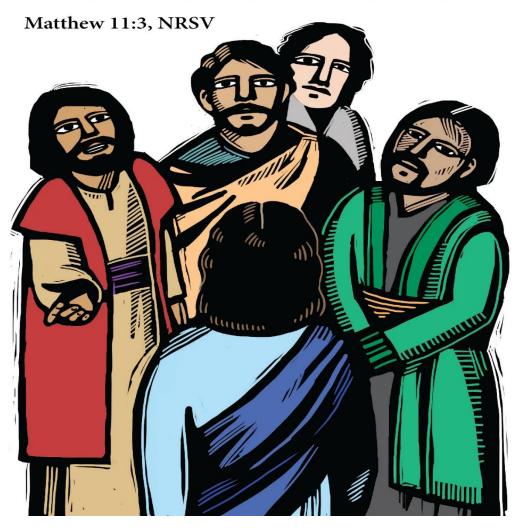
FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH Wapakoneta, Ohio

"Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?"



3rd Sunday of Advent December 14, 2025

WELCOME TO FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH

Your presence today makes us more complete.

Thank you for being here and worshipping with us.

Children of all ages are encouraged to participate in worship.

Sunday Schedule

9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship

The **Altar Candles** are given to the Glory of God by Hilary Roeger & Family in celebration of all December birthdays: Mike Roeger, Glen Miller, Maverick & Cari Frame and especially for the birth of our Savior & Lord, Jesus Christ!

The **Altar Flowers** are given to the Glory of God by Brian & Rebecca Van Meter as we rejoice in the joy and light of the Lord during this Advent season.

MINISTERS for TODAY

Audio/Visual	Noah Kirby & Jeff Ritchie
Lector	Marsha Jackson
Ushers	Ken Frame
Worship Assistant	Hilary Roeger
Musician	Recordings
Pastor	Pastor Bill Schultz
Greeter	Needed
Acolyte	Amelia Roeger
Altar Guild	Brenda Shoffstall & Darla Frame
Fellowship Cleanup	Brenda Shoffstall & Darla Frame

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

^{*} Please rise if able.

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.

Hear this promise of Almighty God: He prepares in our hearts a royal highway for his Son's near approach and cleanses us from all our sins. He drives away the darkness of sin and death, that we may behold the glory of his Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*GATHERING SONG

Blessed Be the God of Isreal (ELW 250)

*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.





The Publisher grants permission to reproduce this part for Congregational singing.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH (light three candles)

Hilary, Mike, Amelia & Elanor Roeger

Today the candle representing Joy joins the candles of Hope and Peace. As we light this third candle, let the joy of the season fill our hearts. May we find joy in simple moments, and may that joy bring a sense of peace and wellbeing into our lives.

When we think of the countless blessings that fill our lives

Our hearts are filled with joy.

For the warmth of relationships and the bonds we share with family and friends Our hearts are filled with joy.

When we pause to appreciate the beauty and wonder of nature

Our hearts are filled with joy.

For the giving and receiving of simple acts of kindness

Our hearts are filled with joy.

Gracious Creator, teach us to find joy not only in triumphs but also in the simple moments of everyday grace. Fill us with joy that surpasses circumstance, anchored in the unchanging truth of your love. Help us share this joy with others and may joy and laughter be a constant companion on our journey through life. **Amen**.

REPEAT ADVENT'S HOLY LIGHT – Congregation Part from Above

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Rebecca Van Meter

WORD

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

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 35:1-10

A reading from Isaiah. ¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus 2 it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and shouting. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. ³ Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." ⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert; ⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp; the grass shall become reeds and rushes. 8 A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. 9 No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.

PSALM: 146

- Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!
- ²I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God all my life long.
- ³ Do not put your trust in princes, in mortals, in whom there is no help.
- ⁴ When their breath departs, they return to the earth, on that very day their plans perish.
- ⁵ Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob , whose hope is in the Lord their God;
- ⁶ who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever;
- ⁷ who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free.
- 8 The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down. the Lord loves the righteous.
- ⁹ The Lord watches over the strangers; he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.
- ¹⁰ The Lord will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord!

