

First English Lutheran Church

Wapakoneta, Ohio



THE LORD HIMSELF GOES BEFORE YOU

AND WILL BE WITH YOU;

HE WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU.

DO NOT BE AFRAID; DO NOT BE DISCOURAGED.

DEUTERONOMY 31:8, NIV

Our January 2023 Newsletter

FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)
107 W. Mechanic Street, Wapakoneta, OH 45895
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Meet our staff...

Pastor

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Makayla Frame, Youth 419-738-3911

Church Council

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The mission of First English Lutheran Church is to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ
and to love one another as He loves us.

A Message from Vicar Deb

Who is Jesus?

The Light of the world? John 1

God with us, Emmanuel? Matthew 1

The Messiah, the Savior? Luke 2

The one who Baptizes with the Spirit? Mark 1

I invite you to ponder, who is Jesus? Each Gospel has a different perspective on Jesus and I bet you do also. There is not one answer.

Who is Jesus to you?

Who or what points you towards Jesus?

Where is Jesus active in your life today?

I invite you to take time this month to ponder who is Jesus. Find your favorite chair and make yourself comfortable, light a candle, and read one of the gospels – to see how Jesus is revealed. Who announces Jesus? Who points us regular people to Jesus? John? Simeon? The Shepherds?

And then I invite you to take a few minutes or 10 and let your mind roam. Who in your life today points you to Jesus? Who shows you the light? Who helps you see your gifts and encourages you to use them – sharing God's love with those you meet? Who helps you to stay strong in your faith?

Maybe Jesus is revealed to you through the lights in this dark season? Maybe Jesus is revealed to you in the love and care of a neighbor? Maybe Jesus is revealed to you in the helpless children or in the people who have a hard time being seen or being respected.

Maybe you don't notice Jesus walking with you, leading you to help others see Jesus until well after. This is often how it works. We don't notice Jesus is amongst us until later (See the story of the disciples walk to Emmaus, Luke 24:13-35)

This month we will be hearing through our gospel lessons different perspectives of Jesus.

I invite you to ponder this in worship, in your quiet time, and even as you are going about living life this month.

Thank you Jesus, for sending your disciples to help us see you and your action in this world. Help us to live as you have taught us, loving you and others as you love us, so we may help others see you in us and in the world. **AMEN**



First English's Stewardship Corner:

Where is the Holy Spirit working in our community?

Thank: Thank you for Supporting the Angel Tree – with your help we helped 5 families (5 adults & 13 youth) plus another 5 youth have a better Christmas this year

Ask: Are you regularly practicing Sabbath? Are you encouraging others rest and refresh?

Support & Serve: Support & Pray for our quilters who make such beautiful quilts. Last month they donated quilts to support the Veterans at the Dayton VA Medical Center.

Prayer Practice: This month I invite you to pause, sit down and light a candle. Turn off the TV, lay down the phone and tablet... put on some soft music, or sit in quiet. Read one of the Gospels – the first couple of Chapters and ponder who is Jesus? Take 10 minutes or so with a sketch pad or with a notebook and sketch or jot down what comes to you? What is God bringing to you through this scripture and through your doodles? Close with: AMEN-Thank you God for revealing yourself to me.

Vicar Deb's Seminary Experience:

Thank you all for supporting me and praying for me as I attend Seminary. I'm in between semesters right now.

Luther encourages us to take a break, a sabbath every so often to just be. A sabbath is a time when you rest – and thank God for all God has provided (Genesis 2: 1-3). We Americans have a hard time with sabbath. If there's empty space in our calendar, we want to fill it. If there is time where we are sitting and waiting, or if there is no noise, we open our phones and read or listen to music or play a game. We Americans are terrible at practicing Sabbath – and I am no different.

So for now, this week after Christmas, I'm taking a small sabbath. I'm resting and recharging and I also encourage you to do the same. I encourage you to remember the sabbath day and keep it holy. God encourages you and me and all the others in the world to take time off – to rest our bodies and our minds from constant work. In our day of rest, we are invited to fill up on good things, on God's word, on music, to pray, and then to praise God. We do this in worship, and in our prayer time with God, together or by ourselves. In our rest, and in our soaking in the holiness of God, we are refreshed and reminded we are Holy. Be sure to soak in your Sabbath today!

My 7th term begins on Jan 9, when I travel to Tanzania (See the article later in the newsletter). When I return, I'll also be taking a class on Food of the Old Testament and how food shapes our life and our community and the theological importance of a just relationship with the land and the food it yields.

