



THE FIRST EDITION

DECEMBER 2024

THIS ISSUE:

UPDATE FROM PASTOR LUKE
Page 2-3

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY
MINISTRY UPDATE
Page 4

COLORADO BACKPACKING
Page 5

FAITH AND LIFE CONVERSATIONS
Page 6

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS
Page 7

DECEMBER CALENDAR
Page 8

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS – A TIME TO WORSHIP

Perhaps we don't realize it, but right in the middle of one of the busiest seasons of all, the Church offers a place and a time to rest, reflect, and simply be fed. Worship services during this season help us stay grounded in the hope, peace, joy, and love that we receive from God. Here are the worship offerings for December:

Sunday Morning Advent Worship – December 1, 8, and 15 at 9 am

Each Sunday at 9:00 am, we will continue to gather for our normal worship services while focusing on the themes of Advent which will help us anticipate the coming of the Christ Child, Emmanuel, God with us. Families will light the Advent candles on the wreath.

Advent Midweek Services – December 4, 11 and 18 at 7:30 pm

Each Wednesday that we have confirmation, we will come together and worship at 7:30 pm for an Advent Midweek service. All are welcome to participate in this service as we reflect on the themes of hope, peace, joy, and love.

Youth Christmas Program – December 22 at 9 am

This service will feature the Youth Christmas Program in lieu of a sermon at our normal 9:00 am worship, and the focus all morning will be on youth (more details later in the newsletter).

December 22 4 pm

We recognize that the holiday season carries both hope and despair. On Sunday, December 22, we will host a contemplative worship service at 4 pm in the sanctuary that recognizes both the burdens and the gifts of the darkest time of the year.

Especially welcome are folks who are grieving the deaths of loved ones. You will be invited to stick around for a small reception following the service.



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Lutheran Church
Cannon Falls

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**VISIT OUR WEBSITE
FOR UPDATES!**

www.firstenglishchurch.com

PASTOR LUKE

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NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

San Lucas Tolimán, Guatemala Trip

Thirteen of us had a great experience traveling to Guatemala. We learned much from the people, the mission, the community, and the place. Thanks to all who came to our presentations last month and we hope you will keep asking us about our trip. This feels like the beginning of a wonderful relationship between First English and the people of San Lucas Tolimán.

Please contact Pastor Luke or Bill Peterson if you might be interested in a future trip as we are sure there will be more.

With gratitude,
Pastor Luke





CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES

Maddie Patterson

Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministry

maddiep@firstenglishchurch.com

507-384-8317



YOUTH PROGRAM UPDATES

Advent has always been a season of getting ready. We're looking forward to the birth of Jesus and preparing for His return. We get to think about the joy that is coming in both cases. As we do this, there are a few celebrations to prepare for that take quite a bit of time to "get ready".

Our Sunday Schoolers have been preparing by riding in the Deck the Falls Parade float. The kids worked hard to make decorations this fall during God's Work Our Hands day, and got to showcase them on parade day. They threw candy and waved, and showed the community the story of Jesus' birth and God's love for us.

This isn't all the Sunday Schoolers have been up to! They are also hard at work getting ready for the Christmas Play. You'll get to see them perform during worship on December 22nd, where they'll tell the story of Jesus' birth. After the play, we will have the pancake breakfast, bake sale, and crafts for everyone!

Our older kids have been preparing in their own lives as the confirmands continue their study of the New Testament, and Youth Group continues to grow! We're excited to share with you what this next season brings.

Peace,
Maddie Patterson
CYF Director

ANNUAL GIVING TREE

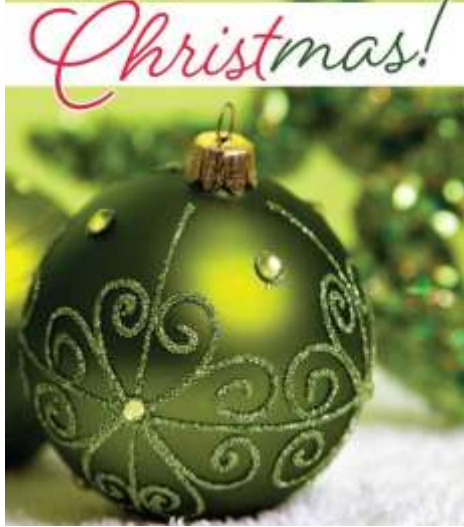
HELPING THE GOODHUE COUNTY CHRISTMAS PROJECT



