#### FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

Office hours: Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

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.

# FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

January 28, 2024 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 **Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart** (based on hymn #873)

#### **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.

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** "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.

### 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"





Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

Let us pray.

Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

The congregation may be seated.

#### **WORD**

First Reading **Deuteronomy 18:15-20** 

[Moses said:] <sup>15</sup>The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. <sup>16</sup>This is what you requested of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the LORD my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." <sup>17</sup>Then the LORD replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. <sup>18</sup>I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. <sup>19</sup>Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. <sup>20</sup>But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die."

The Word of the Lord. R/Thanks be to God!

<sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the LORD with | my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, in the | congregation.

<sup>2</sup>Great are your | works, O LORD, pondered by all who de- | light in them.

<sup>3</sup>Majesty and splendor | mark your deeds, and your righteousness en- | dures forever.

<sup>4</sup>You cause your wonders to | be remembered; you are gracious and full | of compassion.

<sup>5</sup>You give food to | those who fear you, remembering forev- | er your covenant.

<sup>6</sup>You have shown your people the power | of your works in giving them the lands | of the nations.

<sup>7</sup>The works of your hands are faithful- | ness and justice; all of your pre- | cepts are sure.

<sup>8</sup>They stand fast forev- | er and ever, because they are done in | truth and equity.

<sup>9</sup>You sent redemption to your people and commanded your cove- | nant forever;

holy and awesome is your name.

<sup>10</sup>The fear of the LORD is the begin- <sup>1</sup> ning of wisdom; all who practice this have a good understanding. God's praise en- <sup>1</sup> dures forever.

# Second Reading 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

<sup>1</sup>Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. <sup>2</sup>Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; <sup>3</sup>but anyone who loves God is known by him.

<sup>4</sup>Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "no idol in the world really exists," and that "there is no God but one." <sup>5</sup>Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—<sup>6</sup>yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we

exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

<sup>7</sup>It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. <sup>8</sup>"Food will not bring us close to God." We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. <sup>9</sup>But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. <sup>10</sup>For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? <sup>11</sup>So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. <sup>12</sup>But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. <sup>13</sup>Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

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

#### **Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia. The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light; for those who sat in the shadow of death light has dawned. Alleluia.

Gospel **Mark 1: 21-28** 

P: The Holy Gospel according to Mark the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter.

R/Glory to you, O Lord.

<sup>21</sup>[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught.<sup>22</sup>They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. <sup>23</sup>Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, <sup>24</sup>and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy

One of God." <sup>25</sup>But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" <sup>26</sup>And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. <sup>27</sup>They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." <sup>28</sup>At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

# Youth Sermon (10:45 AM)

# Sermon

**Hymn** "Healer of Our Every Ill"

#612

#### Refrain

Healer of our ev'ry ill, light of each tomorrow, give us peace beyond our fear, and hope beyond our sorrow.

- 1 You who know our fears and sadness, grace us with your peace and gladness; Spirit of all comfort, fill our hearts. *Refrain*
- 2 In the pain and joy beholding how your grace is still unfolding, give us all your vision, God of love. *Refrain*
- 3 Give us strength to love each other, ev'ry sister, ev'ry brother; Spirit of all kindness, be our guide. *Refrain*
- 4 You who know each thought and feeling, teach us all your way of healing; Spirit of compassion, fill each heart. *Refrain*

#### **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.

A brief silence.

As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God's blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation.

