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.

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 13, 2026
8:15 AM & 10:45 AM

THE WORSHIP SERVICE

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

GATHERING

Prelude **The Ash Grove** (Welsh folk tune, arr. J. Bert Carlson)

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.

Blessed be the holy Trinity,
☩ one God,
who creates, redeems, and sustains us
and all of creation.
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.

To you, O God,
all hearts are open, to you all desires known. We come to you, confessing our sins. Forgive us in your mercy, and remember us in your love. Show us your ways; teach us your paths; and lead us in justice and truth, for the sake of your goodness in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

The presiding minister announces God's forgiveness.
By water and the Holy Spirit God gives you a new birth, and through the death and resurrection of ☩ Jesus Christ, God forgives you all your sins. The God of mercy and might strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life.
Amen.

Hymn "God, Bless the Hands"

(Tune of #756, text by Marty Haugen)

1 God, bless the hands stretched out in love
through floods below and storms above;
They search and rescue, comfort, calm,
give shelter, offer healing balm.
Oh, guard them by your steadfast hand,
reach out in love to help us stand.

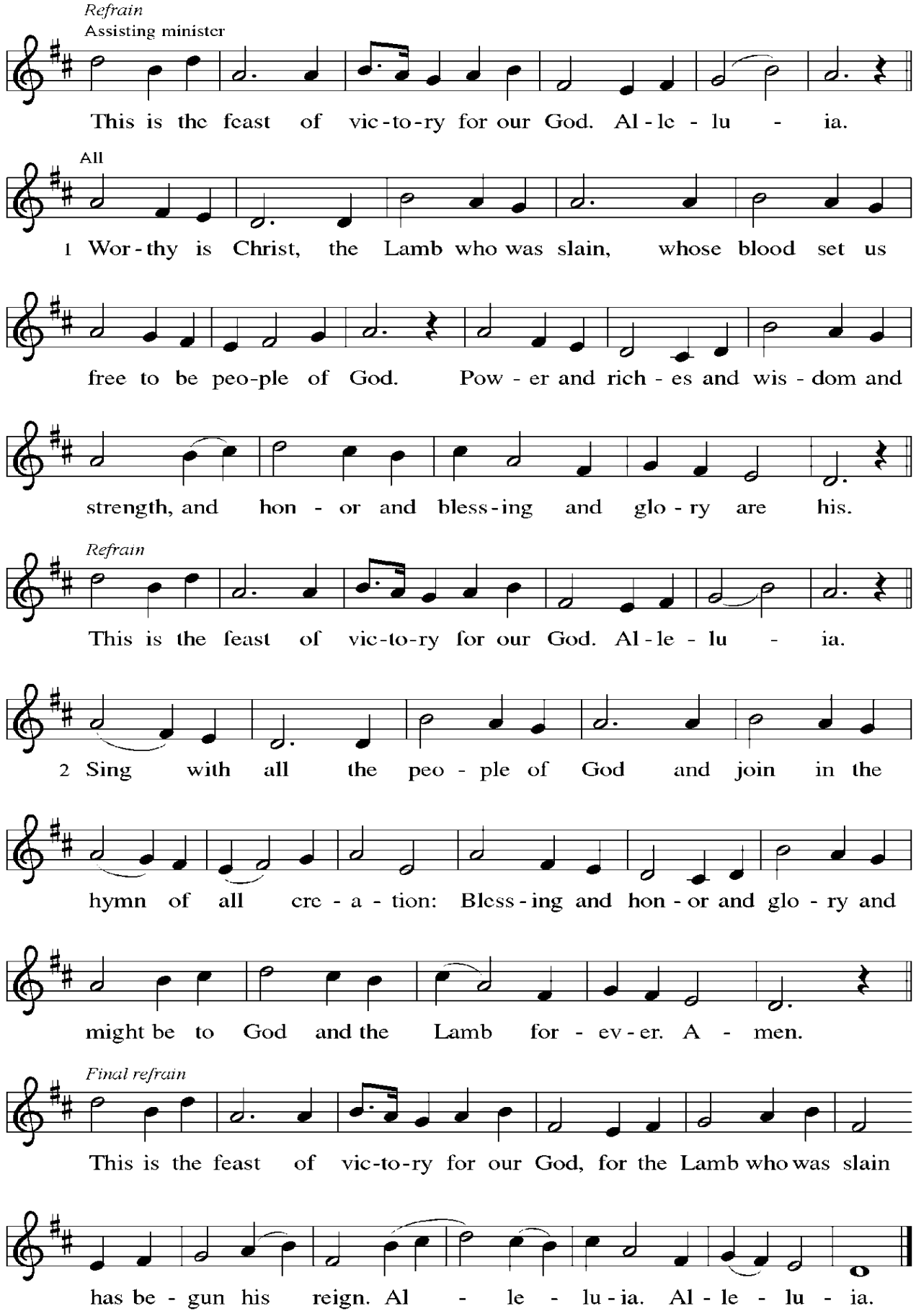
2 Bring comfort to the hearts that mourn,
left broken, emptied by the storm.
Give hope to those in deepest grief;
empower us to bring relief.
To you, O God, we raise our hands.
Save us, we pray, from sinking sands.

