

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

**246 South Main Street
Greensburg, Pennsylvania
724-834-1457**

Office hours: Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

office@felchurch.org

**Chris Combs
Marvin J. Huls**

**Pastor
Director of Music**

WELCOME TO FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH!

We gather here every Sunday to experience the life changing and life giving grace of God. In this place we discover the truth of which the Bible speaks, “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” (2 Cor. 5:17).

We are thankful for your presence among us, thankful to God for His abiding presence that goes with you this week, and hopeful that you will be among us when we gather again.

THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

January 12, 2025
8:15 AM & 10:45 AM

THE WORSHIP SERVICE

The beginning of the organ prelude is a call to silent, personal preparation for the worship of God.

GATHERING

Prelude

Confession and Forgiveness

The congregation stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

In the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and one another.

The assembly kneels or stands. Silence is kept for reflection.

Most merciful God, we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

The presiding minister announces God's forgiveness with these or similar words.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The assembly stands. The service continues with a gathering song.

Hymn “Crashing Waters at Creation” #455

**1 Crashing waters at creation,
ordered by the Spirit's breath,
first to witness day's beginning
from the brightness of night's death:**

**2 Parting water stood and trembled
as the captives passed on through,
washing off the chains of bondage—
channel to a life made new.**

**3 Cleansing water once at Jordan
closed around the one foretold,
opened to reveal the glory
ever new and ever old.**

**4 Living water, never ending,
quench the thirst and flood the soul.
Wellspring, source of life eternal,
drench our dryness, make us whole.**

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Hymn of Praise: “This is the Feast”





strength, and hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his.

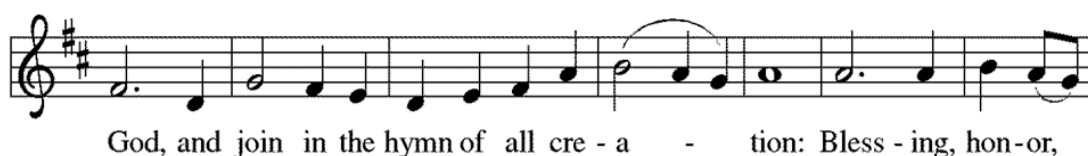
Refrain



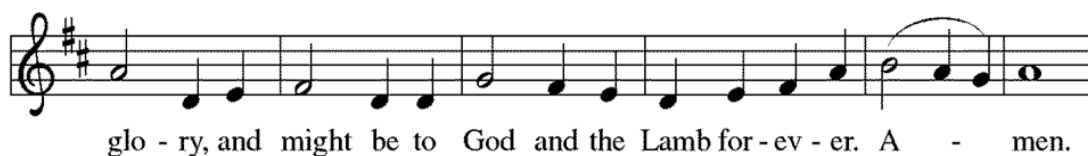
This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,



al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 3 Sing with all the peo - ple of



God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon-or,

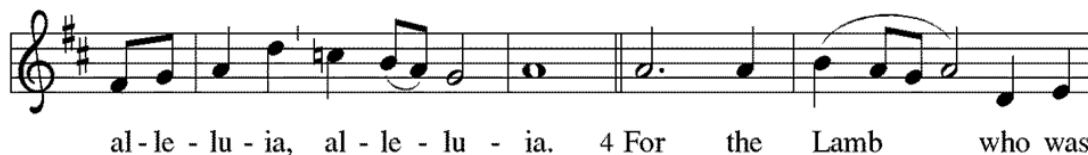


glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for-ev - er. A - men.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,



al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 4 For the Lamb who was



slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

Final refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.



Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Almighty God, you anointed Jesus at his baptism with the Holy Spirit and revealed him as your beloved Son. Keep all who are born of water and the Spirit faithful in your service, that we may rejoice to be called children of God, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

The congregation may be seated.

WORD

First Reading **Isaiah 43:1-7**

¹ But now thus says the Lord,

he who created you, O Jacob,

he who formed you, O Israel:

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have called you by name, you are mine.

