



FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH

3001 Whitis Avenue, Austin, Texas, 78705 • www.felcaustin.org

The mission of First English Lutheran Church is to proclaim the Word of God and the love of Jesus Christ to all people through our ministry of preaching, teaching and caring.

ECHOES Newsletter

Volume 48, Issue 2

February 2012

FROM THE PASTOR

Why Do We Have Sermons?



Pastor Mike Coffey

At our recent annual theological conference for leaders in the three synods of Texas and Louisiana, we heard professors and preachers talk about the art and craft of preaching. We heard thoughts on what makes for Gospel-centered preaching, what makes for sermons that bring together text and context—the people we are with and the place and time we are in, and what makes for good communication.

To those of us who preach on a regular basis, the work and effort that goes into preaching is significant and is one of the chief tasks of a pastor, especially in the Lutheran tradition, where we hold proclamation of the good news of God in Christ through preaching to be central to the church's life. But, by the end of the conference, I was wondering: What difference does preaching actually make to the people in the pews? What are people looking for in a sermon?

Does anything in preaching stick with folks after Sunday? I'm not asking these questions out of doubt or anxiety about preaching, but out of a genuine curiosity about what impact sermons have on real people like, well, you.

What do you think? What difference does it make to hear a sermon preached on Sunday? Which sermons are memorable to you and have impacted your life?

In my own experience, I have learned that preaching is not just the work of the preacher. It is also the work of the worshiping congregation. There is discipline needed to listen. There is faith needed to receive the Word. There is a willingness to be open and transformed by the Spirit's work through worship and the sermon. There is response needed to let the preacher know: I hear you!

Visit Pastor Coffey's Web site at www.michaelcoffey.org for sermons and more. Find Pastor's blog at mccoffey.blogspot.com.



Ash Wednesday

12 NOON
12:45 P.M.
7 P.M.

Ash Wednesday Liturgy
Soup and Sandwich Lunch
Ash Wednesday Liturgy

The Ash Wednesday Liturgy is a solemn and powerful encounter with our mortality and sin. It begins the Lenten journey with utter and stark honesty about our human truth and need before God. The imposition of Ashes is an ancient practice of admitting and accepting death and the need for transformation.



Lenten House Worship: *Breaking Bread Together*

WEDNESDAYS FROM FEBRUARY 29 TO MARCH 28, 6:30–8:00 P.M.

Last year for Lent, Vicar Carolyn Albert led us through a Wednesday evening Lenten worship service that took place in three homes throughout the city. The theme was on hospitality. It was a new and beautiful experience of church in the home, where a more intimate connection among friends and strangers can take place, and where hospitality can be graciously offered and thankfully received.

This year we will continue the house worship format for Lent. Our theme is *Breaking Bread Together*. Through Scripture, prayer, a potluck meal, singing, ritual, and conversation, we will explore what it means to be a community that breaks bread together. We will confess how we have failed to share bread with others. We will give thanks for the community of faith that breaks bread with Jesus. We will look to how breaking bread with friend and stranger alike is God's way of creating community.

The house worship will take place at three homes in the city, making it convenient for you to attend the one most convenient for you. The intention is that each person or family attends the same house meeting for the entire season of Lent.

Look for more information on locations later in the month. Plan on making this Lent a time to rediscover the gift of breaking bread together, with strangers, and with Jesus.

From the Faith Formation Coordinator



Henri Atkinson

The month of presidents, a certain groundhog, lovers and yes leap year is upon us. Enjoy a great month and all the special days.

Our young person of the month is Ashley Jensen, the daughter of Allen and Jenny Jensen. She is also the granddaughter of Margaret and Paul Jensen. She told me that being apart of a three generation family at First English and a part of a smaller church has its rewards (everyone knows who you are) and its setbacks

(everyone knows who you are). She is the oldest Jensen grandchild by one minute over her twin, Joshua. She is a Gemini like me and at this moment in life, shy. Hard to believe but I was shy at her age too! Her younger brother is Ben. She is a freshman at Westwood High School, part of the Round Rock ISD. Her least favorite subject is Math and she is on the Golf team. She shoots in the 90s. Gee, that's what I shot for nine holes! Like most little girls she danced ballet at age 5. She gets easily bored which is so Gemini as well as that wonderful time of life, being fourteen! She likes travelling and would like to travel to Italy. She is really looking forward to the youth trip to New Orleans this summer. And I am looking forward to getting to know Ashley and her twin as they continue their journey of faith.



