



February 2026

# Messenger

## *First English Lutheran Church*

*Connected in Christ,*

*we grow in faith, live with hope, and reach out to share God's*

### Thoughts and Gratitude from Pastor Cheryl

#### **First of all, thank you!**

Horace and I are profoundly grateful to you for your support the last 3-4 weeks as I've gone through surgery, and he's gone through the demands of caring for me. You've prayed, sent greeting cards and gift cards, cooked delicious food, and reminded us in many gentle ways that we matter to you and are loved by you. We needed your support, and you abundantly provided it. Thank you!

#### **Secondly, Kudos to our property manager and musicians!**

Last month we highlighted our office staff in *The Messenger* and asked you to express your appreciation to them. This month, we're highlighting John, Dave and Tammy,

John is our property manager who maintains our building and land with the help of willing volunteers who share their talents with remodeling, woodworking, landscaping, and larger maintenance projects. He understands the ins and outs of our facility systems and deals with contractors for repairs or capital projects. He remains kind and cheerful through it all. Thanks, John, for your faithful service to First English!

Dave is our main church musician and choir director, sharing his organ and piano skills with us for 75% of our worship services. We are grateful for the energy he brings to worship as organist, pianist and choir director. He joins with other musicians to provide special music that touches our hearts. Thanks, Dave! We will miss you when you retire at the end of May!

Tammy is our church musician for 25% of our worship services. Tammy shares her pianistic expertise as well as many of her choir students from Port Edwards High School who provide beautifully prepared special music. Tammy also chairs our Worship and Music Ministry with administrative skill, enthusiasm, and creativity. Thanks, Tammy, for your good-humored commitment to First English!

#### **Lent Begins February 18th**

Ash Wednesday lands on February 18<sup>th</sup> this year and Lent begins. After our soup suppers on Wednesday evenings, we'll join in the candlelit Gathering Area to sing together and hear a series of reflections entitled, "What's It Really Like to Pray?" I hope you'll be present as we refresh our souls together on the journey to the cross with Jesus.



# 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:pastorcheryl@felwr.org">pastorcheryl@felwr.org</a>
Administrative Assistant	Janet Grackowski	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, & Baptisms...

## **FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS**

- 2/1 Bernice Ormstead
- Mark Stultz
- Walter Wright
- Brandon Franz
- 2/8 Eunice Matthews
- 2/9 Pat Peckham
- Alida Gross
- 2/11 Jessica Edwards
- 2/13 Gail Grzadzielewski
- 2/14 Valerie Nygaard
- 2/16 Debra Franz
- 2/18 Jaxon Chambers
- 2/19 Corrine Klopotek
- 2/21 Michele Lipke
- 2/24 Jenni Vetrone
- 2/27 Mike Schill

2/26 Pat & Jodi Waltenberg

## **FEBRUARY BAPTISMS**

- 2/7 Jacob Barnett
- 2/19 Maggie Dallman
- Cameron Mancl



## **FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARYS**

- 2/7 Richard & Mary Bronson
- 2/14 Randy & Debra Franz

# Writer's Corner...

## February and Love

Anne Handschke

George Washington and Abraham Lincoln were topics in school as February was their birthday month. We were taught these imperfect men loved the people they served and fought to make their country a better place for all who lived here.

Valentine's day is also in February with all the gifts of candy, chocolate, cards and flowers for loved ones. We see that word love written in many ways.

It was just a few weeks ago we celebrated Christmas and a sermon stated we should hang on to the promises that Christmas brings. The four gifts of hope, peace, joy and love belong in our Christian lives every day.

Jesus said that there are just two commandments to follow to love God with all your heart and to love your neighbors as yourself. Jesus knew how difficult keeping these two would be. I remember one pastor said look for Jesus in every face you see. When I tried seeing Jesus in others my perspective changed. My heart softened. Lately we hear love thy neighbor frequently. I ask myself if I am truly trying to love all my neighbors.

Soon we will be entering Lent and then the Easter season. We experienced the greatest love at Christmas. Soon we will again experience the greatest sacrifice given. Because the love we receive from our Lord is so powerful. John 3:16 For God so loved the world He gave His beloved son so whoever believes in Him will have eternal life. God loves you – just as you are and He loves me and all His children. How can we not rejoice and try to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Heavenly Father whose love is so strong and mighty, help us to see Jesus in all we meet and love them as you love us. Help us to help those less fortunate with the numerous gifts you have given us.

We thank you for Your son who was born for us and who died for us.

In His name we pray. Amen.



