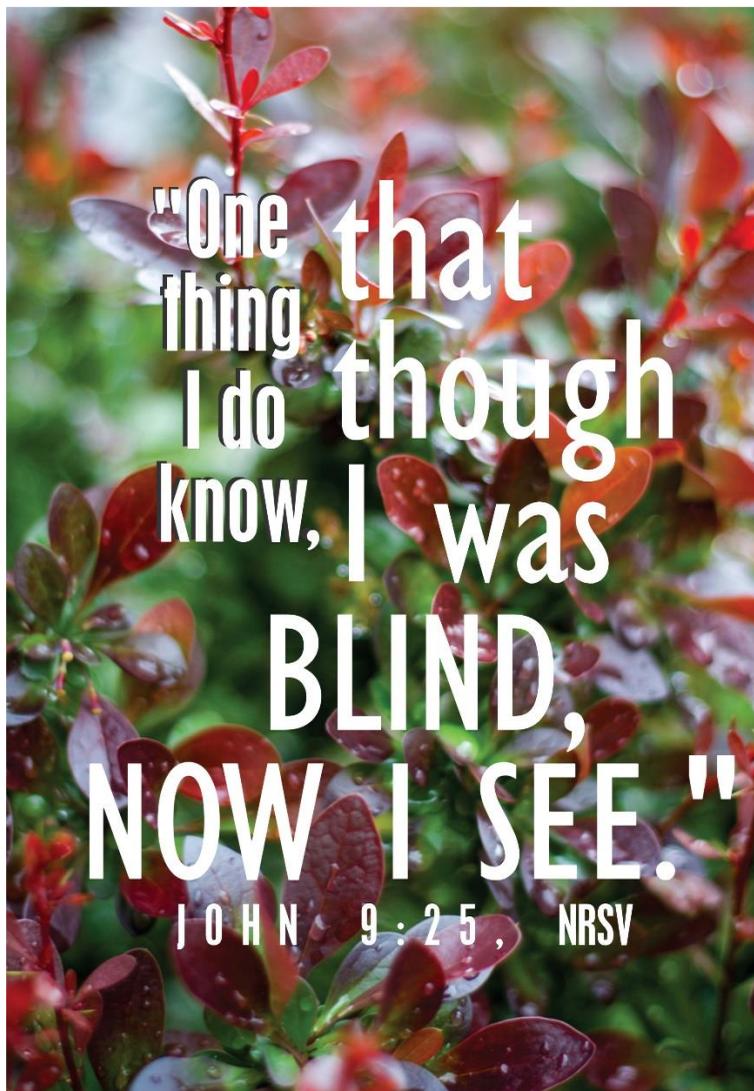


**FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH
Wapakoneta, Ohio**



**4th Sunday in Lent
March 15, 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 Dave & Char Curry for answered prayers.

The **Altar Flowers** are given to the Glory of God
by Dave & Connie Krites in honor of their
granddaughter, Malayna, and grandson, Evan, March birthdays.

MINISTERS for TODAY

Audio/Visual.....	Noah Kirby & Jeff Ritchie
Reader.....	Georgeann Stienecker
Ushers.....	Ken Frame & Chad Sterner
Worship Assistant.....	Darla Frame
Musician.....	Recordings
Pastor.....	Pastor Lorenzo Thomas
Greeter.....	Dave & Chris Cliff
Acolyte.....	Amelia Roeger
Altar Guild.....	Marsha Jackson & Char Curry
Fellowship Cleanup.....	Marsha Jackson & Char Curry

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

Be Thou My Vision (ELW 793)

*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.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray. **Almighty God, grant that we, who for our evil deeds worthily deserve to be punished, by the comfort of your grace, may mercifully be relieved; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

BELL CHOIR

Were You There

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Pastor Lorenzo Thomas

Word

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

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 42:14-21

A reading from Isaiah. ¹⁴For a long time I have held my peace; I have kept still and restrained myself; now I will cry out like a woman in labor; I will gasp and pant. ¹⁵I will lay waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their vegetation; I will turn the rivers into islands, and dry up the pools. ¹⁶And I will lead the blind in a way that they do not know, in paths that they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground. These are the things I do, and I do not forsake them. ¹⁷They are turned back and utterly put to shame, who trust in carved idols, who say to metal images, "You are our gods." ¹⁸Hear, you deaf, and look, you blind, that you may see! ¹⁹Who is blind but my servant, or deaf as my messenger whom I send? Who is blind as my dedicated one, or blind as the servant of the LORD? ²⁰He sees many things, but does not observe them; his ears are open, but he does not hear. ²¹The LORD was pleased, for his righteousness' sake, to magnify his law and make it glorious.

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

PSALM: 142

¹With my voice I cry out to the LORD; with my voice I plead for mercy to the LORD.

²I pour out my complaint before him; I tell my trouble before him.

³When my spirit faints within me, you know my way! In the path where I walk they have hidden a trap for me.

⁴Look to the right and see: there is none who takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me; no one cares for my soul.

