

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING OPENING LITURGY

Recognizing that our faith is a living, busy, active and mighty thing, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with each of you.

And also with you.

Teach us to love you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Descend on our hearts, that we may love others in the ways Jesus loves us.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Empower us to be enthusiastic in pursuing your vision for our congregation.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Move us to engage issues in our community in Christlike ways, and to pursue deep and authentic relationships with those with whom we serve and partner.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Strengthen us to face the barriers we encounter in doing your work, learning to work with others amid disagreement.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Give us the ability to adapt to the cultural, economic and social changes that occur in the neighborhoods we serve.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Guide us to be a healthy congregation that learns from its failures as well as its successes and offers wisdom to others.

Receive our prayer, O God.

As we strive to become the church that we proclaim to be, raise up leaders who focus on the gospel of freedom, forgiveness and reconciliation as given to us through God's indescribable act of love in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Renew us daily in our baptism, that we may discover vitality in our relationships with you, each other and those we serve in the world.

Amen.

Founded on Faith



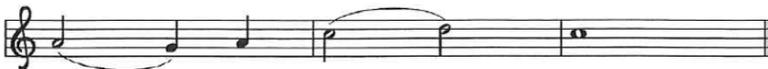
1 Found - ed on faith, the church— a - live by grace—
 2 Your cross, O Christ, re - news our life each day.
 3 E - quipped by prayer, we live the Spir - it's call.
 4 Grow - ing in grace for God's cre - at - ed earth,
 5 Found - ed on faith, called forth, em - pow' red to serve,



pro - claims the gos - pel here and ev - 'ry place.
 Bap - tized in you, we learn and teach and pray.
 Em - pow' red to serve with gifts, both great and small,
 we yearn for jus - tice, peace, and hu - man worth;
 we share God's end - less love with - out re - serve.



The word of God re - sounds through time and space:
 Fed by your love, with thank - ful hearts, we say:
 we bring the liv - ing hope of God to all.
 a world re - stored; a faith - ful, car - ing church.
 Then let us shout a - loud the liv - ing Word!



Al - le - lu - ia!

All Creation Sings, 1048

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**Annual Meeting
of
First English Lutheran Church – Wausau, Wisconsin
Sunday, February 8, 2026 – 10:15 a.m.**

AGENDA

- I. Opening Devotions – p. 1**
- II. Recognitions**
- III. Business Reports**
 - A. Minutes of Feb. 9, 2025 Annual Meeting – pp. 8-10
 - B. Minutes of Feb. 9, 2025 FELC Call Meeting – pp. 11-12
 - C. Financial Reports (including Fair Stand Report) – pp. 28-36
- IV. Other Reports**
 - A. Statistical Report / Parish Records – pp. 4-7
 - B. Pastor’s Report – p. 13
 - C. Minister of Music’s Report – p. 14
 - D. Parish Administrator’s Report – p. 15
 - E. Committee Reports – pp. 16-23
 - F. Fellowship and Service Reports – pp. 24-27
- V. Special Orders**
 - A. Presentation of nominations for Church Council positions:
Officers, Council Members, and Endowment Committee
 - B. Voting
 - C. Presentation/Discussion/Voting of the 2026 Budget – pp. 37-39
- VI. Old Business**
- VII. New Business**
 - A. Elevator Repair Project
 - B. East Central Synod Assembly 2026: June 4 – June 6
Oshkosh Marriot Waterfront Hotel (2 delegates needed)
 - C. Other New Business or comments from the congregation
- VIII. Closing Prayer and Adjournment**

**Annual Report
of
First English Lutheran Church – Wausau, Wisconsin
for Year Ending December 31, 2025**

**Pastor: Rev. Mary E. Zupansic
Supply Pastors: (Jan. - April): Pastor Barry Levine, Pastor Bill Schruba,
Pastor Tryphine Olson Schruba**

STAFF:

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Parish Administrator: | Debra Kluetz |
| Minister of Music: | Daniel Larson (Sunday Organist and Handbell Choir Director) |
| Pianist: | Hal Osborn (Thursday Worship / 2 nd Sunday of the month Pianist) |
| Custodians: | Shawn & Jenny Blaschka |

Sunday School Superintendent: VerJean Detert

Church Council:

| <u>Officers:</u> | Term: |
|--|-------------------|
| President: Cindy Hermel | 2024-25-26 |
| President-Elect: Mike Vaningan | 2025-26-27 |
| Past President: Sherry Larson | 2023-24-25 |
| Treasurer: Marla Zumann | 2025-2026 |
| Recording Sec. Karen Czechowicz | 2024-25 |

| <u>Council Members:</u> | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Carla Baumgardt | 2023-24-25 |
| Jenny Blaschka | 2024-25-26 |
| Angela Greenfield | 2025-26-27 |
| Neil Juedes | 2025-26-27 |
| Michael Klapperich | 2024-25-26 |
| Russ Michalski | 2023-24-25 |
| Kalynn Pempek | 2024-25-26 |
| Dina Santangelo | 2025-26-27 |
| Nicholas Schumacher | <i>Youth Representative</i> |
| Lois Stasko | 2023-24-25 |

Living Endowment Committee: Elected and Voting Members

| | |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Tryphine Schruba | 2025 |
| Louise Neidert | 2024-25-26 |
| Reese Aarthun | 2025-26-27 (resigned 2025) |

