



# THE FIRST EDITION

FEBRUARY 2025

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## FELC HOSTS ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

On Sunday, January 26, we held our annual congregational meeting. Thanks to all who participated! We reflected on how we have made progress in our four strategic initiatives developed in 2022: Broaden Leadership, Provide Meaningful Opportunities for Service, Enrich our Worship Experience, and Develop our Spiritual Education.



We also announced the theme of "Doing Life Together" in 2025, celebrated the opportunities that come with more families attending church, and acknowledged the challenges, primarily financial, that come with the generational transition we are in. Then the 2025 proposed budget was approved that includes the possibility for a second full-time pastor or professional lay leader to replace Maddie when she goes on internship, and health care benefits for the Administrative Assistant and Director of Children, Youth and Family positions.

To conclude, we thanked our outgoing Council members: Dean Kautz, Jim Nelson, and Brenda Deutsch, and voted in new Council members: Kelly Miller, Austin Noble, and Anne Shoemaker.

If you have questions about the annual meeting or annual report, please talk to Pastor Luke or anyone on the Council.



First English  
Lutheran Church  
Cannon Falls

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## CHURCH OFFICE

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M-F, 9 am - 3:30 pm

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BELL CHOIR DIRECTOR: Jane Peterson  
507-263-4148

[janerichard@mchsi.com](mailto:janerichard@mchsi.com)

## CHURCH COUNCIL

Phyllis Althoff	Julie Gergen
Phil Jacobson	Diane Johnson
Scott Johnson	Kelly Miller
Austin Noble	Bill Peterson
Anne Shoemaker	Robin Stewart
Amanda Thompson	Carna Visagie

## FOUNDATION BOARD

Barb Elias	Denise Holz
Dean Kautz	Tiffany Kiffmeyer
Emily Spicer	Kathy Swanson



## PASTOR LUKE

[lukeh@firstenglishchurch.com](mailto:lukeh@firstenglishchurch.com)

507.218.1311

## NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

### Footsteps of Paul

Lisa and I had a great trip to Greece and Turkey. We traveled to places where the Apostle Paul once walked, teaching and preaching to early Christians.

We gathered at Mars Hill, just below the ancient Acropolis and Parthenon in Athens, the same place where Paul addressed the religious idolatry of the Greeks in Acts 17, to hear lectures from our professors. We traveled to the Meteora Monasteries where over 600 years ago Byzantine monks established communities atop perpendicular rocks to worship God. A few of these monasteries are still active today. We sat on the foundations of ancient Corinth and received communion together. We explored Ephesus, one of the best-preserved ancient cities in the Mediterranean, where Paul lived for three years. And we discussed his teachings at the Temple of Artemis, one of the seven ancient wonders of the world.



These remarkable experiences, among others, will greatly impact my ministry and I am truly grateful for this opportunity. I will be presenting on this trip following worship on Sunday, February 2. And I will be leading classes on Paul and his letters the following four Sundays. Hope to see you there!

In Christ,  
Pastor Luke

## SINGING PRAISES THROUGH THE FELC CHOIR



Thank you to our choir for sharing their musical abilities during worship! Everyone is welcome in the FELC choir. The choir usually sings twice a month and on some special holidays. Practice is held at 8 am on the days we sing in worship. Contact Jill Serres at 507-649-0851 or email [jserres@mac.com](mailto:jserres@mac.com).

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE  
FOR UPDATES!**

[www.firstenglishchurch.com](http://www.firstenglishchurch.com)

## CCIC ANNUAL MEETING HELD IN JANUARY

The Community Churches Interaction Council held their annual meeting on Tuesday, January 21, at First English. Several Cannon Falls area churches participated and new members are getting involved. First English was represented by Pastor Luke, who is the treasurer; Kay Sabin, who was elected as the Vice President at the meeting; and Kristin Scott, who is our representative.

