

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
246 South Main Street
Greensburg, Pennsylvania 15601-3183
T: 724-834-1457
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felchurch.org

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC.....Marvin Huls
CHURCH TREASURER..... Patti Sias
OFFICE MANAGER..... Patricia Pluck
OFFICE SECRETARY.....Susan Woodcox
CUSTODIAN..... Jaison Smith

CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Merle Baker	
Cindy Black	
Rebecca Brunetta	
Megan Danilko Zobb	Secretary
Bob Errett	
Suzy Flory	
Jeanne Kiss	
Bobbie Laciak	Vice President
Sue Ross	
Brandie Saraceni	President
Amy Schultz	
Kim von Schlichten	

WORSHIP WITH US

Sunday Church School 9:30 A.M.
SCS does not meet in June, July or August

Sunday Worship 8:15 A.M. & 10:45 A.M.
Summer Schedule 8:15 A.M. & 10:00 A.M.

Elevator and Hearing Assistance Available

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED
FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
246 SOUTH MAIN STREET
GREENSBURG, PA 15601-3183

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**FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
GREENSBURG, PA**

PHONE 724-834-1457
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felchurch.org



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AUGUST 2017



WELCOME INTERIM PASTOR

Church Council is happy to announce that Pastor Larry E. Kemp will serve as our interim pastor for the next year, beginning August 15th. Pastor Kemp resides in Pittsburgh and is coming to First Lutheran as he finishes an interim at Christ Lutheran Church in Millvale, PA. He received his Master of Divinity at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, a Doctorate of Jurisprudence in the field of law and legal studies from Capital University in Ohio and a Bachelor of Arts in economics from the University of Pittsburgh. We look forward to Pastor Kemp's leadership as our congregation moves forward and are confident that his ministry of the Gospel that we all share will flourish among us all. Please help us in welcoming Pastor Kemp to First Lutheran.



God's Grace and Peace,
Church Council

Dear First Lutheran Church Family,

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the entire congregation, church council and staff for the many well wishes, beautiful cards, and monetary gifts in honor of my retirement. I am overwhelmed and humbled by your outpouring of love and generosity.

It has truly been a blessing to serve in the church office. As I begin this new chapter in my life, I will always remember the kindness and caring shown to me over the past 17 years.

Thank you and God bless,

Joanie

CUDDLERS NEEDED



Excelsa Health Volunteer Services is seeking a limited number of committed volunteers to cuddle/rock NAS (neonatal abstinence syndrome) babies at Excelsa Westmoreland. These infants have been born into addiction as a result of their mothers' substance use during pregnancy; volunteers will provide non-medical comfort while the babies detox in the hospital.

Volunteers will be cuddling/rocking NAS babies that are connected to a monitor and, sometimes, a feeding tube. These babies are more challenging to comfort than the average newborn. Cuddlers only rock the babies, they do not walk/stand with them, feed or diaper them.

If you would like to volunteer, contact Ellen Katter or Cheri Anderson at 724-832-4099

Volunteers must obtain clearances, complete bloodwork for titers for vaccinations to determine if boosters or additional vaccinations are needed, complete training for volunteers and baby cuddling and make a commitment to a 4 hour shift. If you cannot cuddle on your shift, you are responsible for finding a substitute.

FIRLU HAS HEARD...



-that as of June 25th our offering receipts are \$11,247; last year they were \$11,342.

--that registrations are now being accepted for the 2017-2018 term of the First Lutheran Preschool. Classes are offered for children ages 3 and 4. Please speak to Barb Krunszysyinsky or call the church office for more information.

-that you can help us promote our preschool! If you have a Facebook account, please go to "First Lutheran Preschool" and "like us" on Facebook. The more "likes" we have, the more ability we have to share our preschool mission: To provide an affordable, high quality, educational program while promoting the Christian faith and a love of learning.

-that assistance is greatly needed the third Thursday of the month by 8:00 AM to unload the truck and sort groceries for Food Pantry distribution.

-that Angel Food cakes (home baked or purchased) are needed the first Sunday of every month for Meals on Wheels. Bring your cake to the church office. Thanks!

-that the deadline for the September newsletter is Friday, August 18th. Please be prompt. You may submit your articles to office@felchurch.org.

-that a FREE PIANO is available if you pick up. Contact the church office.

See you at worship,

FIRLU

SWPA W/ELCA 500TH REFORMATION CHALLENGE



Summer is moving along and so is our WELCA Reformation challenge. We continue to appreciate your generosity concerning the previous items needed. For the months of July, August and September we will be collecting gift cards, in any amount, from either Walmart or Target. These will be given to help Human Trafficking Safe Houses. As usual, the collection boxes will be in the Narthex and the entrance to the Educational Building.

WELCA weekend retreat is September 15 - 17. The theme for this year is "I am She" The weekend activities will take a look at how we can be bold in Prayer, Advocacy, Caring and Teaching. If you are interested in attending, please contact Bonnie Zaccari at 724-689-9106 and I will get the information and registration form for you.



