

# First Edition

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## **CONFIRMATION ON JUNE 7**

On Sunday, June 7, the Festival of the Holy Trinity, Caroline Leigh Lucke will be confirmed at First Evangelical Lutheran Church. Caroline and her family have been members of our church for two years. She has successfully completed a year of confirmation classes with Pastor Peterman, in which the Bible was surveyed and basic Lutheran doctrine was explained.

Confirmation has had a varied history in the Lutheran church. In the time of Luther, it was considered a sacrament that completed what was only begun in baptism. Luther rejected the idea that baptism was somehow inadequate. He said Christian education should be lifelong. Therefore, the rite of confirmation was unnecessary and misleading the way it was then regarded.

A century or two later, confirmation returned to Lutheran church practice as a kind of graduation ceremony, marking the confirmand's completion of a course of study with the pastor. Unfortunately, this led to the belief that once confirmed, the individual had no further need for Christian instruction. As time passed, the church began to assume that children should not be allowed to receive holy communion until they were confirmed.

In the 1960s an extensive study of confirmation and first communion was made by all the major Lutheran denominations in this country. One result was to affirm that the only prerequisite for receiving communion is baptism, and therefore all baptized children are welcome at the Lord's Supper. A second result was to redefine confirmation as a stage in the Christian growth of an individual, in which the person self-consciously confirms his or her faith and the congregation confirms that person in the faith.

It is now the consensus of most Lutheran denominations that while confirmation adds nothing to baptism, it does serve as an important rite of passage that marks significant growth in the life of a Christian.

## **YOUTH AND ADULTS CONTINUE STUDY OF LUTHERANISM**

In June the Youth and Adult Sunday Church School Class will continue a study of Lutheranism. The topics are:

June 7	The History of Lutheran Denominations in America
June 14	The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
June 21	To be announced (The Rev. Joseph Winston, guest pastor)
June 28	To be announced (The Rev. Joseph Winston, guest pastor)

## **JOIN THE MIDTOWNERS FOR DINNER AND A PICNIC**

Everyone is invited to join the Midtowners to celebrate Oktoberfest in June! We're meeting about 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 10, at Rudi Lechner's, 2503 South Gessner Road, just north of Westheimer. Rudi serves a German buffet, including seven meats and five side dishes, for \$14 on Wednesday nights. The cold salad buffet is an additional \$5.50. Call Carolyn Hokanson at 713-668-2973 by June 7, and we'll reserve a seat for you.

Celebrate the Fourth of July on July 5 with the folks from First! Join us in the Parish Hall for a picnic lunch and ice cream social after worship.

**THANK YOU!!! Peterman's Postulate**

As plans to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of my ordination unfolded, I found myself a bit embarrassed to have so much attention paid to my ministry. Yes, fifty years is a long time to be a pastor, but it is really only one year after another, doing what pastors do.

Then I began to receive cards, letters, flowers, and gifts from people and I heard personal greetings from many who were at the dinner. Some thanked me for things long ago that I had not considered very important at the time, and others reminded me of how I had been present with them at some of the great turning points in their lives.

Gradually, it began to dawn on me that in far more ways than I had realized God had used me to accomplish significant ministry. I finally understood what my professor, Joseph Sittler meant when he said at a festivity in his honor, "It seems I uncorked a lot of bottles for others to get high on."

By the time the evening event ended, I was overwhelmed with gratitude. My parents, John and Mary Peterman, now sainted, had affirmed me in my ministry, even when they didn't always understand or agree with what I was doing. My wife Jane has been and continues to be an incredible blessing to me in countless ways. My family means more to me than I can describe. Then there are the people of the congregations I have served, not only here in Houston but also in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, and Sunset Hills, Missouri.

My gratitude also overflows to Lane Kelley and the blue grass group that provided lively music and even let me sing a couple of numbers with them. I am grateful to all the speakers, not only for what they said but also for what they graciously omitted. I was moved by the personal letter of tribute from Bishop Mark Hanson, Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, delivered personally by ELCA Vice President Carlos Pena.

Then, of course, there is the Planning Committee. Fran Allen spearheaded the effort and, among hundreds of other things, made all the floral arrangements. Carolyn Hokanson provided for the reception after the morning service. Sabrina Smitherman worked tirelessly on a host of details, including the displays and the programs. Nathaniel Winston led the Luther League of Christ the King Lutheran Church in serving the food and beverages. Jamie Brewster handled most of the publicity. And there were the others, Curtis Allen, Bill Bammel, Jeffrey Hokanson, Dean Huffman, Meredith Nelson, Robert Taylor, Ryan King, Carl W. Sontag, Dorry and Carroll Shaddock, Paul Orton, and countless more who helped make the event such a success.

