

# THE VISITOR



**The First English Lutheran Church**  
*53 Park Avenue West (at Mulberry Street)*  
*Mansfield, Ohio*

**Volume 62    JANUARY 2020    Number 1**

*"Pointing People to Jesus Through Intentional Relationships"*

THE VISITOR is published monthly by First English Lutheran Church, 53 Park Ave. West, Mansfield, Ohio 44902-1698. Church office hours: 8:30-4:30 Tuesday-Friday; closed Monday. Church phone: 419/522-0662. FAX: 419/522-0075. Website: [www.felc-mansfield.org](http://www.felc-mansfield.org), Early Learning Center phone: 419/522-7500.

CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. Paul L. Larson, Senior Pastor  
Mr. Scott Berry, Organist and Senior Choir Director  
Mrs. Becky Pittman, Coordinator of Music and The Arts  
Mrs. Angela Murphy, Director Early Learning Center  
Nicole Goddard, Bookkeeper Jan Fisher, The Visitor Editor  
Angie Cockrell, Parish Secretary/Printer  
Dave Carew, Custodial/Maintenance  
Andy Kershaw, Property Manager  
Michelle Couch, Early Learning Center Secretary

First Lutheran sponsored missionaries

Go Missions International missionaries to Peru & Bolivia, South America:  
Nick and Shannon Kraft, and children Madison, Tanyon, Moises and Tucker  
World Mission Prayer League Missionaries Brian and Barbara  
Shadreck and Yamikani Chikoti, Kanyenyeva Orphan Care Ministries

CONGREGATION COUNCIL OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

President <i>Lowell Weeks</i>	Personnel <i>Todd Heichel</i>
Vice President <i>Dan Obrynba</i>	Property <i>Mike Anderson</i>
Secretary <i>Alicia Schulz Keultjes</i>	Social Ministry <i>Gary Lane</i>
Early Learning Center <i>Tom Sarbach</i>	Stewardship <i>Mary Schwartz</i>
Christian Education <i>OPEN</i>	
Worship <i>Cindy Russell</i>	
Congregational Life <i>Lana Conry</i>	Youth Ministry <i>Ted Ellis</i>
Evangelism <i>Jan Fisher</i>	
SCS Superintendent <i>Amy Skropits</i>	
Finance TBA	
Women of FELC <i>Jan Fisher</i>	
Global Mission <i>Chris Cichanowicz</i>	

## WHAT'S EPIPHANY?

### Dear Friends in Christ:

What is Epiphany (e PIF ah nee)? Is it relevant today? *Epiphany*, a Greek word means *to shed light upon - to show forth – Revelation!*

The celebration of Epiphany, one of the festivals of Christ's Church, first originated in the eastern Mediterranean world. Its purpose was to honor Jesus' baptism. After its introduction into the Western Church in the fourth century, the theme emphasized the visit of the Wise Men (Magi), as recorded in Matthew 2:1-12.

*<sup>1</sup> Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him."*  
**Matthew 2:1-2 (NKJV)**

Here we learn of the star that led the Magi (foreign-pagan-astrologers ... probably from the region of ancient Babylon) to come and worship Jesus. *<sup>11</sup> And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.* (Matt. 2:11)

The Holy Scriptures record a dream from God, warning the Magi not to return to Herod, which they obeyed. As the Magi left Bethlehem, they told others about the Miracle of the Savior's birth. They became believers and proclaimed the Good News of Jesus.

**Today, churches worldwide celebrate Epiphany - as the Coming of the Wise Men on January 6.** White altar cloths are used for the day of Epiphany, expressing the purity and joy in seeing Jesus. Green is used throughout the Epiphany season, symbolic of new life and growth. **Light** is the predominate theme reminding us of the light of the Bethlehem Star that led foreigners to come and worship Jesus – the Newborn KING!

In the Christmas Season we celebrate the birth of Jesus and the Miracle of the Incarnation (God Himself – Come-in-the-Flesh!) During the Season of Epiphany our Gospel lessons respond to our many questions: "Who is this babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger?" Epiphany is the Season of Revelation in which we come to know Jesus.

**The challenge of Epiphany remains.** Tell the story of, or "show forth" the Lord Jesus in teaching, talking, living, thinking and attitudes. It begins with a star-led journey to Bethlehem to find Jesus personally. Then "showing forth" the love of Jesus through compassion, understanding, patience, forgiveness and long-suffering to the people in your daily life.

On that first Epiphany, God used a star to lead those outside the People of Israel to come and worship Him. Now, God calls each one of us to “shine forth” the Good News of His Love in the witness of our daily lives – so that the world might know Jesus!

May the light of Bethlehem’s Star lead each one of us into new opportunities to share with others the Good News of Jesus, our only Savior and Lord! **Pray** for these new opportunities; **Share** Christ’s Love through your words and deeds; and **Invite** both friends and strangers alike to come and worship Christ our Savior and King!

As Jesus, Himself, commanded us: ***“You are the light of the world! ... Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in heaven.”*** (Matthew 5: 14-16).

**This Epiphany be a STAR for Jesus!**

**In Christ’s Love,  
Pastor Paul**

***GOD Blesses Those Who Meet with Him Daily***  
***By Rick Warren***

***“Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway”*** (Proverbs 8:34 NIV).

Want to know something you can do every day that will certainly lead to God’s blessing? Spend time with Him.

God blesses those who meet with Him daily.

The Bible says, ***“Blessed are those who listen to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway”*** (Proverbs 8:34 NIV).

You don’t have to spend hours with God every day, but you do need to spend five, 10, or 15 minutes every day with him. Put it on your calendar and give that commitment the time it deserves.

