



JANUARY 2026

# Messenger

## First English Lutheran Church

*Connected in Christ, we grow in faith, live with hope, and reach out to share God's love with others.*

### **Giving Credit Where It's Due**

First English has an amazing staff that works together with laughter, humility, kindness, and efficiency. Let's kick off 2026 by thanking our office staff. Next month, we'll honor our musicians, Dave and Tammy, and our property manager, John.

Janet is our Administrative Assistant who holds it all together. If you love the slides used for Worship, she's the one to thank. She's also responsible for easy-to-read worship bulletins, preparing the sanctuary for worship, copyright permissions, membership rolls, volunteers, phone calls, office communication, and much more. She welcomes and encourages those who visit the office, and handles difficult situations with grace. Thank you, Janet!

Rhonda is our Ministry Associate who produces our Worship services for broadcast. This includes much pre- and post-service work. She also directs our weekly GLOW ministry to Howe School students. She supervises the volunteers and maintains contact with parents and the school's administration. She also plans and participates in the sessions. In addition, she fills in gaps in our congregational life in more ways than we can count. Thank you, Rhonda!

Sherri is our Financial Secretary, Community Outreach Coordinator, and the person who loves to add creative seasonal touches to our building. In addition to handling incoming monies, she coordinates our many community outreach activities. This involves juggling many balls (and volunteers) to accomplish each event. She's also responsible for producing our newsletter each month. Thank you, Sherri, for your creativity, kindness, and enthusiasm!

Val has been our bookkeeper for a couple years. She handles all outgoing monies with steady and accurate efficiency. She attends Council and Finance meetings, shares monthly reports, and helps Finance Ministry put together a good budget for each coming year. She usually works after 4 p.m., but some of us who work later still get to enjoy her friendliness and good humor. Thank you, Val, for your excellent work!

You know, it's the staff people who keep the congregation's life running smoothly - even though the pastor often gets the credit. Please let our staff know how much you appreciate them during 2026!

Thanking God for our great staff,

Pastor Cheryl

# About FELC...

## First English Lutheran Church, ELCA

440 Garfield St, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494 715-423-2840 [www.felwisrapids.org](http://www.felwisrapids.org)

Office Hours: 8am-3:30pm M - Th, Closed Fridays

Sunday Worship is at 9:30am w/Communion & FB Live, then YouTube @ 11:15am

*~ Every Sunday We Celebrate the Resurrection ~*



### The Staff at FELC...

Pastor	Cheryl Davis	715-818-5690	<a href="mailto:cdavis002@luthersem.edu">cdavis002@luthersem.edu</a>
Admin Assistant	Janet Graczkowski	715-423-2840	<a href="mailto:fel@felwr.org">fel@felwr.org</a>
Financial Secretary	Sherri Krutzik	715-818-5691	<a href="mailto:Sherri@felwr.org">Sherri@felwr.org</a>
Ministry Assistant	Rhonda Felton	715-88-5692	<a href="mailto:Rhonda@felwr.org">Rhonda@felwr.org</a>
Bookkeeper	Val Elliot	715-423-2840	<a href="mailto:Val@felwr.org">Val@felwr.org</a>
Property Manager	John Lory	715-423-2840	<a href="mailto:John@felwr.org">John@felwr.org</a>
Musicians	Dave Mueller & Tammy Parszewski	715-423-2840	<a href="mailto:fel@felwr.org">fel@felwr.org</a>

Services are televised Sunday at 11am from the previous Sunday on W.R. Community Media, Charter 985, & Solarus Ch 3. *For bad weather and church closings tune to TV Channel 7 WSAW.*

## Birthday & Anniversary...

### JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1/1	Ryan Leverance
1/3	Evelyn Kitowski
1/5	Bonita Place
1/9	Susan Jorgenson
	Kathy Surendonk
1/11	Amanda Zelin
1/13	Marion Koller
	Bill Kohnen
	Bruce Gross
1/14	Dawn Barten
	JJ Hafermann
1/15	Steve Herzberg
1/18	Jane Anderson
	Neil Francis
	Tina Fredrickson
1/19	Don Arneson
	Grace Jahns
1/20	Craig Davidson
1/21	Dave Davies
1/25	Holly Pastori

### 1/28 Kelly Look

1/29 Jennie Watson

1/30 Dick Cavanaugh

Barb Garvey

### JANUARY ANNIVERSARYS

1/8 Joe & Chris Klopotek

Craig D & Sue Hamilton

1/27 Doug & Linda Dresden



# Writer's Corner...

## A Fresh Start

by Robyn Austin

Happy New Year! And happy new YOU – if that is your desire.

