FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH
Wapakoneta, Ohio



25Th Sunday after Pentecost
November 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 Marsha Jackson in honor of Dave and Char Curry's wedding anniversary.

The **Altar Flowers** are given to the Glory of God by Tracy Sawmiller in memory of her brother, Todd Sawmiller and in honor of all our veterans.

MINISTERS for TODAY

Audio/Visual..... Noah Kirby & Jeff Ritchie
Lector.....Doris Fisher
Ushers ..... Ken Frame and Chad Sterner
Worship Assistant .....Deanna Ronan
Musician .....Greg Tabler
Pastor .....Pastor Lorenzo
Greeter .....Joy Kantner
Altar Guild.....Denise Kantner and Joy Kantner
Fellowship Cleanup..... Denise Kantner and Chris Nagel
Acolyte…….Jacob Schlosser

The worship service is live streamed and recorded and is published on You Tube 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.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **Amen.**

***GATHERING SONG** *For The Fruit Of All Creation* (ELW 679)

***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:. **Lord God, rule and govern our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit, that while keeping the end of all things in mind, we may be stirred up to holiness in this life and come to be with you forever in that life to come. Grant this, we pray, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our 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: Zephaniah 1:7-16

Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is near; the Lord has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated his guests. And on the day of the Lord's sacrifice — "I will punish the officials and the king's sons and all who array themselves in foreign attire. On that day I will punish everyone who leaps over the threshold, and those who fill their master's house with violence and fraud. On that day," declares the Lord, "a cry will be heard from the Fish Gate, a wail from the Second Quarter, a loud crash from the hills. Wail, O inhabitants of the Mortar! For all the traders are no more; all who weigh out silver are cut off. At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are complacent, those who say in their hearts, 'The Lord will not do good, nor will he do ill.' Their goods shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them." The great day of the Lord is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there. A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements. Word of God, Word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 90:1-12

Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another.
Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the | earth were born, from age to age you are God.
You turn us back to the dust and say, "Go back, O child of earth."
For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past and like a watch in the night.
You sweep us away like a dream; we fade away suddenly like the grass.

In the morning it is green and flourishes; in the evening it is dried up and withered.
For we consume away in your displeasure; we are afraid because of your wrathful indignation.
Our iniquities you have set before you, and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.
When you are angry, all our days are gone; we bring our years to an end like a sigh.
The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength even eighty; yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow, for they pass away quickly and | we are gone.
Who regards the power of your wrath? who rightly fears your indignation?
So teach us to number our days that we may apply our | hearts to wisdom.
SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him.

Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.
Word Of God, Word Of Life. **Thanks Be To God**

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** *Alleluia* (ELW p. 18

GOSPEL: Matthew 25:14-30

The holy gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you O Lord.**
Jesus said to the disciples, “For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered

no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

MESSAGE Pastor Lorenzo

***HYMN OF THE DAY** *As Saints of Old (ELW695)*

***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.

***PRAYER OF INTERCESSION**

In the power of the Spirit, let us pray to our Lord Jesus Christ on behalf of the Church and all people according to their need.

Holy Father, through water and the Word, you have washed away our sins and given us a promise in which we can trust. We thank you for laying claim to us in our baptism and adopting us as your own. Help us to live lives of trust and repentance. Give us new life by the work of your Spirit. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, the giver of all good gifts. Thank you for giving us a place within your family and for lavishing your blessings upon us. Grant us the gift of truly thankful hearts, and a willingness to express our thanks with joyful songs of praise. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Be with all those who are traveling to distant places next week. Grant them safety on the roads and in the air. Be with all who operate or work on airlines, railroads, taxis, or busses. Give people patience and consideration as they make their way to and from family gatherings. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Strengthen and console those who are anxious, grieving, lonely, ill, or discouraged in any way. I invite you now, either quietly or aloud to speak the names of someone in need of prayer.
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 provided, and for the gifts you share.

OFFERTORY

***OFFERING HYMN** *Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful* (ELW p. 182)

OFFERING PRAYER
Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we humbly offer to you the gifts of our treasures, talents, and time. Use them to your glory, and for the benefit of all your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **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 indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn

:***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 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

(Selections by Greg Tabler)

***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. **Ame**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Almighty and eternal God, we thank you for nourishing us with the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. Send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of your Son, 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 make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace **Amen.**

***SENDING SONG** *Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us* (ELW707)

***DISMISSAL**

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

MINISTERS for Next Week 11-22-26

Audio/Visual..... Noah Kirby & Jeff Ritchie
Lector.....Richard Yocum
Ushers ..... Jon Schmidt and Mason Roode
Worship Assistant .....Marsha Jackson
Musician ..... Susan Miller
Pastor…… Vicar Michelle Kouse
Greeter .....Brenda Shoffstall
Altar Guild.....Denise Kantner and Joy Kantner
Fellowship Cleanup .....Denise Kantner and Chris Nagel
Acolyte …… Annie Yocum

Weekly Attendance and Offerings

Date	Views	Attendance	Current Giving	Benevolence

11-01-26	**13**	**66**	**$3372.00**	**$220.00**
11-08-26	**14**	**68**	**$2299.00**	**$175.00**

OUR PRAYER CORNER

Those who would love a visit or a card…

The Gardens	Betty Lietz
Otterbein-Cridersville	Jim Walls
Homebound	Marty Rostorfer,
	Eloise Katterhenry,
	Marsha Henderson

We especially remember in our prayers…

Betty Lietz, Jim Walls, Marty Rostorfer, Marsha Henderson, Ted Gibson, Hunter Smith, Seth Thuman, Jim Zwiebel, JJ Truesdale, Bennett Douglas, Kay, Richard & Don Ault, Jerry Dicus, Diane Peterson, Connie Krites, Roman Schlegel, Michelle Wannamacher, Mike Nuss, Carolyn Eakin, Allison Heffner & Baby Lydia, Teresa Fisher

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 OCTOBER- OPERATION SHOEBOX Offering pans are located in the chapel and at the back of the church. Donations are accepted during the entire month.

