FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

246 South Main Street
Greensburg, Pennsylvania
724-834-1457

Office hours: Monday through Friday, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

office@felchurch.org

Chris Combs — Pastor
Marvin J. Huls — 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.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 23, 2026
9:30 AM

THE WORSHIP SERVICE

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

GATHERING

Prelude **"Let All Things Now Living"**
(arr. Thomas Keesecker)

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 "The Church's One Foundation" #654

1 The church's one foundation
is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
she is his new creation
by water and the word.
From heav'n he came and sought her
to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her,
and for her life he died.

2 **Elect from ev'ry nation,**
yet one o'er all the earth,
her charter of salvation
one Lord, one faith, one birth:
one holy name she blesses,
partakes one holy food,
and to one hope she presses,
with ev'ry grace endued.

3 **Though with a scornful wonder**
this world sees her oppressed,
by schisms rent asunder,
by heresies distressed,
yet saints their watch are keeping;
their cry goes up: "How long?"
And soon the night of weeping
shall be the morn of song.

4 **Through toil and tribulation**
and tumult of her war,
she waits the consummation
of peace forevermore;
till with the vision glorious
her longing eyes are blest,
and the great church victorious
shall be the church at rest.

5 **Yet she on earth has union**
with God, the Three in One,
and mystic sweet communion
with those whose rest is won.
Oh, blessed heav'nly chorus!
Lord, save us by your grace,
that we, like saints before us,
may see you face to face.

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

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 God, with all your faithful followers of every age, we praise you, the rock of our life. Be our strong foundation and form us into the body of your Son, that we may gladly minister to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

The assembly is seated.

WORD

First Reading **Isaiah 51:1-6**

[1] Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness,
you that seek the Lord.
Look to the rock from which you were hewn,
and to the quarry from which you were dug.
[2] Look to Abraham your father
and to Sarah who bore you;
for Abraham was but one when I called him,
but I blessed him and made him many.
[3] For the Lord will comfort Zion,
comfort all its waste places,
and will make its wilderness like Eden,
and its desert like the garden of the Lord;
joy and gladness will be found in Zion,
thanksgiving and the voice of song.
[4] Listen to me, my people,
and give heed to me, my nation;
for a teaching will go out from me,
and my justice for a light to the peoples.
[5] I will bring near my deliverance swiftly,

my salvation has gone out
and my arms will rule the peoples;
the coastlands wait for me,
and for my arm they hope.
6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens,
and look at the earth beneath;
for the heavens will vanish like smoke,
the earth will wear out like a garment,
and those who live on it will die like gnats;
but my salvation will be forever,
and my deliverance will never be ended.

The Word of the Lord. **R/Thanks be to God!**

Psalm 138 *(Read Responsively)*

1 I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with | my whole heart;
before the gods I will | sing your praise.
2 **I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your name, because of your steadfast | love and faithfulness;**
for you have glorified your name and your word a- | bove all things.
3 When I called, you | answered me;
you increased my | strength within me.
4 **All the rulers of the earth will praise | you, O Lord,**
when they have heard the words | of your mouth.
5 They will sing of the ways | of the Lord,
that great is the glory | of the Lord.
6 **The Lord is high, yet cares | for the lowly,**
perceiving the haughty | from afar.
7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you | keep me safe;
you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies; your right | hand shall save me.
8 **You will make good your pur- | pose for me;**
O Lord, your steadfast love endures forever; do not abandon the works | of your hands.

Second Reading **Romans 12:1-8**

[1] I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. [2] Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

[3] For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. [4] For as in one body we have many parts, and not all the parts have the same function, [5] so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are parts one of another. [6] We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; [7] ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; [8] the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

The Word of the Lord. **R/Thanks be to God!**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. **You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.** ***Alleluia.***

Gospel **Matthew 16: 13-20**

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the sixteenth chapter.

R/ Glory to you, O Lord.

[13] Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son-of-Man is?" [14] And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." [15] Jesus said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" [16] Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." [17] And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my

Father in heaven. [18] And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. [19] I will give you the keys of the dominion of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." [20] Then Jesus sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

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

Youth Sermon

Sermon

Hymn "Take My Life, That I May Be" #685

1 Take my life, that I may be
consecrated, Lord, to thee;
take my moments and my days;
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

2 Take my hands and let them move
at the impulse of thy love;
take my feet and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee.

3 Take my voice and let me sing
always, only, for my King;
take my lips and let them be
filled with messages from thee.

4 Take my silver and my gold,
not a mite would I withhold;
take my intellect and use
ev'ry pow'r as thou shall choose.

5 Take my will and make it thine,
it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is thine own,
it shall be thy royal throne.

6 Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure store;
take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.

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

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.

With bold trust in God's unfailing provision, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

At each petition,
Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

The presiding minister concludes the prayers with these words.
Receive our prayers and answer, O God, as you have promised. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our 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 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.