The December project coordinated by First English's Love in Outreach (formerly Social Ministry) team is the Christmas Giving Tree. We will be providing gifts of clothes, toys, a gift card for holiday groceries and other basic items for families in need, through the Goodhue

County Christmas Project and through the non-profit organization Hispanic Outreach of Goodhue County. Please take a tag or envelope from the tree on the main level or the bulletin board and return your gift or financial contribution to the church by Sunday, December 14. Please attach the tag to your gift. Gifts should be unwrapped; you may provide wrapping paper or a gift bag if you'd like.

First English has a history of being incredibly generous in sharing during the holidays; all contributions are appreciated and will go directly to families that need extra support this year.



TATUM GRACE GRIMES was baptized on Sunday, November 10, 2024. Tatum was born on December 6, 2022 in Red Wing, MN. Tatum's parents are **Jon** and **Whitney Grimes** and s sponsors are **Eric** and **Laura Burvee**.

ELLIE CLAIRE GRIMES was baptized on Sunday, November 10, 2024. Ellie was born on March 16, 2024 in Red Wing, MN. Ellie's parents are **Jon** and **Whitney Grimes** and s sponsors are **Megan Jordan** and **Andrew Leko**.

WOMEN OF FELC GATHERING AND BIBLE STUDY

The next gathering of the Women of FELC group will be held on **Tuesday, December 10 at 10 am** in the Family Room. Join them for fellowship and bible study!

YOUTH BAKE SALE DECEMBER 22

Do you enjoy eating Christmas baking but not necessarily making many different treats?

Or maybe you like baking but don't want to eat it all?

Or maybe you simply like supporting First English Youth and making once in a life time experiences possible for them?

If yes to any of these, youth from First English will help host a Youth Bake Sale to help fundraise for the Youth Colorado Backpacking Trip on Sunday, December 22. We are going to need lots of help with baking, setting up, and managing the bake sale. Please sign up to help however you can at the volunteer sign up table in the narthex.



NEW BABY?

We want to know!

Are you expecting a child through birth or adoption? Do you have a new infant at home? In these sacred times of welcoming a baby, First English Lutheran Church is here for you. We have resources to support the whole family and look forward to connecting with you! Contact our office for more information. For baptism requests, please fill out the Baptism Request form found on our website at

www.firstenglishchurch.com.



HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH TRIP 2025 COLORADO BACKPACKING!

Are you currently in 9th to 12th grade?
Are you interested in a trip of a lifetime?

Consider joining Pastor Luke as we travel to the Sangre de Cristo

Mountains for backpacking, white-water rafting, high ropes adventure, and maybe even a chance to catch a trout from a pristine mountain lake.

The trip will be Saturday, August 2 to Saturday, August 9. On Wednesday, December 4, there will be a brief informational meeting at 6 pm – interested students and parents are welcome. There might be a limited number of participants, 11, unless we get enough interest to support two charters. Therefore, we will reserve spots on a first-come, first-serve basis with a \$100 deposit.

The total cost will be \$650 plus travel expenses minus what we fundraise. Additionally, scholarships will be available. Contact Pastor Luke with any questions or interest.

HELP ON SUNDAYS!

Help is needed in multiple areas during our services. Consider assisting as an usher, lay reader, communion assistant, or with fellowship afterwards. If you can assist in any of these areas, sign up at the welcome desk on the date you are available.

Questions? Contact the church office at 507-263-3042 or email info@firstenglishchurch.com. Thank you for your consideration!

WORSHIP SERVICES LIVE STREAMING



The livestream of our 9 am worship service is available on YouTube via our website, www.firstenglishchurch.com And aired on the local HBC Channel 12 (check local listing for schedule) & MediaCom cable channel 12 (11 am on Tuesday, 3 pm Wednesday, and 4:30 pm on Saturday)





Please join us for a series of Faith and Life Conversations on January 5, 12 and 19 when we explore the role of metaphor in theology with a particular focus on the Creation Stories of Genesis.