3 O God, our strength and refuge sure,
our hope while storms of life endure.
Teach us to live in harmony
with earth and river, sky, and sea.
Preserving waters, air, and lands
as holy work for human hands.

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 Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

The assembly is seated.

WORD

First Reading **Genesis 50:15-21**

15 Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if
Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the
wrong that we did to him?" 16 So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your
father gave this instruction before he died, 17 'Say to Joseph: I beg you,
forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.'
Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your
father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. 18 Then his brothers also
wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." 19 But
Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? 20 Even
though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order
to preserve a numerous people, as God is doing today. 21 So have no fear; I
myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way Joseph
reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

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

Psalm 103:1-13 *(Read Responsively)*

[1 Bless the Lord, | O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's | holy name.
2 **Bless the Lord, | O my soul,**
and forget not | all God's benefits—
3 who forgives | all your sins
and heals all | your diseases;
4 **who redeems your life | from the grave**
and crowns you with steadfast | love and mercy;
5 who satisfies your desires | with good things
so that your youth is renewed | like an eagle's.
6 **O Lord, you provide | vindication**
and justice for all who | are oppressed.
7 You made known your | ways to Moses
and your works to the chil- | dren of Israel.
] 8 **Lord, you are full of compas- | sion and mercy,**
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love;
9 you will not al- | ways accuse us,
nor will you keep your an- | ger forever.
10 **You have not dealt with us according | to our sins,**
nor repaid us according to | our iniquities.
11 For as the heavens are high a- | bove the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for | those who fear you.
12 **As far as the east is | from the west,**
so far have you removed our transgres- | sions from us.
13 As a father has compassion | for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear | you, O Lord.

Second Reading **Romans 14:1-12**

[1] Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of
quarreling over opinions. [2] Some believe in eating anything, while the
weak eat only vegetables. [3] Those who eat must not despise those who
abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat;
for God has welcomed them. [4] Who are you to pass judgment on servants
of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they
will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

[5] Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all
days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. [6] Those
who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also, those who
eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those
who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord, and give thanks to God.

[7] We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. [8] If we
live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then,
whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. [9] For to this end
Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and
the living.

[10] Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why
do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the
judgment seat of God. [11] For it is written,

"As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God."

[12] So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. **We have an advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous; your sins are forgiven on account of his name.** ***Alleluia.***

Gospel **Matthew 18:21-35**

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

R/ Glory to you, O Lord.

[21] Peter came and said to Jesus, “Lord, if another member of the church
sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven
times?” [22] Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-
seven times.

[23] “For this reason the dominion of heaven may be compared to a king
who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. [24] When he began the
reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to
him; [25] and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together
with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be
made. [26] So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience
with me, and I will pay you everything.’ [27] And out of pity for him, the
lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. [28] But that same
slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him
a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you
owe.’ [29] Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have
patience with me, and I will pay you.’ [30] But he refused; then he went and
threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. [31] When his fellow
slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they
went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. [32] Then his lord
summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that
debt because you pleaded with me. [33] Should you not have had mercy on
your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ [34] And in anger his lord
handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. [35] So
my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not
forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

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

Youth Sermon

Sermon

Hymn "When We Are Living" #639

1 When we are living, it is in Christ Jesus,
and when we're dying, it is in the Lord.
Both in our living and in our dying,
we belong to God, we belong to God.

2 'Mid times of sorrow and in times of pain,
when sensing beauty or in love's embrace,
whether we suffer, or sing rejoicing,
we belong to God, we belong to God.

