

The Contact

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH — NORFOLK

1301 Colley Ave., Norfolk, VA 23517

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www.flcnorfolk.com

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NO. 10

God's Abundance Shines

*"I believe that God has created me together with all that exists.
God has given me and still preserves my body and soul: eyes, ears,
and all limbs and senses; reason and all mental faculties.
In addition, God daily and abundantly provides shoes and
clothing, food and drink, house and farm, spouse and children,
fields, livestock, and all property; along with all the
necessities and nourishment for this body and life."*

— Martin Luther, Small Catechism,
Explanation to the First Article of the Creed

God's abundance and goodness is seen most clearly in the gift of Jesus – the fullness of God's grace and love toward us, the source of forgiveness and hope, the foundation of our community and our life with God.

God's abundance shines through the glory of creation and all that exists – from the warmth of the sun to the changing of the seasons, the vastness of the ocean to the bright and cheery blooms of flowers and trees, the buzzing of bees to the purr of a contented cat.

God's abundance sustains our very lives – in the food we eat, the shelter that protects us, the abilities that allow us to work, companionship. Each breath we take serves as a reminder that God provides for us.

There are factors that sometimes limit our ability to see God's abundance in our lives. One of these factors is an attitude of scarcity. Many individuals whose lives are filled with possessions live as if they have too little to take any joy in their abundance. All around us we hear messages that there is always "one more thing" that we need for our happiness, and if we believe those messages, we can become trapped in feelings of insufficiency and scarcity.

Another factor that affects our ability to see God's abundance is an attitude of entitlement. Deuteronomy warns against this mindset, "Do not say to yourself, 'My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth.' But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth..." (Deuteronomy 8:17-18a). When we take credit for what we have, we not only



forget that God has given us the gifts and abilities needed to accumulate good things, we also may begin to define ourselves by our possessions and become preoccupied with amassing more and more as confirmation of our success and superiority – all of which runs contrary to the way of Jesus (see Luke 12:16-21).

A third danger for those of us who live with an abundance of possessions is that we may begin to think that we may see ourselves as divinely favored by God, over against those who struggle economically – that somehow our material wealth is a sign of divine blessing on our righteousness and that those who are poor are somehow morally deficient. This, too, runs contrary to the witness of Scripture (see Luke 16:19-21). Like Abraham (Genesis 12:2), we who are materially blessed are called to be a blessing to others, to share out of our abundance, and to work with those in poverty to lift them up.

In the words of Charles Lane, "the proper attitude in the face of God's abundance is awe and thanksgiving – awe that God would entrust so much to me; thanksgiving that God chooses to be in relationship with me, which gives me the opportunity to be a steward on God's behalf." When we replace scarcity thinking, entitlement mindsets, and self-righteousness with humility and thanksgiving, we grow in our awareness of God's generosity towards us. We recognize God as the source and owner of all this, and we take on with greater seriousness our roles as steward and caretaker.

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God's Abundance Shines

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As stewards trusting in God's abundance, we place a priority on the care of the earth – because the earth is the Lord's – and it is our gift and responsibility to tend to the health and beauty of creation.

As stewards trusting in God's abundance, we manage carefully the gifts entrusted to us – our finances, our possessions, our time, our health. We can step out in faith to live generously – to share with those in need, to make a difference in the lives of others, knowing that we will have enough. We are free to give generously because God's generosity will not run dry.

As stewards trusting in God's abundance, we take seriously the call to tend the faith that is within us, to nurture the faith in the youngest among us, and to share the love of Jesus with others in concrete and meaningful ways. We can invest in new ministries and new ideas, we can give generously in ways that impact others beyond our walls, because we know that God's abundance runs

deep. When we as a congregation model God's generosity, we discover a vibrancy and energy running through us, because our life together reflects God's call to be God's presence in the world.