Statistical Report – 2025

Gains

| | <u>Bapt.</u> | <u>Conf.</u> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| By Baptism-Children | 3 | - |
| By Baptism-Adult | - | - |
| By Affirmation | 8 | 5 |
| By Transfer (<i>from ELCA</i>) | 1 | 1 |
| By Transfer (<i>from non-ELCA</i>) | - | - |
| From Non-Lutheran | - | - |
| Baptized Members Confirmed_ | <u>2</u> | <u>2</u> |
| Total Gains | 14 | 8 |

Losses

| | <u>Bapt.</u> | <u>Conf.</u> |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| By Death | 10 | 10 |
| By Transfer (<i>to ELCA</i>) | 4 | 4 |
| By Transfer (<i>to non-ELCA</i>) | - | - |
| To Non-Lutheran | - | - |
| Released (per request) | - | - |
| Placed on Inactive List | | |
| Total Losses | 14 | 14 |

| | <u>Baptized</u> | <u>Confirmed</u> |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Membership as of December 31, 2024 | 771 | 576 |
| Net Loss (2025) | - | - 6 |
| Membership as of December 31, 2025 | 771 | 571 |

Households: 209

Baptisms: 3

Funerals: 10

Weddings: 0

Sunday Services:

52 Sunday Services

Sunday Average Attendance; 92

Thursday Services:

41 Thursday Services

Thursday Average Attendance: 18

Lent/Holy Week:

- Ash Wednesday (cancelled due to bad weather)
- 5 Lenten Services
- Maundy Thursday
- Good Friday (2 services)

Average Attendance during Lent: 37 *(includes Maundy Thursday and Good Friday)*

Special Services:

- Fair Stand Service - 20
- Christmas Eve 4:00 p.m. - 166 7:00 p.m. - 46
- Christmas Day: No Worship

Parish Records -- 2025

Baptisms:

Ace Lavalle Baneck

Born: December 19, 2024
Baptized: March 9, 2025
Parents: Kyle & Jennifer Baneck

Emma Jo Gribowski

Born: November 7, 2024
Baptized: March 16, 2025
Parents: Amber Kramer and Caleb Gribowski

Cameron Anthony Oberbeck

Born: March 7, 2025
Baptized: August 10, 2025
Parents: Brad & Anne Oberbeck

Funerals:

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Birth</u> | <u>Death</u> | <u>Funeral</u> |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Katherine Bittner | 04-08-1950 | 01-30-2025 | 02-14-2025 |
| Natalie Streveler | 04-17-1941 | 05-23-2025 | <i>Celebration of Life</i> |
| Joyce Pagel | 11-03-1934 | 06-11-2025 | 06-17-2025 |
| Carol Henke | 06-20-1929 | 06-16-2025 | 06-23-2025 |
| Beverly Magrecke | 04-10-1943 | 07-15-2025 | <i>Celebration of Life</i> |
| Alan Sexter | 09-24-1964 | 09-13-2025 | 11-18-2025 |
| William Wachholz | 01-15-1940 | 09-19-2025 | 09-24-2025 |
| Arlan Erickson | 11-16-1942 | 09-26-2025 | 10-11-2025 |
| Shirley Erickson | 03-15-1944 | 09-26-2025 | 10-11-2025 |
| Joyce Utecht | 01-19-1935 | 11-29-2025 | 12-06-2025 |

New Members:

Reni Hamilton
Reuben Roehl
Linda Swenson
Debra Woller
Aaron & Melissa Schiefelbein, Kaedyn, Jay and Julia

Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation): June 1, 2025

Mabel May Akey

Date of Baptism: July 24, 2011

Nickolas Vincent Marquard, Jr.

Date of Baptism: November 13, 2011

Receiving their First Communion: November 16, 2025

Kaedyn Hadley
Kaedance Koehler
Henry Lodahl
Anna Marquard
Annabelle Oestreich

Transfers / Releases: 2025

Reese Aarthun

to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Wausau (ELCA)

Sharon Carlsson

to Messiah Lutheran Church, Madison, WI (ELCA)

John & Corky Motl

to Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Sun Prairie, WI (ELCA)

**FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 9, 2025**

The annual meeting was called to order by President Sherry Larson.

Opening Devotions: Pastor Tryphine Olson Schrubba led the opening litany, prayer and hymn.

Recognition: Sherry Larson thanked the many individuals and teams whose efforts helped to support the operation of the church. Council members whose terms are ending were introduced and given an appreciation gift. Departing members are Sharon Hunter, Jennifer Kroening, Sandi Hiller, Scott Mijal, and Deb Thumstedter. She thanked the Nomination Committee of Karen Briggs, Sharon Hunter, Cindy Hermel, Jennifer Kroening and Deb Kufahl for presenting good nominees for Council. She acknowledged the Wage & Policy Committee that brought forth the budget. She also recognized the great work by the Treasurer, Deb Kluetz, and Pastors Tryphine and Bill and praised the congregation that helped meet our financial goals for 2024. In addition, she thanked all the various committees, worship servers and helpers.

Business Reports: A motion was made by Nina Dittmar and seconded by Reese Aarthun to accept the February 11, 2024, Annual Meeting minutes. Motion passes. The Financial Secretary's Report was reviewed and there were no questions. Tom Daley motioned and Lette Becker seconded a motion to accept the Financial Secretary's Report. Motion passed. The Financial Reports were reviewed and there were no other questions. Cindy Hermel motioned and Jim Kraft seconded a motion to accept the Financial Reports. Motion passed.

Other Reports:

Statistical Report / Parish Records

Parish Administrator's Report: Stewardship Committee sent out a letter to members that have been inactive for two years. One list includes those who were removed from membership and another lists those that have been placed on an inactive list but are still considered members. Deb Kluetz was recognized for her hard work as the administrator and for helping keep the congregation functioning at a normal level these past two years.

