

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
 246 South Main Street
 Greensburg, Pennsylvania 15601-3183
 T: 724-834-1457
 F: 724-834-1469
 felchurch.org

PASTOR.....Chris Combs
 DIRECTOR OF MUSIC.....Marvin Huls
 CHURCH TREASURER..... Patti Sias
 OFFICE MANAGER.....Patricia Pluck
 OFFICE SECRETARY.....Gretchen Fischer
 CUSTODIAN..... Jaison Smith

CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Rebecca Brunetta	President
Brian Erdman	
Tom Flory	
Linda Griffith	
Charlie Kaylor	
Dan Krack	
Bobbie Laciak	Vice President
Leon (Bud) Nusselt	
Holly Rowe	
Cullen Shuster	
Megan Zobb	Secretary

WORSHIP WITH US

Sunday Church School 9:30 A.M.
 SCS does not meet in June, July or August

Sunday Worship 8:15 A.M. & 10:45 A.M.
 Summer Schedule 8:15 A.M. & 10:00 A.M.

Elevator and Hearing Assistance Available

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
 246 SOUTH MAIN STREET
 GREENSBURG, PA 15601-3183
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**FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
 GREENSBURG, PA**



Pastor's Note

Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" John 20:17

Dear Friends in Christ,

I suspect that you will be receiving this newsletter just as Holy Week begins. We will have journeyed with Jesus as He triumphantly entered into Jerusalem and we anticipate what comes. Thursday when He will share a meal with the disciples; Friday when He will be crucified; Sunday when He leaves us an empty tomb. It is a journey through the lowest of lows, to get to the highest of highs.

I have recently been reading through *Martin Luther's Easter Book*. This book was given to me as a gift by a dear sister in Christ at my ordination and it is a gift in more ways than one. This little book contains selections from Luther's sermons and in the section related to the Resurrection, I found a gift that I want to share with all of you.

We often speak of each other as sisters and brothers in Christ. Referencing this verse from John, Luther lifts out this specific portion of Jesus' exchange with Mary. Luther says, "[One] who would be a Christian, let [them] learn these words, 'you are my [brothers and sisters].'" This takes on great significance for Luther and I think is a profound word of grace for us today. He says, "One who is a [brother or sister] is neither a lord nor a servant. There is no greater word in all Scripture [than] this one, "Go say unto my [brothers and sisters]." He continues with discussion of what this would mean should the King of France or England say it to us.

Luther concludes with this, "if, then we are his [brothers and sisters], we are in the same inheritance and rights as he. We are not, indeed, Christ himself, but we enjoy the same privileges, and since he ascends to the Father, then, the Father and Christ and the [brothers and sisters] will be made as it were, into one loaf."

Continued on page 2

Sisters and brothers in Christ --- this is the good news of Easter. As we are claimed as brothers and sisters by Christ we are made "into one loaf," we are the family of God and because of Christ we, "are in the same inheritance and rights as he." Not because we deserve such, but because of the Grace of God.

May you all have a blessed Easter, as you remember that Jesus claims you as sisters and brothers.

Peace,
Pastor Chris



HOLY WEEK AT FIRST LUTHERAN

- April 2 Palm Sunday 8:15 and 10:45 AM**
- April 6 Maundy Thursday 6:00 PM**
- April 7 Good Friday 6:00 PM**
- April 9 EASTER SUNDAY 8:15 & 10:45 AM**
(No Sunday School)



Vacation Bible School will be held at First during the week of June 19th.

More details and sign ups will be available in May.



FIRLU HAS HEARD...

-that as of February 25th, our offering receipts were \$28,404 last year they were \$21,621.

-that sympathy is extended to the family of Virginia Stumpo.

-that **Ruth Circle** will NOT meet in April. The next meeting will be May 4.

-that **Continental Breakfast** is available in the Fellowship Hall between services. Grab some coffee, tea, juice, yogurt, or pastries and join us. Our thanks to Sue Boggs who oversees this ministry. If you would like to help, speak to Sue or call the church office.

-that **Noisy Offering** will be collected by the children on April 2 to benefit Food from the Heart. The offering will only be loose change that has accumulated in pockets, purses or dumped into receptacles in your home. The children will be collecting the offering in metal pots so that it makes lots of noise.

-that the **JAVA TABLE** will be open in the Fellowship Hall April 16 between worship services.

-that assistance is greatly needed the third Thursday of the month by 8:00 AM to unload the truck and sort groceries for Food Pantry

-that 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. Thanks!

-that the deadline for the May newsletter is Monday, April 17. Please be prompt. You may submit your articles to office@felchurch.org.

