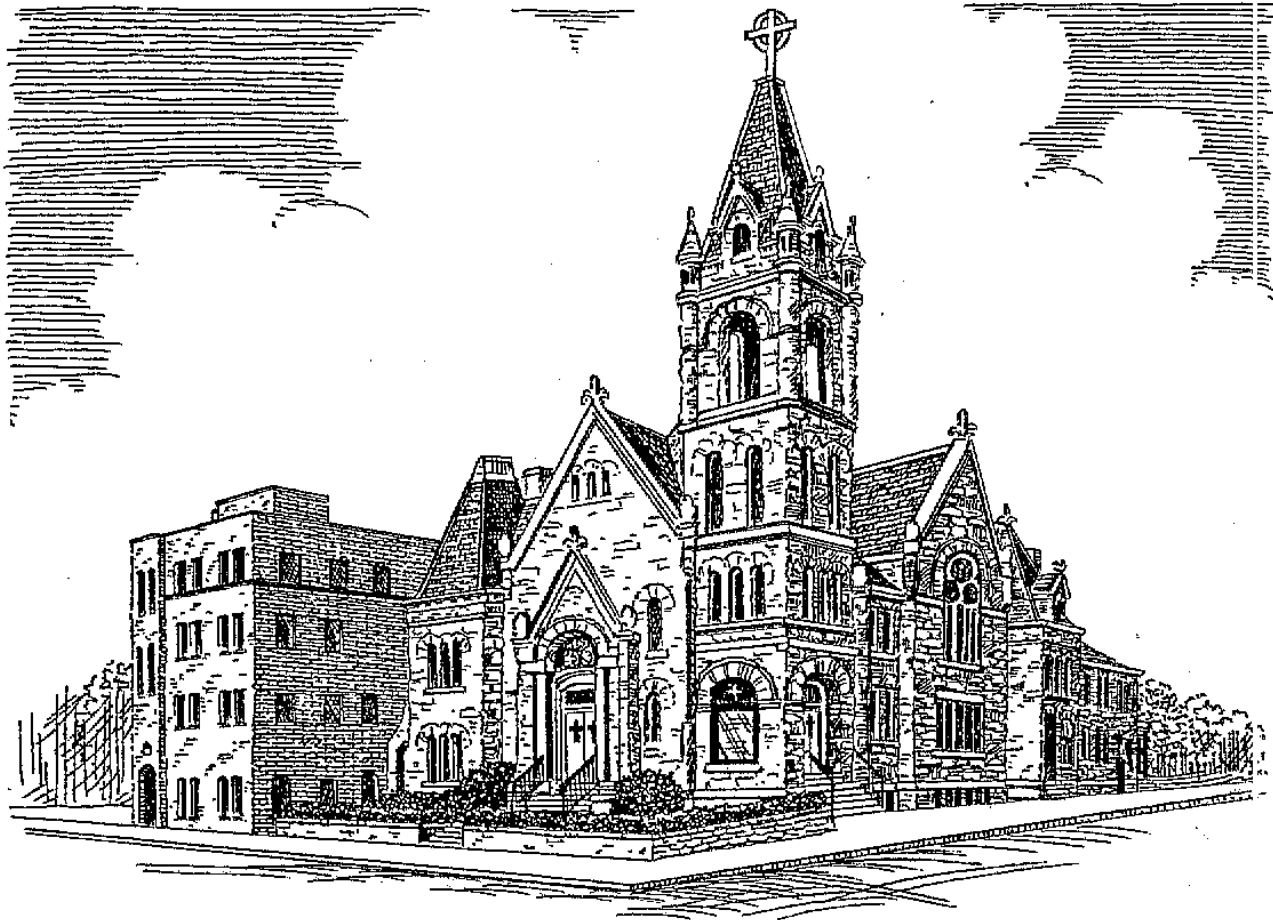


THE VISITOR



The First English Lutheran Church

*53 Park Avenue West (at Mulberry Street)
Mansfield, Ohio*

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“A Faith That Stands the Test of Time!”

Dear Friends In Christ,

If you buy a new major appliance, you will be lucky to get a warranty with it that protects your purchase for 1 year. If you buy a new car, you might do a little better: five years or 100,000 miles. But get a hold of the Faith of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, and you just might discover the genuine item that will endure for generations!

If you have been involved in the congregation-wide invitation to read through the Bible this year, then you have been enjoying some wonderful and inspiring stories of great faith this past month. You have read about the courageous faith of **Abraham**, who clung to the promises of God against all odds; the quiet Faith of **Isaac**, who built altars, dug wells and proclaimed the Name of the LORD wherever he went; the struggling Faith of **Jacob**, who wasn't content until he experienced God's Blessing firsthand; and the patient Faith of **Joseph**, whose confidence in God carried him literally from the pit to the palace. These are four different men, with four different sets of circumstances, but with one thing in common: a faith in God that grew with years.

Definitions of Faith are plentiful and at times helpful. Here are just a few:

- “Forsaking All, I Trust Him;”
- Taking God at His Word;
- Seeing the promises of God as present realities;
- Living your life in such a way that it does not make sense unless God exists.

The book of Genesis does more than define the faith of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph --- it paints a living portrait of faith, describing their every day lives and decisions. If you read the Scriptures, you will not find a bunch of “*perfect people*” with no real flaws or challenges. The Scriptures are often brutally honest about the failures, sins, and struggles of these “Heroes of Faith.” They are real people and that is why we can find ourselves in the powerful stories of their Faith Journeys.

- Abraham and Sarah in an act of impatience and unbelief decide that they have waited too long for God's timing and God's plan. They choose to push forward their time line for a child. But their solution gives birth to Ishmael (the father of all the Arab tribes) and there has been strife ever since.
- Isaac is betrayed and deceived by his own wife and son. Both Isaac and Rebekah make the terrible mistake of showing favoritism between their children.

- Jacob deceives his father Isaac, and steals his brother Esau's Blessing. Then he is betrayed and cheated by his uncle, Laban.
- Joseph is beaten by his brothers, almost murdered, sold into slavery, falsely accused by his employer's wife and wrongly thrown into prison for many years.

Do you struggle with patience for God's timing? Do you question the wisdom of His plan? Is your family life less than perfect? Have you been betrayed, cheated, slandered, or falsely accused? Then you can relate to the true, down-to-earth Faith stories in God's own Word.

Faith is like a muscle that grows stronger through exercise. And the exercise that builds a vibrant Faith is the stress of facing daily trials with confidence in God.

Learning patience and persistence (like 99 year old Abraham waiting for God to keep His promise); leaning on God to resolve a bitter family feud (like Jacob seeking to be reunited with his estranged brother Esau); following God and doing what is right regardless of the consequences (like Joseph who ended up in a pit and in a prison through no fault of his own) --- that's how to build a Faith that stands the test of time!

You can't get physically fit in a day, nor can you develop the Faith of Jacob or Joseph overnight. But you can see your Faith grow and deepen each day as you face your real life's challenges in the strength of the LORD. If you have not yet picked up the practice of daily time in God's Word, it's never too late to begin. Yes, spending time with God each day in His Word will strengthen your Faith.

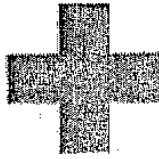
The God of creation is not an impersonal cosmic force but a personal, promise-keeping friend and guide. At times when God may feel far away and it feels like he is only watching you from a distance, you can be confident that it was you, not HE, who moved. The One who put the galaxies in space and rules the universe is looking for men and women, boys and girls who earnestly desire to seek and find Him. The God who revealed Himself to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph is waiting to reveal Himself more fully to you.

Take one of the faith-stretching circumstances you are facing right now, and talk to your ever-faithful God about it. Tell Him that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph sent you!