What do you do during this daily time with God? Sit quietly and let God talk to you. Read his Word. Review devotionals like this. Pray about what’s going on in your life and the lives of others you care about. Talk to God like you’re talking to a friend—because you are.

But more than anything else, it’s about listening. Let God speak to you.

It doesn’t matter whether you spend time with God in the morning, the afternoon, or the evening. The important part is that you do it. Make it a regular habit of your life. God will bless your commitment!

#### **Talk About It**

- How have you seen a regular time with God (or the lack of a regular time with God) affect your life?
- What has been the best time for you to have a quiet time: morning, afternoon, or evening? Why?
- What keeps you from making a daily time with God a regular part of your life?

# ***The STAR of BETHLEHEM!***

***Unlock the Mystery  
Of the World's Most Famous Star!  
Movie Night at First English Lutheran  
Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 4:30pm***

On Sunday evening, January 5<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm we will be having a special movie night at First English Lutheran. We will be meeting in the Emmaus Room to view ***“The Star of Bethlehem.”*** Please use the Luther Hall parking lot. Pastor Paul writes: “This is one of the most fascinating movies I have seen that connects hard science with the Truth of God’s Word. I have checked the astronomy used in this presentation with my daughter (the PhD professor in astronomy) and the information is solid scientific fact. In Psalm 19:1 we read ***‘The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork.’*** This I now realize is not just symbolic, poetic language. We are to take these words literally! You will be amazed!”

From producer Stephen McEveety (The Passion of the Christ) comes an amazing documentary on the Star of Bethlehem. This presentation, as seen by tens of thousands in the U.S. and in Europe, explores the exciting truth of Scripture and reveals the evidence for God’s existence as seen in the stars above.

Using solid facts from the scientific field of astronomy, presenter Rick Larson walks you through biblical and historical clues revealing the incredible significance of this celestial event as well as the wonder and majesty of God’s creation. Discover the secret of the Star – a secret of magnificent beauty. And there is even more! What about signs in the heavens at the moment of Jesus death on the cross? You will be amazed! See what God has written into the very fabric of the cosmos from the dawn of His creation!

Feel free to bring popcorn or your favorite “movie snack” and some pop.  
**Bring Your Friends & Co-Workers!**

FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH  
CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEETING  
Tuesday November 12, 2019

PRESENT: Mike Anderson; Chris Cichanowicz; Lana Conry; Ted Ellis; Jan Fisher; Todd Heichel; Gary Lane; Dan Obrynba; Cindy Russell; Tom Sarbach; Alicia Schulz; Mary Schwartz; Lowell Weeks; Pastor Paul Larson. Not present: Kathy Hoecker.

Council president Lowell Weeks called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Gary led in devotions and prayer.

Roll was taken. Motion (Ted/Tom) to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2019, Council meeting; **Motion carried.**

**Reports:**

**Executive:** Lowell reported that Lu Blankenship was asked to start forming the security task force. - Exec is in favor of procuring a replacement bus, request that ELC, Property and Worship Committees collaborate on coming up with bus specifications and bus usage information. – The Youth Committee (Tom, Elizabeth Volz, Stuart Brenkus, Chad McFadden) are asked to work with the Personnel Committee in selecting and interviewing candidates for the position of Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries. – Information was shared and discussed about the need for a new roof for Pastor Cloyd and Becky Kress. Motion (Chris/Gary) that we publish their request for financial help in our bulletins and/or monthly newsletter. **Motion carried.** – Motion (Dan/Pastor) that Mary Schwartz be designated as our statutory agent. **Motion carried.**

**Vice President:** Dan mentioned that some families have left FELC and joined churches elsewhere. Are we failing members who leave or are missing? How do we respond to absent families? After discussion, it was the consensus of council that at each council meeting we will discuss who is missing and who and how we should reach out to them. This issue should be put on our monthly meeting agenda.

**Senior Pastor:** Many thanks to Darcie Ballenger who has so faithfully served our congregation as our Parish Secretary since May of 2017. Darcie has been such a wonderful blessing in the lives of all of our Staff and all of our members who have had the privilege of coming to know her and work with her. We thank her for her excellent work and joyful dedication to Christ and His Church. Darcie will be going to her own home congregation where she has now been called to become their new

Parish Secretary. **WELCOME to Angie Cockrell!** We give thanks and praise to God for so wonderfully providing us with our new Parish Secretary, Angie Cockrell. Our hard working and dedicated Personnel Committee went through numerous resumes and many interviews until they found for us the perfect new parish secretary. We thank God for Angie's many talents and gifts and experiences, and her passion to serve Christ as our new parish secretary. Stop by the church office and introduce yourself to her - On the weekend of November 9-10, I used one of my two continuing education weekends to participate in Pr. Greg Finke's ***"Joining Jesus on His Mission - Kick The Tires Event"*** in Fort Wayne, IN. The event was hosted by Holy Cross Lutheran Church, LCMS. As the Dean of the North Central Ohio Mission District, all of my expenses for this continuing education weekend were covered so that I could go and "check it out" for the rest of our Ohio congregations. - Greg Finke uses simple, powerful and applicable insights to show you HOW to be on Mission for Jesus in your everyday life. Through real-life, practical examples, you learn to recognize where Jesus is already at work in your neighborhoods, workplaces, and schools, and how to actively and effectively engage the people that God brings into your everyday life. Participants in the event experienced relief and hope as they heard themselves saying: ***"I Can Do This!"*** And it is all through learning how to respond to the everyday opportunities that Jesus is already placing in your path. Here at FELC, our Mission Statement is: ***"Pointing People to Jesus through Intentional Relationships."*** Having now read Finke's book and participated in this event, I can't think of a better resource to encourage, empower and equip each one of us as we learn to build intentional relationships that will point people to Jesus! All of us want far more than simply being a church that adopted a great Mission Statement. We want all of us to learn to live it ... to become "Jesus-with-skin-on." As I sat listening to Finke, I couldn't help but praise God for this perfect resource for our congregation in our place and time. The good news is that the plans are already in the works to have a similar event here in Ohio on the weekend of **March 21-22, 2020**, for all of our Ohio NALC congregations. Both the Ohio Mission Region of the NALC and The North Central Ohio Mission District of our NALC are working together to plan and sponsor this event for all of our NALC Ohio Churches. We at First English Lutheran are privileged to have now been asked to host it. The Ohio Mission Region will handle all of the mailings and registrations. Motion (Pastor/Alicia) that we accept the invitation to host this event. **Motion carried.** - **New Adult Sunday School Class - Joining Jesus – Show Me How!** is the 2<sup>nd</sup> book in Pr. Gregg Finke's practical and down-to-earth series on HOW we can Be Jesus' witnesses in our everyday lives. join us for this fun, practical, encouraging New Adult Sunday School Class, starting at 9:00am on November 17 - We will be hosting The Executive Committee of The North Central Ohio Mission District of The NALC on