² When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;

and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;

when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,

and the flame shall not consume you.

³ For I am the Lord your God,

the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

I give Egypt as your ransom,

Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.

⁴ Because you are precious in my sight,

and honored, and I love you,

I give people in return for you,

nations in exchange for your life.

⁵ Do not fear, for I am with you;

I will bring your offspring from the east,

and from the west I will gather you;
⁶I will say to the north, "Give them up,"
and to the south, "Do not withhold;
bring my sons from far away
and my daughters from the end of the earth—
⁷everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made."

L: The Word of the Lord. **R: Thanks be to God!**

Psalm 29 *(Read responsively)*

¹Ascribe to the ^lLORD, you gods,
ascribe to the LORD glo- ^lry and strength.
²**Ascribe to the LORD the glory ^ldue God's name;**
worship the LORD in the beau- ^lty of holiness.
³The voice of the LORD is upon the waters;
the God of ^lglory thunders;
the LORD is upon the ^lmighty waters.
⁴**The voice of the LORD is a pow- ^lerful voice;**
the voice of the LORD is a ^lvoice of splendor.
⁵The voice of the LORD breaks the ^lcedar trees;
the LORD breaks the ce- ^ldars of Lebanon;
⁶**the LORD makes Lebanon skip ^llike a calf,**
and Mount Hermon like a ^lyoung wild ox.
⁷The voice ^lof the LORD
bursts forth in ^llightning flashes.
⁸**The voice of the LORD ^lshakes the wilderness;**
the LORD shakes the wilder- ^lness of Kadesh.
⁹The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe
and strips the ^lforests bare.
And in the temple of the LORD all are ^lcrying, "Glory!"
¹⁰**The LORD sits enthroned a- ^lbove the flood;**
the LORD sits enthroned as sovereign for- ^levermore.
¹¹O LORD, give strength ^lto your people;
give them, O LORD, the bless- ^lings of peace.

Second Reading Acts 8:14-17

¹⁴ Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. ¹⁵ The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit ¹⁶ (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). ¹⁷ Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

L: The Word of the Lord. **R: Thanks be to God!**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. A voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased." ***Alleluia.***

Gospel Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 3rd chapter.

R/ Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

²¹ Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

P/The Gospel of the Lord. **R/ Praise to you, O Christ.**

Youth Sermon

Sermon

Hymn “This is the Spirit’s Entry Now”

#448

- 1 This is the Spirit's entry now:
the water and the word,
the cross of Jesus on your brow,
the seal both felt and heard.**
- 2 This miracle of life reborn
comes from the Lord of breath;
the sinless one from life was torn;
our life comes through his death.**
- 3 Let water be the sacred sign
that we must die each day
to rise again by his design
as foll'wers of his way.**
- 4 Renewing Spirit, hear our praise
for your baptismal pow'r
that washes us through all our days.
Come, cleanse again this hour.**

APOSTLES' CREED

With the whole church we confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

The service continues with the prayers of intercession

Prayers of the Church

To stay current with our many continuing prayer needs, we will refresh our prayer list at the beginning of each new month by starting with a clean slate. We understand that many people will continue to need prayer beyond the length of one month. If you wish to continue to have someone listed in the bulletin for public prayer, please call the office by the last Wednesday of the month.

With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

At each petition,
God of grace,
hear our prayer.

The presiding minister concludes the prayers with these or similar words.

We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people.

Amen

The Peace

The presiding minister and the assembly greet each other in the peace of the risen Christ.

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say Peace be with you or similar words. The assembly is seated.

THE MEAL

Offerings may be placed in the plates as they are passed. You can utilize your regular envelopes or the gold envelopes in the pews. You can also utilize our new online giving tool through Tithe.ly by visiting felchurch.org or utilize the QR code here:



Checks can also be mailed to: First Lutheran, 246 S. Main Street, Greensburg, PA 15601.