See you at worship,
FIRLU

Serving At Worship In April 2023

4/2 4/9 4/16 4/23 4/30

ACOLYTES

Noah Boggs	Aaron Woodley,	Molly Boggs	Aaron Woodley	Noah Boggs
Bradley Schmidt	Noah & Molly Boggs	Tessa Miller	Tyler Miller	Addy Saraceni
	Corrina & Nicholas Vuick and Benjamin Gustafson			



LECTORS

Sue Boggs	Pat Yost	Jean Miller	Kim Nicassio	David von Schlichten
Jeanne Christensen	Bob Errett	Shirley Huls	Sunshine Keiser	Dan Krack

ASSISTING MINISTERS

Rebecca Brunetta	Carolyn Hanzel	Mia Saraceni	Pat Yost	Dianna Marusko
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ALTAR GUILD

Roberta Laciak

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

LENTEN WORSHIP & LUNCH Thursday, April 6th 12:05 PM at Zion's on Pennsylvania Avenue. The Rev. Brian Chaffee is preaching and lunch is a soup and salad bar. A \$5.00 donation for lunch is suggested.



**EASTER EGG HUNT
HOLY SATURDAY
April 8, 2023 10:00 AM**

All children ages 12 and under are invited to come and hunt for Easter eggs at First Lutheran Church. Friends are invited to join you as well. Please call the church office at 724-834-1457 to register for the hunt.

Please indicate if your child has any food restrictions or allergies.

2023 LENTEN CONGREGATIONAL PROJECT



Traditional cooking stoves can burn a lot of wood and fill small homes with dangerous smoke that leads to a host of health problems for families. More efficient stoves can burn a variety of fuels, produce less smoke and maintain heat better, which means **families burn less wood and face fewer health risks.** Our project this year will be to raise enough money during Lent to purchase 20 Environmentally Friendly Cookstoves for ELCA Good Gifts to give to families in need at a price of \$105 each.

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

[Lutheran Disaster Response and its partners are prepared to accompany our neighbors impacted by the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. One hundred percent of your gifts to "Middle East Crisis" go to supporting earthquake survivors and other people affected by disasters in the region.](#)

If you would like to help, here's what you can do:

Write out a check payable to First Lutheran Church (or you can give cash). (Note: We will utilize Matching Funds for this response.)

Place it in an envelope and write "**Middle East Crisis**" on the outside of the envelope.

Put the envelope in the offering basket or bring it to the church office.

Your donation will be forwarded to the ELCA's disaster relief office, and 100% of your gift will be used to assist those affected by the earthquakes.



SUMMER is just around the corner—time to start planning for summer camp! Visit www.lutherlyn.com/summercamp.

CAMP BLAST is Saturday, May 13th, 11 AM—4:30 PM where you can sample all that Lutherlyn has to offer **FREE OF CHARGE**.

Week long summer Camps run from June 18 through August 4, 2023 for grades 4—6, 7—9 and 10—12. There are also **Small Fry Days** for grades 1—3 where children may attend one or multiple days.

Lutherlyn offers a \$100 coupon for first time Lutherlyn campers to help cover the cost of camp. Stop in the church office for a coupon before registering. Enter coupon code: **FIRST** when registering.

First Lutheran offers Camperships. Register with Lutherlyn, then let the office know the title and dates of the camp and a Campership will be sent to Lutherlyn.

PLEASE NOTE: Lutherlyn is in need of a number of staff for the summer. If you are interested, please check Lutherlyn's website or talk with Pastor Chris.

From the Organ Bench....Marvin Huls

Excerpts from WHY AREN'T PEOPLE COMING BACK?

(Peter W. Marty, Editor/Publisher of THE Christian Century)



Dear friends,

I am going to assume you're a positive person who enjoys people, radiates goodness, and thrives on hope. I'm also assuming you're familiar with discouragement. Sometime in the last year, you looked out over the sanctuary and you wondered, "What happened to the people?". Why did so many kiss congregational life good-bye? You may have well learned that they're doing just fine. Their weekends are active and full. They endured COVID. They sound healthy and well. So what should you do?

Well, keep the doors of your church and heart wide open. Don't write off anyone's place in your community unless they insist on it. Restarting a lapsed habit can be more difficult than creating a brand new one. Let's not forget the growing secularization of culture and rising religious indifference staring us all in the face. Much of the public perceives faith as having limited social value. "We now live in a time," says Andrew Root, "where the very idea that God is real and present in our lives is no longer accepted. Indeed, it's widely contested." Skepticism about the benefits of religious community has caused many people to quit looking to the church for personal meaning or identity.

First, remember that God has given the church a bigger and better hope than what the world lives by. How you communicate this beautiful idea that we follow a light brighter than the flicker of our own little bulb is up to you.

Second, don't forget to love your Christian community as you find it, not merely as you wish it were. Anybody can talk up their love for Jesus. But the church is the one place where we actually meet the living and present Christ.

Third, remind yourself that your church needs to welcome and accept people for who they are, and then love them into who they get to become in Christ.

Fourth, keep looking for ways to grow and share the energy that ought to be evident in your church when people come together around a shared purpose.

Finally, delight in every sign of your congregation's faithfulness. Fixating on who's not in the pew is a worthless and suffocating exercise. There is no convincing anybody of their need for Christian community. They have to want it. And their best chance for discovering that desire may come from observing the joy that's in you.