Together In Christ's Love and Service,

Pastor Paul L. Larson

Meditation adopted from The Daily Walk Bible, Tyndale House Publishers, Day 7 & 14.



**American
Red Cross**

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

Thursday, February 1, 2007

9 A.M. to 2 P.M.

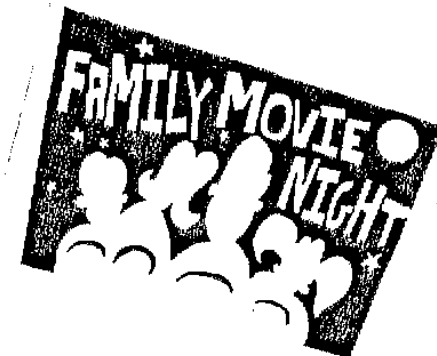
Emmaus Room

There is always a need for blood in the Mansfield area as well as across the United States. Accidents, surgeries, and other everyday occurrences require a constant supply of donations. With our help, the Red Cross can continue to meet these needs every day.

Our blood drive will be held Thursday, February 1, 2007 from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M. in the Emmaus Room and should only take a total of 45 – 60 minutes of your time. If you are in good health and weigh at least 110 pounds you can donate a pint of blood as often as every 56 days and a single donation can save up to three lives! Please take time to mark your calendars. To make an appointment, contact me at 419-884-0405. Thank you!

– Kay Leedy, Service Ministry

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT
featuring “CARS”
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2
6:30 P.M. IN THE UNDERCROFT



Bring a snack to share if you wish; popcorn and beverages provided.
Sponsored by our Evangelism Committee, Steve Ritz, chair.

REGULARLY SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES!

- Sunday,
Feb 4 **Blood Pressure Readings**, 9:30 to 10:45 A.M. in the Narthex. Nurses coordinator: Barb Hill, 419-756-4998.
- Every
Sunday **Fireflies and Spirit!** children's and youth choirs rehearse during the 9:45 A.M. Sunday school hour. Directors: Becky Pittman and Dana Ruth.
- Sunday,
Feb 4 **Matins Choir Rehearsal** at 9:30 A.M. They will sing at the 8:30 A.M. Holy Communion service on Sunday, February 11.
- Monday,
Feb 5 **Men's Group** meets at 9:30 A.M. the first Monday of the month for breakfast at Denny's on West Fourth Street in Ontario. Contact: Hal Simmons, 419-529-6586.
- Tuesday,
Feb 6 **Prayer Shawl Ministry** meets at 7:00 P.M. in the Narthex Lounge. Knitting instruction and patterns provided. Contact: Karen Ellis, 419-884-1882 or Jan Fisher, 419-589-2820.
- Wednesdays,
Feb 7 & 21 **Workday Ladies Sew** patchwork quilts 8:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. on the third floor of Luther Hall (bring a sack lunch). Tracing and cutting, ironing, machine sewing, and tying. Coordinator: Marge MacDonald, 419-756-5714.
- Every
Wednesday **Wednesday Noon Worship and Lunch**, 12:10 P.M. worship in the Chapel; lunch following in the undercroft. *Ash Wednesday, February 21, 12:05 Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion.*
- 1st & 3rd
Thursdays **Proclaim! Praise Team Rehearsal**, 6:00 P.M. in the undercroft (please use the East side Luther Hall entrance). Contacts: Kristi Larson, 419-756-3858, or Joy Jones, 419-884-1016.
- Every
Thursday **Senior Choir Rehearsal**, 7:00 P.M. in the choir room in the rear balcony. Director: Dr. Timothy E. Guenther. (Please use the East side Luther Hall entrance).
- Friday,
Feb 16 **Friendly Friday Group**, 10:30 A.M. program in the Emmaus Room. Lunch is served at 11:30; games until 2:00. Rides available. Coordinator: Margaret Battisti, 419-526-4381.
- Sat/Sun
Feb 24 & 25 **Food Collection Weekend.** The December collection totaled 13 bags of groceries for The Salvation Army, and \$255 for our Wednesday Noon Worship and Lunch Program. Thank you for your continued generous support!

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4!



Join forces and battle hunger with our First Lutheran youth and thousands of other youth across the country by bringing an extra dollar to drop in the soup pot following the worship services on February 4. Every dollar dropped in the soup pots helps people in need feel the power of God's love. **This year's Souper Bowl of Caring donations are designated for our Wednesday Noon Worship and Lunch program.** *"Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat."*

FEBRUARY WORSHIP

Saturdays:	5:00 P.M.	Worship in the Chapel (Communion with 1 st Sunday)
Sundays:	8:30 A.M.	Worship in the Nave (Communion 2 nd Sunday).
	9:45 A.M.	Sunday Church School for all ages
	11:00 A.M.	Worship in the Nave (Communion 1 st Sunday)
	11:00 A.M.	Proclaim! Contemporary, Undercroft (Communion 3 rd S.m.)
Wednesdays:	12:10 P.M.	Worship in the Chapel; lunch in the undercroft

SUNDAYS IN FEBRUARY:

- Feb 4 ➡ Souper Bowl of Caring
- Feb 18 ➡ Transfiguration Sunday. Rev. Ed Winkler guest preacher 11:00 A.M. - Nave.
- Feb 25 ➡ Acolyte Training, 12:15 P.M. in the Nave.



THE LUNCH BUNCH TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6 . . .

The Lunch Bunch meets on Tuesday, February 6, at 12:00 noon in the Emmaus Room. The Rev. Cloyd Kress will share his experiences in Alaska this past summer. **EVERYONE IS WELCOME!** Cost of lunch is \$2.50. Lunch reservations by Monday, February 5, to the church office, 419-522-0662, or Pat Wells, 419-756-6863, are appreciated.

RIDES TO WORSHIP

If you would like a ride to either the 8:30 or 11:00 A.M. worship service, call our February contacts, **Ken & Vi Deems at 419-589-3747**, Saturday afternoons from 3-5 P.M. only. *Leave your name, address, phone number, and which service you will attend.* No phone calls after 5:00, please. Be ready by 8:00 A.M. for early worship pick-up, and by 10:00 A.M. for late worship pick-up.





BRING YOUR PALMS!

Remember the palm branches you received last year on Palm Sunday? Many of you have kept them as visual reminders of Christ's life-giving death and resurrection for you. It's time again to bring them back to church.

Palms will be received at the Saturday chapel service **February 17**, and at the Sunday services on **February 18**.



Our Nursing
Home Ministry

COMMUNION SERVICES AT NURSING HOMES . . .

In order to provide communion for First Lutheran members who live in nursing homes or assisted living facilities, monthly worship services are scheduled in five locations with Communion Deacons assisting the pastors. All residents of the facilities are invited to attend, and members of First Lutheran are encouraged to come and accompany a family member or friend.

Tuesday, Feb 20
9:00 A.M.
Elmcroft of Ontario

Thursday, Feb 22*
9:00 A.M.
Alterra Sterling House

Tuesday, Feb 20
10:15 A.M.
The Waterford

Thursday, Feb 22*
10:15 A.M.
Winchester Terrace

Tuesday, Feb 20
2:00 P.M.
Mifflin Care Center

* 4th Thursday of the month

LUTHER FELLOWSHIP MEETS TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20 . . .



On Tuesday, February 20, Luther Fellowship will welcome Lloyd Martin, Superintendent of Mansfield Public Schools, who will project his vision of Mansfield City Schools moving forward into the future with this whole community working together to provide a place where kids learn. Please come and graciously welcome him to our church.

Lunch will be in the Emmaus Room at 11:30 A.M. Cost is \$5. Sign up on the bulletin boards in the Narthex or Luther Hall by Sunday, February 18. Please include your phone number. Questions? Call Carolyn or Lowell Weeks at 419-756-1776.