Yours in Christ,
Henri Atkinson

From the Church Council

SUMMARY — Submitted by Joe Cain, COUNCIL SECRETARY

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE JANUARY 17 COUNCIL MEETING:

The Council reviewed the year-end financial statements for 2011, noting that the year's deficit was \$7,593, less than the budgeted deficit of \$19,247.

Karleen Jung has asked to be admitted as a member, and the council unanimously approved an invitation to her for membership.

The council took up the election of officers. Nancy Neuse was nominated and elected as President. Terry Porter was nominated and elected as Vice President. Dana MacLaren was nominated and elected as Treasurer. David Austin was nominated and elected as Financial Secretary. Alison-Derick Northcutt was nominated and elected as Secretary.

CHURCH STAFF

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KRYSTAL NORMAN

CUSTODIANS

TERESA/JESUS DEL AGUILA
SONIA ESPINOZA

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Nancy Neuse

VICE-PRESIDENT

Terry Porter

SECRETARY

Alison Derick-Northcutt

MEMBERS

Billy Elliott
Angelo Ferrazzano
Ruth Gray
Shelly Kronbergs
Judy Moltz
Kristin Mondy
Terry Porter
Barbara Schutz
Sage Weber

TREASURER

Dana MacLaren

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FELC OFFICE HOURS

Monday–Thursday 9:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.
Friday 9:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.

FROM THE VICAR

“Come and see” what we “get to” do on our journey through Lent.



Vicar Peder Hinderlie

One of the Gospel texts this past January was a story from the Gospel of John. In this story, Philip invites Nathanael to “come and see” Jesus. At first, Nathanael is a bit doubtful about what he’d been invited to, but of course taking the risk paid off. He encountered something truly special.

Well, this month, y’all have the opportunity for an encounter that is almost as special as Jesus: Fastnacht! FELC’s yearly talent show. From what I have heard, this night has been lots of fun over the years, and I look forward to helping continue that tradition. However, besides the lovely singing I get to hear from you in church, I don’t really know who among you has any talent to share. I am just beginning to put together a list of acts, and if you would like to participate (You know you want to!), please shoot me an e-mail at vicar@felcaustin.org, speak to me in person, or leave a voicemail at 478-1933, ext. 12.

It has been a while since I’ve been a part of a church talent show, but I do remember way back in 8th grade, some friends and I treated my church at the time to an assortment of Metallica and Nirvana cover songs. I don’t think it went over very well with the congregation, but I am very proud that I got out of my

comfort zone and performed for others. I hope some of you who maybe haven’t performed in the past due to nerves or anything like that will use this opportunity to let your talent shine!

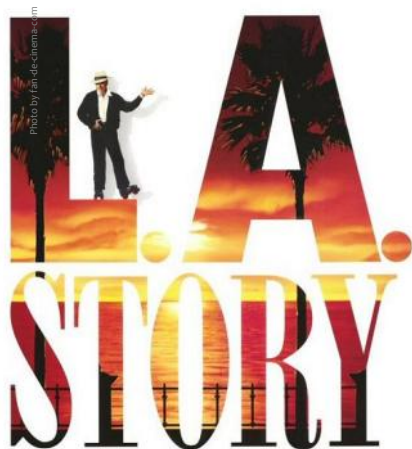
Besides Fastnacht, the month of February also marks the beginning of Lent, my favorite season of the church year. For most in our culture Lent is equated with restraint. Over the years I’ve heard many times what people have “given up for Lent.” Some “give up” eating meat. I have “given up” watching television. In my experience, what I have “given up” is generally something I shouldn’t be doing in the first place.

If Lent is a time to remember and reflect on the One who came that we may have life, and have it abundantly, then I wonder if we shouldn’t re-phrase how we understand our Lenten adventures. Instead of “giving up”, with its negative connotations, we should perhaps focus on “getting to” do something that embraces life and living, to take action.

How much more exciting to “get to” read books and exercise? Or to, “get to” explore the wide world of fruits and vegetables? (Well, that second one doesn’t sound all that exciting, but you get the point.)

