

# **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.

# FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

April 6, 2025

8:15 AM & 10:45 AM

## THE WORSHIP SERVICE

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

### GATHERING

Prelude	8:15	<b>He Never Said a Mumbalin' Word</b> (Spiritual, arr.)
	10:45	<b>He Never Said a Mumbalin' Word</b> (Spiritual, arr. Moses Hogan) Sarah Wells, soprano

### 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      “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”      #803**

- 1   When I survey the wondrous cross  
on which the prince of glory died,  
my richest gain I count but loss  
and pour contempt on all my pride.**
- 2   Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast  
save in the death of Christ, my God;  
all the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his blood.**

- 3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet,  
sorrow and love flow mingled down.  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
or thorns compose so rich a crown?**
- 4 Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
that were a present far too small;  
love so amazing, so divine,  
demands my soul, my life, my all.**

### 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.

**Creator God, you prepare a new way in the wilderness, and your grace waters our desert. Open our hearts to be transformed by the new thing you are doing, that our lives may proclaim the extravagance of your love given to all through 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      **Isaiah 43:16-21**

- <sup>16</sup> Thus says the Lord,  
    who makes a way in the sea,  
    a path in the mighty waters,  
<sup>17</sup> who brings out chariot and horse,  
    army and warrior;  
they lie down, they cannot rise,  
    they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:

<sup>18</sup> Do not remember the former things,  
or consider the things of old.  
<sup>19</sup> I am about to do a new thing;  
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?  
I will make a way in the wilderness  
and rivers in the desert.  
<sup>20</sup> The wild animals will honor me,  
the jackals and the ostriches;  
for I give water in the wilderness,  
rivers in the desert,  
to give drink to my chosen people,  
<sup>21</sup> the people whom I formed for myself  
so that they might declare my praise.

The Word of the Lord.

**R/Thanks be to God!**

**Psalm 126**

*(Read responsively)*

<sup>1</sup> When the Lord restored the for- | tunes of Zion,  
then were we like | those who dream.  
<sup>2</sup> **Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue  
with | shouts of joy.**  
Then they said among the nations, “The Lord has done  
great | things for them.”  
<sup>3</sup> The Lord has done great | things for us,  
and we are | glad indeed.  
<sup>4</sup> **Restore our for- | tunes, O Lord,  
like the watercourses | of the Negeb.**  
<sup>5</sup> Those who | sowed with tears  
will reap with | songs of joy.  
<sup>6</sup> **Those who go out weeping, carry- | ing the seed,  
will come again with joy, shoulder- | ing their sheaves.**

## Second Reading **Philippians 3:4b-14**

[Paul writes:] <sup>4b</sup> If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

<sup>7</sup> Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. <sup>8</sup> More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. <sup>10</sup> I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup> if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

<sup>12</sup> Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. <sup>13</sup> Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord.

**R/Thanks be to God!**

### Gospel Acclamation



P: The Holy Gospel according to John the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter.

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

<sup>1</sup> Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. <sup>2</sup> There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. <sup>3</sup> Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. <sup>4</sup> But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, <sup>5</sup> "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" <sup>6</sup> (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) <sup>7</sup> Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. <sup>8</sup> You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

P/The Gospel of the Lord.

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

## **Youth Sermon**

## **Sermon**

**Hymn      "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross"      #335**

**1 Jesus, keep me near the cross  
there's a precious fountain;  
free to all, a healing stream  
flows from Calv'ry's mountain.**

### ***Refrain***

**In the cross, in the cross  
be my glory ever;  
till my ransomed soul shall find  
rest beyond the river.**

**2 Near the cross, a trembling soul,  
love and mercy found me;  
there the bright and morning star  
sheds its beams around me. *Refrain***

**3 Near the cross! O Lamb of God,  
bring its scenes before me;  
help me walk from day to day  
with its shadow o'er me. *Refrain***

**4 Near the cross I'll watch and wait,  
hoping, trusting ever,  
till I reach the golden strand  
just beyond the river. *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.*

Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

*At each petition,*  
God in your mercy,  
**Receive our prayer.**

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

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

**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 I Want Jesus to Walk with Me** (Spiritual, arr.)

**10:45 O Lord, My God** (J.S. Bach, arr. Hal Hopson)

**O Lord, my God, you are my refuge. O let me never be dismayed. Lord, in mercy hear my prayer to you. You are my hope. You are my refuge. My trust is ever in your care. Lord, in mercy hear my prayer to you.**

**Through dark of night, your light shines upon my way. For you are near to be my comfort. I will praise your name forever more.**

Offertory Response: "Create in Me a Clean Heart"