Minister of Music Report was given orally by Dan Larson. Dan plans music that reflects the message for the day. Alan Sexter has retired as choir director and the congregation expressed appreciation for his service. Dan will try to revamp the choir and plan for the future.

Fair Stand Report / Treasure Sale Report: The fair stand had a very good year considering the weather and decreased crowd size. Scott Kufahl thanked everyone who helped to make these major fund raisers successful.

Confirmation and Sunday School Report: New this year was the addition of a two-year-old program, which is very successful. This new class was a combination of two- and three-year-olds. Sunday school welcomes both members and non-members.

Committee Reports

Fellowship and Service Reports

Committee reports were summarized in the Annual Report, and no further questions were raised.

Special Orders: The candidates for officers and Council were introduced. Vice President/President-Elect: Mike Vaningan, Treasurer: Marla Zumann, Council Members: Lette Becker, Elizabeth Oestreich, Neil Juedes, Dina Santangelo, and Angela Greenfield, Endowment Committee: Reese Aarthun. There were no other nominations from the floor for Vice President/President elect. Nina Dittmar moved and Reese Aarthun seconded a motion to close nomination for Vice President/President Elect. Motion passed. Mike Vaningan was elected Vice President/President Elect by acclamation. There were no other nominations from the floor for Treasurer. Tom Daley moved and Kathi Zoern seconded a motion to close nominations for Treasurer. Motion passed. Marla Zumann was elected Treasurer by acclamation. Reese Aarthun moved and Kalynn Pempek seconded a motion to close the nominations for Council members. Motion passed and nominations were closed. Voting for new Council members was done by written ballot. Angela Greenfield, Neil Juedes and Dina Santangelo were approved as new Council members. There were no other nominations from the floor for the Endowment Committee. Kalynn Pempek moved and Pam Engelmeier seconded a motion to close nominations for the Endowment Committee. Motion passed and nominations were closed. Reese Aarthun was elected to the Endowment Committee by acclamation.

2025 Budget: The 2025 budget was reviewed. Scott Kufahl highlighted the pastor's salary which was agreed upon in October. No additional changes to the budget were needed. After a review of the 2025 budget, Matt Heyne moved and Neil Juedes seconded a motion to accept the 2025 budget. Motion passed. A supplemental handout for FELC Total Benevolence (Outreach) for 2024 was handed out and reviewed.

Reese Aarthun suggested we add a youth position as a member of the council.

Cindy Hermel thanked Sherry Larson for her past service as Council President.

Mike Vaningan has vacated the Endowment Committee to accept the Council position of Vice President/President Elect. Nominations for his replacement on the Endowment committee were opened up from the floor. Karen Briggs nominated Tryphine Schrubka. There were no other nominations from the floor for the Endowment Committee. Tryphine Schrubka was elected to the Endowment Committee through acclamation.

Old Business:

New Business:

Elevator Repair Project: Scott Kufahl reviewed the project. Our elevator is 34 years old. The recommendation is to change the cylinder every 25 years. The quote for replacing the cylinder is \$88,000 with no issues. With issues the price could increase significantly. We are approved for a bank loan of \$175,000 which would cover anything that may go wrong. Once the work begins, the timeline for having the elevator up and running is two to three weeks. We need to have a 50% down payment to begin the work. We have \$30,000 set aside in the budget for the elevator repair. We are only paying interest on the loan once the job is completed. The interest rate on the loan is .0755%, which is good for a commercial loan. Funding has been approved through the bank and by Council. Earl Zabel moved and Mike Vaningan seconded the motion to approve the recommendations on the elevator project and payment. Motion approved.

East Central Synod Assembly is taking place Saturday, June 7, 2025, from 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. at Calvary Lutheran Church in Green Bay, WI and two delegates are needed. Anyone interested in attending this year should contact Deb Kluetz in the office.

Other New Business or comments from congregation:

Reese Aarthun acknowledged art projects that were displayed in church and extra cookies made because of the youth lock-in event. The event was open to younger children and enjoyed by all.

Deb Kluetz gave a personal thanks to Pastors Bill, Tryphine and Barry. They helped keep the congregation running at a normal level.

Closing Prayer

Adjournment: Tom Daley moved Jim Kraft seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Czechowicz, Recording Secretary

**FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL CALL MEETING
FEBRUARY 9, 2025**

The special meeting was called to order by President Cindy Hermel.

The reading of the Call Notice of the meeting: A special meeting of the congregation has been duly called by the Church Council and Call Committee to be held on Sunday, February 9, for the purpose to call a Pastor to First English Lutheran Church. No other business will be transacted. The meeting will follow the annual meeting.

Synod Representatives John Murphy and Kira James were introduced. John Murphy led in the opening prayer. Kira introduced herself and explained her role and the purpose of the Synod, which is to support congregations and leaders.

Introduced Secretary – Karen Czechowicz

Introduced Counters - Ushers

Presentation of the Call Committee:

Call Committee: Sharon Hunter (chairman), Karen Briggs, Scott Kufahl, Lynn Santangelo, Cindy Petzke, Matt Heyle, Nina Dittmar, Amy Abbots, and Dan Larson.

Ministry Site Profile Committee: John Motl, Russ Michalski, Amy Abitz, Karen Briggs, Karen Briggs, Cindy Hermel, Ben Lodahl, Lynne Santangelo, Sharon Hunter, and Scott Kufahl

Nina Dittmar explained the process of the call. She thanked Sharon Hunter as the chairman of the committee. The Call Committee interviewed three pastors. The pastor we are proposing is in alignment with First English Lutheran Church's culture and mission. It was a unanimous decision by the Call Committee to move forward with this pastoral candidate.

