

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

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

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED
FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
246 SOUTH MAIN STREET
GREENSBURG, PA 15601-3183

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
GREENSBURG, PA 15601
PERMIT #436

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
GREENSBURG, PA

PHONE 724-834-1457
FAX 724-834-1469

office@felchurch.org

APRIL 2024



Pastor's Note

Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?"

*Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord";
and she told them that he had said these things to her.*

(John 20:15a, 18, NRSV)

Dear Friends in Christ,

Jesus asks, "whom are you looking for?" and as I write to you this month, the request of the Greeks that were in Jerusalem for the Passover is fresh in my mind. They approached Andrew and said, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." I wonder if their response when they next encountered their friends was like Mary's announcement, "we have seen the Truth - we have seen the Lord."

As our journeys of faith continued this Lent, hasn't our request been the same as those Greeks? Don't we also wish to see Jesus, to be drawn closer to Him. Isn't that at least part of the reason that so many have adopted disciplines during this season of lent? To see Jesus more clearly.

We have been journeying with Jesus to Jerusalem and to the cross. Now we find ourselves like Mary faced with an empty tomb. We see the tomb differently than Mary first saw it though, because we have heard the rest of the story --- we too have seen the Lord.

(Continued on Page 2)

(Continued from Page 1)

Today we rejoice in the empty tomb. While death on a cross leads to the tomb, we now find it empty as it reveals God's love for us and for the world. Jesus conquers death for our sake, bringing us to new life in Him.

As you embrace the truth of Easter and the new life it brings to you, may you be energized to proclaim in word and deed ---- I have seen the Lord -- He is Risen! He is Risen indeed!

Together in Christ,
Pastor Chris

NOISY OFFERING FOR APRIL

For April's Noisy Offering, we will be collecting for Street Outreach organized by Seton Hill University's School of Physical Therapy. The group hopes to meet the needs of and provide medical care to individuals who are unhoused or experiencing rough sleeping. Currently they only consist of physical therapists and other non-clinicians, but as they assess the needs of the community, they plan to reach out to other medical providers to ask them to participate as well. They are modeling themselves after Street Medicine which was founded in Pittsburgh over 30 years ago. It is now an international community of providers, but its roots started in Western PA and we would like to expand the outreach in our region beyond Pittsburgh. If you are interested in learning more about Street Medicine, you can check out their website:

<https://www.streetmedicine.org/> .

FIRLU HAS HEARD...



-that as of February 29th, our offering receipts were \$25,093. Last year they were \$28,404.

-that **Noisy Offering** will be collected the first Sunday of April to benefit Seton Hill Street Outreach organized by Seton Hill School of Physical Therapy .

-that assistance is greatly needed on Thursday, **April 18** at 8:00 AM to unload the truck and sort groceries for Food Bank.

-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 JAVA TABLE will be open in the Fellowship Hall April 14 between worship services.

-that **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST** is available in the Fellowship Hall between services through May 19. 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 the deadline for the May newsletter is Tuesday, April 16. Please be prompt. You may submit your articles to office@felchurch.org

See you at worship,

FIRLU

Serving At Worship In April 2024

4/7

4/14

4/21

4/28

ACOLYTES

Molly Boggs	Aaron Woodley	Molly Boggs	Aaron Woodley
Benjamin Gustafson	Tessa Miller	Addy Saraceni	Corrina Vuick

LECTORS

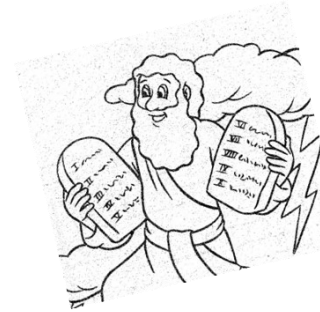
Liz Rowe	Bill Pfeifer	Mark Barnhart	Sue Boggs
Youth Sunday	Dan Krack	Dianna Marusko	Joan Orr

ASSISTING MINISTERS

David von Schlichten	Rebecca Brunetta	Carolyn Hanzel	Dianna Marusko
Tawnya Combs			

ALTAR GUILD

Roberta Laciak
Sherry Menz
Mary Caldwell



THE TEN COMMANDMENTS BIBLE STUDY SCHEDULE—SPRING 2024
Two sessions each day at 1:30 & 6:00 PM.