You're invited to a fellowship event!



FASTNACHT
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2007
6:00 PM in the undercroft

Dinner PROVIDED by FELC!

Please bring your most decadent dessert to share!

We hope you come and enjoy the fellowship!!! – Congregational Life Committee

ASH WEDNESDAY . . .



Why ashes? On Ash Wednesday, we enter into the Lenten Season through a special service of penitence and reflection upon the quality of our faith and life. The Ash Wednesday liturgy marks the beginning of a penitential discipline. This season of penitence climaxes in the absolution and the peace of the special Maundy Thursday Service of blessing, forgiveness, and Holy Communion.

Ashes are an extraordinarily rich symbol rooted in the ancient customs and practices of our faith. Coming from our Old Testament traditions, ashes in a Jewish or Christian context suggest God's judgement and His condemnation of sin. They remind us of our human frailty and our total dependence upon God for life. In churches where the imposition of ashes is practiced, the pastor uses ashes made from the burned palms of Palm Sunday to make the sign of the cross on the believer's forehead. As he does so, the pastor says to each person, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Thus we are forcefully reminded of the words of the committal in the burial service, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." One day, these words will be said over all of us. Not only do the ashes become a visual reminder of our total dependence on God for our life and salvation, they also become a visual symbol of our repentance. They are our public humiliation in the spirit of the Old Testament tradition of repenting in sack cloth and ashes. In ashes we publicly admit to God and to our neighbors our failures to live in all righteousness toward them. We openly confess our sins, seeking forgiveness from God and from one another.

Moreover, ashes suggest cleansing and renewal. They were once used as a cleansing agent in the absence of soap, and on Ash Wednesday, the ashes have sometimes been understood as a penitential substitute for water, thus symbolizing our baptism.

In Luther's *Small Catechism*, brother Martin writes: "What does Baptism mean for daily living?" "It means that our sinful self, with all evil deeds and desires, should be drowned through daily repentance; and that day after day a new self should arise to live with God in righteousness and purity forever."

Baptism is a primary emphasis of Lent. Water both stifles and refreshes, drowns and makes alive. Likewise, the ashes also tell of both death and renewal. Another example of death and renewal found in the symbol of ashes comes from the ancient practice of burning the fields in the spring. The old is destroyed and from the ashes rises the new life of spring.

It is this death-to-life, repentance unto salvation motif which we find reflected in the very name of this season of Lent. "Lent" is from the old English word meaning "springtime," and so it is to be understood as the springtime of the soul, a time for repentance, a time for preparation, planting and growth. Yes, Lent is a time of death. It is a time of dying unto ourselves, being crucified with Christ. As surely as we have died with Him, so shall we be raised with Him to the glory of God our Father. Lent is a time for the cross and resurrection.

-- Pastor Larson



ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21 . . .

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 21. Two opportunities for worship will be offered that day:

12:05 P.M.	Chapel	Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion <i>(lunch following in the undercroft)</i>
7:00 P.M.	Nave	Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion

Annual Lenten Breakfast Saturday, February 24



9:00 A.M. Holy Communion – Chapel
10:00 A.M. Breakfast/Speaker – Emmaus Room

The Women of the ELCA (WELCA) will hold their annual LENTEN BREAKFAST on Saturday, February 24. Following the 9:00 AM Holy Communion service in the Chapel, a delicious breakfast will be served in the Emmaus Room. Following breakfast, Pastor Diana Seaman will be the speaker.

Cost is \$6.00 per person. Tickets will be on sale February 11 through 23. This is a wonderful way to begin your Lenten observances! Everyone is welcome – men, women and children!



SUPPERS

LENTEN SOUP SUPPERS BEGIN WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28 . . .

Soup is served at 6:00 P.M. in the undercroft followed by the Lenten Study in the sanctuary at 7:00. Come and enjoy the food and fellowship.

The Life of Worship

2007 Mid-Week Lenten Series

Yes, the new hymnal of the Evangelical Lutheran Church will soon be coming to a pew near you. Depending upon when we receive our new hymnals at First English Lutheran, we are hoping to be able to start using them in mid-March.

Leading into this new worship resource, we thought it would be good to focus in our 2007 Mid-Week Lenten Series on the broader topic of "The Life of Worship." We will be looking at what the Scriptures teach us about our life of worship; the history of worship in the Lutheran Church; and the many different ways we experience the fullness of Worshipping God today - both through traditional and contemporary expressions of worship. Come and join us from 7:00-8:00pm on Wednesday nights in the Season of Lent --- The Season of New Beginnings!

- Pastor Paul & Pastor Andy

<i>February 21st</i>	<i>Ash Wednesday</i>
<i>February 28th</i>	<i>Confession & Absolution</i>
<i>March 7th</i>	<i>Praise & Thanksgiving</i>
<i>March 14th</i>	<i>The WORD!</i>
<i>March 21st</i>	<i>The Creeds</i>
<i>March 28th</i>	<i>The Sacraments & Sacramental Living</i>

Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Coming Soon To A Pew Near You!

The 2007 Mid-Ohio Prayer Seminar

Friday, March 2nd, 2007
Prayer & Praise Worship Celebration
&
Saturday, March 3rd, 2007
Dr. Terry Teykl - The Presence Based Church

The Presence Based Church -Becoming a Church after God's Own Heart

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Dr. Terry Teykl

Dr. Terry Teykl's warm humorous style makes him one of the most sought after speakers and seminar leaders in the country. Rev. Teykl has 28 years of experience as a parish pastor and is now working full time in prayer ministry. Dr. Teykl writes: "Sometimes as Christians we wind things up so tight that we break them. But prayer is God's idea. Our responsibility is to participate not produce...He makes it work."

COST: \$30 per Person (Your Registration costs Include \$15 of printed materials from Dr. Teykl and your Noon Lunch)

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: MONDAY, February 26th

This Event is Sponsored in part by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is a Fortune 500 membership organization that helps Lutherans and their families achieve their financial goals and give back to their congregations and communities.

FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY (FPU)

CLASSES BEGINNING FEBRUARY 27!

What is FPU? It is the most important step to changing your financial future. It is your Total Money Makeover Program. FPU is a 13-week life-changing program that empowers and teaches you how to make the right money decisions to achieve your financial goals and God's plan for your life. The course includes practical lessons on eliminating debt, building wealth, giving like never before, and much, much more!

Who is Financial Peace University for? It's for EVERYONE!.....from the financially secure to the financially distressed. Applying God's Word radically changes your life. On average, FPU graduates have paid off over \$5,300 in debt and saved \$2,700 during the 91-day program!

What will I learn?

1. Step-by-step cash flow planning.
2. Debt Snowball Plan technique to eliminating debt.
3. How to invest wisely.

How often do classes meet? Classes will meet once per week for 13 consecutive weeks, beginning Tuesday, February 27.

How long is each class session? Each class session typically lasts two hours. The first hour consists of financial teaching by Dave Ramsey via video. The second hour is small group discussion. (We usually meet from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.)

Reasons FPU is important for so many....

Marital Problems – 37 percent (the highest rate) of marital problems derive from financial situations.

Cash Flow – 70 percent of all consumers live paycheck to paycheck, meaning they run out of money before the end of the month.

Savings – The average family would have to use a credit card to pay a \$1,500 unexpected expense (ex. home or car repair).

Retirement or College Saving – Nearly half of all Americans (46%) have less than \$10,000.

Testimonials. One couple who completed FPU said, "We've actually relieved ourselves of over \$50,000 worth of debt in two years just from using these principles." Another couple said, "It made us sit down as a couple and communicate...and it gave us an instant pay raise!" *The most recent FPU at First English paid off a combined \$48,663 in debt!!*

Call Jerry & Lu Diday (419-522-9808) for more information.