SECOND READING: JAMES 5:7-11

A reading from James. ⁷Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹ Indeed, we call blessed those who showed endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL: MATTHEW 11:2-15

The holy gospel according to Matthew. Glory to you, O Lord.

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." ⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? 8 What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. 9 What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' ¹¹ "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and violent people take it by force. ¹³ For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John came, ¹⁴ and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵ Let anyone with ears listen!

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

MESSAGE Pastor Bill Schultz

*HYMN OF THE DAY

Awake! Awake, & Greet the New Morn (ELW 242)

*APOSTLES' CREED

Let us profess our faith using the words of the 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.

*PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

As we await the coming of Christ in mercy and majesty, let us pray for the Church, the world, and for all people according to their need.

How sweet are your words today, dear Lord! Thank you for refreshment along life's often-dusty road. Thank you for hope that dawns unexpectedly in our heart's wilderness. Thank you for Jesus, your sweetest Word of forgiveness, compassion, and life. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Grant that in many and various ways, your Church constantly preaches the Good News of what Jesus has done: "the blind receive their sight and the lame walk; lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up; and the poor have good news preached to them." Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Establish this congregation, O Lord, in words and deeds of patience, mercy, and goodness. Help us to refresh the heavy-hearted, to heal those wounded by sin and sorrow, and to enlighten the innocent and the ignorant. Make this place a haven of safety and joy for all who trust in you. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Deepen the faith and increase the wisdom of your apprentices and journeyman in the art of discipleship. May all they learn from you bring joy and enlightenment to others. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Shed the light of your merciful healing upon those whose lives are shadowed by sorrow or suffering, including Betty Hague, Mary Ann Thomas, Betty Lietz, Marty Rostorfer, Eloise Katterhenry, Marsha Henderson, Judy Metz, Ted Gibson, Bryan Katterhenry, Judy Kentner, Lauren Makuh, Sasha Maslov, Jenny Oliver, Alex Shirey, Hunter Smith, Seth Thuman, Harold Wallace, Jim Zwiebel, JJ Truesdale, Sue Bartlett, Ike Schnell, Roman Schlegel, Sue Hughes, Dan Havens, Jason Schneider, Jenn Douglas & Baby Bennett, Joyce Brincefield, Norma Jarrells, Bobbi Bendele, Connie Krites, Jeanie Schnell, Kate Cunningham, Tim Cunningham, Judy Fisher, Michelle Kouse, Elaine Carlson, Wanda Nuss, Kingdom Harvest Ministries and WHS-Fellowship of Christian Athletes. And anyone that we name out loud or quietly in our hearts. (Brief silence). Give us grace to touch their lives with gentleness and hope. Give us words of forgiveness and encouragement. Give us strength to accompany them in their wilderness. And fulfil your promise to embrace us all in your everlasting arms. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Happy are those who, in this life, put their trust in you, dear Lord. Their hope has been fulfilled. Comfort all the bereaved whose grief runs deep. And we pray: Save us from folly and defend us from evil. Strengthen our faltering hands and make firm our feeble knees. Establish our hearts in steadfast patience and the spirit of encouragement. Lead us into Zion, where, with all the redeemed, we shall praise your glory, delight in your love, and see you face to face. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All these things, and whatever else you see that we need, grant to us, dear Father, for the sake of your Son, our Savior 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 provided, and for the gifts you share.

OFFERTORY

*OFFERING HYMN

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful (ELW 182)

*OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. Holy God, receive these tokens of our love for you. Make them, and us, holy. Use them, and us, as you desire. In everything, grant that we speak and act for the glory of your coming Kingdom, and for the well-being of the people you long to redeem. This we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. For you are the source of light and life, you made us in your image, and called us to new life in Jesus Christ our Lord; who on the first day of the week overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

(ELW p. 190)

*WORDS OF INSTITUTION

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

*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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

As we come to this time of Holy Communion, please let me extend to you an invitation to come forward and share in this Holy supper. You do not need to be member of this church or any Lutheran church to participate. If you have been baptized and profess faith in Christ Jesus, you are welcome. He is extending this invitation and that is His only requirement. Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