April 29, 2024

May 20, 2024

*“Return to the Lord your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and
relents from punishing.”*

Joel 2:13



RUTH CIRCLE will meet Thursday, April 11th at 7:00 PM in the church parlor. All women of the congregation are welcome to join us for a brief meeting, an interesting topic, fellowship, and our always delicious dessert.



BIBLES FOR LOVE PACKAGES

Do you have old Bibles that you no longer use or have inherited and don't know what to do with them? Well, we have an answer.

Beginning in January and running for several months, First Lutheran will collect used and/or new Bibles as well as Sunday School materials and other Christian materials to send to "Love Packages."

Putting the Word of God into Hungry Hands All Over the World

Love Packages collects bible donations—as well as donations of Christian books, Sunday School materials, and more—from people and publishers across the U.S. and ship it to our network of distributors all over the world. Love Packages is fueling international missions work and sending the gospel to the ends of the earth by putting donated bibles and other Christian literature into the hands of people around the world. Some of the locations shipped to include Kenya, India, Uganda, South America and others in need. They ship over 1,500 tons of recycled gospel literature to the mission field every year.

Items we are collecting are:

Bibles – new or used, any translation, New Testaments or other portions, individual gospel booklets.

Reference Material – Dictionaries, Bible dictionaries, concordances, commentaries, etc.

Books – all Christian books – adult or children, non-fiction.

Magazines and Daily Devotionals – any devotionals or magazine from a Christian publisher.

Sunday School Materials – adult quarterlies and all teacher manuals in any amount from all publishers; children's quarterlies with the teacher's manual and full student manuals.

CDs, DVDs, Blu-ray – Christian music & movies.

Puppets, Nativity Sets, etc. – bible games, biblical puzzles – anything that helps teach the gospel, especially to children.

Lutherlyn's 2024 Summer Camp Schedule

Week 1 June 16-21	-Staff-In-Training (SH) -Life in the Wild (JH) -Adventurers (JH & SH)	-Classic (Jr) (SH) -Horse Camp (JH & SH) -Confirmation Camp
Week 2 June 23-28	-Classic (Jr) (JH) -Horse Camp (Jr) -Small Fry Days (Th & Fri) -Confirmation Camp	-Adventurers (JH & SH) -Young Folks (Sun-Wed) -Grown Up & Me (Th & Fri)
Week 3 June 30 - July 5	-Family Camp -On-Site Day Camp (1st-5th grade)	
Week 4 July 7-12	-Arts & Musical (Jr & JH) -Classic (Jr) (JH) (SH) -Life in the Wild (Jr)	-Horse Camp (Jr) -Adventurers (JH & SH)
Week 5 July 14-19	-Classic (Jr) (JH) (SH) -Adventurers PLUS (SH) -Small Fry Days (Th & Fri)	-Horse Camp (JH & SH) -Young Folks (Sun-Wed) -Grown Up & Me (Th & Fri)
Week 6 July 21-26	-Classic (Jr) (JH) -Horse Camp (Jr) -Junior Adventurers (Jr)	-Venture (SH) -Rocketry (JH & SH)
Week 7 July 28– August 2	-Classic (Jr) (JH) -Rocketry (Jr) -Horse Camp (JH & SH)	-Night Owls (JH & SH) -Adventurers (JH & SH)

"Young Folks" - campers enter grades 2-3, "Jr" - campers enter grades 4-6, "JH" - campers enter grades 7-9, "SH" - campers enter grades 10-12 or 2024 graduate

Registration for 2024 starts on February 1.
Camperships are available for all who need assistance.
Visit www.lutherlyn.com/summer for details.



You Are Invited to CampBlast!
Saturday, May 11, 2024, 11:00 am - 4:30 pm
FREE! RAIN OR SHINE!
Join us for a day of FUN that highlights
all that Lutherlyn has to offer.

Campfire, crafts, gaga ball, archery, pony rides, zipline, bouldering room, hikes, nature activities, hay rides, games, sports, archaeology, disc golf, jump pillow, tours, great food, worship, and MORE! **The best part.... EVERYTHING IS FREE!**
www.lutherlyn.com/campblast

\$100 off for FIRST-TIME campers!