A few updates to note. 2024 was a year of getting re-established and ensuring CCIC is operational. Community churches have re-engaged and are committed to working together for the sake of the gospel despite theological differences. Over \$22,000 was distributed to people in need through the Good Samaritan Fund, and we raised about \$21,000 to support this ongoing ministry. Feed My Starving Children went well, raising the necessary \$30,000 and engaging 400 volunteers to pack 101,088 meals to feed 276 kids for the year. Monthly Community Meals, including the Community Thanksgiving Dinner, supported local community members. And CCIC is close to launching its own website!

First English has been very involved in this important ecumenical work and we look forward to what we can accomplish together in 2025. Please contact Pastor Luke if you are interested in getting involved or learning more.

## FIRST ENGLISH PLANS 2ND ANNUAL TRIP TO GUATEMALA

Join Pastor Luke and Bill Peterson as they lead a second team from First English on a cultural immersion trip to the western highlands of Guatemala. Our host is "The Mission" in San Lucas Tolimán which has served the people of San Lucas since 1963. Come, learn about Mission programs, visit communities and sacred places, and immerse yourselves in the ancient culture of the Maya people. A few have already signed up and we will be opening this trip to non-members starting this month.



**Dates of the trip are June 3-10, 2025.** This trip is open to participants ages 16 and up (younger if accompanied by a parent.) (Please note: we promise to have a 2026 trip offered during summer break to allow wider youth participation!)

This is a great opportunity to learn about international development work, to gain perspective on another culture, and to experience first-hand what God is doing in San Lucas. We will end the trip with two nights in the beautiful colonial town of Antigua.

**Cost of the trip is \$1600.** This includes airfare, trip insurance, ground transportation, hotels and meals. Everything except a couple of meals and souvenirs! Participants need valid passports (not expiring before 2026) and must be able to walk on uneven ground.

**To register, make a \$350 deposit with First English as soon as possible to ensure your spot. Group size is limited to 12.**

For questions, contact Bill at 612-325-3667 or [bipet001@gmail.com](mailto:bipet001@gmail.com). Bill is the recently retired Executive Director of Friends of San Lucas and has led dozens of groups to San Lucas. For more information about the Mission and Friends of San Lucas go to: [sanlucasmision.org](http://sanlucasmision.org).



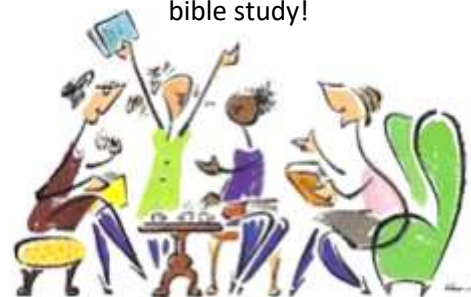
Please join Pastor Luke on **February 2** when he gives a presentation on his recent trip to **Greece and Turkey** following the Footsteps of Paul.

Then on February 9, 16, 23 and March 2, Pastor Luke lead Faith and Life Conversation on the Apostle Paul.

The conversations will be held after worship.

## WOMEN OF FELC GATHERING AND BIBLE STUDY

The next gathering of the Women of FELC group will be held on **Tuesday, February 11 at 10 am** in the Family Room. Join them for fellowship and bible study!



## INTERESTED IN HELPING TO STREAM WORSHIP?

*Come, share your talent and join our tech team!*

Streaming and recording our Worship services is an important part of getting the Good News to our congregation and beyond! Persons are needed to help operate the system on Sundays during worship. If you are interested in sharing your expertise, please contact Pastor Luke or the church office at 507-263-3042 or email [info@firstenglishchurch.com](mailto:info@firstenglishchurch.com).



First English will be helping to host the Cannon Falls Breakfast Club on these following dates — **February 4, March 4 and April 1.** The breakfast starts at **7 am at St. Ansgar's.**

The breakfast club is a place for kids to gather in a spirit of kindness, to be fed in word and fellowship, and grow in their faith. For more information

If you would like to help serve or help with devotions, contact Maddie.