⁵I cry to you, O LORD; I say, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living."

⁶Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low! Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are too strong for me!

⁷Bring me out of prison, that I may give thanks to your name! The righteous will surround me, for you will deal bountifully with me.

SECOND READING: EPHESIANS 5: 8-14

A reading from Ephesians. ⁸... {F}or at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. ¹³But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, ¹⁴for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

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

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Let Your Steadfast Love (ELW p. 189)

***GOSPEL: JOHN 9:1-41**

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

¹As {Jesus} passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. ²And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud ⁷and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." ¹⁰So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight." ¹²They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know." ¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." ¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. ²¹But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." ²²(His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.) ²³Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." ²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵He answered, "Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you

also want to become his disciples?" ²⁸And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." ³⁰The man answered, "Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." ³⁴They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out. ³⁵Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" ³⁷Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you." ³⁸He said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him. ³⁹Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind." ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, "Are we also blind?" ⁴¹Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains."

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

MESSAGE

Pastor Lorenzo Thomas

***HYMN OF THE DAY**

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound (ELW 779)

***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,
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to hell. 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 again 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 lift our hearts and voices to the Lord in prayer, that he would be merciful to his people.

Eternal God, lord of mercy, you continue to pour out upon us grace upon grace, blessing upon blessing; yet too often we fail to recognize your blessings and our need for your grace. Grant us the grace to set our minds on things above, where Christ is seated at your right hand and for Christ's sake show us your abundant mercy. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Through the transforming work of your most Holy Spirit, keep us mindful during this Lenten season of Jesus' journey to the cross. Help us to contemplate the magnitude of your costly grace, teach us to value that which is of surpassing worth, and reveal to us the new things you are doing in our midst. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty and merciful God, your Son stretched out his hand to heal the sick; bringing sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, hope to the despairing, and forgiveness to all. Reach out your hand to touch and hold those for whom we pray, that they may experience your healing power. This day we pray especially for 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, Roman Schlegel, Sue Hughes, Dan Havens, Jason Schneider, Bennett Douglas, Norma Jarrells, Jeanie Schnell, Michelle Kouse, Elaine Carlson, Wanda Nuss, Tom Meyer, Todd Sawmiller, George Anderson, Jerry Dicus, Kingdom Harvest Ministries, and WHS-Fellowship of Christian Athletes. And anyone that we name out loud or quietly in our hearts. (Brief silence). Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, gracious Father, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **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. You bid your faithful people cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the Paschal feast; that, fervent in prayer and in works of mercy, and renewed by your Word and Sacraments, they may come to the fullness of grace which you have prepared for those who love you.. 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:

***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. Jesus 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

I Come with Joy (ELW 482)

You are Mine (ELW 581)

Christ, the Life of All the Living (ELW 339)

*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, you have given your only Son to be for us both a sacrifice for sin and an example of godly life. Give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive these his inestimable gifts, and daily endeavor to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **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

In the Cross of Christ I Glory (ELW 324)

*DISMISSAL

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

Weekly Attendance and Offerings

<u>Date</u>	<u>Views</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Current Giving</u>	<u>Benevolence</u>
02/15/2026	28	96	\$9,403.00	\$115.00
02/22/2026	21	71	\$2,941.00	\$465.00
03/01/2026	16	69	\$3,291.00	\$130.00
03/08/2026	17	60	\$5,791.00	\$230.00

MINISTERS for Next Week 3-22-26

Audio/Visual.....	Noah Kirby & Jeff Ritchie
Reader.....	Chris Nagel
Ushers.....	Jon Schmidt & Maeson Roode
Worship Assistant.....	Ken Frame
Musician.....	Recordings
Pastor.....	Pastor Lorenzo Thomas
Greeter.....	Dave & Chris Clift
Acolyte.....	Vivian Fisher
Altar Guild.....	Marsha Jackson & Char Curry
Fellowship Cleanup.....	Marsha Jackson & Char Curry

OUR PRAYER CORNER

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

The Gardens	Mary Ann Thomas, Betty Lietz
Shawnee Manor	Judy Kentner
Homebound	Marty Rostorfer, Eloise Katterhenry, Marsha Henderson, Judy Metz

We especially remember in our prayers...

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, Roman Schlegel, Sue Hughes, Dan Havens, Jason Schneider, Bennett Douglas, Norma Jarrells, Jeanie Schnell, Michelle Kouse, Elaine Carlson, Wanda Nuss, Tom Meyer, George Anderson, Todd Sawmiller, Jerry Dicus, 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.

What's Happening at First English....

Noisy Offering for the month of MARCH: CAMP KNO-KOMA 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. March Items-Taco kits, Salsa, Brownie mix, cooking soups & Pringles. 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.

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.