No matter how we decide to reset the language of our journey through Lent, we can know that along the way we have a family of support here at First English. I wish you all many blessings, and look forward to journeying with you.

STEVE MARTIN



SPIRITUALITY IN MOVIES

L.A. STORY

Monday, February 13, 2012

6:30 P.M. in the Parlor

This month’s film is Steve Martin’s 1991 funny and thoughtful look at life in Los Angeles. The story is about a weatherman in a city where the weather never changes, looking for meaning and transformation in his life, and getting messages from a mysterious highway sign. As always, bring a dinner if you’d like to eat during the movie, enjoy some popcorn, invite a friend, and stay for the conversation afterwards led by Pastor Coffey.

Other movies planned for the winter/spring season include *The Tree of Life*, *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, and *The Empire Strikes Back*.



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

LOCATION LEGEND

CE = CLASSROOM EAST
 FH = FELLOWSHIP HALL
 LB = LIBRARY
 PL = PARLOR
 SY = SANCTUARY
 TC = TRANSEPT CHAPEL

Stephen Ministry Continuing Education Monday, February 6, at 7 P.M. in the Parlor

Topic: Care-giving to the Unemployed
 Speaker: Jim Adcock, SharePoint Consultant
 and Vice President of LaunchPad Job Club

Anyone interested is invited. (Assigned Stephen Ministers will meet at 6:30 for supervision)

FEBRUARY 1

10:00 A.M.
 CDC Chapel (SY)
10:30 A.M.
 Companions Group
12:30 P.M.
 Prime Timers Potluck
6:00 P.M.
 NUNA DRC Meeting
6:15 P.M.
 Learning Ministry T
7:00 P.M.
 Choir Rehearsal (S

FEBRUARY 5

8:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
 Worship (SY)
9:45 A.M.
 Children's Sunday School (FH)
 Adult Sunday School (PL)
 High School Group (CE)

FEBRUARY 6

9:00 A.M.
 Monday Ministry (SY)
7:00 P.M.
 Stephen Ministry Continuing Ed (PL)

FEBRUARY 7

8:00 A.M.
 Lutheran pastors text study (LB)
NOON
 Prayer Circle (LB)
6:00 P.M.
 CDC Board (PL)

FEBRUARY 8

10:00 A.M.
 CDC Chapel (SY)
10:30 A.M.
 Companions Group
5:30 P.M.
 NUNA Membership
7:00 P.M.
 Choir Rehearsal (S

FEBRUARY 12

8:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
 Worship (SY)
9:45 A.M.
 Children's Sunday School (FH)
 Adult Sunday School (PL)
 High School Group (CE)
2:00 P.M.
 Art Exhibition (TC)
6:30 P.M.
 FELC Book Club (TBD)

FEBRUARY 13

9:00 A.M.
 Monday Ministry (SY)
NOON
 Micah 6 Board Meeting (PL)
6:30 P.M.
 Spirituality in Movies (PL)

FEBRUARY 14

8:00 A.M.
 Lutheran pastors text study (LB)
NOON
 Prayer Circle (LB)

FEBRUARY 15

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
FEBRUARY ECHOES
10:00 A.M.
 CDC Chapel (SY)
10:30 A.M.
 Companions Group
7:00 P.M.
 Choir Rehearsal (S

FEBRUARY 19

8:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
 Worship (SY)
9:30 A.M.
 Green Team (LB)
9:45 A.M.
 Children's Sunday School (FH)
 Adult Sunday School (PL)
 High School Group (CE)

FEBRUARY 20

9:00 A.M.
 Monday Ministry (SY)
7:00 P.M.
 Congregation Council (PL)

FEBRUARY 21

8:00 A.M.
 Lutheran pastors text study (PL)
NOON
 Prayer Circle (LB)
1:15 P.M.
 Prayer Shawl Ministry (LB)
6:00 P.M.
Fastnacht (FH)

FEBRUARY 22

10:00 A.M.
 CDC Chapel (SY)
10:30 A.M.
 Companions Group
NOON
Ash Wednesday Li
12:45 P.M.
 Soup and Sandwich
7:00 P.M.
Ash Wednesday Li

FEBRUARY 26

8:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.
 Worship (SY)
9:45 A.M.
 Children's Sunday School (FH)
 Adult Sunday School (PL)
 High School Group (CE)
NOON
 Prayer Shawl Ministry (LB)