## ABOUT THE GOOD SAMARITAN FUND

The Good Samaritan Fund is a joint effort of area churches (through the CCIC) to support community members with emergency needs. Donate to help your community members today! Any community members can donate to the CCIC Good Samaritan Fund directly.

The Good Samaritan Fund is available to assist Cannon Falls community members with funds for emergencies. Each household may use these emergency funds only ONCE during the calendar year. For requests, please contact Pastor Shannon Bauer at 507-298-7719 or Lori at 507-298-7282.

All other inquiries for monies should be done through the Public Safety Building - 918 River Rd., Cannon Falls.



## CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES

Maddie Patterson

Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministry

[maddiep@firstenglishchurch.com](mailto:maddiep@firstenglishchurch.com)

507-384-8317

## YOUTH PROGRAM UPDATES

Hi First English,

It might be chilly January now, but warmer days are coming. And with warmer days come lots of chances for exploration and out of doors faith experiences. So let's take a break from the cold and explore what's coming up!

Starting with our youngest members, we will have **Vacation Bible School** led by Good Earth Village this summer! GEV staff will come to put on a day camp here at FELC from **June 22-27.** Get ready to have fun playing games, learning camp songs, and hearing all kinds of stories about God.

It isn't just our kids that have activities planned this summer! Our High Schoolers have a different adventure open to them. Pastor Luke will be leading a **backpacking trip** through the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in Colorado **August 2nd through 9th.** This trip will include white water rafting, high ropes course, and backpacking, but spots are limited and will open up to non-members in February. So if you would like to go, please let Pastor Luke or Maddie know!

If you're wondering about our middle schoolers, they haven't been forgotten. We will have summer activities open to them, but just haven't decided which ones yet. We'd love to hear what your middle schoolers would enjoy!

So mark the dates and dream of warmer days, summer fun is just around the corner. We're excited to share and experience the love of God in new ways and new places.

Peace,  
Maddie Patterson  
FELC CYF Director

## SPREADING THE GOOD NEWS



Thank you to all the children and their families for joining us during the Children's Message at worship each Sunday. You are an important part of our service!

# WEDNESDAY NIGHT PROGRAMS



Wednesday Night programming is going strong! Here are some of our confirmation students working together and dancing it out in between lessons.

## CELEBRATING VALENTINE'S DAY



The ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) celebrates Valentine's Day by offering gifts that help people in need and by encouraging people to live in love.

### Gifts



Limited-edition Valentine's Day cards are available for gifts featured on [goodgifts.elca.org/valentines-day](http://goodgifts.elca.org/valentines-day).

**Honeybees**—Support farmers and honeybee colonies by giving a gift of honeybees. Honeybees provide honey, beeswax, and pollination that helps crops grow.



**Fruit-tree seedlings**—Give a gift of a fruit-tree seedling that can help protect the soil and provide fruit for generations.

**Goats**—Give a gift of a pair of goats that can survive in challenging terrain and provide milk and reproduction.



**Piglets**—Give a gift of a piglet that can provide natural fertilizer for crops and can be sold at a marketplace.

### Love

- The ELCA celebrates love, especially for those who are treated poorly.
- The ELCA encourages people to live in harmony with others, and to overcome evil with good.
- The ELCA believes that God is love, and that people are lovers whether they are partnered or single.



**KOVE RYAN MORALES** was baptized on Sunday, January 5, 2025. Kove was born on October 22, 2024 in Northfield. His parents are **Vienna Qualey** and **Lenny Morales** and his sponsors are **Saundra Stodden, Ellie Stodden, Amelia Buecksler, Dylan Reinardy.**

## 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](http://www.firstenglishchurch.com).



## FROM THE SE MN SYNOD

### CONFERENCE ASSEMBLIES

All five conference assemblies will take place on Sunday, February 16. (Backup: Feb. 23)

Look for information from your conference officers regarding specific times and locations.

