

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
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.

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
CHRISTMAS EVE, 2024, 8:00 P.M.
CANDLELIGHT SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

Announcements

Preludes **What Child Is This**
 The First Noel

Handbell Quartet: Eric Combs, Shirley Huls, Rebecca Brunetta,
Tawnya Combs

Confession and Forgiveness

P: In the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P: God of Grace and Truth,

C: In Christ Jesus, you come among us as light shining in the darkness. We confess that we have not welcomed the light nor trusted the good news to be good. We have closed our eyes to glory in our midst, expecting little, and hoping for less. Forgive our doubt and renew our hope, so that we may receive the fullness of your grace and live in the truth of Christ our Lord. Amen

P: 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.

C: Amen

**O come, all ye faithful, joyful, and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him, born the king of angels:
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest:
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

The Apostolic Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

R/ And also with you.

Hymn of Praise “Angels We Have Heard on High” ELW 289

**Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria... in excelsis Deo; Gloria... in excelsis Deo.**

**Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heav'nly song?
Gloria... in excelsis, Deo; Gloria... in excelsis Deo.**

The Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you. **R/ And also with you.**

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

The First Lesson: Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness

have seen a great light;

those who lived in a land of deep darkness—

on them light has shined.

³You have multiplied the nation,

you have increased its joy;

they rejoice before you

as with joy at the harvest,

as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴For the yoke of their burden,

and the bar across their shoulders,

the rod of their oppressor,

you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors

and all the garments rolled in blood

shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onwards and for evermore.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

The Word of the Lord.

R/Thanks be to God!

Psalm 96 (Read Responsively)

¹Sing to the LORD | a new song;
sing to the LORD, | all the earth.

²**Sing to the LORD, bless the name | of the LORD;
proclaim God's salvation from | day to day.**

³Declare God's glory a- | mong the nations
and God's wonders a- | mong all peoples.

⁴**For great is the LORD and greatly | to be praised,
more to be feared | than all gods.**

⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they | are but idols;
but you, O LORD, have | made the heavens.

⁶**Majesty and magnificence are | in your presence;
power and splendor are in your | sanctuary.**

⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families | of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD hon- | or and power.

⁸**Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the | holy name;
bring offerings and enter the courts | of the LORD.**

⁹Worship the LORD in the beau- | ty of holiness;
tremble before the LORD, | all the earth.

¹⁰**Tell it out among the nations: "The | LORD is king!
The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved
will judge the peo- | ples with equity."**

¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the | earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful
and all that | is therein.

¹²**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy
at your com- | ing, O LORD,
for you come to | judge the earth.**

¹³You will judge the | world with righteousness
and the peoples | with your truth.

The Second Lesson: Titus 2:11-14

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

The Word of the Lord.

R/Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation: "Go Tell It on the Mountain" ELW 290

**Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!**

**While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.**

**Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!**

**The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo, above the earth rang
out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth.**

**Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!**

The Gospel:

Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:

¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying, and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Gospel Response: “Go Tell It on the Mountain” ELW290

**Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev’rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!**

**Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born;
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.**

**Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev’rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!**

Youth Sermon

The Sermon

Hymn: “What Child Is This”

ELW 296

**What child is this, who laid to rest, on Mary’s lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are
keeping?**

**This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!**

**Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the Cross be borne for me, for
you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary!**

**So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own
him!
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him!
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!**

Nicene Creed

With the whole church we confess our faith.

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the
dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Filled with good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

At each petition,
God of grace,
receive our prayer.

We commend these prayers to you, O God, trusting your grace made known to all, through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Savior, and Lord.

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.**

Offering

ANTHEMS:

“Sing We Now Of Christmas”
(French Carol, arr. Mark Kellner)

Sing we now of Christmas. Noel sing we here. Hear our grateful praises to the Babe so dear. Sing we Noel, the King is born, Noel!

Angels called to shepherds, “Leave your flocks at rest, journey forth to Bethlehem, find the Child so blest.” Sing we Noel!

In Bethlehem they found Him, Joseph and Mary mild, seated by the manger, watching the holy Child. From the eastern country came the kings afar, bearing gifts to Bethlehem, guided by a star. Gold and myrrh they took there, gifts of greatest price; there was ne'er a place on earth so like paradise. Sing we Noel!

“Brightest and Best”

(Paul Sjolund)

**Brightest and best of the stars of the morning, dawn on our darkness
and lend us thine aid. Star of the east, the horizon adorning, guide
where our infant redeemer is laid.**

**Cold on his cradle the dewdrops are shining; low lies his head with the
beasts of the stall; angels adore him in slumber reclining, maker and
monarch and savior of all.**

**Shall we now give him in costly devotion, gifts of incense and off’rings
divine; gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean, myrrh from the
forest, or gold from the mine?**

**Vainly we offer the rarest oblation; vainly with gifts would his favor
secure; richer by far is the heart’s adoration, dearer to God are the
prayers of the poor.**

Offertory Response “Angels We Have Heard on High”

**Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn king.
Gloria...in excelsis Deo; Gloria....in excelsis Deo.**

Offertory Prayer (in unison)

Let us pray.

**Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your
goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time,
and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding
the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us,
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Great Thanksgiving

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.

In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh
you have opened the eyes of faith
to a new and radiant vision of your glory,
that, beholding the God made visible,
we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see.
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

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.
Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.
Come among us.
Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us.
Awaken your people.
Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth.
Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Lord remember us in your kingdom and help 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.

The Fraction

When we eat this bread, we share the body of Christ. When we drink this cup, we share the blood of Christ.

Reveal yourself to us, O Lord, in the breaking of bread, as you once revealed yourself to your disciples.

COMMUNION

All 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.*
- *Cups can be placed in the receptacles 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.*

Communion anthem **“See In Yonder Manger Low”**
(John Benke)

See in yonder manger low, born for us on earth below. See the gentle Lamb appears, promised from eternal years. Hail the ever blessed morn; hail redemption’s happy dawn. Sing through all Jerusalem, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Lo, within a stable lies he who built the starry skies. He who, throned in height sublime, sits amid the cherubim.

Sacred infant, all divine. What a tender love was thine, thus to come from highest bliss down to such a world as this.

Teach, oh, teach us holy Child by thy face so meek and mild. Teach us to resemble thee in thy sweet humility

Table Blessing

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray.

Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Lighting of the Candles

(The ushers will direct the lighting of the candles beginning from the center aisle.)

The Gospel of the Incarnation: John 1:1-14

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Candlelight Hymn “Silent Night, Holy Night!”

**Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin, mother, and child. Holy Infant, so
tender and mild, sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in
heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the
sight;
glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing
Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ the Savior is born!**

**Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.**

Benediction

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

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Organ Postlude

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.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER this week Brandie, Suzy, Terry, Cullen, Doug, Gavin, Dennis, Larry, Connie, Cooper, Carol, Chris, Hollie, Willis, Brenda, Taylor, Lily, Kiera, Mark, Cathy, Paul, and Jean.

THE ALTAR FLOWERS are in memory of Dr. and Mrs. William S. Keck by their family.



THE STAFF at First Lutheran – Pastor Chris, Jaison Smith, Marvin Huls, Patricia Pluck, Gretchen Fischer, and Patti Sias - extends hearty best wishes and our prayers for each of you to have a blessed and joyous Christmas Day and season.

**IN THE NAME OF THE HOLY CHILD,
WELCOME!**

We are happy that you have come to
worship with us.

If you are visiting just for this evening, we pray that
God will be with you on your journey.

If you are seeking a church home, we would be
happy to welcome you into our
church community.