# Lenten Soup Suppers...



Starting Ash Wednesday, February 18th  
through Wednesday, March 25th  
Soup Suppers will be served at 5:30pm  
w/Lenten Worship to follow at 6:30pm

## Holy Week Services...

*Palm Sunday* 3/29 at 9:30am

*Maundy Thursday* 4/2 at 6:30pm

*Good Friday* 4/3 at 1:00pm

*Easter Sunday* 4/5 at 8:30a, 10:30am  
w/Holy Communion

Be sure to sign up on the bulletin board in the Gathering Area to help with set-up, make soup, bars, and/or bread for the soup suppers. Thanks!



## Wednesday Lenten Worship...

### What's It *Really* Like to Pray?

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| February 25 | When the Bush Burns: God Gets Our Attention                       |
| March 4     | When the Dialogue Goes South: Human Resistance to God's Attention |
| March 11    | When Obedience Seems Impossible: The Human Pays Attention         |
| March 18    | When God Enlists Community: God's People Listen and Obey          |
| March 25    | When the Wheels Come Off: God's Promises Fulfilled                |

# Happenings...



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



**Help support the Family Center, FOCUS Pantry, and Hannah House**

Right here in Wisconsin Rapids!

Starting **February 22rd thru March 15th**

We will have large boxes in the entry area by the office to collect personal hygiene products and cleaning supplies for the homeless.

## Most Urgently Needed Items:

- Soaps: laundry, dish, soft, shower, 2-in-1 shampoo
- Trash bags (large and 4gal.)
- Diapers (sizes 3-6 and Pull-Ups)
- Deodorant (unscented)
- Wet wipes
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Disposable razors
- Tampons and maxi pads





## The Love God Desires

God's love is never meant to stop with us; it's meant to flow through us. When we love others, we reflect his very heart. As 1 John 4:12 (NIV) reminds us, "If we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us."

This is the true mark of a Christian — love that reaches beyond comfort zones, opinions and differences. Jesus said in John 13:35 (NIV), "By this

everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

The world is watching, not to see how loudly we profess our faith but how deeply we practice it. Every act of compassion, every gentle word and every moment of grace reveals something divine — God's love at work in us. The more we give that love away, the more it grows within us, mirroring the heart of Christ, who gave Himself for all.

So ask yourself: Does the world recognize you as his disciple by the way you love?

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**Chefs**  
FOR CHANGE

**YOU'RE INVITED**

**THE 2ND ANNUAL CHEFS FOR CHANGE: AN EVENING OF IMPACT**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2026**  
**6:00 P.M. | HOTEL MEAD**

JOIN US FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE EVENING FEATURING:  
CULINARY COMPETITION SHOWCASING LOCAL CHEFS  
DELICIOUS PLATED DINNER & SIGNATURE COCKTAILS  
SILENT AUCTION WITH TREASURES TO DISCOVER  
INSPIRING STORIES OF HOPE AND RESILIENCE

PROCEEDS BENEFIT WISCONSIN RAPIDS FAMILY CENTER, SUPPORTING  
SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT.

RESERVE YOUR SEATS TODAY:  
[FAMILYCENTER.HARNESSGIVING.ORG/3321](https://familycenter.harnessgiving.org/3321)

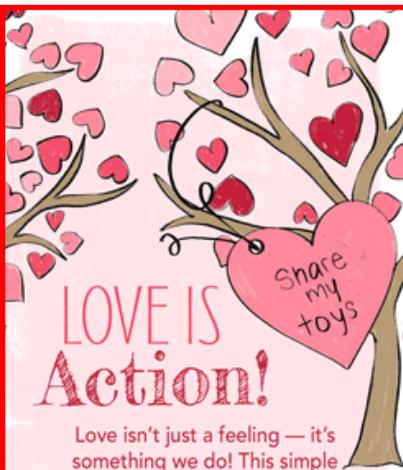


# Activity Page...



A friend  
*loves*  
at all times.

Proverbs 17:17

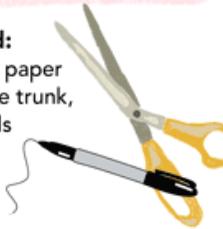


## LOVE IS Action!

Love isn't just a feeling — it's something we do! This simple activity reminds us that acts of love, big or small, can grow and bless others.

### What you need:

- Construction paper (brown for the trunk, pinks and reds for hearts)
- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Markers or crayons



### What you do:

1. Cut a large tree trunk and branches out of brown paper and glue it onto a sheet of paper or poster board.
2. Use colorful paper to cut several hearts — these will be your "leaves."
3. On each heart, write loving actions like "share my toys," "pray for others," or "help clean up."
4. Glue the hearts onto the branches to create a full, love-filled tree.
5. Hang it somewhere visible as a reminder to put love into action every day!

