

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 FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 18, 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 **“Air from Water Music Suite”**
(G. F. Handel, 1685 - 1759)

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 “Come, We That Love the Lord” #625

**1 Come, we that love the Lord,
and let our joys be known;
join in a song with sweet accord,
join in a song with sweet accord
and thus surround the throne,
and thus surround the throne.**

Refrain

**We're marching to Zion,
beautiful, beautiful Zion:
we're marching upward to Zion,
the beautiful city of God.**

**2 Let those refuse to sing
who never knew our God;
but children of the heav'nly king,
but children of the heav'nly king
may tell their joys abroad,
may tell their joys abroad. *Refrain***

**3 The hill of Zion yields
a thousand sacred sweets
before we reach the heav'nly fields,
before we reach the heav'nly fields,
or walk the golden streets,
or walk the golden streets. *Refrain***

**4 Then let our songs abound,
and ev'ry tear be dry;
we're marching through Immanuel's ground,
we're marching through Immanuel's ground,
to fairer worlds on high,
to fairer worlds on high. *Refrain***

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.

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

O Lord God, you teach us that without love, our actions gain nothing. Pour into our hearts your most excellent gift of love, that, made alive by your Spirit, we may know goodness and peace, 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 assembly is seated.

WORD

First Reading

Acts 11:1-18

¹ Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. ² So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, ³ saying, “Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?” ⁴ Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, ⁵ “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. ⁶ As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. ⁷ I also heard a voice saying to me, ‘Get up, Peter; kill and eat.’ ⁸ But I replied, ‘By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ ⁹ But a second time the voice answered from heaven, ‘What

God has made clean, you must not call profane.’ ¹⁰ This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. ¹¹ At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. ¹² The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. ¹³ He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, ‘Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; ¹⁴ he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.’ ¹⁵ And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. ¹⁶ And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ ¹⁷ If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?” ¹⁸ When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, “Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.”

The Word of the Lord.

R/Thanks be to God!

Psalm 148

(Read Responsively)

- ¹ Hallelujah! Praise the Lord [|] from the heavens;
praise God [|] in the heights.
- ² **Praise the Lord, [|] all you angels;
sing praise, all you [|] hosts of heaven.**
- ³ Praise the Lord, [|] sun and moon;
sing praise, all you [|] shining stars.
- ⁴ **Praise the Lord, heav- [|] en of heavens,
and you waters a- [|] bove the heavens.**
- ⁵ Let them praise the name [|] of the Lord,
who commanded, and they [|] were created,
- ⁶ **who made them stand fast forev- [|] er and ever,
giving them a law that shall not [|] pass away.**
- ⁷ Praise the Lord [|] from the earth,
you sea monsters [|] and all deeps;

⁸ **fire and hail, | snow and fog,**
tempestuous wind, do- | ing God's will;
⁹ mountains | and all hills,
 fruit trees | and all cedars;
¹⁰ **wild beasts | and all cattle,**
creeping things and | flying birds;
¹¹ sovereigns of the earth | and all peoples,
 princes and all rulers | of the world;
¹² **young | men and maidens,**
old and | young together.
¹³ Let them praise the name | of the Lord,
 whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over | earth and
 heaven.
¹⁴ **The Lord has raised up strength for the people and praise for**
all | faithful servants,
the children of Israel, a people who are near
the Lord. | Hallelujah!

Second Reading

Revelation 21:1-6

¹ I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first
 earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy
 city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
 prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice
 from the throne saying,

“See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;

they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them;

⁴ he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away.”

⁵ And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.” ⁶ Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.”

The Word of the Lord.

R/Thanks be to God!

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia.* Everyone will know that you are [|] my disciples* if you have love for [|] one another. *Alleluia.

Gospel

John 13:31-35

P: The Holy Gospel according to John the thirteenth chapter.

R/ Glory to you, O Lord.

