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.

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 27, 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

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 **"Once a Father Told His Children"** Tune of #807
(Text by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette)

Once a father told his children,
"Go and do your daily chores.
Go and work out in my vineyard;
All that's mine will soon be yours."
One responded, "I won't do it!"
Then he changed his mind and went.
One said, "Yes! Just send me to it!"
But he went back home again.

Once a church was filled with Christians
Who were proud and feeling blessed.
"God has called us and we've answered!
We have truly answered, "Yes!"
On a chilly Sunday morning,
When a homeless man came by,
They said, "Go! It's not yet storming!
God is love — he will supply."

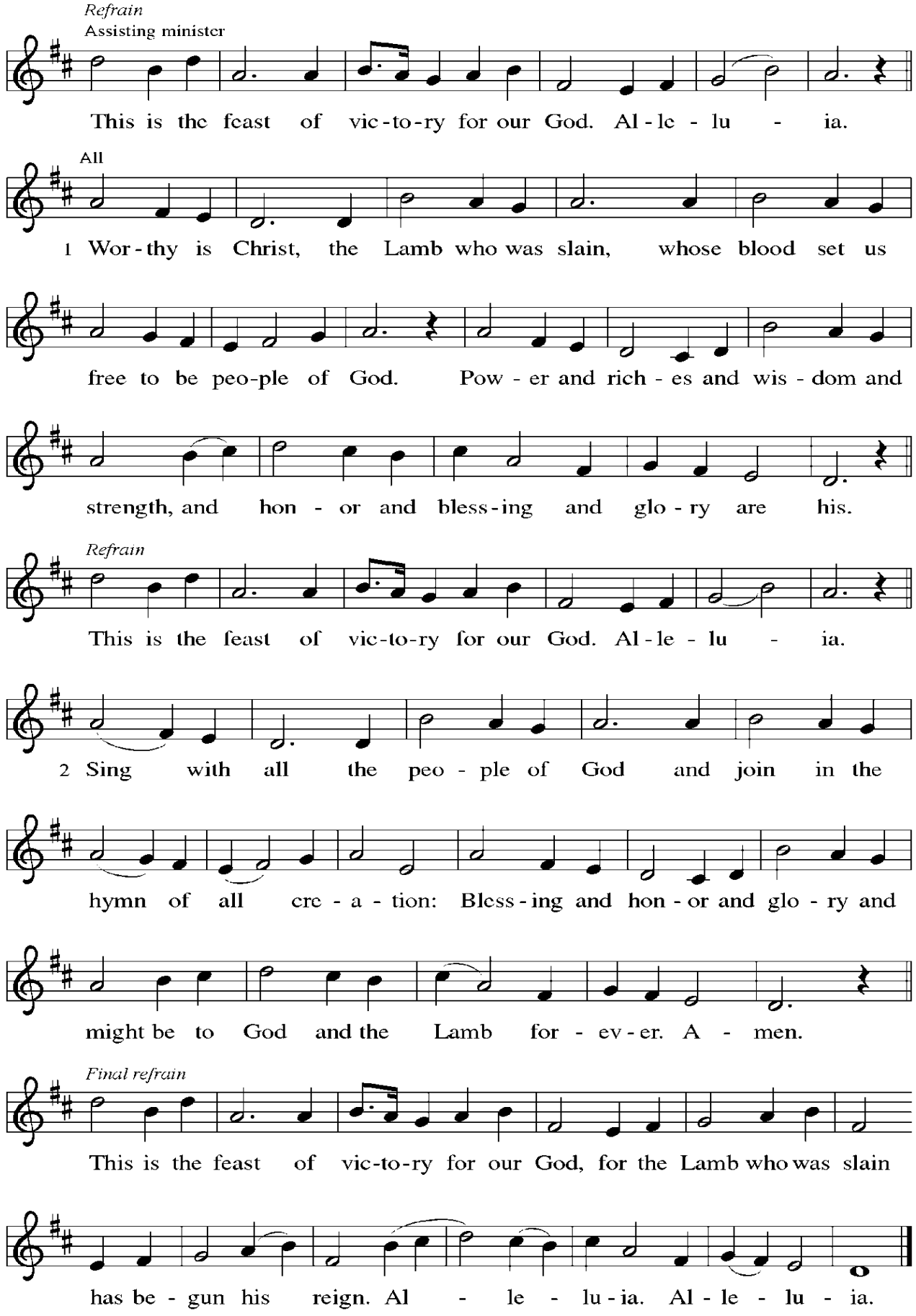
Once a woman, quite the sinner,
Struggled deep in pain and doubt.
As she passed that church in winter,
There she saw that man walk out.
He was homeless, worn and weary,
So she stopped her car and said,
"I'm no saint but you look hungry —
Let's go buy some soup and bread."

