

FIRST ENGLISH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
88TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
SUNDAY, JULY 21, 2024
HISTORICAL SNAPSHOT



First English Ev. Lutheran Church was founded on Sunday, July 19, 1936, and the nave and sanctuary were built in 1939. We have served with five pastors in our history, 50 vicars/ interns, and numerous music directors, organists, youth ministers, education and faith formation directors, and child development center directors. We seek to be an inclusive and caring community of faith and service that invites, welcomes, connects, and transforms people from diverse areas of faith and life. We strive to share the Gospel of the risen Christ. We serve with neighbors, near and far, that all may know God's love and justice, peace and joy.

God loves. We love. Everyone!

1930's

1936	June 24	First meeting of founding members
	July 12	First worship service celebrated
	July 19	Congregation organized; Pastor Fred Kern called
1937	August 30	Purchase property at Whitis and 30 th
1938		Adjacent lots purchased
1939	January 22	Ground breaking ceremony
	May 7	\$7000 to install air conditioning, first in Austin
	September 24	Dedication of Nave & Sanctuary

1940's

1942	October 31	Pastor Kern resigns to serve in the US Military Chaplaincy
	July 15	Pastor Lewis Speaker begins call
1947	May	Additional lot added
1948		Brotherhood organized

1950's

- 1952 September 28 Parish Hall construction started
- 1953 May 3 Parish Hall dedicated
- 1956 Baptized membership reaches 800
- 1958 Vicar Internship Ministry started, Arlyn Hausman serves as first vicar

1960's

- 1961 July 25th Anniversary celebrated
- 1962 Parish Hall air conditioning added
- 1963 Pastor Speaker retires
- 1964 April 15 Pastor Merle Franke begins call
- 1964 First Chicken BBQ
- 1968 Vicar Intern Ministry renewed

1970's

- 1972 Child Development Center opens as an outreach ministry
- 1974 Pipe Organ rebuilt
- 1977 First vicar intern couple: Kathy and Al Wicks
- 1978 FELC resettles Laotian and Vietnamese refugee families

1980's

- 1980 Budget reaches \$100,000
- 1982 Anna Johnson retires after 26 years as church secretary
- 1984 March 31 Pastor Franke resigns
- December 19 Pastor Robert Karli begins call
- 1985 Nave air conditioning replaced
- Vicar Intern Ministry renewed
- FELC resettles Guatemalan refugee family
- 1986 Stephen Ministry begins

- 1986 50th Anniversary celebrated
- 1988 January 1 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America formed
- 1989 FELC resettles an Iranian refugee family (through Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, now Global Refuge)
- 1989 FELC becomes a Reconciling in Christ congregation

1990's

- Long-range plan adopted for \$300,000 in improvements
- Covered ramp for parking lot entrances built
- Sanctuary lighting upgraded
- Sacristy remodeled to provide two accessible restrooms
- Trumpet stop added to pipe organ
- Sanctuary floor leveled
- FELC hosts music and arts events with volunteers
- Baptized membership settles around 350

2000's

- 2007 October Pastor Karli retires
- 2008 July 1 Pastor Michael Coffey begins call
- 2009 Nave & Sanctuary rewired; exterior stonework washed and tuckpointed
- First Oktoberfest

2010's

- 2011 75th Anniversary celebrated with year-long observance
- 2012 Companion Café Wednesday night dinner ministry started
- 2015 Church basement floods; air conditioning components replaced
- Beginning of relationship with Dialogue Institute of the Southwest
- Beginning of relationship with Vision of Hope AME Church
- Young Adult outreach ministry begins
- 2016 Capital Campaign for campus improvement (inc. sound system)

	Chapel of the Saints and Columbarium dedicated
2017	FELC hosts Refugee Council USA prayer vigil
2019	New LED lighting installed in Nave/Sanctuary/Chapel

2020's & Beyond

2020	January	Outreach Strategic Plan developed
2020	March	COVID-19 pandemic leads to online worship and formation only
2020	December	Largest Christmas Eve worship attendance in FELC history, all online
2021		Upgrading and investment in digital technology
2021		FELC hosts first trans/non-binary vicar pastoral intern
2022		Nave, Sanctuary, Chapel, and Transept walls repaired and painted
2022	June	Synod bishop suspends FELC as a internship ministry site
2023	January	Pastor Coffey resigns
2023	March	Covenant begins with Transitional Pastor, J. Mills
2023	May	Child Development Center ministry suspends operations
2023	June	Significant upgrades and remodeling to CDC wing and fellowship hall
2023	August	Child Development Center ministry resumes operations
2023	October	Transition Ministry Team formed
2023	November	Congregation engages in large and small gatherings for the transition
2024	January	Church Council does not renew covenant with transitional pastor
2024	January	Transition Pastor resigns
2024		Enrollment in CDC rises and now includes infants
2024		Team, Committee, and Task Force leaders renew active leadership
2024		FELC renews/begins engagement with Austin area music groups
2024		Front courtyard and grounds redesigned and restored
2024		Narthex doors refurbished
2024		Preparations underway for refurbishing of the Pipe Organ
2024		Council engages in team building trainings
2024	June	Pastoral Call Committee formed and ministry documents approved
2024	July	Pastoral Call Committee begins process for candidate interviews

HISTORY OF VICARS / PASTORAL INTERNS

2022-2024		Pastoral transition ministry – no vicar
2022	50	Wes Isberner
2021		Covid19 pandemic - no vicar
2020	49	Kelsey Kresse
2016–18	48	Travis (Gould) Fitzgold (two-year, half-time vicar intern)
2014–16		Break from vicar ministry
2013	47	Kwame Pitts
2012	46	Alex LaChapelle
2011	45	Peder Hinderlie
2010	44	Carolyn Albert Donovan
2009	43	Rick Fry
2008	42	Rich Gates
2007		Pastoral transition ministry – no vicar
2006	41	Jordan Miller
2005	40	Laila Olson Barr
2004	39	Mary Seroczynski
2003	38	Amy Becker
2002	37	Trish Madden
2001	36	Kristen Koch
2000	35	Elaine Watsky
1999	34	Jason Wahlstrom
1998	33	Scott Chinberg
1997	32	Craig Sagebiel
1996	31	Elisa Brandt
1995	30	Joan Swander
1994	29	Steve Springer
1993	28	Greg Bouvier
1992	27	Chris Jones
1991	26	Michael Coffey
1990	25	Phil Witkop
1989	24	Marsha Houtman
1988	23	John Conrad
1987	22	Mike Mackey

1986	21	Jim Oschwald
1985	20	Melinda Wagner
1984		Pastoral transition ministry – no vicar
1983	19	Robert Wertz
1982	18	Beth-Marie Halverson
1981	17	Bobbie Blackburn
1980	16	Daniel Carlson
1979	15	David Olson
1978	14	Alan Wicks
1977	13	Kathy Wicks
1976	12	Robert Graff
1975	11	Wayne Harrison
1974	10	Robert Neubauer
1973	9	David Swenson
1972	8	Ralph Lien
1971	7	Craig Johnson
1970	6	Stephen Youngdahl
1969	5	Lee Dyer
1968	4	Paul Hansen
1961-67		Break from vicar ministry
1960	3	Kenneth Schroeder
1959	2	Terrance Michael
1958	1	Arlyn Hausman

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