

The Herald

Newsletter of First English Lutheran Church February 2024
1013 Minnesota Street, Oshkosh, WI 54902 * (920) 231-9890 * www.firstenglish.org
Rev. Jonathan Radichel-Wills, Pastor
Worship Service Times: Saturday 5:00 PM, Sunday 9:00 AM, SPOH 10:30 AM.
Sunday School 9:30AM release from worship



Official Acts January 2024

Baptisms: Maggie Louise Oswald
December 23rd 2023

Alexander Thomas Oswald
December 23 2023

No deaths to reports
No confirmations to report

No transfers to report



Annual Meeting Notice
February 4, 2024

The Annual Meeting is scheduled to be held on **February 4, 2024 beginning at 10:30**. The annual report should be ready for you to pick up at church starting January 20th or it will be mailed to you if requested.

Ashes & Roses:

Exploring the alignment of Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day

Meditation by Pastor Jon Radichel-Wills

It's not often that Ash Wednesday coincides with Valentine's Day. It's a complex calculation.

Over the last 100 years, Ash Wednesday has coincided with Valentine's Day five times in a pattern that is inexplicable to me. The first was in 1923. Up until then there was no alignment in the 20th century between this day of atonement and this day of Chardonnay and chocolate. They coincided again 11-years later in 1934 and eleven years after that in 1945. Then the alignment hit the snooze button for 73 years before reoccurring again in 2018. Six years later it happened again in 2024 with another alignment to follow in 2029.

As I said, this is a complex equation. I have trouble enough understanding the ripples and waves of the church's liturgical calendar. This is the calendar that determines the date of Easter and other high holy days and operates in a way that is far beyond my math skills and my understanding of the phases of the moon. When factoring the shifting of days and dates that govern the traditional Gregorian calendar found in most kitchens, offices, and smartphones the calculus of this becomes more than I can bear. The main take away is that one is more likely to be born on Leap Day than celebrate Ash Wednesday on Valentine's Day. Please don't do the math on that one. I certainly didn't. What I am most concerned with is how this affects our faith. With the collision of Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day occurring like lightning in a bottle the church finds itself decidedly ill equipped.

The problem is ironic juxtaposition. One holiday is a reminder of our mortality and an entrance into the wilderness that leads inexorably to the suffering and death on a cross. The other is a festival of the flesh and the joys and excesses that come with it. They are both celebrations of love but different kinds of love. These diametrically opposed celebrations represent the worrying tension of the flesh and the spirit and coalescing the bacchanalian nature of our humanity as it runs the risk of negating the holy discipline of the spirit.

But I do not believe that the coinciding of a secular holiday like Valentine's Day and a high holy day like Ash Wednesday needs to create a theological problem. In fact, I believe that bringing the two together creates an opportunity to understand our humanity as it relates to God's divinity. The understanding of this duality is inherent to our faith as both Christians and Lutherans. We are all sinners and fall short of the grace of God.

That is why it is such a gift when Christ comes down from the cross and invites us into the perfection of God's Kingdom. We could not do this on our own. Pretending that we are anything but sinners who are desperate for God's grace is forgetting that grace. On a day like Valentine's Day, we remember our humanity. It is a celebration of what it means to be alive. Coalescing this with Ash Wednesday, a day that celebrates the fleeting nature of our existence, brings an added power to both. When remembering that we are ashes and to ashes we will return we are given the opportunity to remember what those ashes stood for, what they meant, and why they mattered.

If nothing else, this is an excellent opportunity to have a date night at church. Bring your date to Ash Wednesday worship. I can only imagine it would be a unique experience for everyone concerned. I am serious about this. Love is a very serious thing, and it is a rare opportunity to bring together both romantic love and the love of God into one holy space.

Education

You are never too old or young to start over. Each day is a new day, a new chance to make changes. A chance to create the life we want. A new year offers us a chance to start fresh, an opportunity to move ahead with new perspectives, change our habits and create goals for ourselves. In fact each day offers this to us as well. Every single day we can wake up and start again. What an amazing gift from God! Why? Because he loves us. Love uplifts, heals, and inspires us. Love is powerful!

