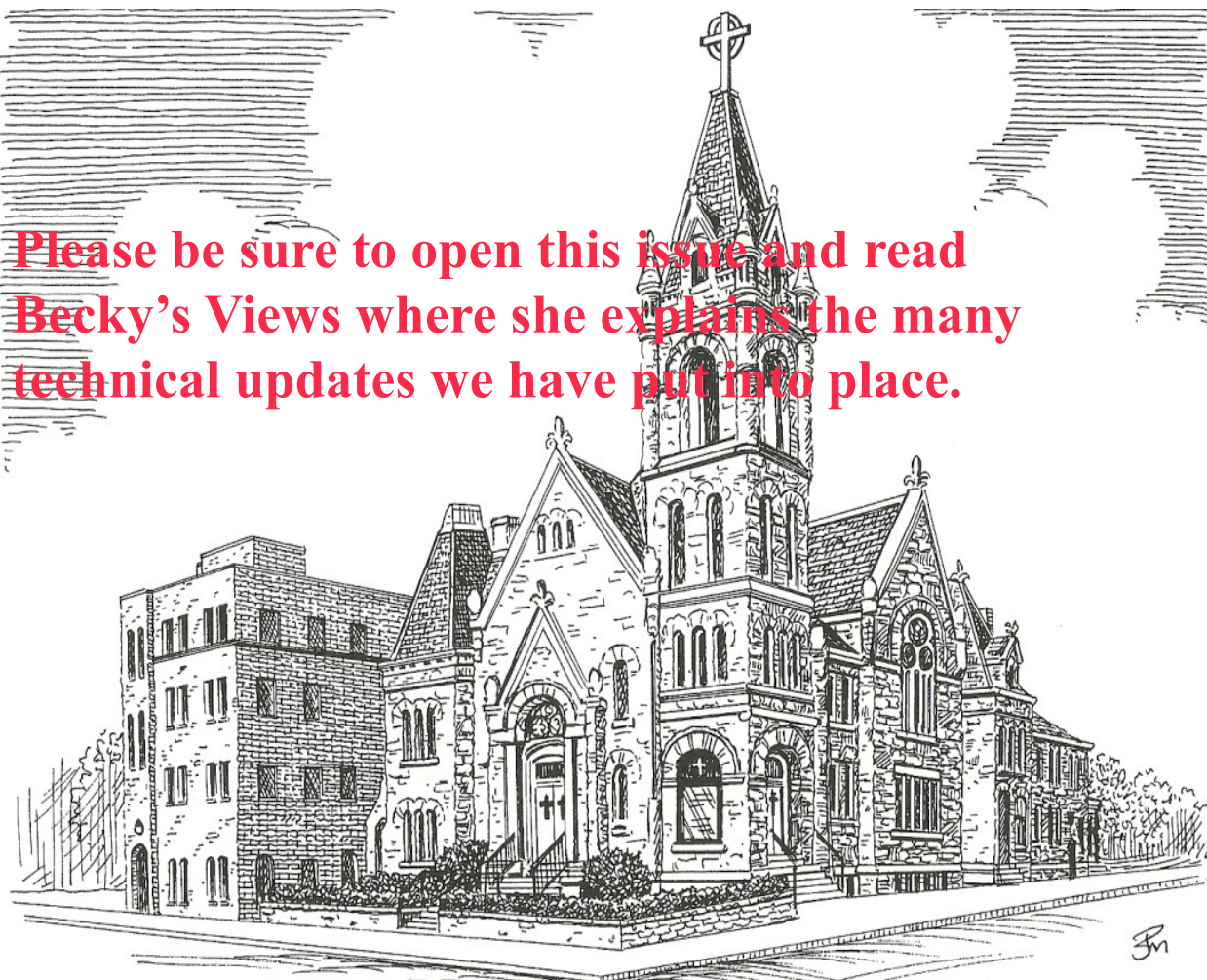


THE VISITOR

Please be sure to open this issue and read
Becky's Views where she explains the many
technical updates we have put into place.



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

Volume 62

MAY 2020

Number 5

"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, 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>
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Christian Education <i>Kathy Hoecker</i>	
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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>	

DEAR FRIENDS in CHRIST,

Truly, this is a springtime, an Easter Season unlike any of us have ever seen before. Yes, this is not the first pandemic our world has ever seen. But, it is the first almost global-wide “shut down” that our world has ever known. Therefore, it is not surprising that people are feeling trapped in the dark emotional caves of their self-isolation, and governmental “stay-at-home-orders.”

We are a people longing to be Free. Now, especially in the face of all the fear and depression and anxiety that our society is experiencing – we must remember that we are God’s Easter People! This is our opportunity to hear and receive and share God’s Good News for us – maybe in a far more profound way than we have ever experienced before.

“Why do you seek the living among the dead?” It’s that familiar, yet still powerfully stirring question of Easter morning. The women had come to the tomb that first day in sorrow and mourning. There was no joy in their hearts. They were lost in the deep pit of their own grief, fear and depression. As far as they knew, it was all over. All that they had hoped and dreamed for was lost. Jesus was dead. As sorrow and despair filled their hearts, they must have wondered, “What’s the use of living anymore?”

“Why do you seek the living among the dead?” “Do you not remember the promise of your LORD that He would rise again?” Jesus was alive, but their thoughts, their lives, were still being smothered under a load of grief and fear. And therefore, so emotionally overwhelmed by those oppressive clouds of darkness, they could not yet see the miracle of Easter’s dawning. Christ had been raised: The powers of Sin, Death and the Devil destroyed!