CREAMY PEANUT BUTTER DONATIONS . . .

Women of the ELCA (WELCA) sponsor this local outreach project. **We are collecting jars of creamy peanut butter** to be distributed to the folks who come to our Wednesday Noon Lunches. We feel that peanut butter is a good commodity because you don't have to refrigerate it, and yet it is nutritious. **There are collection boxes clearly marked "Peanut Butter" both in the Narthex and in Luther Hall.**

So when you go to your favorite grocery, please remember to pick up an extra jar of creamy peanut butter (any size) and drop it off at church. God bless you for caring about those less fortunate than we are! It's such a small thing, and it can make a big, big difference!

– Jan Fisher for WELCA

FEBRUARY 2007 WELCA CALENDAR

CIRCLE/EVENT	DATE	DAY OF WEEK	TIME	MEETING PLACE/TOPIC
MARY	NO FEBRUARY MEETING			
WORKDAY LADIES	7 & 21	WEDNESDAY	8:30 A.M.	3 rd Floor.
SARAH	5	MONDAY	1:00 P.M.	Emmaus Room. Program: Anna Marie McCracken Hostess: Vi Deems
LYDIA	5	MONDAY	7:30 P.M.	Emmaus Room. Program: Holy Land by Stan & Chris Cichanowicz. Devotions: Karyne Carey. Hostess: Lola Reid
LUNCH BUNCH	6	TUESDAY	NOON	Emmaus Room. Program: Slides of Alaska trip by Pr. Cloyd Kress.
EVE	6	TUESDAY	7:30 P.M.	Emmaus Room. Prayer Shawl
PLANNING TEAM	19	MONDAY	7:00 P.M.	Emmaus Room.

Altar Group Workers: Nave – Beth Harruff & Jan Shenberger; Chapel – Bev Graham; Proclaim! – Jan Fisher

Funeral Dinners: Squad B, Marilyn Dinges & Margaret Runyon.

COMING EVENTS: Cluster Planning Meeting – January 30, 2007 at First Lutheran - Noon

Lenten Breakfast – February 24, 2007



FEbruary NEWS IN THE CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOL . . .

Our February theme is Praise God! Psalm 66 and Psalm 100. We will be talking and singing praises to God for his love and presence in our lives. We will be doing various activities with our heart for National Heart Month and Valentine's Day. It is also Dental Health Month, so we will be doing some activities about the care of our teeth!

A big thank you to our local Thrivent Financial for Lutherans chapter for the monetary donation to purchase a new tricycle. The children are enjoying it! Thank you all for your continued support!

– Cheryl Lantz, Director



MANSFIELD FOR MALAWI



Kenenyeva Orphan Project

The Mansfield for Malawi offering during Advent totaled \$3,307. Thank you for your heartfelt generosity in helping the Kenenyeva Orphan Project with food and supplies! Remember, our support for Mansfield for Malawi is on-going and donations are accepted on a regular basis.

Thank you to everyone who has helped us to begin our fund raising to be able to bring Shadreck Chikoti to the US. Thank you to everyone who ordered food through Gordon Food Service. Thank you to everyone who donated money. As I write this article, we are still in the midst of our first fundraiser, so unfortunately, I can't share with you the total amount that we were able to raise.

If you ordered food, please remember to pick it up from church after the services on Saturday, February 10 or Sunday, February 11, unless you arranged to have it delivered.

Please continue to pray for

- Shadreck's safety as he helps the orphan project in Malawi
- the children in Malawi to have enough food to eat
- that the children will be able to get at good education to help them in their future.

– Joy Jones

REQUESTS TO THE PRAYER CHAIN

The Prayer Chain provides prayer support to those with special needs or concerns. Prayer requests for members or non-members may be called in to **Cheryl Strohming**, 419-884-2260. Join our prayer chain ministry and become a member of the Prayer Chain! There are no meetings to attend; just make one or two phone calls and pray! Questions about this ministry? Call Cheryl Strohming at the number above.

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULING CONTACTS

The monthly volunteers list is published in The Visitor and is posted on the bulletin boards. The following are responsible for scheduling the listed areas of volunteer ministry:

Betty Guenther, Staff Secretary
419-522-0662

Acolytes
Assisting Ministers
Lay Readers
Sunday Van Drivers
Van Ride Contacts

Beth Harruff, Worship Chair
419-589-2762

Communion Preparers
Communion Assistants
Sound Booth Operators

Wanda Donnan, 419-524-8616

Greeters
Welcome Table Hosts

Gene Harsch, 419-774-0247

Ushers

Chris Cichanowicz,
Sunday School Superintendent
419-529-6593

Nursery Helpers

Becky Pittman, 419-529-3876

Children's Church Leaders

Ruth Sweval, 419-526-5090

8:00 am Sunday Prayer Partners
Intercessory Prayer Teams

Gene Luedy, 419-526-4304

Pew Pad Gleaners

Barb Hill, 419-756-4998

Blood Pressure Nurses

Renee Blankenship, 419-632-6162

Proclaim! Ushers/Greeters
Proclaim! Communion Preparers
Proclaim! Communion Assistants

FEBRUARY VOLUNTEERS

GREETERS 5:00 P.M.

1 st Saturday	Jean Ridenour	3 rd Saturday	Marian Owen
2 nd Saturday	Jean Ridenour	4 th Saturday	Elva Bonser

GREETERS

Will & Dolores Esler
The McCrackens

8:30 A.M.

Narthex
East Entrance

USHERS

Larry Faith
Rebecca Faith

8:30 A.M.

GREETERS

Jane & Liz Sprang
TBA
TBA

11:00 A.M.

Narthex
East Entrance
West Entrance

USHERS

Bill Schwartz
Mary Schwartz
Hal Simmons

11:00 A.M.

Greeter, Ash Wednesday, February 21, 7:00 pm: Carol Lauthers

WELCOME TABLE HOSTS

8:30 A.M. Nave Jan Swartz
11:00 A.M. Nave Mary Ellen Schulz

8:00 A.M. SUNDAY PASTOR'S PRAYER PARTNERS TEAM

Feb 4 Jim Scheiber, Jerry Gallagher
Feb 11 Chris Cichanowicz, Jim Scheiber
Feb 18 Mary Schwartz, Jane Starner, Rob Hogsette
Feb 25 Rob Hogsette, Steve Ritz, Lowell Weeks

11:00 ASSISTING MINISTERS

Feb 4	Stan Cichanowicz	Feb 18	Greg Hughes
Feb 11	Terry Leedy	Feb 25	Annette Doklovic

LAY READERS

5:00 P.M. Saturday Chapel

Feb 3	Jean Ridenour	Feb 17	Jean Ridenour
Feb 10	Kay McNaul	Feb 24	Kay McNaul

	<u>8:30 A.M.</u>	<u>11:00 A.M.</u>
Feb 4	Pat Reed	Chris Kaschube
Feb 11	Sherry Winbigler	Shirley Lane
Feb 18	Juanita Baker	Diane Molyet
Feb 25	Mary Hujus	Stacey Crall

Ash Wednesday, Feb 21, 7:00 pm: Mike Hill

ACOLYTES, CRUCIFERS, TORCHBEARERS

5:00 P.M. Saturday Chapel: A Linda Chapman

	<u>8:30 A.M.</u>	<u>11:00 A.M.</u>
Feb 4	A Casey Kelley	A Alissa Ruth C Jake Eyerly
Feb 11	A Sarah Ward	A Elizabeth Volz C Bryce Fisher
Transfiguration Feb 18	A Trayce Prather	A Lindsey Brenkus C Bryan Eyerly
Lent I Feb 25	A Kate Hogsette	A Erin Blankenship