God of love, you call your children;
Some say, "No!" and some say, "Yes!"
Lord, forgive us for our judging
Who will be among the blessed.
For your kingdom is surprising;
Some you call will not obey;
Those we find ourselves despising
May be those who seek your way.

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.

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

The assembly is seated.

WORD

First Reading **Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32**

1 The word of the Lord came to me: 2 What do you mean by repeating
this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour
grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? 3 As I live, says the
Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. 4 Know
that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the
child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

25 Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house
of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? 26 When
the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity,
they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall
die. 27 Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they
have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their
life. 28 Because they considered and turned away from all the
transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall
not die. 29 Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair."
O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are
unfair?

30 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. 31 Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? 32 For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

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

Psalm 25:1-9 *(Read Responsively)*

1 To | you, O Lord,
I lift | up my soul.
2 **My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be | put to shame,**
nor let my enemies triumph | over me.
3 Let none who look to you be | put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame | who are treacherous.
4 **Show me your | ways, O Lord,**
and teach | me your paths.
5 Lead me in your | truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all | the day long.
6 **Remember, O Lord, your compas- | sion and love,**
for they are from | everlasting.
7 Remember not the sins of my youth and | my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your good- | ness, O Lord.
8 **You are gracious and up- | right, O Lord;**
therefore you teach sinners | in your way.
9 You lead the low- | ly in justice
and teach the low- | ly your way.

Second Reading **Philippians 2:1-13**

[1] If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love,
any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, [2] make my joy
complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord
and of one mind. [3] Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in
humility regard others as better than yourselves. [4] Let each of you look
not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. [5] Let the same
mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

[6] who, although being in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
[7] but relinquished it all,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness. And being found in human form,
[8] he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

[9] Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
[10] so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
[11] and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God, the Father.

[12] Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only
in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own
salvation with fear and trembling; [13] for it is God who is at work in you,
enabling you both to will and to work for God's good pleasure.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. **My sheep hear my voice, says the Lord; I know them and they follow me.** ***Alleluia.***

Gospel **Matthew 21:23-32**

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the twenty-first chapter.

R/ Glory to you, O Lord.

23 When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the
people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are
you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" 24 Jesus said to
them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I
will also tell you by what authority I do these things. 25 Did the baptism
of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued
with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then
did you not believe him?' 26 But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are
afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." 27 So they answered
Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by
what authority I am doing these things.

28 "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and
said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' 29 He answered, 'I will
not'; but later he changed his mind and went. 30 The father went to the
second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not
go. 31 Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first."
Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes
are going into the dominion of God ahead of you. 32 For John came to you
in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax
collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you
did not change your minds and believe him."

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

Sermon

Hymn "O Master, Let Me Walk with You" #818

1 O Master, let me walk with you
in lowly paths of service true;
tell me your secret; help me bear
the strain of toil, the fret of care.

2 Help me the slow of heart to move
by some clear, winning word of love;
teach me the wayward feet to stay,
and guide them in the homeward way.

3 Teach me your patience; share with me
a closer, dearer company,
in work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
in trust that triumphs over wrong,

4 In hope that sends a shining ray
far down the future's broad'ning way,
in peace that only you can give;
with you, O Master, let me live.