ABOUT: Each conference shall hold a Conference Assembly at least annually, typically at the beginning of February. Each congregation shall be represented by its pastor(s), Deacons, and three times the number of lay voting members it is entitled to at the Synod Assembly. (See the "Assembly Voting Members" document for specifics.) Resolutions may be submitted by the given deadline, and elections will be held for open conference positions.

Individual event details will be provided as available at: [semnsynod.org/events](http://semnsynod.org/events)

### REFERENCE AND COUNCIL UPDATE

The Synod Committee on Reference and Council reminds you that instructions for submitting a resolution for the 2025 Synod Assembly can be found through the appropriate links on [semnsynod.org/assembly](http://semnsynod.org/assembly). The deadline for submission is March 15.

### 2025 NOMINATION INFO

The window for nominating folks to synod positions is open! Find all the details, forms, and a handy, one-page guide at: [semnsynod.org/nominations](http://semnsynod.org/nominations).

## FELC COMMITTEES

First English Committees continue to get more engaged and help us lead various ministry areas in our church. Thank you to the many individuals that help lead and support in these committees: Faith & Life Conversations, Love in Outreach Ministry Team, Property Team, Worship & Music Committee, Memorial Committee, Altar Guild, Foundation Board, and our Prayer Chain.

Additionally, a Finance Committee is being formed, the Children, Youth and Family Ministry Team needs to be re-established, and the Support Team is going to get a refresh. Participating in these committees and ministry teams is a great way to get involved in the church and give back to our community. Please reach out to Pastor Luke if you are interested in getting involved in one of these ways.

A couple of related updates to note:

**Faith & Life Conversations** met in January and has some engaging presentations and conversations lined up for this spring.

The **Property Team** continues to assess the state of our building and make improvements to take care of our valuable asset. There are lots of "one and done" projects and opportunities to help the church.

The **Worship & Music Committee** will meet in February. We are looking for new members to help us enrich our worship experiences.

**Love in Outreach Ministry Team** will meet at 6pm on Thursday, February 6 to plan the next couple of months. All are welcome to participate and help us in acts of service and work with ministry partners.

We desperately need people who are willing to step in and join the Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Team. Please reach out to Maddie if you have questions or are interested.



**CANNON FALLS FOOD SHELF**

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.

**Consider donating funds or food to restock the shelves for our community today.**

**HOURS:**  
Thursdays  
3-6 pm

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](mailto:cannonfallsfoodshelf70@gmail.com)



## COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

The First English Lutheran Church Council met at their scheduled meeting on January 9, 2025.

The following are the highlights of the meeting:

- Approved December 19, 2024, council minutes.
  - Received the Pastor's written report.
  - Approved Treasurer's Report
- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| December 2024 Income/Expense Report     |                 |
| Total Income                            | + \$ 41,746.90  |
| Total Expenses                          | - \$ 42,004.29  |
| 2024 Year to Date Income/Expense Report |                 |
| Total Income                            | + \$ 370,636.15 |
| Total Expenses                          | - \$ 406,881.18 |
- Annual meeting is on Sunday, January 26, during last 20 minutes of worship time. Pr. Luke and Phil Jacobson are working on presentation.
  - Approved holding annual church picnic and outdoor worship at Lake Byllesby Region Park, Goodhue side, at cost of \$110.
  - Council agreed to add to 2025 budget the cost of covering health insurance for CYF Director for month of May (June-December are already included in 2025 budget). Will work with CYF Director to find appropriate plan.
  - Discussed Administrative Assistant's health insurance coverage. Council recommended exploring if there are other plans that might be more cost effective.
  - January salaries: First paychecks will remain at 2024 levels; second paychecks will be adjusted to reflect 2025 budget approved by congregation at annual meeting.
  - D. Kautz explained how auditing will be transitioning to a more formal method. Audit Committee will meet on Monday, January 20.
  - Approved \$4,000 bid from Cannon Valley Water for 3 cu ft commercial water softener unit, which includes installation and removal of old unit.
  - Approved \$9,639.50 bid from Cannon Valley Mechanical for 90,000 BTU Standard Efficiency furnace that will supply heat to north stairwell and fellowship hall. Bid includes removal of old furnace from attic and installation of new furnace in back office.
  - Bill Peterson provided update on Guatemala mission trip.
  - Jim Nelson reported that Food Shelf made two \$1,000 gifts to First English. Scott Johnson will expand energy audit to include estimate on cost of running commercial refrigeration and freezing units used by Food Shelf. Diane Johnson will work on drafting a formal agreement between Food Shelf and church.
  - Faith Formation: Maddie Patterson submitted a written report.