# 186



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.**

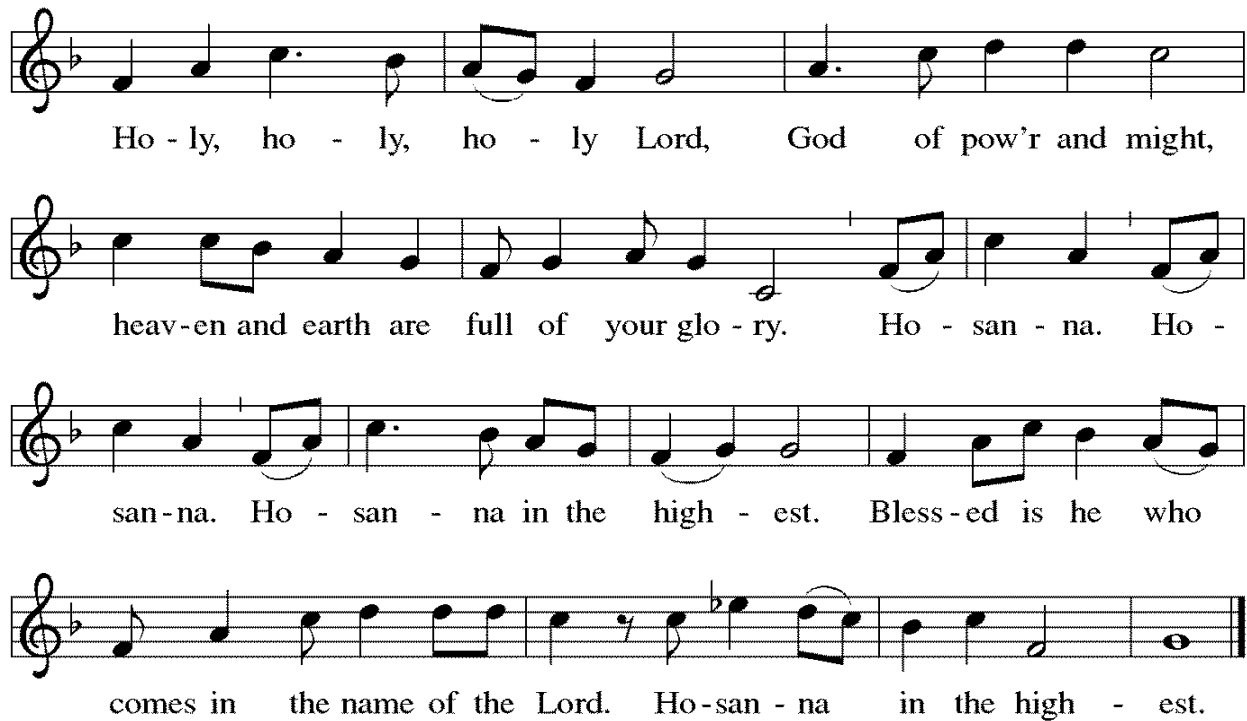
*The presiding minister continues:*

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

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

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

- *We encourage everyone to continue using hand sanitizer before coming forward for communion.*
- *As you approach the chancel, take a plastic cup from the tray.*
- *The communion rail will fill from both sides of the congregation.*
- *We encourage everyone to leave added space at the rail, primarily between family units.*
- *For those who need gluten free or grape juice, please tell the Pastor or assistant during the distribution.*
- *Cups can be placed in the trays near each side aisle as you return to your pew.*
- *For those who would like to receive communion, but are not comfortable coming to the rail, please let an Usher know so that the Pastor and Assisting Minister can bring communion to you.*

*When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say*

*The body of Christ, given for you.*

*The blood of Christ, shed for you.*

*and each person may respond Amen.*

*After all have received,*

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

## Prayer after Communion

*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      “My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less”      #597**

**1      1 My hope is built on nothing less  
than Jesus' blood and righteousness;  
no merit of my own I claim,  
but wholly lean on Jesus' name.**

### *Refrain*

**On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;  
all other ground is sinking sand.**

**2      When darkness veils his lovely face,  
I rest on his unchanging grace;  
in ev'ry high and stormy gale  
my anchor holds within the veil. *Refrain***

**3      His oath, his covenant, his blood  
sustain me in the raging flood;  
when all supports are washed away,  
he then is all my hope and stay. *Refrain***

**4      When he shall come with trumpet sound,  
oh, may I then in him be found,  
clothed in his righteousness alone,  
redeemed to stand before the throne!    *Refrain***

**Dismissal**

**Go in peace. Serve the Lord.**

**Thanks be to God.**

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## **BLESSED TO BLESS**

**SERVING TODAY:**

**8:15 AM**

**10:45 AM**

**ACOLYTE**

Colton Boggs

**LECTORS**

Kim Woodley

Bob Errett

**WORSHIP ASSISTANT**

Tawnya Combs

**ALTAR GUILD** for April includes Roberta Laciak and Mary Caldwell.



## **PRAYER CONCERNS:**

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER** this week Brandie, Suzy, Terry, Cullen, Doug, Gavin, Dennis, Cooper, Nicole, Larry, Carolyn, Dave, Jean, Stacey, Jen, Allan, Kim, Frank, Ethan, Rachel, Pam, Pat, Matthew, Alexander, Hollie, Patty, Scott, Brody, Shelly, Deanie, Ruth, Dan, Taylor, Rachel, Sue, and John.