This coupon entitles FIRST-TIME Lutherlyn Campers to \$100 off of the registration fee for Summer 2024. This applies to Lutherlyn's residential week-long programs. Young folks half-week programs get \$50 off for FIRST-TIME campers. Does not apply to Family Camp, Confirmation Camp, Day Camps, or Small Fry Days. Must be a FIRST-TIME summer camper.

No additional discounts may be combined with this offer.

Enter coupon code: FIRST Register at WWW.LUTHERLYN.COM

(Please share this code with friends!)

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

Week long summer Camps run from June 16 through August 2, 2024.

First Lutheran offers Camperships are available to help defray the cost. Register with Lutherlyn, then let the office know to send the campership.

BIBLES FOR LOVE PACKAGES continued

Items not accepted:

VHS/Tapes/Records/8-tracks

Guideposts

Handiwork or busy papers from Sunday School materials

Secular books (other than dictionaries)

Missions magazines

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.

'WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO'

Bibles for Love Packages sends Christian literature around the world

By Steve Schmidt

I grew up attending a denominational church, and I even went to parochial school. I heard about Jesus. But I never knew Him until I was sent to prison. I was a no-good guy; I sold drugs for a number of years. After I got busted with a large amount of drugs, I was sentenced to an honor camp, and I was supposed to serve a lot of time—somewhere between one and 30 years.

While I was there, I started reading the Bible for hours on end. Nobody told me about Jesus; I started believing the Bible as the Word of God, and God changed me from the inside out. I realized I was a sinner who needed to turn away from my sin and give my life to Christ.

My life was radically changed. I was released after serving just three months and three days, and when I got out, I started doing things for the Lord.

In the spring of 1975, I had been a believer for a couple of years. I was teaching some Bible studies, and I had a little stack of *Decision* magazines, some devotionals and a couple of Bibles sitting in my dining room. Every time I walked through there, it was as if God pointed His finger at me and said, "Steve, you're wasting those materials."

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

I argued with the Lord for about three months: “No, I’m going to use that material. I’m going to prepare lessons with it.” And it was like He said, “No, you’re not, Steve. You’re going to throw them away.”

So I finally gave in. I still didn’t know exactly what to do with the literature, but I knew five men who had just graduated from a Bible college and were going back to their homes in Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya and India. I wrote to them, asking, “Can you use English Christian literature? And if so, how much and how soon?”

They wrote back and said, “Yes! We can use as much as you can get here, as soon as you can get it here.”

So my wife, Jeanie, and I started in the basement of our home. We collected Christian literature from our little church, as well as magazines and other materials we got in the mail. I shipped 60 little packages to those guys.

The following year, at various church dinners and other events in our community, people would ask me what I was doing. I’d say, “I collect old Bibles and Sunday school materials and send them overseas. People over there don’t have any.”

And they’d go, “We’ve got a whole closet full of that stuff from our church. Can we bring it to you?”

Poor Jeanie; the next year we had stuff on the front porch, in the living room, in the dining room—everywhere. That second year, we shipped three and a half tons, the next year seven, then 11, and over the past 49 years it’s grown and grown. In 2023, we shipped more than 2,000 tons of Christian literature around the world.

“In so many places, Bible colleges have no books, and pastors have no Bibles. We can never, ever, get enough Bibles.” The need is so great. And that’s why we do what we do.



The 2024 SWPA Women of the ELCA designated outreach is St. Peter’s Lutheran Church Afterschool Program located in Evans City. Donations of snacks, paper products, craft supplies, cleaning products, and small items from the Dollar Store to be use as prizes (Monetary donations will be used for tuition assistance and capital improvements.) are being collected at the Spring Cluster meeting at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

Summer Worship Schedule

Given the positive feedback from our single services in December, Church Council, based on a recommendation from Worship and Music, has determined that for this summer we will have only one worship service at **9:30 am** which will begin on Sunday, May 26.

MESSAGE FOR THRIVENT FINANCIAL MEMBERS

At the first of each year, Thrivent members are given Thrivent Cash Dollars to direct to charitable organizations.