Growing Disciples of Jesus Christ & Supporting Vicar Deb through Seminary

Our Mission:
to spread the Gospel of
Jesus Christ
and love one another
as He loves us

Graduation
& Ordination
June 2023

Spring 2023

Winter 2023
January 9 to
February 10
2023

Sept 16 to
Dec 20
2022

June 8 to
August 19
2022

Vicar Deb's Classes
Winter 2023

- Global Church Immersion: Tanzania
- Food, Culture & Justice in the Biblical Tradition

How are you
Discipling?

What new
Growth do
you see?

February 26
to May 27
2022

January 7 to
February 20
2022

Sept 17 to
December 20
2021

June 9 to
August 20
2021



Prayer
Partnership and
Internship Teams
Council
Encouragement
Worship
Living into our Gifts!

First English &
Trinity friends
nourish &
support!

FELC Committees, Chairpersons, Council Liaisons

Committee	Chairperson	Liaison
Building & Property	Brenda Shoffstall	Jeff Ritchie
Christian Education/Youth	Rebecca Van Meter	Rebecca Van Meter
Evangelism	Rebecca Van Meter	Denise Kantner
Finance	Cari Frame	Dave Clift
Life & Fellowship	Brenda Shoffstall	Darla Frame
Social Ministry	Rebecca Van Meter	Teresa Fisher
Staff Support	Cari Frame	Jon Schmidt
Stewardship	Meets with Finance	Brenda Shoffstall
Worship & Music	Darla Frame	Georgeann Stienecker



2022 Noisy Offerings

Month	Recipient	Amount Collected
January	God's Storehouse	\$176.87
February	Kids Against Hunger	\$435.69
March	International Ministry	\$171.00
April	Mercy Unlimited	\$144.59
May	Auglaize Crisis Center	\$147.00
June	Family Life Center	\$145.00
July	Compassion International	\$281.00
August	Servant's Day	\$250.00
September	Angel Tree	\$63.00
October	Operation Shoebox	\$73.00
November	Loaves and Fishes	\$72.00
December	Tracy Anderson	\$1,711.00

Our Prayer Corner

Those who would love a visit or a card...

Auglaize Acres	Dennis McCormick
The Manor	Jim Reinhart
Otterbein at Cridersville	Sharon Billiter, Rex Lippincott
Otterbein at St. Marys	Dorothy Dickman
The Gardens	Betty Hague

We especially remember in our prayers...

Tracy Anderson, John Austin, Brianna Bertke, Don Cole, Dominic Cousins, Jacob Cox, Paul Crossley, Donna Stowell Dague, Janice Etzkorn, Connie Kantner, Bryan Katterhenry, Wayne & Judy Kentner, Dave Krites, Rex Lippincott, Lynne Loebach, Sasha Maslov, Dennis McCormick, Cathy & Desmond Miller, Nici Rapp, Sue Schoonover, Pam Schulz, Adam Schulze, Alex Shirey, Seth Thuman, Chaz & Tracy Williams, and Angela.

We remember in our prayers all those affected by the armed conflict in Ukraine. May we share today and always the bread of solidarity and peace.

We remember in our prayers our military serving at home and abroad, under represented and oppressed people, first responders, educators, healthcare workers, and our veterans.

We remember in our prayers our college students:
Amanda Bailey, Katie Ronan, and Haley Schattschneider.

If we are missing anyone in our prayer corner, please call or email the office and let us know. If there is anyone who wishes to be removed, please do the same.

Flowers and Candles

Altar Flowers for the month of January:

January 1 st	--available--
January 8 th	Van Meter's
January 15 th	Brenda Shoffstall
January 22 nd	--available--
January 29 th	--available--

Altar Candles for the month of January:

The **Altar Candles** are given to the Glory of God by Brenda Shoffstall in celebration of God's promises and blessings for this new year.