Dan Larson read the informational letter about the candidate.

Scott Kufahl discussed the Pastor's benefit package. Benefits are in conjunction with the Synod bylaws. We will also be helping out with housing. The candidate is ready for the call. Members from the Call Committee gave personal opinions about the candidate.

- "She meets our needs and culture."
- "Interested in shut-ins and youth."
- "Interested in outreach."
- "She questioned our outreach and was excited by the support of our congregation."
- "Encourages youth to be involved in the services throughout the year."
- "High energy and very eager to get started at First English."

The Call Committee's top three priorities were emphasis on preaching, visitation and youth. The candidate is looking at a long-term commitment. There was no opposition to having a weekday service. Reese Aarthun moved and Sherry Larson seconded a motion to accept the recommendation of the Call Committee to call the pastoral candidate. Paper ballots were handed out and tabulated. Call was approved. Pastor Mary Zupansic was announced.

A Mutual Ministry Agreement for Congregations and Ministers of Word and Sacrament under Call was signed by the congregational president and council secretary certifying the necessary approvals of the congregation and congregational council to accept provisions of the call. The executed agreement will be sent to Pastor Mary Zupansic for signature and acceptance of the call.

Ongoing acclamation to our congregation will include socializing before and after church services, introductions and becoming familiar with programming for youth, shut-in visits and learning the roles of committees.

The congregation will encourage and support the pastor's ministry by supporting the Pastor in her professional development, provide onboarding support, assist when needed when visiting shut-ins and having the Worship and Music Committee, members and the Music Director assist the Pastor with worship services.

Closing prayer was by John Murphy.

Adjournment: Lynn Santangelo moved and Dina Santangelo seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Czechowicz, Recording Secretary

Pastor's Report

"I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now." Philippians 1:3-5

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is truly a blessing to be here and to serve in ministry alongside the people of First English Lutheran Church. I would like to share a memorable story from my early days at a former congregation. One morning, while I was out for my usual run, I saw school children walking and biking to school. As one little girl rode past me on her bike, she turned and said, "I know you. You're the church," before riding away. This simple statement has stayed with me over the years. While she clearly recognized me as a member of the church, her words also speak to a deeper truth: WE ARE CHURCH. Church is not merely a place we go, nor is it simply an activity reserved for Sunday mornings. CHURCH IS WHO WE ARE. We are the body of Christ. No matter what our profession or circumstance—whether we are students, teachers, mechanics, store owners, retired, or unemployed—we are the church!

Reflecting on the past ten months since I was called to First English, I see that we excel at 'being church.' I have witnessed the countless hours dedicated to preparing for the annual Treasure Sale, with many hands sorting and pricing items, culminating in a remarkable sale that benefits our church, our local community, and beyond. Similarly, I have seen the hard work invested by FE members in setting up and running the food stand at the Marathon County Fair. After working a couple of days bussing tables, I can attest to how demanding the task truly is! The proceeds from the food stand also support various organizations within our community.

We are church when we worship together and when we gather each week to sew quilts, not only for Lutheran World Relief (LWR) but also for local organizations like the Bridge Street Mission and the Salvation Army. Our children learn to 'be church' through weekly Sunday School and their participation in collecting items for monthly missions. FE members serve as the church when we provide community meals throughout the year. In so many daily ways, we embody what it means to be church: from those who tend to fix-it tasks and building maintenance, to those who clear snow from our sidewalks, set up and clean up for communion, serve as Sacramental Visitors, and count the weekly offering.

I am excited for the coming year and eager to see how we will continue being church together. As you review the annual report, you will find many more examples that affirm this truth: WE ARE CHURCH.

As we journey into a new year, we do so with confidence, remembering the words of St. Paul: "I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1:6

Blessings,
Pastor Mary

Annual Report FELC, 2026
From the Organist's Bench:

Happy new year! I want to express appreciation and thanks for the continued efforts to maintain our instruments, the organ and the piano. Regular maintenance and tunings help to keep these fine instruments in working order.

Thanks and appreciation go to my partner, Hal Osborn, for providing accompaniment for our Thursday night services and various Sundays throughout the year.

Since Chris Berenz's retirement, I have continued working as the bell choir director for FELC. We rehearse on Tuesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. We have a wonderful group of people who participate in the bell choir. If you are interested in learning more about bell choir playing techniques, please stop in and join a rehearsal in the sanctuary on a Tuesday night. We do have needs for a substitute player once in a while for services.

We remember the passing of our choir director, Alan Sexter. At this point, there is no regularly scheduled choir rehearsal during the week. Since January 2025, I have attempted to run some periodic rehearsals to prepare an anthem for Christmas and Easter. We also prepared a special anthem for Pastor Mary's Installation last July. Watch for announcements in the Lantern and the bulletin for future rehearsals for this spring's Easter anthem. I will work with the worship and music committee and the church council to try to explore more concrete options for continuing our choir here at FELC.

I enjoy my job at FELC very much – it is a pleasure to prepare and provide inspirational music for our services each week. God's blessings to you all!

Respectfully submitted,
Daniel Larson – Organist / Minister of Music

Parish Administrator's Report

Greetings, my church family!

Another year has passed and a new one beginning.

First of all, I want to thank...