Jan. 5: Metaphor and Life.

Understanding metaphor and how it both hides and illuminates our experience of life. How do metaphors shape our behavior? What are some of the dominant metaphors in our culture? And how do metaphors affect our understanding of God?

Jan. 12: Creating Order. Genesis 1:1

– 2:4a. What does the first creation story tell us about the world and how God relates to it? What is the character of God in this story? And what does the form and content of this story tell us about the people who wrote it?

Jan. 19: God the Tailor. Genesis

2:4b – 3:24. What does the second story tell us about the world, our human experience of it and the character of God? Why is the character in this story so different from the character in the first? What does this story tell us about the passionate and compassionate side of God?

Conversations will be led by Bill Peterson.

FELC OFFICE HOURS

Our church office hours are

Monday-Friday,

9 am-Noon, 1-3:30 pm

Closed on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day

The poster for 'I Cantanti Chamber Choirs' features a dark background with large, glowing red and white Christmas ornaments. The text is white and reads: 'I CANTANTI CHAMBER CHOIRS', 'A FESTIVAL OF NINE Lessons & Carols', 'PETER SCHLEIF & WAYNE KIVELL DIRECTORS', and two performance dates: 'Sunday, December 1 at 4:00pm Skinner Memorial Chapel Carleton College Northfield' and 'Sunday, December 8 at 4:00pm Trinity Lutheran Church 530 4th St NW Faribault'. At the bottom, it says 'Freewill Exit Offering in Lieu of Tickets'.

The flyer for 'CANNON FALLS FOOD SHELF' has a background of fresh vegetables. The title is in orange. Below it, text in black states: 'For over 25 years, the volunteers of the Cannon Falls Food Shelf has devoted their energy to passionately advocating for the needs of our community family.' A white box on the right contains 'NEW HOURS!' in red, followed by 'Thursdays 3-6 pm' in black. Below this, more text in black says: 'The Cannon Falls Food Shelf is run by a local volunteer board and is not under the administration of First English Lutheran Church. Tax ID# is 30-0221349. Contact Info: 507-819-0236, cannonfallsfoodshelf70@gmail.com'.



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

The First English Lutheran Church Council met on November 14, 2024.

The following are the highlights of the meeting:

- Approved October 10, 2024, council minutes with one correction.
- Pastor's Report
 1. Communication – looking to strengthen with more use of pictures; nice to have someone on council with these skills
 2. Working with stewardship/budget committee to simplify budget/finance reporting; should we eliminate Rooted in Faith gifts or re-work how/where to include in budget?
 3. Booked youth trip to Colorado for August 2-9; other churches invited if enough room
- Reflection time with council
 - Great participation in FMSC event with strong leadership from First English
 - Level of participation increasing, work on getting newer folks claiming "ownership"
- Approved Treasurer's Report

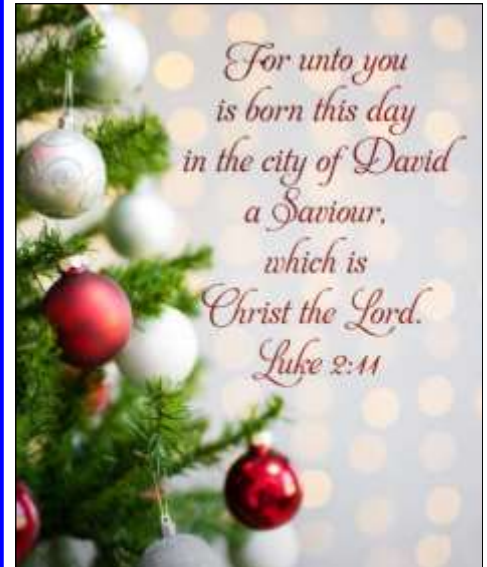
October 2024 Income/Expense Report	
Total Income	+ \$ 26,485.01
Total Expenses	- \$ 26,901.73
2024 Year to Date Income/Expense Report	
Total Income	+ \$ 278,345.25
Total Expenses	- \$ 331,561.00
- Pr. Emily Carson from the Synod office will work with us on strategic planning that will help us determine staffing needs and identifying our main energy. The retreat will be Tuesday, November 26, from 9 am to 1 pm at church.
- Stewardship letters with revised pledge card mailed today. Members will be sharing at worship what First English means for them.
- Property team
 - determined that two existing pole lights illuminate southwest parking area, are controlled by switch in lobby with no timer/auto shut-off, are very bright. Will check if a timer can be used.
 - Will get proposals on installing lighting for north parking area used by food shelf.
 - Property team is working on creating schedule for replacing 10 heating/AC units, possibly 1 unit every other year
- Approved moving altar furnace/AC unit to north stairwell if possible; if not, approved purchasing new furnace/AC unit for front stairwell area; funds from Rooted in Faith (RIF) building/furnishing.
- Nominating committee is encouraged to begin meeting!
- Bill Peterson reported that Faith and Life conversations on school referendum and Guatemala trip were going well.
- Jim Nelson and Robin Stewart commented on change in hours, noting it is now less confusing; Food Shelf Director Paul Norby has a cell number people may call for emergency assistance.
- Julie Gergen reported that First English has hosted its first CF Breakfast Club. We have volunteered to host another several times. The Club meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 7 am at St. Ansgar's.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING:

