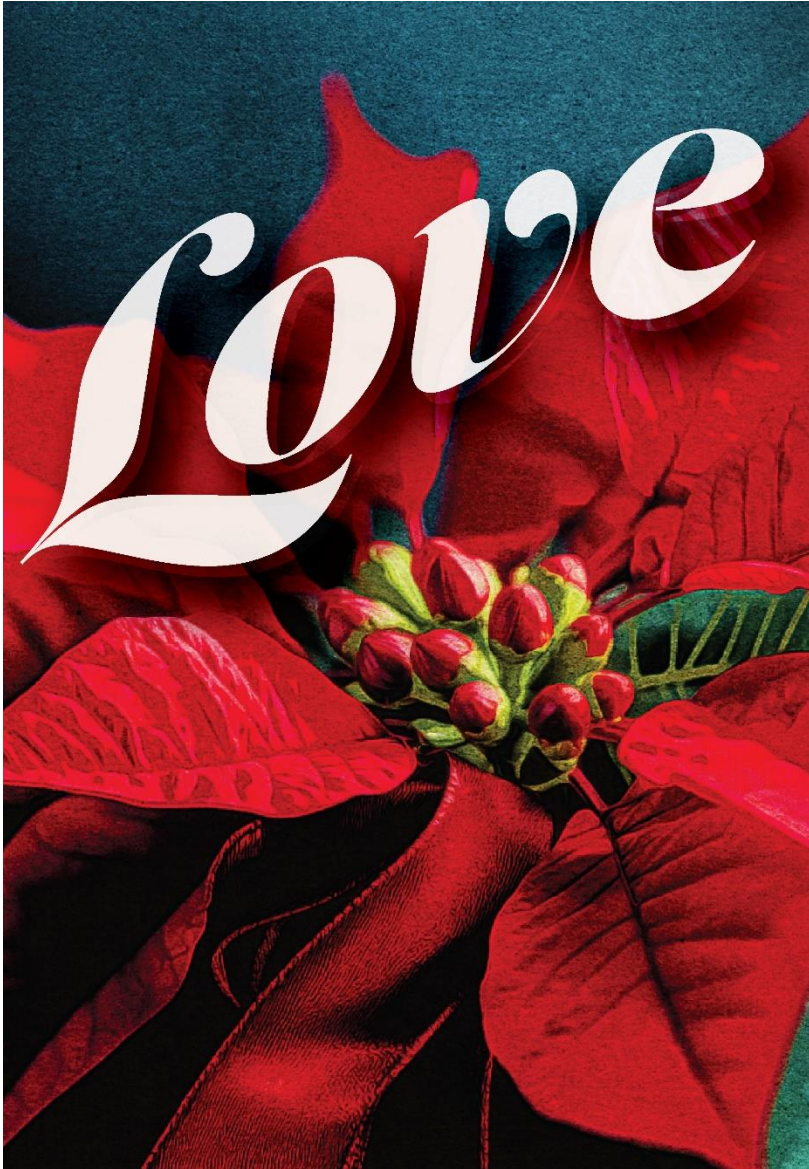


**FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH  
Wapakoneta, Ohio**



**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent  
December 22, 2024**

# WELCOME TO FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH

Your presence today makes us more complete.  
Thank you for being here and worshipping with us.

We invite all baptized Christians who believe that Christ is truly present  
in the meal to join us for Holy Communion when served.

Children of all ages are encouraged to participate in worship.

## Sunday Schedule

9:00 a.m. Adult & Youth Sunday School

10:00 a.m. Worship

The **Altar Candles** are given to the Glory of God  
by Marsha Jackson in memory of her parents, Mabel & Charles Jackson.

The **Altar Flowers** are given to the Glory of God by Brian & Rebecca Van Meter  
in honor of the hope, peace, joy and love of the season.

## MINISTERS for the TODAY

Audio/Visual .....	Noah Kirby & Jeff Ritchie
Lector .....	Joyce Brincefield
Ushers .....	Luke Kline & Chad Sterner
Worship Assistant .....	Makayla Frame
Musician .....	Recordings
Pastor .....	Chaplain Leslie Haines
Greeter .....	Needed
Acolyte .....	Vivian Fisher
Altar Guild .....	Brenda Shoffstall & Darla Frame
Fellowship Cleanup .....	Brenda Shoffstall & Darla Frame
Advent Reader/Candlelight .....	Nancy & Frank Heffner

This worship service is live streamed and recorded and  
is published on YouTube and Facebook.

\* Please rise if able.

## Introduction to the day

Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight—"we proclaim the Lord's death."

## GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### PRELUDE

### \*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God, **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **Amen.**

**\*GATHERING SONG**      *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn* (ELW 242)

**\*GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

**\* CALL TO WORSHIP**

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,  
**For his steadfast love endures forever.**

Give thanks to the God of gods,  
**For his steadfast love endures forever.**

Give thanks to the Lord of lords,  
**For his steadfast love endures forever.**

Advent's Holy Light  
Congregational Part

JOEL RANEY

*(on cue)*

Lord, we are wait - ing for peace to reign.  
Lord, we are lis - tening for love's re - frain.  
For hope, peace, and joy and love to u -  
nite in the beau - ty and won - der of  
Ad - vent's ho - ly light.

*(repeat this chorus after the candle lighting and litany)*

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## **LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

Nancy & Frank Heffner

(light four candles)

Today the fourth candle, the candle of Love, joins the candles of Hope, Peace and Joy. Like the combined glow of many candles, let this season remind us of the strength found in unity as we come together to love and uplift one another. Let the warmth of love illuminate the connections that bind us together and foster us in a deep sense of belonging.

Love creates the bonds that provide us with deep meaningful relationships.

**The greatest of all gifts is love.**

Love inspires random acts of kindness and generosity.

**The greatest of all gifts is love.**

Love causes us to only look for the best in others.

**The greatest of all gifts is love.**

Love allows us to be accepted for who we are, flaws and all.

**The greatest of all gifts is love.**

Gracious Creator, we gather in your presence today, hearts brimming with gratitude for the extraordinary gift of love you have bestowed upon us. May the celebration of love extend beyond our immediate circles, creating ripples of compassion and unity in the world. In recognizing the beauty of love, may we become vessels of your light, shining brightly for all to see. **Amen.**

## **REPEAT ADVENT'S HOLY LIGHT-Congregation Part from Above**

### **\*PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray. **Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## **CHILDREN'S SERMON**

Rebecca Van Meter

## WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

### FIRST READING: Micah 5:2-5a

A reading from Micah.

<sup>2</sup> But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. <sup>3</sup> Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. <sup>4</sup> And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; <sup>5a</sup> and he shall be the one of peace.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### PSALM: Luke 1: 46b-55

<sup>46b</sup> My soul proclaims the greatness | of the Lord,

<sup>47</sup> my spirit rejoices in | God my Savior,

<sup>48</sup> **for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your | lowly servant.**

**From this day all generations will | call me blessed:**

<sup>49</sup> you, the Almighty, have done great | things for me  
and holy | is your name.

<sup>50</sup> **You have mercy on | those who fear you,  
from generation to | generation.**

<sup>51</sup> You have shown strength | with your arm  
and scattered the proud in | their conceit,

<sup>52</sup> **casting down the mighty | from their thrones  
and lifting | up the lowly.**

<sup>53</sup> You have filled the hungry | with good things  
and sent the rich | away empty.

<sup>54</sup> **You have come to the aid of your | servant Israel,  
to remember the prom- | ise of mercy,**

<sup>55</sup> the promise made | to our forebears,  
to Abraham and his chil- | dren forever.

## **SECOND READING: Hebrews 10:5-10**

A reading from Hebrews.

<sup>5</sup>Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; <sup>6</sup>in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. <sup>7</sup>Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)."

<sup>8</sup>When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup>then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. <sup>10</sup>And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### **\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

(ELW p. 188)

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?**

**You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.**

**Alleluia, alleluia. Alleluia.**

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

### **\*GOSPEL: Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]**

The holy gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>39</sup>In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup>where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

<sup>41</sup>When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup>and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup>And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup>For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

### **MESSAGE**

Chaplain Leslie Haines

### **\*HYMN OF THE DAY**

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (ELW 257 vs 1, 3, 5, 6)

## **\*APOSTLES' CREED**

Let us profess our faith using the words of Apostles' Creed.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.\*  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **\*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

God our uniter, increase communication and cooperation in our relationships with those of other traditions and religions. Root your church in the radical message of your incarnation and enable us to pursue your justice in the world.

Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our creator, we praise you for the beauty that surrounds us. Awaken in us a renewed sense of care for wildlife. Form us into faithful stewards of what you have made. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our sovereign, Mary proclaims a new way of life that lifts up the lowly and fills the hungry with good things. Nurture in local governments and municipalities a desire to care for all who are overlooked and ignored.

Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**



God our beacon, as the northern hemisphere begins its slow turn toward more daylight, remind us that even in the deepest nights, you are there. Comfort the lonely and bereaved. Hold closely the frightened, anxious, depressed, and ill *especially* Sharon Billiter, Dorothy Dickman, Betty Hague, Mary Ann Thomas, Betty Lietz, Marty Rostorfer, Eloise Katterhenry, Kathy Link, Staff and Students at Concordia University at Ann Arbor, Lee Albright, James Benshoff, Janet Case, Dominic Cousins, Emily Fisher, Ted Gibson, Ben Jauert, Bryan Katterhenry, Wayne & Judy Kentner, Lauren Makuh, Sasha Maslov, Jenny Oliver, Nixon Palte, Pam Schulz, Alex Shirey, Hunter Smith, Evelyn Sprague, Seth Thuman, Norma Wachauf, Harold Wallace, Jim Zwiebel, Tasha McPeek, Shelia Snider, Bonnie Davidson, JJ Truesdale, Kathi, Nancy Bush and Wanda Nuss. And those that we name out loud or in our hearts. (Brief silence). Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our guide, shepherd the leadership of this congregation. Bless the council and staff in discerning future ministry and open their hearts to the voices of the community. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our life, you remember the promises you have made to your people. In gratitude for those who have died, we praise you for your faithfulness throughout history. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

### **\*PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

*Please take a moment to share the Lord's peace and grace with one another.*

### **MEAL**

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

### **TITHES AND OFFERING**

*Please be seated.*

As the ushers come forward, we would like to thank you for the work you have been doing, for the support and care you provide, and for the gifts you share.

## OFFERTORY

### \*OFFERING HYMN

(ELW p. 190)

### \*OFFERING PRAYER

(ELW p. 190)

Let us pray. Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

### LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

### \*AS WE ARE BLESSED

Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace now and always. **Amen.**

## SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

### \*CALL COMMITTEE PRAYER

Heavenly Father, **as we seek a new shepherd to lead our church, we humbly come before You, asking for Your guidance and wisdom in this important decision. Grant our call committee the wisdom to identify the individual You have chosen to be our pastor, one with heart for Your word, a passion for ministry and a love for our community. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.**

### \*BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

### \*SENDING SONG

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* (ELW 270)

### \*DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news. **Thanks be to God.**

## MINISTERS for Next Week 12-24-24

Audio/Visual .....	Noah Kirby & Jeff Ritchie
Lector .....	Marsha Jackson
Ushers .....	Steve Stienecker & Jim Kantner
Worship Assistant .....	Char Curry
Musician .....	Special
Pastor .....	Pastor Bill Schultz
Greeter .....	Denise Kantner
Acolyte .....	Amelia Roeger
Altar Guild .....	Brenda Shoffstall & Darla Frame
Fellowship Cleanup .....	Brenda Shoffstall & Darla Frame
Advent Reader/Candlelight .....	Kirby Family

## WEEKLY ATTENDANCE & OFFERINGS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Views</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Benevolence</u>
11/24/2024	13	86	\$2,192.00	\$100.00
12/01/2024	14	63	\$3,667.00	\$25.00
12/08/2024	16	78	\$3,537.96	\$0.00
12/15/2024	10	98	\$21,225.80	\$115.00

2024 current budgeted expenses are \$128,507.08, or \$2,471.29 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](http://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!



## OUR PRAYER CORNER

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

Manor at Celina	Sharon Billiter
Otterbein at St. Marys	Dorothy Dickman
The Gardens	Betty Hague, Mary Ann Thomas, Betty Lietz
Homebound	Marty Rostorfer, Eloise Katterhenry

### ***We especially remember in our prayers...***

Sharon Billiter, Dorothy Dickman, Betty Hague, Mary Ann Thomas, Betty Lietz, Marty Rostorfer, Eloise Katterhenry, Kathy Link, Staff and Students at Concordia University at Ann Arbor, Lee Albright, James Benschhoff, Janet Case, Dominic Cousins, Emily Fisher, Ted Gibson, Ben Jauert, Bryan Katterhenry, Wayne & Judy Kentner, Lauren Makuh, Sasha Maslov, Jenny Oliver, Nixon Palte, Pam Schulz, Alex Shirey, Hunter Smith, Evelyn Sprague, Seth Thuman, Norma Wachauf, Harold Wallace, Jim Zwiebel, Tasha McPeek, Shelia Snider, Bonnie Davidson, JJ Truesdale, Kathi, Nancy Bush and Wanda Nuss.

We remember in our prayers our military serving at home and abroad, underrepresented and oppressed people, EMTs, firefighters, police officers, healthcare workers, and our veterans.

*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.*

***What's Happening at First English....***

**Noisy Offering for the month of DECEMBER: Mercy Unlimited** Offering pans are located in the chapel and at the back of the church. Donations are accepted all month.

**Worship Music** We need your help! If you or someone you know would like to record a song, or sing or play live music for our prelude, let Darla know. Also, if you know someone who plays the organ or piano that might be interested in serving as our "organist" one or two Sundays a month, please let Darla know. Thank you so much!

**Collection for the Women's Crisis Center** We are collecting food items each month for the Auglaize County Crisis Center based on a monthly dinner theme. December's theme is Snacks. The crisis center is also in need of basic personal hygiene items. Please put donations on the counter in the library for us to deliver weekly or bi-weekly.