Speaking of love, I love that I get to spend time each weekend with some of our youngest members. I get a fresh chance each week to share God's love with them. It is truly a blessing getting to know them. The relationships we all have built

is one of a kind. We ended this past year with a celebration, a chance to start



over...early! A "Noon" Year Eve Celebration! What a fun way to start fresh, with God's love, amazing company, fun projects and great food. We brought out the party hats, sparkles and horns to celebrate all things new! Thank you to those who stayed after the service to "ring in the noon year" with us. And thank you to Lisa and Sharon for a wonderful spread! We'd go hungry without you! My wish for you is to have a blessed, healthy and silly New Year! Life is too short to not have a little fun!

As you may be creating your resolutions this year consider swinging by an event. The kids would sure love to see other

friends as well as some new faces. I would too! I promise a good time, good company and good food! What more could you ask for? So, with that said I will leave you with this....

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

Proverbs 3:5-6

"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."

John 15:12

"Do onto others as you would have them do onto you." Luke

6:31

Upcoming Events:

Pancake Breakfast - February 11th

Ash Wednesday - February 14th

Alicia Valdez

Sunday School Coordinator

920-740-4244

aliolesen@hotmail.com





February 2024 Neighborhood Center News

Programs begin at 11:00 *this month* unless noted,
with lunch at noon in the FELC Fellowship Hall.
Enter through the 10th Ave parking lot.

Bring a friend and join the fun! All are welcome. Still the best lunch deal in town
for a \$7 donation. *Reminder that menus are subject to change.*



February 7 program: Super Bowl Tailgate Party at 11:30
Menu: Nachos supreme, chili cheese dogs, baked beans, brownies
After lunch: Sheepshead, cribbage

February 14 program: Ash

Wednesday Lenten Service

Menu: Tuna melts with chips, peas, relish tray, dessert

After lunch: Sheepshead, cribbage

February 21 program: Lenten Worship Service

Menu: President's Day Celebration with baked spaghetti,
vegetables, garlic bread, cherry surprise

After lunch: Sheepshead, cribbage,

February 28 program: Lenten Worship Service

Menu: Scalloped potatoes with ham, corn, relishes, rolls, cake for February birthdays

After lunch: Sheepshead, cribbage



mixed

****If you would like to donate a cake for a special occasion, please contact Kay at 920.203.4464 or kayd_54902@yahoo.com. Please contact with special dietary requests/needs by Monday noon.****

Missionary Sponsorship Lenten Support



In 2022, we welcomed our new partner in mission work, Rev. Kristin Engstrom. Pastor Kristin serves as a facilitator for leadership development in Zambia in southern Africa. She is called to walk with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zambia, and specifically, with pastors and lay leaders as they work to strengthen the church while growing in congregational and community leadership. Pastor Kristin received her BA from UW-Madison and her M.Div. from LSTC in Chicago.

Pastor Kristin made a visit to FELC in September where she preached at all three services, shared her musical talents in teaching our Sunday School “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” in the Chewe language, and updated adults in The Gathering Grounds about missionary work in Zambia.

FELC is committed to support Pr. Kristin’s work and has pledged in 2023. A brief overview of her current work can be seen on YouTube- https://youtu.be/QgYS_eoxBWK.

A letter from the Missionary Sponsorship Team will be arriving in February and includes the Lenten worship schedule, readings for Lent, envelope for your support of Pr. Kristin, and a message from Pr. Jon.



Chewe

\$6500

an

From the Women of the Church

Thank you again for everyone whom was involved in our sweets sale. Januarys Bible study was cancelled on January 9th due to weather. Our next meeting will be Feb 6th at 9:30AM in the Mary Martha room. Hope we can all get there, see you soon!

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Community Outreach Updates

Hot Meal Ministry

Thanks volunteers for your work AND to all for your generous financial support!



Hot Meal Ministry makes and delivers monthly meals for the Christine Ann Domestic Abuse Center, the Salvation Army, and sends meal supplies as needed for Lutheran Campus Ministry-Oshkosh.

Volunteers are needed to help cook/deliver meals on the second Sunday of each month. Supplies are provided and training is available!

Hot Meal Ministry also provides meals for families/individuals who have recent hospitalizations, losses, or just need a comforting meal. Contact the church office at 920.231.9890 or Pr. Jon if you would like to have a meal.

How Can We Help You or Someone You Know?

