

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.

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 14, 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

“I Danced in the Morning”
(19th century Shaker tune, arr. Douglas Wagner)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The assembly 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.

The presiding minister may lead one of the following or another prayer of preparation.

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 of 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.

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.**

Hymn “As We Gather at Your Table” #522

**1 As we gather at your table,
 as we listen to your word,
 help us know, O God, your presence;
 let our hearts and minds be stirred.
 Nourish us with sacred story
 till we claim it as our own;
 teach us through this holy banquet
 how to make Love's vict'ry known.**

**2 Turn our worship into witness
in the sacrament of life;
send us forth to love and serve you,
bringing peace where there is strife.
Give us, Christ, your great compassion
to forgive as you forgave;
may we still behold your image
in the world you died to save.**

**3 Gracious Spirit, help us summon
other guests to share that feast
where triumphant Love will welcome
those who had been last and least.
There no more will envy blind us
nor will pride our peace destroy,
as we join with saints and angels
to repeat the sounding joy.**

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.

This Is the Feast

Refrain

Assisting minister



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

All



1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



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

Refrain



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



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



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

Final refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



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

Prayer of the Day

The presiding minister leads the prayer of the day.

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Holy and righteous God, you are the author of life, and you adopt us to be your children. Fill us with your words of life, that we may live as witnesses to the resurrection 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 assembly is seated.

WORD

First Reading **Acts 3:12-19**

¹²[Peter] addressed the people, “You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk?¹³The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. ¹⁴But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, ¹⁵and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. ¹⁶And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

¹⁷“And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. ¹⁸In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. ¹⁹Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.”

The Word of the Lord.

R/Thanks be to God!

¹Answer me when I call, O God, defender¹ of my cause;
 you set me free when I was in distress; have mercy on me and¹ hear
 my prayer.

²**“You mortals, how long will you dishon-¹ or my glory;
 how long will you love illusions and seek¹ after lies?”**

³Know that the LORD does wonders¹ for the faithful;
 the LORD will hear me¹ when I call.

⁴**Tremble, then, and¹ do not sin;
 speak to your heart in silence up-¹ on your bed.**

⁵Offer the appointed¹ sacrifices,
 and put your trust¹ in the LORD.

⁶**Many are saying, “Who will show us¹ any good?”
 Let the light of your face shine upon¹ us, O LORD.**

⁷You have put gladness¹ in my heart,
 more than when grain and¹ wine abound.

⁸**In peace, I will lie¹ down and sleep;
 for you alone, O LORD, make me¹ rest secure.**

Second Reading: 1 John 3:1-7

¹See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ²Beloved, we are God’s children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. ³And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

⁴Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. ⁵You know that he was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. ⁶No one who abides in him sins; no one who sins has either seen him or known him. ⁷Little children, let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

The Word of the Lord.

R/Thanks be to God!

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. Our hearts burn within us while you open to us the scriptures. *Alleluia.*

Gospel

Luke 24:36b-48

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke the twenty-fourth chapter.

R/ Glory to you, O Lord.

^{36b}Jesus himself stood among [the disciples] and said to them, “Peace be with you.” ³⁷They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸He said to them, “Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” ⁴⁰And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” ⁴²They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³and he took it and ate in their presence.

⁴⁴Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things.”

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

Youth Sermon (10:45 AM)

Sermon

Hymn “Day of Arising” #374

- 1 Day of arising,
Christ on the roadway,
unknown companion walks with his own.
When they invite him,
as fades the first day,
and bread is broken, Christ is made known.**

- 2 When we are walking,
doubtful and dreading,
blinded by sadness, slowness of heart,
yet Christ walks with us,
ever awaiting
our invitation: Stay, do not part.**

- 3 Lo, I am with you,
Jesus has spoken.
This is Christ's promise, this is Christ's sign:
when the church gathers,
when bread is broken,
there Christ is with us in bread and wine.**

- 4 Christ, our companion,
hope for the journey,
bread of compassion, open our eyes.
Grant us your vision,
set all hearts burning
that all creation with you may rise.**

Nicene Creed: With the whole church we confess our faith.

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

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.

Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news.

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

The presiding minister concludes the prayers with these words.
Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord. **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 Tithely 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 "Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart (Robert Hobby)

**10:15 "Jesu, Jesu" (Text: Hymn #708)
(Ghana folk tune, arr. Lloyd Larson)**

Offertory Response:

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful *Offering Song*



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.

Blessed are you, O God, ruler of heaven and earth. Day by day you shower us with blessings. As you have raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The presiding minister greets the assembly and invites all present to give thanks.