Ash Wednesday, Feb 21, 7:00 pm: A Sarah Jones C Chelsea Heidlebaugh

11:00 SUNDAY INTERCESSORY PRAYER TEAMS

Feb 4	Lowell Weeks, Chris Cichanowicz	Feb 18	Jim Scheiber, Ruth Sweval
Feb 11	Wes Volz, Mary Schwartz	Feb 25	Don Beddard, Chris Cichanowicz

COMMUNION PREPARERS

Feb 4	11:00 am	Marilyn Dinges and Betty Wilson
Feb 11	8:30 am	Bill & Pearl West
Ash Wednesday, Feb 21	7:00 pm	Jim & Lolita Scheiber

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

(regular communion)

	<u>Feb 4 - 11:00 am</u>	<u>Feb 11 - 8:30 am</u>
Bread Servers	Pastor & Asst Minister	2 Pastors
Wine West	Gene Calver	Ken Frayer
Cups West	Lana Dunham	Karen Frayer
Wine East	Gene Harsch	Gene Luedy
Cups East	Susanne LeMunyon	Marilyn Motson
Intinction	Marianne Sweat	Jerry Gallagher

Ash Wednesday

Feb 21 - 7:00 pm

(regular communion)

Bread Servers	Pastor & Assisting Minister
Wine West	Greg Hughes
Cups West	Linda Hughes
Wine East	TBA
Cups East	TBA
Intinction	Lu Diday

11:00 NURSERY HELPERS

Feb 4	Marianne Sweat	Feb 18	Ally Hannemann
Feb 11	Jo Wirstrom	Feb 25	Mary Shaffer

CHILDREN'S CHURCH LEADERS

Becky Pittman, coordinator

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP HOSTS

Stewardship Committee

PEW PAD GLEANERS

Feb 4	Liz Sprang	Feb 18	Lolita Scheiber
Feb 11	Brenda Eyerly	Feb 25	Marilyn Dinges

BLOOD PRESSURE NURSE

February 4: Janet Swartz

+ + +

11:00 PROCLAIM! CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP

Greeters/Ushers

Feb 4 Cindy and Robyn Russell
Feb 11 Larry & Cheryl Lantz
Feb 18 Jerry & Lu Diday
Feb 25 Ted & Karen Ellis

February 18 Communion Preparer

Cheryl Lantz

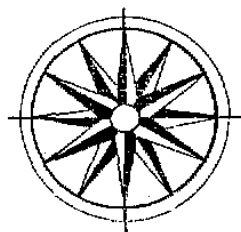
February 18 Communion Assistants

Larry & Cheryl Lantz
Matt & Renee Blankenship

Intercessory Prayer Team

Matt Blankenship and Kristi Larson





Congregation Council

JANUARY CHURCH COUNCIL NOTES...

President Matt Blankenship called the Tuesday, January 9, 2007 meeting of the First English Lutheran Church Congregation

Council to order at 7:00 P.M. Pastor Larson opened the meeting with prayer.

CORRESPONDENCE: Mary Schwartz read a letter from the Northeastern Ohio Synod thanking our church for mission support which enabled the Synod to send \$420 to Trinity Theological Seminary to support Mike Hughes in his preparation for public rostered ministry.

SENIOR PASTOR: Pastor Larson stated he is working with Joe and Karyne Carey on plans for the visit of Jim and Virginia Miningers, President of Lithuanian Christian College, on March 10 and 11, 2007. A special meeting of Christian leaders and educators is planned for Saturday, March 10. The Miningers will preach on Sunday, March 11 at all three worship services.

Plans are being made for the March 2 and 3, 2007 Prayer Seminar with Dr. Terry Teykl. Grants are being sought from the ELCA and Thrivent. Nancy Pasheilich will prepare the lunch that day.

Pastor Larson announced that Chris and Angie Kaschube will be the point leaders for the Fall 2007 launch of 40 Days of Purpose. The Kaschubes and Pastor Jones will be attending a conference at Saddleback Church February 20 to 22, 2007.

The mid-week Wednesday Lenten services will be titled "The Life of Worship": Confession and Absolution, Praise and Thanksgiving, The Word, The Creed and The Sacraments and Sacramental Living.

Pastor Elizabeth Eaton will be installed as Bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod Saturday, February 3, 2:00 P.M. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Akron.

Deadline for FELC campership support requests is March 1, 2007. A campership support envelope will be in the February offering envelope packet.

Council approved Main Street Mansfield membership for 2007 at the cost of \$100.

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held Sunday, May 6, 9:45 A.M.

Pastor Larson reminded the Council of the time line they have presented to the congregation for the Capital Fund Appeal to fund roof replacement and address our kitchen needs. The Major Capital Fund Appeal was proposed to begin in February 2008. The Council will need to do the necessary planning and research in this coming year.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR: Pastor Jones expressed appreciation for the great Children's Christmas Program, Christmas decorating, caroling, cookies, etc. He stated that new computers are up and running, with daily and weekly backup. Appreciation was expressed to Paul Ward for his work with the computers and to Tom Pasheilich and his crew for electrical and wiring work done. A new Alpha course will begin January 31 for

(continued)

the Wednesday Lunch group, and a Sunday afternoon course will begin March 4, excluding Easter Sunday. Pastor Larson and Pastor Jones will attend a Northeastern Ohio Synod Leadership Retreat February 12 and 13.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Matt Blankenship thanked Council members for their thoughts and prayers of support following his November 29 eye surgery.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE: Nancy Pasheilich stated 43 carolers went Christmas caroling to 78 members. Angie Kaschube organized the event and has volunteered to do this work again in 2007. Fastnacht will be held Tuesday, February 20, with a prepared meal and pot luck dessert. Lenten soup suppers begin Wednesday, February 28 for 5 weeks, preceding the worship services. Plans are being made for the Easter breakfast, Sunday, April 8.

GLOBAL MISSION: Jeanne Hillman said plans are being made to bring Shadreck Chikoti from Malawi to Mansfield for about 4 weeks during April and early May. He will speak to groups in Ohio and Michigan to raise funds for the Kenyenyeva Orphan Care Ministries. Joy Jones has composed an informative brochure about the program as well as display posters announcing a Gordon Food Services fundraiser which will begin January 13, with food to be distributed February 10 and 11.

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: Tim Guenther thanked everyone who helped with holiday celebrations at our church.

STEWARDSHIP: Renee Ward sent a written report stating \$2,708.75 was received in the 2006 Advent folders. Pastor Larson reminded Council that the 2007 Lenten folder offering will benefit the Lithuanian Christian College.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: Chris Cichanowicz expressed many thanks to Becky Pittman for coordinating the Children's Christmas program. Special thanks also to Shirley Lane who narrated the program and to all the teachers, parents and helpers who made everything run smoothly. Most of all, thanks to our wonderful youth for sharing their many musical talents with our congregation. God bless all of you. The February 4 Souper Bowl of Caring offering will benefit Wednesday Noon Lunch.

YOUTH: Annette Doklovic reported that 17 young people and 6 adults will attend the Junior High School Quake event February 16 to 18, 2007 in Huron, Ohio. Seven senior high students and 2 adults will attend the Cincinnati "Zone" retreat February 23 to 25.

The Christmas cookie fund raiser in December was a huge success, with Thrivent funds supplementing the sale. Appreciation was expressed to everyone for supporting our youth. Plans are being made for a "sleepover/lock in" for the girls at the church and for the boys at the Blackfork Retreat Center March 24, 7:00 P.M. Six junior high students and 2 adults will attend a "Rock the Campus" retreat at Purdue University June 27 to 30.

CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOL: Paul Theaker said that the day school reopened

(continued)

January 2 following a Christmas break December 23 to January 1, and they are looking forward to a successful, positive year.