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

10:45 Offertory Anthem

"Come and Sing a Song Unto The Lord"

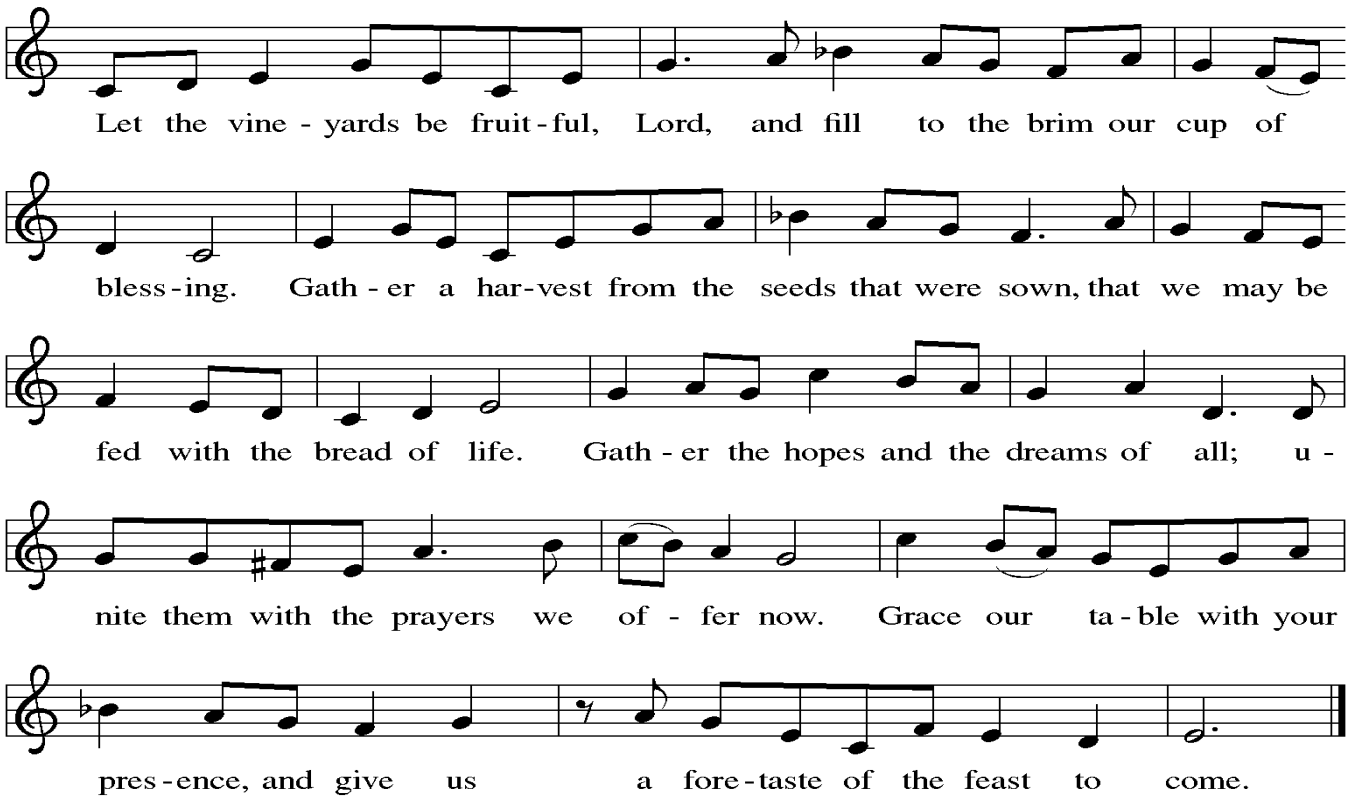
(Dan Edwards)

Come and sing a song unto the Lord, oh come rejoice, lift up your voice, and sing in one accord.
Shout for joy to God who reigns on high, oh raise a mighty song of praise, let all the earth reply!
Play the pipe and let the timbrel sound, come strike the harp, let cymbals crash and raise a joyful sound.
Let the earth in ev'ry corner sing, rejoice, give thanks unto the Lord, our glorious God and King! Sing hosanna unto our God and King.
Sing hosanna, our joyful tidings bring! Sing hosanna, let ev'ry voice be raised. Sing hosanna with hymns of grateful praise.

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.