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.

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,
for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ,
the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin;
who in dying has destroyed death,
and in rising has brought us to eternal life.
And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the
resurrection,
with earth and sea and all their creatures,
and with angels and archangels, cherubim, and seraphim,
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

The presiding minister continues, using one of the following.

You are indeed holy, O God, the fountain of all holiness; you bring light from darkness, life from death, speech from silence. We worship you for our lives and for the world you give us. We thank you for the new world to come and for the love that will rule all in all. We praise you for the grace shown to Israel, your chosen, the people of your promise: the rescue from Egypt, the gift of the promised land, the memory of the fathers, the homecoming from exile, and the prophets' words that will not be in vain. In all this we bless you for your only-begotten Son, who fulfilled and will fulfill all your promises.

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Therefore, O God, with this bread and cup we remember the incarnation of your Son: his human birth and the covenant he made with us. We remember the sacrifice of his life: his eating with outcasts and sinners, and his acceptance of death. But chiefly we remember his rising from the tomb, his ascension to the seat of power, and his sending of the holy and life-giving Spirit. We cry out for the resurrection of our lives when Christ will come again in beauty and power to share with us the great and promised feast.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit, that we and all who share in this bread and cup may be united in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, may enter the fullness of the kingdom of heaven, and may receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and every place, and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest until he comes as victorious Lord of all.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, 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 risen Christ is made known to us in the breaking of the bread. Come, 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 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.*

The assembly may be seated.

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.

Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of life to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection, that we may show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

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

Blessing

The presiding minister proclaims God's blessing.

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

Hymn “The Strife Is O'er, the Battle Done” #366

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

- 1 The strife is o'er, the battle done;
now is the victor's triumph won!
Now be the song of praise begun. Alleluia!**
- 2 The pow'rs of death have done their worst;
Jesus their legions has dispersed.
Let shouts of holy joy outburst. Alleluia!**
- 3 The three sad days have quickly sped,
Christ rises glorious from the dead.
All glory to our risen head! Alleluia!**
- 4 Christ closed the yawning gates of hell;
the bars from heav'n's high portals fell.
Let hymns of praise his triumph tell. Alleluia!**
- 5 Lord, by the stripes that wounded you,
from death's sting free your servants too,
that we may live and sing to you. Alleluia!**

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

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BLESSED TO BLESS

SERVING TODAY:

ACOLYTES are Aaron Woodley and Tessa Miller.

LECTORS are Bill Pfeifer and Dan Krack.

WORSHIP ASSISTANT is Rebecca Brunetta.

SERVING IN APRIL:

ALTAR GUILD for April includes Roberta Laciak – coordinator, and Mary Caldwell.

PRAYER CONCERNS:

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER this week Brandie, Suzy, Lois, Terry, Joyce, Cullen, Doug, Gavin, Dennis, Jared, Patricia, Bonnie, Patty and her family, Alan, Lisa, Karen, Jim, Brody, Shelly, Pam, Clare, Jeff, Jan, Dylan, Joy, Jay, Sandy, Ted, Denny, Addison, Christopher, Ed, Nancy, Teresa, Connie, Caroline, Mark, Dominique and unborn twins and family.

THE ALTAR FLOWERS are given in memory of Virginia Detore by Holly Rowe.

THE CHANCEL FLOWERS are given in memory of Jean Steel by Tom and Suzy.

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.

*"But God commendeth his love toward us,
in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ
died for us."*

Romans 5:8

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.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE Tuesday, April 16.

FINANCE 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).

FOOD PANTRY 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.

HANDBELLS Thursday, 6:15 PM.

NOISY OFFERING last Sunday was \$166.00.

ATTENDANCE last Sunday was 110.

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

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. -1 John 3:1a

Our identity – who we really are – forms the hub of our lives as steward-disciples. Our actions and thoughts revolve around that hub. And John reveals that we are children of the Almighty. When you live, as a child of God at your core, everything else falls into place.

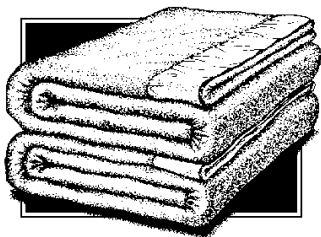
MISSION STATEMENT

“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

Volunteers Needed



The Youth Committee needs volunteers to make tie blankets for our high school seniors.

Sunday May 5th

After 10:45 AM Service

Light Lunch will be provided

**Please sign up so we know how much food to order.
(Return this slip to the church office.)**

NAME _____