It’s a revealing question the angels ask, for it points out an incredible irony. *“Jesus is Alive! But you’re acting as if He were still dead!”* That was where those disciples were trapped on that first Easter morning, and maybe that’s where lots of Jesus’ disciples still get trapped today.

Yes, we are in the midst of a global war against a deadly virus. But we already know who has already given us the victory! His Name is JESUS! Easter is Here! Easter is Now! The Victory, the Joy, The Hope are all ours! Yes, we must responsibly face the hard challenges of these very unusual days. But, we should not drag around as if Jesus were still rotting in the grave!

The dark temptation is to approach life's hard situations much as those women approached the tomb on that first Easter morning. We come in fear and despair smothered in a cloud of negativism. We're down on the present. We're down on our past. We're down on the future. We're down on ourselves. As Christians such a defeatist attitude just is not realistic.

Life has always been filled with deadly realities, and hard and terrible times. And being a Christian doesn't exempt us from any of the problems or suffering that the rest of the world experiences. Indeed, our Lord Jesus warned us that if we choose to follow Him - we will be choosing an even harder road. But still, in the midst of it all, we have the LIGHT which shines in our darkest hours, which No Darkness shall ever overcome. It is the Joyous Light of Easter's Dawning → The Resurrection of Christ our Lord.

In the face of life's hardest times, the Child of God can still experience a healthy optimism rooted in a strong Faith in Jesus our saving LORD. "Jesus is for me! Jesus is with me! Therefore, I can go forward!"

This Easter season, God's great love and victory for us claims our lives in the Hope of the Resurrection. Washed in the waters of Holy Baptism, we too have been raised to Newness of Life! We have been filled with the Holy Spirit, "*the Lord and Giver of Life.*" And if God by His Spirit can raise Jesus from the dead, He can most certainly raise us to Newness of Life here and now.

Easter has Come! Christ is Raised!
"Why seek ye the living among the dead?"
This is the Day that the LORD has Made!
Let us Rejoice and be Glad in it!

**In Christ's Love,
Pastor Paul L. Larson**

DRAFT MINUTES

FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday March 10, 2020

PRESENT: Chris Cichanowicz; Lana Conry; Ted Ellis; Jan Fisher; Todd Heichel; Gary Lane; Cindy Russell; Tom Sarbach; Alicia Schulz; Lowell Weeks; Pastor Paul Larson. Excused: Mike Anderson; Kathy Hoecker; Dan Obrynba; Mary Schwartz.

- Council president Lowell Weeks called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Ted presented the devotion and prayer.

Reports:

Secretary: Motion (Pastor/Tom) to approve the minutes of the 2/11/20 council meeting previously emailed to council members. **Motion carried.** – Motion (Alicia/Chris) that we, as we have done in prior years, invite the congregation to contribute to LOMO camperships and invite campers to apply for them. **Motion carried.**

Executive: Lowell presented a recommendation from the exec committee that the exec committee, together with Cindy Russell and Lu Blankenship, review the performance of the James Dickson Memorial Fund and schedule a distribution per the fund's instructions. **Recommendation approved.** Recommendation from the exec committee that council approve a wine and cheese fellowship event for the council and TAG leadership members to meet with Greg Finke on Friday evening, March 20 at 7 p.m. **Recommendation approved.**

Senior Pastor: Funeral Services - On March 3, I officiated at the funeral services for Elaine M. Lemon (93). Elaine was an active, life-long member of First English Lutheran, baptized here at FELC as an infant. Her grandparents were among the generation that helped to build our sanctuary. - Mission Conference! We are looking forward to hosting an exciting Mission Conference for our Ohio Mission Region - NALC, here at FELC on Saturday March 21. Our Guest Speaker will be the fun and

dynamic, Pastor Greg Finke, author of *“Joining Jesus On His Mission!”* The weekend is guaranteed to significantly advance the mission-conversation in every participating congregation and among our leadership. Every congregation is being strongly encouraged to bring a large group from their church for the maximum impact on our mission outreach! Jan Fisher will be coordinating the catered box lunches, “Break Time” refreshments, and volunteers. Because FELC is the host congregation, Pastor Finke has offered to meet with all of our Leadership (Council & TAG Visioning Task Force) on Friday evening for a time of fellowship and light refreshments and an important opportunity to get to know Pastor Finke and learn all about what strong support his discipleship organization (***DWELLING 1:14***) can provide to congregations. This may be an option the congregation would want to explore to help us move our Vision Statement (“Pointing People to Jesus through Intentional Relationships”) into the everyday lives of our folks in the pews. This is the key goal of our ***Culture of Engagement***. In addition, because we are the host congregation, Pastor Finke will be providing a special Adult Forum for us on Sunday morning March 22 at 9:00 am in the sanctuary. He will also be our guest preacher at our Sunday 10:00 am worship service. – On February 12th I traveled to Orlando, FL to participate in the Gathering of the Ministerium of our NALC. This is that important annual meeting of all of the clergy of our NALC with our bishop, as he lays out his vision for our church in the coming year. This year was especially historic, as we met not only with all of the Assistants to the Bishop, but with our newly called bishop, Bishop Dan Selbo. Bishop Selbo laid out ***The NALC 2020 Vision: A 10-Point Plan***. I have attached a copy for your information. This year’s gathering was also historic and significant in another major aspect. It was followed immediately by a joint gathering of the pastors and leadership of both The NALC and The Anglican Church in North America. The theme of the conference was: ***“Disciple-Life 2020.”*** It focused on working together as “Word & Sacrament” churches in North America that are both Biblically orthodox and confessional to develop congregational cultures which intentionally and authentically with accountability will foster and support disciple-making. – ***Lenten Mid-Week Bible Study*** this year’s 2020 Lenten Mid-Week Bible Study Series “Journey To the Cross: The Events of Holy Week!” will begin at 5:00pm (March 4th – April 1st) for food & fellowship followed at 6:00pm for our Bible Study Series, all in the undercroft. Childcare will be provided during the Bible Study. – Greater Mansfield Community ***“MARCH of PRAYER”*** Last year, a March of Prayer involved 47 churches each hosting a 6-8 p.m.