PROPERTY: Shawn Volz reported that Midwest Maintenance replaced shingles on the church roof. Copper pipe was stolen from the chapel air conditioner unit. Shawn mentioned that John Meyer stripped and waxed the undercroft floor with volunteer help in late December. Comments were made about the wonderful job John does in keeping this church property clean.

PERSONNEL: Sherry Winbigler recommended that the church join the Richland County Safety Council for 2007 at the cost of \$50. A 4% discount of Bureau of Worker Comp Insurance fees is received if someone from our church attends 8 Safety Council meetings during the year. Sherry reported that during July to December 2006, the 33 employees of our church (25 CDS, 8 clergy and support staff) worked 20,223.5 hours, with zero lost time hours.

This meeting adjourned with prayer by Pastor Larson at 8:30 P.M.

– Mary M. Schwartz,
Congregation Council Secretary

NORTHEASTERN OHIO SYNOD BISHOP-ELECT INSTALLED

The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton will be installed as Bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod, ELCA, on **Saturday, February 3, 2007, 2:00 P.M.** at **St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1361 West Market Street, Akron, Ohio.** ELCA Bishop Mark S. Hanson, presiding. Directions to St. Paul's are available in the church office.

ANNUAL REPORTS DUE FRIDAY, MARCH 23

Attention committee chairs and organization leaders! Your annual report for May 2006 through April 2007 is due in the church office on Friday, March 23. *Be sure to include a list of your committee members.* Reports submitted by e-mail or on diskette are greatly appreciated (felcbguenther@neo.rr.com).



Evangelical Lutheran

Worship

ELW UPDATE ...

We are in an exciting time in the church. Once in every generation a new core worship resource appears: a new treasury of worship, prayer, and song

to help the church renew its worship life. Soon we will reach one of those moments in our church's history: *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* will be available for us to use in our worship.

Having a printed book at the center of a new generation of worship materials provides access to and ensures stewardship of our shared treasury of worship texts, hymns, and patterns. Holding and worshipping from this book reminds us that we are a broad and welcoming church, a church with many places and practices that enrich us all. This new book of worship helps us all to know and celebrate both the historic riches of our worship and the new treasures before us.

The title *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* is rich with meaning and purpose for the church today:

Evangelical – *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* is designed to welcome people to worship together. With original artwork throughout, elegant design, and easy navigation aids, this book will help both newcomers and long-time members worship with heart and mind. Although filled with song and prayer for use throughout the year, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* is easy to use at any time. In worship God's people join in the mission of proclaiming the good news.

Lutheran – The involvement of the whole church in the development of these resources is a solidly Lutheran practice. We are a church that honors many expressions of worship, grounded in our faithful heritage, yet always open to the new. Words, music, and visual art combine in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*—recalling Luther's own emphasis on praising and proclaiming God using every human gift.

Worship – Word and sacrament are the core of this resource, reflecting this centering of all that we do as a church in the gifts of God's grace. The musical settings bring together for the first time a wondrous variety of worship styles practiced in the church. The hymn collection has grown out of research from over 800 churches across the country. Congregations will now be able to explore a variety of worship styles while using only a single worship resource. *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* has been designed to serve the church of today.

At press time, approximately 187 copies of the pew edition of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* have been donated by the members and friends of First English Lutheran Church. This is well on our way to our goal of purchasing 200 copies to equip the Nave and the Luther Hall Chapel with this new resource! THANK YOU for your faithful, generous support of this project!

– Dr. Tim Guenther



GLOBAL MISSION NEWS . . .

ELCA GLOBAL MISSION EVENT IS COMING TO COLUMBUS, OHIO, JULY 19 THRU JULY 22, 2007

The ELCA Global Mission has never been closer to FELC. This year is your chance to attend a Global Mission Event within one hour of First Lutheran. You will have the chance not only to hear how the ELCA reaches out to the world, but meet people from around the globe.

Your days will be filled with songs of praise, prayer, Bible study and workshops. At the same time the youth are attending their own Global Sessions and workshops and generally growing spiritually. There will be child-care provided for children under three.

By Sunday morning you have possibly joined the choir and are ready to partici-

pate in the awesome worship service with Eucharist. Can you imagine taking communion with 2000 people? If you are unable to attend the entire event, the Thursday evening worship and plenary session and the Sunday worship service are free and open to the public.

For further information or if you have questions, contact **Cheryl Lantz, Jan Fisher, Linda Elgin or Jerry Gallagher** as we are very excited to be on the "local" committee in Columbus planning the event. You can also check it out on the ELCA website: www.elca.org then go to "Events."

"One of the Global Mission Events I attended in the past, I met the Bishop from Malawi"
- J. Gallagher

PATIENT INFORMATION COMPUTERS ARE DOWN at Med/Central Mansfield Hospital. IF YOU ARE IN THE EMERGENCY ROOM OR ADMITTED, PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE, 419-522-0662, to let us know. The hospital will not call with the information. **Don't let your hospital stay go by without Pastoral care!**



Thrivent Financial for Lutherans™

2006 THRIVENT FUNDED FELC ACTIVITIES REPORT

Thank you to everyone at First English who has been involved in or supported Thrivent Financial for Lutherans funded activities in 2006! Thrivent gives a congregation of our size a beginning amount of \$1,600 each year to be used as matching funds for either fund raising projects or hands-on projects. Thrivent guidelines are such that the match is to be \$1.00 for every \$3.00 raised. Also, congregational and Thrivent member involvement is very important as we are to count ALL volunteer hours involved in planning and carrying out EACH project.

Anyone or any group within the church can apply for Thrivent funding. To do that merely contact one of our church's three coordinators: **Larry Lantz, Carolyn Weeks, or Mary Schwartz.** They can give you the paperwork and guide you through it.

Another phase of the Thrivent funds available is the program called "Care Abounds in Communities." This program is designed to be more far reaching than just our congregation in that it involves an

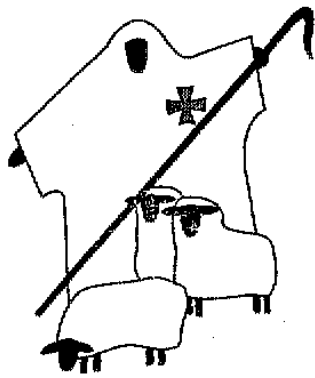
event or cause being attended by people in our community or from other churches, etc. To apply for Care Abounds in Community funds you must write up a proposal/request and submit it to the Ashland/Richland Chapter Leadership Board at least 30 to 45 days prior to the date of the event.

Here at First English, we have **Barb Hannemann, Jan Fisher, and Ruth Sweval** connected to the Chapter Leadership Board, so you can always make contact with one of them for help in applying for funds. The Chapter Leadership Board meets the fourth Thursday of each month to review requests and take care of any other business. For more information about Thrivent Financial for Lutherans go to www.Thrivent.com

The following spread sheet outlines Thrivent Financial for Lutherans 2006 requests for matching funds from First English Lutheran:

Thrivent Requests for matching funds, 2006				
Event name	Date of event	Amount Requested	Amount we matched	Starting amt. \$1600.00
Fastnacht	Feb. 28, 2006	\$350.00	\$100.00 (net too low on proceeds)	
Youth Spud Fest	19-Mar-06	\$250.00	\$250.00	
Tetelestai	March 31, Apr.1,06	\$175.00 up front was all they needed, othr exps were covered	\$175.00	also providing Thrivent cups
Silent Pie Auction	Sept. 10, 2006	\$400.00	\$400.00	
Youth/SteamThrs	Sept 23-24, 06	\$300.00	used to date \$925	\$675 still available
CDS Windmollen	Oct. 12, 06	\$200.00	used to date \$1225.00	375.00 still available
CDS Windmollen	Oct. 12, 06	\$200.00	\$200.00	175.00 still available
Youth Bake Sale	Dec. 16-17, 06	\$100.00	\$100.00	75.00 still available
WELCA SilAuct (benefit CDS)	Dec. 6, 06	\$75.00	\$75.00	00 bal

Note: In 2006 we used our \$100 Thrivent open contribution for purchase of Thrivent preprinted styro cups for coffee fellowship



WITHIN THE FOLD . . .