"God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store: nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom, costly cross, grave's shattered door, gifted by you, we turn to you, offering up ourselves in praise; thankful song shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days."
ELW 678

Peace,

Pastor Mims

(adapted from Charles Lane's article,
"A Well-formed Stewardship Leader
Trusts God's Abundance")

"Troubling the Waters"

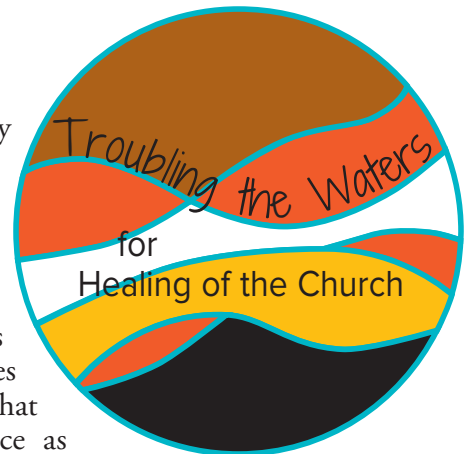
It's not uncommon for Christians to draw a dividing line between the church and government, and when the issue is the church's independence from government, it is an essential dividing line. But we can too easily ignore the fact that when it comes to the government's responsibility to maintain justice in the society, the church should not hesitate to function as a conscience that holds the government responsible. Wherever there is injustice, the church has a significant role to play.

This point is brought out powerfully by the Lutheran founder of Bread for the World, the Rev. Arthur Simon, in his recent book, *Silence Can Kill*. We quote his words here (pp. 213f.):

"The church and the government have distinctive but interrelated roles with respect to love and justice. The church's core mission is to proclaim and live the good news of God's love for us in Christ, which is not an appropriate work of the government. Christians teach and do things that are most deeply needed but for which the government is not suited, such as offering God's mercy and peace to troubled hearts, instilling in people a sense of purpose and hope, urging one another to grow in love and respect

for others as equally cherished by God, and inviting others to become part of a community of faith.

"But the church's mission also includes God's command that people practice justice as an expression of love. This connects us directly to the government's role of legislating, administering, and adjudicating public justice. The church, if it engages faithfully in its mission, pursues justice when it helps people understand that following Christ applies to every aspect of life, including our life as citizens. Through our power as citizens we can help shape public policies not for personal advantage, but for the good of others, both here and abroad, paying particular attention to those who are denied justice. In this way justice is an extension of love applied more broadly." [To which we respond, "Amen, and Amen!"]



October 2021

Office Hours: 9 AM—4 PM Monday-Thursday, 9 AM -1 PM Friday
Men's Bible Study: 7 AM, Wednesdays, IHOP, 114 E. 21st, Norfolk, VA 23517
Women's Bible Study: 2 PM Tuesdays online, please contact Pastor Mims for more information.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 9:00 AM Sunday School for children, youth & adults 10 AM In-Person & Online Worship 11:30 AM End of Life Forum 12 PM FLY Luncheon 3 PM Blessing of the Animals	4 7PM Congregation Council	5 11 AM Lydia Circle 12 PM Adult Ministry 2 PM Women's Bible Study 5:30 PM Tuesday Night Dinner Ministry 7 PM Martha Circle	6 7 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast 12 PM Lunch Ministry	7 7 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast 12 PM Lunch Ministry	1 2 Pastor Mims' Day Off	9
10 9:00 AM Sunday School for children, youth & adults 10 AM In-Person & Online Worship 11:30 AM End of Life Forum 6:30 PM FLC Book Club	11	12 10 AM Quilting Group 2 PM Women's Bible Study 5:30 PM Tuesday Night Dinner Ministry	13 7 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast 12 PM Lunch Ministry	14 7 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast 12 PM Lunch Ministry	15 16	
17 9:00 AM Sunday School for children, youth & adults 10 AM In-Person & Online Worship with Blessing of Healthcare Workers 11:30 AM End of Life Forum	18	19 2 PM Women's Bible Study 5:30 PM Tuesday Night Dinner Ministry	20 7 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast 12 PM Lunch Ministry	21 5:30 PM Laundry Love	22 23	
24 9:00 AM Sunday School for children, youth & adults 10 AM In-Person & Online Worship 11:30 AM End of Life Forum 4PM Academy of Music Concert	25	26 10 AM Quilting Group 2 PM Women's Bible Study 5:30 PM Tuesday Night Dinner Ministry	27 7 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast 12 PM Lunch Ministry	28 9:30 AM Christian Service 7:30 PM Social Justice	29 30	
31 Reformation & Confirmation Sunday 9:00 AM Sunday School for children, youth & adults 10 AM In-Person & Online Worship			General Deadlines: 12 PM Tuesdays—Life Together Weekly Edition 3 PM Tuesdays—Altar Flowers 4 PM, 15th of every month—The Contact Email kminnick@fncnorfolk.com with your articles & information.			