Thursday, December 5, 2019 from 10:00am to 1:30pm. - I will be taking 3 vacation days from Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup> - Thursday, November 21<sup>st</sup>. I will be taking 3 vacation days from Monday November 25 – Wednesday, November 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Personnel:** (Todd) The committee met multiple times in October and early November to discuss the open Parish Secretary job description and position. After reviewing almost 80 resumes, the committee began interviewing candidates. Five candidates were interviewed before one was ultimately selected for council approval. The updated job position was made available for council review. Motion (Tom/Ted) to approve the updated Job description (approved by Personnel Committee 10/12/19). **Motion carried.** Recommendation from Personnel Committee that we approve the hiring of Georgeanne Angela (“Angie”) Cockrell. **Recommendation approved.**

**Finance:** Ted reviewed the latest financials. He noted that we have now taken the \$35,000 draw previously approved by the congregation. Year to date income is down about \$15,000; year to date expenses are down about \$51,000. – Have not yet finalized the 2020 budget. It will be a deficit budget.

**Property:** (Mike) The Property Committee met on November 4th. Travis Welch and his father, Matt Welch presented their proposal to replace the flooring at the Blackfork Retreat Center at no cost to FELC, as a fulfillment of Travis’s Eagle Scout project . - The Flippin Property demolition was put on hold as the contractor found more asbestos in the building. As soon as the asbestos is removed H & T Demolition will start on the project and work until it is completed . - The fire alarm system installation is almost completed by Koorsen. The attic is the remaining area to be completed . - Richland Renovating was called to remove water and dry out the undercroft area. An insurance claim has been submitted but the damage will be less than our deductible .

**ELC:** (Tom) Personnel: Currently on staff we have 3 Admins and 13 Teachers. - Enrollment: Current enrollment stands at 61 + 20 school agers - Upcoming Events: Thanksgiving Feast will be Thursday, November 21 beginning at 11:30. We will be closed November 28-29. Christmas program will be Tuesday, December 3 at 6:00. We will be closed December 24, 25, 26, 31 and January 1. - The ELC would like to create and start fundraising drive in order to raise funds to go toward the purchase of the new bus. Motion (Ted/Tom) that we approve bus funds as an alternative to poinsettias at Christmas. **Motion carried.** Finance Committee has already set up a fund to receive moneys for the bus.



**Youth:** (Ted) The youth had an overnight at the retreat center on 10/19. In addition to fun, food and games they spent some time on clean up. Thanks especially to Tom and Zach Sarbaugh who spent many hours cutting trees and moving logs. After breakfast the group returned to church for Sunday service. Tom Sarbaugh, Trish and Elizabeth Volz and Stu Brenkus spent the (peaceful?) night with the youth. After church there was a prayer partner event where pumpkins were carved. The pumpkins were then placed on the stairway going up to the ELC so the kids had a treat of lighted pumpkins in the morning as they came to school and were able to take one home. On November 19th we will have lunch and go to Mansfield Place to play bingo with the residents. We are pleased that the congregation unanimously approved the hiring of a Youth and Young Adult Leader. We have combined the members of the Youth Committee and the TAG youth group. - About 20 persons have signed up for Quake.

**Evangelism:** (Jan) The free produce distribution was cancelled for November 12 due to the demolition going on in the parking lot. - Tom Sarbach, Angie Murphy, Michelle Couch and I have been busy working with Jonathan Keim (Top Roof Marketing) on the design of the new church/ELC website. It will be mobile friendly and very up to date, hoping to have it running by end of November. A copy of the contract had been made available to council. Motion (Jan/Dan) that we approve the contract with Top Roof Marketing/Top Jump Marketing for the website work. **Motion carried.** - We continue to reach out to members “missing in action”, sending out personal notes and making contacts. Believe me, it’s not as easy as you might think!

**Worship:** (Cindy) We are looking for volunteers to participate in the candle exchange this year. It will involve going to St. Pete's on Saturday, November 30th to receive the candle and then going to the church we are exchanging with on the first Sunday of Advent, December 1st. Information regarding which church and time of service is not available yet, but should be available after Inter Church Council on November 13th. - St. Nicholas will be visiting Sunday, December 8th. - The Children's Sunday School Christmas program will be December 22nd. - Music for the Christmas Eve Service will begin at 7pm with Worship beginning at 7:30. There will be no radio broadcast this year. – After discussion about decorating for Christmas, it was decided we would do this at 4:30 p.m. Monday, November 25. - Worship Committee is recommending we invite the Image Choir from Mansfield Christian to participate in one of our services. We are hoping for February 16th.

