

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 FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 25, 2024

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 “ I Have Chosen The Way Of Truth”
(Craig Courtney)

I have chosen the way of truth; I have set my heart on your laws. I hold fast to your statutes. O Lord, my God, let me not be put to shame. I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free. Teach me to follow your decrees, O Lord, and I shall keep them to the end. Turn my heart to your decrees, away from worthless gain. Preserve my life, according to your word. I have chosen the way of truth; I have set my heart on your laws. Lead me in the path of your commands, for there I will find my delight.

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 “In Unity We Lift Our Song”

(Tune: A Mighty Fortress is Our God; Words: Ken Medema)

- 1. In unity we lift our song of grateful adoration, for brothers brave and sisters strong. What cause for celebration!
For those whose faithfulness has kept us through distress, who’ve shared with us our plight, who’ve held us in the night, the blessed congregation.**

- 2. For stories told and told again to every generation, to give us strength in times of pain, to give us consolation.
Our spirits to revive to keep our dreams alive, when we are far from home and evil seasons come; how firm is our foundation.**

- 3. For sacred scriptures handed down, a blessed trust and treasure, which give us hope when hope is gone and make us weep with pleasure.
And when our eyes go blind and death is close behind, we shall recite them still
whose words our hearts can fill with hope beyond all measure.**

- 4. For God our way, our bread, our rest, of all these gifts the Giver. Our strength, our guide, our nurturing breast whose hand will yet deliver
Who keeps us till the day when night shall pass away, when hate and fear are gone and all our work is done, and we shall sing forever.**

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.

Holy God, your word feeds your people with life that is eternal. Direct our choices and preserve us in your truth, that, renouncing what is false and evil, we may live in you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

WORD

First Reading

Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18

¹ Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. ^{2a} And Joshua said to all the people, ¹⁴ “Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. ¹⁵ Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”

¹⁶ Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; ¹⁷ for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; ¹⁸ and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.”

The Word of the Lord.

R/Thanks be to God!

- ¹⁵ The eyes of the LORD are up- | on the righteous,
and God's ears are open | to their cry.
- ¹⁶ **The face of the LORD is against those | who do evil,
to erase the remembrance of them | from the earth.**
- ¹⁷ The righteous cry, and | the LORD hears them
and delivers them from | all their troubles.
- ¹⁸ **The LORD is near to the | brokenhearted
and saves those whose spir- | its are crushed.**
- ¹⁹ Many are the troubles | of the righteous,
but the LORD delivers them from | every one.
- ²⁰ **God will keep safe | all their bones;
not one of them | shall be broken.**
- ²¹ Evil will bring death | to the wicked
and those who hate the righteous | will be punished.
- ²² **O LORD, you redeem the life | of your servants,
and those who put their trust in you will | not be punished.**

Second Reading: Ephesians 6:10-20

¹⁰ Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵ As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸ Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

The Word of the Lord.

R/Thanks be to God!

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia.* Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. *Alleluia.

Gospel

John 6: 56-69

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

R/ Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said,] ⁵⁶ “Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.” ⁵⁹ He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

⁶⁰ When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” ⁶¹ But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶² Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³ It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴ But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. ⁶⁵ And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

⁶⁶ Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. ⁶⁷ So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?” ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

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

Youth Sermon

Sermon

HYMN “I Received the Living God” #477

Refrain

**I received the living God,
and my heart is full of joy.
I received the living God,
and my heart is full of joy.**

**1 Jesus said: I am the bread,
kneaded long to give you life;
you who will partake of me
need not ever fear to die. *Refrain***

**2 Jesus said: I am the way,
and my Father longs for you;
so I come to bring you home
to be one with us anew. *Refrain***

**3 Jesus said: I am the truth;
come and follow close to me.
You will know me in your heart,
and my word shall make you free. *Refrain***

**4 Jesus said: I am the life,
far from whom no thing can grow,
but receive this living bread,
and my Spirit you shall know. 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**

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.

Calling on the spirit of Wisdom to guide our hearts and our minds, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

At each petition,
Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

The presiding minister concludes the prayers with these words.
We lift up these prayers to you, gracious God. Receive them into your holy keeping.
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

“The Call”

(Text: George Herbert; Music: Ralph Vaughan Williams)

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life! Such a Way, as
gives us breath: Such a Truth, as ends all strife: Such
a life, as killeth death.

Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength: Such a Light,
as shows a feast: Such a Feast, as mends in length.
Such a strength, as makes his guest.

Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart: Such a joy as none
can move: Such a Love, as none can part: Such a
Heart, as joys in love.

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.

God of mercy and grace, the eyes of all wait upon you, and you open your hand in blessing. Fill us with good things at your table, that we may come to the help of all in need, through Jesus Christ, our redeemer 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

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.

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 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.

Gracious God, in this meal you have drawn us to your heart, and nourished us at your table with food and drink, the body and blood of Christ. Now send us forth to be your people in the world, and to proclaim your truth this day and evermore, 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.