- *Winter is here!* FELC supports programs providing warm coats, mittens, and gloves for families. Our neighbors at Jefferson Elementary are also in need of children's sizes in leggings, sweatpants, and socks. If you have any, please drop them in the Jefferson box in the church office.
- If you know anyone **specifically in need**, please contact the church office or Pr. Jon.
- Basic food supplies are available at Neighborhood Center. Please feel free to utilize the food cart as needed for yourself or a neighbor during Neighborhood Center hours on Wednesdays from 11-1:00.
- Weekly meal bags continue to be available for our neighbors at Jefferson Elementary. . Donations of healthy snacks/100% juice boxes and money are welcomed. Thanks for your support in providing this needed outreach.



Thanks for Your Community Support

Your offering to the FELC **Restricted Fund** supports designated outreach in Oshkosh. See the ministries currently supported on the Outreach bulletin board above the water fountain by the Minnesota Street entrance.

- Thanks to the Dr. Michael and Paulette Olsen Lewis Fund of the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation gift supporting continued FELC outreach.
- Thanks to the families of George and Verna Dobberke for their generous memorial supporting outreach.
- *Soda can tabs for the Ronald McDonald House* continue to be collected on the table next to the basement steps below the church office.



Homebound Communion



Have you noticed that there are travel kits with elements for Holy Communion on the altar? Pastor Jon blesses the wafers and juice inside. Then they are taken to the homes of our homebound members whom have requested this means of Grace. They eagerly and joyfully receive the body and blood of our Lord from FELC communion distributors. All present share in portions of the order of service prior to and following communion. A taste of Worship can be brought right into your home, too.

If you or someone you know would welcome this gift brought to your house, apartment or room, please call Amanda in the Church office at 920.231.9890 to make your request. She will arrange for a home visitor to give you a call and arrange a once-a-month visit.

We look forward to staying in touch with you!



From our Youth

MISSION 3.0

The Youth Group will be raising funds this Lenten season for our local food pantries.

The items below are rarely donated so we thought we'd do our part in changing that.

milk, butter, boxed milk, can openers, stove top stuffing, dish soap, vegetable oil, spices, salt and pepper, tea bags, coffee, sugar, flour, fresh produce, fresh meat, tuna, crackers, feminine hygiene products, bread, eggs, cake mix, frosting.

There are two ways you can help with this mission project:

1) donate items from the above list and place in tote marked Food Pantry located in the church office or kitchen refrigerator

OR

2) attend our soup suppers and place a freewill offering in the basket (preferred option because it's a great time for fellowship)

Freewill offering Soup Suppers will be each week during Lent from 5 - 6:15.

We will make every attempt to offer a gluten free soup/dessert each week but cannot guarantee it.

Soup slots have all been filled, but we do appreciate donations of scrumptious desserts. Please let me know if you'd be willing to help out and, if so, what week.

- 2-14 Cream of Broccoli/Cauliflower and Chicken Noodle
- 2-21 White Chicken Chili and Vegetable Beef Sirloin
- 2-28 Cheezy Cauliflower and Lasagna
- 3-6 Cheeseburger and Chicken Dumpling
- 3-13 Loaded Baked Potato and Vegetable Beef Barley
- 3-20 Cream of Wild Rice/Chicken and Stuffed Pepper



First English Lutheran Church
Council Minutes – December 12, 2023

Devotions: Sherry Ratchman

Attendance: Mark Boettcher, Tom Brauer, Sherry Ratchman, Nate Hitz, Janet Zeinert, Julie Gutche, Becky Meissner, Dave Richards, Dan Luft, Art Loos, Mary Murken, Alicia Valdez and Karl Kessler (arrived at 7:40 pm)

Staff: Pastor Jon Radichel-Wills, Kay Dobberke Brauer, Steve Seidl

Excused: Karen Frederick and Nate Hitz

Communications: Received a thank you response from Seon Loon Chung, the Dean of The College of Nursing at UWO for the support of their mission to empower students and faculty to meet the healthcare needs of our society. And a thank you from The Samaritan of the Fox Valley for assistance in their growth in 2023.

Minutes from November 2023 Council Meeting – M/S/C

Update January 2024 Herald Calendar – Calendar was passed around and updated by council members. Mark shared the following friendly reminders from Amanda Smith:

- a. Any events that you would like in the calendar should be submitted by the 2nd Monday of the month for Council approval.
- b. Please note – Herald assembly will always be the 3rd Thursday of the month, going forward.
- c. Herald articles need to be received by the 3rd Monday. Anything received after that time may not appear in the monthly edition.