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

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

Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

#### 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:**

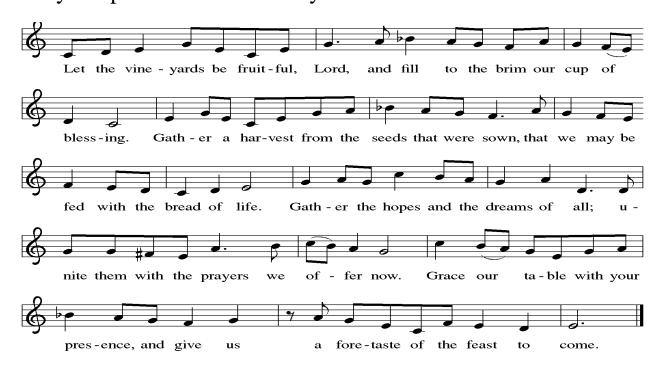
- 8:15 My Shepherd, You Supply My Need (arr. Robert Hobby)
- 10:45 Bless Now, O God, the Journey (arr. Anne Krentz, Organ)

Kyrie eleison. Bless now, O God, the journey that all your people make, the path through noise and silence, the way of give and take. The trail is found in desert and winds the mountain round, that leads beside still waters, the road where faith is found.

Christe eleison. Bless sojourners and pilgrims who share this winding way, whose hope burns through the terrors, whose love sustains the day. We yearn for holy freedom while often we are bound. Together we are seeking the road where love is found.

Kyrie eleison. Divine Eternal Lover, you meet us on the road. We wait for lands of promise where milk and honey flows. But waiting not for places, you meet us all around. Our covenant is written on roads, as faith is found.

Offertory Response: "Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful" # 182



Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980 Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923 Text and music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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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.

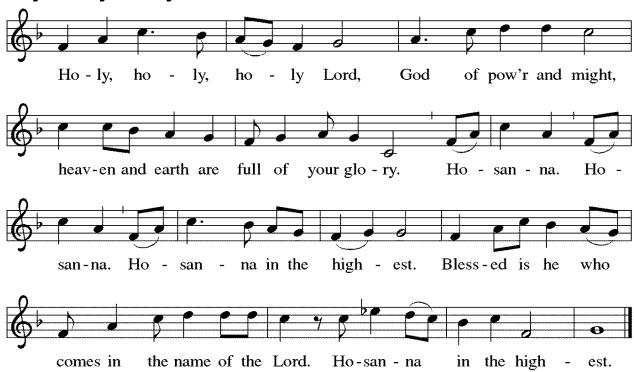
By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.

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



# **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 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.
- Cups can be placed in the receptacles 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

The assisting minister leads a 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**

# 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** "Open Your Ears, O Faithful People"

#519

1 Open your ears, O faithful people, open your ears and hear God's word. Open your hearts, O royal priesthood, God has come to you.

#### Refrain

God has spoken to the people, hallelujah! God has spoken words of wisdom, hallelujah! God has spoken to the people, hallelujah! God has spoken words of wisdom, hallelujah! 2 They who have ears to hear the message, they who have ears, now let them hear; they who would learn the way of wisdom, let them hear God's word. *Refrain* 

#### **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

#### Thanks be to God.

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# "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13

# **BLESSED TO BLESS**

# **SERVING TODAY:**

**ACOLYTES** are Noah Boggs and Nicholas Vuick.

**LECTORS** are Rebecca Brunetta and Sunshine Keiser.

**WORSHIP ASSISTANT** is Rebecca Brunetta.

# **PRAYER CONCERNS:**

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER** this week Brandie, Suzy, Lois, Terry, Joyce, Cullen, Doug, Gavin, Dennis, Pat, Cindy, Tieesha, Christina, Annie, Daniel, Betty Jean, Barry, Stephen, Denny, Alecia, Bob, Jake, Jan, Teresa, Clare, Denise, Christopher, Judy, Jack, Judy, Jeff, Jan, Connie, Karen, Phil, Dean, Rick, and Pat.

**THE ALTAR FLOWERS** are given in memory of Clifford and Susan Jennings by their family.

**THE CHANCEL FLOWERS** are given in memory of Bill Kraus by the Kraus 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 Excela 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.

CHOIR REHEARSAL 10:00 AM today.

**BOWLING** Today at Main Bowl at 12:30 PM.

**TEN COMMANDMENTS BIBLE STUDY** Monday, January 29, 1:30 and 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).

PROPERTY Wednesday, 6:30 pm.

