravy, and cold sliced ham. Members are invited to bring a covered dish, a salad, or dessert to share with others. Before long a flier will be mailed asking those planning to attend to indicate which category of food they will bring. Volunteers willing to help with the set-up beforehand and the clean-up afterward should contact Marjorie Ranft, Chairman of the Education and Fellowship Committee, at 713-723-4208.

After the dinner, there will be several brief presentations on the stewardship of time, talent, and treasure. Afterward each family will receive a packet of materials, which will include

- An Estimate of Giving form to indicate how much money each household expects to give next year.
- A Time and Talent Survey form, on which every member and associate member can volunteer time and talent in 2009.

Members and associate members unable to attend the dinner will receive their packets of materials by mail after the dinner. All forms should be returned to the church office by December 1.

No one will want to miss this exciting event. Plan now to come and enjoy a sumptuous meal and discuss plans for the coming year.

THE BIND.....Peterman's Postulate

Jesus' story about the Prodigal Son has one brother running off to squander his inheritance, while the older brother stays home and saves his. When the younger brother finally comes to his senses and returns home, the father throws a big party to celebrate his homecoming. The older brother grumbles about it and feels cheated, but the father assures him that he is loved just as much as his younger brother. There the story ends.

Or does it?

Every congregation has both kinds of members. Some have been there all along and have never quit the church or wasted their inherited faith. Others are members who have ventured far away from the church at some time in their lives, but have now repented and returned, only to find themselves loved and forgiven despite their prodigal ways.

That poses a problem for any church that is made up of long-time members and relative newcomers. The church welcomes all sorts and conditions of people and offers them forgiveness and life without requiring that they do something to earn it. Yet the church as an institution also needs money and time and talent. How do you ask people who have recently joined to give these things without leaving the impression that they owe them in payment for the love they have received?

On the other hand, there are members who have not had a dramatic return but have been there and given all along. How do you ask them to keep on giving without making them feel somehow cheated and used?

The bind this causes can be difficult, but it need not be. Giving is a privilege, not a burden. The joy of returning is no greater than the joy of having been at home all along. God's love binds us to him and to his mission in a way that summons from us a joyful response in giving, for we give, not to pay a debt, but to show our gratitude.

So whether you're an old timer or a new arrival to the church, the same love binds you to God and to neighbor. Let that love call forth from you a response that is generous and filled with gratitude.

ADULT CLASS CONTINUES TO STUDY CORINTHIANS

In September the Adult Sunday Church School Class began a four-month study of Paul's letters to the Corinthians. The course is being taught by Pastor Peterman.

The city of Corinth had been destroyed in 146 B.C. The Corinth Paul knew was rebuilt on the same site a century later, probably under orders from Julius Caesar, and quickly grew to be an important Roman colony. With a population of 600,000, it was a prosperous commercial center. Nearby were held the Isthmian Games, second only to the Olympian Games in importance. On the summit of Acrocorinth, a peak 1800 feet above the city, stood a famous temple to Aphrodite, the goddess of love. In the Greco-Roman world Corinth had become a byword for vice. To "live like a Corinthian" was slang for debauchery.

It was into this troublesome city that Paul carried the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Acts 18 describes the year and a half that Paul spent in Corinth in 50-51 A.D.

Although the New Testament indicates only two letters from Paul (First and Second Corinthians), many scholars believe portions of his letters were rearranged and spliced into each other. By careful study, it is not difficult to distinguish four of Paul's letters in these two books. It is believed these letters were written from 55 to 60 A.D.

The adult class meets every Sunday in the Parish Hall from 10:00 until 10:40 a.m. All adults are invited to attend.

CONFIRMATION CLASS BEGINS

In October a Confirmation Class began at First Evangelical Lutheran Church. The class consists of Bailey Craddock, William Craddock, and Caroline Lucke. It is taught by Pastor Peterman.

One year of instruction is planned. In the fall, the class engages in a survey of the entire Bible. In the winter and spring the class will study Luther's *Small Catechism*. Thus, the only textbooks used in class are the Bible and Luther's *Small Catechism*. The class meets several times a month on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. until noon.

The Rite of Confirmation will occur in late spring at a Sunday service of worship.

