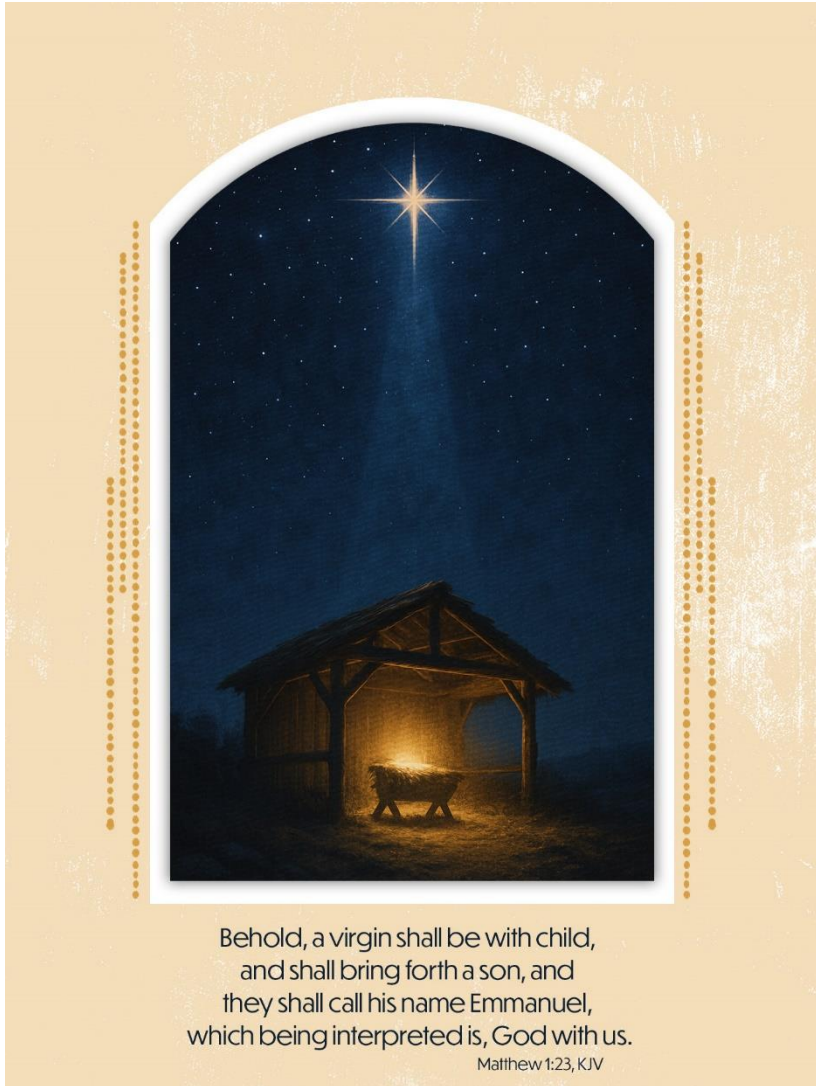


FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH
Wapakoneta, Ohio



4th Sunday of Advent
December 21, 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

Marsha Jackson in memory of Charles Jackson.

MINISTERS for TODAY

Audio/Visual	Noah Kirby & Jeff Ritchie
Lector	Carly Craft
Ushers	Ken Frame & Chad Sterner
Worship Assistant.....	Deanna Ronan
Musician	Recordings
Pastor	Vicar Michelle Kouse
Greeter	Chris Nagel
Acolyte.....	Kaidence Schmidt
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

The King Shall Come (ELW 260)

*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



(repeat this chorus after the candle lighting and litany)

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LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH (light four candles)

Carlene Koch & Diane Hollingsworth

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 hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father 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 7:10-17

A reading from Isaiah. ¹⁰ Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” ¹³ Then Isaiah said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted. ¹⁷ The Lord will bring on you and on your people and on your ancestral house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria.”

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

PSALM: 24

¹The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
the world and those who live in it.

²**For he has founded it on the seas
and established it on the rivers.**

³Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord,
and who shall stand in his holy place?

⁴**Those who have clean hands and pure hearts,
who do not lift up their souls to what is false, and do not swear
deceitfully.**

⁵They will receive blessing from the Lord
and vindication from the God of their salvation.

⁶**Such is the company of those who seek him,
who seek the face of the O God of Jacob.**

⁷Lift up your heads, O gates; and be lifted up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

⁸**Who is this King of glory?
The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle!**

⁹Lift up your heads, O gates; and be lifted up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

¹⁰**Who is this King of glory?
the Lord of hosts he is the King of glory.**

SECOND READING: ROMANS 1:1-7

A reading from Romans. ¹ Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶ including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, ⁷ To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia (ELW p. 188)

***GOSPEL: MATTHEW 1:18-25**

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

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³ “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son, and he named him Jesus.