Treasurer’s Report from November 2023: M/S/C

- a. Report – discussed Designated Funds, Monthly Reports, Annual Report, August Winter (leaky boilers) expense - \$6,078 to be paid from Designated Fund/General Memorial Fund – **M/S/C**
- b. Invoices – Largest to Smallest
- c. Pay Bills/Designated Funds
 - a. Total Program Expense will incorporate a \$3000 decrease from the 2023 budget to be \$56,200 for the 2024 budget – **M/S/C**
 - b. Approved Staff expenses for 2024 at \$263,252.56 – **M/S/C**
 - c. Approved Facility expenses for 2024 at \$116,500.00 – **M/S/C**
 - d. ELCA Benevolence and Restricted Benevolence Amendment from 14% to 10% - with an overall savings of \$11,800 - **M/S/C**
 - e. The ELCA Benevolence will reflect a decrease to a new total of \$21,500 and the Restricted Benevolence will reflect a decrease to a new total of \$8,000 – This will bring the overall Benevolence total for 2024 to \$35,500 - **M/S/C**

New Member/Loss Report:

New Members:

No new member requests to record this month

Baptisms:

Emma Elisabeth Lyle

Born - June 18,2023

Baptized - December 2, 2023

Alarie Wayne Mader
Born – April 5, 2022
Baptized – December 2, 2023

Deaths:

Dorothy Gerth
October 16, 1941 to September 14, 2023
Funeral – September 26, 2023

Guy Redlin
August 4, 1971 to December 2, 2023
Funeral – December 7, 2023

Yvonne Fritz
July 25, 1932 to December 5, 2023
Funeral – December 9, 2023

Harvey Jacobson
Information is still being obtained
Date of Death – December 8, 2023

Transfers to First English:

Elizabeth Sell and Haily Kranz from St John's Lutheran Church in Oshkosh

Staff Reports: M/S/C

Kay Dobberke Brauer

- a. "Reverse Advent Calendar" information was shared with council and is being distributed and displayed throughout the church. This is to help encourage putting together food packages for those in need. It emphasizes to collect a different item each day during the month of December and bring the contents to church for the Lutheran Food Pantry on Christmas Eve.
- b. "Jefferson School Elementary" will be holding a Winter Holiday Fair on Wednesday December 13th from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. Volunteers are needed to help with the tables the children will be shopping from and to help with the wrapping of the gifts that they purchase. Donations of wrapping paper, tape, ribbons are also appreciated and may be placed in the Jefferson box in the church office. Jefferson is also looking for donations of new, small gift items (such as Bath & Body soaps, lotions, etc.). Contact Kay if able to volunteer.
- c. Kay recently wrote grants for over \$1,000 through the Thrivent program. She encouraged anyone that has a plan through Thrivent to let her know as there are ways to submit grants and obtain additional funding for various needs.
- d. "Pastor Marty Rugge" – recently carolers from First English visited Lakeview, where Pastor Marty and his wife Lola are currently residing. He wanted to express his thankfulness and enthusiasm for the visiting carolers and treats that were shared. Truly brightened his day, as well as the other residents.

Pastor Jon Radichel-Wills

- a. Childrens Christmas Pageant – will be held on Saturday December 16th at 5 pm.
- b. Christmas Weekend Church Schedule
 - a. Saturday December 23 at 5 pm – Vigil of the Nativity
 - b. Sunday December 24 at 9 am (Advent) – Invitation to the Nativity
 - c. Sunday December 24 at 5 pm (Christmas Eve) – Candlelight Service
 - d. Monday December 25th – Christmas Day – NO SERVICES

Committee Reports: - M/S/C

Education Committee – Alicia Valdez

- a. Christmas Pageant will be held on Saturday 12/16/2023 at 5 pm. This will be incorporated into the regular church service for that day. A gathering in the Fellowship Hall will follow with goodies served by the Hospitality Committee and share the space with the Silent Auction.
- b. “New Years Eve Celebration” will be held on Sunday December 31st from 10 am to Noon (following the 9 am service), in the Fellowship Hall. This is a family friendly event filled with fellowship, snacks, crafts and overall fun! Help ring in the “Noon” year!
- c. Other events throughout 2024 are in the works.

Youth Group/Confirmation

- a. Advent suppers are going well. Suppers are on Wednesdays at 5 pm with church at 6:30. Church is being led by the Spirit of Hope group.
- b. Silent Auction will be held on Saturday December 16th following the 5 pm worship service.

