



THE FIRST EDITION

APRIL 2025

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2025 Guide to Holy Week



Palm Sunday

April 13 Service at 9 am Sunday before Easter. Celebration of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Observed with palm branches, parades and celebration.



Maundy Thursday

April 17 Services at 2 pm & 7 pm Thursday before Easter. Marks the beginning of the paschal Triduum and commemorates the Last Supper of Jesus with the Apostles.



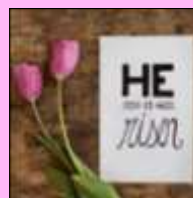
Good Friday

April 18 Service at 7 pm Our service will be centered on Psalm 22. Friday before Easter. A solemn day that commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus and his death.



Holy Saturday

April 19 No Service Saturday before Easter. Some celebrate the discovery of the empty tomb with an Easter Vigil.



Easter Sunday

April 20 Services at 8 am & 10:30 am Hallelujah! Christ is risen! This day we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. Sing hallelujahs and celebrate with great joy.



**First English
Lutheran Church**
Cannon Falls

CHURCH OFFICE

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Dean Kautz Tiffany Kiffmeyer

Emily Spicer Kathy Swanson

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE
FOR UPDATES!**

www.firstenglishchurch.com

PASTOR LUKE

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NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

This Month's Updates

Well... it is the end of March and my head is spinning. Everything from planning the details of Holy Week and trips to Guatemala and Colorado, to dreaming and initiating partnerships through the CCIC and hiring a colleague to replace Maddie. With everything going on, I paused to reflect on what ministry areas have been energizing and what might be draining. I am happy to share that almost everything going on around First English has been very energizing for me! The work we are doing together feels meaningful and fulfilling.

So for this month's newsletter, I am going to provide some updates on a few of the things going on that I think you should know about. AND I hope that you will ask me or find a way to learn more about whatever piques your interest. Here's what I have for you:

Call Committee – We have formally started the search process to replace Maddie, who will be leaving for internship later this summer. Anne Shoemaker, who serves on our council, will be the chair of the committee. Anne, along with Amanda Swanson, Mike Althoff, Katie Meyers, Bill Peterson, a youth representative and one more member which we are finalizing, will be tasked with the hiring process. We are open to hiring another rostered minister who would share pastoral and intergenerational ministry responsibilities with me, or a lay leader who would be responsible for overseeing our Children, Youth, and Family Programming. We wish to keep an open mind and cast a wide net in order to find a good fit for our staff and church community. If you have feedback about this process please reach out to me or anyone on the Call Committee.

Meaningful Opportunities for Service – I regularly think about the goal of providing meaningful opportunities for service that FELC identified before I was hired. Service can take shape in so many ways. I think Education is one that is often overlooked. When we confess that we are inspired and led by the Holy Spirit, it is our responsibility to grow in faith through Scripture and theology in order to learn how we might live as God's people and meet the needs of the world. **Faith and Life Conversations**, which has been meeting Sundays after worship, has been doing just that. We have learned together by looking at everything from Paul's letters to immigration to metaphor and life, and have upcoming conversations about grief and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Stop by and join us!

Trips are another great opportunity! This summer we are sending (at least) ten people to Guatemala for a service learning trip and ten high school students to Colorado for a backpacking trip where they will grow together in their faith. The cultural immersion trip to **Guatemala** is a great opportunity to learn about "The Mission" of San Lucas Tolimán, visit communities and sacred places, serve alongside Guatemalans, and immerse ourselves in the ancient culture of the Maya people. By asking participants about this experience and supporting "The Mission" financially, you can be involved in this meaningful work without even going. Plus, there will be future trips that you can participate in – simply talk to Bill Peterson or me.

Youth trips, like last year's National Youth Gathering in New Orleans and this summer's **Colorado Trip**, are often the single most transformational experience people point to when reflecting on meaningful faith experiences. Again, there are ways to be a part of these experiences even without physically going on them. I think we are just starting to scratch the surface with these kind of opportunities – there are so many multi-generational trips and adult trips (even like the Footsteps of Paul trip to Greece and Turkey I went on in January) that we could do. All it takes is for you to come up with an idea and start sharing it with others.

The **Community Churches Interaction Council (CCIC)** is back up and running. Ecumenical churches across Cannon Falls are coming together to express God's love in our community. Our own Phil Jacobson and Kay Sabin have met with the school to see how we might meet the needs of students, and are already finding ways to help. While we are still identifying how this might work, it is exciting to watch what started as a seed of an idea grow into something meaningful that helps local kids! The CCIC has launched its first website: cciccf.org. Check it out to learn more or talk to our CCIC representative Kristin Scott or me.

