



# January 2026 Cross Beams



Kingdom Kids in December



Christmas  
Pageant  
December  
14, 2025



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## Pastor Pete's Article

January 2026

This is often the time of year when we say that we are going to start fresh. It's a new year, new me! In the past, New Year's Eve was always the last night that I was going to do (blank)... pick your poison. It didn't really matter because I was going to give it my all on New Year's Eve and then, on New Year's Day I was going to emerge from bed a new man, as if the stroke of midnight would release me from my shell and I would become a new person. Done with all of my addictions and bad habits and become healthy. This year, I was going to really do it.

But it never worked. When I would wake up, I was still this broken, sinful human being, I still am. But I have grown and changed over the years, but rarely was it because of a lightning moment. There wasn't a big BOOM and as the smoke cleared a new person was there. It was still me, I was still there, but something was shifting. I have met people that have had those mega-moments in their lives, when they were changed in an instant, but I am not one of them. Perhaps it is my stubbornness, but with me, change happens in small increments. It is more like watching someone carve a block of wood with a chainsaw. It takes time, first the artist makes a couple of bigger cuts to get the general shape. Then he goes in there and makes smaller cuts to begin to bring out some of the details. Finally, he goes in with smaller tools to bring out the finer details. It is a slow and methodical process.

For many of us, that is how God is working in our lives. He sent us his son, Jesus Christ, who chisels out a new life for us. With his love, he releases us from our sinful prison, our blocks of wood. Because of his grace and forgiveness, we are set free from sin and can share that beauty with the rest of the world. No longer are we captive to sin and shame. Through Jesus Christ, we are made new!

That blockhead, that chunk of wood, is a beautiful sculpture that is waiting to be set free. During creation, God created us in his image and that image is beautiful. We are broken and flawed, but still beautiful. You are beautiful! And you are beloved. We just celebrated the birth of Jesus a few days ago. Another name for Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us. In John 1:1, In the beginning there was the Word, the Word was with God and the Word was God. That Word is one word that sends Satan running. We sing that Word when we sing "A Mighty Fortress." And what is that one tiny Word that sends the devil running? What is that Word that was in the beginning during creation? That Word is Jesus Christ. Jesus was there from the start of the world. He has always been there with us and for us.

That one Word is working in, with and thru us. Jesus is helping us to form our world into a better world. That is the core of us, that we are saved from our sin and called to love our neighbors. In this New Year, it is a new me, a new you, a new us and I am excited to see what God will do with us in this New Year.

Happy New Year!

Peace, Pastor Pete

# CHURCH NEWS

## Women's Brunch & Bible Study

Wednesday, January 14  
9:30 a.m.

Pastor Pete will prepare a brunch, and following the brunch, we will have the first session of a two-part Bible Study, "Embodied Prayer" by the Rev. Liv Larson Andrews. All women of the church are invited to participate in this fellowship time. (A \$5.00 donation is appreciated to help cover the cost of the brunch.)

Please join us in the Fireside Room. Please contact Melba Smith at 641-740-7855 with any questions or for more information.

We look forward to seeing you.



**Relapse Prevention Group**  
A Recovery Meeting in the Ellsworth Area is held at English Lutheran on Thursday nights at 6:00 p.m. Read and Discuss "Staying Sober".

## Endowment Committee

English Lutheran Church has an Endowment Fund and a committee that keeps tabs on the fund and makes decisions on any requests to utilize that funding. If your ministry has a funding need, please submit a request to the Endowment Committee. Examples of requests we have provided funding for in the past include: Thanksgiving baskets full of food for community members, purchasing greeting cards for the deaconess ministry to send to members of our church and community, vacation bible school for our children, quilting supplies for our graduate quilt ministry, supplies for Kingdom Kids program for elementary age children in our church and community, serving a meal at Minneapolis based Sharing and Caring Hands, supplies for the Sharing Shed in the back parking lot to support the community, and support for the Heart program.

We meet quarterly to review these requests. Request forms can be found on the forms shelf outside of the office or on our website. Contact the office if you need assistance in getting a form. Contact a member of the Endowment Committee if you have any questions about our ministry or a fund request.