FEBRUARY 27

9:00 A.M.
 Monday Ministry (SY)

FEBRUARY 28

8:00 A.M.
 Lutheran pastors text study (LB)
11:30 A.M.
 Women's Bible Study Group (PL)
NOON
 Prayer Circle (LB)
7:30 P.M.
 Drum with Rajamani (TC)

FEBRUARY 29

10:00 A.M.
 CDC Chapel (SY)
10:30 A.M.
 Companions Group
7:00 P.M.
 Choir Rehearsal (S
6:30 P.M.
 Lenten Worship (I



THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

	<p>FEBRUARY 2 7:30 P.M. Candlemas (SY)</p>	<p>FEBRUARY 3 6:15 P.M. Yoga Class (FH)</p>	<p>FEBRUARY 4 8:30 A.M. 2012 SeniorFest (Palm Valley Lutheran) 9:00 A.M. Austin Central SDA (SY, PL, LB: 12:30 P.M. FH)</p>
	<p>FEBRUARY 9</p>	<p>FEBRUARY 10 6:15 P.M. Yoga Class (FH)</p>	<p>FEBRUARY 11 9:00 A.M. Austin Central SDA (SY, PL, LB: 12:30 P.M. FH) 9:00 A.M. FELC Women's Walkabout (UT North)</p>
	<p>FEBRUARY 16</p>	<p>FEBRUARY 17 9:15 A.M. Church Women United Board (PL) 6:15 P.M. Yoga Class (FH) 6:30 P.M. 3rd Friday Game & Fellowship (LB)</p>	<p>FEBRUARY 18 9:00 A.M. Austin Central SDA (SY, PL, LB: 12:30 P.M. FH)</p>
	<p>FEBRUARY 23</p>	<p>FEBRUARY 24 6:15 P.M. Yoga Class (FH)</p>	<p>FEBRUARY 25 9:00 A.M. Austin Central SDA (SY, PL, LB: 12:30 P.M. FH)</p>

Heart to Drum



Drum with a master hand drummer.

Every last Tuesday of the month, Oliver Rajamani offers a one-hour drumming session at 7:30 P.M. in the Transept Chapel.
No experience necessary. Just walk in. If you have a drum please bring it. All levels welcome.

FELC Women's Walkabout

Second Saturdays

Next up: February 11 at 9 A.M.
Neighborhood just north of U.T.
Meet at the home of Renee and Rita Carlson, 604 Harris Avenue, 78705
We'll walk and end up at the Carlson house for drinks, snacks, and conversation!
Questions? Want to get on the Walkabout e-mail list for updates?
Contact Renee Carlson, crsh@grandecom.net or 477-3489.

4TH Saturday Kickball: On Hiatus for February

Kickball will be on hiatus for February. We'll hope to resume once the holidays and the first wave of cold temps pass. Watch Echoes for updates as February approaches. For questions or info about FELC Kickball, contact Gretchen Olson at gretchenrolson@yahoo.com.

Central Texas 2012 SENIORFEST

FAITH IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE

Saturday, February 4, 2012

at Palm Valley Lutheran Church, Round Rock

Is learning about your faith a New Year's resolution? SeniorFest 2012 has all the elements: teaching in the Word, training for discipleship, discussions on putting our faith to work. Come join us for Faith in the Public Square.

An exciting presenter with national credentials:

Retired Army Chaplain Rodger Venzke;

two great workshops chosen from a list of eight;
a great meal and conversations
with old & new friends.

**Registration forms are available
in the Narthex and the FELC office.**

Questions? Call Barbara Gilbertson at 864-7473.

A Journey of Faith

Juried Art Exhibition

Opens Sunday February 12

2:00 P.M., Transept Chapel

Juried Exhibition, entitled "A Journey of Faith" will open Sunday afternoon February 12 in celebration of FELC's 75th anniversary.

The exhibition was open to all Central Texas artists and was juried by University of Texas art professor Tim High. Included are works by Cynthia Cain, Jane Coleman, Sandra Martin, Nathan Jensen, Howard Rains, and eight others.

An opening reception will be held in the First English Lutheran Transept Gallery at 2:00 P.M. The public is invited.