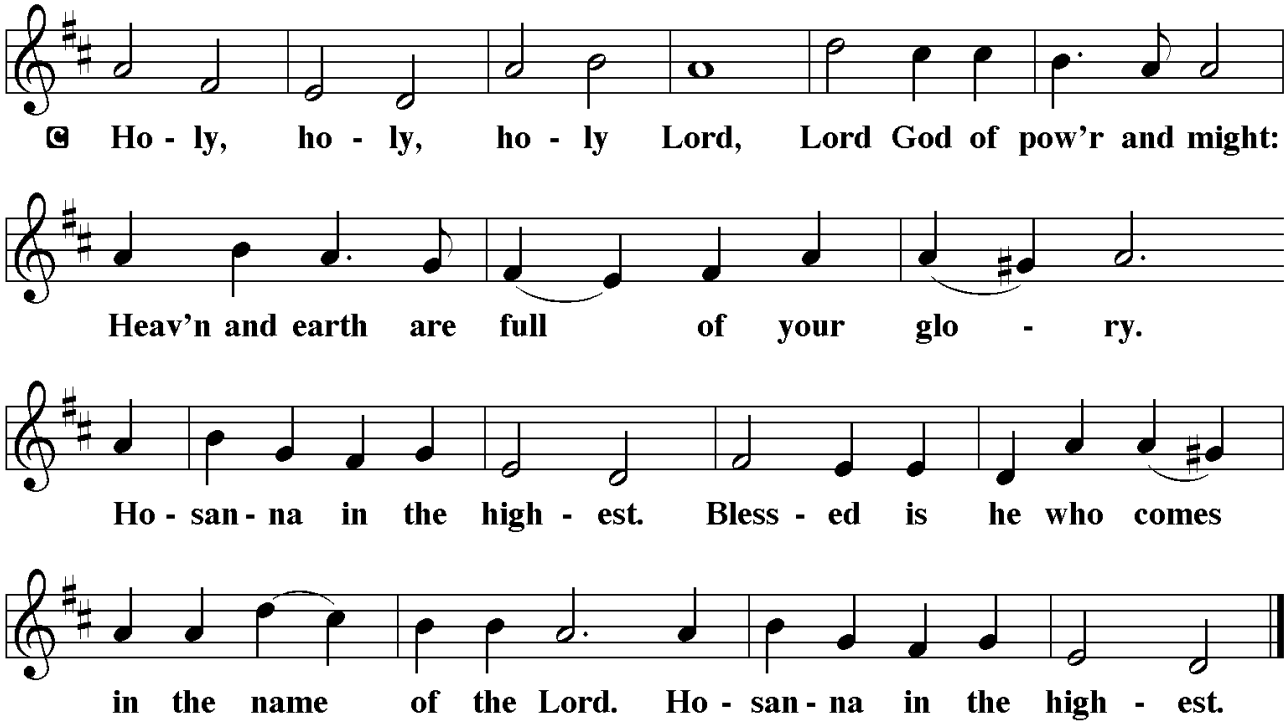
Great Thanksgiving

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 **"O Jesus, You Were Born to Be"** Tune of #565
(Text by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette)

O Jesus, you were born to be
God's gift to save humanity;
And one great day we're moving toward,
All life will bow and call you Lord!

You taught the people every day
As Rabbi, Teacher of the Way;
O Master, may we learn from you
To love both God and neighbor, too.

You are the Bread that satisfies,
The Light that guides us through our lives,
The Gate that leads us safely home,
The Shepherd calling to your own.

O Son of God and Son of Man,
You trusted and obeyed God's plan;

The poor, the sick and those in need
Cried, "Son of David, set us free!"

You are Messiah, you are Christ,
Anointed One, God's sacrifice.
In you, God's mercy is revealed:
We're saved from sin, forgiven, healed.

O Jesus, you're the living Way,
The Resurrection, God's new Day.
You give us hope and make us new;
How wondrous is our life in you!

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	Colton Boggs	Robbie Jefferson
LECTOR	Mark Barnhart	Megan Zobb
WORSHIP ASSISTANT	Bud Nusselt	Rebecca Brunetta

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, Sam, Morrie, Michelle, and Mike.

THE ALTAR FLOWERS are given in memory of loved ones by Terry and Charla Keffer.

THE CHANCEL FLOWERS are given in memory of Mary Furlong-Leppold by Al Leppold and 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 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 Pastor David Clement for his worship leadership.