From Maxine Zimmerman: "Thanks so much to the carolers who came to me on December 17. It was such a good feeling to hear the songs that have always been part of my Christmas. It was a joy to receive them into my home. God bless."

From Tom & Evelyn Woodard: "We want to thank the carolers who came and sang for us. The children were so adorable. We sure appreciated them, and they made our day. The people at First English Lutheran Church are so thoughtful, so thanks and God bless each and everyone."

From the family of Norma Layer: "Our thanks to all who signed the card, 'God Be With The Family Of Norma Layer.' We thank Pastor Kress for his many visits, prayers, and the giving of Communion during Norma's illness." Deborah, Kent, Charles, and Dick

From Harmony House "We appreciate your support for Harmony House Homeless Shelter. Thanks for helping keep our water on. I was amazed at the amount donated, exactly enough to pay the bill. Bless all of you!" -Vicki Kane, director

Editor's note: Vicki Kane was the speaker at the December Lunch Bunch. A love offering taken by the group attending was given to Harmony House.

Harmony House Christmas Project 2006: "What an awesome, generous group of members we have at First English! Thanks to you the Harmony House residents had a much brighter Christmas this year. With your donations of clothing, bedding, appliances, food, games, gift cards, etc. many of these people felt the love and caring of the members at First English. Thanks also to the Warm Up America project for donating full size afghans to be delivered at Christmas. The members of First English came through once again by sharing with those that are less fortunate." - Thank you! Kay Leedy, Service Ministry

Allison Molyet performing! *The Merry Widow* with Opera Columbus, Friday February 9, at 8 pm and Saturday, February 11 at 2 pm. at the Palace Theatre in downtown Columbus. For more information contact ticketmaster.com or call 614-469-0989. Allison's email is allsndance@hotmail.com or molyet.4@osu.edu. The Columbus Dance Theatre website is www.coldancetheatre.org

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Support Our Troops - Heartfelt thanks to all who have donated to the Support Our Troops project! "This project has been a great success and we brightened the day of some very deserving young Marines. A total of 24 awesome packages have been mailed to Iraq, and First English Lutheran Church received two Certificates of Appreciation from the commanding officer of the Regiment we adopted. This particular group of Marines is getting ready to redeploy back to the United States in early February, and we pray for their safe return home to their families. The collection boxes will continue to be in the Narthex and undercroft for those who wish to continue to donate to this project – we are hoping to have another contact in Iraq in mid-February and will be able to ship packages again at that time."
-- Kay Leedy, Service Ministry

From Julie Altman: "Dear Pastors and congregation, I can't begin to thank everyone for all of the support that I have received throughout my surgery and chemo. All of your cards and prayers have been much appreciated by me as well as the rest of my family.

Thank you, Pastor Paul, for being at the hospital and staying with my family during my surgery. I will never forget how you put me at ease and helped me though the wait before they took me back. Pastor Andy, thank you for all of your calls to see how things were going. You helped not only me, but Mike and the kids, too.

Where would we have been without all the wonderful food that was made and brought in to us? The people are too numerous to name, but you know who you are. The kids looked forward to seeing what was next! Now they are stuck with my cooking again!

Thank you ladies of my Eve Circle. The prayer shawl travels with me to all my treatments. It was a comfort to me during chemo. When I put it on, I think of all of you caring women and the prayers that it has in it.

It is a privilege to be a part of such a wonderful church family."

REQUESTS FOR CAMPERSHIPS FOR 2007 DEADLINE MARCH 1

Requests for Camperships for 2007 must be submitted in written form to the church office on or before Thursday, March 1, 2007 to be considered at the March 13 Church Council meeting. Include your name, address, phone number, the name of the Lutheran camp, the dates to be attended, and the amount of the fee. For a list of camps, visit www.lomocamps.org.

An envelope designated for Campership Support is included in your February Offering Envelope packet. The average cost for a week at camp is \$315 per child. Please be generous in your support for our young people!

Prague, Budapest, Vienna!

The Three Crown Jewels of Eastern Europe!

This coming Summer, June 25-July 6, 2007 we would like to invite you to join us as we travel to the three most gorgeous cities in **Eastern Europe: Prague, Budapest and Vienna**. It will be a beautiful 11 days experiencing the wonderful culture, history, music, art, and ambiance of these three incredible cities. We will be staying at 4-star, centrally located hotels. The pace will be relaxed with ample time to go for a stroll or sit at a little sidewalk café and soak-up the rich beauty of these cities and enjoy their wonderful people.

The cost (round-trip from Detroit on Lufthansa Airlines) is **only \$2540** per person. This includes all accommodations at 4-star hotels, continental-breakfast and dinner daily, a farewell Danube River Dinner Cruise, and the services of our excellent, professional guides. Call, or e-mail for your full-color brochure. Enjoy the stimulation of discovery, and relaxing moments with old and new friends in the warmth of Christian fellowship. Plan now to join us!

E-Mail: pklarson@richnet.net

Telephone: (419) 756-3858 Home Office (419) 522-0662 Church Office

Love, *Pastor Paul & Kristi*

ALTAR FLOWER OPENINGS IN 2007

As of January 18, altar flower sponsors are not yet assigned for the following dates in 2007. If you would like to sponsor altar flowers, please call the church office, 419-522-0662, to reserve date. Cost per week is \$35.

April
8 (Easter), 22

May
7

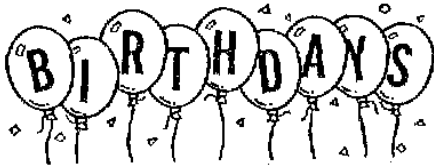
July
1, 8, 22, 29

September
9, 16

October
14

November
4

December
9, 30



FEBRUARY 80+ BIRTHDAYS . . .

Best wishes to our members who are 80+ years of age this month! We are glad to honor them on their special day, and thank God who has given them a long and full life. We pray for God's rich blessing on them now and in the years to come.

FEBRUARY

3	Mr. Frank Ackard	919 Lexdale Lane	44907-2611
3	Mr. Leland McKean	1973 Rosewood Dr.	44906-1722
7	Mrs. Isabelle Smith	1332 Park Ave. E.	44905-2636
11	Mr. George Stafford	230 Valley Hi Drive, Lexington	44904-9792
12	Mrs. Elinore Cunning	248 Saxton Rd.	44907-1114
12	Mrs. Ruth Wolford	1457 Wolford Rd.	44903-9736
17	Mrs. Mary Pore	475 Beechwood Dr.	44907-2303
18	Mrs. Wanda Hill	Winchester Terrace, 70 Winchester Road	44907
19	Mr. Harold Dickson	139 Lind Ave.	44903-2103
21	Ms. Theresa Schambre	1568 Lexington Ave., Apt 1A	44907-2635
22	Mrs. Betty Newlon	PO Box 414, Tonto Basin, AZ	85553-0414
22	Mrs. Emma Shaum	11728 Hickory Lane, Tavares, FL	32778
23	Mr. William Cairns	1458 N. Stewart Rd.	44903-7761
25	Mrs. Marie Kiner	318 James Ave., Apt. A2	44907
25	Mrs. Evelyn Smith	1065 Partridge Circle, #101 Naples, FL	34104

Editor's note: if you DO NOT WANT your 80+ birthday published in The Visitor in 2007, please let the church office know, 419-522-0662.