**Recommendation approved.**

**Stewardship:** (Mary) commitment Sunday was celebrated on November 3, 2019. Pledges for 2020 were received and on that Sunday, 49 people filled out pledge cards for a total of \$150,988 compared to pledges on the 2019 Commitment Sunday when 52 people filled out pledge cards for a total of \$136,116. (As of today, 61 pledges/\$177,636; 12/31/18: 71 pledges/\$173,274) Praise God that the Holy Spirit moved within the hearts of members of our congregation to step out in faith as we are thankful how God is blessings us. – We will have an advent mailing ready to hand out November 24.

**Global Missions:** (Chris) Nick and Shannon Kraft: The Krafts continue to ask us to pray for the safety of their Go Missionaries in Bolivia, peace for their Go Missionaries in Peru, and resources for their building project. - They are presently working this month to help change the lives of 11 women, many with special needs, all of whom need to experience the love of Jesus. - The Sorges 1) Pray for healing and eternal life for their new Islander friend "Adele" who is in treatment for cancer and no family. 2) Pray that the final obstacles can be overcome so the Scripture App in the Islander language will be available to iPhone users. 3) Pray that Islander communities centered around Jesus will gather in the Islands and places where Islanders live.- - Malawi: Shadreck and Yami Chicoti The Bride Price is a documentary film about the realities of forced and underage marriage in Malawi. As of October, \$822 has been raised of the \$1,850 needed for its completion. Check out Facebook for additional information. Joy is keeping updates there. Jan and her daughter Amy were able to meet with Shadreck while he's in the states.

**SOCIAL MINISTRY:** (Gary) The Committee was all ready to reach out to the neighborhood at the Veteran's Day Parade, with hot cocoa but the parade was cancelled.

**WFELC:** (Jan) The Women's Ministry Team proposes that we focus on supporting our missionaries Nick and Shannon Kraft in their endeavor to raise funds for a building where they will continue their ministry. Motion (Jan/Lowell) that a special offering be taken during the Epiphany season (January 6 – February 26) for this purpose. **Motion carried.** Motion (Jan/Todd) that we hold a collection of knit hats, gloves, etc. and children books to be given to our ELC children and Zoe's Learning Center kids as Christmas gifts. **Motion carried.** We will support these donations with additional support via a Thrivent Action Team card. We anticipate this gifting to go to at least 100 kids.

**New Business:** Motion (Pastor/Alicia) that a Thanksgiving offering be designated for The Salvation Army food ministry. **Motion carried.**

With this last flurry of motions, Dan reminded us to be considering whether we are making decisions that are consistent with our focus of “Pointing People to Jesus through Intentional Relationships” or whether we are doing things because we have always done them that way.

**Announcements:** December coffee fellowship/council devotions: Alicia.

Next meeting: December 10, 2019 @ 7 p.m.

Meeting adjourned with prayer at 9:15 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Alicia Schulz, Secretary**



## **NOTICE OF JANUARY 19, 2020 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL BUDGET MEETING**

At its meeting on December 10, 2019, the FELC Church Council set January 19, 2020, as the date for the 2020 January Budget Meeting of the Congregation. The meeting will convene in the sanctuary, following the regular Sunday worship service, at 11:15 a.m. Pursuant to the by-laws of the Congregation, only items announced in the meeting notice may be considered at this meeting. There is only one agenda item:

(1) Presentation, discussion and adoption of a 2020 Congregational Operating Budget. The enclosed budget is recommended by the Council to the Congregation for its adoption.

This recommendation was approved by the Council at their December 2019 meeting and is now recommended to the Congregation for their adoption at the January 2020 Annual Congregational Budget Meeting.

## *How much of Eternity Is in what I am Doing Today?*

**Dear Friends in Christ,**

I know that most of you have already heard me talk about how much I enjoy my **Daily Walk Bible**, but it is Good News that I just can't keep from sharing. For the longest time, my experience of reading through the Bible was filled with way too much frustration. I lost track of the number of times that I had (with all good intentions) committed myself to "Daily Bible Reading – With the GOAL of Reading through my Bible in a Year." It is a great goal, but I failed at it TOO many times to count. Somewhere along the way, I would suddenly run into a whole string of crazy busy days. Suddenly, I would realize that I was hopelessly behind! Catching-up would look so overwhelming --- I must confess that I would just give up.

But now, I have found a devotional Bible that has really made a difference in my life. It is called The Daily Walk Bible by Tyndale Press. What makes this one different? It is arranged with "*365 Daily Devotional Helps to Guide You through the Bible in One Year.*"

Does this mean that now, for the first time, EVERY single day, I complete my Daily Bible Reading Goal? ... NO! But there are two important differences in the way THIS devotional Bible is set-up.

**First of all**, the readings are not numbered from 1 to 365. Instead, they are divided by the days of the year and marked accordingly, for example: "June 1<sup>st</sup>, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, etc." So if you get out of the daily rhythm for a few days, or a few weeks, ...or even a few months, you DON'T start where you left-off and try to catch-up. This is where most of us feel overwhelmed & give-up. Instead, you just jump back in. If you didn't get to your daily Bible reading ... GOD still Forgives! So... Receive His Forgiveness & Grace! And Embrace His Gift of a NEW Beginning and Start Again Today! **It is the difference between letting oppressive Guilt defeat you and embracing God's Grace to inspire you! I prefer GRACE!**

**Secondly**, and The VERY BEST thing about this great Bible, is the **Daily Devotional Thoughts** that preface each Daily Scripture Reading. This will now be my 17<sup>th</sup> year of doing this→ But I continue to find myself learning things I never knew! God's Word continues to come ALIVE in exciting new ways. I am experiencing the Blessing of growing closer to my LORD as I hear Him speak to the realities of my life as I read His Word.