- Pastor Mary. Having a new office partner I have learn new ways of doing things. It has taken some work but they have made my work a bit easier. I am grateful for her patience.
- Volunteers who assist me in more ways than you know. You are valuable to me. I'm grateful for you!
- Our dedicated staff. I am proud to serve with you.
- Our Church Council for your support and leadership.
- All those who do those "behind the scenes" things for me and for First English that most people don't see or are even aware of. I see it just about every day. The 'Men about Church' are a joy to have around. They are so helpful and see that things get done no matter how small. And they always find time for that 10:00 a.m. cup of coffee and conversation!

Many of the tasks here at church are done by volunteers. There are many of you and you are all so much appreciated!

First English is a strong congregation and one we should be proud of.

As we enter this new year, let's continue working together, sharing Christ's light in our congregation, our community, and around the world. May God guide us in the days ahead and keep us strong.

I ask you to continue your prayers for First English and its members. May God's blessings be with us all in this new year! Let's keep the Light of Christ shining!

Sincerely and Respectfully submitted,

Debra Kluetz, Parish Administrator

WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE

For the last couple of years we've had many lay leaders and retired pastors who did their best to support the ministry of First English. For this we are truly grateful. This year we were blessed by a new pastor, Pastor Mary Zupansic, who has implemented some changes into our worship experience.

Pastor Mary preaches from the floor making a closer connection with the congregants. The complete service, liturgy and hymns, now are included in the Sunday bulletin. Communion changes include prefilled wine glasses with Pastor Mary offering the host. Our minister of music, Dan Larson, continues to surprise us with special music and Sunday afternoon concerts for meditation. The Bell choir plays often and a small choral group sings for special occasions. Hal Osborn is our alternate pianist for worship.

Times for worship services have remained the same, Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings. This year again we had a shared Thanksgiving Eve service with Good Shepherd and St. Andrew congregations at St. Andrew's church. Our Christmas Eve services were offered at 4 PM and 7 PM. Due to small attendance at the Christmas day services in the past, we have agreed to cancel that service this year.

We look forward to the new year and supporting our new pastor to build on what we have.

Respectfully submitted,
Lette Becker

Committee Members: Cindy Hermel, Deb Kufahl, Tryphine Schrubba, Dan Larson, Lette Becker

2025 Parish Education

All Sunday School classes are held from 10:15 to 11:15 a.m. following our Sunday church service. This is our 2nd year of offering classes for children that are two years of age as of September 1. The leaders of this group are Mia Lodahl, Mabel Abitz, and Gracin Dittmar. The children are very receptive to this class as most of them participate in 'Children's Time' as part of our weekly church service. The class meets on the third Sunday of each month. The parents have been invited to remain in the classroom if they desire to do so.

In addition to this class, our Sunday School education program is offered to students that are age 3 by September 1, through grade 8. For the younger group, ages 3 through grade 5, we use the "One Room Sunday School curriculum". This presents sections of each lesson that are applicable for the various students' ages. Jenny Blaschka and Dilynn Koehler have been involved with this group. We would like to add some additional volunteer help, so we could arrange for more age-appropriate classes. This would allow our teachers to teach on a rotation schedule.

Our students in the 3rd grade receive a Bible from our church. The Bible is very user friendly. If you are not familiar with it, please contact one of the students or see me to view it.

The curriculum for the 6th, 7th and 8th grades is "Unearthing" by Joc Davis. The 6th, 7th and 8th graders also receive their confirmation instructions, acolyte and communion training during this time frame. Mabel Akey and Nickolas Marquard were confirmed on June 1, 2025.

We are continuing with our 'Mission Sundays'. There are self-care kits, snack kits and school kits. The students gather the needed items and distribute them to homebound members, needy school children, and those in the various care facilities.

The Sunday School children presented a Christmas Program "The Good News" during the December 14th church service. It again focused on using our church puppets. Jenny Blaschka directed the program.

The Parish Education committee meets monthly on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. to discuss the educational needs of our congregation. The members of this committee are Dilynn Koehler, Amy Abitz, Nina Dittmar, VerJean Detert. and Jenny Blaschka. Anyone interested in the Christian education of our young people, please contact one of the committee members.

Respectfully submitted, VerJean Detert

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Stewardship Committee was pleased to have the support of Pastor Mary for this year's stewardship program. The theme was Giving to God our Heart through prayer, worship, gifts & talents, and our financial resources. These four channels of giving our heart to God were each the theme for a given Sunday morning worship service. In week one, we wrote a prayer request and in week two we considered what we love about worship. For the final two weeks we returned our completed Time and Talent Sheet and then our Estimate of Giving Form. The scripture lesson was Matthew 6:21.....Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The committee continues to send thank you notes to congregation members who give of their time and their skills to serve at FELC. The list is long.....bringing coffee hour treats, shoveling snow, mowing lawn, working with youth, delivering flowers to shut ins, working at community suppers, taking Communion to shut ins, quilting, decorating for holidays, cleaning the church, repairing things in the building, providing music, and on and on. All are acts of stewardship.

We continue to reach out to our homebound members and those in care facilities. We send birthday, Easter, and Christmas cards and also coordinate the delivery of spring flowers for Easter and poinsettia plants for Christmas. We are grateful to those who did deliveries this year: Duane and Darlene Chapman, Joan Heahlke, Neil and Sue Juedes, Maralee Moellendorf, Lynne Santangelo, and Mary Olson.

Respectfully submitted,

Stewardship Committee

Carla Baumgardt, Karen Briggs, Susan Oberbeck, Deb Thumstedter, and Connie Vaningan.