Respectfully submitted,  
Diane Johnson

## NEXT COUNCIL MEETING:

**Thursday, February 13, 2025 at 7 pm**



## MEMORIALS & GIFTS

JANUARY 2025

### In Memory of Duane Holt

Conroe Erickson  
Jeffrey and Mary Reinhardy

### In Memory of Marlene Ulrich

Betty Nelson  
Lynette Pagel  
Beverly Stedman  
Joan and Kenneth Slingby  
David and Mary Johnson  
Dar Qualle  
Sandra Erickson  
Steve and Sue Josephson  
Gerald and Janet Hall  
James and Diane Lundell  
Brenda Quilling  
Carissa Hjellming

### In Memory of Maurine Olson

Betty Nelson

### In Memory of Jeri Noble

Doug and Lynn Larson  
Barbara Noble  
Keb and Barb Elias  
Phil and Terry Ruud



## HELP WITH SNOW SHOVELING!

Help is needed to shovel snow around the church during the winter months (if it snows this winter). Please contact Pastor Luke, Diane Johnson, Scott Johnson or any member of our Property Committee if you can help.

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

# FEBRUARY 2025

## FEB 2, SUN

9 am Communion Worship  
10:15-10:45 am Sunday School and Faith  
and Life Conversations

## FEB 5, WEDS

1 pm Staff Meeting  
6 pm Confirmation Classes

## FEB 6, THU

3-6 pm CF Food Shelf  
6 pm Love in Outreach Committee  
Meeting

## FEB 9, SUN

9 am Worship  
10:15-10:45 am Sunday School and Faith  
and Life Conversations

## FEB 11, TUE

10 am Women of FELC Mtg/Bible Study

## FEB 12, WEDS

1 pm Staff Meeting  
6 pm Confirmation Classes

## FEB 13, THU

3-6 pm CF Food Shelf  
5 pm Worship & Music committee  
Meeting  
7 pm Church Council Meeting

## FEB 16, SUN

9 am Communion Worship  
No Sunday School  
10:15-10:45 am Faith and Life  
Conversations

## FEB 17, MON PRESIDENT'S DAY

Church Office Closed

## FEB 19, WEDS

1 pm Staff Meeting  
6 pm Confirmation Classes

## FEB 20, THU

3-6 pm CF Food Shelf

## FEB 23, SUN

9 am Worship  
10:15-10:45 am Sunday School and Faith  
and Life Conversations

## FEB 26, WEDS

1 pm Staff Meeting  
6 pm Confirmation Classes

## FEB 27, THU

3-6 pm CF Food Shelf

## FELC OFFICE HOURS

Our church office hours are  
**Monday-Friday,**  
**9 am-Noon, 1-3:30 pm**  
Closed on President's Day



FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH  
511 W Belle St  
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## LENT STARTS IN MARCH

Mark your calendars for this year's Ash Wednesday services on March 5 at 2 pm and 7 pm. Then on each Wednesday during Lent, join us for soup suppers at 6 pm followed by worship at 7 pm.

Easter is on Sunday, April 20. We will have two services, one at 8 am and another at 10:30 am, with a special Easter breakfast between services.

Come and celebrate with us!

## LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP SERVICES



The livestream of our 9 am worship service is available on YouTube via our website, [www.firstenglishchurch.com](http://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)