January often arrives quietly, especially when it brings new snow. Overnight, the world can be transformed - yesterday's footprints softened, tire tracks smoothed away, familiar paths made new again. A clean slate stretches before us, inviting us to begin again.

We talk a lot about "fresh starts" at the beginning of a new year. Resolutions are made, calendars are empty, and hope feels a little closer to the surface. Yet as Christians, we should know that God's gift of new beginnings is not limited to January 1. God is in the business of renewal every single day.

Martin Luther reminded the church that baptism is not a one-time event locked in the past, but a daily reality. Each day, we die to sin and rise to new life. Each night, we come before God honestly, carrying the marks of the day - our worries, our regrets, our sharp words, and missed chances.

And each night, Jesus meets us not with condemnation, but with grace. Forgiveness falls gently, like fresh snow, covering what was and preparing the ground for what can be.

This is good news for those of us who didn't end last year the way we hoped. It's good news for anyone who already feels behind on resolutions or burdened by habits that won't disappear overnight. God's mercy does not depend on our willpower or our ability to "do better this time." It depends on Christ alone.

As we step into this new year, may we notice the small signs of grace around us: a quiet snowfall, a kind word, a moment of peace at the end of a long day. May we trust that God is always offering us a clean slate - not just once a year, but again and again.

Whatever tracks you carry into this January, know this: God's grace is deeper, wider, and more enduring. In Christ, every day begins with mercy, and every morning invites us to start anew. Amen.





25 Food Baskets were ordered, prepped, and given to families at Howe Elementary School. Thanks to all of you who came in to help!  
Lead: Sarah A & Andrea K



**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2026**

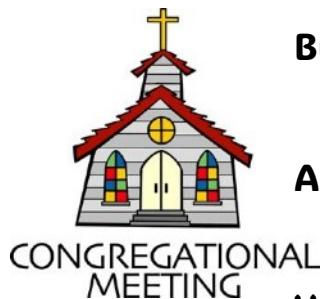
*"Lord, as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us to be mindful of those without even a bowl of soup to eat."*

Please, either bring in some canned goods, or place a monetary donation in the Soup Pot on Sunday, February 8th.

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# Happenings...



## Budget Meeting

Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup> after Worship

## Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 25th after Worship

**Your Voice Matters ~ Join in the Sanctuary**

Starting January 11th, or thereafter, you can pick up a copy of your 2025 Year-End Statement in the Gathering Area . Thank you all for your generosity!

Offering envelopes have been out for pick-up in the Gathering Area. If you haven't already, please pick up yours on Sunday or pop in next week M-Th from 8am - 3:30pm.

Thanks to those of you who filled out and returned your annual pledge cards.





We at FELC  
hope  
your Christmas was Merry  
and your New Year is  
Happy and Bright!