Community Groups (Strickler Hall): Mixed Groups—Sun. 7:00-9:30 PM; Happy Hour AA Home Group—Mon. 4:30—6:30 PM; Happy Hour AA—Mon. 5-7 PM; SAA—Mon. 7-8:30 PM; Thur. 7:30—9:30 PM; Just For Today—Tue. 10-11:30 AM; Continuing Quest—Fri. 12-1 PM; Candlelight—Fri. 8-9 PM; SNL AA—Sat. 7-9:30 PM



Concert In The Courtyard

Sunday, October 24th at 4:00 PM

First Lutheran Church will host the SONO ensemble of the Academy of Music Suzuki Strings program under the direction of Christina Morton. These seven students range from ages 10-17 and represent the cities of Norfolk, Chesapeake, and Virginia Beach. The Academy of Music, where they study, is a non-profit community music school which provides lessons to students of all ages and all backgrounds, regardless of their ability to pay. Throughout COVID these students have attended weekly lessons and outdoor group sessions as well as on zoom. The Academy is excited to celebrate the joy of music making by presenting this free program for the community.

Bring lawn chairs and invite some friends to enjoy beautiful music in FLC's beautiful front yard!

Save the Date

Academy of Music Concert
October 24, 2021 @ 4:00pm
FLC Courtyard



Call Committee Update

The Call Committee has made its recommendation of the Primary Candidate for the Senior Pastor to the Congregation Council for their consideration. The name of the candidate must remain confidential until further in the call process. The remaining steps include:

- The Council schedules an Executive Session to interview and vote on the recommendation
- Council drafts and approves the compensation package
- If approved, an informal meet & greet event will be scheduled for the congregation to meet the primary candidate
- Council schedules a Special Congregational Meeting to vote on extending the call and approve the compensation package
- If approved, the Council formally offers the call to the candidate

- The candidate accepts (or rejects) the call. If the candidate rejects the call, the interview process starts over.

The Call Committee remains active and in place until after the call is accepted by the candidate, at which time the Call Committee is released by the Council.

Speaking for the Call Committee as a whole, we wish to express many thanks to the Congregation, Staff, and leadership of First Lutheran Church for their patience and understanding during this process. We were honored to serve the church in this capacity, and stand ready to help further in the concluding steps of the process, if needed.

Sincerely,

Ed Grogan, Chair
Call Committee

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

"I was a stranger, and you welcomed me"

— Matthew 25:35

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service is the largest faith-based nonprofit dedicated to serving vulnerable immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the United States. For over 80 years, LIRS has fulfilled its mission of welcoming the persecuted, resettling refugees, reuniting children and parents, and rekindling the American Dream. You can learn more about its history, including its formation by the Lutheran Church, and its incredible work here: <https://www.lirs.org/80-years-of-welcome/>

LIRS has been on the front lines of preparing for the arrival of refugees from Afghanistan and welcoming them to our country. It has advocated our government to be more proactive in its rescue of our Afghan allies who have been endangered by the Taliban's takeover. It has worked across political divides to mobilize people around the United States to support our new Afghan neighbors. Here's a video that shares how LIRS is making a difference: <https://youtu.be/03U5yBWV89Y>