HANDBELLS Thursday, 6:15 pm.

**RUTH CIRCLE** will meet Thursday, February 8 at 7 PM in the church parlor. All women of the church are invited to join us for a brief business meeting, an interesting program, fellowship, and our always delicious dessert.

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

**NOISY OFFERING** next Sunday will be donated to LUTHERAN SUMMER MUSIC (LSM). LSM is the nation's premier faith-based music academy for high school students, grades 8-12. In addition to advanced musical instruction and numerous performance opportunities, LSM students form an international community, living together for four weeks on the campus of Valparaiso University.

**WORSHIP ATTENDANCE** last Sunday morning was 79.

# **Stewardship Snippets**

"But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak."—1 Corinthians 8:9

Christians enjoy great freedom, but we are also responsible to and for one another. Just as new runners start out gently, so new Christ followers may need our careful and loving guidance as we all train in the faith.

**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.

#### **BIBLES FOR LOVE PACKAGES**

Do you have old Bibles that you no longer use or have inherited and don't know what to do with them? Well, we have an answer.

Beginning in January and running for several months, First Lutheran will collect used and/or new Bibles as well as Sunday School materials and other Christian materials to send to "Love Packages."

#### Putting the Word of God into Hungry Hands All Over the World

Love Packages is fueling international missions work and sending the gospel to the ends of the earth by putting donated bibles and other Christian literature into the hands of people around the world. Some of the locations shipped to include Kenya, India, Uganda, South America and others in need. They ship over 1,500 tons of recycled gospel literature to the mission field every year.

#### Items we are collecting are:

**Bibles** – new or used, any translation, New Testaments or other portions, individual gospel booklets.

**Reference Material** – Dictionaries, Bible dictionaries, concordances, commentaries, etc.

**Books** – all Christian books – adult or children, non-fiction.

**Magazines and Daily Devotionals** – any devotionals or magazine from a Christian publisher.

**Sunday School Materials** – adult quarterlies and all teacher manuals in any amount from all publishers; children's quarterlies with the teacher's manual and full student manuals.

CDs, DVDs, Blu-ray – Christian music & movies.

**Puppets, Nativity Sets, etc.** – bible games, biblical puzzles – anything that helps teach the gospel, especially to children.

#### Items not accepted:

VHS/Tapes/Records/8-tracks

Guideposts

Handiwork or busy papers from Sunday School materials

Secular books (other than dictionaries)

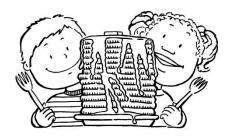
Missions magazines

Boxes for your items will be located in the Narthex, the Education Building and the Fellowship Hall. For more information on Love Packages check them out on *lovepackages.org*.

# CONGREGATION DINNER / MEETING February 4

Join the First Lutheran Family for business and fellowship on February 4 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** Printed copies are available in the Narthex at the back of the church.



# SHROVETIDE BRUNCH SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11

SHROVETIDE BRUNCH

The First Family will gather for a "Shrovetide Brunch" the Sunday before Lent, February 11, following the 10:45 AM worship service.

The menu will include: pancakes, sausage, syrup, orange juice, coffee, and tea. A donation to defray expenses may be given if you so desire.

Shrovetide traditions of the past included using all of the flour in the house

in preparation for the fasting of Lent. The days preceding Ash Wednesday became festive days with focus on increased baking, fellowship, and fun (as in the Mardi Gras tradition). We adapt this tradition with our pancake brunch for the First Lutheran family. Join us as we enjoy this time of food and fellowship.



PLEASE RETURN THE FORM BELOW IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND OR CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE TO LET US KNOW SO WE CAN PLAN.

FAMILY NAME	

NUMBER ATTENDING SHROVETIDE BRUNCH



# Friendship Sunday February 11

Friends & Family Game Afternoon (bring your favorite game & friends)

Join us for an afternoon of FUN!!

Games following the Shrovetide Brunch

All members are encouraged to bring a friend to church.