In Christ,
Pastor Luke

GUEST CHAPLAIN

Pastor Luke Hollander was invited to be the guest chaplain on Thursday, March 6 at the beginning of the session for the Minnesota House of Representatives. He is pictured with Rep. Andy Smith, House District 25B



LOVE IN OUTREACH MINISTRY

FOCUS ON LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

For many years, First English has been participating with Lutheran World Relief, which started in 1945 and has served 136 countries. Throughout the years, we have completed and donated quilts, school kits, personal care kits, baby care kits and fabric kits. In 2024, 16 countries received 689,814 quilts and kits. Recently, the United States has been a receiver due to many disasters. Due to recent governmental directives, our neighbors in the U.S. and around the world, are going to need more of our support. We are called to help.

In the remaining months of 2025, First English will be addressing these concerns. In May we will be collecting items for personal care kits.

To learn more, go to lwr.org.

YEARS

1900-2025

A 125TH CELEBRATION FOR FELC

A committee is being started to plan for the 125th Anniversary celebration of First English Lutheran Church.

If you are interested in helping to celebrate the history of our church, contact Phyllis Althoff at 507-273-6554 or email phyllisalthoff@gmail.com.



JOIN US FOR MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES

7pm – Holden Evening Prayer with weekly theme
April 2 — Forgiveness
April 9 — Love

SOUP SUPPER STARTS AT 6 PM

LET US KNOW WHEN YOUR CONTACT INFO CHANGES

In this day and age when phone numbers, mailing addresses and email addresses are frequently changing, getting ahold of our church members can be challenging, especially when unexpected and emergency situations develop.

If your address, email or phone number has changed, please call (507-263-3042) or email (kathye@firstenglishchurch.com) with your current information. We will do our best to keep you informed of important notices.

COMING UP MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Sunday Schoolers

- May 4th Last Day of Sunday School
- June 23-26 Vacation Bible School with Good Earth Village. Kick off on Sunday, June 22

Confirmation Students

- Wednesday, May 7th Last Night of Confirmation and Mentor Night
- Youth Camp Date Options
 - June 15-20
 - August 3-6

High Schoolers

- Sunday, May 18th FELC Senior Recognition during 9 am worship service
- Wednesday, May 21st Baccalaureate at First English, open to community graduates
- Sunday, May 25th Confirmation for this year's ninth graders during our 9 am service



CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES

Maddie Patterson

Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministry

maddiep@firstenglishchurch.com

507-384-8317

YOUTH PROGRAM UPDATES

Hi FELC,

First Communion - First Communion for our fifth graders is coming up! As always, God brings us to the table to meet Him, and there we find God's love and forgiveness present for us.

Those taking First Communion will have a chance to learn more about what communion is in the coming weeks. Anyone interested in welcome to meet for First Communion class on April 6th at 10:15am following worship. Parents are welcome to join! The following week, at the same time, the fifth graders gather in the kitchen to bake the bread used in the sacrament.

Maundy Thursday — On April 17th, at the 7pm service, our fifth graders will take their First Communion. Fifth graders and their families will be called up first to receive communion. The kids also have a special role during worship by stripping the altar at the end of service. They will help take the paraments off of the altar in preparation for Good Friday.

Easter Prep, Saturday, April 19th — After we remember the crucifixion of our Lord on Good Friday, the preparations for Easter morning begin. Confirmation students can come from 9-11am April 19th to help make egg bakes and stuff eggs for the Easter Egg hunt. If you're a confirmation student or parent reading this, please plan on having students come help if you're available. It's a great way to finish off your last service hours.

Easter Sunday Breakfast & Egg Hunt — Get ready to celebrate the Resurrection with everyone after service as we feast! Easter breakfast will be from 9-10:15am Sunday morning, following the first service. We will have an egg hunt for the Sunday School kids immediately following the 8am service.

Ditch Clean Up, April 26th — Another service opportunity for everyone is the annual ditch clean up on Saturday, April 26th. First English has adopted a stretch of highway along County 24, and it's time to get it picked up for the year. We meet at First English at 10:00am.

Colorado Trip Planning Meeting, April 23rd at 7pm — High school students, and their parents, heading to Colorado to backpack and grow in faith will meet with Pastor Luke for a trip planning meeting.

9th Grade Spotlight, April 27th — Our ninth graders have a chance to serve as ushers and greeters on this day! Get them signed up to help serve on April 27th.

Peace,
Maddie Patterson
FELC CYF Director

FELC SUPPORTS CANNON FALLS HIGH SCHOOL 9TH GRADE CLOTHING DRIVE FUNDRAISER

This summer 24 ninth grade students from Cannon Falls High School will embark on a six-day adventure to visit three national parks. They are collecting donations for the Epilepsy Foundation to raise money to help offset the cost of the trip.