**Pastor Nicky Gumbel in the ALPHA course states:**

"God still speaks today through the Scriptures. He may speak to us as we read. The psalmist says, 'Your statutes ... are my counselors' (Psalm 119:24). That is not to say that we find God's will by opening the Bible anywhere at random and seeing what it says. Rather, as we develop the habit of regular, methodical Bible study we begin to find it quite extraordinary how appropriate each day's reading seems to be for the particular circumstances in which we find ourselves. Sometimes the verse seems to almost leap off the page at us, and we sense GOD speaking through it."

I began this note to you with a quote from the daily devotional for MAY 14<sup>th</sup>: "*We must ask ourselves: How much of Eternity Is in what we are Doing?*" So many people, events, obligations, and organizations will compete for your Time, your Talents, and your Commitments in 2019. There are equally as many causes, and organizations, and things that will compete for your money. I would invite you Today to ask yourself: "***How much of Eternity Is in what I am Doing?***" I believe that daily spending time with your LORD in His Word is the very best way to begin.

*Together In His Service,*  
**Pastor Paul L. Larson**

**You Can  
Read Through the BIBLE  
In One Year**

## So Here's the INVITATION!

- **First,** This is not about being a Bible expert and having all the answers. ***This is about having a hunger for God and His Word. This is about being eager to learn.*** If you want a weekly place where you can ask questions about what you have read in your Bible during the last week, I will again be meeting with you in The Emmaus Room on Tuesdays over the Lunch Hour (12:00-1:00pm).. Bring your Bible and a Sandwich if you like. Invite a friend or co-worker. If your schedule changes, don't worry, just come when you can. This is a great time to ask questions and grow together in our understanding of God's Word for our daily lives.
- **Secondly,** If you would like to join me in this wonderful “*Walk Thru the Bible*”, we have made arrangements so that you can purchase a copy of **The Daily Walk Bible** at a special discount price of \$20. Check with the church office.
- **Thirdly,** Don't worry about understanding everything that you read. None of us do! This is not about Bible quizzes. This is about spending time with your Lord Jesus in the Gift of His Word. This is about GRACE!
- **Fourthly,** Don't worry about getting behind. I think almost everybody does. If you do get behind, (and most of us do) just jump back in again! Remember → This is about GRACE!
- **Fifthly,** This is the BEST thing I have done for myself to intentionally grow in my relationship with my Lord Jesus. I have every confidence that it will continue to be the BEST thing I do in 2020. Even if you can't join us for our discussion times, I know that you too will still be wonderfully BLESSED to be more and more in God's Word.

## **WITHIN THE FOLD**



**Wednesday Noon Lunch Ministry**



**Wednesday Noon Lunch  
Donations for November \$4.50**



We had 9 bags of groceries donated for the month of November which will go to Catholic Charities. Thanks so much for your generosity! We collect groceries on the last Sunday of each month to donate to Catholic Charities. Don't forget to bring some groceries on December 29 and also at the end of January!

Dear members of First English Lutheran Church,

I would like to thank you for the prayers, cards, and thoughts during my recent surgery and convalescence. They lifted my spirit and encouraged me along the way. Once again proving the loving, caring congregation of F.E.L.C.

With appreciation, **Janet Shenberger**

### **An update on our January 2019 acquired "Flippin Building"**

We have waited through all of 2019 to see the demolishing of the Flippin Building come to pass. In a nutshell, there were some contractor/vendor issues that were unexpected but we have now overcome them. As of December 10, 2019 the building is a pile of rubble, soon to be "carted off" and the property will be cleaned up. What a blessing and gift to our downtown community! By Spring we hope have a green space established and a new playground for the ELC. We can now listen to God as he prepares to lead us into our future endeavors in the Kingdom!



calendar here

**calendar here**



### **Cutting our Postage Costs**

Do you have an email account? Would you prefer to get your monthly copy of the Visitor newsletter digitally? As Stewards of our valuable resources here at FELC, we are making an attempt to cut our mailing costs. After the end of year 2020 we may be eliminating our Bulk Mail subscription. To that end, The Visitor newsletter is the one thing that has to go out via BULK MAIL. We are going to have the copies in the narthex in January. We can save ourselves some expensive mailing costs if more people are willing to get a digital copy of the Visitor. At the time of the Visitor printing Angie Cockrell in our church office also sends out the Visitor via an email. So you get it in a very timely manner, and we have saved mailing costs! All you need to do is contact Angie Cockrell at the church office (419.522.0662) or email her at [acockrell@felc-mansfield.org](mailto:acockrell@felc-mansfield.org).

The monthly Visitor will also be posted in a timely manner on our new website, soon to be launched. Thank you for considering this change.

Questions, contact **Jan Fisher or Mary Schwartz**

# WOMEN'S MINISTRY

## CALENDAR



GROUP	Date	Time	Place	Hostess
Prayer Shawl Ministry	Tuesday, January 7, 2020	7:00 PM	TBA	Bring your latest knitting and crocheting of shawls. Everyone invited!
Sarah	Monday, January 6, 2020	1:00 PM	Emmaus Room	Marianne Sweat and Kay Jewett leading
Women's Bible Study (formerly Lydia Circle)	Monday, January 13, 2020	1:00 PM	Emmaus Room and Undercroft Kitchen	Study of Luke
Women's Ministry Team Meeting	TBA as needed			Officers and Circle Leaders attend. All women are welcome to join us.
Workday Ladies	Wed, January 15, 2020	1:00 PM to 4:00 PM	Third Floor	Cutting squares and quilting tops. All women are welcome to join us! We would love your help!