3 Across this wide world, we shall always find
those who are crying with no peace of mind;
and when we help them, or when we feed them,
we belong to God, we belong to God.

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.

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

At each petition,
Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

The presiding minister concludes the prayers with these words.
Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name.
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

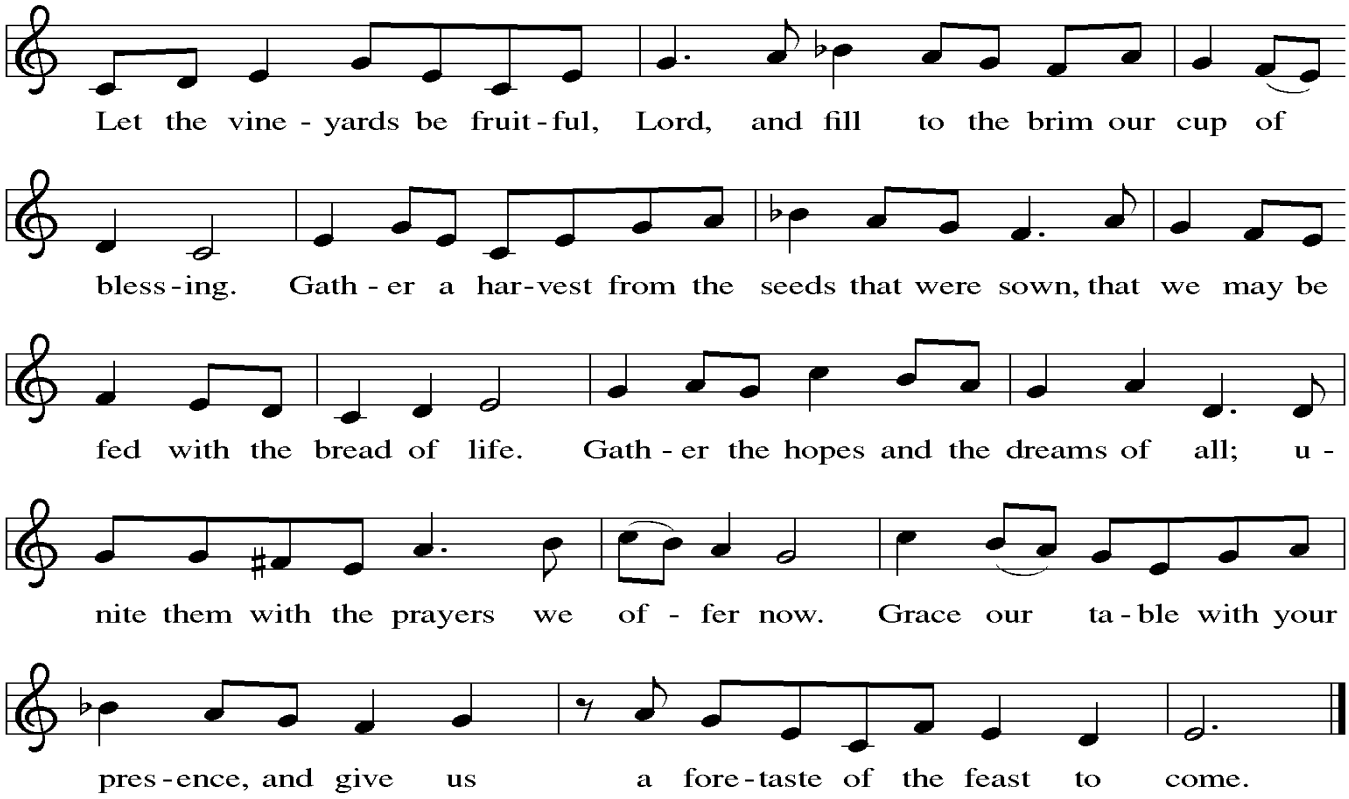
8:15 **Amazing Grace** (arr. Dale Wood)

10:45 **Sing to the Lord A New Song** (Kenneth Kosche)
Sing to the Lord a new song. Oh, sing to the Lord all the earth! Sing to the Lord! Bless God's name. Tell of God's salvation from day to day. Declare God's glory among the nations, God's marvelous works among the people.

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.