prayer service for the area, for revival, for local officials, for praise of God, for focus on Jesus, for the community to worship with each other in each other's church. It began March 1 and continued until Easter on April 19. This year, we are doing it again. While we will continue the theme "Mansfield is Godsfield", we want to expand it to "Richland is God's Land!" and while the first 42 days are already filled up till Easter, we want to expand it to include all of April, and conclude on the evening before the National Day of Prayer on May 7. **NOTE:** First English Lutheran Church is inviting the community to our Great Easter Vigil on Saturday, April 11th, 2020 at 8:30pm. - **Vacation Plans:** As in the past, I plan to take most of my vacation days this year in the Summer, when my wife is not teaching at the school. Tentatively, we are planning to be gone Monday, June 15th to Friday, July 10th and Monday, July 13th to Wednesday, July 22nd. I am arranging for Pulpit Supply for the Sundays that I will be gone and also for emergency pastoral care for our parishioners if it is needed. - Motion (Pastor/Lowell) that the annual meeting be held on May 24, 2020, at 11:15. **Motion carried.** Annual reports should be turned into Angie Cockrell by April 10.

Personnel: (Todd) The committee met Thursday, Feb. 20, and - reviewed and revised the *FELC Employee Handbook*. - reviewed resumes received for the Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministries and passed those resumes on to the interviewing committee with our recommendations. Also, discussed options other than [Indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com) for posting the position and agreed to move to ministry-specific, Christian job sites. Todd is also in the process of gathering contact information from local colleges and universities to post within their career services offices - Discussed ongoing efforts towards meeting compliance requests from our insurance company. Names of individuals requiring background checks have been collected and Todd is forming a sub-committee to draft a new policy (based on model policies provided by the insurance company). Andy Kershaw is organizing efforts for fingerprinting and background checks.

Finance: Ted summarized the financial reports noting that income is some \$9000 above budget, expenses are some \$2000 below budget. Member giving is up over the same period in 2019. - The money for the bus is just over \$19,000. Motion (Ted/Tom) that up to \$13,000 be taken from the ELC endowment fund to aid in the timely purchasing of the bus and that a congregational meeting be held on April 5, 2020, to approve that expenditure. **Motion carried.** - The committee authorized Nicole to set up a play ground fund. - Pastor drew council's attention to account # 3.011.100 (Prayer seminar fund) and explained that these funds came, over the years,

as grants from other Lutheran organizations to support some of our major events. It is time to close that fund out. In the spirit in which the funds were received, Finance committee recommended that \$2000 be given to the NALC North Central Ohio Mission District and \$2000 to the NALC Ohio Mission Region from that fund and that the balance (\$8,189.08) be moved to Account # 3.028.100 (Enrichment Fund (formerly Anderson Lecture Fund)). **Recommendation approved.** Finance committee further recommended that funds from the Enrichment Fund be used to cover the registration fee for all the volunteers who will be working at the upcoming Greg Finke event. **Recommendation approved.**

Property: (Mike) 1. The fire alarm inspection and training has been completed and approved by the city fire department and codes and permits. – Koorsen has agreed to add to the present system 2 pull stations on the second floor of Luther Hall, a heat detector in the elevator and two multifunction detector devices in the penthouse. Koorsen will bear the costs of these items and the new permit. - 2. Schmidt Security has provided a quote to replace our current two system alarm panels with a state of the art panel . The cost of this proposed panel would be \$4919.00. The new panel would eliminate the need for a dedicated phone line, thus saving \$49.99/ month. The Schmidt Security monthly monitoring fee would be \$79.95 as compared to Vector Security fee if \$111.00/ month. The Property Committee voted on and approved this expenditure and is asking council to vote on this and explore ways to fund this expenditure. - 3. Andy Kershaw received a quote from J&B Accoustical for a lock on the lower door of the undercroft off of the main entrance of \$950.00. There would also be a \$950.00 charge for a lock on the upper door to the balcony, as requested by the security team . Property Committee voted on and passed this expenditure and recommends that council approve it with funds to come out of the memorial fund. **Recommendation approved.**

ELC : (Tom) Personnel on staff at the time of this report totals 3 Admins (mostly still sane), 13 Teachers, and countless volunteers. Enrollment currently stands at 61 ankle biters with an additional 20 school agers. - Angie is diligently working toward the completion of a purposed playground design, including getting quotes on two styles of fencing for the playground. I currently have drawings for two different equipment layouts to share with council on the 10th. - Summer camp enrollment forms have been sent to over 50 children. We are already beginning to receive some back. - Dates of note over the next few months:

April ~ visit from Easter Bunny - date tba

May 4th 7am-10am ~ Muffins with Mom in Emmaus Room

May 27th 4pm-5pm ~ Pre-K Graduation

May ~ End of Year Party - date tba

June 2nd ~ 1st day of camp

June 15th 7am-10am ~ Donuts with Dad in Emmaus Room

- Congratulations go out to all of the ELC staff for the hard work and diligence shown working toward our Star 5 rating. Angie and company pulled the trigger and sent in the paperwork to apply for the rating late last week. - The ELC kids had a great time at the Valentine's dance! Several parents stayed for the event; thank you to Mary Shaffer, Sandie Volz, Pat Smith and Mary Schwartz for volunteering. Many thanks to the church members that donated cookies and to the women's ministry that stuffed goodie bags. - Newhope friends joined our ELC preschool classes for a morning of music in the Emmaus Room. The engagement between everyone involved was awesome. This will occur on the third Thursday of each month. - Thank you to Kathy and Chris Hoecker for teaching the ELC kids about Abraham Lincoln and George Washington! It was a HIT!

(Although a little strange to see Chris with all that hair 😊). - Many ELC families AND teachers stayed for Fastnacht and enjoyed a meal together! Several preschool children and ALL of the ELC school-age participated in the variety show. The talent was enough that it lasted over an hour. Singing, skits, recorders and group songs....- Thank you to Mitch Pittman and Egypt Murphy for acting out a silly Dr. Seuss skit about "faithfulness" (our theme for the month of March) while Chris C. narrated! Thing 1 and Dr. Seuss learned to be faithful with what they do and say - to try and be like Jesus each day. - Stories with Shirley (Lane) begin on Wednesday, March 5th at 11:00 in the Emmaus room. She will read a book about Jesus and a book that goes along with the theme of that particular week. - All ELC families have received invitations to Fastnacht, the Ash Wednesday service, and the 2nd Sunday of each month when there is Children's Church offered during our 10:00 service. They will also be receiving weekly Wednesday night Soup Supper/Bible Study invitations. Becky P. will be setting up and supervising a movie in the Emmaus room for any kids that may attend. - Many awesome things going on here at The Early Learning Center! On a personal note, I would like to formally thank Becky P. for all of the effort she has put into The Early Learning Center since expanding her hours with FELC. Not only are her efforts bearing fruit in the day school, but the youth program and our congregation as a whole

are beginning to run just a little more smoothly thanks to her penchant for bringing out the best we have to offer each other. Well done Becky! - If you find yourself with a free afternoon, go visit the children and staff. I stand by my claim that nothing warms the soul like a little play time.

Youth: (Ted) 20+ youth attended Quake titled "MORE+ our GOD is more than enough" and Ephesians 3:20-21. There were powerful speakers and plenty of time for fun and team building time. As usual the FELC youth and chaperones were complimented on the cohesiveness our group has and the respect they have for each other. - Most of our youth also attended Winter Jam. They spent the evening enjoying pizza, loud music and group time. – There will be a lock-in this weekend. - The youth want to thank all that support their activities along with the brave chaperones who attend these events with them

Congo Life: (Lana) There are 4 soup Suppers and bible studies left in the Lenten season. I would like to thank all of the council members who contributed food for the council soup supper on March 4. Also thanks so much for all who helped to make it happen. – As authorized by council last month, the nominating committee will not be seeking a candidate for this council position. Myra Cordrey has taken responsibility for some of the duties of that committee. She will submit a quarterly report to council, submit an annual budget, prepare an annual report to the congregation, and recruit leaders to take responsibility for special events and dinners.

Evangelism: (Jan) Reminding people to check out the new mobile friendly website. Becky, Michelle Couch, and I are learning how to manage changes to the site. Eventually we want to teach Angie Cockrell and/or Nicole Goddard how to also be able to navigate the site.

Worship: (Cindy) The Holy Week services were reviewed to determine if any changes were warranted regarding format and length. Some minor changes were made but the committee was careful to make sure the "feel" and meaning of those services would not change. - FELC has been approached by Rachel Justice to do a live painting during a worship service. There is no cost involved. All she is asking is that it be video taped and that she can use the video on her website. Rachel will be doing her live painting on Sunday, May 31st which is Pentecost Sunday.

Christian Ed: (Kathy) The Sunday school committee, plus Pastor and Lowell , met Sunday March 1st. It was a productive meeting! Chris Kaschube is putting together material to teach a class on Lutheran Liturgy-4-6 weeks in length. This will begin May 1st. - Also, Elizabeth (Volz) and Stewart (Brenkus) are interested in starting a young adult class and are kick starting it with a reunion group on March 22! We will see where this goes!

Global Missions: (Chris C) Ken Ekegren just returned from Malawi. The project is down to 2 feeding days. Welcome all to read his lengthy report.

Social Ministry: (Gary) Cindy Russell continues to do a great job with Wednesday noon lunch. – Jan is making good use of Thrivent cards to purchase detergent, blankets, pillows, sheets, and such to benefit the Harmony House.

WFELC: We did recently provide a funeral meal for the family and friends of Elaine Lemon. Many of our faithful women are also on the support staff for ELC. Women's Bible Study continues to enjoy studying the Gospel of Luke via a video series.