Of course, LIRS works with refugees and asylum seekers from all over the world, drawing from its Lutheran heritage and the call in Scripture to care for the foreigner, the alien, among us. Scripture includes numerous examples of God calling upon his people to care for foreigner, to love the stranger, and to remember their own exile – both in Egypt and in Babylon. In the New Testament, Jesus and

O LORD GOD, YOU LED YOUR PEOPLE
THROUGH THE WILDERNESS AND
BROUGHT THEM TO THE PROMISED LAND.
GUIDE US NOW SO THAT, FOLLOWING
YOUR SON, WE MAY WALK ALONGSIDE
VULNERABLE REFUGEE FAMILIES AS
THEY BUILD A NEW LIFE IN THE BOUNTY
OF YOUR LOVE AND MERCY.



his family were forced to flee their home because their lives were in danger from Herod, and the invitation to extend hospitality to strangers permeates the teachings of Jesus and the epistles.

In recognition of the work of LIRS and to express solidarity with refugees and immigrants, the Congregation Council has voted to change the sign posted in our courtyard. This change begins a rotation of signs in our courtyard to share with the community our values and hopes. Supporting refugees seemed a timely modification given the recent events in Afghanistan.



God's Work Our Hands



October Birthdays

2 Oct Don Strehlow	11 Oct Debbie Affeldt	17 Oct Beckett Hutchings	27 Oct Irene Brady
3 Oct Callan Stopa	11 Oct Julie Erwin	17 Oct Carrie Saich	27 Oct Alexandra Cook
4 Oct Dena Strong	12 Oct Mollie Mae Ammons	18 Oct Jim Harvey	27 Oct Donna Koch
4 Oct Joan Werner	12 Oct Samantha DiBiao	18 Oct Cole New	27 Oct Cheryl Weeks
5 Oct Jo Ann Hughes	12 Oct Kerry Kisa	18 Oct Sadie Porter	27 Oct Vicki Wittmann
7 Oct Marilyn (Stephens) Booker	13 Oct Gail Anthony	19 Oct John Azar	28 Oct Frieda Grimball
7 Oct Cassie Elverum	13 Oct CJ Mendelson	20 Oct Jenn Holbach	28 Oct David Kuehl
7 Oct Jim Koch	14 Oct Jack Curran	20 Oct Al Pedersen	29 Oct Kristin Bourcier
9 Oct Katie Alexander	14 Oct Harrison Kuehl	21 Oct Lynda Falkiner	29 Oct Tammy DiBiao
9 Oct Olivia New	14 Oct Joanne Lundquist	22 Oct Jeff Hood	29 Oct Felix Janik
9 Oct Linda Perron	14 Oct Lelia Milner	25 Oct Mary Lou Anderson	31 Oct Tyler Fisher
10 Oct Joe Peterson	15 Oct Matthew Faircloth	25 Oct Ginny Fox	31 Oct Bernard Sutton
	16 Oct Grady Erwin	26 Oct Judy Biboum	

Congregation Council Summary

At our September meeting held Monday, August 30, 2021, via Zoom, the Congregation Council

- Devotion by Rev. Dr. Phyllis Milton – Luke 4:16
- Discussed Council's Activity - God's Work Our Hands – Coat Drive
- Discussed First Lutheran Church landscaping - SOW – four (4) contractors Two (2) bids & One (1) not bidding & One (1) nonresponsive
- Hired the Coordinator Youth Ministry employee – Maren Corliss
- Discussed Rally Day – September 12, 2021
- Selected the rotating signage/banner to be displayed; to create a series of messages that are more inclusive.
- Discussed the Ministry Investment Plan – Council submission date to Trina Winfield is October 01, 2021
- Discussed the appreciation and gratitude to staff and congregants for stepping up for the Mr. Bidle funeral

