

# RESURRECTION

Evangelical Lutheran Church

## WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

[www.relcarlington.org](http://www.relcarlington.org) - 6201 Washington Blvd. Arlington, VA 22205

Rev. Harry Therwanger, [pastorharry@relcarlington.org](mailto:pastorharry@relcarlington.org)

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### From the Pastor's Pen

As the pastor of a congregation with a variety of political opinions and having had conversations with a few of you about this I find myself praying for wisdom – a lot. As one who believes in the separation of church and state, weekly I prayerful craft sermons to speak to the readings and moral guidance that the scriptures offer us each Sunday. I do not venture into politics.

Also, as a student of history, I know the United States was not founded as a “Christian Nation,” contrary to much of what I am reading and hearing in the news right now. However, the Founders did expect religious groups to inform the moral fiber of the electorate.

I feel a powerful moral compunction to speak out right now!

Separation of Church and State means the Church will not endorse candidates nor craft its message of the gospel in a way to forward one political party. Separation of Church and State also means that the State may not interfere with the Church.

Many of you know this already but allow me to share the opening segment from the website of the Reynold Law Group in a response to what a clergy person might say or not say from the pulpit.

“In 1954, Congress amended IRS Code § 501(c)(3) to restrict the speech of non-profit, tax-exempt entities—including churches. Before the amendment, there were no restrictions on church speech concerning government or voting, . . .

After the amendment, churches faced a choice: speak freely on all issues addressed by Scripture and potentially risk their tax exemption or remain silent and protect their tax exemption. . . . Ironically, after 60-plus years of strict interpretation by the IRS, there is no reported situation to date where a church lost its tax-exempt status or was punished for sermons delivered from the pulpit. Nonetheless, the law remains unchanged.

Recently, President Donald Trump signed an executive order relaxing the enforcement of the Johnson Amendment. Nonetheless, the amendment is still the law of the land because an executive order does not reverse legislation. Legislation can only be fixed by other legislation or by being ruled unconstitutional by the appropriate court.”

You may or may not be aware of the viral X (Twitter) post from last week. Elon Musk said DOGE would shut down “illegal payments” to Lutheran charitable organizations as they were “laundering funds” for illegal purposes! Mr. Musk may not be aware – religious non-profits expanded mightily under the Reagan administration, as that administration sought to move programs *into religious charities* as they were seen as being less costly, more efficient than government run operations. Most religious charities had a core of committed volunteers who worked for little or no money and could run programs at much less cost to the federal government. Many religious organizations had space largely unused during the week, again a cost savings.

Since caring for the sick, poor, marginalized – the widow, the orphan, the alien – aligns with the Gospel, Christians responded to this call.



As someone long familiar with, and committed to, Lutheran Child and Family Services (LCFS) of Illinois I cannot begin to express the wound this post has caused!!!

LCFS does legal immigrant resettlement, counsels families in crisis, created a nationally copied model to assist the formerly incarcerated that dramatically reduced recidivism, actively sought to combat racism in the foster care system, oversees a foster care and adoption service that is one of the largest in Illinois, and many other good works. The state would leave young people who aged out of the foster care system to their own devices. LCFS created a program to find housing and job training for these vulnerable young adults. Shall I go on?

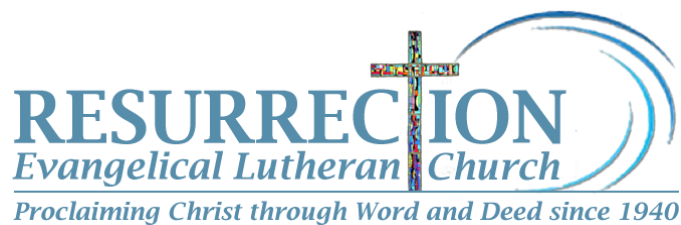
To accuse and threaten all our charities and to single out the work of Lutheran related organizations is, to me, the epitome of “Fake News,” not to mention the slander and disrespect to thousands of our fellow Lutherans and partners of many beliefs who work with us to live out what we believe and make lives better. It ignores the true need and the hurt of those served.

Dear Church, I do not know how to call this administration and it’s unethical and unaccountable wrecking ball tactics to account, except to speak out.

I invite you to follow the link to hear Bishop Eaton speak succinctly and well in this video in her official response to these accusations. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Liqz0VdZG1E>

From our pulpit you will always hear the gospel – “by grace you have been saved!” But I will also be praying for the Holy Spirit to give the words, the wisdom, and timing to chart a moral compass as the disciples of Jesus. Join me in such prayer and action.

Bless you Dear Church!