**Funeral Squad for JANUARY Squad A:** Karen Ellis, Barb Coon, Ila Kershaw

Womens' Bible Study continues with a video on study of Luke. We have learned a lot and enjoyed the video thus far! All are welcome!

Women's Bible Study group filled 35 containers of Christmas cookies for our shut-ins. They looked delicious and festive and will be enjoyed by our folks when they are delivered by our Communion Deacons and Christmas carolers. Thank you to everyone who so willingly baked these yummys!

## **Missional Outreach on the local level through Thrivent!**

We have done several “missional outreach” projects right here at the end of the year. What wonderful gifts we have been able to give those less fortunate than us. We love to have the congregation’s support on these projects, but many are actually funded by Thrivent Action Team cards which we then supplement with our involvement. It is always your choice as to whether you can help support these projects, and of course there is no obligation!

Recently we collected knit hats, gloves, and kids books for both Zoe Learning Center on Reba Avenue and for our own ELC kids. We also collected non perishable food items to give our Wednesday Noon Lunch guests a little extra boost for their Christmas meals. Our Youth have made fleece blankets that will be given to Newhope residents. And by the way, Newhope is grateful for any and all assistance in this manner.

What a great way to teach them about outreach to others! And one project that you might not know about is a card we got for creating “Buddy bags” for homeless people in downtown. They will contain toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, wash cloth, razor, detergent, deodorant, and a small fleece blanket. We also use Thrivent cards to secure our toilet paper that is given out once a month to our Wednesday Noon Lunch guests. So you can see, we are using resources that you might not be aware of to reach out in our community in a very giving way!



### **SAFETY**

Our council has charged me with assembling a team to address safety concerns at FELC. We need to put together a written plan to address Security, First Aid/AED, Intruders, and Fire/Tornado Preparedness.

If you have expertise or experience in any of these areas, please consider helping me with this. Or, if this is something of interest to you, I could use your help.

It would be great if our team would include someone involved in ushering, someone from the Early Learning Center, someone who knows law enforcement, a nurse, etc.

Initially, we will put a plan together. Then we will need to arrange training. Then, we’ll find other volunteers who are willing to be “go to” people when/if there are security, safety or health concerns at worship or another church function.

Please consider giving this team some of your valuable time.

Thank you!

**Lu Blankenship (419-564-1469, [luella616@google.com](mailto:luella616@google.com))**

# Thankoffering for 2020 Epiphany Season

**News of a “matching grant” to help with this funding.**



**An anonymous donor connected to FELC is offering a matching grant of \$5,000.00 to go along side whatever donations our “People of God” can give in support of this Epiphany donation request.**

**Nick and Shannon Kraft continue to do wonderful mission work in Peru and Bolivia.** Please read the Global Missions article below for further details about the Kraft’s building project. This is SO important to their ministry that they have personally put \$20,000.00 of their own finances into getting this building built.

**Jan Fisher, Women’s Team Leader**

## **Global Mission Report from Chris Cichanowicz**

**1) The Krafts are asking for prayer for God's provision to finish the building before the January 4th anniversary and future vision for a 2nd floor at the right time. There is still a need for \$5000 for bathrooms, staircase and floor. Pray for Bolivia and their political struggles and for violence to end. Pray for a pastor from the jungle who wants to send some students to them. Pray for God to be the center of Potter's House. (FELC will be sending our Epiphany donations to help the Krafts with their building expenses. Please give generously!)**

**2) The Sorges had 4 days of training in "Bible Based Healing of Trauma" and are asking for us to pray that God will help them become more effective mediators of His healing for the broken hearts of Islanders and others through this training. Pray for their safety as well.**

**3) A summer mission trip to Malawi may happen if there is enough interest. Please see me if you would like to be part of the team. I'll have more information about this after a conversation with Pastor Andy and Joy on January 5.**



## “Love Notes from Shirley”

written by Shirley Lane.....

We are so proud of our teens here at FELC, and I am happy to share with you about **Taylor Grossenbacher**.

He is Dawn Frayer’s son and Karen and Ken Frayer’s grandson. He has a younger brother, David. He is quite accomplished in his academics, being a senior at Lucas High School in the Honors Program. His 4.0 GPA reflects on his studious nature, which is presently augmented by all college level classes at OSU Mansfield campus. In preparation for college, he has obtained very high scores on the required ACT, PSAT, and SAT tests. He presently serves as a tutor in college level mathematics at OSU Mansfield. His dream is to attend MIT, Case Western, or Ohio State University. He recently interviewed with MIT and is waiting for the next step: acceptance!

We are blessed to have Taylor as one of our ushers as well as a power point operator during worship. Thank you, Taylor, for your servants heart! Best of luck for an amazing future filled with hard work!

## Prayer Requests

To be put on the printed prayer listing: If you would like the church family to know of your joy or concern, please notify the pastors or call Angie Cockrell (419.522.0662) in the church office to be added to the list. Please call again when it is appropriate to have that prayer request deleted.

We also invite you to use our two prayer chains. Your request will be shared with a small group of prayer warriors via phone call chain.

Call **Pat Shenberger** to activate the prayer chains.  
Her home # is: 419.589.2399 or cell# is: 419.632.4850.



Prayer is very powerful, and we encourage you to use these methods for many needs.