**Please submit your request for our February meeting by Wednesday, February 4.**

Endowment Committee members: Gary Brown, Traci Maxwell, Trina Groen, Diane Wiskerchen, Kip Gore, Warren Johnson, and Dixie Basch.



There are baskets located by the front and back doors of the church for donations of nonperishable food items to support the **Pierce County Food Pantry**.

The Food Pantry is in need of the following items:  
**Flour, Oatmeal, Sugar, Baked Beans, Dry Soup Mix, Ramen Noodles, Cereal, Canned Meats, Vegetable Oil, Dish Soap, Laundry Soap, Paper Towels**

To donate money online:  
[hungerpreventioncouncil.com](http://hungerpreventioncouncil.com), click on Give  
Thank you for your "kindness".

## Baptism December 6, 2025

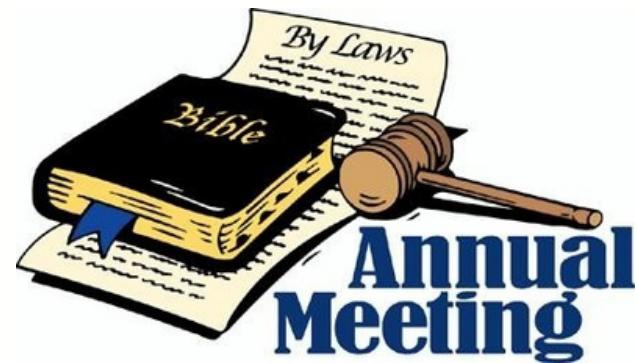
We had the honor of Hank Liam Matteson being baptized on Saturday, December 6, 2025 in our church.

His parents are Madelyne and Jason Matteson and sponsors are Chrissy and Jamie Matteson. Please join us as we celebrate this baptism.



## Cantata by the Choir

Sunday, December 21  
Directed by Missy K.  
Accompanied by Ava on the piano  
Narration by Pastor Pete & Warren Johnson  
Beautiful Music! Thank you to all that put hours of practice into this Cantata. You are appreciated!



**Mark Your Calendars  
Annual Meeting**

**Sunday, January 25, 2026 10:00 a.m.**

# CHURCH NEWS



## Thank You & Acknowledgements

During December with the Brunch and the Advent Social we collected \$425.00 along with many canned goods that we were able to donate to the Pierce County Food Pantry.

A big thank you to all that helped with the Christmas Box Program. We helped 5 families/30 people! We appreciate all of the assistance. It truly takes a team. Thank you!

## Council Minutes

The November Council Minutes will be in the February Cross Beams issue. The Council did not meet in December and thus were not able to approve the November Minutes.



Men's Breakfasts-Thursday 8 a.m. start again on January 8! We look forward to seeing you!

LPBC hosts one winter camp every year if the weather cooperates. The winter camp is happening in the new year, Feb. 6 - 7! This is a weekend-long camp for 6th-12th graders to come to camp and experience what camp is like in the winter. There will be workshops focused on our theme, "Building Community," but there will also be some free time for fun winter games and building community.

To register, parents/guardians will need to log in to the same account they used for summer camp, or create an account if they didn't attend camp last summer. Here is the page to log in or to create an account: <https://lutherpoint.campbrainregistration.com/>

They also need chaperones for this event. They need one (1) chaperone for every 9 youth attending! If you or someone you know is willing to be a chaperone, please fill out this Google Form: <https://forms.gle/JrpBt6rLXF89snCW8>



## Heart-Touching One Life at a Time

Mission Statement: To reach children and families in tough financial situations. We can assist with basic needs by providing clothing, shoes, coats, toys, or other essential items to help alleviate the challenges faced in these difficult situations.

Heart is here to lend a helping hand to families who need support during tough times. We have access to furniture, school supplies, laundry soap, coats, bikes, toys, and an array of other items. Recipients will be vetted to confirm the needs. There are limits to what we can offer. We can help families at Christmas with gifts for children, and we work with the Gift Box Program as well as Basics for Kids with donations of coats and boots.

We are here to help change lives and improve the quality of life for those who need a helping hand. We are not allowed to help with things like rent, utility bills, etc. If you are in need or know someone else in need, please reach out to Cindy at 715-307-9615 or Donna at 715-307-2213.