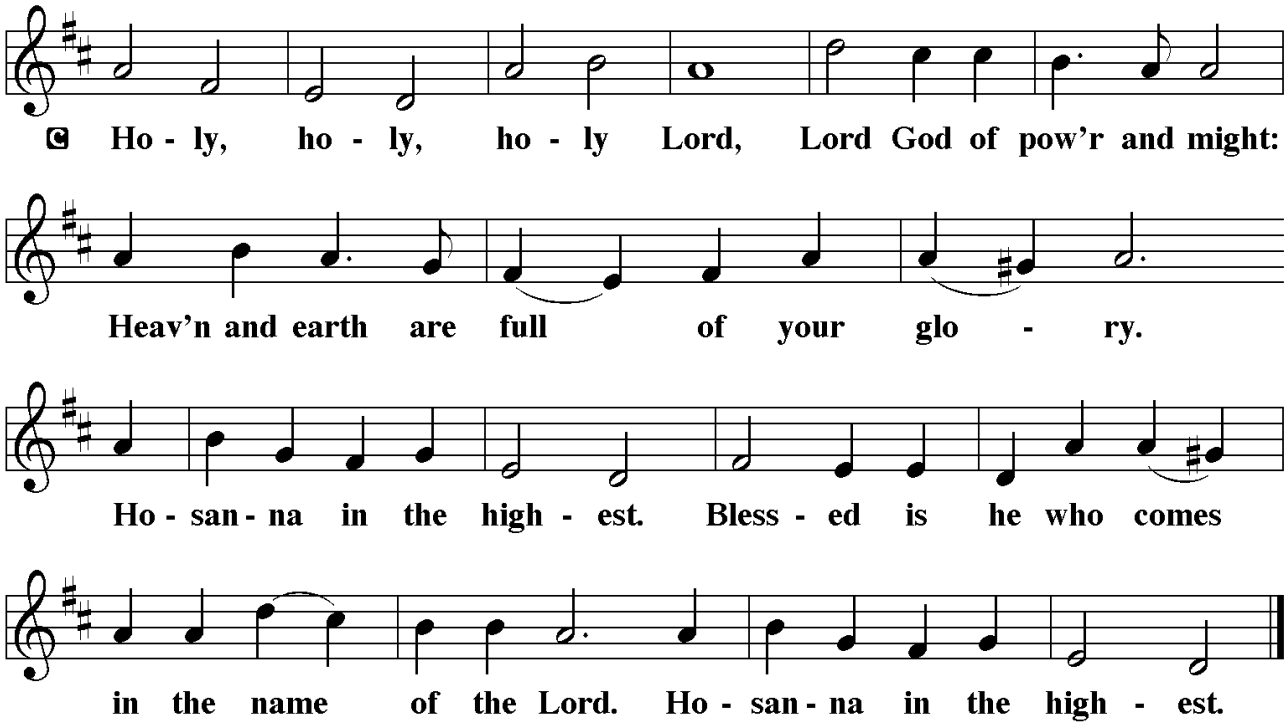
Great Thanksgiving

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.

Blessed are you, O God,
creator of heaven and earth.
You rescued your covenant people,
led them on all their journeys,
and taught them by the prophets.
You so loved the world
that you gave your only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him
may not perish but may have eternal life.

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.

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

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

Pour out your Holy Spirit
in this meal,
and make us one
in this community of faith
and with your people
throughout the world.

Glory and praise to you, O God,
Author of life,
Word made flesh,
Power of the Most High,
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, in this holy communion you have welcomed us into your presence, nourished us with words of mercy, and fed us at your table. Amid the cares of this life, strengthen us to love you with all our heart, serve our neighbors with a willing spirit, and honor the earth you have made; through Christ our 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 "Go, My Children, with My Blessing" #543

1 "Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone.
Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own.
In my love's baptismal river
I have made you mine forever.
Go, my children, with my blessing, you are my own."

2 “Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.
Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.
Here you heard my dear Son’s story,
here you touched him, saw his glory.
Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.”

3 “Go, my children, fed and nourished, closer to me.
Grow in love and love by serving, joyful and free.
Here my Spirit’s power filled you,
here my tender comfort stilled you.
Go, my children, fed and nourished, joyful, and free.”

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	Levi Boggs	
LECTOR	Liz Rowe	Jeanne Christensen
WORSHIP ASSISTANT	Carolyn Hanzel	Tawnya Combs

ALTAR GUILD for September includes Roberta Laciak and Joan Orr.