From the CDC



Teresa Kapelle
CDC Director

A week or so ago I sat in on a group time with our three and four year olds. The ultimate discussion was about igloos, as the teacher sat in front of a play tent that looked like an igloo (gotta love IKEA!).

The teacher discussed all types of different houses before really focusing on the igloo. She asked the kids to tell her about their observations. She asked them to compare the igloo to the other types of houses that they had seen. When she began to discuss the shape of the igloo, the kids described it as being round and like a circle. She told the group that the name for that shape was a "dome."

Very quickly, a little girl raised her hand. "I went to the Capitol, and it is a dome!"

This is when my ears perked up. I get really excited when I hear children making a connection between prior experiences and present learning. This is what early childhood learning is all about! We want our kids to have a range of experiences from which to draw connections. Want to best prepare your child for future learning?

- **Give Them New Experiences.** Even if you think it is over their heads. Kids understand that for which they are ready. Our little girl probably had no idea what the purpose of the Capitol was; however, she did take away that shape.
- **Give Learning Movement.** So many famous educators have taught us that learning is active, especially when you are a young one. The more you can get your child physically involved in the learning, the more likely they are to take away new concepts.
- **Be Present With Them in Their Learning.** You want to actually put that computer aside and admire how the bubbles are bursting in the bubble bath. Give the moment power and show that learning is important. Ask open ended questions. ... And mostly,
- **Don't Push It.** Learning should be fun when you are young, not a chore. If your kiddo is not excited by the learning moment, that's okay. There will be many more in their future. You'll make sure of it.

Always a pleasure,
Teresa

First English Lutheran
Child Development Center
(512) 478-5424
tkapelle@firstenglishcdc.org

The Wall Cross Project

We are starting a collaborative project to display many different wall crosses in the hallway between the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall.

To represent every member of our congregation, we're asking everyone to contribute a cross, or more than one! This will be an assemblage or constellation of crosses, with lots of variety and different artistic styles represented.

We'd like to hang beautiful crosses made of metal, wood, ceramic, stone, wire, beads, resin, fabric—the more variety the better! So please bring a cross to hang on the wall! You can choose a cross that you've had hanging on your own wall, buy one from a store or make your own cross for this project. Byzantine or modern, Latin or Celtic, we love them all!

Bring your crosses by Ash Wednesday, February 22.

A container will be provided in the narthex to collect the crosses. Questions? contact Anne Wiebe: wiebeanne@hotmail.com

Austin CROP Hunger Walk



FELC group will walk:
Sunday, March 4
1:45 P.M. Registration
Walk begins at 2:30 P.M.

Sunday not good for you? How about the day before:
Saturday, March 3
9:30 A.M. Registration
Walk begins at 10:00 A.M.

25% of the money raised stays local:
Micah 6 will receive 1.5% of that portion.

Where is the one-mile walk?
Walter E. Long Park
6614 Blue Bluff Road

Contact Cliff Roberts:
656-8268 or crsh@grandecom.net
to sign up to be a walker or to sponsor a walker!

CONTINUE IN PRAYER FOR

Ben Wilkins, uncle of Greg Meier
Pat Wilkins, aunt of Greg Meier
Michael George, son of Karleen Jung George
Mike Grund, nephew of Merle & Ginna Franke
Alice & John Robbins, sister-in-law and brother of Mary Robbins
Emily Schottman & family, friends of Mary Robbins
Karen & Lew, friends of Mary Robbins
Kathy, friend of Mary Robbins
Cecile Austin, mother of David Austin
Lisa Norgard, cousin of Erin Anderson, and
Lisa's daughters Betsy and Stina,
Ann Hinz
Link Davidson, visitor to First English
Kathy Matson & family, friends of Vicar Peder
David Wicks, son of former FELC Vicars Kathy & Al Wicks
Mike Waters, friend of Buddy Lundstedt, and LaRu & Fred Woody
Linda Henderson, friend of Emily Atkinson
Pat Wilkins, aunt of Greg Meier
Bruce Collmann, nephew of Larry Collmann
Carolyn Albert, FELC Vicar #44
Helen Rodriguez, friend of Greg Meier
Christopher Jordan, nephew of Barbara Ws' friend, Gloria Jordan
Bill Martin, father of Barbara Wiederaenders' classmate
Felix, Kristen & Lauren Bargas, friends of Monica Lund
Don Larson & Family, cousin of Monica Lund
Dennis Burroughs, friend of Gratia Winship
Princetta MacLaren, step-mother of Andy MacLaren
Michaelie Wiebe, niece of Anne Wiebe
Gene Steinmeyer, uncle of Jill Essbaum
Greg & Renee Heins & Family, friends of Emily Atkinson
Mindy, Charlotte & James, friends of Monica Lund
Mallie Coker, friend of Katherine Houston
Jarett Werley, friend of Chris Billig
Ki Norman, friend of Monica Lund