Ruth Circle will meet on Thursday, September 13 at 7:30 in the church parlor. All women are invited and welcomed. We are looking for someone to assume the role of leader and also for someone to assume the role of treasurer/secretary. Transitional help will be provided. Please prayerfully consider accepting one of these roles.



Youth going into grades 8—12 who are interested in attending the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston Texas from June 27—July 1, 2018 should contact the church office at 724-834-1457 and leave your name and phone number. You can also find more information on the gathering at www.elca.org/YouthGathering.

REFORMATION REFLECTIONS

It's time you met some members of the Wittenberg gang. They were the dynamic group of theologians, teachers, preachers, and linguists who bounced ideas around, discussed word meanings in several languages, and inspired each other in their daily lives and work. Martin Luther was the headliner, but the energy, force and intelligent thinking of these men established Elector Frederick the Wise's newly-established university as a vigorous force for change.



Johann Staupitz an Augustinian monk who deeply influenced Martin Luther's development as a theologian. Staupitz was confessor, friend and guide to Luther during his years as a monk. It was he who introduced Luther to the idea of a loving God, and he who recommended the young Luther to Frederick the Wise as a good candidate for professor of theology. Staupitz and Luther corresponded during all the years of their lives.

Philip Melanchthon, the most recognizable name associated with the Reformation after Luther. Upon seeing Melanchthon for the first time Luther commented that he was a scrawny shrimp who resembled Luther's imagined image of the apostle Paul. It did not take Luther long to also notice his brilliant intellect and despite their differences they became life-long colleagues and friends. It was Melanchthon who attended the diet at Augsburg, and afterward wrote The Augsburg Confession which is still a major component of Lutheran Confessions.

Georg Spalatin, an Augustinian monk and priest appointed to the Court of Fredrick the Wise to act as tutor for his children and chaplain to his court. Luther and Spalatin became enduring friends and correspondents. Spalatin was Luther's link to Fredrick's court. When Luther met the newly-escaped, bedraggled nuns (including Katherine von Bora) arriving in Wittenberg he immediately wrote to Georg Spalatin that the nuns were a miserable lot and their condition called for sympathy. He asked that Spalatin perform an act of charity in Luther's name and "beg your rich courtiers, so I can feed them for a week or two."

continued...

REFORMATION REFLECTIONS continued...

Johannes Bugenhagen was a pastor of the Reformation and leader of the Wittenberg town Church. He arrived in Wittenberg when Luther was safely away at the Wartburg. Trained in the liberal arts and ancient languages he approached Luther's writings as a teacher. He, along with Melancthon, assisted Luther in the retranslation of the Bible. Bugenhagen became one of the chief reformers in Germany and was loaned out to various territories and even to the King of Denmark.

Nicholas von Amsdorf pastor and theology professor at Wittenberg was one of Luther's closest friends. Amsdorf accompanied Luther to Worms, corresponded with Luther when he was at the Wartburg and became the first bishop consecrated in the Reformation. When Katherina von Bora was the final remaining ex-nun still without a permanent home and still living in Wittenberg, Amsdorf approached her after the young man she was engaged to let her down—his parents nixed the marriage because she had no dowry. Amsdorf had talked to an older man who agreed to marry Katherina, but she firmly and flatly said no thank you—and added she would marry either Amsdorf or Luther himself.

Andreas Carlstadt was the senior theologian at Wittenberg. He was a rebel who wanted to remove candles, pictures and décor from church buildings and throw over and destroy liturgical order. Luther, on the other hand wanted to reform it. Carlstadt's over-the-top attitude brought Luther back to Wittenberg from the Wartburg, safe or not. While Carlstadt was the senior theologian he stood in Luther's shadow. Eventually Carlstadt accepted a position of church pastor. He didn't get along well with people and often made them angry. Shortly after Luther married, Carlstadt showed up at the Luther's home. He had managed to anger enough people to get himself and his family thrown out of the town where he had lived and served as a pastor. Luther, of course, provided hospitality.



Joan Orr

ON PREACHING THE GOSPEL continued...

Now fast forward to a Christmas Eve service five years later. We went to another church, in another denomination, thousands of miles away from the first church. What happened was absolutely incredible. The preacher began the sermon talking about Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and Gene Autry. A few minutes into the sermon, he cupped his ears as if he were hearing something. It turned out to be the song about Rudolph coming through the sound system and—can you believe this?—the congregation began to sing along! What are the odds that two preachers from two different denominations, thousands of miles apart, would preach about Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer without reference to the unbelievable miracle of the Incarnation? I wanted to cry, I wanted to shout, I wanted to give up on the church.

What does it mean to preach the gospel? Does it mean saying the words “Jesus Christ” a number of times during the sermon? Does it mean using the formula “Jesus died for you?” a sufficient number of times? Of course not. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer puts it, does it mean hammering the people with the law in the first part of the sermon so they feel sufficiently guilty and then bring in the gospel and tell them all is forgiven?