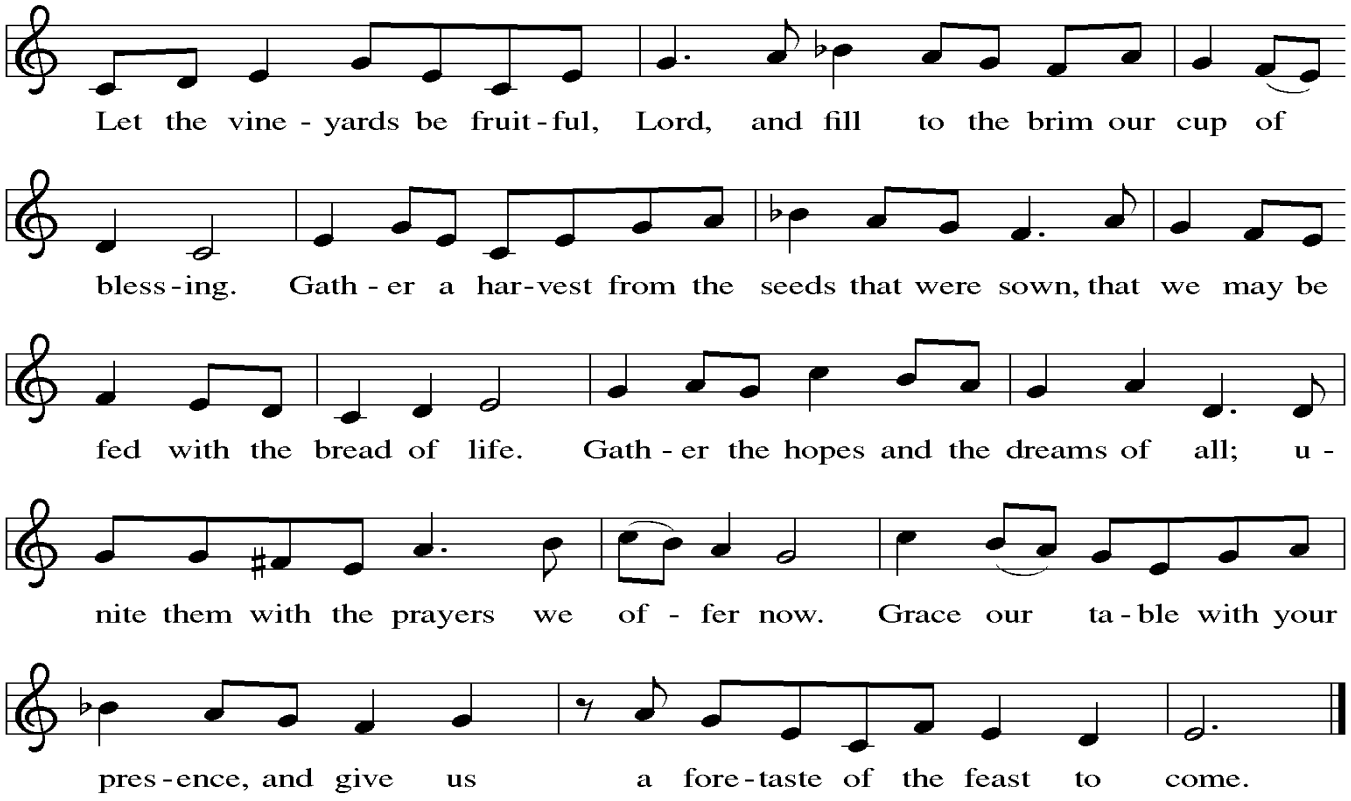
(Children, please bring your offering to the front of the church and place it in the "Thank You Jesus" Jar.)

Offertory "I Need Thee Every Hour" (arr. Penny Rodriguez)

Offertory Response:

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful

Offering Song



Offertory Prayer (in unison)