New Business: Tom brought up the topic and after discussion it was the consensus of council that we should create a transition task force to determine the congregation's needs regarding the interim pastor whose role will begin January 1, 2021. Each Council member is asked to come to the April council meeting with a short list of persons who might serve on that task force. After discussion and prayer it is anticipated that we will have the task force members appointed in May.

Announcements: April coffee fellowship/council devotions – Personnel committee

Next meeting April 14, 2020 at 7 p.m.

Addendum: On March 15, 2020, The following action was taken by Council via e-vote: Motion (Alicia/Jan) that FELC, with regrets and due only to Covid-19 health concerns, rescinds the offer to host the Greg Finke event on March 21, 2020, but would be pleased to host the event in the future at some mutually agreeable and available date. **Motion carried.**

Second Addendum: On March 17, 2020, The following action was taken by Council via e-vote: Motion (Pastor Larson/Jan) that, effective immediately, FELC suspends all Sunday worship services, Sunday school classes, confirmation classes, Wednesday noon chapel services, Wednesday evening Lenten Soup Suppers & Bible Studies, and all non-essential meetings of committees and small groups. This suspension will last through and including Tuesday, March 31, 2020. **Motion carried.**

Third Addendum: On March 27, 2020, the following action was taken by Council via e-vote: Motion (Lowell/Ted) that for the sake of the health and safety of our people that we cancel all worship services and non-essential meetings through and including Easter Sunday, April 12th. This motion includes the cancellation of our special congregational meeting scheduled for April 5th. **Motion carried.**

Fourth Addendum: As of April 10, 2020, the following actions were taken by Council via e-vote: Motion (Pastor Larson/Lowell) that FELC suspend all worship services and non-essential public meetings through April 30, 2020. **Motion carried.** Recommendation from Property Committee that, as we grade the Flippin property, we will remove the excess top soil from the property and move the dirt to the lower parking lot alongside of the existing retaining wall. **Recommendation approved.**

Respectfully submitted by
Alicia Schulz, Council Secretary

This from our Congregation Council President.....

April 23, 2020

Hello FELC Family! Happy Easter to all!

(As the season of Easter continues until Pentecost.)

This past Sunday I was worshiping with Scott, Becky, and Pastor Paul on Facebook and I noticed that I was wearing my pajamas and toasting bagels with cream cheese! Has cabin fever taken over? Am I going to seed? Do I need to enact a personal dress code to worship on Facebook? We will watch this trend closely and see. We as a congregation are doing what we can to keep in touch with our church family during this "stay-at-home" order. Hopefully, you have been able to participate in our worship services that are available on Facebook "Live" Sunday @ 10:00 am. If not, you can view our past worship services via our website (www.felc-mansfield.org). On the home page you will find a button that will take you to our "You Tube" site where you can view them. Don't forget to hit the subscribe button!

We also have members who are calling other members just to check in. As time goes on, it gets tougher and tougher to stay in touch with our church family. Fortunately these days we have multiple ways to contact each other. You can call, text, face time or check in on Facebook or Instagram if you are missing someone. It is good for you and good for them.

And thanks are due to you who are sending your pledges to the church office while we are not able to gather physically for worship. It is an important "act of worship." And special mention of thanks to those of you who have chosen to give sacrificially in this time of need.

Gratefully,

Lowell

EARLY LEARNING CENTER

At the time of this writing, ELC is not open.

EARLY LEARNING CENTER ACTIVITY

Although we have been closed to the public, there is always work to be done on the second and third floors. Angie Murphy is humble about the extra work that she puts in for the great success of the Early Learning Center!

If you could go in right now and take a tour, you would find out that the floors have been stripped and waxed, carpet and carpet squares have been removed and/or replaced, the infant room has had a beauty treatment, and the ELC storage room (which used to be the Youth Sunday School area) has been cleaned up, cleaned out, sorted and reorganized! Thank goodness for dumpsters to take away old out-of-date goods. Angie has been the muscles and grit behind all of this! Thank you so much, Angie. Because of social distancing, you have had minimal help on this huge project. However, Allison Goddard, Nicole Goddard's oldest daughter, selflessly helped Angie with a big sorting and clean up project in ELC resource storage area. And of course, Egypt Murphy was also in there helping her Mom! And don't forget that awesome James Murphy, doing whatever is asked of him!

We all will be very happy when restrictions are lifted and our ELC staff can return to their home away from home: FELC church building.

Submitted by the editor.....

WITHIN THE FOLD



Wednesday Noon Lunch

Our most recent time to serve WNL was mid-March when we handed out brown bag lunches to anyone who came up to our outdoor location.

Love in action!

The family of Elaine Lemon would like to thank all those who came to the calling hours and funeral. Pastor Paul did a wonderful job, as well as Pastor Mike Hughes and Scott Berry. Many thanks for the delicious lunch served following the funeral by our women of the church.

Everyone really enjoyed it. All of the nice cards we received were very much appreciated as well as the kind words and hugs. Thanks also for the communion prepares and servers for the funeral on such short notice. Our mom always enjoyed the church service at the nursing home and we are grateful for the faithful group and pastor that came out each month. Thank you for all your prayers and concern. We're so lucky to be part of such a caring church family. God bless you all. **Love, the family of Elaine Lemon**



Gardening

Over the past couple of weeks, several women from our congregation have done the spring clean-up of the landscaping.