# JANUARY 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Pastor Cheryl will be off the entire month of January on Sabbatical, with knee surgery and healing time.				1 Office Closed <b>Happy New Year!</b> 	2 8a Bible Zoom M Office Closed	3
<i>Blessings in the New Year!</i>						
4 8a Confirmation 9:30a Worship w/SS Preacher: Roxi	5	6 7a Yoga 3p GLOW	7 10a Bible Zoom W 2:45p Bible RR 7p Choir	8 7a Yoga	9 8a Bible Zoom M Office Closed	10
11 8a Confirmation 9:30a Worship w/SS Preacher: Rich  <b>Prayer Ministry Mtg</b>	12	13 7a Yoga 3p GLOW	14 10a Bible Zoom W <b>12p Finance Mtg</b> 1p Quilters 1:45p SHINE W 7p Choir	15 7a Yoga  <b>5:15p Christ Ed</b>	16 8a Bible Zoom M Office Closed	17
18 8a Confirmation 9:30a Worship w/SS Preacher: Rich  <b>10:45a Budget Mtg</b>	19	20 7a Yoga 3p GLOW <b>6p Council Mtg</b>	21 10a Bible Zoom W 10:15a SHINE AV 2:45p Bible RR 7p Choir	22 7a Yoga	23 8a Bible Zoom M Office Closed	24
25 8a Confirmation 9:30a Worship w/SS Preacher: Rich  <b>10:45a Annual Mtg</b>	26	27 7a Yoga 3p GLOW	28 10a Bible Zoom W 1p Quilters 1:45p SHINE W 7p Choir	29 7a Yoga	30 8a Bible Zoom M Office Closed	31

# FOR THE BIRDS

Display this recycled craft to care for feathered friends.



#### What you need:

- Peanut butter or vegetable shortening
- Plastic knife
- Empty toilet paper tube
- Bird seed
- A plate
- String



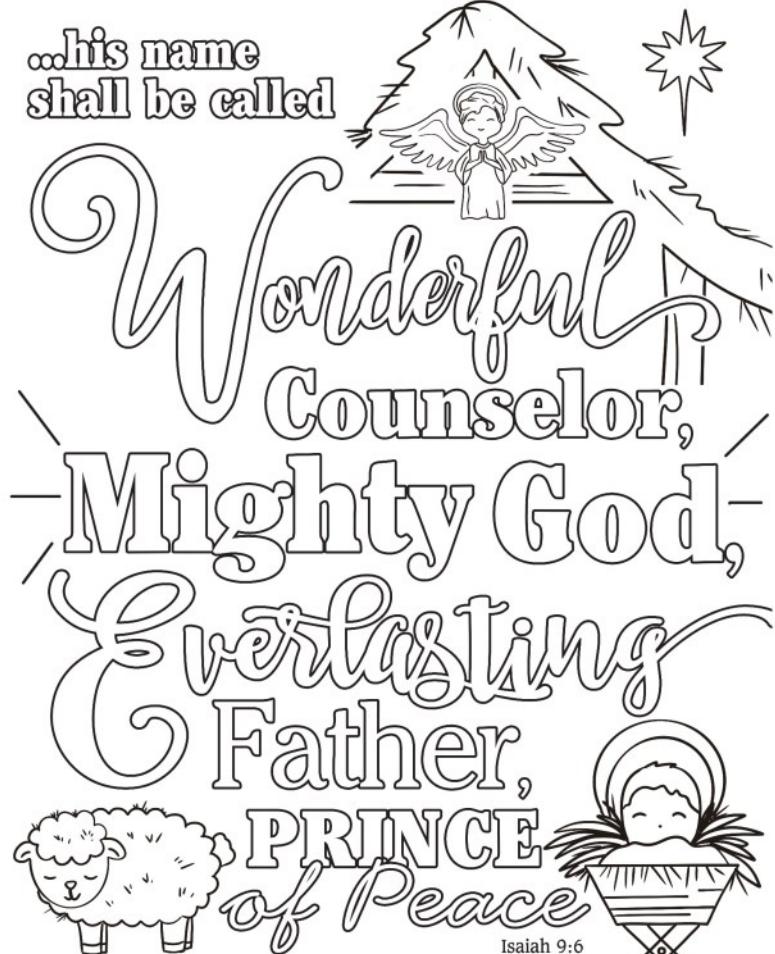
#### What you do:

1. Spread peanut butter or vegetable shortening on the tube, covering the entire outside surface.
2. Pour bird seed on a plate and roll the tube in the seeds.
3. Thread string through the tube and tie it to make a loop.
4. Hang the bird feeder outside. When seeds are eaten, coat the roll again.

## Activity Page...



...his name shall be called



Isaiah 9:6