COMMUNION SONG

Lamb of God (ELW p. 191)

SONGS DURING COMMUNION

Break Now the Bread of Life (ELW515)

He Came Down (ELW 253)

To God Be the Glory (Screen)

*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.**

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Almighty and ever-living God, we give you thanks for these heavenly gifts. Kindle in us the fire of your Spirit. When your Christ comes again, make us shine as lights before his face; who is alive and reigns now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING

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

*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.**

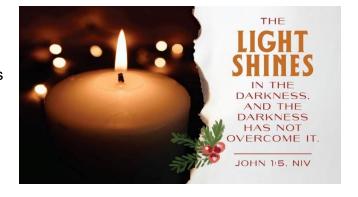
*SENDING SONG

Joy to the World (ELW 267)

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Christmas Eve Candlelight
Service with Communion will be at 8:00pm on December 24th.
Come early for the joyous sounds of those blessing us with their Christmas selections before worship service. Be sure to pick up your poinsettias after service that you ordered.



OUR PRAYER CORNER

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

The Gardens Betty Hague, Mary Ann Thomas, Betty Lietz

Burton Ridge in Lima Judy Kentner

Homebound Marty Rostorfer, Eloise Katterhenry,

Marsha Henderson, Judy Metz

We especially remember in our prayers...

Betty Hague, Mary Ann Thomas, Betty Lietz, Marty Rostorfer, Eloise Katterhenry, Marsha Henderson, Judy Metz, Ted Gibson, Bryan Katterhenry, Judy Kentner, Lauren Makuh, Sasha Maslov, Jenny Oliver, Alex Shirey, Hunter Smith, Seth Thuman, Harold Wallace, Jim Zwiebel, JJ Truesdale, Sue Bartlett, Ike Schnell, Roman Schlegel, Sue Hughes, Dan Havens, Jason Schneider, Jenn Douglas & Baby Bennett, Joyce Brincefield, Norma Jarrells, Bobbi Bendele, Connie Krites, Jeanie Schnell, Kate Cunningham, Tim Cunningham, Judy Fisher, Michelle Kouse, Elaine Carlson, Wanda Nuss, Kingdom Harvest Ministries and WHS-Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

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.

MINISTERS for Next Week 12-21-25

Noah Kirby & Jeff Ritchie
Carly Craft
Ken Frame & Chad Sterner
Deanna Ronan
Recordings
Vicar Michelle Kouse
Needed
Kaidence Schmidt
Brenda Shoffstall & Darla Frame
Brenda Shoffstall & Darla Frame

What's Happening at First English....

Noisy Offering for the month of DECEMBER: LOAVES & FISHES Offering pans are located in the chapel and at the back of the church. Donations are accepted during the entire month.

<u>Loaves and Fishes:</u> 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. No Loaves & Fishes on December 18th, 25th & January 1st.

<u>Collection for the Women's Crisis Center</u> We are collecting food items each month for the Auglaize County Crisis Center based on a monthly dinner theme. <u>December's Items: Canned Fruit, Canned Soups, Saltine Crackers, Peanut Butter & Fruit Juices</u>. 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.

Egg Carton Ministry Asking for only 12 count size clean empty egg cartons. Please put them in the box in the church library. They will be used to distribute eggs to those in need.

<u>Plastic Bag Ministry</u> FELC will be collecting clean empty plastic grocery bags for our Prison Ministry. Allen/Oakwood Correctional incarcerated persons are making mats for the homeless. There is a collection container located at the back door.

<u>Angel Tree</u> We are supporting 2 families this year. One through the Crisis Center and another a local family in the community. <u>Unwrapped gifts are due TODAY, December 14th.</u> Total November donations for Angle Tree: \$855.00

Bookkeeping purposes please have all FELC donations to the church by Sunday, December 28, 2025. Tax statements will be available for pickup at the church in January.

<u>Christmas Caroling</u> TODAY, December 14th at 5:30pm. Let Rebecca Van Meter or Jennie Grundey know if you are interested in joining the caroling.

