

FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH
Wapakoneta, Ohio

**All who heard him
were amazed...**

Luke 2:47, NRSV



2nd Sunday after Christmas
January 4, 2026

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 Mark & Chris Nagel in honor of the birthdays this month of Mark,
son, Brian and memory of Chris' dad John Zuber.

The **Altar Flowers** are given to the Glory of God
by Mark & Chris Nagel in honor of the birthdays this month of Mark,
son, Brian and memory of Chris' dad John Zuber.

MINISTERS for TODAY

Audio/Visual.....	Noah Kirby & Jeff Ritchie
Lector.....	Richard Yocum
Ushers	Ken Frame & Richard Yocum
Worship Assistant.....	Marsha Jackson
Musician	Karen Luginbuhl
Pastor	Jennie Grundey
Greeter	Needed
Acolyte.....	Faith Whetstone
Altar Guild.....	Brenda Shoffstall & Sara Young
Fellowship Cleanup.....	Brenda Shoffstall & Chris Nagel

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

Oh, Come, Little Children by Michael Burkhardt

*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

O Come, All Ye Faithful (ELW 283)

*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**

Jesus Christ is the Light of the world!

He is the Light no darkness can overcome.

At darkest night we gather to celebrate the great light of our salvation.

With the heavenly host we sing, “Glory to God in the highest heaven.”

In Christ, God’s Word is made flesh and lives among us.

With the shepherds, we will tell of the wonders we have seen and heard.

***CANTICLE OF PRAISE**

Glory to God (ELW p. 185)

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray. **Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, 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 SERMON

Rebecca Van Meter

Word

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

FIRST READING: 1 KINGS 3: 4-15

A reading from 1 Kings. ⁴ The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the principal high place; Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. ⁵ At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, “Ask what I should give you.” ⁶ And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷ And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹ Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people?”

¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ God said to him, “Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you. ¹³ I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor all your life; no other king shall compare with you. ¹⁴ If you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your life.”

¹⁵ Then Solomon awoke; it had been a dream. He came to Jerusalem, where he stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. He offered up burnt offerings and offerings of well-being and provided a feast for all his servants.

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

PSALM: 119: 97-104

⁹⁷ Oh, how I love your law!

It is my meditation all day long.

⁹⁸ **Your commandment make me wiser than my enemies,
for it is always with me.**

⁹⁹ I have more understanding than all my teachers,
for your decrees are my meditation.

¹⁰⁰ **I understand more than the aged,
for I keep your precepts.**

¹⁰¹ I hold back my feet from every evil way,
in order to keep your word.

¹⁰² **I do not turn away from your ordinances,
for you have taught me.**

¹⁰³ How sweet are your words to my taste!
sweeter than honey to my mouth!

¹⁰⁴ **Through your precepts I get understanding;
therefore I hate every false way.**

SECOND READING: EPHESIANS 1:3-14

A reading from Ephesians. ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ to the

praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹ he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴ this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

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

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia (ELW p. 188)

***GOSPEL: LUKE 2:40-52**

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

⁴⁰ The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and the favor of God was upon him. ⁴¹ Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. ⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. ⁴³ When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. ⁴⁴ Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵ When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ When his parents saw him they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." ⁴⁹ He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he said to them. ⁵¹ Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favor.

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

MESSAGE

Jennie Grundey

*HYMN OF THE DAY

What Child is This? (ELW 296)

*NICENE CREED

Let us profess our faith using the words of the Nicene creed.

We believe in one God,

**the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

**the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

**who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Let us pray that the light of Christ may shine upon the Church, the world, and all people according to their need.

Heavenly Father, thank you for the Light of the World, your dear Son Jesus! Thank you for revealing your mercy and loving-kindness to all people. Thank you that he reveals you as the God of every kindred, nation, and tribe, until the world ends and Christ is all in all. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Make your Church a faithful steward of the mysteries of Christ. Fill your pastors with wisdom, holiness, and faithfulness. May the Church's worship, fellowship, and acts of charity be as frankincense, gold, and myrrh offered to her infant Redeemer. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Make this congregation a place where even sinners, strangers, and Gentiles encounter the living Christ. Shape us into "magi" who eagerly seek, study, and worship Jesus. And send us home "by a different way" – as his disciples, and as his sisters and brothers. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Protect and bless your Church wherever it suffers from malice, persecution, and scorn. Give even to its enemies a teachable heart and questioning mind, so your goodness, holiness, justice, and mercy may touch and transform them. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray on behalf of scholars, teachers, scientists, philosophers, and especially seminary professors and students. Increase their numbers and their zeal for seeking your truth! Give them grace to adore you, the source of truth and wisdom. And give them generous hearts, to freely share their wisdom, knowledge, curiosity, and faith. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Put your Spirit upon the leaders of this and every nation, that they may faithfully bring forth and establish justice throughout the world. Give them the wisdom and the will to rightly protect and provide for their people. And grant peace and blessing to all in this new year. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift before you everyone charged with protecting life and liberty. Grant them such integrity and courage that those whose lives are most in danger may call on them with confidence. Bring them safely home to their loved ones, and heal those who are wounded in body, mind or soul.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bring the light of Christ to everyone who dwells in the shadows of suffering, sin or sorrow, especially those we lift before you now: 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, Dave Krites, Kingdom Harvest Ministries and WHS-Fellowship of Christian Athletes. And anyone that we name out loud or quietly in our hearts. (Brief silence). Give competence, compassion, and patience to everyone charged with their care; and grant health and hope according to your merciful wisdom. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We thank you for the lives of all your faithful servants who through word and example have been stewards of your Gospel. Give us wisdom and devotion, so that we seek your will throughout our earthly life; and give us the strength and the means to do it. And, in your good time, lead us “by another way” to the eternal home and inheritance you have prepared for all who are redeemed by your beloved Son. For there, we will adore your glorious wisdom and delight in your merciful love in the power of your Holy Spirit forever.
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 you provide, and for the gifts you share.