Ministries in Action

	January 1 st	January 8 th	January 15 th	January 22 nd	January 29 th
Acolyte	Doris Fisher	Makenzie Schneider	Deven Whetstone	Matthew Kline	Harrison Anderson
Lector	several	Ken Frame	Chris Nagel	Sandy Brading	Connie Krites
Ushers	Ken Frame	Dave Krites & Brian Van Meter	Ken Frame & Jon Schmidt	Clayton Fisher & Luke Kline	Steve Stienecker & Jim Kantner
Worship Assistant	Marsha Jackson	Deanna Ronan	Chuck Curry	Jon Schmidt	Susan Miller
Musician	Darla Frame	Karen Luginbuhl	Susan Miller	Darla Frame	Kelly Walls
Preacher	Lessons and Carols	Jennie Grundey	Chuck Curry	Pastor Melodi Hagen	Cameron Bowersock / Vicar Deb
Greeter	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>	Chris Nagel	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>

Altar Guild for January: Sara Young & Angie Bowersock

Fellowship Cleanup for January: Brenda Shoffstall & Chris Nagel

The Word of God

These are the lessons and gospel readings for the next two months. We provide them for you...to read at your leisure, to prepare your hearts for worship, to study the Word of God throughout the coming weeks.

Sunday/ Holiday	1st Reading	Psalm	2nd Reading	Gospel Reading
January 1 st	Numbers 6:22-27	Psalm 8	Galatians 4:4-7	Luke 2:15-21
January 8 th	Isaiah 42:1-9	Psalm 29	Acts 10:34-43	Matthew 3:13-17
January 15 th	Isaiah 49:1-7	Psalm 40:1-11	1 Corinthians 1:1-9	John 1:29-42
January 22 nd	Isaiah 9:1-4	Psalm 27:1,4-9	1 Corinthians 1:10-18	Matthew 4:12-23
January 29 th	Isaiah 58:1-9a [9b-12]	Psalm 112:1-9 [10]	1 Corinthians 2:1-12 [13-16]	John 1:1-14
February 5 th	Micah 6:1-8	Psalm 15	1 Corinthians 1:18-31	Matthew 5:1-12
February 12 th	Deuteronomy 30:15-20	Psalm 119:1-8	1 Corinthians 3:1-9	Matthew 5:21-37
February 19 th	Exodus 24:12-18	Psalm 2	2 Peter 1:16-21	Matthew 17:1-9
February 22 nd Ash Wednesday	Joel 2:1-2, 12-17	Psalm 51:1-17	2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
February 26 th	Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7	Psalm 32	Romans 5:12-19	Matthew 4:1-11

Thank You's

On behalf of the board of directors of God's Storehouse and our clients, we would like to thank the people of FELC for their thoughtfulness in providing food and supplies during Advent.

Sincerely - God's Storehouse

We, the Christmas Jubilee Committee, would like to thank you for your donation of \$300. It is greatly appreciated. With your help, we were able to help 43 families have a brighter Christmas season. We are very grateful for you donation.

Sincerely – Christmas Jubilee Committee

Thanks to all the FELC carolers who gave their time to spread Christmas joy, time is precious during the Advent season. Thanks also for the tasty gift and signed card. Youth choir always brings good memories during Sunday service.

Merry Christmas to All! – Mary Klock

Thank you so much for coming to our home to sing carols. It was so nice and appreciated. Especially thank you for the Advent verses and treats we are enjoying daily. What a wonderful and blessed idea!

God Bless! Merry Christmas! – Jerry & Francene Slife

Thank you to all who helped make the Christmas play special. To the parents who brought their children to practice and helped them practice, to all the youth who acted, sang, and shared the message, to Makayla, Bailey and Rylie who prepared, led and encouraged the youth to shine and to Rebecca Van Meter, our Christian Education and Youth Director who helped coordinate it all!

God's love and light truly shines through you all!

Weekly Attendance and Offerings

<u>Date</u>	<u>Views</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Current Giving</u>	<u>NWOS Benevolence</u>
12/04/2022	14	77	\$12,786.90	\$96.00
12/11/2022	17	89	\$1,997.00	\$153.00
12/18/2022	18	130	\$2,447.00	\$80.00
12/24/2022E	1	75		
12/24/2022L	5	60		
12/25/2022	17	23	\$5,140.98*	\$63.00

*Includes all donations from the Christmas weekend

2023 current budgeted expenses are \$210,480.66, or \$4,047.71 per week.

FELC can now accept online donations through the church website thanks to our partnership with Tithe.ly online giving. Just visit myfelc.org or scan the QR code to the right. From the church website click on the green GIVE button and follow the prompts.

Thank you for your support!



Announcements from Council

After our congregational meeting following worship, we then held our monthly council meeting.

We talked at great lengths concerning Vicar Deb's report and ways to proceed regarding next year's expectations of how she would like to serve us after her schooling is done and our church's needs. We decided while she is traveling to Tanzania for her schooling requirements, Council will hold a of couple temple talks before worship begins on January 15th and 22nd. We would like to inform everyone of the options and facts concerning how we as a congregation moves forward. We really hope we can get some good feedback from you.