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

MESSAGE

Vicar Michelle Kouse

***HYMN OF THE DAY**

O Come, O Come Emmanuel (ELW 257 VS 1, 2, 6)

***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.

O Wisdom, proceeding from the mouth of the Most High, fill the Church with your Spirit. Sustain and order its worship, proclamation, and works of charity, according to your most holy will. Come, and teach us prudence.

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

O God, ruler of the House of Israel, rule also in the lives and works of your people in this congregation. Give us your Word and show us your glory. Look with favor upon all who seek to be your disciples in this place. Come with your outstretched arm to redeem us. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Bright and Morning Star, you gladden the hearts of those who sit in darkness. Shine on all who are overwhelmed by despair, confusion, hatred, or unbelief. Come and lead them into the brightness of your holy love.

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

O King of the nations, the ruler they long for, unite all people under your glorious and gentle reign. Teach us the things that make for peace. Come and save us, whom you formed from clay. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Key of David, you open what no one can close; you close what no one can open. Free all who suffer and are imprisoned by the powers of sin, evil, and death: especially 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). Come, and close the path to misery. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Dayspring, splendor of life everlasting, keep safe in your mighty arms all those who died trusting in your promises. Come and enlighten us, who still sit in the shadow of death, and open wide our heavenly home.
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

Come, Share the Lord (Screen)
Away in a Manger (ELW 277)
Hark! The Herald (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**

O Come, All Ye Faithful (ELW 283)

DISMISSAL

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

***Please remain seated for Congregational Meeting. Church Council meeting will be held after for their monthly meeting. Thank you. Extra budgets are at the back of the church.**

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 12-28-25

Audio/Visual	Noah Kirby & Jeff Ritchie
Lector	Council
Ushers	Jon Schmidt & Maeson Roode
Worship Assistant	Susan Miller
Musician	Darla Frame
Pastor	Council
Greeter	Needed
Acolyte	Jacob Schlosser
Altar Guild	Brenda Shoffstall & Darla Frame
Fellowship Cleanup.....	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.

Loaves and 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. No Loaves & Fishes on 25th & January 1st.

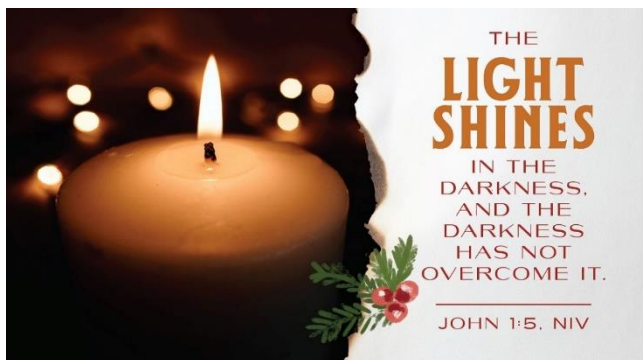
Collection for the Women's Crisis Center We are collecting food items each month for the Auglaize County Crisis Center based on a monthly dinner theme. December's Items: Canned Fruit, Canned Soups, Saltine Crackers, Peanut Butter & Fruit Juices. The crisis center is also in need of basic personal hygiene 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.

Plastic Bag Ministry 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.

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.

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.



FELC Upcoming Calendar of Events

Sun, Dec 21 st	9:00am	Adult Sunday School
	10:00am	Worship – Vicar Michelle Kouse Acolyte-Kaidence Schmidt CONGREGATIONAL MEETING Council Meeting
Mon, Dec 22 nd	5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class No School-Wapak City Schools
Tues, Dec 23 rd		No School-Wapak City Schools
Wed, Dec 24 th		No School-Wapak City Schools
	7:30pm	Music Selections from our Congregation
	8:00pm	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service- Vicar Michelle Kouse Acolyte-Nolan Roode Ladies' Choir
Thurs, Dec 25th		MERRY CHRISTMAS! JESUS CHRIST IS BORN! Office Closed No School-Wapak City Schools
Fri, Dec 26 th		No School-Wapak City Schools
	9-11:30am	God's Store House
Sat, Dec 27 th	8:15am	Spiritual Movement Class
	9-11:30am	God's Store House
Sunday, Dec 28th	9:00am	Adult Sunday School
	10:00am	Worship – Council Acolyte-Jacob Schlosser
Mon, Dec 29 th	5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class January Newsletter Information Due! No School-Wapak City Schools
Tues, Dec 30 th		No School-Wapak City Schools
Wed, Dec 31 st	5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class No School-Wapak City Schools
Thurs, Jan 1 st		Happy New Year's Day – Office Closed No School-Wapak City Schools
	9-11:30am	God's Store House NO Loaves & Fishes
Fri, Jan 2 nd		No School-Wapak City Schools
	9-11:30am	God's Store House
Sat, Dec 20 th	8:15am	Spiritual Movement Class
	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: wapakelc@bright.net

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

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>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Current Giving</u>	<u>Benevolence</u>
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
12/14/2025	17	44	\$1,073.00	\$20.00



FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH
Wapakoneta, Ohio

*Our mission is to
spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ
and to love one another as
He has loved us.*