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

Hymn “Blessed Assurance” #638

**1 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.**

Refrain

**This is my story, this is my song,
praising my Savior, all the day long:
this is my story, this is my song,
praising my Savior all the day long.**

**2 Perfect submission, perfect delight,
visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
angels descending bring from above
echoes of mercy, whispers of love. *Refrain***

**3 Perfect submission, all is at rest;
I in my Savior am happy and blest,
watching and waiting, looking above,
filled with his goodness, lost in his love. *Refrain***

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

From Evangelical Lutheran Worship © 2006. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of Augsburg Fortress under license #SB144012.

First 2 readings and the Gospel Reading: New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

The prayers of intercession (printed in each Sunday/festival section) may be reproduced for onetime, non-sale use, provided copies are for local use only and the following copyright notice appears: From Sundays and Seasons, copyright © 2024 Augsburg Fortress.

BLESSED TO BLESS

SERVING TODAY:

ACOLYTE is Molly Boggs.

LECTOR is Tawnya Combs.

WORSHIP ASSISTANT is Tawnya Combs.

SERVING IN AUGUST:

ALTAR GUILD for August includes Dianna Marusko.

PRAYER CONCERNS:

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER this week Brandie, Suzy, Terry, Joyce, Cullen, Doug, Gavin, Dennis, Larry, Alan, Connie, Caroline, Mark, Cindy, Brody, Scott, Carolyn, Blanca, Connie, Larry, Joanne, Marie, Jean, Harry, Wendy, Sherrie, Matt, Daniel, Kelly, Bob, Ian, Becky, Marcel, and Todd.

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 (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.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

THANKS to Marc Toure for his musical assistance today.

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE Word and Sacrament at 9:30 AM.
No Sunday School.

ATTENDANCE last Sunday was 68.

NEWSLETTER FOLDING Tuesday, August 27.

CHRISTIAN ED / YOUTH Tuesday, 6:30 PM.

PROPERTY Wednesday, 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).

HANDBELL CHOIR rehearsals begin Thursday, September 5 at 6:15 PM.

CHOIR rehearsals begin Sunday, September 8 at 10:00 AM.

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.

*“Cast all your anxieties upon God,
because he cares for you.”*

1Peter 4:7

Stewardship Snippets

John 6:58 – This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which the ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.

To stay physically healthy we have to eat lots of good vegetables, and to stay spiritually healthy we need to nourish ourselves on the Word of God and the Bread of Life in Holy Communion.



BLOOD DONORS MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Schedule today!

Blood Drive **Zion Lutheran Church**

Basement

Church Hall
140 S. Pennsylvania Ave.
Greensburg

Monday, August 26
11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Maximize your blood donation. Help more patients.
If you are an eligible type O, B - or A - donor, consider making a Power Red donation.
Red blood cells are the most commonly transfused blood component.

Please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: ZionLutheran to schedule an appointment.

Streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass to complete your pre-donation reading and health history questions on the day of your appointment.

Donors needed! Come give blood in August for \$20 Amazon.com Gift Card by email. See rcblood.org/Help

1-800-RED CROSS | 1-800-733-2767 | RedCrossBlood.org | Download the Blood Donor App

© 2017 The American Red Cross | 1511101701-0000

1-800-RED-CROSS | 1-800-733-2767 | 1511101701-0000

Bibles for Love Packages

Bibles WILL BE COLLECTED THROUGH RALLY DAY

Boxes for your items will be located in the Narthex, the Education Building, and the Fellowship Hall.

For more information on Love Packages check them out on lovepackages.org.

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.

August is “Canned Food Month.” Items especially needed are:

Soup

Fruit

Canned pasta (SpaghettiOs, etc.)



A box 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!

FFTH NEEDS YOU!

Anyone who enjoys fellowship and working in the kitchen, please consider volunteering at FFTH. Hands are needed! Contact Bobbie Laciak if interested.



Rally Day Cookies for First Responders! Sunday, September 8th Rally Day

Hands are needed to:

- **Make cookies!**
- **Deliver cookies to the Fellowship Hall by 10 am Saturday, September 7th!**
- **Pack cookies on Saturday, September 7th.**
- **Deliver cookies to First Responders after Church on Sunday, September 8th.**

**Our Thanks for your help!
The Christian Outreach Committee**



RALLY DAY PLANNED FOR SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

On September 8, we will kick off another year of Christian learning and mission with a Rally Day. Sunday Church School resumes from 9:30 to 10:30 AM with classes for all ages.

Immediately following the 10:45 AM service, we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for a lunch. The menu includes:

Sloppy Joes / hotdogs
Chips
Sundae Bar
Lemonade / Coffee / Tea

Please complete a reservation form (below) and return it to the church office or you may call the church office. Reservations are requested by **September 1, 2024**.

All are welcome! Make sure to mark your calendar to kick off this year of learning and mission!

Name _____

Number attending _____

A donation to defray expenses may be given if you so desire.