We moved on to discussion of our financial information and committee reports. I will be sending out reminders to anyone that normally writes the reports for our annual meeting on February 5th so that they can be to be sent to Chuck by January 15. Council approved going with a contract for outsourcing our janitorial services that will begin in January.

Rebecca Van Meter was hired to fill the Christian Education and Youth Director position.

Election of officers for 2023 were then held. Our 2023 officers will be:

Brenda Shoffstall- President

Teresa Fisher- Vice President

David Clift- Secretary

Georgeann Stienecker- Treasurer

For the January 1, 2023 service volunteers from Council were chosen to help with the lessons.

Our next meeting will be January 15, 2023 and we will begin a new year with lots of wonderful ways we can all serve here at First English. We wish you all a happy and healthy New Year.

Church Council

FELC News and Events...

Personal contact information...if there has been a change in your family's contact information, please contact the church office by email at wapakelc@bright.net or by calling the office at 419-738-3911.

Adult Sunday School is meeting in the parlor at 9:00am on Sunday mornings. We would love for everyone to join our discussion and fellowship. Please contact Rebecca Van Meter if you are interested in joining us via Zoom or Facetime. All are welcome!

Education/Worship Schedule:

9:00 a.m.	Adult Sunday School
9:15 & 11:15 a.m.	Youth Sunday School
9:45 a.m.	Youth Choir
10:00 a.m.	Worship in person and online at www.myfelc.org

Noisy Offering for the month of January: Luke Kline's Eagle Scout Project

Donations are accepted in the chapel and at the back of the church the entire month.

Middle-School and High School Sunday School will be meeting in the basement each Sunday morning at 9:15. Vicar Deb, or her occasional substitute, would love for you to join in the conversation!

Preschool-Elementary School Sunday School has begun. There are two options to participate, at 9:15am and immediately following worship. Each session will take place in the large Sunday School room and last about 30 minutes. Both sessions will have the same lesson taught.

Youth Choir has returned and is open to all youth who would like to participate. Practice will take place every Sunday from 9:45-9:55 in the large Sunday School room.

Men's Night is scheduled for Thursday, January 12th at 6:00pm at Beer Barrel in St. Marys.

Wednesday prayer You are welcome to join us as we pray together on Wednesdays. Pastor Melodi and others pray at Trinity, Moulton at noon and Vicar Deb will be praying at First English at 5:00pm only on Wednesday, January 4 this month.

Newsletter Please call or email the office if you read this note. We would love to hear what you appreciate most about the newsletter. We are interested in your thoughts on our media. Thank you

Wapak Loaves & Fishes Meals need to be reserved by calling 567-204-6708 and can be picked up in the alley behind the Fellowship Hall from 4:30 to 5:30 pm. Please remain in your vehicle and the meals will be brought to you.

Quilting Group meets on third Wednesday of the month, from 10am-12noon in the parlor. If you would like to join this group or have questions, please contact Darla Frame.

Movie Night scheduled for January 13th We will have pizza at 5:30pm, with a movie to follow. The adult movie is *Running the Bases*. The youth movie is *The Star*.

Volunteers needed! We will be taking down the Christmas decorations on Saturday, January 14th at 9:30am and would appreciate all the help that we can get. Thank you!

Red Cross Blood Drive will be held at First English on Tuesday, January 17th from noon to 6:00pm. If you would like to schedule an appointment, please contact Judy Strauser at 419-235-9899.

Offering Envelopes Due to production delays, the 2023 offering envelopes are not available at this time. Until the envelopes arrive, please use a regular envelope, and mark your name on it when submitting your offering. Thank you!

Upcoming Temple Talks Scheduled Council will be holding a couple of temple talks before worship on January 15th and January 22nd. We would like to inform everyone of Vicar Deb's graduation from seminary and of her hopes to continue to lead us. We will share facts concerning how we as a congregation can move forward toward this goal. We really hope that we can hear purposeful thoughts from all of you. Stay tuned for more information regarding the temple talks in the coming bulletins and January newsletter.

Vicar Deb is Going To Tanzania, Africa in January!!

Thank you for supporting me and praying for me as I complete Seminary. As part of my seminary experience, and as part of my scholarship at Luther Seminary, I am invited to travel with my cohort to the Global South. The church in the Global South is growing so much so that the center of Christianity is no longer in Europe or North America but rather in the South, in Africa and South America. Our donor and our school wanted to give us an opportunity to experience this growing vibrant church in the South.