Please bring your donations of clothes, clothing accessories (hats, gloves, scarves, ties), personal accessories (purses, wallets, belts, bags), bed and bath items (sheets, blankets, pillows, towels, tablecloths, curtains), shoes and other cloth materials. Please don't donate water-damaged or moldy items.

Donations will be accepted at
First English Lutheran Church, 511 Belle Street W, Cannon Falls, on
Wednesday, April 2 from 3 to 7 pm and on
Saturday, April 5 from 9 am to 1 pm.



WOMEN OF FELC GATHERING AND BIBLE STUDY

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



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

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.



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.

2025 LENT LETTER

From Bishop Hassanally

To the People of God in the Southeastern MN Synod,
In the story from 1 Kings chapter 3, two women come before King Solomon, asking him to settle their dispute. They are both new mothers. Their children were born only three days apart. In the middle of the night, one of the infants unexpectedly died. Both women claim it is their child who lives and the other woman's who died. They have come before King Solomon looking for him to determine whose child had survived.

Solomon's response to their tragedy is jolting: "Cut the living child in two!" he cries, "Give half to one woman and half to the other."

Immediately, one of the women responds, "Please, Your Majesty, give her the living child; please don't kill him."

The second woman replies, "If I can't have him, neither will you. Cut the child in half."

Solomon responds, "Give the first woman the living newborn. Don't kill him. She is his mother."

The first woman, the one willing to give up her son so he could live, is the one to whom Solomon entrusts the child.

I have been living with this story for weeks. I am fixated by the first mother's deep love and how love springs to action in a moment of peril.

Throughout the Bible, love is demonstrated not as passive or merely emotive, but as action. In the Bible, love operates like a verb; it is always doing something.

In that famed passage from 1 Corinthians chapter 13, the apostle Paul gives us a list of all the ways love shows up in the world: in patience, in kindness, in perseverance, and in telling the truth. Love, Paul writes, "doesn't seek its own advantage."

What I find so striking about the mother's love in 1 Kings is how self-sacrificing it is. The women in 1 Kings, both mothers, are also prostitutes, which is to say they are vulnerable. These women have little standing on their own, but to be the mother of a son... that would shift each woman's social standing.

When the first mother is willing to give up her son so that he might live, she is willing to give up *everything*. Her son, yes, but also, in many ways, herself.

It is a startling moment of self-emptying love. Her action of love is so deep and profound that it is a preform for the kind of love we see between God and Jesus. It is a love that is self-sacrificing and self-emptying *for the sake of those who are loved*.

In the story from 1 Kings, the mother's love compels her to act even in a way that will cost her much.

We are entering the forty days of Lent. It is a season for preparation, repentance, and reflection. It is also a season traditionally marked with almsgiving, tangible ways of caring for the poor.

In this Lenten season, I want to invite us into a discipline of love. Not emotive love or passive love, but the kind of robust love that *compels us to act*. The kind of love that does not relent even when it costs us something.

While the story from 1 Kings is often used as an illustration of Solomon's wisdom, it is also a stunning example of holy love.

It is, perhaps, the kind of love some of us might expect to see expressed by a mother toward her child. And yet, that depth of love ought not to be contained only to parent-child relationships.

In the gospel of Mark, when Jesus is asked to state in simplest terms the commandments of God, Jesus says: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength...you shall love your neighbor as yourself." There is no greater commandment than these." (Mark 12:30-31).

The kind of self-emptying, self-sacrificing love we see in 1 Kings, in the gospels, and throughout the story of God's work in the world is the kind of love Christ calls us to possess and exhibit toward *all* creation. It is a love that compels us to act, speak up, and interrupt injustice. It is a love that compels us to release what we cling to for our sake in order that others might live.

We have forty days. Forty days to practice love, to examine our hearts, and to consider who and what we love with the kind of love demonstrated in 1 Kings. We have forty days to wonder where our love falls short and to look for opportunities to take action compelled by deep love.

In 1 Corinthians 15:3, Paul writes, "I am passing on to you what I first received..." He goes on to write of the resurrection and promises of Christ. Paul tells the story of the unrestrained, self-emptying love of God.

We, too, have received this great love. What we have received we must also pass on.

Dear friends, immersed in the depths of God's love in this Lenten season, what will that love compel you to do?

I am with you on the journey.

In Christ,

Bishop Regina Hassanally

Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

The First English Lutheran Church Council met at their scheduled meeting on March 13, 2025. Here are some highlights.

Approved February 13, 2025, council minutes.

Received Pastor's written report. He attended ICE rapid response training in Red Wing. He reviewed council retreat.

Received Children, Youth, and Family Director's written report. Discussion on communion for children – first communion classes, who may participate, when offered.

Approved Treasurer's Report for February.