## The Sanctuary was adorned with beautiful poinsettias for Christmas Eve Services!

### Thank You for the Poinsettias in the Sanctuary

**Bartels Family**

In memory of Sallee Larson

**Tammy Brenner**

In honor of grandchildren: Brennen, Gannon, Harper, Remi, & Ana

**Curt & Judy Dumermuth**

In memory of Eldred & Irene (Curt's Parents)

**Jazmine Gardiner**

In memory of Earl & Evelyn (Judy's Parents)

**Dave & Bev Greeley**

In memory of Patricia Hanson

**Jackson & Katie Hager**

In memory of Loyal Hanson

**Nancy Johnson**

In memory of our parents and brother

**Willie & Kathy Maas**

In honor of our children, grandchildren & great grandchildren

**Sharon & Joel Schulze**

In memory of Thanksgiving for the season

**Melba Smith**

In memory of Sharon's sister, Dianne

**Mary Sokolik**

In memory of Heather Hantsbarger & other loved ones

**Lynette Winger**

In honor of our family & friends

**Diane Wiskerchen**

In memory of our loved ones we have lost

**Lee & Jeanette Wright**

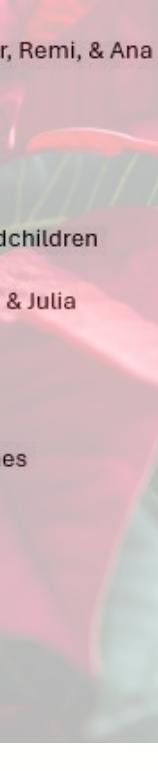
In honor of my family

In memory of my friends, & church family

In memory of Elaine Sanders

In thanksgiving for family & friends

In memory of our parents



January 2026

JUN 2006 (Cyclic Trends • China)



See the church website for the most up-to-date calendar

# You are invited to

## DISH WITH THE



500  
-  
730

All Ages  
Activity

Good Food

Sun  
Jan  
11

Bishop  
Q&A

Fellowship

**Who:** Members of the body of Christ in the  
Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

**Where:** First Lutheran Church  
218 County Rd K, New Richmond

**When:** Sunday, January 11, 2026  
5:00-7:30pm

Schedule:

500	Dinner
545	All Ages Activity
645	Bishop Q&A, Presentation
730	Depart



Northwest Synod of Wisconsin  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



#### Prayer requests:

Janet Arndt  
Max Beck  
Tomi Erlandson  
Matt Feuerhelm  
Julie Gore  
Dean Mewes  
Judy Morrow

Steve Pieczykolan  
Darren Place  
Greg Place  
Melba Smith  
Sophia Sokolik  
Elaine Wegerer

#### Military service prayers:

Josh Bechel  
Jonathan Bergman  
Kohl Flock



#### Financial Update

November 30, 2025 Cash Balances  
General Fund = \$101,016.30  
Dedicated Fund = \$103,014.28  
Total = \$204,030.58  
Thrivent = \$117,272.41

November General Fund Balance  
Income = \$14,047.20  
Expenses = \$18,527.10

The next finance meeting:  
**January 6 at 6:30 p.m.**

English Lutheran Church  
229 West Main Street  
Ellsworth, Wisconsin  
Phone: 715-273-4617

Church Website:  
[www.englishlutheranchurch.org](http://www.englishlutheranchurch.org)  
Find us on Facebook!  
**EnglishLutheranEllsworth**

#### Office Hours

Please contact the office for an appointment

office@englishlutheranchurch.org  
715-273-4617

#### Deaconess

The role of the Deaconess consists of sending thoughts, well wishes, and congratulations to members of our church to let them know we are thinking of them. Please notify the church office or any deaconess worker with prayer requests.

The Deaconess for January is Bev Greeley.



#### Staff

##### **Pastor Pete Warren**

pastorpete@englishlutheranchurch.org  
Cell: 218-760-6974 Office: 715-273-4617

**Communications Coordinator: Julie Winger**  
office@englishlutheranchurch.org  
Office: 715-273-4617

**Finance Administrator & Accompanist: Ava Maxwell**  
finance@englishlutheranchurch.org

**Music Director: Missy Kowalchyk**  
music@englishlutheranchurch.org

**Custodian: Malerie Mathis**