Bingo at the Gardens in Wapakoneta **at 1:30pm** on the second Tuesday of the month. Please join us!

Collection for Auglaize County Crisis Center THEY ARE IN NEED of food items each month for the based on a monthly request. November items: Cleaning supplies, Trash Bags and Kleenex.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

Operation Shoebox - Boxes for this mission are on the table in the Chapel. Deadline to have returned will be Nov. 22nd.

Angel Tree- We will be starting our Angel Tree giving soon led by Teresa Fisher. Sign up sheets will be posted in the chapel in the next week or so.

God's Storehouse- Don't forget to save your community Market slips- Put them in the cannister in the back foyer.

REQUEST- Please do not leave coats or personal items in the back foyer during worship.

The Light Shines in the Darkness
A Reflection from Pastor Lorenzo

As we approach the end of another year, I've been noticing how quickly the days are growing shorter. The sun sets earlier, the evenings seem longer, and before we know it, we're driving home in the dark. The trees have lost their leaves, the air has grown colder, and creation itself seems to be settling down for a long winter's rest. Some of you might remember that last month I was reading a book called *Be Afraid* by Kutter Callaway. It's a fascinating book about fear, faith, and what our fears can teach us about ourselves and our relationship with God. One of the things I've been thinking about since reading it is how uncomfortable we can be with darkness. We naturally associate darkness with uncertainty, danger, and the things we cannot see or control. And yet, darkness. ***The Light Shines in the Darkness***

There is something wonderfully fitting about the way the Church year unfolds during this season.

Before we celebrate Christmas, we will observe Christ the King Sunday, when we proclaim that Jesus Christ reigns over all creation. Not the sort of king who rules through fear or oppression, but a King whose throne is a cross and whose crown is made of thorns. A King who enters into the darkness of our world rather than remaining safely removed from it.

Then comes Advent, a season of waiting, watching, and preparing. Advent reminds us that we live in a world that is not yet what God intends it to be. There is suffering, uncertainty, grief, and fear. We know these things all too well. But Advent also reminds us that God has not abandoned his creation. We wait in hope because we know that Christ has come, Christ is with us, and Christ will come again.

And then, just as the days reach their shortest point, something remarkable happens.

Around December 21, we reach the winter solstice. The darkness has stretched as far as it can go, and slowly, almost imperceptibly, the days begin to grow longer again. The light returns.

Just a few days later, we celebrate Christmas, when we remember that the true Light of the world entered into our darkness. As St. John tells us, ***"*The light shines in the darkness, *and the darkness has not overcome it"* (John 1:5).**

I love that image. Not because Christmas magically makes all our problems disappear, any more than the winter solstice suddenly makes the world warm again. There will still be cold days ahead. There will still be darkness, hardship, and uncertainty. But something has changed. The light is returning, and the darkness cannot stop it.

Perhaps that's something worth remembering as we enter these final weeks of the year. Whatever darkness we may be facing in our own lives, whether it is grief, illness, loneliness, anxiety, or simply the weariness that comes from living in a troubled world, we do not face it alone.

Our hope as Christians is not that we will never experience darkness. **Our hope is that God has entered the darkness with us, and the darkness will never have the final word.**

So as the evenings grow longer and the days grow colder, I invite you to embrace this season of the Church year. Come celebrate Christ our King. Enter into the waiting and expectation of Advent. And bring a friend to prepare your hearts once again to welcome the Christ Child, the Light of the world.

The days may be getting darker, but the Light is coming.

Pastor Lorenzo

FELC Upcoming Calendar of Events

Sun. Nov. 15	**9:00am**	**Adult Sunday School**
	10:00am	**Worship- Pastor Lorenzo**
		Acolyte- Jacob Schlosser
Tues, Nov 17th	6:00pm	Ladie's Night at Mason Jar
Thurs, Nov 19th	9-11:30am	God's Store House
	4:30pm	Loaves & Fishes
Fri, Nov 20th	9-11:30am	God's Store House
Sat, Nov 21st	9-11:30am	God's Store House
Sunday Nov 22nd	**9:00am**	**Adult Sunday School**
	10:00am	**Worship- Vicar Michelle Kouse**
		Ladie's Choir
		Acolyte-Annie Yocum
		Decorating after Church-Pizza
Thurs, Nov 26	11:00-1:00pm	St. Joseph Parish Center
		Thanksgiving Community meal
Fri, Nov 27th	9-11:30am	God's Store House
Sat, Nov 28th	9-11:30am	God's Store House
Sun,Nov 29th	**9:00am**	**Adult Sunday School**
	10:00am	**Worship- Vicar Michelle Kouse**
		Acolyte- Knox Yocum

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 – 11:30 am

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	Pastor Lorenzo Thomas;pastor.lorenzo@myfelc.org
Vicar	Michelle Kouse
Bookkeeper	Anderson Accounting
Music Director	Darla Frame; darlaframe@gmail.com
Audio-Tech	Dave Curry; dlcy@bright.net; 937-307-8596