I thank you all, and, most of all, I thank God for calling me to the ordained ministry and sustaining me for my first fifty years as a pastor.

**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.

Saturday, May 9 *Selah* enjoyed a wonderful repast on the hillside of Miller Outdoor Theater. The weather was perfect and the conversation was fun. Wow! Those girls can cook! A great time was had by all as we watched the Houston Ballet's performance of "Classically Contemporary." A favorite for many was "Mediaeval Babes."

Sunday, June 7 *Selah* heads to Nippon, an excellent Japanese restaurant, for a post-worship lunch. The address is 4464 Montrose Boulevard. RSVP to Meredith Nelson at 713-688-4081 by Friday, June 6.

**MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS**

	May 15	April 15	One year ago
Child members	13	13	8
Confirmed members	<u>141</u>	<u>142</u>	<u>130</u>
Total members	154	155	138
Associate members	43	43	35

**OVER 300 ATTEND BACH VESPERS**

More than three hundred people attended the Bach Vespers on Sunday, April 26, at First Evangelical Lutheran Church. The Vespers was sponsored by the Society for Early Music of the Church.

## LOOKING AHEAD TO JULY

July 3	4:00 Wedding rehearsal
	6:00 Wedding rehearsal
July 4	11:30 Wedding
	3:30 Wedding
July 5	12:30 Church Picnic and Ice Cream Social
July 6	7:30 Executive Committee meeting
July 10	12:30 Congregation Council meeting
Monday through Friday every week: <i>Tae Kwan Do practice</i>	

## 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION MAY 17

On Sunday, May 17, the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Ordination of Pastor Peterman was celebrated at First Evangelical Lutheran Church. The day began with a festive service of worship at which the Reverend Michael Rinehart, Bishop of the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, preached and presided at Eucharist. A reception was held in the Beutel Room following the service.

In the evening more than two hundred people gathered for a dinner and program in the courtyard of the church. Live bluegrass music was provided by Lane Kelley, Scott Sylvester, Bill Sincler, and Anita Hammond. (Pastor Peterman even sang several numbers with the group.)

Special greetings were brought by the Vice-president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Carlos Pena, on behalf of Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson. Other speakers included the Rev. Janice A. Campbell, the Rev. Dr. Robert G. Moore, the Rev. James L. Berggren, Wanda Lynn (Tod) Schenck, and Carroll S. Shaddock. Serving as Master of Ceremonies was Dean Huffman, President of First Evangelical Lutheran Church.

A special tribute with a standing ovation was given to Jane Peterman, Pastor Peterman's wife, who had celebrated her 76<sup>th</sup> birthday on May 16.

Friends and relatives came from as far away as Colorado, Minnesota, New York, and Ohio to attend the event.

Serving on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee were Fran Allen (chair), Curtis Allen, Bill Bammel, Jr., Jamie Brewster, Carolyn Hokanson, Jeffrey Hokanson, Dean Huffman, Meredith Nelson, Jane Peterman, Paul Orton, Carroll Shaddock, Dorry Shaddock, Sabrina Smitherman, Carl W. Sontag, and Nathaniel Winston.

As part of the anniversary celebration (although mention during the program was inadvertently omitted), four new chasubles were purchased for the church in Pastor Peterman's honor. The chasubles, made in Belgium, consist of brocade with an orphrey in gold embroidery superimposed on each one. Chasubles are worn by the pastor when presiding at Eucharist. The colors are white, green, red, and purple. Pastor Peterman wore the white chasuble for the first time at the Ascension service on May 21.

## PRAYER LIST (April 16–May 15)

### Prayers for Members and Associate Members

James Cone	Emilie Ratcliffe	Carl W. Sontag
Minnie Lou Gaeckler	Emilie Ratcliffe	Carl W. Sontag
Minnie Johnson	Kenneth Rogers	Deborah Speeg
Lorine Nichols	Janis Rudd	Millie Thibodeaux
Marjorie Ranft	Dolph Schlachter	Betty Wade
	Allison, Dustin, and James Brewster Silk	Chester Yater

### Prayers for Friends and Relatives

Richard Bruce Bell	Edmund Kuempel	Ed Story
Emmett Dixon	Edmund Kuempel	Ed Story
Doris Gorman	Rosamond Landry	Anna Taylor
Jerry Huffman	Lindsay Lum	Mary Ruth White
	Brian Nelson	Howard Wolfer
	Lee Orton	

### Prayers for Other Special Concerns

All who serve in the United States military, especially Robert Edgar Becker  
Jon and Amanda Fielder and their family, medical missionaries in Malawi  
Death of John DeVany, Tom DeVany's father, May 1  
Birth of Emmeline Marie to Michael and Tracy Walton, May 2  
Death of Robert Jungbecker, May 6

**MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY UPDATE** (corrections underscored)

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