Thank you for your generous support of First's Ministry.

(Children, please bring your offering to the front of the church and place it in the "Thank You Jesus" Jar.)

OFFERTORY:

10:45 **Psalm 47** (Setting by John Behnke)

Sing aloud and clap your hands! Sing to God throughout the land. Let your hope and joy abound, as you make a joyful sound! Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

God the Lord rules over all. Ev'ry creature, great and small. Share your joy with ev'ry one for the vic'try has been won!

Trumpets blow and handbells ring! Now ascended Christ the King. All in heaven glories raise, as we lift our earthly praise. Alleluia!

Offertory Response “Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful” # 182



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

Offertory Prayer (in unison)

Let us pray.

God of mercy and grace, the eyes of all wait upon you, and you open your hand in blessing. Fill us with good things at your table, that we may come to the help of all in need, through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and Lord. Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The presiding minister continues:

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations;
in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son;
and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,



heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -



san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

Eucharistic Prayer

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, now and forever.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The gifts of God for the people of God. Taste and see that the Lord is good.

COMMUNION

All baptized who wish to receive the body and blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins and the nourishment of their lives are welcome. It is not necessary to be a member of First Lutheran to receive the sacrament.

For those receiving the sacrament please note the following:
Communion is at the rail for those who desire.

- *We encourage everyone to continue using hand sanitizer before coming forward for communion.*
- *As you approach the chancel, take a plastic cup from the tray.*
- *The communion rail will fill from both sides of the congregation.*

- *We encourage everyone to leave added space at the rail, primarily between family units.*
- *For those who need gluten free or grape juice, please tell the Pastor or assistant during the distribution.*
- *Cups can be placed in the trays near each side aisle as you return to your pew.*
- *For those who would like to receive communion, but are not comfortable coming to the rail, please let an Usher know so that the Pastor and Assisting Minister can bring communion to you.*

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

and each person may respond Amen.

After all have received,

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray.

God of abundance,

with this bread of life and cup of salvation

you have united us with Christ,

making us one with all your people.

Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit,

that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world

and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Blessing

The presiding minister proclaims God's blessing.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace.

Amen.

Hymn “Songs of Thankfulness and Praise”

#310

1 Songs of thankfulness and praise,

Jesus, Lord, to thee we raise;

manifested by the star

to the sages from afar,

branch of royal David's stem

in thy birth at Bethlehem:

anthems be to thee addressed,

God in flesh made manifest.

2 Manifest at Jordan's stream,

prophet, priest, and king supreme;

and at Cana wedding guest

in thy Godhead manifest;

manifest in pow'r divine,

changing water into wine;

anthems be to thee addressed,

God in flesh made manifest.

**3 Manifest in making whole
weakened body, fainting soul;
manifest in valiant fight,
quelling all the devil's might;
manifest in gracious will,
ever bringing good from ill:
anthems be to thee addressed,
God in flesh made manifest.**

**4 Grant us grace to see thee, Lord,
present in thy holy word;
grace to imitate thee now
and be pure, as pure art thou;
that we might become like thee
at thy great epiphany,
and may praise thee, ever blest,
God in flesh made manifest.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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BLESSED TO BLESS

SERVING TODAY:

ACOLYTE is Molly Boggs.

LECTORS are Bill Pfeifer and Megan Zobb.

WORSHIP ASSISTANT is Tawnya Combs.

SERVING IN JANUARY:

ALTAR GUILD for January includes Bev Attenberger and Shirley Huls.

*“God is light and in him there is
no darkness at all.”*

John 1:5

**Saved by Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit
we share God’s love, through word and deed,
in service to all of God’s Children.**

PRAYER CONCERNS:

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER this week Brandie, Suzy, Terry, Cullen, Doug, Gavin, Dennis, Cooper, Carol, Taylor, Lily, Kiera, Connie, Nicole, Larry, Kaleb, Joan, Rachel, Pam, Pat, Taylor, and Carolyn.