I will be leaving from Detroit on Monday, January 9 and will return on Wednesday, January 25, 2023. We will fly to Dar es Salaam and then travel for a day by bus to Iringa in the Bega Qwa Bega Diocese (FYI - our NW Ohio Synod is partnered with the Dodoma Diocese, which is another 8 hours North by bus). We will spend several days meeting with Tanzanian pastors and seminary students in the Lutheran Center in Iringa to study and discuss ministry topics and challenges for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (poverty, prosperity Gospel, evangelism, pastoral care, women's leadership, Muslim-Christian relations, etc.). Those pastors then will then host us in small groups at their home villages and parishes for worship and fellowship. We will fully participate in the life of the villages.

When I return, in worship on Sunday, January 29, I'll share with you some of the experiences in Tanzania and will share the Love of Christ which is alive there. Join Us!!

While Vicar Deb is out of the country from Jan 9 through Jan 25 on her School Trip to Tanzania, Africa, Pastor Melodi Hagen will be available for Pastoral Care. Please call the First English office to connect with her.

January 2023 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Lessons & Carols Worship @ 10am	2	3	4 12:00pm Prayer @ Trinity 5:00pm Prayer @ FELC Girl Scouts 6:00pm Bell Choir 7:30pm Choir	5	6 5:00pm Depart for YouthQuake	7
8 Baptism of Our Lord Sunday School 9:00am Adult Worship @ 10am Return from YouthQuake in the afternoon	9	10	11 12:00pm Prayer @ Trinity 5:00pm Girl Scouts 6:30pm Confirmation @ Trinity	12 4:30pm Community Loaves & Fishes 6pm Men's Night @ Beer Barrel St. Marys	13 Movie Night Pizza @ 5:30 pm More details to follow	14 Tear Down Christmas Decorations 9:30am
15 2nd Sunday of Epiphany Sunday School 9:00am Adult 9:15 & 11:15am Youth 9:45am Youth Choir Worship @ 10am 11:15am Council Meeting	16	17	18 10am Quilting 12:00pm Prayer @ Trinity 5:00pm Girl Scouts 6:00pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Confirmation @ Trinity 7:30pm Choir	19 4:30pm Community Loaves & Fishes	20	21
22 3rd Sunday of Epiphany Sunday School 9:00am Adult 9:15 & 11:15am Youth 9:45am Youth Choir Worship @ 10am	23	24	25 12:00pm Prayer @ Trinity 5:00pm Girl Scouts 6:30pm Confirmation @ Trinity	26 4:30pm Community Loaves & Fishes	27	28
29 4th Sunday of Epiphany Sunday School 9:00am Adult 9:15 & 11:15am Youth 9:45am Youth Choir Worship @ 10am	30 6:30pm Christian Ed Meeting	31				

February 2023 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 12:00pm Prayer @ Trinity 5:00pm Prayer @ FELC Girl Scouts 6:00pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Confirmation 7:30pm Choir	2 4:30pm Community Loaves & Fishes	3	4
5 5th Sunday of Epiphany 9:00am Adult 9:15 & 11:15am Youth 9:45am Youth Choir Worship @ 10am Congregational Meeting	6	7	8 12:00pm Prayer @ Trinity 5:00pm Prayer @ FELC Girl Scouts 6:30pm Confirmation	9 4:30pm Community Loaves & Fishes 6pm Men's Night @ TBD	10	11
12 6th Sunday of Epiphany 9:00am Adult 9:15 & 11:15am Youth 9:45am Youth Choir Worship @ 10am 11:15am Council Meeting	13 Worship and Music Committee 6:00pm	14	15 10am Quilting 12:00pm Prayer @ Trinity 5:00pm Prayer @ FELC Girl Scouts 6:00pm Bell Choir 6:30pm Confirmation 7:30pm Choir	16 4:30pm Community Loaves & Fishes	17	18
19 Transfiguration Sunday 9:00am Adult 9:15 & 11:15am Youth 9:45am Youth Choir Worship @ 10am	20	21	22 12:00pm Prayer @ Trinity 5:00pm Prayer @ FELC Girl Scouts 7:00pm Ash Wednesday Worship service at St. Marks	23 4:30pm Community Loaves & Fishes	24	25
26 1st Sunday of Lent Sunday School 9:00am Adult 9:15 & 11:15am Youth 9:45am Youth Choir Worship @ 10am	27	28				