SELAH: WHAT'S HAPPENING

Selah (pronounced SEE-lah or SEH-lah) is Hebrew for crescendo; to increase, to lift up; also, the Young Adults at First Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Sunday, November 23 Following the service of worship, *Selites* will congregate at the Black Labrador Pub, 4100 Montrose Boulevard. The Pub features delightful British fare, including Lemon Pepper Cod or Sole in its Coffin, and, of course, the old British standby of Fish and Chips. Following lunch we will head to the Byzantine Fresco Chapel Museum, a part of the Menil Collection. RSVP to Meredith Nelson at 713-688-4081.

Sunday, December 21 Come join in the holiday fun following the worship service, as we gather to decorate the Christmass tree and the nave in preparation for Christmass. RSVP to Meredith Nelson at 713-688-4081.

Sunday, January 25 Mark your calendars now for the BIG EVENT! We will need all hands on deck to put on the GOLDEN AGERS LUNCHEON honoring our senior congregants (ages 75+). Please return your *Selah* helpers survey to Meredith indicating your willingness to serve in the many areas of this event. The luncheon will take place at approximately 12:30 p.m., following worship.

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING DECEMBER 7

The Congregation Council is calling a special meeting of the congregation on Sunday, December 7, 2008, at 12:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall for the purpose of acting on several items.

1. Approve a contract for an Interim Pastor in 2009.
2. Elect four members to three-year terms on Council.
3. Elect one member to a two-year term on Council.

The December issue of *First Edition* will provide further information. Meanwhile, feel free to speak with a member of the Congregation Council about any of these matters.

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An apology is a good way to have the last word.

PRAYER LIST (September 16–October 15)

Members and Associate Members

Richard and Betty Campbell	John Palmer
James Cone	Emilie Ratcliffe
Minnie Lou Gaeckler	Carl Sontag
Minnie Johnson	Deborah Speeg
Robert Jungbecker	Millie Thibodeaux
Lorine Nichols	Betty Wade

Friends and Relatives

Matthew Babin	Lee Orton
Doyle Kelley	Chayton Reel
Barbara Knoeller	Ed Story
Lindsay Lum	Anna Taylor
Karen McCambridge	Ibrahima Traoré
Brian Nelson	Kimberly Westbrook
	Mary Ruth White

MISSION INVESTMENT FUND: ECONOMIC CONCERNS

With the global financial crisis, ELCA ministries and church members can take comfort in knowing that the Mission Investment Fund is stable and strong. The fund has built up capital of more than \$160 million, reflecting a net worth of nearly 30 percent of assets.

The fund maintains strong underwriting standards and did not engage in sub-prime lending or other risky loan practices. It focuses its resources on providing ministry loans, investment opportunities, and support services for members, congregations, and institutions.

The fund maintains a highly efficient cost structure. With low operating expenses, it operates conservatively—and still provides exceptional rates and services to investors and borrowers. In the 90-plus-year history of the Mission Investment Fund and its pre-decessors, the fund has always paid investors their principal and interest in accordance with the terms of the investment. No one has ever lost money on an investment.

For additional information on the Mission Investment Fund, visit the Fund's web site at www.elca.org or contact area representative, Pastor Carol Spencer at 817.927.3239 or Carol.Spencer@elca.org.

LOOKING AHEAD TO DECEMBER

December 2 - 7:30 *Houston Saengerbund*
December 6 - 10:00 Confirmation Class
December 7 - 12:30 Special Congregational meeting
December 8 - 7:30 Executive Committee meeting
December 9 - 7:30 *Houston Saengerbund*
December 14 - 12:30 Congregation Council meeting
December 15 - 6:00 Finance Committee meeting
7:30 Executive Committee meeting
Deadline for January issue of *First Edition*

NAME TAGS

Name tags for members and visitors are provided on Sunday mornings. The ushers help people arriving for worship find appropriate name tags, and after worship the name tags are returned to the baskets in the narthex. It is hoped that this will help people become better acquainted with fellow members and worshippers.

KRISTALLNACHT COMMEMORATION

On Sunday, November 9, at 6:00 p.m. a Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of Kristallnacht will be held at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 2353 Rice Boulevard, in the Village.

November 9, 1938, was a night of violence against Jews and of destruction of the businesses and other property belonging to them. The name “Kristallnacht” refers to the broken glass that resulted from the destruction. Using the pretext of the assassination of a German diplomat in Paris, Goebbels urged violent reprisals. The rampage by Storm Troopers, the SS, and Hitler Youth resulted in 91 Jewish dead, hundreds injured, and 7,500 businesses and 177 synagogues gutted.