Lots of hours (about 24 man hours) went into:

- Removing old leaves and trash from all landscaped areas
- Trimming the hydrangeas along the East Parking Lot
- Trimming all bushes in the front landscaping
- Cleaning old leaves and debris from parking lot
- Weeding all the landscaped areas
- Fertilizing

YET TO DO: Spread mulch across front of church landscaping

In late May/early June there will more to do:

- Plant geraniums from Pentecost worship
- Plant other annuals, including large planter pots
- Pulling weeds, continuing all summer

After the annuals are all planted, dead-heading and watering will be required. As you probably recall, FELC was recognized by the City of Mansfield and the Mens' Garden Club for all the beautiful planters and other plantings.

There is a need for people to help with the maintenance all summer.

If you would be interested in helping with this outdoor work, please call or text Jan Fisher (419-589-2820) or Lu Blankenship (419-564-1469).

calendar here

calendar here

STAYING IN TOUCH



No one is likely to challenge that our days have been separated and sequestered and sometimes lonely since mid-March! But we are such a loving bunch of congregants that we can always find a way to do outreach or “inreach”, and that is exactly what has happened. The very fortunate thing is that in the year 2020 there is much technology available to help us with interaction. (Think how confining it must have been back in 1918 at the time of that influenza pandemic!) At least now we have FaceTime, Facebook, E-mail connections, texting, Zoom meetings, Instagram, etc.!

We have been blessed to worship online, as long as we have the proper technology available to each home. But for some, that just is not a reality, so about fifteen of us have graciously and lovingly been making phone calls to those of us who might otherwise be very lonely and out of touch. We have a rotating list that we use, thus we make calls weekly to different members of our congregation. I think that there is no recipient who has not appreciated getting a greeting from a fellow member. It’s all about engagement and looking after one another. To that I say

“this is what Jesus calls us to do and the Holy Spirit has stirred us up!” And Praise to God the Almighty, we are being INTENTIONAL!

If you find a little spare time now and then, please take a moment to check on a fellow member or send a quick note. The goal is to stay as connected as possible during our time away from church.

We recently heard that one of our families surprised an older member by dropping off a lovely potted tulip plant to her front door. What a lovely surprise! I’m sure it lifted the recipient’s day!

I know that there has also been some yummy meal sharing — all following Jesus’ call to love our neighbors.

Our church office support staff has been working remotely from home. When needed, our gals Nicole and Angie do make a trip into the office, but it’s rare. This is simply to keep them as safe as possible, and also to keep their families safe. Becky, too, is working in and working out depending on what she needs to accomplish. Andy and Dave have been in the building taking care of some deep cleaning property issues. And the Early Learning Center is getting a makeover, too! Please read the article on their page for the work being done there.

It’s rare that a meeting is held, so be patient with all of us as we determine what to do and when to do it. These uncertain times do not make it easy to plan very far in advance

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

CALENDAR



GROUP	Date	Time	Place	Hostess
Prayer Shawl Ministry	Nothing scheduled due to COVID 19	7:00 PM	TBA	Bring your latest knitting and crocheting of shawls. Everyone invited!
Sarah	Nothing scheduled due to COVID 19	1:00 PM	Emmaus Room	Marianne Sweat and Kay Jewett leading
Women's Bible Study (formerly Lydia Circle)	Nothing scheduled due to COVID 19	1:00 PM	Emmaus Room	Video study of Luke, Pat Heichel will be hostess. All women are invited to join us!
Women's Ministry Team Meeting	TBA as needed			Officers and Circle Leaders attend. All women are welcome to join us.
Workday Ladies	Nothing scheduled due to COVID 19	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 MAY Squad C: Jackie Moxley, Kathy Hoecker, Sandie Volz
Women's Bible Study is temporarily suspended. We have hopes of scheduling an interactive meeting later in May if gathering is allowed.

“Love Notes from Shirley”

written by Shirley Lane.....



Different times, such as we are observing presently, call for a different design on the Notes column. Instead of writing about one of our dear church members, I will share with you the words of Hulk Hogan that really spoke to me.

Hulk Hogan is a retired wrestler and actor. He was the most recognized star and popular wrestler in the 80's. The following is from his writing and indeed something to wrestle with.

“In three short months, just like He did with the plagues of Egypt, God has taken away everything we worship. God said, “You want to worship athletes, I will shut down the stadiums. You want to worship musicians, I will shut down Civic Centers. You want to worship actors I will shut down theaters. You want to worship money, I will shut down the economy and collapse the stock market. You don’t want to go to church and worship Me, I will make it where you can’t go to church. “ Hogan’s statement goes on to say he is using the time of isolation to discover what is important to him and concentrate on worshipping Jesus.

NOTE: TO THIS I ADD “THANK YOU” AND AMEN!

Global Missions

I was part of a ZOOM meeting of the Go Missions International board last Sunday. Talked for almost 3 hours! The Krafts now have 12 people living with them. One is a young nurse who planned to help out in Bolivia, but cannot leave Peru at this time because of the coronavirus. Another is a CORE worker who was to go back to the states in January, but her flight was cancelled. Peru is now on day 32 of the quarantine. Nick asked for prayers for protection from thieves and unity as he and his neighbors get together to build roadblocks to discourage the thievery. Some specific needs for GMI in Bolivia include the need for money for transportation, materials, and snacks as teams go to schools, camps and pueblos and more education for the missionaries on how to speak about physical and verbal abuse.