THANKS TO Diane Sheffler (clarinet) and Mary Smaligo (tambourine) for their musical assistance.

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE last Sunday was 80.

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.

ANGEL FOOD CAKES (home baked or purchased) are needed the first Sunday of every month for Meals on Wheels. Bring your cake to the church office. Thank you!

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.

HARVEST HOME SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18 The First Family will celebrate harvest Home on Sunday, October 18 at both worship services. Cornstalks and pumpkins will adorn the sanctuary, and you are asked to bring canned goods and food staples to the church.

Your gifts will help in our Food Pantry with providing food to the needy in our area. "Now thank we all our God!"

THIS WEEK AT FIRST:

Sunday – September 27 – Pentecost 18

8:15 – Worship

9:30 – Sunday School

Continental Breakfast

10:00 – Choir

10:45 – Worship

> *"...God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us."*
>
> *Romans 5:5*

Monday – September 28

6:30 – Stewardship

Tuesday – September 29

10:00 – Newsletter Folding

Wednesday – September 30

12:00 – Food From the Heart

6:15 – Handbells

6:30 – Property

Sunday – October 4 – Pentecost 19

Noisy Offering for Lutheran Indian Ministries

Angel Food Cakes for Meals on Wheels due

8:15 – Worship

9:30 – Sunday School

Continental Breakfast

10:45 – Worship

Harrold Zion Lutheran Church is having a Comedy Matinee show on Sunday, November 15th at 2:00 PM. The title of the show is **Laugh With the Lutherans,** and we would love to have our fellow Christians join us for a hilarious afternoon. Slapstick Comedy Production will provide two Standup comedians (PG rated). Cost is $40 per person, which covers admission and food. There will be wine and raffle baskets. Contact Harrold Zion 724 - 837-7327 for ticket purchase and information.

Trex Recycling Challenge

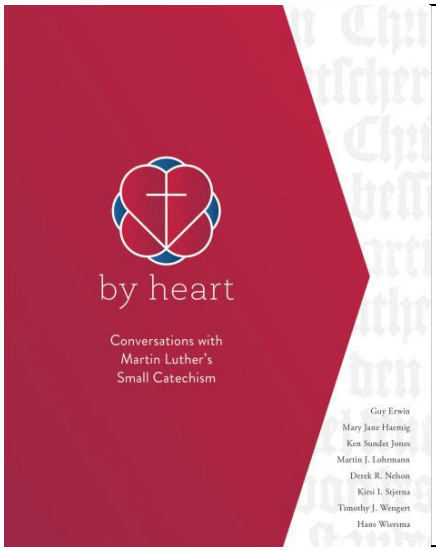
Plastic Patrol

Totals to date:

Oct-Dec. 2025 166 pounds
Jan-Mar. 2026 253 pounds
Apr – Jun 2026 252 pounds
July – Sept 2026 242.8 pounds (as of September 16, 2026)
Grand total to date: 913.8 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.*



Adult Study

Our Adult Study of Luther's Small Catechism, utilizing *by heart: Conversations with Martin Luther's Small Catechism,* continues on October 19th in the Fellowship Hall. You can join the conversation at either 1:30 pm or 6:00 pm. In October we will focus on Chapter 2, The Ten Commandments.
Books are available in the office. If you are able, we are requesting $15/book to help cover the cost.
Future dates are November 16th and December 14th.

OCTOBER NOISY OFFERING is FOR LUTHERAN INDIAN MINISTRIES

The Noisy Offerings in September and October will support Lutheran Indian Ministries (LIM). Based in Wisconsin, LIM's focus is outreach and Christian ministry to Indian and Alaskan Native Americans, many who carry feelings of anger, hopelessness, and/or trauma stemming from the ways their communities have historically been treated. LIM is faith-based aligning most closely with Lutheran theology and believe "the only true hope for healing is to deal with the effects of trauma in a biblical way." The goal is to bring Christ into people's lives as the best way to help address many old and new emotional and traumatic challenges that impact both individuals and their communities. To learn more please view a five-minute video at:

lutheranindianministries.org/about-lim-2025

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

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

Reception to follow.

SPREAD THE WORD!