Prayer Circle
TUESDAYS AT NOON

Take a break in your day for meaningful group prayer time, most Tuesdays at Noon in the church library. For information and special prayer requests, please call Barbara Schutz (328-0587) or Lois Holck (327-8501).

Save the Date: Saturday, March 3
2012 Lenten Retreat
at McKinney Falls State Park

A one-day best-of-both event: Out-of-doors and short drive!

February 2012



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH

VOLUME 48, ISSUE 2

February 2012

ECHOES is a monthly publication of First English Evangelical Lutheran Church. Founded in 1936, the church is located at the corner of Whitis Avenue and 30th Street in the North University area of Austin.

PASTOR

Michael Coffey

VICAR/INTERN

Peder Hinderlie



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

8:30 A.M. Worship Service

9:45 A.M. Sunday School

11:00 A.M. Worship Service

Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday at both worship services.

FASTNACHT

Tuesday, February 21
Pancake Supper &
Talent Show

6:00 P.M. IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL

Calling all prospective performers!
To showcase your talent,
please contact Vicar Peder: e-mail to
vicar@felcaustin.org, speak to him in person,
or leave a voicemail at 478-1933, ext. 12.



Save the Date: Saturday, March 3, Lenten Retreat at McKinney Falls State Park



CANDLEMAS



PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD

Thursday, February 2 at 7:30 P.M.

An ancient celebration of the presentation of Jesus in the temple

- Candlelight procession and Eucharist
- Blessing of candles for the church year
- Bring a candle to be blessed for prayer in your home
- Celebrate the passing on of the light of hope and faith from one generation to another
- Offering to be dedicated to Any Baby Can

My eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the
presence of all peoples, a light
for revelation to the Gentiles and
for glory to your people Israel

—Luke 2:30–32



Welcome New Members

Anita Jung-Rajamani and Oliver Rajamani

— Submitted by Barbara Wiederaenders



transitions youth and families from crisis to safety and success. It provides counseling, education and housing to over 10,000 individuals each year. Now Division Director of Counseling Services, her passion is the use of Ericksonian hypnosis in her private therapy practice. A licensed professional counselor and diplomate of the American Psychotherapy Association, Anita is an international workshop presenter, past president of the Central Texas Society of Clinical Hypnosis and is currently representative of all therapists to the national group of that Society. For more information about the services of her practice, see www.anitajung.com.

Anita and Oliver travel the world together presenting at international hypnosis and therapy conferences. Anita facilitates a deep state of trance to hundreds of people with the hypnotic melodies of Oliver's music.

With roots in Germany and India, Anita and Oliver bring an international flavor to the First English family. In spite of their different home countries, the towns in which they were raised were similar—both centers of tourism in mountainous regions.

ANITA JUNG, daughter of Georg and Hedwig Jung, was born April 7 in Bodenmais, Germany, in the Bavarian Forest. When she came to Austin to attend college, she hadn't planned to stay in America, but one job led to another and Austin has become home. Anita has a masters of science in counseling from the University of Central Texas. The past sixteen years she has been with Life Works, a non-profit organization that

As for the family back in Bavaria, her father was a musician and builder who died in 2004. Her brother Georg Jung, Jr., died in 2007. In view of these losses and her mother's health issues, Anita's daughter Jana has moved to attend college in Germany with her three cousins and offer support to her grandmother. Anita and Oliver visit as often as possible.

And how did Anita and Oliver meet? "On a couch in a parking garage!" What? Oliver was waiting to go on stage with musicians playing at a benefit for the SIMS Foundation non-profit group supporting mental health services for musicians in Austin. He gravitated to the only seating in the parking garage venue, the sofa where Anita, a Foundation provider, was perched. That was about 12 years ago and they've now been married over 4 years.

