

**FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH  
Wapakoneta, Ohio**

**“This is my Son,  
the Beloved, with whom  
I am well pleased.”**



Matthew 3:17, NRSV

**Baptism of Our Lord  
January 11, 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.

### MINISTERS for TODAY

Audio/Visual.....	Noah Kirby & Jeff Ritchie
Lector.....	Chris Nagel
Ushers .....	Dave Krites & Dave Clift
Worship Assistant .....	Darla Frame
Musician .....	Recordings
Pastor .....	Vicar Michelle Kouse
Greeter .....	Chris Clift
Acolyte .....	Youth Quake-None
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

#### \*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

*Songs of Thankfulness & Praise* (ELW 310)

#### \*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.**

### **\*CANTICLE OF PRAISE**

*This is the Feast (ELW p. 187)*

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

Let us pray. **O God our Father, at the baptism of Jesus you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized into Christ faithful to their calling to be your daughters and sons, and empower us all with your Spirit, 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**

Vicar Michelle Kouse

#### **Word**

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

#### **FIRST READING: ISAIAH 42:1-9**

A reading from Isaiah. <sup>1</sup> Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. <sup>2</sup> He will not cry out or lift up his voice or make it heard in the street; <sup>3</sup> a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. <sup>4</sup> He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth, and the coastlands wait for his teaching. <sup>5</sup> Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: <sup>6</sup> I am the Lord; I have called you in righteousness; I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, <sup>7</sup> to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. <sup>8</sup> I am the Lord; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols. <sup>9</sup> See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them.

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

## PSALM: 29

1 Ascribe to the Lord, O heavenly beings,  
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

**2 Ascribe to the Lord the glory of his name;  
worship the Lord in holy splendor.**

3 The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders;  
the Lord is over mighty waters.

**4 The voice of the Lord is a powerful;  
the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.**

5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars;  
the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

**6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf,  
and Sirion like a young wild ox.**

7 The voice of the Lord  
flashes forth flames of fire.

**8 The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness;  
the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**

9 The voice of the Lord causes the oaks to whirl, and strips the forest bare;  
And in his temple all say, "Glory!"

**10 The Lord sits enthroned over the flood;  
the Lord sits enthroned as king forever.**

11 May the Lord, give strength to his people!  
May the Lord bless his people with peace!

## SECOND READING: ROMANS 6:1-11

A reading from Romans. <sup>1</sup>What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup>By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? <sup>3</sup>Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup>Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. <sup>5</sup>For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. <sup>6</sup>We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. <sup>7</sup>For whoever has died is freed from sin. <sup>8</sup>But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. <sup>9</sup>We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. <sup>10</sup>The death he died, he died to sin once for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God. <sup>11</sup>So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

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

**\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*Alleluia* (ELW p. 188)

**\*GOSPEL: MATTHEW 3:13-17**

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

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup> John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" <sup>15</sup> But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. <sup>16</sup> And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. <sup>17</sup> And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

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

**MESSAGE**

Vicar Michelle Kouse

**\*HYMN OF THE DAY**

*Christ, When for Us You were Baptized* (ELW 304)

**\*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.**

## **\*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.

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, we adore you! You reveal your heart to us in the Baptism of Jesus. By the Spirit's power, unite us to Christ, so that we may hear the Father say to each of us, "You are my beloved son, my beloved daughter; in you I am well pleased."

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

Fill the Church with your Spirit. Bind it to your Son, your Word of truth. Adorn it with your goodness, holiness, and love. Make it fruitful in discipleship. Use it to lead many to the waters of Baptism, there to be made your beloved children.

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

Be enthroned, O Lord, in the midst of this congregation. Overwhelm us with your majesty and mercy. Fill our worship with the beauty of holiness. Strengthen us to do your will. Conform us to the heart and mind of Jesus. Bestow on us your peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Do not quench the spirit or break the hearts of your persecuted servants, O Lord; nor let them be discouraged when they suffer on account Christ. For them, for missionaries throughout the world; for all who wonder if they are called to ministry; for seminarians, professors, pastors, bishops, and other ministers, we also lift our hearts and voices in fervent supplication.

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

Bless everyone who is baptized today, and all who remember and give thanks for their Baptism. Thank you for adopting us as brothers and sisters of your dear Son, and for filling us with the same Spirit that descended upon him. Let us glorify you in all we say and do. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Put your Spirit upon the leaders of this and every nation. Establish your justice through them. Give them the wisdom and the will to protect and provide for their people, especially those who are like "bruised reeds and faintly burning wicks." Make them prefer mercy over might; righteousness over renown; and integrity over influence. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Keep in your care all who take up arms in defense of liberty and justice for all. Give them a spirit of wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, so their deeds conform to your will. Bring them safely home and speed up the day when deeds of war need not be done anymore. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We beseech you on behalf of everyone afflicted by suffering, especially those who crave our prayers, 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, Connie Krites, Jeanie Schnell, Kate Cunningham, Tim Cunningham, Judy Fisher, Michelle Kouse, Elaine Carlson, Wanda Nuss, Tom Meyer, Kingdom Harvest Ministries, those attending Youth Quake and WHS-Fellowship of Christian Athletes. And anyone that we name out loud or quietly in our hearts. (Brief silence). Bring them out of the dungeon of suffering and the prison of darkness. Lead them into the brightness of your presence and the company of all who love them. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal: we praise and adore you for the mercy you have shown to all who have died to us but are alive eternally to you. Grant that we walk the broken pathways of this mortal life, refreshed by your Spirit and conformed to your Son. Bring us through the floodwaters of death into your presence, where with all your redeemed children we worship and adore you in the beauty of your holiness 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**