- Discussed VBS – “Come to the table” was held in-person and the participation from congregants is greatly appreciated
- Discussed Nominating Committee for Council Members rolling off in November 2021- Recruiting congregants.
- Discussed approving the Constitution at the Annual meeting
- Informed that the Call Committee is still meeting and interviewing candidates
- Annual Meeting is scheduled for November 14, 2021
- Covid Task Force provided an update on wearing masks – “it is not a good time to discontinue wearing masks”
- Approved minutes from August 2021 Council Meeting
- Approved next Council Meeting for October 04, 2021, by Zoom
- Shared blessings, prayer concerns and prayer partners

The Congregation Council normally meets at 7 PM on the first Monday of each month. The meeting is open to the congregation.

Connect with Others

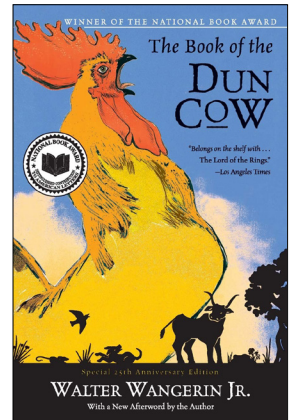
FLC Book Discussion Group

The FLC Book Discussion Group will meet Sunday, November 7th at 6:30 PM to discuss the Walter Wangerin, Jr. classic *The Book of the Dun Cow* (*Chauntecleer the Rooster* #1), 2013 edition.

Wangerin, a Lutheran minister, wrote this National Book Award-winning story of the epic struggle between good and evil. In a time when the sun revolved around the Earth, and the animals could speak, Chauntecleer the Rooster rules justly over his kingdom. But evil is brewing across the river, as the monstrous Cockatrice pillages his own lands and people, preparing for the return of Wyrms who is imprisoned within

the Earth to contain this ancient evil. Keeping Wyrms in his prison is a task too great for any individual animal, so it is up to Chauntecleer to rally all of the animals to work together to keep the Earth safe once again.

Reminder: The book for our October 3rd Book Discussion is *Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion* by Gregory Boyle. Contact Betty Jean Meyer for the Zoom link for the meeting.



Blessing of the Animals Sunday, October 3rd at 3:00 p.m.

First Lutheran honors the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi (c. 1180–1226), patron saint of animals and the environment, with a yearly *Blessing of the Animals* in the courtyard. All pets and their caretakers are invited to attend.

In the case of inclement weather, we will gather in the parking lot, under the porte cochère.

You Are Welcome

This fall, the adult Sunday School class meeting on the third floor at 9:00 a.m. is focusing on a very important subject for congregations here in Norfolk and throughout the country: maintaining a welcome spirit that embraces the stranger. We are particularly centering on persons who experience discrimination because of who they are, whether it be their race, their sexuality, a disability, or whatever it is that makes them “other” from the rest of us. You are invited to come and share in the conversation! This series will extend through most of the fall.

Blessing of Healthcare Professionals

Sunday, October 17
10:00 a.m.

Blessing of Healthcare Professionals

Sunday, October 17th at 10:00 a.m.

St. Luke, evangelist and physician, has historically been remembered by the church on October 18th. This year, on the Sunday before, we will ask a special blessing upon those who work so selflessly and tirelessly in the ministry of healing.

Healthcare professionals and students aspiring to the healing arts are invited to wear their scrubs and bring their stethoscopes or other instruments of their trade for a special blessing upon them and their work.

Lydia Circle

Lydia Circle is meeting Tuesday, October 5th, at 10:30 AM in the Reception Room to hear Pastor Mims discuss Luther and the Reformation. Anyone who is interested in the topic is welcome to attend (even men!) Please note the earlier meeting time. Until Covid abates, we will be wearing masks and we will not be eating. If you have questions, contact Pam Baynard, 681-0157, or pbaynard65@charter.net.