## Memorial Donations received through

**December 10, 2019**

### **ELC**

*In memory of Eugene Luedy*

*Given by: Wes and Sandie Volz*

### **Malawi Orphan Care Fund**

*In memory of Stan Cichanowicz*

*Given by: Margaret Gramly*



*With Sincerest Sympathy*

**Eugene Luedy**

**December 5, 2019**

**Jean Rock**

**November 28, 2019**

**Camilee Kemper**

**November 2019**

Mother of Debra (Richard) Riei

**Joseph Riei**

**November 13, 2019**

Father of Richard (Debra) Riei

We remember in our prayers the family and friends of those who have recently lost loved ones through death. We pray for Christ's gifts of healing and peace during this time of loss and sorrow that they may be comforted with the Promise of the Resurrection through faith in Christ Jesus our Risen Savior.

### **Pastoral Acts**

None to report.

ELC

## Little People BIG News January

### Flashback into December



In December, we had an audience of 211 for our Christmas Program. We would like to thank Becky Pittman for putting on a great show. Three of our teachers accomplished obtaining their CDA credentials! Congratulations to Megan Collins, Ann Mathie and Jaylin O’Neal on a job well done!

### A Peek into January



We would like to welcome everyone back from Christmas vacation! Our children will jump right back into learning! We are looking forward to a great 2020!

**Thank you to all who donated toward the knit hats, gloves, and books for the ELC childrens’ Christmas gifts. Every child received a gift.**

Angie Murphy, Director



### **Nursing Home Communions**

***A message from our caring group of Communion Deacons and home visitors .....***

***If you know of anyone who wants a Communion Deacon to give Communion to them in their home, or if you just want a home visit, please contact the Church Office or call Larry Lantz at 419.756.5506.***

**Larry Lantz, Coordinator**

#### **Nursing Home and Assisted Living Communion Services**

January 15, 2020	Tues. 2:00 PM	Mifflin Care
January 16, 2020	Wed. 2:30 PM	Primrose
January 16, 2020	Wed. 3:30 PM	Msfd. Place

<b>Volunteer Scheduling Contacts</b>	<b>The monthly volunteers are published in Visitor and posted on bulletin boards.</b>
<b>Worship Committee</b> <b>Heather McFadden 419.295.6467</b> Acolytes <hr/> <b>Cindy Russell 419.544.0878</b> Assisting Ministers and Lay Readers	<b>Pew Pad Gleaners</b> <b>Jane Sprang 419.610.9776</b> <hr/> <b>Ushers</b> <b>Charles and Myra Cordrey</b> <b>704-431-5057</b>
<b>Evangelism Committee</b> <b>Jan Fisher 419.589.2820</b> Greeters	<b>Becky Pittman</b> <b>419.989.8585</b> Power Point, Nave
<b>Property Committee</b> <b>Mike Anderson 419.295.4598</b> Property Chairman	<b>Finance Committee</b> <b>TBA</b>
<b>Becky Pittman</b> <b>419.989.8585</b> Sound Board/Audio	<b>Amy Skropits 419.747.3076</b> Sunday School Superintendent

## A Note from the Finance Committee.....

2019 Church Offerings			
	Monthly Actual	Monthly Budget	Over/ (Under)
Jan	\$15,063.77	\$22,620.00	-\$7,556.23
Feb	\$31,155.39	\$20,447.00	\$10,708.39
March	\$22,852.01	\$24,874.00	-\$2,021.99
April	\$19,414.13	\$26,159.00	-\$6,744.87
May	\$16,827.71	\$18,700.00	-\$1,872.29
June	\$19,411.66	\$23,600.00	-\$4,188.34
July	\$14,937.34	\$29,400.00	-\$14,462.66
Aug	\$15,659.07	\$17,300.00	-\$1,640.93
Sept	\$18,398.34	\$22,500.00	-\$4,101.66
Oct	\$19,219.94	\$17,400.00	\$1,819.94
Nov	\$22,404.77	\$17,500.00	\$4,904.77
Totals	\$215,344.13	\$240,500.00	-\$25,155.87

At the end of **NOVEMBER** , we are presently \$25,155.87 **BEHIND** in our offerings.

**2 Corinthians 9:7** Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

**Lowell Weeks, President of Congregational Council**

*January, 2020 Volunteers*

**Sunday 10:00 a.m.**

**Worship (Nave)**

**ACOLYTES**

January 5: Peyton  
McFadden  
January 12: Lydia  
McFadden  
January 19: Max Weeks  
January 6: Callie  
Kaschube

**ALTAR WORKERS**

Bryce & Allison Carroll

**ASSISTING MINISTERS**

Chris Hoecker

**COFFEE FELLOWSHIP**

**HOSTS**

Property

**COMMUNION**

**PREPARERS**

January 5: Charles & Myra  
Cordrey

**COMMUNION SERVERS**

January 5:  
Wine West: Dawn Frayer  
Cups West: Ila Kershaw  
Wine East: Pat Smith  
Cups East: Gary Simmons  
Intinction: Alicia Schultz

**GREETER**

Jan Fisher

**LAY READERS**

January 5: Kathy Hoecker  
January 12: Sandie Volz  
January 19: Jan Fisher  
January 6: Angie  
Kaschube

**PASTORS' PRAYER**

**PARTNERS**

Chris Cichanowicz  
Mary Schwartz  
Lowell Weeks  
Jan Fisher

**PEW PAD GLEANERS**

January 5: Brenda Eyerly  
January 12: Jodi Mumaw  
January 19: Lana Conry  
January 26: Stacey Crall

**POWER POINT**

**OPERATORS**

January 5: Taylor  
Grossenbacher  
January 12: Shelley Shupp  
January 19: Cindy Russell  
January 26: Isaac  
McFadden

**SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**BREAKFAST**

January 5: Myra Cordrey  
January 12: None: Youth at  
Quake  
January 19: Becky Faith  
January 26: Alicia Schulz

**SOUND BOARD**

**OPERATORS**

January 5: Ross Justice &  
Andy Kershaw  
January 12: Ed Farner &  
Andy Kershaw  
January 19: Ed Farner &  
Ross Justice  
January 26: Ed Farner &  
Andy Kershaw

**USHERS                      NAVE**

Mary Schwartz & Kayla  
McFadden  
Jodi Mumaw & Ed Corley



### **ALTAR FLOWERS**

The following opportunities are available for the donation of Altar Flowers. Please consider purchasing flowers in honor **or** in memory of a loved one. Please call Angie Cockrell at the Church Office (419-522-0662) to reserve one of the dates listed below or to check the availability of other upcoming dates. **OR** you can sign up to sponsor flowers by filling out the Altar flower Sign Up Form on the table in the Narthex. Flowers are \$40.