When you are considering where to spend your Cash Dollars, please consider giving your gift to the General Fund of First Lutheran Church. Thrivent Financial considers our congregation and any committee a valid recipient for Cash Dollars. Call (800-847-4836) say Thrivent Choice or email fraternal@thrivent.com .

Women of the ELCA
Southwestern PA Synod
District #4

Spring Meeting – April 13, 2024

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
501 Fairfield Drive
Greensburg, PA 15601

Theme: International Day

8:45 am Registration & Refreshments
9:20 am Greetings and Introduction
9:30 Worship Service
12:00 noon Lunch (luncheon fee \$10.00)



We will learn a little bit about Georgia and Latvia from two splendid and charming exchange students who are presently attending Hempfield High School and worshipping at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Greensburg:

From Georgia: Tenco Kandelaki and From Latvia: Alaksis Ratenteks

Giving Opportunities

- Regular offerings will be split between WELCA SWPA and WELCA Churchwide
- In-kind gifts and offering for 2024 Designated Outreach (see enclosed brochure) for St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Evans City's "After School Program"

Please telephone or text message your reservation to:
Lillian Shae – 724-837-8688

If you prefer to mail your reservation, fill in the reservation form at the below, mail it to the attention of Lillian Shae at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church at the above address.

.....
Name _____
Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Thank God for our food

God said [to Adam and Eve], 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food.-Genesis 1:29

There's an old joke about the first-grade teacher who asks her class, "Where do apples come from?" Little Ian speaks up: "From the supermarket!"

We laugh, but the sad truth is that many of us are so far removed from farms that we forget that our food – every bite – comes from life, life that God alone created. Yes, farmers sow seeds and care for the plants and trees, but it's God's miracle of life that makes them grow.

As stewards and disciples, we desire to cultivate in ourselves and our communities a deep appreciation for all God provides us, particularly what we need to live. With every mouthful at every meal we thank God for our daily bread, and for the soil, air and water that sustains life.

Easter and springtime are perfect occasions to celebrate God's miracle of life that gives us fruit, vegetables, grains, meat, fish and dairy foods. Here are some ideas: Mealtime grace, thank God not only for food, but also for the cycles of seedtime, growth and harvest; for life-nourishing soil, water and air.

While eating, discuss the origins of the variety of food on your plate. How and where are the plants grown? How do they get to your kitchen?

As a church or family, celebrate Earth Day (Saturday, April 22) by learning about food production and how climate change, pollution and economics impact our food.

Celebrate Earth Day by planting a garden in your yard or community garden on church grounds.

Learn about nutrition -- what foods are the best and worst for us, and why. Promote healthy eating.

Learn about food waste in our culture and take steps to reduce it in your home. At church, reserve a Sunday for a service highlighting creation and food. Maybe "Blessing of the Seeds," or the ancient "Rogation Sunday" ritual.

We live in a culture where food is all around us all the time. As steward-disciples, we want to be sure not to take even a mouthful for granted.

--Rob Blezard

Copyright ©2018 Rev. Robert Blezard. Reprinted by permission. Pastor Blezard works as content editor for www.stewardshipoflife.org and serves as pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Abe

April 2024

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 6:00 Executive	3 FOOD/HEART Noon 6:30 Fellowship	4 6:15 Handbells	5	6
7 8:15 Worship 9:30 SCS 10:00 Choir 10:45 Worship NOISY OFFERING YOUTH SUNDAY	8	9 6:00 Council	10 FOOD/HEART Noon	11 6:15 Handbells 7:00 Ruth Circle	12	13
14 8:15 Worship 9:30 SCS 10:00 Choir 10:45 Worship JAVA Table	15	16 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 6:30 Finance	17 FOOD/HEART Noon	18 FOOD BANK 6:15 Handbells	19	20
21 8:15 Worship 9:30 SCS 10:00 Choir 10:45 Worship	22	23 6:30 Ch. Ed./Youth	24 FOOD/HEART Noon 6:30 Property	25 NEWSLETTER FOLDING	26	27
28 8:15 Worship 10:00 Choir 10:45 Worship	29 1:30 & 6:00 Ten Commandments	30				



Classes will enthusiastically resume on April 7.



Vacation Bible School will be held at First during June 17 - 20 in conjunction with Zion's.

More details and sign ups will be available in May.