The event will feature the music of Bach, Mendelssohn, and Jadasohn presented by the Bach Choir and Orchestra. Mr. Ben Wasserman, eye-witness of Kristallnacht, will speak. It is sponsored by the Holocaust Museum Houston, the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Interfaith Ministries, and the Bach Society at Christ the King Lutheran Church.

Everyone is welcome to attend. Parking is available in the Rice University West Stadium lot.

NEW RETIREMENT COMMUNITY IN HOUSTON

In late June The Village at Gleannloch Farms, Houston’s newest full-service continuing care retirement community, was dedicated. The \$31 million project, sponsored by Lutheran Social Service, features cottage style homes, apartments, and direct care rooms, plus care for seniors requiring assisted living, skilled care, or memory support. The facility is located at 9505 Northpointe Boulevard in Spring, Texas.

“This beautiful, state-of-the-art community will allow seniors to age in place with the maximum of independence and dignity, no matter what level of assistance they may require, for as long as they need it,” said John Berkely, senior vice president of senior services for Lutheran Social Service.

Resident services cover all utilities except telephone and Internet, a flexible dining plan, bi-weekly housekeeping and flat-linen service, as well as health and wellness programs. Each residence includes a fully equipped kitchen and a full-size washer and dryer. Some offer patios or terraces, depending on the floor plan.

Community features include covered parking, a beauty salon and barbershop, a climate-controlled pool, and a fitness center.

For more information about this continuing care community, visit www.VillageAtGleannlochFarms.com or call 281-569-2999.

Lutheran Social Service has been a leading not-for-profit provider of senior housing and health care in Houston for more than fifty years. LSS is supported by the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, as well as other Lutheran bodies in Texas.

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*“The first commandment in the Bible was when Eve told Adam to eat the apple.”
-a British child’s answer to a church school question*

BACH VESPERS

On Sunday, November 16, at 6:00 p.m. a Bach Vespers will be held at Christ the King Lutheran Church in the Village. The Bach Choir and Orchestra will present:

- Cantata BWV 131 *Aus der Tiefen (Out of the Depths)* by Johann Sebastian Bach
- *Richte mich: Gott (Judge me, God)*, (Psalm 43), opus 78, number 2, by Felix Mendelssohn
- *Ich hebe meine Augen auf (I lift up my eyes)* (Psalm 121), opus 128, by Salomon Jadassohn

The Bach Society offers its programs to the entire community without charge. However, a free will offering is received at each event to support the work of the Society. Information about membership in the Bach Society may be obtained at www.BachSocietyHouston.org.

FROM THE PARISH RECORD (September 16—October 15)

Remove from the Membership Roll

CLYDE GILLIAM, by Transfer to the Methodist Church

Add to the Membership Roll

CLARA KARNEI, by Affirmation of Faith

LANE KELLEY, by Transfer from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Downers Grove, Illinois

RICHARD and SARAH MADRID, by Affirmation of Faith and by Transfer from King of Glory Lutheran Church, Billings, Montana, respectively

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

	<u>October 16</u>	<u>September 15</u>	<u>One year ago</u>
Child members	10	10	8
Confirmed members	<u>143</u>	<u>140</u>	<u>113</u>
Total baptized members	153	150	121
Associate members	37	37	18

“The patron saint of travelers is St. Francis of the sea sick.”

- a British child’s answer to a church school question

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY UPDATE

Membership Changes and Corrections (underscored)

JACKSON, CAROL ANN 281-350-1261
435 West North Hill Drive
Spring, Texas 77388

Associate Membership Changes and Corrections (underscored)

RICE, DONALD & VELMA 713-660-6237
4539 Bellaire Boulevard
Bellaire, Texas 77401

VIERECK, HELEN 713-630-0916
2052 Addison
Houston, Texas 77030

Remove from the Membership Roll

GILLIAM, CLYDE

Add to the Membership Roll

KARNEI, CLARA 713-501-0625
20 Pinedale No. 4
Houston, Texas 77006

KELLEY, LANE 713-461-4724
1105 Riverbend
Houston, Texas 77063

MADRID, RICHARD & SARAH 713-861-2629
1116 Nicholson
Houston, Texas 77008