First English Lutheran Church – Property Committee – 2025 Annual Report

Members: Scott Kufahl, Mike Vaningan, Earl Zabel, Kalynn Pempek and
Mike Alters (ad hoc)

Following is a summary of accomplishments in 2025. Thank you to everyone who had a hand in taking great care of our beautiful facilities and property:

Elevator

Otis Service and Repair out of Kaukauna, Wisconsin, completed the elevator repair work:

- Removed old cylinder
- Installed new Cylinder head support
- Installed new cylinder with sealed PVC protection
- The cost is estimated was \$88,000, and this price is based on a 50% downpayment of \$44,000.
- The cost could have increased if they had any issues removing the old cylinder or discovered any oil leaks.
- The cylinder removal took about 2 days with no issues or oil leaks.
- The project was completed in less than 2 weeks at the quoted cost of \$88,000.00

Parking Lot signs replaced

- They were damaged and hard to read.

Pastor's office

- Found volunteers to paint the office, changed out the outlets, switches and light.
- New fixtures installed in Pastors office bathroom (A church member donated the labor and fixtures)
- Added new desk top printer for the Pastors office.

Cedar Street Door- Replacement

- New doors and hardware purchased and installed and added a new closure and hardware to the outside door near the Fireside room.
- Replace tiles by the Cedar Street entrance which were removed when the new doors were installed.

Other property repairs/replacements/maintenance

- Hired a contractor to repair / replace 3 outside faucets. We also updated the water line to the outside faucet from the Fellowship Hall restroom. (These updates will make it more convenient for our service contractors in addition easier access for watering the flowers.)
- Researched water leaks in class rooms following heavy rains. Determined part of the problem was rain water flowing over the top of the gutters which would fall directly in the window wells. The window wells cannot handle this amount of water. The current downspouts could not remove the water fast enough from the gutters.

- We decided to add additional downspouts to help empty the gutters before they would overflow. We hired a company to add 5 additional downspouts - 3 on the west side and 2 on the east side.
- After 35 years we replaced the ceiling fans in church. (One was limited to speed control, and I am sure in a matter of time others would have followed.)
- Install new garbage disposal in the church kitchen (Purchased by Comfort Guild).
- Replaced the 17-year-old hot water circulating pump that supplied heat to the new church.
- Purchased TV and installed cables for Wi Fi connection in the Youth room –(used for Confirmation classes).
- Hired the same contractor to snowplow our church parking lot.
- Clean chandelier glass globes and monitor bulb sockets that are moving when replacing bulbs.
- On going replacement of the ballasts in our current fluorescent lights.

Thanks to our volunteers

- For snow shoveling and salting our church sidewalks and entryways
- For weekly mowing and trimming of the church lawn
- For trimming all the shrubs around the church.
- For planting, weeding, and watering flowers.
- Youth and Adults for fall yard clean up (Especially to Gary for providing a lawncare company to pick up the majority of the leaves.)
- To Shawn and Jenny Blashka for their service cleaning our church building.
- The men at church who take care of many of the smaller maintenance issues.
- To Virg for all his hours working to keep our parking lot clear of weeds in the cracks.

Looking ahead

- Researching options to add window well covers to divert rainwater
- Possibly getting quotes to strip and wax the fellowship hall floor

It has been a busy year. Thanks to all our members for helping research/complete all the projects we did this year. Each year has its own demands. We will see what 2026 brings.

We meet monthly on committee night (1st Tuesday evening at 6:30 pm). To discuss the needs of the property. We would be happy to welcome new members anytime.

FELC Technology Team

Members of the Technology Team are Cindy Hermel, Sharon Hunter, Michael Klapperich, Kalynn Pempek, Pastor Mary Zupansic.

In 2023 FELC subscribed to a church organizational tool called REALM. It has been used to manage pledges, online giving, and offering statements since its implementation. In 2023 when the FELC Strategic Plan was developed, one of the long-term goals was **Introduce Realm to the congregation to increase communication.** Sharon Hunter and Cindy Hermel attended a three-day Realm Conference in October to see firsthand the various applications that will be helpful to FELC. We have merged the Technology Team and the Realm Task Force into one group.

The Technology Team has addressed several technology-related issues. Another FELC Strategic Plan goal was to **increase the FELC social media presence to encourage new members to join the church and to communicate with our current members.** Team members have made weekly postings to the FELC Facebook page showcasing many activities, community outreach projects, worship opportunities and children/youth experiences. We also appear on Instagram and maintain an informative and interesting website.

The Technology Team has developed a comprehensive plan to help members create their individual REALM Connect accounts and profiles. This is the first step in being able to participate in Realm and take advantage of the opportunities it offers. The FELC Council was the first group to create their accounts and communicate through Realm. After the February 8, 2026, Annual Meeting FELC members will be able to receive assistance from Technology Task Force members in downloading the Realm Connect App and creating an account. The plan is to implement components of Realm slowly providing help and support as needed.

Technology touches FELC in many ways. The Tech Team has explored the benefits of a colored copy machine, started an inventory of all hardware and software currently in use at First English, discussed the benefits of a tablet to download the bulletin with large print capability, and proposed the installation of a monitor in the narthex for sharing announcements and photos of FELC activities, worship opportunities and fellowship events. The committee welcomes your feedback and suggestions.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Hermel

Church in Society Committee Report

Committee members: Angela Greenfield, Lynne Santangelo, Bill Schrubba, Jim Kraft, Dolores Zwahlen, Kathi Zoern

Committee activities included:

- Joined other ELCA churches in providing a fall picnic for the homeless at the Marty Bus.
- Conducted around a dozen Adult Forums, most of them using Wired Word materials.
- Served meals at the Boys and Girls Club for their annual recognition night.
- Sorted the food that Wausau West had gathered for the Women's Community.
- Staffed the intake one evening for the Good Shephard Shelter.
- Sorted and counted diapers for the Baby's Place diaper drive.
- Served as liaison and coordinator for the five Community Suppers that FELC takes responsibility for.
- Participated in Habitat for Humanity's Rock the Block and Women's Day of Painting.

