

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.

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

March 17, 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 “**Deep River**” (Spiritual, arr. Sam Batt Owens)

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 “My Faith Looks Up to Thee” #759

- 1 My faith looks up to thee,
thou Lamb of Calvary,
Savior divine!
Now hear me while I pray,
take all my guilt away,
oh, let me from this day
be wholly thine!**

- 2 May thy rich grace impart
strength to my fainting heart,
my zeal inspire;
as thou hast died for me,
oh, may my love to thee
pure, warm, and changeless be,
a living fire!**

**3 While life's dark maze I tread
and griefs around me spread,
be thou my guide;
bid darkness turn to day,
wipe sorrow's tears away,
nor let me ever stray
from thee aside.**

**4 When ends life's transient dream,
when death's cold, sullen stream
shall o'er me roll;
blest Savior, then, in love
fear and distrust remove;
oh, bear me safe above,
a ransomed soul!**

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, with steadfast love you draw us to yourself, and in mercy you receive our prayers. Strengthen us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, that through life and death we may live in 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 **Jeremiah 31:31-34**

³¹The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³²It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. ³³But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

The Word of the Lord.

R/Thanks be to God!

Psalm 51:1-12

(Read responsively)

¹Have mercy on me, O God, according to your [|] steadfast love;
in your great compassion blot out [|] my offenses.

²**Wash me through and through [|] from my wickedness,
and cleanse me [|] from my sin.**

³For I know [|] my offenses,
and my sin is ev- [|] er before me.

⁴**Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil [|] in your
sight;**

**so you are justified when you speak and right [|] in your
judgment.**

⁵Indeed, I was born [|] steeped in wickedness,
a sinner from my [|] mother’s womb.

**⁶Indeed, you delight in truth | deep within me,
and would have me know wisdom | deep within.**

**⁷Remove my sins with hyssop, and I | shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be pur- | er than snow.**

**⁸Let me hear | joy and gladness;
that the body you have broken | may rejoice.**

**⁹Hide your face | from my sins,
and blot out | all my wickedness.**

**¹⁰Create in me a clean | heart, O God,
and renew a right spir- | it within me.**

**¹¹Cast me not away | from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spir- | it from me.**

**¹²Restore to me the joy of | your salvation
and sustain me with your boun- | tiful Spirit.**

Second Reading **Hebrews 5:5-10**

⁵Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him,

**“You are my Son,
today I have begotten you”;**

⁶as he says also in another place,

**“You are a priest forever,
according to the order of Melchizedek.”**

⁷In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ⁸Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; ⁹and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, ¹⁰having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

The Word of the Lord.

R/Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel **John 12:20-33**

P: The Holy Gospel according to John the 12th chapter.

R/ Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁰Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. ²¹They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” ²²Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. ²³Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

²⁷“Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. ²⁸Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” ²⁹The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” ³⁰Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. ³¹Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. ³²And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” ³³He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

P/The Gospel of the Lord.

R/ Praise to you, O Christ.

Youth Sermon (10:45 AM)

Sermon

Hymn “Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church” #321

- 1 Eternal Lord of love, behold your church
walking once more the pilgrim way of Lent,
led by your cloud by day, by night your fire,
moved by your love and toward your presence bent:
far off yet here—the goal of all desire.

- 2 So daily dying to the way of self,
so daily living to your way of love,
we walk the road, Lord Jesus, that you trod,
knowing ourselves baptized into your death:
so we are dead and live with you in God.

- 3 If dead in you, so in you we arise,
you the firstborn of all the faithful dead;
and as through stony ground the green shoots break,
glorious in springtime dress of leaf and flow'r,
so into life and glory shall we wake.

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 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 **“Ah, Holy Jesus”** (arr. Michael Burkhardt)

10:45 **“He Leadeth Me”** (arr. Gilbert Martin)

He leadeth me, O blessed thought! O words with heav'nly comfort fraught! What e'er I do, where'er I be, still tis God's hand that leadeth me.

Sometimes mid scenes of deepest gloom, sometimes where Eden's flowers bloom. By waters calm, o'er troubled sea, still is God's hand that leadeth me.

He leadeth me, he leadeth me, by his own hand he leadeth me. His faithful follower I would be, for by his hand, he leadeth me.

Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine, nor ever murmur or repine: Content, whatever lot I see, since tis my God that leadeth me.

And when my task on earth is done, when by thy grace, the vict'ry's won, e'en death's cold wave I will not flee, since God through Jordan leadeth me.

Offertory Response: "Create in Me a Clean Heart"

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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.