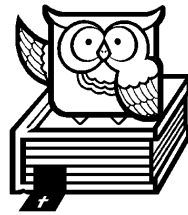
Your companion on the journey, Peter

New in the Library This Month

Grace under Pressure: Responding Faithfully to Stress

by Christopher M. Kennedy

Christ's words at his crucifixion are an important and iconic point in the Bible where He shows grace and love, even while dying on the cross. But, in your life, it can be difficult to find grace in stressful situations. As sinful humans, we act ungraceful when stress, anxiety, and difficult times come around. Study Christ's words on the cross to see how you can have more Christlike grace in your life. Start by understanding what the four dimensions of grace are in the Bible: Common, Saving, Sanctifying, and Sustaining. Then, study seven different quotes from Christ on the cross to see what He teaches in these moments, and how you can apply them to your life. Perfect for group or individual study, each chapter has a Q&A at the end, and the back of the book includes a leader guide.



Contemplative Knitting

by Julie Cicora

This book shows how knitting creates connections and communities, and ties the repetition of knitting to the consistent recitation of prayer. It also compares the act of knitting to the spiritual journey, from starting something new to how we handle mistakes. Many people would like to incorporate a spiritual practice into their frenetic lives only to become discouraged and give up when they try. Those who knit are able to experience its calming effects and dedicate time to their craft each day.

Icky Sticky, Hairy Scary Bible Stories: 60 Poems for Kids

by Jonathan Schkade

Put on your apron and goggles! The stories in the Bible are not always nice and happy. Some are messy and dangerous. Some are about foolish, strange, or awful things. This collection of short, funny poems is sure to capture the attention of any reader. Each poem shows that God works in the ugly, icky, gross world we live in and helps us out of our messes. This resource intersperses poems with paraphrases of biblical wisdom. Fun illustrations and shockingly gross stories are just right for inquisitive children. The Bible is terrifically funny at times, and we should not be afraid to explore and enjoy it.

CHURCH DIRECTORY COMING

We are pleased to announce that we will be compiling a 2023 church family pictorial directory with Universal Directories. It will include all member's family portraits & roster info so we can stay connected.



You can sign up for a photo session in three ways.

1. Between services in the entrance to the Education Building; or
2. Online at www.ucdir.com (click scheduling login) (code is **pa983**) (password is **photos**). (This is only available Mondays through Fridays.)
 - a. Click on the **Photography Appointment Scheduling Login** button
 - b. Click on the desired photography date
 - c. Click on the **Reserve Time** button beside the desired photography appointment time.
 - d. Enter appropriate information in all required fields (indicated by the asterisk)
 - e. Click on the Schedule Appointment button at the bottom of the screen to reserve in the appointment time in your family's name
 - f. If you have more than six family members being photographed, please reserve two appointments consecutively (such as 6:00 and 6:10)
 - g. Print the next screen to use as a reminder of your family's appointment
3. You can also contact **Rebecca Brunetta** at 724-836-0982 or rd.brunetta@comcast.net or **Gretchen** at the church office 724-834-1457 (on Tuesday, Thursday or Friday) to make, change or cancel your photography appointment.


There is no cost to be photographed & every family will receive a complimentary 8x10 portrait.

Take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to make a treasured family keepsake. Only participating households will receive a free directory! Photography will take place in the Fellowship Hall Thursday - Friday, April 27-28 (2:00 - 8:30pm) & Saturday, April 29 (10:30am - 5:00pm).

Can't make the photo dates? You can submit your own family photo for a \$15 donation. Send your photo and donation to the church office by April 20, 2023.

April 2023

Please note that this schedule of events is subject to change.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 8:15 W&S 9:30 SCS 10:15 Choir 10:45 W&S Noisy Offering	3	4 6:00 Council	5 FOOD/HEART Noon	6 6:00 PM Maundy Thursday Service	7  6:00 PM Good Friday Service	8 Easter Egg Hunt 10 AM
9 8:15 W&S 10:15 Choir 10:45 W&S	10	11 6:30 Christian Ed/ Youth	12 FOOD/HEART Noon	13	14	15
16 8:15 W&S 9:30 SCS 10:15 Choir 10:45 W&S Java Table	17 MAY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	18 6:30 Finance	19 FOOD/HEART Noon	20 FOOD PANTRY	21	22
23 8:15 W&S 9:30 SCS 10:15 Choir 10:45 W&S	24	25 NEWSLETTER FOLDING 6:00 Executive	26 FOOD/HEART Noon 6:30 PM Property	27 Directory Pictures 2 to 8:30 PM	28 Directory Pictures 2 to 8:30 PM	29 Directory Pictures 10:30 AM to 5 PM
30 8:15 W&S 9:30 SCS 10:15 Choir 10:45 W&S YOUTH SUNDAY						

There are no activities
on April 1st.
No continental
breakfast on April 9th.



- April 2 Palm Sunday
- April 6 Maundy Thursday
- April 7 Good Friday
- April 9 EASTER SUNDAY!



Sunday Church School will
NOT meet April 9.

Classes will enthusiastically
resume on April 16.