Thursday, December 12,
2024 at 7 pm

COMING IN JANUARY

Annual Congregational
Meeting, January 26, 2025



CCIC UPDATE

The Community Churches Interaction Council met this past month at First English. We continue to see interest in collaboration between local churches which gives me hope! Logistically, we are finalizing a website, and generally feel like we are getting into a good rhythm with our leadership team. Ministry-wise, we have sent out over \$18,000 to people in need through the Good Sam fund, supported the Feed My Starving Children packing event and Thanksgiving Community Dinner, and more! We also continue to dream up new ways to support our community, so let us know if you want to get involved!

– Pastor Luke

DECEMBER 2024

DEC 1, SUN 1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

9 am Communion Worship
10:15-10:45 am Education Hour—
Christmas Play Practice and Faith and
Life Conversations about Advent

DEC 4, WEDS

1 pm Staff Meeting
6 pm Confirmation
7:30 pm Wednesday Worship

DEC 5, THU

3-6 pm CF Food Shelf

DEC 7, SAT

8 am Altar Guild Christmas Decorating

DEC 8, SUN 2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

9 am Worship
10:15-10:45 am Education Hour—
Christmas Play Practice and Faith and
Life Conversations about Advent

DEC 10, TUE

10 am Women of FELC Mtg/Bible Study

DEC 11, WEDS

1 pm Staff Meeting
6 pm Confirmation
7:30 pm Wednesday Worship

DEC 12, THU

3-6 pm CF Food Shelf
7 pm Church Council Meeting

DEC 15, SUN 3RD SUN. OF ADVENT

9 am Communion Worship
10:15-10:45 am Christmas Play Practice

DEC 18, WEDS

1 pm Staff Meeting
6 pm Confirmation/Youth Christmas
Party
7:30 pm Wednesday Worship

DEC 19, THU

3-6 pm CF Food Shelf

DEC 22, SUN 4TH SUN. OF ADVENT

9 am Worship and Children's Christmas
Play
Christmas Breakfast and Bake Sale
4 pm Blue Christmas Service

DEC 24, TUES CHRISTMAS EVE

Church Office Closed
3 pm Christmas Eve Worship
5 pm Christmas Eve worship

DEC 25, WEDS CHRISTMAS

Church Office Closed
No Confirmation or Wednesday Worship

DEC 26, THU

3-6 pm CF Food Shelf

DEC 29, SUN

9 am Worship
No Sunday School



FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Worship Services

December 24 3 pm and 5 pm

The Nativity of Our Lord – Christmas Eve

At 3 and 5 pm on Tuesday, December 24, we will gather around the manger, as we sing, hear, and witness the miracle of Christ's birth. Music, candlelight, and experiencing the ultimate story of hope will highlight this service.

Lessons and Carols – December 29 at 9 am

Sunday worship on December 29 will be a service of Lessons and Carols. Join us as we sing Christmas favorites together and read familiar stories at 9am.