Submitted by Jim Kraft

Welcome Visitor/Retain Membership Committee

This committee began its work in February of 2025. It was established to address FELC's Strategic Plan goal: To maintain our current membership and welcome new members. The Committee membership included Angela Greenfield, Cindy Hermel, Liz Oestreich, Kalynn Pempeck, and Dina Santangelo. Pastor Mary served as consultant.

The Committee reviewed the 2023 First English SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) summary for context and analysis of possible actions to appeal to current membership as well as support new member potential. Input was also sought from the FELC Council through an interactive brainstorming session regarding suggestions to add to the SWOT information.

An action plan was developed with a focus on making visitors feel welcome and providing information about First English. New brightly colored green Visitor Cards were created and made available in the pews. There was a welcome message in the bulletin and a verbal invitation from Pastor Mary to visitors to fill out the cards and give to an usher or place in the offering plate. Bright green gift bags were filled with a welcome message, a brochure with basic information about First English, the most recent copy of the Lantern, a daily devotion booklet, a small cross and a few pieces of candy. These bags were distributed to guests at our worship services. Since a picture is worth a thousand words, efforts are being made to display photos of FELC activities and projects utilizing bulletin boards in the cloak room. In addition, our Facebook page has provided a wonderful forum for sharing photos of all the many and varied activities, projects, and community outreach efforts.

Retaining our current membership is a high priority. The Committee is creating a short survey for members to identify the type of fellowship activities people are interested in and would support. A new communication tool will soon be introduced in the FELC narthex. We will share announcements and photos of activities on a monitor for your information and viewing pleasure.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Hermel

COMFORT GUILD

The Comfort Guild consists of a group of women who hope it doesn't have to convene very often. The group provides a light luncheon to family members after the funeral service for their loved ones. There are also several men who set up tables and help with clean-up.

In 2025 we served 3 families, helped at 2 lunches that were catered by outside vendors.

This past year Joan Buckmaster was the go-to person for the Guild. This year Lori Heyne will be taking over her duties. Thank you, Joan! Thank you, Lori!

Karen Zumann does the telephoning for helpers and for donations of bars which are generously donated by church members. Family members pay for the groceries and \$2.00 per plate served.

Monies are used for needed kitchen items and other church things. A donation of \$1,000.00 was given to the Elevator Fund in 2025.

There are very few churches that still provide this service. If you haven't signed up for this needed and rewarding service, you can still can by calling Karen and letting her know. A big thank you to all involved.

Current balance in account: \$2,140.84.

Lori Heyne (715-297-3165)
Karen Zumann (715-675-7402)

Charity Circle

Charity Circle meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, with the exception of July and August. You can find us in the Bethany Room at 9:00am for treats and social time, followed by Bible Study at 10:00am. Led by Nancy Kohorn-Hendricks we use the Gather magazine for this.

This past year our Circle donated to the following:

- *FELC Food Pantry
- *FELC Youth for various service projects
- *Wausau West Pantry (food and hygiene supplies)
- *John Muir Pantry (food and hygiene supplies)
- *WMC Homeless shelter

Generous donations from the congregation helped Lori H. to assemble 188 Personal Care Kits.

We welcome anyone to join us for the study of God's Word, fellowship and refreshments.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Heyne

Quilters Report

The Quilters have assembled and donated a total of 283 quilts this year. That is 29 more than last year!

Specifically:

183 Twin Size and Baby/Youth Quilts (locally)

- *The Women's Community
- *Hospice
- *Palliative Care
- *Salvation Army
- *Bridge Street Mission
- *The Birthing Center
- *Children's Hospital
- *FELC Baptisms
- *The Baby's Place

100 Twin Size Quilts (overseas)

- *Lutheran World Relief

The Quilters have 11 regularly attending members and meet on Tuesday mornings from 9-11:30. Some members cut material and sew quilt tops at home and then on Tuesdays, we assemble them into full quilts. Everyone is welcome to join us! No sewing experience is necessary as we assemble the quilts by hand. We enjoy snacks/desserts at 10:00 with coffee and the morning is filled with laughter and fellowship.

As with any organization, there are many people to thank. We appreciate the behind-the-scenes help from Virgil, LeRoy, and Tom. We also cannot do this without the financial assistance we receive through memorials, the Fair Stand, and the donations of fabric, gently used sheets, and yarn. Thank you so much for these generous gifts! Additionally, I would like to thank Judy Jensen for her leadership and her continued mentoring as I learn the ropes and become the new contact person for the Quilters.

Again, we encourage you to join us! We are committed to helping people feel cared for, warm, and safe...one quilt at a time.

Respectfully submitted,
Dawn Schumitsch (715-370-1640)

Treasure Sales – 2025

Our 2025 Treasure Sale was a huge success!

Thank you to everyone for your help and donations in making the sale successful.

We had a profit of \$15,017! Well done! All proceeds were given to the First English Elevator Fund.

In November we had our first Holiday Treasure Sale. This sale was also a success. It was a way to sell Thanksgiving and Christmas items that did not sell at our June sale. Profits from this sale were \$2,400, an amazing amount. We will have another holiday sale this fall.

We were told by shoppers that our sales are very organized, clean and items were priced well.

We are already planning for our June sale. The dates for the 2026 sale are June 11, 12, & 13. We are already taking donations.