OFFERTORY

Bring a Torch arr Jeannette Isabella by M. Charpentier

***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.

***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.

***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 Angles Sing (ELW 270)

***DISMISSAL**

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

MINISTERS for Next Week 1-11-26

Audio/Visual	Noah Kirby & Jeff Ritchie
Lector	Chris Nagel
Ushers	Dave Krites & Dave Cliff
Worship Assistant	Darla Frame
Musician	Recordings
Pastor	Vicar Michelle Kouse
Greeter	Needed
Acolyte	Youth Quake-None
Altar Guild	Brenda Shoffstall & Sara Young
Fellowship Cleanup.....	Brenda Shoffstall & Chris Nagel

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, Dave Krites, 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.



Please keep our youth and adults in your prayers as they travel to attend Youth Quake in Cincinnati, Ohio; January 9-11, 2026. We have 13 youth and 3 adults attending event.

What's Happening at First English....

Noisy Offering for the month of JANUARY: KINGDOM HARVEST

MINISTRIES 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.

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. January's Items: Canned Pasta, Jello Cups, Kid's snacks, & Hamburger Helper. 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 Tax statements will be available for pickup at the church in January.

Men's Night is scheduled for 6:00pm on Thursday, January 8th, at JT's in St. Marys by Krogers. All men are encouraged to come and bring a friend!

Ladies' Lunch is scheduled for 11:30am on Tuesday, January 20th at El Azteca in Wapakoneta, OH. All women are encouraged to come and bring a friend!!



Christmas Decorations TODAY,
after worship service, we will be
taking down our beautiful Christmas
decorations. We are asking for
everyone who can stay and help us.
Thank you and have a very Happy
New year to all!

Weekly Attendance and Offerings

<u>Date</u>	<u>Views</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Current Giving</u>	<u>Benevolence</u>
12/07/2025	15	65	\$2,980.00	\$280.00
12/14/2025	17	44	\$1,073.00	\$20.00
12/21/2025	20	72	\$2,485.50	\$35.00
12/24/2025	5	113	\$713.00	\$0.00
12/28/2025	15	49	\$8,090.00	\$10.00

O Lord, let my
New Year's resolution
be to 
follow you
more closely
and to
trust in your
loving guidance.

FELC Upcoming Calendar of Events

Sun, Jan 4th	9:00am	Adult Sunday School
	10:00am	Worship – Jennie Grundey
		Acolyte-Faith Whetstone
Mon, Jan 5 th	5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class
Wed, Jan 7 th	6:00pm	Confirmation Class
		Bell Choir
	7:00pm	Ladies' Chori
Thurs, Jan 8 th	9-11:30am	God's Store House
	4:30pm	Community Loaves & Fishes
	6:00pm	Men's Night @ JTs in St. Marys, OH
Fri, Jan 9 th	9-11:30am	God's Store House
	5:00pm	Departure for Youth Quake-Cincinnati, OH
Sat, Jan 10 th	8:15am	Spiritual Movement Class
	9-11:30am	God's Store House
		Youth Quake-Cincinnati, OH Return 1/11/26 afternoon
Sunday, Jan 11th	9:00am	Adult Sunday School
	10:00am	Worship – Vicar Michelle Kouse
		Bell Choir
		Acolyte-Youth Quake-None
Mon, Jan 12 th	5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class
		January Newsletter Information Due!
Tues, Jan 13 th	1:30pm	Bingo at The Gardens
Wed, Jan 14 th	5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class
	6:00pm	Confirmation Class
Thurs, Jan 15 th	9-11:30am	God's Store House
	4:30pm	Community Loaves & Fishes
Fri, Jan 16 th	No School-Wapak City Schools	
	9-11:30am	God's Store House
Sat, Jan 17 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

Intern

Bookkeeper

Music Director

Audio-Technology

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

Vicar Michelle Kouse

Anderson Accounting

Darla Frame; darlaframe@gmail.com

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



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.*