Let us pray.
God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

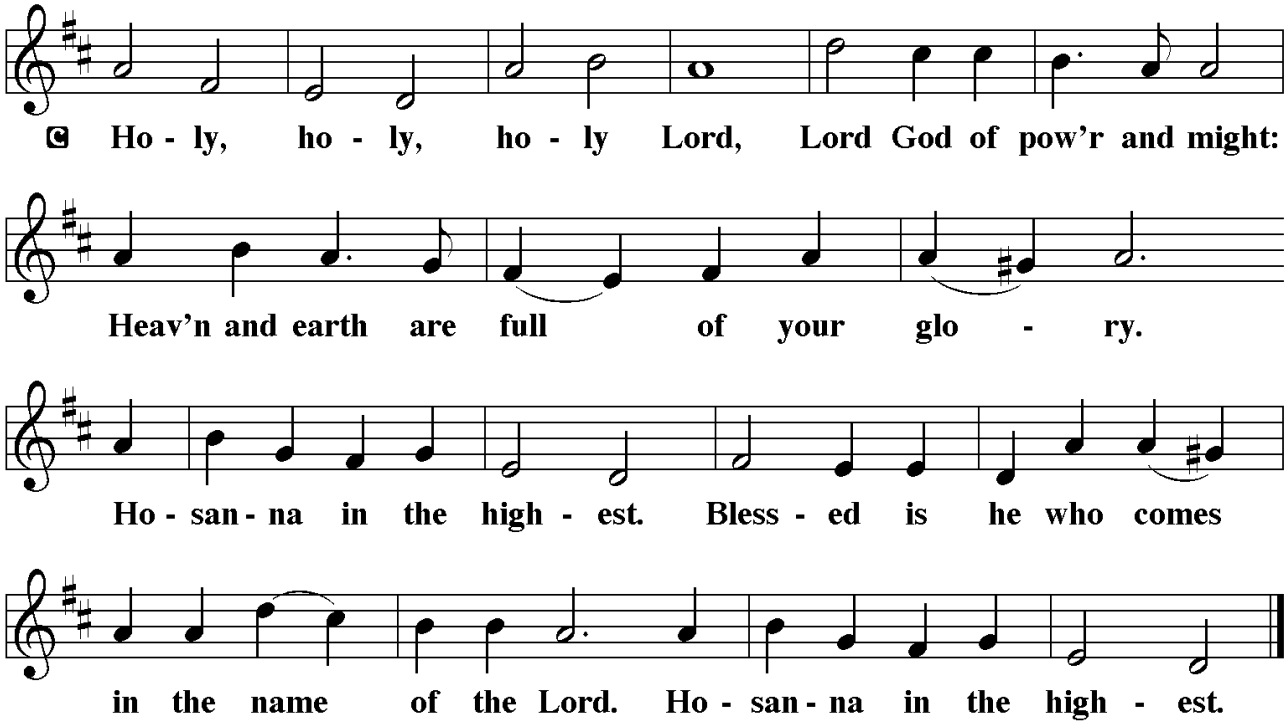
Great Thanksgiving

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,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.
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



Thanksgiving at the Table

The presiding minister continues, using one of the following.

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, 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 gifts of God for the people of God. 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.
O God, our life, our strength, our food, we give you thanks for sustaining us with the body and blood of your Son. By your Holy Spirit, enliven us to be his body in the world, that more and more we will give you praise and serve your earth and its many peoples, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

SENDING

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

Blessing

The presiding minister proclaims God's blessing.
The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **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***

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

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: **9:30 AM**

ACOLYTE Nathaniel Boggs

LECTOR Dan Krack

WORSHIP ASSISTANT Kim Woodley

ALTAR GUILD for August includes Dianna Marusko, Carolyn Hanzel, and Cindy Bell.

PRAYER CONCERNS:

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER this week Brandie, Suzy, Terry, Doug, Dennis, Barry, Marsha, Kris, Ray, Mike, Judy, Jared, Lily, Andy, Sue, Hollie, Kevin, Paula, Frank, Cameron, and Lee.

THE ALTAR FLOWERS are given in memory of Ethel Peters by Holly Rowe.

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 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:

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE last Sunday was 64.

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.

ABOUT TODAY'S HYMNS:

The Church's One Foundation was written by Samuel Stone (1839-1900) in 1866. He wrote this hymn to help his congregation comprehend "the breadth and depth of meaning contained in the Apostle's Creed."

Take My Life, That I May Be was written by Frances Havergall on February 4, 1874. She was inspired during a five-day visit in Arely House in Worcestershire where "there were ten persons in the house, some unconverted and long prayed for, some converted but not rejoicing Christians." During the last night of her visit, she felt a sense of praise and renewal of her own faith. She felt these little verses formed themselves and chimed in her heart one after another till they finished with "ever, only, all for Thee."

Faith of Our Fathers. After he became a Roman Catholic, Frederick Faber began writing hymns. In 1862, he wrote 150 and published them in four books. His purpose was to "furnish some simple and original hymns for singing" and "to provide English Catholics with a hymn-book for reading as well as singing." He wrote these hymns on behalf of mostly poor, sometimes immigrant Roman Catholics who needed hymns to sing.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST:

Sunday – August 23 – Pentecost 13

9:30 – Worship

Tuesday – August 25

10:00 - Newsletter Folding

Wednesday – August 26

12:00 – Food From the Heart

6:30 - Property

Sunday – August 30 – Pentecost 14

9:30 – Worship

"Blessed are you, Lord God, the God of Israel; you alone do wondrous deeds."

Psalm 72:18

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.

AMP UP YOUR SUMMER The Jeannette Community Band will be playing a variety of tunes Saturday, August 29 from 7 to 9 PM at the Hempfield Park Amphitheater in Greensburg. Come and enjoy!