Committee members: Kathy Rohde, Sharon Hunter, Carol Rachu, Sue Juedes, Joan Buckmaster, Dawn Kramer, Kathi Zoern and VerJean Detert.

Fair Stand Report 2025

Deposits

| | |
|-------------|---------------|
| Tues. 7/29 | \$3,719.00 |
| Wed. 7/30 | 5,747.00 |
| Thurs. 7/31 | 7,842.00 |
| Fri. 8/1 | 9,577.00 |
| Sat. 8/2 | 7,866.00 |
| Sun. 8/3 | 4,028.00 |
| Found Cash | 1,560.00 |
| Meal Tix | 1,121.00 |
| Tip Money | <u>713.00</u> |
| Total | \$42,173.00 |

Expenses

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Bimbo Bakeries | \$ 1,116.20 |
| Lamb's | 5,605.20 |
| Graykowski | 1,950.34 |
| County Market | 311.87 |
| Wis. Valley Fair – Pepsi | 5,924.00 |
| Merrill Distributing | 2,568.42 |
| WPS | 208.45 |
| Extra Fair passes (25)plus 3 parking | 679.00 |
| Heyne – Walmart/Sam's Club | 579.08 |
| Jerome Dahlke (Supplies/Pies \$440 | 1,327.01 |
| Trailer Storage | 814.00 |
| Health Dept. License | 309.00 |
| Space Rent (2024) | <u>1,900.00</u> |
| Total | \$ 23,292.57 |
| Stand Profit | \$ 18,880.43 |
| Previous \$\$ in Account (2024) | <u>9,598.79</u> |
| Total | \$ 28,479.22 |
| Distribution Amount | \$ 18,750.00 |
| Remaining Balance in Account | \$ 9,729.22 |

Respectfully submitted by Lori Heyne – Fair Stand Treasurer

Fair Stand Distribution Report

First English Needs

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| FELC Elevator Repair Fund | \$ 5,000.00 |
| FELC Good Samaritan Fund | 1,000.00 |
| FELC Building Fund | 1,000.00 |
| FELC Confirmation Camp Scholarships | 1,000.00 |
| FELC Youth (Nat'l Youth Gathering) | <u>1,500.00</u> |
| | \$9,500.00 (50%) |

Outreach

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| FELC Quilters | \$ 1,000.00 |
| Jim Harris 'We Help War Victims' (Laos) | 250.00 |
| Habitat for Humanity | 250.00 |
| Wausau Faith in Action | 250.00 |
| Women's Community, Inc. | 400.00 |
| The Neighbors' Place Food Pantry | 500.00 |
| Stable Hands | 250.00 |
| The Salvation Army (Transition Living Cen.) | 400.00 |
| ELCA World Hunger | 800.00 |
| Crossways Camping-Waypost | 250.00 |
| Crossways Camping Building Campaign | 300.00 |
| Homme Home Foundation | 250.00 |
| Greater Wausau Christian Services | 250.00 |
| ELCA Lutheran Disaster Response | 700.00 |
| NAOMI | 200.00 |
| ShyAnn Egwalata (work in Uganda) | 400.00 |
| ShyAnn ... Uganda Student Scholarship | 1,800.00 |
| Donation to St. John's Church | 500.00 |
| Special Olympics | <u>500.00</u> |
| Total | \$ 9,250.00 |
| Total Distribution | \$18,750.00 |

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT
DECEMBER 2025

| | <u>2024</u> | <u>2025</u> |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Total \$'s Pledged | \$ 175,056.00 | \$ 181,232.00 |

MONTHLY ACTIVITY

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Current \$'s Received | \$ 18,151.56 | \$ 24,326.48 |
| # of Sundays | 5 | 5 |
| Weekly Average | \$ 3,630.31 | \$ 4,865.30 |

YEAR-TO-DATE ACTIVITY

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| YTD \$'s Received | \$ 229,481.79 | \$ 284,831.74 |
| # of Sundays | 52 | 52 |
| Weekly Average | \$ 4,413.11 | \$ 5,477.53 |
| YTD \$ Pledged | \$ 175,055.92 | \$ 181,231.96 |

\$ 3,485.23 expected weekly in 2025

\$ 4,807.69 needed weekly in 2025 to meet anticipated current pledge receipts.

Year-to-Date Budget Need: \$ 250,000.00

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Kluetz

Giving Units: 170

This includes households who give their offerings through
ACH (electronic giving) through Vanco Simple Giving and People's State Bank

THROUGH YOUR GENEROSITY, GOD IS AT WORK ACROSS THE ELCA.

MISSION SUPPORT

A portion of your offering, called Mission Support, advances the ministry of our church, helping the ELCA nurture Christian community, raise up leaders, serve our neighbors and strive for justice.

ELCA WORLD HUNGER

Part of our church's long tradition of meeting human needs, ELCA World Hunger testifies to our hope for and commitment to God's promise of a time when we will hunger and thirst no more. ELCA World Hunger walks alongside communities in more than 60 countries — including the United States — to create unique solutions to hunger and poverty.

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

Lutheran Disaster Response shares God's hope, healing and renewal with people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

WHERE NEEDED MOST

Where Needed Most supports the powerful ways we work together around the world — supporting leaders, inspiring young people, fueling ministries and championing global mission. Gifts to Where Needed Most support and sustain the people, congregations, synods and ministries working around the world to realize the hope-filled future God promises.



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Sign up to hear more stories of impact from the ELCA churchwide organization at [ELCA.org/subscribe](https://elca.org/subscribe).

Read about Mission Support and learn more at [Livinglutheran.org/SOFA](https://livinglutheran.org/SOFA)