

**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](mailto: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.

# SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

February 25, 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      **“O Sacred Head, Now Wounded”**  
(arr. Thomas Keesecker)

#### **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.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,  
who forgives all our sin,  
whose mercy endures forever.

**Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Gracious God,  
**have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

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

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

**Amen.**

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

**Hymn      “Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus”      #802**

**1 Let us ever walk with Jesus,  
follow his example pure,  
through a world that would deceive us  
and to sin our spirits lure.  
Onward in his footsteps treading,  
trav'lers here, our home above,  
full of faith and hope and love,  
let us do our Savior's bidding.  
Faithful Lord, with me abide;  
I shall follow where you guide.**

**2 Let us suffer here with Jesus,  
and with patience bear our cross.  
Joy will follow all our sadness;  
where he is there is no loss.  
Though today we sow no laughter,  
we shall reap celestial joy:  
all discomforts that annoy  
shall give way to mirth hereafter.  
Jesus, here I share your woe;  
help me there your joy to know.**

**3 Let us gladly die with Jesus.  
Since by death he conquered death,  
he will free us from destruction,  
give to us immortal breath.  
Let us mortify all passion  
that would lead us into sin;  
and the grave that shuts us in  
shall but prove the gate of heaven.  
Jesus, here with you I die,  
there to live with you on high.**

**4 Let us also live with Jesus.  
He has risen from the dead  
that to life we may awaken.  
Jesus, you are now our head,  
we are your own living members;  
where you live, there we shall be  
in your presence constantly,  
living there with you forever.  
Jesus, let me faithful be;  
life eternal grant to me.**

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.**

## Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

**O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son, 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    **Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16**

<sup>1</sup>When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, “I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. <sup>2</sup>And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.” <sup>3</sup>Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, <sup>4</sup>“As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. <sup>5</sup>No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. <sup>6</sup>I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. <sup>7</sup>I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.”

<sup>15</sup>God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. <sup>16</sup>I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.”

The Word of the Lord.

**R/Thanks be to God!**

**Psalm 22:23-31**

*(Read responsively)*

<sup>23</sup>You who fear the LORD, give praise! All you of Jacob's | line, give glory.

Stand in awe of the LORD, all you off- | spring of Israel.

<sup>24</sup>**For the LORD does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty; neither is the LORD's face hid- | den from them; but when they cry out, | the LORD hears them.**

<sup>25</sup>From you comes my praise in the | great assembly;

I will perform my vows in the sight of those who | fear the LORD.

<sup>26</sup>**The poor shall eat | and be satisfied, Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts | live forever!**

<sup>27</sup>All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn | to the LORD; all the families of nations shall bow | before God.

<sup>28</sup>**For dominion belongs | to the LORD, who rules o- | ver the nations.**

<sup>29</sup>Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow | down in worship; all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel be- | fore the LORD.

<sup>30</sup>**Their descendants shall | serve the LORD, whom they shall proclaim to genera- | tions to come.**

<sup>31</sup>They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people | yet unborn, saying to them, "The | LORD has acted!"

**Second Reading Romans 4:13-25**

<sup>13</sup>The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. <sup>14</sup>If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. <sup>15</sup>For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

<sup>16</sup>For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the

adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, <sup>17</sup>as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”)—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. <sup>18</sup>Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become “the father of many nations,” according to what was said, “So numerous shall your descendants be.” <sup>19</sup>He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. <sup>20</sup>No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, <sup>21</sup>being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. <sup>22</sup>Therefore his faith “was reckoned to him as righteousness.” <sup>23</sup>Now the words, “it was reckoned to him,” were written not for his sake alone, <sup>24</sup>but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, <sup>25</sup>who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

The Word of the Lord.

**R/Thanks be to God!**

### Gospel Acclamation

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and mer - ci - ful,  
 slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

Gospel

**Mark 8:31-38**

P: The Holy Gospel according to Mark the 8<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**R/ Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>31</sup>[Jesus] began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. <sup>32</sup>He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. <sup>33</sup>But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

<sup>34</sup>He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>35</sup>For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. <sup>36</sup>For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? <sup>37</sup>Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? <sup>38</sup>Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

P/The Gospel of the Lord.