PRAYER CONCERNS:

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER this week Brandie, Suzy, Terry, Doug, Dennis, Barry, Marsha, Ray, Paula, Cameron, Lee, Jerry, Jacob, Lisa, Mark, Jack, Melanie, Mikey, Cindy, Scott, Brody, Ricky, Cade, Sue, Hollie, Kevin, Lori, Deanne, Frank, and Sam.

THE ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the glory of God in honor of our 28th Anniversary by Pastor Chris and Tawnya.

THE CHANCEL FLOWERS are given in memory of Irene A. Skodak by her daughter, Marla DeCrisio.

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 57.

NOISY OFFERING for Lutheran Indian Ministries was $144.

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.

JAVA TABLE will be open on the third Sunday of each month between services beginning September 20.

RUTH CIRCLE will meet Thursday, September 17 at 7:00 PM in the church parlor. All women of the congregation are invited and welcome to join the fellowship.

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.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST:

Sunday – September 13 – Pentecost 16

RALLY DAY

8:15 – Worship

9:30 – Sunday School

Continental Breakfast

10:00 - Choir

10:45 – Worship

Rally Day Luncheon following 10:45 service

GWOH Cookie Tray Delivery

Monday – September 14

1:30 & 6:00 - Bible Study

Wednesday – September 16

12:00 – Food From the Heart

Thursday – September 17

8:00 – Food Bank

6:15 – Handbells

7:00 – Ruth Circle

"...God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us."

Romans 5:5

Saturday – September 19

SWPA LDR Training 9:30 to 11:30

Sunday – September 20 – Pentecost 17

8:15 – Worship

9:30 – Sunday School

Continental Breakfast

JAVA Table

10:45 – Worship

Trex Recycling Challenge

Plastic Patrol

Totals to date:

Oct-Dec. 2025	166 pounds
Jan-Mar. 2026	253 pounds
Apr – Jun 2026	252 pounds
July – Sept 2026	182 pounds (as of August 28, 2026)
Grand total to date:	853 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.*

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.

Team Trivia Night

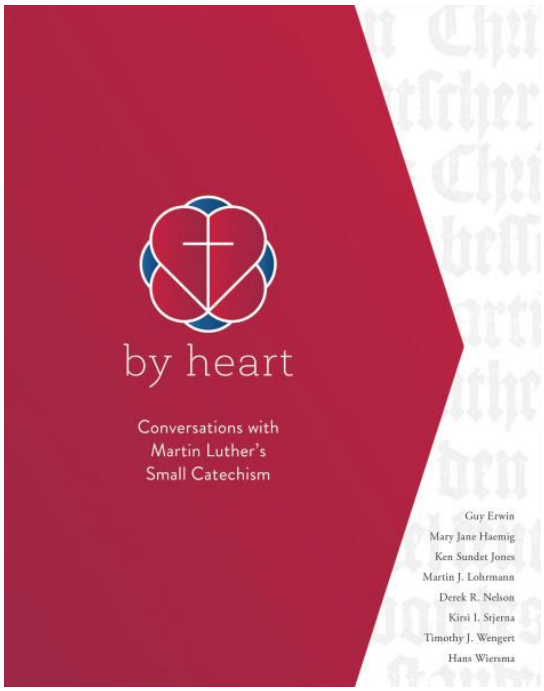
*Thursday, September 24, 2026

*If interested, meet for dinner 6PM. Everyone is responsible for buying his/her own dinner.

*Team Trivia begins at 7PM

*Contact person – RSVP to Teresa Graziotto by Monday, September 21, 2026

grazebear@gmail.com or (724) 331 - 7134



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.

Piano,
Pipes,

Peals &
Premieres

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR...

"Piano, Pipes, Peals, and Premieres"
Sunday, October 18, 2026 at 4:00 PM
First Evangelical Lutheran Church
Greensburg, Pennsylvania

The free program will be presented by Josh Beck (jazz piano & organ), Marc Tourre (baritone), Kathy Campbell (soprano sax), the FELC Handbell Choir.....AND includes the world premiere of "No Height, No Depth" (in honour of Marvin Huls) by composer Jonathan White, AND the re-premiere of "Serenity Prayer" (in honour of FELC member, Gwen Irwin's 100th birthday this November) by composer Mark Hayes.
Both premieres performed by the FELC choir and guest singers and accompanist Nancy Sheehan.

Reception to follow.

SPREAD THE WORD!