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 **“The Days Are Coming”**

(Sung to the tune of #592; Words by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette)

1. **“The days are coming,” said the Lord,
“when I will bring in something new.
My people now reject my word
so look and see what I will do.”**

2. **“I’ll write my words upon the heart,
And I will put my law in them.
Though they have wavered from the start,
My people will return again.”**

3. **O God, this law that is within
Becomes the means by which we’re free.
No longer bound by human sin,
In Christ, we’re who we’re called to be.**

4. **In every sinful, hurting place,
Our hearts know what it means to yearn.
We hear your promised love and grace;
Now at your cross may we return.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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BLESSED TO BLESS

SERVING TODAY:

ACOLYTES are Molly Boggs and Addy Saraceni.

LECTORS are Dianna Marusko and Jeanne Christensen.

WORSHIP ASSISTANT is Dianna Marusko.

ALTAR GUILD for MARCH includes Bev Attenberger and Linda Griffith.

PRAYER CONCERNS:

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER this week Brandie, Suzy, Lois, Terry, Joyce, Cullen, Doug, Gavin, Dennis, Alecia, Andrea, Karen, Phil, Les, Bob, Barbara, Dean, Charlie, Anissa, Jim, Rick, Larry, Cindy, Jeff, Jan, Judy, George, Pat, Sandy, Ted, Levi and Nicole and unborn child, Jared, Connie, Caroline, Mark, Teresa, Christopher, Claire, Ed, Nancy, Denise, Mike, Shirley, Carol, Harry, Kimberly, Ronny, Robert, and M and family.

THE ALTAR FLOWERS are given in memory of loved ones by Sue Boggs.

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.

TEN COMMANDMENTS BIBLE STUDY Monday, March 18, 1:30 and 6:00 PM.

FINANCE Tuesday, 6:30 PM.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE Tuesday, March 19.

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.

HANDBELLS Wednesday, 6:45 PM.

FOOD BANK DISTRIBUTION is this Thursday. Assistance is needed by 8:00 AM to unload the truck and sort groceries (Both unloading and inside help is much needed for **FOOD BANK** this Thursday at 8:00). If you can lend a hand on Thursday morning, your effort will be greatly appreciated.

MARCH FOR PARKS is this Saturday March 23rd: Remember to register for First Lutheran's March for Parks Team at www.co.westmoreland.pa.us/parks. Our team name is **First Lutheran** and our team captain is **Molly Maga**.

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 107.

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

“Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” – John 12:24

Jesus speaks about his coming death and outlines what it means to truly follow him. Like Jesus, we are called to put aside self-interest for the sake of the gospel and serve God and neighbor willingly.

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

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.



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.



2024 LENTEN CONGREGATIONAL PROJECT

CAMP LUTHERLYN "BUILDING for the FUTURE"

Since 1948, Lutherlyn has become an influential presence in the lives of youth and adults throughout Western Pennsylvania. Borne from the conviction that youth would benefit from a faith-based leadership camp, Lutherlyn has intentionally expanded to include education opportunities that explore God's creation. The impact of Lutherlyn lives on in generations of campers, retreaters, summer staff, and the communities of which they are a part.

This \$2.5 million campaign will add five new winterized cabins, repair the amphitheater, remove old cabins, improve roads, and add five seasonal cabins. The *Building for the Future* capital campaign will provide the funding necessary to retain Lutherlyn's capacity for year-round programs and increase the number of youths, adults, and congregations served by this ministry for generations to come.

You may place your contribution in a gold pew envelope and write "Lenten Project" or "Lutherlyn" on the outside of the envelope and on the memo line of your check.

ORDER LILIES FOR EASTER

Lilies will again decorate our church on Easter Sunday. You are invited to purchase a plant at a cost of \$14.00 and “lend” it to the parish. Plants that are purchased may be removed from the church following the 10:45 AM Easter Sunday Service. Any lilies that are not removed by the Wednesday following Easter will be given to our Food from the Heart guests.



Your purchase may be made “in memory of” or “in honor of” the person(s) of your choosing. Please indicate your preference and return this form with your payment. All orders are due by **Monday, March 25.**

In honor of _____

By _____

and/or

In memory of _____

By _____

Amount enclosed \$ _____

*“God is our refuge and strength, a
very present help in trouble.”*

Psalm 46:1



SATURDAY MARCH 30, 2024 10 AM

All children ages twelve and under are invited to come and hunt for Easter eggs at First Lutheran Church.

Friends are invited to join you as well.
Please complete the form below for each child
and return to the Church Office.



RESERVATION DUE BY
Wednesday, March 27, 2024

NAME OF CHILD _____

AGE _____ PHONE NUMBER _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Please indicate below if your child has any food restrictions or allergies.