General Fund YTD Actual: Income \$67,884; Expense \$52,562

Benevolence YTD Actual: Income \$4,220; Expense \$1,722

Approved renewing time certificates (reserve fund) at First Farmers & Merchants and ELCA Mission Investment at shortest term/highest rate.

125th anniversary: Phyllis Althoff has copy of 100th anniversary booklet; looking at celebrating our 125th anniversary in July (perhaps at picnic).

Call Committee/CYF job description: Anne Shoemaker asked for input on proposed CFY Director proposed job description. Committee members are Anne Shoemaker (chair), Mike Althoff, Nicole or Josh Holz; more to be added.

Updated list of committees with members, chairs, and council liaisons was shared.

Approved Food Shelf proposed formal agreement as basis for Pr. Hollander negotiating formal agreement with Food Shelf.

Approved donating \$1,000 from pledged mission to Hispanic Outreach of Goodhue County.

NOTE: Council meetings will begin at 6:00 pm starting with April meeting.

Finance committee will begin meeting monthly at 1:00 pm on the Tuesday before council meets.

Julie Gergen read a written report from the Love in Outreach Ministry committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Johnson

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING:

Thursday, April 10, 2025 at 6 pm

LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP SERVICES



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)



MEMORIALS & GIFTS

MARCH 2025

In Memory of Becky Pagel

Dick and Jane Peterson

In Memory of Jan Barness West

Steve West

In Memory of Marland Husaby

Sharon Aamodt

Dar Qualle

Kevin and Beth Nerud

David and Brenda Deutsch

Ken and Margaret Johnson

Scott and Brenda Safe

Leann Qualle

Jim and Babe Nelson

Phil and Therese Ruud

Vicki and Bryan Pepera

Dean and Marcia Kautz

Brian and Lanor McDonald

Brad and Kathy Anderson

Doris and Roger Gruber

Karen Coakley


Mary Althoff

Jay and Donna Chytracek

Tom and Stephanie Fox



First English Lutheran Church-Cannon Falls

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FELC OFFICE HOURS

Our church office hours are

Monday-Friday,

9 am-Noon, 1-3:30 pm

Closed on Monday, April 21

APRIL 2025

APRIL 2, WEDS

6 pm Lenten Soup Supper
6:30 pm Confirmation Classes
7 pm Lenten Worship Service

APRIL 6, SUN

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

APRIL 8, TUE

10 am Women of FELC Mtg/Bible Study

APRIL 9, WEDS

1 pm Staff Meeting
6 pm Lenten Soup Supper
6:30 pm Confirmation Classes
7 pm Lenten Worship Service

APRIL 10, THU

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

APRIL 13, SUN Palm Sunday

9 am Worship

APRIL 16, WEDS

1 pm Staff Meeting

APRIL 17, THU Maundy Thursday

2 pm Maundy Thursday 1st Service
3-6 pm CF Food Shelf
7 pm Maundy Thursday 2nd Service

APRIL 18, FRI Good Friday

7 pm Good Friday Service

APRIL 20, SUN Easter

8 am Easter 1st Service
9 am-10 am Easter Breakfast
10:30 am Easter 2nd Service

APRIL 21, MON

Church Office Closed

APRIL 23, WEDS

1 pm Staff Meeting
6 pm Confirmation Supper and Classes

APRIL 24, THU

3-6 pm CF Food Shelf

APRIL 26, SAT

10 am Annual Ditch Clean Up

APRIL 27, SUN

9 am Worship (New Member Sunday)
10:15-10:45 am Sunday School and Faith
and Life Conversations

APRIL 30, WEDS

1 pm Staff Meeting
6 pm Confirmation Supper and Classes



FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH

511 W Belle St
Cannon Falls MN 55009

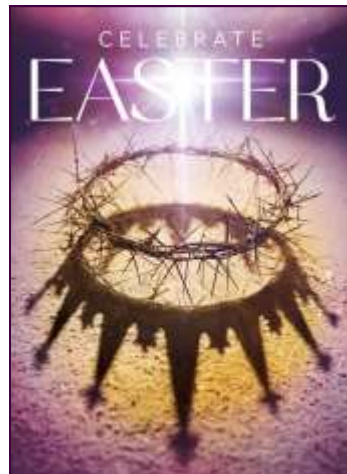
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JOIN US FOR EASTER BREAKFAST!

All are welcome for an Easter breakfast between our Easter services on Sunday, April 20, as well as an egg hunt for the Sunday Schoolers.

For breakfast, there will be egg bakes, fruit, and other treats. There will also be gluten-free and vegetarian options. The annual Easter Egg hunt will start after the 8 am worship downstairs for all Sunday School students. The breakfast will conclude before the second Easter worship service starts at 10:30 am.



APRIL 20 EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES

8 am and 10:30 am