## CHURCH COUNCIL

This Sunday we officially install our new 2025 Church Council. Congratulations to

Jack Schoen, president  
Valerie Pratt, secretary  
Ron Bergman  
Angie Brooke  
Lee Hansen  
Clair Kanevsky  
Cameron Korver  
Dennis Polla  
John Wood  
Pastor Harry Therwanger

## COMMUNION INSTRUCTION

Pastor Harry will host three sessions on our understanding of Holy Communion March 2, 9, and 23 at 9:00 a.m. The class is geared for our grade-school-age youth, but all are welcome to participate and refresh your knowledge of the Eucharist.

Speak with Pastor, if you would like to participate. Each of the young people who complete the series will have their First Communion after instruction on March 30<sup>th</sup>



# RELC Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Survey



Siblings in Christ, we would love your feedback! Over the past year, the RIC Team has been exploring with the congregation the process of becoming a Reconciling in Christ partner. We have journeyed together through book studies, adult forums, and other activities, and we would like to hear more from you. Please take a few moments to complete [the anonymous survey](#) by February 23. There are paper copies of the survey and a basket to return them in the Narthex, for those who would prefer that method. Thank you for your continued participation! [Click here to take the anonymous survey](#)

## CALENDAR

### Sunday, February 9 – 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany

9:00 a.m. Sunday School in the Parish Hall & “My Bible” Class in Room 13

10:00 a.m. Worship Service, Pastor Harry Therwanger

11:00 a.m. Fellowship in the Parish Hall

35<sup>th</sup> Annual “[Souper Bowl of Caring](#)” - Homemade soups, stews, and chili will be available for purchase during Fellowship Time.

11:30 a.m. [Adult Forum in the Chapel](#)

On February 9 and 16, the Adult Forum after the Sunday Liturgy in the Chapel, led by Gordon Lathrop, will focus on the Gospel according to Luke. The readings from the Gospel in the liturgy for much of this coming year come from Luke, so it is good for us to consider the book more carefully. We will look at the sources for this Gospel, at the meaning of its outline, at some of its principal themes, at ways it differs from the other Gospels, and at what it proclaims to us about the presence of the Risen Christ in the early church and in the church of our own day. Bring your coffee and come!



**Tuesday, February 11,** 10:00 a.m. The *Piecemakers* Quilters Group

**Thursday, February 13,** 11:00 a.m. online Bible Study, contact Pastor Harry for the link

### Sunday, February 16 – 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany

9:00 a.m. Sunday School in the Parish Hall, No “My Bible” Class

10:00 a.m. Worship Service, Pastor Harry Therwanger

11:30 a.m. Adult Forum in the Chapel on the “Gospel of Luke” led by the Rev. Dr. Gordon Lathrop.

Please submit articles to [office@relcarlington.org](mailto:office@relcarlington.org) for the next *The Steeple Light* by the end of the day

**Thursday, February 20,** 11:00 a.m. online Bible Study, contact Pastor Harry for the link

### Sunday, February 23 – 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany

9:00 a.m. Sunday School in the Parish Hall

10:00 a.m. Vicar Jessica Zurcher preaching, Pastor Harry Therwanger presiding

11:00 a.m. Fellowship in the Parish Hall

February 23 is the last day to take the RIC survey, online or paper copies of the survey are in the Narthex. [Click here to take the anonymous survey](#)

**Tuesday, February 25,** 10:00 a.m. The *Piecemakers* Quilters Group

### Thursday, February 27

11:00 a.m. online Bible Study, contact Pastor Harry for the link

7:00 p.m. The RELC Book club will meet on February 27 in the RELC lounge.





Recognizing that February is Black History Month, the book club will discuss the highly acclaimed first novel of James Baldwin, *Go Tell it on the Mountain*. Light refreshments will be served. Contact Jack Schoen, [jbschoen@alumni.colgate.edu](mailto:jbschoen@alumni.colgate.edu) or Christina Cuesta, [christinaw.cuesta@gmail.com](mailto:christinaw.cuesta@gmail.com), with any questions you may have.



## Sunday, March 2 – Transfiguration

- 9:00 a.m. Sunday School in the Parish Hall & Communion Instruction
- 10:00 a.m. Worship Service, Pastor Harry Therwanger  
“My Bible” presentation during Worship
- 11:00 a.m. Fellowship in the Parish Hall

## Tuesday, March 4 – Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, 6:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall

## Wednesday, March 5 – Ash Wednesday

- 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. “Ashes to Go” at the Metro station. Pastor Harry Therwanger
- 11:00 a.m. Ash Wednesday Worship Service, Pastor Harry Therwanger
- 7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Worship Service, Pastor Harry Therwanger



## ELCA and Metro DC Synod News



### Traveling Prayer Night

The next Traveling Prayer Night is on Thursday, February 13, at First Trinity Lutheran Church, 501 4th St. NW, Washington, D.C. A potluck dinner begins at 6:30 p.m., followed by a prayer and meditation service at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome!