THE ALTAR FLOWERS are given in memory of loved ones by Tom and Suzy Flory and family.

PRAYER REQUESTS for First's Prayer Chain may be made at any time by calling the church office or by writing the request on the prayer cards in the pew racks and placing it in the offering plate. **If for whatever reason you do not want your name listed but would like to be on the prayer list, just let us know when you make your request.**

INDEPENDENCE HEALTH SYSTEM (formerly Excelsa Health) does not notify the church of member admissions. Please notify the pastor or call the church office if you or your loved one is hospitalized.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST is available today and each Sunday, 9 - 10:30 AM in the fellowship hall.

JAVA TABLE will be open in the Fellowship Hall today between worship services. Fair Trade coffees, teas and chocolates will be available for purchase.

NOISY OFFERING for The Union Mission was \$163.

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE last Sunday morning was 74.

COUNCIL Tuesday, 6:00 PM.

FOOD FROM THE HEART Wednesday lunch continues as a **BROWN BAG** lunch provided from 12 to 12:45 PM. Lunches will be available for pick up by people walking at the gate to the park and to those driving at the basement door on Bononi Way (alley behind the church).

CHRISTIAN OUTREACH Wednesday, 6:30 PM.

FOOD BANK DISTRIBUTION is this Thursday. Assistance is needed around 7:30 AM to help with the set-up and the need for assistance increases at 8:00 AM to unload the truck and prepare for distribution. If you can lend a hand on Thursday morning, your effort will be greatly appreciated.

HANDBELLS Thursday, 6:15 PM.

A **NURSERY** is available for children to use on the second floor of the Education Building, down the hall from the Library.

PASTOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION: Pastor Chris Combs may be reached either by calling the church office at 724-834-1457, by email at PastorChris@felchurch.org or by calling or texting his cell phone at 412-973-4179. If the concern is of an urgent nature, please call his cell phone.

Stewardship Snippets

Isaiah 43:1: Thus says the LORD: ... Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.

When we think of generosity, we remember that God was first generous to us, redeeming and claiming us as God's own children. We do not fear to be generous because we are God's, and we trust in the Almighty One.

OFFERING ENVELOPES are available in the Narthex. You are asked to pick your envelopes before or after worship, or anytime during the week. Please deliver a box to a shut-in, family member, or neighbor who may not be able to take their box.



PLEASE NOTE: The security system has been upgraded. If you have previously accessed the building and armed/disarmed the system, please make sure that you have an access code. Please reach out to Pr. Chris if you have not already received a code. **The old code is no longer active.**

CONGREGATION DINNER / MEETING

February 2

Join the First Lutheran Family for business and fellowship on February 2 immediately following the 10:45 AM service. Lunch and fellowship will include a meal with meat, rolls, beverages, and dessert provided. **You are asked to bring a covered dish of vegetables or salad and your own place settings.**

ANNUAL REPORT There will be printed copies available at the back of the church beginning January 19 and also when we gather for the annual meeting on February 2.

FOOD from the HEART: Recently FFTH has found it difficult to keep our cupboards stocked with nonperishables. We are asking the congregation for small monthly donations in the early months of 2025 to assist us with this problem. There will be boxes available in the Fellowship Hall for donations in Jan. Feb. and March.

Here is our wish list:

January: a can of green beans, mixed vegetables, corn, or carrots.

February: cans of fruit or jars of apple sauce.

March: broth, diced or crushed tomatoes or spaghetti sauce.

We appreciate your help!

MESSAGE FOR THRIVENT FINANCIAL MEMBERS

Thrivent members are given Thrivent Cash Dollars to direct to charitable organizations.

When you are considering where to spend your Cash Dollars, please consider giving your gift to the General Fund of First Lutheran Church. Thrivent Financial considers our congregation and any committee a valid recipient for Cash Dollars. Call (800-847-4836), say Thrivent Choice or email fraternal@thrivent.com .