OLIVER RAJAMANI, born June 19 in Madurai, known as the City of Temples in Southern India, grew up in Kodaikanal, a bubble of international citizenry. It was developed by the British as a retreat for their soldiers and eventually attracted American missionaries. The 8,000 foot high city became a



Visit First English Lutheran on the Web at www.felcaustin.org for more information and the current activity schedule.

headquarters from which to send their emissaries into the interior, with local Indians providing workers for the resulting tourism industry. In this setting, Oliver attended the Christian missionary school for international students on scholarship.

Although Indian families usually insist their young men become professionals in medicine, law, etc., his family was always supportive of his love of music. With the help of his grandmother's advocacy, he was awarded a scholarship to a Quaker School in the U.S. They believed in experiential learning and students were expected to study in two countries other than their own. He studied Indian music and culture in India and then came to the North American Center in Long Island, New York. Majoring in sociology, he later studied in Jerusalem and then Greece . where he studied Buddhist art. An artist as well as musician, Oliver learned that the first sculptures of Buddha were made by Greek artisans in India who gave Buddha the face of Apollo. When the Greeks ruled India, they created two art schools: one in India called Gandhara, the other in Afghanistan called Taxila.

Oliver became interested in Roma (Gypsy) studies when he learned that historically the Roma, whose music he loves, are genetically, linguistically and culturally from India. He worked for the Romani Congress at the United Nations and moved to Austin in 1995. The U. N. representative of the Roma people is a professor at the University of Texas which has the largest Roma archives in the world.

All of this makes the eclectic variety of his musicianship more understandable. Many of us have enjoyed his local appearances and are privileged that he holds a drumming session, "Heart to Drum," from 7:30-8:15 P.M. every last Tuesday in our chapel. Come drum with a master hand drummer, learn rhythms from around the world, and de-stress. See our calendar for details. To learn more about his local appearances, please see his web site www.oliverrajamani.com.

What about the other parts of Oliver's life? Going to the local protestant church was a must in his family. His father, Alfred, is a veterinarian and his mother is the secretary and homemaker, who, Oliver says, actually "runs the family as in most Indian families." He has one brother and his sister, married to a pilot, has two children. Life as a musician in America is a long way from these foundations, but he resolved to follow his dad's advice not to "go off the deep end" with the temptations of the entertainment world. With Anita, who was born and raised Roman Catholic, he has been open to a variety of faiths and traditions. They had attended a Baptist church in Austin and appreciated the pastor's messages. When that pastor left, Oliver remembered First English where he had appeared with the Texas Early Music Project. After he and Anita attended a Christmas service here, they kept coming back. The hymns, the services, the choir, the warm and welcoming congregation make him almost feel back home.

Oliver and Anita have a lot to be thankful for. Oliver names his health, the loving support of his wife and daughter of his heart Jana, his family and their support, and the upbringing they provided. He is grateful for a good and varied life, quite magical at times. Arriving with only \$10 and making his way as a professional musician has not been easy, but he cannot complain. There is the sense of a Divine Presence that always provides.

Anita is also thankful for her strong foundation that has protected her from the floating around that is so prevalent today. She's thankful for the balance her husband provides, helping her bear the stresses of life. She is thankful for her daughter and for the many good people of this country who carry on the true vision of the spiritual oneness of all beings and provide her with countless opportunities and acceptance. She is thankful to have a gift for helping other people through the creative Ericksonian approaches.

And what would they ask a candidate for the United States presidency, what advice? Anita recommends that they look into how free health care services and schooling work in Europe so beautifully and asks how they might implement that here. "It works!" Oliver wants to know, with America being the most powerful country in the world, "What steps would you take to make America truly the leader in peace globally in a spiritual manner? What steps would you take to go beyond your own fears to be an example of peace in this world such as putting aside your honor as president and being more aware as a human being? It is a spiritual question in a worldly context. As a leader of this country, you have more to answer for."

No one knows the future, but one can hope. In ten years, Anita would like to be working less and spending more time being creative, writing books, teaching, and holding workshops. At First English, she may be of service to the terminally ill. Oliver looks forward to maturing spiritually, evolving spiritually as it reveals itself in his music. It would be good to see more financial stability in his career as well, and he looks forward to continuing to be involved in the music ministry in some way.

We are very pleased to welcome Oliver and Anita into the family, into the mission and ministry of First English!