³¹ When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³² If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³ Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’ ³⁴ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

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

Youth Sermon

Sermon

Hymn “Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death”

#452

- 1 Awake, O sleeper, rise from death,
 and Christ shall give you light;
 so learn his love, its length and breadth,
 its fullness, depth, and height.**
- 2 To us on earth he came to bring
 from sin and fear release,
 to give the Spirit's unity,
 the very bond of peace.**
- 3 There is one body and one hope,
 one Spirit and one call,
 one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,
 one God who made us all.**
- 4 Then walk in love as Christ has loved,
 who died that he might save;
 with kind and gentle hearts forgive
 as God in Christ forgave.**
- 5 For us Christ lived, for us he died,
 and conquered in the strife.
 Awake, arise, go forth in faith,
 and Christ shall give you life.**

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.

God of resurrection and new life, we come before you in prayer for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

At each petition,

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

The presiding minister concludes the prayers with these words.

We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting that you are always with us; in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen 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 "Andantino" (Gabriel Faure, 1845 - 1924)

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.

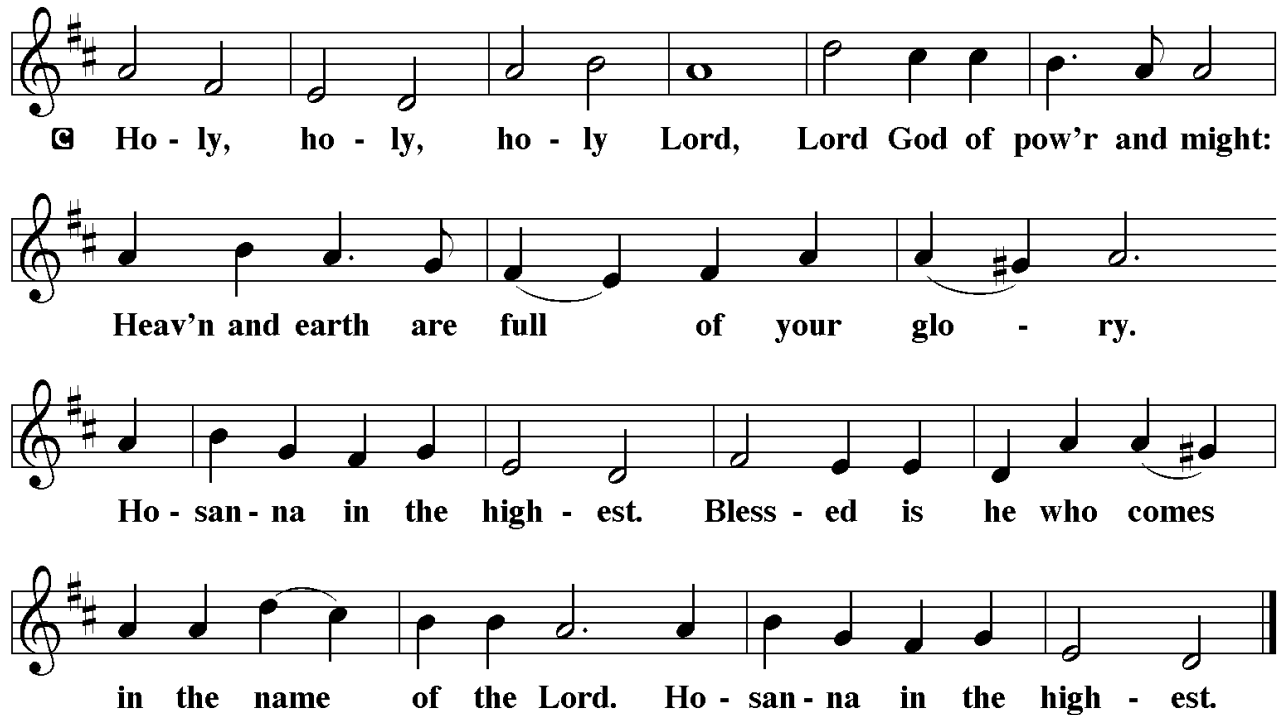
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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, Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
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 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.*

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 “Faith of Our Fathers” #812

**1 Faith of our fathers, living still
in spite of dungeon, fire, and sword.
Oh, how our hearts beat high with joy
whene'er we hear that glorious word.**

Refrain

**Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
we will be true to thee till death.**

**2 The martyrs, chained in prisons dark,
were still in heart and conscience free;
and blest would be their children's fate
if they, like them, should die for thee. *Refrain***

**3 Faith of our fathers! We will love
both friend and foe in all our strife;
proclaim thee too, as love knows how,
by saving word and faithful life. *Refrain***

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is with you.
Thanks be to God.