No. As I see it, preaching the gospel means that Jesus Christ is at the core of the sermon—the very heart—and that all paragraphs lead to Jesus Christ.

Preaching Christ is not designed to enable people to feel good when they leave the service, but to know to a certainty that they are God's people who are forgiven and called by God to a new way of living—with their families, at work, in their social settings, wherever they find themselves to be. In our present culture and time, people are hungry for something they can hang on to, something that will give them hope, something that will put meaning into their lives. Preachers have that something. It's called the gospel, the good news of the risen Christ who longs to enter their hearts and lives.

Submitted by Marvin Huls, July 2017

Selected passages from **ON PREACHING THE GOSPEL** (Joe Hauser, retired Lutheran pastor, published in FORUM LETTER, July 2017)

I have been out of professional ministry for about 20 years. During that time, I have visited numerous Christian congregations and listened to hundreds of sermons throughout Virginia, Montana, Illinois, Missouri and Vermont. In the letter to the Romans, Paul says that he is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation. It is my experience during these 20-odd years that many preachers seem to be ashamed of the gospel-at least if you judge by how little it has been proclaimed in the sermons I have listened to.

Permit me to share a couple of experiences with you. You might consider these incidents over the top, but any sermon that is void of the gospel, that is, any sermon where God's action on our behalf in Jesus Christ is absent and that does not have the life, death and resurrection at its very core is not worth preaching. I'm sure that I have delivered such sermons over my 30 years of ministry, and each one is a source of guilt for me. I am ashamed of how often I failed.

One experience happened some years ago at a large church in the town where my wife and I retired. It was Christmas Eve, and at the time, our two sons were in Iraq. We were worried and very anxious about how they were doing. We wondered if they were safe, out of harm's way or were they in the thick of it? We felt helpless to do anything; everything was out of our control. We were essentially powerless. We went to the Christmas Eve service, hoping/yearning to hear words of promise from our God who in Jesus Christ promises to be with us and our boys.

What we heard was the story of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and how Gene Autry came to write it. The Rudolph story occupied three quarters of the sermon, which then closed with a description of gifts contained in the song of the Twelve Days of Christmas. I remember whispering to my wife that I was happy there weren't 100 days of Christmas. No mention of how God entered the human condition to forgive us and to sustain us with his gracious presence. In other words, no gospel.

continued...

Serving At First In August 2017

8/6

8/13

8/20

8/27

ACOLYTES

Drew Erdman
Erika Ament
Cade Cavanaugh

Ailanthus Hanzel
Erik Hanzel
Alyssa Tomb
Haley Tomb

Reese Woodley
Jacob Julian
Caris Rehak

Drew Erdman
Bradley Schmidt
Christopher Steel

LECTORS

Kathy McMaster
Jeanne Christensen

Dave von
Schlichten
Shirley Huls

Gail Armstrong
Rick Druschel

Sue Boggs
Sunshine Keiser

ASSISTING MINISTERS

Erik Hanzel

Rocco Marusko

Suzy Flory

Dianna Marusko

AV MINISTRY TEAM

Dennis Acita

Drew Erdman

Dwight Miller
Lexi Hahn
Scott Hahn

Liz Rowe
Tim Irwin
Spencer Irwin

Delivery

Helen Marie Flinner

Betty Mohny

Cheryl Lucas

Nola Petrazzi

8:15 USHERS

10:00 USHERS

ALTAR GUILD

Tom Gockel -
chief
Brian Erdman
Mary Caldwell

Lou Shutt -
chief
Bob Errett
Al Danilko

Bobbie Laciak -
coordinator
Sue Cobb
Marsha Danilko

August 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 7:00 Cong Council	2 FOOD/HEART 7:00 Fellowship	3	4	5
6 8:15 W&S 10:00 W&S	7	8 6:00 Personnel	9 FOOD/HEART	10	11	12
13 8:15 W&S 10:00 W&S 9:30 Information Technology	14	15 7:30 Finance	16 FOOD/HEART	17 FOOD PANTRY	18 <i>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</i>	19
20 8:15 W&S 10:00 W&S	21	22	23 FOOD/HEART	24	25	26
27 8:15 W&S 10:00 W&S	28	29 7:00 Christian Ed	30 FOOD/HEART 6:30 Property 7:00 Executive	31		

SUMMER FOOD DRIVE

During the summer months, the Social Ministry Activation Team will be collecting nonperishable items for our Emergency Food Cupboard. These items will be used to assist many individuals and families in our community.



August is
“Canned Food Month”.
 Items especially needed are:
 Soup
 Fruit
 Canned pasta
 (Spaghetios, etc.)

A box is located in the education building foyer for your donations.

Please **check the expiration dates** before donating, as we cannot distribute expired items in the Emergency Food bags.

Thank you!