*January 5, 2020*

*January 12, 2020*

*January 19, 2020*

*January 26, 2020*

***It is an awesome act of Worship to give God the Glory in beautifying the church on Sunday morning!***



# Youth News!

## Jr. and Sr. High Advent News Report

The T A G program suggests we create a youth outreach program to point youth in our community to “Jesus” through intentional relationships. What better way to do this than obtain a “Thrivent Action Card” and seek out an organization in our community who could benefit from a caring and loving deed of kindness this “Advent Season”.

Our Jr. and Sr. High Youth received a Thrivent Action Card to purchase fleece material and have been busy this month making fleece blankets using 70 yards of material making a total of 12 blankets for Richland Newhope, who supports children and adults with disabilities. Any Sunday morning you could go up to the Penthouse Sunday School room and see 15 to 20 children busy measuring, cutting and tying fleece blanket material to make a cozy blanket for children and adults in the Richland Newhope Community.

“CONGRATULATIONS” goes out to our youth and Sunday School teachers for overseeing this Project by developing an “Intentional Relationship” showing the Love of Jesus in the community this way.

Our Youth are headed to Quake the weekend of January 10th through the 12th! Please keep our kids and chaperones in your prayers for safe travels and a blessed time together filled with the Holy Spirit.

## DAILY DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS

Devotional booklets for JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH are in the tract racks, so please help yourselves to these booklets. Make daily devotions a necessary part of your “routine.” There are also many good apps available for your iPhone or Android. In today’s busy world, apps are a wonderful digital tool!



Find us on Facebook: **First English Lutheran Church**  
Podcasts of weekly sermons are on the website: [felc-mansfield.org](http://felc-mansfield.org)



## **BULLETIN INFORMATION DEADLINE!**

Need to get information in the bulletin for a meeting or an announcement?  
Send details to Angie Cockrell at [acockrell@felc-mansfield.org](mailto:acockrell@felc-mansfield.org) or phone the church office at 419.522.0662.

Weekly deadlines are noon on Wednesday for bulletins pertaining to that particular weekend. Bulletins assembled at 11:30 AM on Thursdays each week.

Nicole Goddard, our bookkeeper, may be reached by calling the church office at 419-522-0662 or email her at [NGoddard@felc-mansfield.org](mailto:NGoddard@felc-mansfield.org)

**FEBRUARY Visitor Newsletter Deadline: TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2020.**

**Assembled and mailed: THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 2020**

PLEASE EMAIL ALL ARTICLES TO: [newslettereditor53@yahoo.com](mailto:newslettereditor53@yahoo.com) or leave in the mail slot marked Visitor Editor. Volunteer editor Jan Fisher can be reached at 419.589.2820.

### **FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH E-MAIL AND WEB SITE**

Pastor Larson	<a href="mailto:plarson@felc-mansfield.org"><u>plarson@felc-mansfield.org</u></a>
Scott Berry	<a href="mailto:saberry31@yahoo.com"><u>saberry31@yahoo.com</u></a>
Becky Pittman	<a href="mailto:beckypittman@yahoo.com"><u>beckypittman@yahoo.com</u></a>
Angela Murphy	<a href="mailto:cds@felc-mansfield.org"><u>cds@felc-mansfield.org</u></a>
Nicole Goddard	<a href="mailto:ngoddard@felc-mansfield.org"><u>ngoddard@felc-mansfield.org</u></a>
Angie Cockrell	<a href="mailto:acockrell@felc-mansfield.org"><u>acockrell@felc-mansfield.org</u></a>
Church Office	<a href="mailto:office@felc-mansfield.org"><u>office@felc-mansfield.org</u></a>
Jan Fisher, Editor	<a href="mailto:newslettereditor53@yahoo.com"><u>newslettereditor53@yahoo.com</u></a>
Andy Kershaw	<a href="mailto:propman@felc-mansfield.org"><u>propman@felc-mansfield.org</u></a>

Visit our web site at: [\*\*www.felc-mansfield.org\*\*](http://www.felc-mansfield.org)

Find us on Facebook at First English Lutheran Church.

***Emergency cell phone number if the pastor cannot be***

***contacted at church or home:***

Pastor Paul Larson, 419-632-1875

**Non-Profit Org.**

affix label here

**U.S. Postage**

**PAID**

**Permit No. 714**

**Mansfield, OH**

**44902**

**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**

**DO NOT DELAY – DATED MATERIAL ENCLOSED**

**JANUARY 2020**

**We have made a commitment to focus on the following values and objectives:**

**CORE VALUES**

- 1 Relationships
- 2 Standing on the Word of God
- 3 Sacrifice
- 4 Giving Our Best to God
- 5 Worship Space
- 6 Worship Experience

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

- 1 ELC (formerly CDS)
- 2 Align Ministries to Strategic Focus
- 3 Engaging Youth
- 4 Repurpose Staff Including Accountabilities
- 5 Create Culture of Engagement