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BLESSED TO BLESS

SERVING TODAY:

8:15 AM

10:45 AM

ACOLYTE

Nathaniel Boggs

LECTORS

Kim Woodley

Rebecca Brunetta

WORSHIP ASSISTANT

Rebecca Brunetta

Rebecca Brunetta

ALTAR GUILD for May includes Kim Woodley and Ann Copper.

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.

PRAYER CONCERNS:

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER this week Brandie, Suzy, Terry, Cullen, Doug, Gavin, Dennis, Cooper, Carolyn, Dave, Jean, John, Cathy, Mark, Paul, Jean, Kathy, Matthew, Jessie, Willis, Alexander, Frank, Larry, Craig, Charles, Allan, and Jan.

THE ALTAR FLOWERS are given to in memory of Cliff and March Jennings by the 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.

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

Psalms 34:8

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

CORRECTIONS: Chicks were given in memory of Esther R. Ordich by Mark Barnhart for Mother's Day. Chicks were also given in memory of Bertie Kratochvil by Dan and Jody Lewis and family.

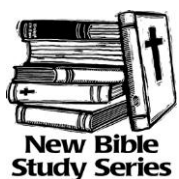
WORSHIP ATTENDANCE last Sunday morning was 90.

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

Revelation 21:1 – *“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.”*
The things of this world are passing away. We are waiting for a new heaven and a new earth, which have been promised to us in Christ. This knowledge is foundational for our stewardship of what God has put into our hands. What is truly important? What is worthy of our support? How has God called us to use “unrighteous mammon” for the good of our neighbor and His kingdom?



THE PARABLES OF JESUS

Interested in Jesus teaching through parables? Join the conversation as we explore some of Jesus' most interesting and challenging teachings.

You have two opportunities each month to join. We will gather at 1:30 PM and 6:00 PM on May 19. Hope to see you there!

THIS WEEK AT FIRST:

Sunday – May 18 – Fifth Sunday of Easter

8:15 – Worship

9:00 – Continental Breakfast

9:30 – Sunday School

10:45 – Worship

Monday – May 19

1:30 & 6:00 – Bible Study

Newsletter Deadline

Tuesday – May 20

6:30 – Finance

Wednesday – May 21

12:00 – Food From the Heart

Sunday – May 25 – Sixth Sunday of Easter

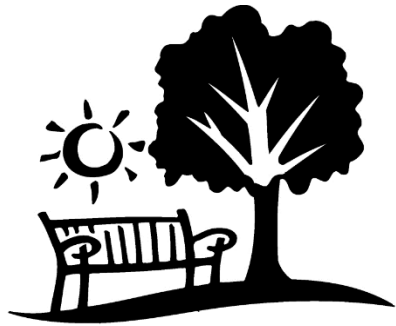
8:15 – Worship

10:00 - Worship & Music Meeting

10:45 – Worship

Monday – May 26

OFFICE CLOSED in observance of Memorial Day



**Saturday Worship
In the Park**
Weather permitting

We are trying something new! Have you ever thought it would be nice to worship outside in the park? Well, we have just the thing! We will be having worship outside in the park on the following Saturdays at 5:00pm. June 7th & 21st, July 12th & 26th, and August 9th and 23rd.

This is casual worship in the park (or the fellowship hall if necessary). Please bring your favorite camp chair and dress for the outdoors. Hope to see you there!

FROM THE CHRISTIAN OUTREACH TEAM:

We are trying to determine the level of interest and availability of people for a possible Habitat for Humanity project on Saturday, July 19, 2025. There are no specifics yet. If you are interested, please sign on the line below and send it to the Church Office or drop it in the collection plate.

Name: _____

is interested in helping with the Habitat for Humanity Project on July 19, 2025.