Chris Cichanowicz

Global Mission Chairperson

Becky's Views.....

An update from FELC's Coordinator of Music and the Arts:

Information Regarding our Online Worship: (THIS TAKES THE PLACE OF NEWS FROM THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE)



Our first Facebook Live worship was on Sunday, March 22nd. Here is an update on what has been done thus far and what goals we have established for the next month ahead:

Jan Fisher graciously volunteered to record our Facebook Live services with her tripod and phone. Things we (as a team) have learned to double check before the service begins: Are we logged in as First English? Is the camera set on horizontal and not vertical? Which Wifi system are we using? Do a brief "trial run" before the service starts. We're beginners.

Jan also comes in during the week to beautify our space. (Palms and banners for Palm Sunday; flowers for Easter, etc)

Tom Sarbach is recording the worship with his own personal GoPro. He has also created a First English YouTube page for our church. He is editing the video each week on his own time because the length of our service has to be divided into two parts. YouTube places time-limit restrictions on new accounts. We encourage everyone to subscribe to our page so we increase our number of viewers and the allowed record time.

Tom installed a new router in our sanctuary. This will boost the Wifi signal we are currently using. Andy Kershaw is calling our provider to upgrade our Wifi system. This will help reduce the buffering or "freezing" you may experience while watching at home or the WiFi "crash" we experienced on Easter morning. He also purchased a video capture card to input the GoPro to a laptop, an SD card for the video capture card, a GoPro mic adapter and case to house the GoPro/mic adapter/mount/ etc. All of these purchases will enable us to begin live-streaming from our own sound board instead of through a phone. The audio will improve greatly.

Scott Berry did research for us regarding our licensing and copyright issues. He upgraded our licenses so we are legally producing music via Facebook and

YouTube. We were restricted to only "Public Domain" song selections the first week because we did not have these updates yet.

Scott and Becky continue to work together to provide a blended worship despite having only the organ and rhythm guitar at this time. Contemporary songs are chosen specifically with these two instruments in mind.

We began emailing the worship order and music selections on Palm Sunday to our current church list so the congregation can be more engaged during the service. It includes all of the responsive liturgy and text for the songs. Plus we will now also be including the full Weekly Sunday Prayer List.

Pastor Paul became an administrator on our church Facebook page in order to lead the Lenten Bible Study sessions. He also has familiarized himself with Zoom and FaceTime and is utilizing these tools to continue holding meetings from home with various church committees and to do pre-marital counseling.

We have made many updates to our new church website in the last few weeks. Facebook and YouTube Links are now available directly from our site. A "Letter from the Pastor" link has been created and additional "live" buttons have been added to keep our congregation informed during this time. The new "live" buttons will make it easier for individuals to navigate through our Website. The bulletin board at the bottom of our homepage is updated regularly.

Goals that we are working on:

- Upgrade our Wifi system at church.
- We plan to meet with Sound Fall Media to have a free consultation on what our next steps would be to continue improving our live-streaming directly from our soundboard AFTER we meet as a worship committee. What are our long term goals regarding recording our service? How does it fit into our vision? Is it worth further costs?
- We are pursuing software that will enable us to add the liturgy and song lyrics directly to your screen at home.

BELOW IS UPDATE #2 WHICH GIVES MORE INFORMATION THAT YOU ALL MIGHT ENJOY KNOWING!

Hello, Worship Committee! Here is your worship update #2:

We are continuing to make changes and improvements to our worship approach as we move forward into May! We are excited to begin pre-recording the service and then publishing it at 10:00 on Sunday mornings to our congregation, online visitors and "scrollers" starting on Sunday, May 3rd. It will be published on our YouTube church page and Facebook. What does this mean to you watching at home? It will eliminate much of the "freezing" and buffering issues. You will now be able to see all of the hymn/song texts and liturgy rolling at the bottom of your screen. Picture quality will improve because we will be recording with a GoPro ahead of time instead of going live with a Smartphone.

A BIG THANK YOU to JAN FISHER for IMMEDIATELY stepping up to get us out there "live" on March 22nd. First English did not have to cancel one single worship because of her willingness to serve. We are grateful! She has agreed to continue beautifying our space as needed in the weeks ahead.

A BIG THANK YOU to TODD HEICHEL who is now on board with doing all of the editing required when working with a pre-recorded worship! He is very familiar and experienced with the process and is happy to help us reach this next level. He will be able to take over where the rest of us were stuck!

THANK YOU TO TOM SARBACH who will continue to do the recordings and ED FARNER who continues to make his home in our soundboard.

After preparing and presenting worship over the last month, we have decided as a group that an adapted Lutheran service will be most effective to those worshipping at home. Pastor Paul, Becky and Scott will still be leading the worship together, but we will be trying to reduce the length by reducing music to 4 selections a week and keeping an eye on the length of the sermon. There no longer will be a Children's Sermon, but activity sheets will continue to be a part of our mass email. (Yes, we will continue the email so folks have a choice between printed sheets or their screen. This may help those with vision problems)

Big breath! Praise God! He is good all the time! Thank you for your patience with us, as we aren't good all the time. Hahaha! 😊

Please thank him for the individuals listed above - particularly our amazing volunteers - and give Him thanks and praise for technology!