**R/ Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **Youth Sermon (10:45 AM)**

### **Sermon**

**Hymn**

**“In the Cross of Christ I glory”**

**#324**

**1 In the cross of Christ I glory,  
tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time.  
All the light of sacred story  
gathers round its head sublime.**

**2 When the woes of life o'ertake me,  
hopes deceive, and fears annoy,  
never shall the cross forsake me;  
lo, it glows with peace and joy.**



**3 When the sun of bliss is beaming  
light and love upon my way,  
from the cross the radiance streaming  
adds more luster to the day.**

**4 Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,  
by the cross are sanctified;  
peace is there that knows no measure,  
joys that through all time abide.**

## **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.*

Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

*A brief silence.*

*At each petition,*

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

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

Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**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](http://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 "Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed"**  
(arr. Rachel Chaplin)

**10:45 "God, You Made This World A Garden"**  
(Text by Jaroslav Vajda; Music by Richard W. Gieseke)

**God, you made this world a garden, ev'ry harvest bearing seed. Loving God, today as ever you anticipate our need. You are ready with your answer long before we plead.**

**Take us through that other garden, tragic, dark Gethsemane. Where our Savior faced our future, set to win our amnesty: Seed of woman, Seed of promise from a barren tree.**

**Now a universal garden, seeded with your living Word, grows with peace and love and beauty, songs of freedom there are heard. By your mercy, by your Spirit, thankful hearts are stirred.**

**In this corner of your garden planted by a faithful few. We have thrived by their endeavor; as you blessed them, bless us too. Find us, as you walk among us, bearing fruit for you.**

Create in Me a Clean Heart

*Offering Song*

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right  
 spir-it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take  
 not your Ho-ly Spir-it from me. Re-store to me the joy of  
 your sal-va-tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir-it.

Offertory Prayer (in unison)

Let us pray.

**God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our 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.**

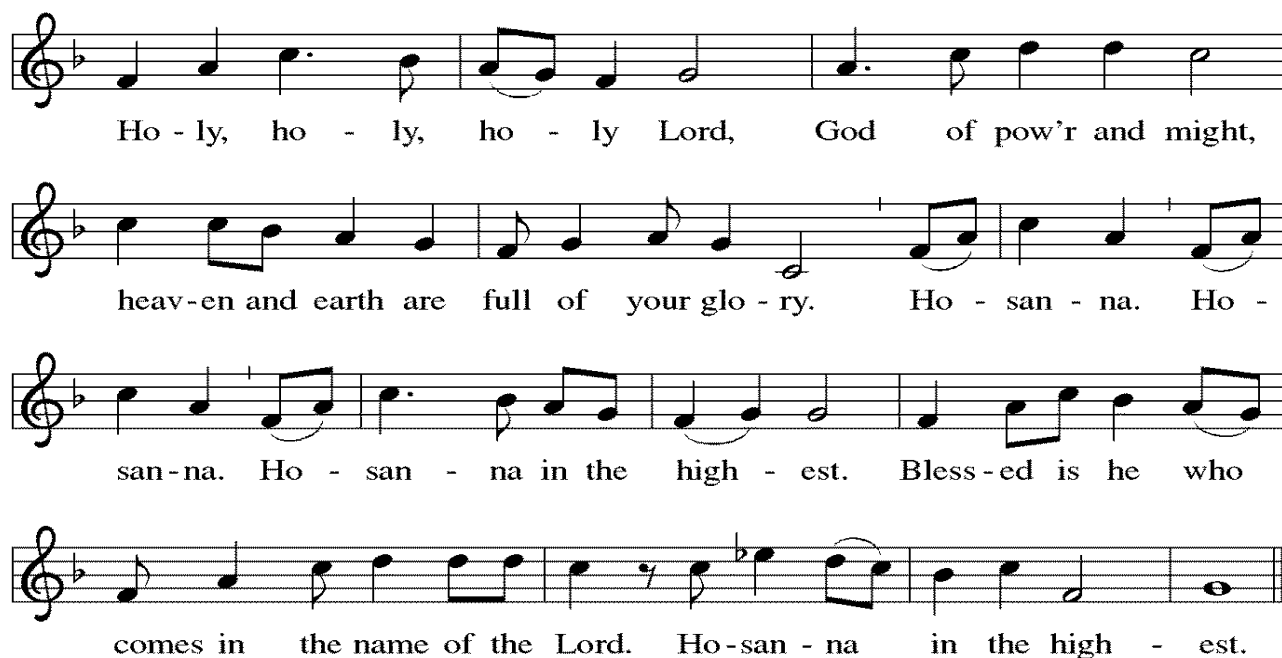
*The presiding minister continues:*

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.