Connect with Word and Body

Prayer Concerns for October

O God, through suffering and rejection you bring forth our salvation, and by the glory of the cross you transform our lives. Grant that for the sake of the gospel we may turn from the lure of evil, take up our cross, and follow your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Give joyful thanksgiving

...For the birth of Reed Johnson (great-grandson of **Judy & David Basco**)

...For the saints who now rest in your embrace

...For the faithful work and service of our Call Committee

...For our church, that it may always be a place where your presence is experienced and shared

Help us

...Restore forests and curb overflowing waters

...Strengthen first responders to help meet the complex needs of others.

...Break chains of discrimination and injustice as well as amplify voices that go unheard and inspire us to advocate for the those who are overlooked

Pray for

...Margaret, Heather, Kevin & their family

...Peace and comfort to the family & friends of **Lew Bidle**

...The service personnel who were killed in Afghanistan and their families

...Those fleeing Afghanistan

...Recovery efforts & aid to Haiti

...For those in the path of hurricane Ida

...For those in the path of fires out west

...Peace and comfort to the family and friends of **Chris Hogan**

...For unaccompanied children at our borders

...Guidance, patience, and discernment for our call committee

...Blessing and protection of children, the elderly, and the sick who cannot be vaccinated

...Justice for the victims of racial oppression & violence

...Those who are dying, that they are secure in knowing that God loves them & will welcome them into everlasting life.

...People fleeing dire humanitarian situations for a better life.

...The sick, that they are comforted and the despairing, that they receive hope.

...Those struggling with addiction and mental health issues.

...Those mourning the death of loved ones.

...For all who cry out to God in any need.

Margaret Ackley, Gail Anthony, Jean Bozeman, Alvene Buckley, Don Buckley, Lucian Clare, Barbara Cordrey, Jennette Franklin, Roger Fuller, Joelle Griffith (mother of Paula Barwick), Valerie & Jim Harvey, Marion Ingersoll, Joann Klotz, Kelley Minschke, Lorna Moss, Bill Newlon, David Perron, Betty Phillips, Fay Rogner, Gail Simos, Shirley Skees, Jane Van Wolkenten, Ken Zaletski, Betty Lou, Dave, Dot Streadfast, Gert, Jimmy, Katrina, JoAnne & Lloyd Rawls, Mark, Marty Parker, Rema, Rob

Those dealing with cancer

Alissa (friend of **Dorothy Shaffer**), Bob, James Collier, Iris Corbin, Dave Guelcher (father of Beth Zaletski), Harriette Wheatley (friend of the **Grogans**), Jenn, David Kelly, Vickie Mack, Greg McCorkindale (brother of **Sharon Asam**), Mark, **Melvin (Jack) Smith**, Phil, Ralph Munsey, Rob, Sandy, Andie Seagraves, Gerald Stover, **Dallas Williams**, Jess WineKing

Military and their families:

All military personnel around the world.

Fox family, Austin Davidson, Tom Douglas, Kyle Hefner, Dan Kelly, Bobby Masters, Nick Masters, Ted Peterson, Brian Becker, Amy Hardbower, Nicolette Huntley, Tim Kelly, Ian Logan, Kelly Mackenzie, John Marfield, Nikki Parkman

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

— **Amen.**

Readings for October

October 3rd

Job 1:1-1; 2:1-10

Psalms 26

Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12

Mark 10:2-16

October 10th

Job 23:1-9, 16-17

Psalms 22:1-15

Hebrews 4:12-16

Mark 10:17-31

October 17th

Job 38:1-7, 34-41

Psalms 104:1-9, 24, 35b

Hebrews 5:1-10

Mark 10:35-45

October 24th

Job 42:1-6, 10-17

Psalms 34:1-8, 19-22

Hebrews 7:23-28

Mark 10:46-52

October 31st

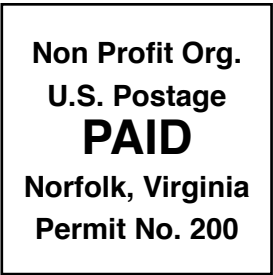
Jeremiah 31:31-34

Psalms 46

Romans 3:19-28

John 8:31-36

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