In Christ's love,
Pastor Paul, Becky, Scott, Ed, Tom, Jan and now Todd
BE INTENTIONAL! BE LIKE JESUS!



Memorial Donations none received

With Sincerest Sympathy

Pastoral Acts

None to report

Donna Yarman April 9, 2020
(friend of Zac and Becky Pittman & cousin of Jeanne Hillman)

Shane Conry March 30, 2020

Pastor Cloyd Kress March 30, 2020

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.



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

May 19, 2020	Tues. 2:00 PM	Mifflin Care
May 20, 2020	Wed. 2:30 PM	Primrose
May 20, 2020	Wed. 3:30 PM	Msfd. Place

OF COURSE THIS IS ALL SUBJECT CHANGE OR CANCELLATION

Volunteer Scheduling Contacts	The monthly volunteers are published in Visitor and posted on bulletin boards.
Worship Committee Heather McFadden 419.295.6467 Acolytes <hr/> Cindy Russell 419.544.0878 Assisting Ministers and Lay Readers	Pew Pad Gleaners Jane Sprang 419.610.9776 <hr/> Ushers Charles and Myra Cordrey 419.632.4121
Evangelism Committee Jan Fisher 419.589.2820 Greeters	Becky Pittman 419.989.8585 Power Point, Nave
Property Committee Mike Anderson 419.295.4598 Property Chairman	Finance Committee TBA
Becky Pittman 419.989.8585 Sound Board/Audio	Amy Skropits 419.747.3076 Sunday School Superintendent



Safety/Security Committee Update

Our next meeting and training will be announced when “stay-at-home” is lifted.

Congo Life

The life of our congregation will bloom again, once we can openly gather! I’m ready for some hugs!

Lana Conry, Congo Life

Stewardship Message

Please see Lowell’s letter posted earlier in this Visitor edition.

Evangelism for Today’s World

It is hopeful that we will be able to offer Produce Distribution in May. Stay tuned for update!

Find us on Facebook: **First English Lutheran Church**

Podcasts of weekly sermons are on the website: felc-mansfield.org



And please check out our new FELC mobile friendly website!

felc-mansfield.org where you can be directed to online worship via Facebook and YouTube.



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. We have no altar flowers during Lent.

May 24, 2020

May 31, 2020

June 07, 2020

June 14, 2020

June 21, 2020

June 28, 2020

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

YOUTH NEWS!

Jr. High and Sr. High Youth News



Thanks to Elizabeth Volz for setting up Zoom meetings! Our Youth have been staying connected via Zoom for both Sunday School and for virtual Youth Group meetings. Every Sunday and Wednesday evening at 7:00 PM they all connect electronically. Sometimes their siblings even join in! They have done such things as an Easter Scavenger Hunt connected to a Bible Study, they've had a challenge where the boys competed to put their hair up into pony tails (due to no recent hair cuts), they spend time sharing what their days have been like, and they generally just enjoy their time together in fellowship! The Youth Group has an Instagram page where Stu Brenkus recently planted some "seeds" to watch their faith grow. They all enjoyed that lesson. It is just awesome to hear that they have been so innovative! However, it is NOT a surprise. Go Youth, Go God!

DAILY DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS

Devotional booklets for MAY and JUNE 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!

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.

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 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

JUNE Visitor Newsletter Deadline: TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2020.

Assembled and mailed: THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2020.

PLEASE EMAIL ALL ARTICLES TO: newsletereditor53@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	<u>plarson@felc-mansfield.org</u>
Scott Berry	<u>saberry31@yahoo.com</u>
Becky Pittman	<u>beckypittman@yahoo.com</u>
Angela Murphy	<u>cds@felc-mansfield.org</u>
Nicole Goddard	<u>ngoddard@felc-mansfield.org</u>
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Jan Fisher, Editor	<u>newsletereditor53@yahoo.com</u>
Andy Kershaw	<u>propman@felc-mansfield.org</u>

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



GERANIUMS

The Festival of Pentecost falls on Sunday, May 31, 2020. This festival is the climax of the “Great Fifty Days” of the Easter Season, and we will decorate the chancel with bright red geraniums, symbolic of the fire of the Holy Spirit.

This year we will be offering the 1 gallon pot.
Deadline for ordering is **THURSDAY MAY 21st, 2020.**
(*No orders will be accepted after May 21st because
our order must be submitted to the greenhouse soon after.)

Turn your order and money in **directly to the Church Office** either in person or by mail
or put your order in the offering plate.

Please, **If you put the order in the offering plate, Please put check & order form in a separate envelope marked for flower order.**

This will help prevent names from being inadvertently omitted from the bulletin listing.
The geraniums will decorate the chancel for our Pentecost service on Sunday, May 31, 2020; they may be taken after the service that day or you can donate them for outside decorating of the church. We encourage you to plant them in your garden at home as a continual reminder throughout the summer of the work of the Holy Spirit in your own life.



cut here

2020 Geranium Order:

Number of 1 gallon plants _____ (\$5.00 per plant) = \$ _____

_____ I will take my geranium(s) on Sunday, May 31st

_____ I will pick up my geranium(s) by Wednesday, June 3rd

_____ Please plant my geranium(s) in the church yard.

“In **Memory** of _____”

“ _____ ”

“In **Honor** of _____”

“ _____ ”

“Given by _____”

(Person ordering _____ Envelope # _____)

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

DO NOT DELAY – DATED MATERIAL ENCLOSED

MAY 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