**Confirmation** Regular class is on a break until January 8<sup>th</sup> and don't forget Sermon Notes!

**Candlelight Christmas Eve Service** will be at 8:00pm on December 24<sup>th</sup> with Pastor Bill Schultz. We will have special music starting at 7:45pm. We hope everyone will join us.

**THANK YOU to everyone** that came to the FELC Christmas Party on Friday!! I hope you had as much fun as I did! Merry Christmas to all!

**Cookie Donations for Cookie Plate Fundraiser** CORRECTION: The proceeds will NOT benefit the Wapak Ministerial Association and County EMA to help with efforts to combat food and housing insecurity. All proceeds went towards current funds. I apologize for the incorrect information.

## **Call Committee Checklist for seeking a Pastor:**

- ✘ At the time of learned pastoral vacancy, the congregation council arranges for regular supply or interim, working with the Mission District dean.
- ✘ Form a call committee in accordance with congregational constitution – uneven # of persons with a cross-section of the congregation is helpful-elect Chair of the Committee.
- ✘ Call Committee downloads NALC Call Process Manual for call committee members.
- ✘ Call Committee chair contacts the NALC Call Process Coordinator to schedule a conference call for orientation/training. Met on September 15<sup>th</sup>.
- ✘ Call Committee engages in Bible Study in the Call Process Manual. Meeting on Wednesdays at 6:45pm.
- ✘ Call Committee chair will contact Mission District dean to arrange and complete The Congregational Workshop in preparation for the Call Process.
- ✘ Chair contacts their Mission District dean to arrange and complete the Congregational Workshop – November 2, 9am-2:00/2:30pm.
- ✘ Call Committee completes the Congregational Profile and emails it to NALC Call Process.
- ✘ Call Committee completes the Congregational Profile and video to the NALC website.
- **Call Committee develops list of ministry questions to be asked in full interviews. ...**

**CALL COMMITTEE PRAYER:** Please pray throughout the week: Heavenly Father, as we seek a new shepherd to lead our church, we humbly come before You, asking for Your guidance and wisdom in this important decision. Grant our call committee the wisdom to identify the individual You have chosen to be our pastor, one with heart for Your word, a passion for ministry and a love for our community. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.



## FELC Upcoming Calendar of Events

<b>Sunday, Dec 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>9:00am</b>	<b>Adult Sunday School</b>
	<b>10:00am</b>	<b>Worship – Chaplain Leslie Haines</b>
<b>Tues, Dec 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>7:45pm</b>	<b>Special Christmas Eve Music</b>
	<b>8:00pm</b>	<b>Christmas Eve Service</b> <b>- Pastor Bill Schultz</b>
<b>Wed, Dec 25<sup>th</sup></b>		<b>CHRISTMAS DAY! Jesus is Born!</b> Office Closed NO Confirmation
<b>Thurs, Dec 26<sup>th</sup></b>		Office Closed NO Loaves & Fishes
<b>Fri, Dec 27<sup>th</sup></b>		Office Closed
<b>Sunday, Dec 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9:00am</b>	<b>Adult Sunday School</b>
	<b>10:00am</b>	<b>Worship – Council-Lessons &amp; Carols</b>
<b>Mon, Dec 30<sup>th</sup></b>		January Newsletter deadline.
<b>Tues, Dec 31<sup>st</sup></b>		January Newsletter available.
<b>Wed, Jan 1<sup>st</sup></b>		<b>New Year's Day! Office Closed</b> No Confirmation
<b>Thurs, Jan 2<sup>nd</sup></b>		Office Closed
	<b>4:30pm</b>	<b>Loaves &amp; Fishes</b>
<b>Fri, Jan 3<sup>rd</sup></b>		Office Closed
<b>Fri, Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> – Jan 5<sup>th</sup></b>		Youth Quake in Cincinnati, OH

## **First English Lutheran Church**

A Congregation of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC)

107 W. Mechanic Street, Wapakoneta, OH 45895

(419) 738-3911 [www.myfelc.org](http://www.myfelc.org)

Church email: [wapakelc@bright.net](mailto:wapakelc@bright.net)

Office Hours: M-F, 8:30am – 12:30pm

## **Mission Statement**

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

## **Church Staff & Volunteers**

Office Administrator

Bookkeeper

Treasurer

Music Director

Audio-Technology

Hilary Roeger; [wapakelc@bright.net](mailto:wapakelc@bright.net); 419-738-3911

Anderson Accounting

Cari Frame; [felc.finance@myfelc.org](mailto:felc.finance@myfelc.org)

Darla Frame; [darlaframe@gmail.com](mailto:darlaframe@gmail.com)

Dave Curry; [dscy@bright.net](mailto:dscy@bright.net); 937-307-8596