Dishes...

A dedicated group of ladies have cleaned out the kitchen and identified a number of items that are no longer needed. This includes a large number of dishes. Please take a look in the Fellowship Hall and see if you can use any of the items there. Donations for items taken are welcome, please clearly mark your donation - "Dishes".

Any items left at the end of August will be donated to Westmoreland Community Action to help people moving into new housing.

SHARING SPIRIT OF AMERICANS: Our church will be one of 250 partners with the WCFB honoring the sharing spirit of Americans by having a collection for the Food Bank from Sept. 1 to Sept 13 (Rally Day). Any nonperishable food item that is not out of date will be accepted in containers in the Fellowship Hall and the entrance to the education building. Some items that are of particular need include: canned tuna, chicken or salmon, canned fruits and vegetables, canned meals (ravioli, stew), peanut butter, macaroni and cheese, cereal and boxed meals (Hamburger Helper). With the rising cost of food and the increased burden on us all, your help in this collection is so much appreciated.

Trex Recycling Challenge

Plastic Patrol

Everyone is now a part of the Plastic Patrol of First Lutheran Church. Keep bringing in your plastic bags, etc. so we can **keep it out of our landfills** and get a *chance(s) each quarter to win a Trex bench for our park.

Totals to date:

Oct-Dec. 2025	166 pounds
Jan-Mar. 2026	253 pounds
Apr – Jun 2026	252 pounds
July – Sept 2026	138 pounds (as of August 5, 2026)
Grand total to date:	809 POUNDS

LET'S KEEP RECYCLING THAT PLASTIC!!!

**for each 250 pounds of plastic collected per quarter, one entry into a random drawing to win and choose a bench or one of 4 other prizes.*

PUT IT ON YOUR CALENDAR!

Piano, Pipes, Peals, and Premieres on Sunday, October 18 at 4:00 PM in the Sanctuary. The program will feature the world premiere of NO HEIGHT, NO DEPTH by composer Jonathan White, in honor of Marvin Huls, featuring the FELC choir and guest choir members, Marc Tourre (baritone), Kathleen Campbell (soprano saxophone), and Nancy Finke Sheehan (accompanist). Also on the program will be the Re-Premiere of SERENITY PRAYER, written by noted composer, Mark Hayes, in honor of Gwen Irwin by her children. Special guest will be Josh Beck (jazz piano and organ) with hymn improvisations. A reception will follow. Free and open to the public.

SUMMER FOOD DRIVE

During the summer months, the Christian Outreach Committee will be collecting nonperishable items for our Emergency Food Cupboard. These items will be used to assist many individuals and families in our community.

We have also seen an increased need for personal care items. Anything you are able to provide is greatly appreciated!

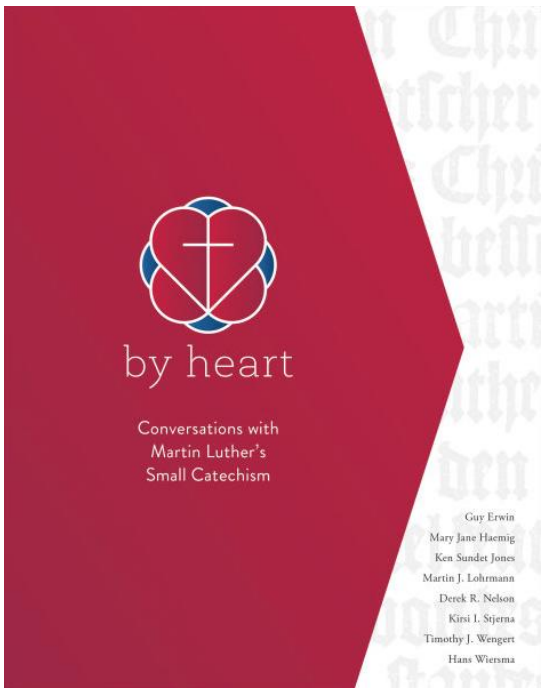
August is "Canned Food Month": Items especially needed are:

Soup
Fruit
Canned pasta (SpaghettiOs, etc.)

August Personal Care: Toothpaste, Toothbrush (single or 2-pack), dish liquid, laundry detergent (small size)

A basket is located in the education building foyer for your donations.

Please **check the expiration dates** before donating, as we cannot distribute expired items in the Emergency Food bags. Thank you!



Adult Study

Our Adult Study resumes on September 14th. This year we will be studying Luther's Small Catechism, utilizing *by heart: Conversations with Martin Luther's Small Catechism.* Books will be available in the office by September 1st. If you are able, we are requesting $15/book to help cover the cost of these books.

Hope you can join the conversation in the Fellowship Hall on the 14th at either 1:30 pm or 6:00 pm.

Future dates are October 19th,` November 16th, and December 14th.