

Test Message - January 2026 Newsletter

From Church Office <firstchurchlima+live.com@icontactmail.com>

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**First Evangelical & Reformed Church  
Informer Newsletter  
January, 2026**

**CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION**

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**FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK**

**The New Year is upon us, and as we make resolutions—or refuse to make them because they often get broken—may I invite you to consider a different approach this year.** No, we're not talking about weight loss or exercise. No joining a gym. No promises of countless volunteer hours. I'd like to propose something completely different.

**What if we recaptured the lost art of gathering?**

Remember those Sunday dinners at your aunt's and uncle's house? The neighborhood picnics? Family reunions? Having friends or neighbors over for supper, for cards, for conversation—for connection? What if we set a simple goal: **create one gathering a week** with different people? Maybe we choose them because... We want to hear their story and understand what makes them who they are. We enjoy their company—or we hardly know them but want to expand genuine friendships (not Facebook friend counts, but real friends). We want to encourage someone to grow deeper in Christ, or we want to grow ourselves and learn from them. We simply want to say *thank you* for the

**CALENDAR**

*Please click the Bible to view important events. (Anniversaries and Birthdays.)*



Sunday School, 9 AM  
Worship, 10:15 AM

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January 1, 2026  
New Year's Day

January 4, 2026  
Gathering Meal following worship.

January 4, 2026  
The Paul Kreher Souper Bowl begins. Runs through 2/8/26.

relationship we share and celebrate God's goodness together.

Life is short. Friends and family matter. And Jesus is the solution to many of the challenges we face. **So what about a meal, a prayer, and some spiritual fellowship? "But that sounds crazy..."** I know—we're all busy. We're embarrassed about how the house looks. We can find a hundred excuses. But what if we started valuing people again? What if we intentionally built relationships? What if we truly allowed God to order our days, our steps, and our interactions—and used our homes as small tabernacles of His glory?

What if we took God *out of the church building* and brought Him home in a real and personal way— making our homes an extension of the Church and our relationships an extension of the body of Christ?

**What could happen?** Honestly, I don't know. But I do know this: if we continue saying "no" to the resolutions and habits that could stretch us, change us, and grow us...are we not really saying, *"I like life just the way it is"*? Yet Christ came to transform our hearts, minds, and lives—to shape us into extraordinary individuals who are ambassadors for His kingdom. Your kingdom—your domain—is your home. Your home is your castle, right? So maybe this year...

**Drop the drawbridge and invite the neighbors in. Don't grab the remote and sink into the moat.**

Have a blessed and joyful New Year. **Pastor Ed**

January 6, 2026  
Epiphany

January 8, 2026  
Elder Meeting, 4 PM

January 12, 2026,  
Trustees meet at 6 PM and Consistory meets at 7 PM.

January 13, 2026  
Bible Study resumes at Alicia's at 7 PM every Tuesday except as noted.

January 17, 2026  
The Men's Breakfast is at 8:30 AM here at the church.

January 18, 2026  
Annual Meeting following the worship service.

January 19, 2026  
MLK Day. Office is closed. Will be open on Thursday, January 22, 9 AM - 3 PM instead.

January 25, 2026 is the Annual Meeting make up date in case of snow on the 18th.

### Member Spotlight

This month's spotlight is on Charlene Malloy. Her family members are Taminka Malloy of Lima, Cornelius Skipworth of Sheffield, Alabama and Mariska Collier of Lima.



She has been a member of First Evangelical & Reformed Church since 2016, when she joined by Confession of Faith.

She has served in the Ladies Aid and attends Sunday School and Worship. Her favorite aspect of church events are the First Sunday lunches.

She is a nurse by profession and retired due to a disability. Her hobbies and interests are music, movies, reading and crocheting.

Thank you, Charlene, for all you do. You are appreciated.



### Announcements Continued

The Men's Fellowship Breakfast is Saturday, January 17, 2026. They meet every third Saturday of every month at 8:30 AM in the church fellowship hall for breakfast. All are welcome to attend.

*Psalm 100:2 Serve the Lord with gladness;  
Come before His presence with singing.*

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Annual Meeting is on January 18, 2026 following the worship service. All members are encouraged to attend. We will have our church directory ready for pickup at that time as well as 2025 Giving Statements. To keep expenses down, we will not be mailing the directories. The snow date for the Annual Meeting is January 25.

Christmas Tree Festival ornaments. These ornaments were crafted especially for the Christmas Tree exhibit at the Allen County Museum by our members. The theme of our tree was “Jesus is Sweet”. There were garlands of popcorn and lifesavers as well multicolored lights and bulbs. You can see the tree pictures on Facebook.

You're Invited! A new Bible Study Discussion group will begin meeting Tuesday evenings at 7:00 PM starting January 13th at Alicia Moor's home—and you're invited to join the adventure! This 12-week study, “Climbing the Spiritual Mountain Trail: From Base camp to Invitation of Others,” is written by Pastor Ed Rinehart and designed to help you grow in confidence, faith, and your walk with Christ.

Just like any real mountain adventure, we begin at Base camp, where we'll establish solid footing and gather the spiritual supplies needed for the journey ahead. Throughout the study, you'll be guided by “trained professionals”—insights from Scripture and the Holy Spirit—who have navigated the trail long before us.

Each week will offer new challenges and “confidence builders,” helping you overcome fear, strengthen your faith, and develop a deeper relationship with God, Christ, and the Spirit. Topics will include grace, walking by faith, prayer, and more. Discussions will be heartfelt, personal, and encouraging.

Along the way, expect some “wildlife” (Alicia has a friendly dog!) and picturesque spiritual views as we climb together. Alicia assures us there is plenty of seating—chairs, couches, recliners— and last time she even had a digital fireplace glowing on the TV. (Not the warmest fire, but definitely the coziest!)

Study copies are available at the church, or Pastor Ed can email you a PDF if you prefer using a laptop or tablet. Want to do the study on your own? That's fine too. Want to bring a friend or neighbor so you don't come alone? Absolutely!

Let's gather around this “campfire” and start our mountain-climbing adventure together. Watch the church bulletin for more details and for Alicia's address. We hope you'll climb with us!

Our November Thank Offering collected \$302.00. The funds collected went to help our neighbors, the Rescue Mission and the Samaritan House. Your generosity is much appreciated.

Breakfast with Santa was Saturday, December 6. It was a huge success. Just ask the kids! There were 21 children and 18 adults who attended. Breakfast was served and when Santa arrived, the children visited with him and opened gifts. Pictures are posted on Facebook. Once again, thank you to all who helped with these events!

There were a lot of activities in December. Thank you to all the hardworking people who helped make all these activities possible. If you helped in any way, you are much appreciated!



### THE SOUPER BOWL

The PAUL KREHER MEMORIAL SOUPER BOWL is back! We will be collecting soup and crackers to be donated to CUP. If you want to donate money, please give your donation to Jeff Grapner and he will shop for you. Please bring your donated items to the church. The Souper Bowl will run from January 4th to February 8th, 2026.