You call your people to cleanse their hearts  
and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,  
that, renewed in the gift of baptism,  
we may come to the fullness of your grace.

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.

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE (ELW p. 153)

*The presiding minister continues, using one of the following or another appropriate form.*

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.

## **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.

Compassionate God, you have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

# SENDING

## Blessing

*The presiding minister proclaims God's blessing.*

Almighty God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

## Hymn    “How Firm a Foundation”    #796

- 1 How firm a foundation, O saints of the Lord,  
is laid for your faith in Christ Jesus, the Word!  
What more can he say than to you he has said  
who unto the Savior for refuge have fled?**
- 2 "Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dismayed,  
for I am your God and will still give you aid;  
I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,  
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand."**
- 3 "When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,  
my grace, all-sufficient, shall be your supply.  
The flames shall not hurt you; I only design  
your dross to consume and your gold to refine."**
- 4 "Throughout all their lifetime my people shall prove  
my sov'reign, eternal, unchangeable love;  
and then, when gray hairs shall their temples adorn,  
like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne."**

## Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



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## **BLESSED TO BLESS**

### **SERVING TODAY:**

**ACOLYTES** are Aaron Woodley and Nicholas Vuick.

**LECTORS** are Sue Boggs and Megan Zobb.

**WORSHIP ASSISTANT** is Dianna Marusko.

### **PRAYER CONCERNS:**

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER** this week Brandie, Suzy, Lois, Terry, Joyce, Cullen, Doug, Gavin, Dennis, Pat, Alecia, Connie, Rick, Pat, Sandy, Jeff, Jan, Andrea, Teresa, Christopher, Denise, Ed, Claire, Karen, Phil, Les, Addy, Bob, Barbara, George, Pat, Charlie, Anissa, Jim, Rick, and Levi and his wife and unborn child.

**THE ALTAR FLOWERS** are given in memory of William and Cora Baer by Judi and Justin Seanor.

**THE CHANCEL FLOWERS** are given in memory of Anna, Robert, and John Snyder by their 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.

**CHOIR REHEARSAL** 10:00 AM today.

**TEN COMMANDMENTS BIBLE STUDY** Monday, February 26, 1:30 and 6:00 PM.

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION / YOUTH** Tuesday, 6:30 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).

**WEDNESDAY VESPERS** 6:00 PM.

**PROPERTY** Wednesday, 6:30 PM

**HANDBELLS** Wednesday, 6:45 PM.

**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. Thank you!

**NOISY OFFERING** next Sunday will be donated to Seton Hill University's Street Outreach Program organized by Seton Hill School of Physical Therapy.

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

**WORSHIP ATTENDANCE** last Sunday morning was 94.

**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**

*“For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.” – Mark 8:35*

Jesus is pretty clear that we are not to spend our time on earth amassing stuff and seeking to extend our lives and capital but rather to give ourselves away in grateful response to the gospel. Saving one's life is about loving and giving instead of fortifying one's own status and economic condition.

*“Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.”*

*Romans 8:39*

## 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.

## MISSION STATEMENT

**“As Servants of Jesus Christ, we strive to impact our families, neighbors, and the world by sharing our faith, empowered by God’s Grace”**

**Developed by Church Council**

**October 2016**

**YOU ARE INVITED**  
**LENTEN THURSDAY WORSHIP & LUNCHEON**  
**AT ZION'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**140 S. Pennsylvania Avenue**  
**Greensburg PA 15601**

Services begin at 12:05 PM  
Lunch is served following the service at 12:30 PM

- February 29 Preaching: The Rev. Kara Propst  
Lunch: Chicken Casserole, Cranberry Salad, Rolls, Cookies
- March 7 Preaching: The Rev. Roger Steiner  
Lunch: Ham & Cheese Sandwich, Wedding Soup, Veggies and dip, and Pie
- March 14 Preaching: The Rev. Christopher Combs  
Lunch: Roast Beef Sandwich, Potato Salad, Veggies and dip, and Bar Cookies
- March 21 Preaching: The Rev. Caroline Clifford  
Lunch: Broccoli Cheese Soup, Chicken Salad Croissant, and Cherry Crisp
- March 28 Preaching: The Rev. Brian B. Chaffee  
Lunch: Soup and Salad Bar

Suggested Lunch Donation—\$5.00

Worship & Luncheon are not held on days when Greensburg-Salem School district declares a school closing due to snow.