#### **\*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)

## **\*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 profess faith in Christ Jesus, you are welcome. Jesus is extending this invitation and that is His only requirement. The bread and wine we share today has already been consecrated by an ordained pastor for this meal. Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

## **COMMUNION SONG**

*Lamb of God* (ELW p. 191)

## **SONGS DURING COMMUNION**

*Thine the Amen* (ELW 826)

*Spirit of Gentleness* (ELW 396)

*O Mornings Star How Fair & Bright!* (ELW 308)

## **\*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**

*God, Whose Almighty Word* (ELW 673)

### **\*DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Christ is with you. **Thanks be to God.**

## 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, Connie Krites, Jeanie Schnell, Kate Cunningham, Tim Cunningham, Judy Fisher, Michelle Kouse, Elaine Carlson, Wanda Nuss, Tom Meyer, 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.

**2025 Tax Statements** 2025 Tax statements available for pickup outside of chapel.

**Bingo** at The Gardens of Wapakoneta on Tuesday, January 13<sup>th</sup> at 1:30pm.

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

**Vote to Call a Pastor** We invite you for worship service and we will be having a congregational meeting on January 25, 2026, to vote to call Pastor Lorenzo Thomas. Please join us for this important vote for our congregation. A letter and information has been mailed to all active church members.

## MINISTERS for Next Week 1-18-26

Audio/Visual ..... Noah Kirby & Jeff Ritchie  
 Lector ..... Nancy Heffner  
 Ushers ..... Ken Frame & Chad Sterner  
 Worship Assistant ..... Jon Schmidt  
 Musician ..... Darla Frame  
 Pastor ..... Vicar Michelle Kouse  
 Greeter ..... Needed  
 Acolyte ..... Jacob Schlosser  
 Altar Guild ..... Brenda Shoffstall & Sara Young  
 Fellowship Cleanup ..... Brenda Shoffstall & Chris Nagel

### Weekly Attendance and Offerings

<u>Date</u>	<u>Views</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Current Giving</u>	<u>Benevolence</u>
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
01/04/2026	17	64	\$2,754.00	\$155.00

## **FELC Upcoming Calendar of Events**

<b>Sunday, Jan 11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9:00am</b>	<b>Adult Sunday School</b>
	<b>10:00am</b>	<b>Worship – Vicar Michelle Kouse Bell Choir Acolyte-Youth Quake-None</b>
Mon, Jan 12 <sup>th</sup>	5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class
Tues, Jan 13 <sup>th</sup>	1:30pm	Bingo at The Gardens
Wed, Jan 14 <sup>th</sup>	5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class
	6:00pm	Confirmation Class
Thurs, Jan 15 <sup>th</sup>	9-11:30am	God's Store House
	4:30pm	Community Loaves & Fishes
Fri, Jan 16 <sup>th</sup>	9-11:30am	God's Store House
Sat, Jan 17 <sup>th</sup>	8:15am	Spiritual Movement Class
	9-11:30am	God's Store House
<b>Sun, Jan 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9:00am</b>	<b>Adult Sunday School</b>
	<b>10:00am</b>	<b>Worship – Vicar Michelle Kouse Acolyte-Jacob Schlosser Council Meeting</b>
Mon, Jan 19 <sup>th</sup>	5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class
Tues, Jan 20 <sup>th</sup>	11:30am	Ladies' Lunch at El Azteca in Wapak
Wed, Jan 21 <sup>st</sup>	10:00am	Quilting
	6:00pm	Confirmation Class Bell Choir
Thurs, Jan 22 <sup>nd</sup>	7:00pm	Ladies' Chori
	9-11:30am	God's Store House
Fri, Jan 23 <sup>rd</sup>	4:30pm	Community Loaves & Fishes
	9-11:30am	God's Store House
Sat, Jan 24 <sup>th</sup>	8:15am	Spiritual Movement Class
	9-11:30am	God's Store House
Sunday, January 25 <sup>th</sup>		Vote to CALL Pastor Lorenzo Thomas

## **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 – 12:00pm

## **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](mailto:wapakelc@bright.net); 419-738-3911

Vicar Michelle Kouse

Anderson Accounting

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

Dave Curry; [dlcy@bright.net](mailto: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.*