**THE ALTAR FLOWERS** are given in memory of Helen Poole by her family.

**THE CHANCEL FLOWERS** are given in memory of Wendell and Minerva Smith by Barry and Beverly Attenberger.

**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.

**NOISY OFFERING TODAY** for Lutheran Summer Music (LSM).

**COUNCIL** 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 LENTEN WORSHIP** 6:00 PM.

**HANDBELLS** Thursday, 6:30 PM.

**FIRST COMMUNION CLASS** Saturday, 9:00 AM

**RUTH CIRCLE** will meet for the last time this year on Thursday April 10th at 7:00 in the church parlor. All women of the congregation are welcome.

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

**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!

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

**APRIL Noisy Offering is for Lutheran Summer Music (LSM)** which 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. Since 1981, this program has guided the lives of young musicians, who credit LSM as the starting place for their future careers and vocations. Young musicians from across the country are invited to join this joyful community to expand their musical skills, build supportive relationships and lifelong friendships, and find welcome in using their musical gifts in worship. The music program includes private lessons, large ensembles, chamber music groups, musicianship classes, concerts, and recitals. The connections students make are immeasurable, getting to know oneself, becoming connected to others, and feeling closer to God. Your generosity helps make all of this happen. Thank you.

**WORSHIP ATTENDANCE** last Sunday morning was 103.

**THANK YOU!** When FFTH requested assistance with needed nonperishables we hoped for a few cans from anyone who would like to help. What has happened is FULL cabinets with not just cans, but cases thanks to your generosity. This will enable us to supplement healthy meals for months, if not the year. Your kindness is very much appreciated.

**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.

## **ATTENTION PARENTS OF 3<sup>RD</sup> & 4<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS**



We are getting ready for First Communion. If you think your child is ready for their First Communion, classes will be held on Saturday April 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM. We will meet in the Sanctuary. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Chris.



**EASTER EGG HUNT  
HOLY SATURDAY  
April 19, 2025 10:00 AM**

**All children ages 12 and under are invited to come and hunt for Easter eggs at First Lutheran Church. Friends are invited to join you as well. Please call the church office at 724-834-1457 to register for the hunt.**

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

**YOU ARE INVITED** to **Lenten Thursday Worship & Luncheon** at Zion's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 140 S. Pennsylvania Avenue.

Services begin at 12:05 PM

Lunch is served following the service at 12:30 PM

April 10    Preaching: The Rev. Chris Combs

Lunch: Ham BBQ Sandwich, Pasta Salad, Chips, & Dessert

Suggested Lunch Donation—\$5.00

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

*"Taste and see that the Lord is good; happy  
are they that take refuge in him"*

*Psalms 34:8*

## 2025 LENTEN

### CONGREGATIONAL PROJECT



The Lenten Project this year, a clothes collection for The Community Closet at The Free Methodist Church, will be a great opportunity to help our neighbors and clean out our closets! All clean, gently worn clothing will be accepted starting Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2025. There will be boxes available in the Fellowship Hall.

All clothing will be accepted, however there is a particular need for boys clothing sizes 18 months to a men's small. Also accepted are gently used backpacks and duffel bags. Many of the clients of The Community Closet are displaced children to whom small stuffed animals, coloring books and small boxes of crayons are provided. If you have no clothing at this time, perhaps you would be interested in purchasing some of these items.

The Community Closet was conceived of 10 years ago when a need for free clothing for people in the Greensburg area was identified. Kathy Statler, a member of The Free Methodist Church, spearheaded the project and has watched the need grow steadily. The Closet is now associated with 14 agencies that assist families and children in crisis. Some of these are Allied Family Solutions, The Children's Institute, Embrace Grace, Glade Run Lutheran Services, The Westmoreland Children's Bureau, and Westmoreland Case Management.

Volunteer opportunities will also occur when the collection is complete to separate the items by gender and size. If interested in helping, please contact Joanie Knobloch or Bobbie Laciak.

Thank you in advance for your kindness during this Lenten season and happy cleaning!