### Living Faithfully in Fractious Times

Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Fairfax is excited to invite you and your faith community to join us for an exceptional opportunity to spend an afternoon with Dr. Diana Butler Bass. She will speak on "Living Faithfully in Fractious Times," followed by a book signing and reception.



We are honored to host this prolific author, world-famous theologian, and historian, Dr. Diana Butler Bass, who will lead an inspired and informed discussion on progressive Christianity renowned commentator on contemporary Christian issues. This community-wide event is co-sponsored by the Metro DC Synod of the ELCA and will be held on Saturday, February 22, 2025, from 3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Rd., Fairfax, VA 22032. Free childcare for children between 3-10 years old will be provided for those who register in advance.

A sign-up sheet is in the Narthex. If we have 10 participants sign up, the office will register us as one group and we will qualify for the discounted registration price of \$15.00. If we do not get 10 signed up by February 16th, you will be contacted to register individually at the standard ticket price of \$20.

### 2024 Synod in Review

Celebrate all that God has accomplished through the Metro D.C. Synod in 2024! You're invited to explore the Synod's Year in Review – a vibrant collection of stories, photos, and reflections. Hear from Bishop Ortiz, Synod Vice President, Jennifer Slagle Peck, synod staff, and team leaders to see how God's faithfulness has worked in and through this community. Be inspired by what's possible through the Holy Spirit's movement and invitations.



[https://metrodcelca.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/2024-Metro-DC-Synod-Annual-Report\\_D2.pdf](https://metrodcelca.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/2024-Metro-DC-Synod-Annual-Report_D2.pdf)

### As Dawn Broke over D.C.

Reflecting on Bishop Budde's Sermon. Click here to read the reflection by Bishop Ortiz.

<https://metrodcelca.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/As-dawn-broke-over-D.C.%E2%80%94Reflecting-on-Bishop-Budde's-Sermon.pdf>



### Supporting Lutheran Ministry

In light of recent social media posts attacking the humanitarian work of Lutheran social service agencies. The link below is the response from Katharyn Wheeler, representative on the board of Lutheran Social Services National Capital Area (LSSNCA) She addresses two crucial points: the Synod's steadfast commitment to supporting LSSNCA and similar organizations and how we can effectively respond on social media when confronting injustice—whether related to this situation or other instances of wrongdoing in our community.

<https://metrodcelca.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/How-to-Support-Ministry.pdf>



## RELC Ongoing Programs



### Your 2025 Offering Envelopes Are Here!

Offering envelopes for the new year are available for pickup now in the Narthex. If you don't find envelopes for you or your family, please see Glen Mason or contact him at [gdmason@verizon.net](mailto:gdmason@verizon.net) – there are plenty of envelopes available!



### RIC (Reconciling in Christ)

In the Narthex there are RIC reading materials with an anonymous question box. The RIC Core Team encourages you to go to the RIC official website for additional information: <https://www.reconcilingworks.org/ric/>



### Collection of Food Items for AFAC - [www.afac.org](http://www.afac.org)

We receive non-perishable food item donations in the Narthex for the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC). Donations are collected on the 1st Sunday of every month. The next collection at RELC is March 2, 2025.

### Piecemakers Quilters Group

The *Piecemakers* Quilters Group meets each month on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Join us to put together quilts for Lutheran World Relief that are sent to refugee camps around the world. No sewing skills needed and no experience necessary. Speak with Gail Flatness for more information, [gailflat@gmail.com](mailto:gailflat@gmail.com).



### Music at Resurrection

The Music at Resurrection committee seeks quality musical groups to perform concerts. Email Cathy Carr, [jccarr7@gmail.com](mailto:jccarr7@gmail.com) with concert suggestions.



### RELC Meal Ministry

RELC's Meal Ministry needs volunteers who are willing to cook and bake when the need arises. If you know of someone who needs the Meal Ministry, reach out to Pastor Harry. Contact Mimi Van Poole with questions. [vanpoole2@comcast.net](mailto:vanpoole2@comcast.net)



**Livestreaming Worship** – View past worship services on YouTube by searching for “Resurrection Evangelical Lutheran Church.” See you online.

**Other Announcements** If committee chairs or those responsible for ministry initiatives have announcements, email both Dale, church admin, [office@relcarlington.org](mailto:office@relcarlington.org) and Jack, Church Council President, [jbschoen@alumni.colgate.edu](mailto:jbschoen@alumni.colgate.edu) before noon on Wednesday. Thank you for respecting our time. Announcements will be published for one week unless specific run dates are given.