Sunday, Dec 14 th 9:00am 10:00am Worship – Pastor Bill Schultz Acolyte-Amelia Roeger Mon, Dec 15 th 5:15pm Spiritual Movement Class			Calendar of Events	
10:00am Worship – Pastor Bill Schultz Acolyte-Amelia Roeger	Sunday, Dec 14 th	9:00am	Adult Sunday School	
Acolyte-Amelia Roeger		10:00am	Worship – Pastor Bill Schultz	
	Mon, Dec 15th	5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class	
Wed, Dec 17 th 10:00am Quilting	Wed, Dec 17 th	10:00am	Quilting	
5:15pm Spiritual Movement Class		5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class	
5:45pm Bell Choir		5:45pm	Bell Choir	
6:30pm Advent Service-Vicar Michelle Kouse		6:30pm	Advent Service-Vicar Michelle Kouse	
7:15pm Ladies' Choir		7:15pm	Ladies' Choir	
Thurs, Dec 18 th 9-11:30am God's Store House	Thurs, Dec 18th	9-11:30am	God's Store House	
NO Loaves & Fishes			NO Loaves & Fishes	
Fri, Dec 19 th 9-11:30am God's Store House	Fri, Dec 19 th	9-11:30am	God's Store House	
Sat, Dec 20 th 8:15am Spiritual Movement Class	Sat, Dec 20th	8:15am	Spiritual Movement Class	
9-11:30am God's Store House		9-11:30am	God's Store House	
Sun, Dec 21 st 9:00am Adult Sunday School	Sun, Dec 21st	9:00am	Adult Sunday School	
10:00am Worship – Vicar Michelle Kouse		10:00am	Worship – Vicar Michelle Kouse	
Acolyte-Kaidence Schmidt			Acolyte-Kaidence Schmidt	
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING			CONGREGATIONAL MEETING	
Council Meeting			Council Meeting	
Mon, Dec 22 nd 5:15pm Spiritual Movement Class	Mon, Dec 22 nd	5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class	
No School-Wapak City Schools			No School-Wapak City Schools	
Tues, Dec 23 rd No School-Wapak City Schools	Tues, Dec 23 rd		No School-Wapak City Schools	
Wed, Dec 24 th No School-Wapak City Schools	Wed, Dec 24th		No School-Wapak City Schools	
7:30pm Music Selections from our Congregatio		7:30pm	Music Selections from our Congregation	
8:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service		8:00pm	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service-	
Vicar Michelle Kouse			Vicar Michelle Kouse	
Acolyte-Nolan Roode			Acolyte-Nolan Roode	
Ladies' Choir				
Thurs, Dec 25 th MERRY CHRISTMAS! JESUS CHRIST IS BORN!	Thurs, Dec 25 th	MERRY CHRISTMAS! JESUS CHRIST IS BORN!		
Office Closed			Office Closed	
No School-Wapak City Schools				
Fri, Dec 26 th Office Closed	Fri, Dec 26 th		Office Closed	
No School-Wapak City Schools			· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
9-11:30am God's Store House		9-11:30am		
Sat, Dec 13 th 8:15am Spiritual Movement Class	Sat, Dec 13 th			
9-11:30am God's Store House		9-11:30am	God's Store House	

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

Church email: <u>wapakelc@bright.net</u> Office Hours: M-F, 8:30am – 12:00pm

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 Hilary Roeger; wapakelc@bright.net; 419-738-3911

Intern Vicar Michelle Kouse Bookkeeper Anderson Accounting

> FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH Wapakoneta, Ohio

Treasurer Dave Clift

Music Director Darla Frame; darlaframe@gmail.com

Audio-Technology Dave Curry; dlcy@bright.net; 937-307-8596

Weekly Attendance and Offerings

<u>Date</u>	<u>Views</u>	Attendance	Current Giving	Benevolence
11/16/2025	9	61	\$2,365.00	\$360.00
11/23/2025	11	72	\$7,055.00	\$20.00
11/30/2025	19	48	\$1,038.00	\$10.00
12/07/2025	15	65	\$2,980.00	\$280.00