FROM OUR VISITATION PASTOR . . .



From the
Pastor

The Stilling of the Storm

The Sea
of Galilee

is as dangerous as it is beautiful. In a matter of seconds, the calm surface of the water can become a raging, churning cauldron. Such was the experience of the disciples in our story (read Mark 4:35-41). The day had been a busy one. Mark states that Jesus had preached his message to people using many parables. The people had listened attentively, but few understood. One author states that Jesus was exhausted, not so much from the meeting of human needs, but the battling against hardened hearts of those living in darkness. Having found little openness to his teaching, Jesus was exhausted, and so he left the crowd, took his disciples with him, and got into a boat.

William Barclay points out, "The boats of the Galilean fisherman were quite large and a little unwieldy, with one mast and one great triangular sail. At the stern (the rear) of the boat, just in front of the helmsman, there was a little platform-like deck. On this deck was a cushion. It was the custom that distinguished guests would sit upon that cushion while the boat sailed. Apparently, Jesus went to the back of the boat, stretched out on the pillow and fell asleep. Suddenly a strong wind blew up and the waves were so large they began to spill over into the boat. The disciples panicked, rushing to wake the sleeping Jesus. "Teacher, don't you care that we are about to die?" Jesus got up and commanded the winds and waves to be still.

The winds died down and there was a great calm.

Jesus, however, was not so calm. He turned to the disciples and said, "Why are you so frightened? Are you still without faith?" The disciples could not answer him. They were so amazed to see the sudden calm of the sea that they could only say to each other, "Who is this man? Even the wind and the waves obey him!" As we focus on the disciples, we discover fear, which appears to have displaced their faith.

Often fear is a greater destructive force in our lives than we are willing to give it credit. There is a classic legend of the peasant who gave an old lady a ride in his cart. When he discovered her name was Cholera, the dreaded plague, he made her promise that she would kill no more than ten people in his village. She agreed, and in pledge she gave the peasant a knife with which he could kill her if she killed more than ten. When Cholera left the village the next morning, 100 people had perished from the plague. The angry peasant took the knife she had given him as a pledge of her promise and started out after her. When he finally caught up with her on the road, he attacked her in anger. She grabbed his hand that was raised to plunge the knife and cried, "I kept my word. I killed only ten. Fear killed the rest."

Jesus came, not only to motivate faith in the hearts of his disciples, but also to help them

overcome fear. God constantly calls us to resist fear with faith. The meaning of this passage is found in how we answer the question, "In whom do we put our faith when we fear?" If it is anything less than God, then it will be inadequate!

As Christians, we do not fear our ultimate destiny. God is a loving Father whose power seeks to bring wholeness to our lives...His calm and hope.

This is the meaning of this miracle of the Stilling of the Storm. Our God is an all-loving and all-powerful God. When he is present in the little boat of our life, we are never alone, will never be lost, and need never to fear. Nothing...no force in all the world is powerful enough to snatch us from his loving and powerful grip. Remember Jesus' words: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14:27)

—Cloyd E. Kress, Visitation Pastor



We remember the families and friends of those who died December 23, 2006 - January 19, 2007:

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| Damian Blankenship (age 33)
<i>(husband of Laura Brandt Blankenship,
son-in-law of Bob & Deb Brandt,
grandson-in-law of Bill & Mary Hayes)</i> | January 8 |
| Don McCready
<i>(brother of Bob McCready and
Cheryl Strohminger)</i> | January 12 |
| Ge Sun Bok
<i>(grandmother of Daniel Nam, South Korean
exchange student with the Jones family)</i> | January 17 |

We pray for Christ's gifts of healing and peace to touch their lives during this time of loss and sorrow that they may be comforted with the promise of the Resurrection through faith in Christ our Savior.

MEMORIALS

ELW Hymnal Fund

Martha Hostettler:

Anonymous
Bailey, Clayton & Candy
Blaney, Tom & Dot
Bowers, Charles & Cheryl
Calland, David & Carol
Morales, Dorothy
Schlereth, Barbara
Schwaner, Alex & Wahnita
Snyder, Erna

General Endowment Fund

Norma Layer:

Marilyn Dinges
Carol McFarland
Wilbur Rodgers

Organ Maintenance Fund

Huldah McNeal:

Helen Anderson
Chad & Joe Huffman
Diane McGivern

Organ Maintenance Fund

Evelyn Earick:

Helen Anderson
Susan Davis
John & Miriam Gross
Jane Harper
John & Chriss Harris
Lyle & Terry Mackey
The Charles McConkie Jr. family
The Robert McConkie family
Ruth Mengert
Ronald & Lois Moore
David & Jessie Petska
Bill & Mary Ellen Schulz
Jeff & Diane Urban
Ruth Wachtel
Friends at Westfield Insurance

FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH E-MAIL AND WEB SITE

Pastor Larson	felcplarson@neo.rr.com
Pastor Jones	felcassociate@rrbiznet.com
Timothy Guenther (home)	tguenthr@richnet.net
Dot Blaney	felcoffice@neo.rr.com
Betty Guenther	felcbguenther@neo.rr.com
Christian Day School	felccds@rrbiznet.com

Please, no junk mail, cutesy stories, or chain letters. Reserve the use of church e-mail for important correspondence with the staff. Visit our web site at: www.felc-mansfield.org

MISSION STATEMENT

First English Lutheran Church, Mansfield, Ohio

First English Lutheran Church exists as a visible sign of the continuing presence of Jesus Christ through his body on earth, the Church. Christ's presence is made known through the ministry of this congregation as:

We regularly worship and experience through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit the vitality of the Word, the assurance of God's acceptance through the divine commands and the earthly elements of the Sacraments, and the fellowship of our brothers and sisters in the faith.

We invite those unfamiliar with the saving grace extended to all who proclaim Jesus Christ as Savior to unite with us and to join us in continually familiarizing all with the Grace of God through our nurturing and caring efforts.

We reach out to the needs of our community and our world in compassion, generosity, and equity. We practice stewardship of our resources (time, talent, and monetary) as responsive expressions of the blessings we have received from the Lord so that the ministry of this congregation will be assured of continuing viability.

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CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. Paul L. Larson, Senior Pastor
The Rev. Andrew W. Jones, Associate Pastor
The Rev. Cloyd E. Kress, Visitation Pastor
Dr. Timothy E. Guenther, Director of Music
Mrs. Cheryl Lantz, Christian Day School Director

Dorothy Blaney, Parish Administrator
Betty Guenther, Staff Secretary/Visitor Editor
Connie Stewart, Printer/Mailing Coordinator
Gina Hutchison, Christian Day School Secretary

John Meyer, Custodial/Maintenance
Gordon & Amy Strohminger, Security
Lindsay Johnson, Nursery Care Worker

First Lutheran sponsored missionaries

Bolivia, South America: Rev. Nick and Shannon Kraft, and children Madison, Tanyon, Moises, and Tucker
Nairobi, Kenya: Rev. Bob and Denise Schmalzle, and children Aaron and Jacob

CONGREGATION COUNCIL OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

President	Matt Blankenship	Personnel	Sherry Winbigler
Vice President	Gene Harsch	Property	Shawn Volz
Secretary	Mary Schwartz	Service Ministry	Kay Leedy
Christian Day School	Paul Theaker	Stewardship	Renee Ward
Christian Education	Chris Cichanowicz	SCS Superintendent	Chris Cichanowicz
Congregational Life	Nancy Pasheilich	Worship	Beth Harruff
Evangelism	Steve Ritz	Youth Ministry	Annette Doklovic
Finance	Rob Skropits	Women of the ELCA	Cheryl Lantz
Global Mission	Jeanne Hillman		