***Was mentioned that as a friendly reminder, that more council participation at the extra events are highly encouraged.

Music and Worship Committee:

- a. “A Gift of Christmas” at the Christmas Eve service would be more of a worship endeavor than educational, and worshipers would get a bible and an online link to the program (The Basics) beginning with that service. A physical book is also available for those who would prefer one. No funding is needed from the church as it will be covered by private donations.
- b. “Scout Sunday” event is moving forward with the date of February 4, 2024. This is being led by Karl Kessler. Is being advertised on the First English website and Facebook.

P&I Committee:

- a. There is a condensation pipe problem in the boiler room, which is also causing flooding in that area. Trying to find the best solution to this issue. Currently looking at repair costs of between \$7,200 and \$14,000.

Community Outreach:

- a. Neighborhood Center – a huge success with the city-wide Thanksgiving. Special thanks to Pastor Glenn Chase for leading the Praise Service.
- b. Outreach Team again discussed the need to get a current/updated mailing list of members. Current listing is still outdated.

Executive Committee:

- a. All information for the 2024 Annual Report is due to Amanada (office@firstenglish.org) by 1/5/2024.
- b. Herald Articles – Reminder to all that articles that are due by 12/18/2023 to Amanda at office@firstenglish.org.
- c. Council Installation will be done first thing at the beginning of the service on Sunday January 7th, 2024 at the 9 am service.
- d. Special “Congregational Meeting” will be held on Saturday, January 13th, 2024 at 3:00 pm. A letter will be sent to all congregants.
- e. “Annual Meeting” will be held on Sunday February 4th 2024 at 10:30 am. This will follow the 9 am service for that day and will be a combined service of Traditional and SOH.
- f. Delegates needed for 2024 (working on dates for these events)
 - a. Oshkosh Conference Assembly – need 2 delegates
 - b. Lutheran Homes of Oshkosh – need 3 delegates
 - c. Synod Assembly – need 3 delegates

- d. Lutheran Campus Ministries - will be held March 17th 2024 at 2 pm at All Saints Lutheran Church in Oshkosh – need 2 delegates
- e. Crossways Camps held in March 2024 – need 2 delegates

Old Business:

All outstanding old business will be tabled until January 2024.

Proposals:

No proposals submitted to council for December 2023.

New business:

- a. Adopt Annual Meeting Agenda for February 4, 2024 at 10:30 am – **M/S/C**
- b. Financial Review – will be led by Tim Cornell. He will form a group of people to assist him with reviewing the financials for First English.
- c. Pastor Jon Radichel-Wills housing allowance credit for tax purposes. Designation of Housing or Furnishings Allowance to be paid to Pastor Jonathan Radichel-Wills – Cash Compensation \$61,242.72 and Housing Allowance \$18,372.82 – **M/S/C**

- d. Trust Fund proposal for the following at \$5,000 each: - **M/S/C**
 - a. Crossways
 - b. Lutheran Campus Ministries
 - c. Winnebago Area Literacy Council
 - d. ELCA World Relief
 - e. World Relief Wisconsin
 - f. Miravida
- e. Thank you to Dave Richards and Tom Jefferson for you dedication and service to the FELC Council. A special heartfelt thank you and recognition to Jerri Schmidt for her many years of love, dedication and service to and for First English.

Close with the Lord’s Prayer

Break for Refreshments and Changing of the “Old Council” with the “New Council”

Reconvene with “New Council”:

- a. Election of 2024 Church Council Officers for Executive Committee
 - a. President – Mark Boettcher
 - b. Vice President – Tom Brauer
 - c. Secretary – Becky Meissner
- b. Appoint Steve Seidl as Treasurer for 2024 – **M/S/C**
- c. Committee Appointments – Listing of committees provided to all council members. Each member dedicated themselves to serve on at least one committee for 2024.
- d. Possible change in giving envelope distribution. Discussion took place on continuing to have the giving envelopes be mailed out monthly or to just hand out all of the envelopes to those members at one time for the whole year. This will be tabled for another date.
- e. 2024 Council Devotions List – was distributed to all council members to sign up for their commitment and share for the monthly devotion at the beginning of each council meeting.
- f. 2024 Benevolence List Review – tabled until January 2024 meeting.
- g. 2024 Goals – reviewed goals for council to accomplish.

Next Meeting: January 9, 2024

Executive Board @ 6:30pm and full Council @ 7:00,

Devotions

TBD