Mid-Week Evening Services FELC will also be having **Wednesday Evening Lenten Services on March 18th & 25th at 6:30pm.**

9-Square Monthly IS MEETING TODAY, 1pm-2:30pm!! It will be a time for Middle/High Schoolers to come together and play 9-Square while learning about God's word. We encourage youth to invite friends from other churches, school, dance class, sports teammates and any other place they feel called to invite someone. **We will meet once a month, 1pm-2:30pm, see flyer for all dates.** We will have a 15-minute Bible Time to learn about God's Love & Good News. Adults are also welcome to join! No need to RSVP, just come! Any questions, contact office/Hilary.

Easter Celebration with Luncheon & Egg Hunt on Palm Sunday, March 29th following worship service in the Fellowship Hall. The Luncheon will be a carry-in meal, the fellowship committee will provide the meat. There will be Bible Time, 9-Square, & *Egg Hunt. Please make sure to sign up for celebration, clipboards will be passed around at church.

Easter Flower Order Sheet We will be ordering flowers for Easter Sunday! Order form is at the back of church or on the office door. **Orders are due by March 22nd** to Georgeann or to the office. There are four different types to choose from, please consider ordering to help make Easter Sunday a beautiful, flowery service. Make sure you take flowers with you after Easter service.

The annual Wednesday Noon Lenten services, organized by the Wapakoneta Area Ministerial Association (WAMA) will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 18. All services will be held at St. Joseph Catholic Church, West Pearl street. The theme for the 2026 services is "The Beatitudes: Attitudes of the Heart, Personally and Communally." Ash Wednesday's theme is "Blessed are the poor in spirit...."

Lunch and a time of fellowship will follow each half-hour service. The Noon Lenten services are free and open to the public; all are very welcome. Free will donations will be accepted for WAMA's Voucher Program and for Servants Day.

Those attending the service may enter the church from the west (parking lot) entrance, north (Pearl Street) entrance, or east (Perry Street) entrance. The Blackhoof Street entrance into the parking lot will be closed, and cars should access the parking lot from Benton Street, not Pearl Street.

FELC Upcoming Calendar of Events

Sun, Mar 15th	9:00am	Adult Sunday School
	10:00am	Worship – Pastor Lorenzo Thomas Bell Choir Acolyte-Amelia Roeger
	1pm-2:30pm	9-Square Monthly
Mon, Mar 16 th	5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class
Tues, Mar 17 th	♣ Happy St. Patrick's Day ♣	
	11:30am	Ladies' Lunch @ Main St. Station in NK
Wed, Mar 18th	10:00am	Quilting
	12:00pm	Noon Lenten Lunch/Service @ St. Joe's
	5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class
	5:45pm	Bell Choir
	6:30pm	Mid-Week Lenten Service
	7:15pm	Ladies' Choir
Thurs, Mar 19 th	9-11:30am	God's Store House
	4:30pm	Community Loaves & Fishes
Fri, Mar 20 th	9-11:30am	God's Store House
Sat, Mar 21 st	8:15am	Spiritual Movement Class
	9-11:30am	God's Store House
Sun, Mar 22nd	<u>Easter Flower Order Forms are Due!</u>	
	<u>Please consider ordering!</u> 😊	
	9:00am	Adult Sunday School
	10:00am	Worship – Pastor Lorenzo Thomas Acolyte-Vivian Fisher
Mon, Mar 23 rd	5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class
Wed, Mar 25th	12:00pm	Noon Lenten Lunch/Service @ St. Joe's
	5:15pm	Spiritual Movement Class
	6:30pm	Mid-Week Evening Lent Service
Thurs, Mar 26 th	April Newsletter Info Due!	
	9-11:30am	God's Store House
	4:30pm	Community Loaves & Fishes
Fri, Mar 27 th	9-11:30am	God's Store House
Sat, Mar 28 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

Pastor

Rev. Lorenzo Thomas;

pastor.lorenzo@myfelc.org; 330-506-6025

Office Administrator

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

Bookkeeper

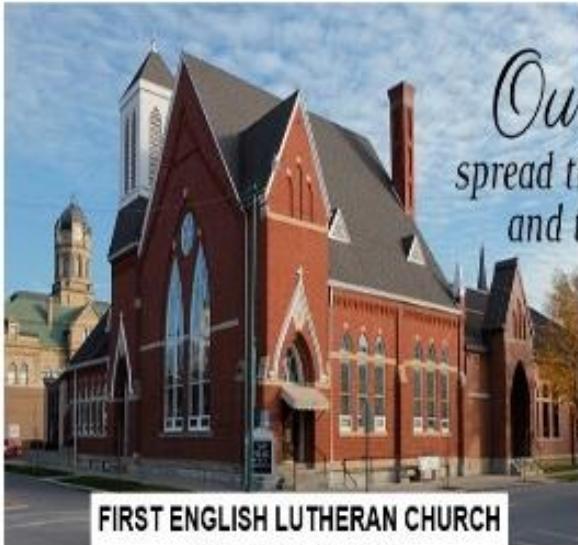
Anderson Accounting

Music Director

Darla Frame; darlaframe@gmail.com

Audio-Technology

Dave Curry; dscy@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.*