

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

PASTOR.....Chris Combs  
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC.....Marvin Huls  
CHURCH TREASURER.....Amy Boggs  
OFFICE MANAGER.....Patricia Pluck  
OFFICE SECRETARY.....Gretchen Fischer  
CUSTODIAN.....Tim Rowe

**CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Kip Boggs  
Rebecca Brunetta                      President  
Tom Flory  
Linda Griffith  
Teresa Graziotto  
Charlie Kaylor  
Dan Krack  
Bobbie Laciak  
Leon (Bud) Nusselt  
William Pfeifer III  
Holly Rowe                              Vice President  
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 9:30 A.M.

Elevator and Hearing Assistance Available

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

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GREENSBURG, PA**

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

office@felchurch.org

**February 2026**



Pastor's Note



Dear Friends in Christ,

I was thinking about Lent this morning. It is approaching fast. Ash Wednesday is February 18<sup>th</sup>.

As I was scrolling through one of the websites I use for inspiration I found the words Stop, Look, and Listen. I read on and there was a question, Why should we observe Lent? This is perhaps a question that many of you have asked from time to time. There are lots of reasons to observe Lent, but I invite you to consider this:

We observe Lent because it invites us to Stop. In this Holy season, we are invited to stop and rest a while. We are invited to take a step back from the busyness of the world.

*(Continued on Page 2)*

### Pastor's Note

We observe Lent because it invites us to Look. Lent is a time for looking inward, a time for self-reflection. It is also a time to Look closely at the Cross, which although an instrument of death brought life. This instrument of salvation invites us to look seriously at ourselves and our world. The Cross also invites us to look forward in the hope of the Resurrection.

We observe Lent because it invites us to Listen. Listen to Christ's words of Mercy and Grace. We are invited to listen for God's voice in our midst today and consider where the Holy Spirit is leading us.<sup>1</sup>

I have to admit, that when I first saw this, the words, Stop, Drop, and Roll went through my mind. We should all be familiar with those words and hopefully this lent, we remember that we are invited to Stop, Look, and Listen.

Together in Christ,  
Pastor Chris

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<sup>1</sup>Adapted from content found at <https://www.churchart.com/subscriber/content/issue/9672046> --- January 20, 2026

### Message for Thrivent Financial Members

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](mailto:fraternal@thrivent.com).



### FIRLU HAS HEARD...

-that as of December 30<sup>th</sup>, our general offering receipts were \$214,765. Last year they were \$200,483.

-that **Noisy Offering** will be collected the first Sunday of February to benefit First Lutheran 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 **JAVA TABLE** will be open Sunday, February 8.

-that Food Bank distribution is **Thursday, February 19**. Assistance is needed around 7:30 AM to help with the set-up and the need for assistance increases at 8:00 AM to unload the truck and prepare for distribution. If you can lend a hand on Thursday morning, your effort will be greatly appreciated.

-that the deadline for the **March newsletter is Monday, February 16**. Please be prompt. You may submit your articles to [office@felchurch.org](mailto:office@felchurch.org).

See you at worship,  
FIRLU

| Financial Update<br>Through December 2025 |            |            |
|---|------------|------------|
| Giving                                    |            |            |
| 2025                                      | 2024       | Budget     |
| \$ 240,322                                | \$ 229,076 | \$ 246,000 |
| Expense                                   |            |            |
| 2025                                      | 2024       | Budget     |
| \$ 429,828                                | \$ 425,125 | \$ 467,247 |

# Serving At Worship In February 2026

|                              | 2/1                            | 2/8              | 2/15            | 2/22         |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 8:15<br>Acolyte              | Rachel Boggs                   | Colton Boggs     | Nathaniel Boggs | Molly Boggs  |
| 10:45<br>Acolyte             | <b>ONE SERVICE<br/>AT 9:30</b> | Owen Lenhart     |                 |              |
| 8:15<br>Lector               | Sue Boggs                      | Mark Barnhart    | Kevin Reilly    | Liz Rowe     |
| 10:45<br>Lector              | <b>ONE SERVICE<br/>AT 9:30</b> | Dan Krack        | Joan Orr        | Malcolm Sias |
| 8:15<br>Worship<br>Assistant | Rebecca Brunetta               |                  | Kim Woodley     |              |
| 10:45<br>Worship             | <b>ONE SERVICE<br/>AT 9:30</b> | Rebecca Brunetta | Dianna Marusko  | Tawnya Combs |



For February includes Dianna Marusko and Sue Ross.

*"Peace I leave you, my peace  
I give to you" John 14:27*



## 2026 LENTEN CONGREGATIONAL PROJECT

Ash Wednesday is February 18 and our thoughts turn to God and....our Lenten Project! A collection of clean, gently used clothing will occur from the 18<sup>th</sup> of February through Easter Sunday, to again be donated to the Community Clothes Closet at the Free Methodist Church in Greensburg. Clothing can be dropped off on or beneath the table on the bathroom side of the Fellowship Hall.

The Community Clothes Closet plays an important role in providing clothing to the county's children who have been displaced from their homes, often suddenly. This is where the Closet's greatest need lies. To assist with that need, a monetary collection will occur at the same time. If you find your closets are bare of unwanted clothing, consider a donation to help these children. Donations can be made via the yellow envelopes in the pews, with the designation Community Clothes Closet.



**To stock FOOD FROM the HEART (FFTH)** cupboards we are asking for donations in the upcoming months:

- March** spaghetti sauce, diced tomatoes or pasta
- April** chicken broth, beef broth or creamed soups
- May** canned fruits, canned vegetables or apple sauce

## Stewardship Moment

The Budget and Finance committee has various responsibilities in the life of the church, including preparing a budget, making sure our insurance needs are covered and stewarding our investments.

I also want to take a moment and remind you that we have a matching funds program here at First. You as members can make gifts to organizations that are near and dear to your heart and that align with our mission and have those gifts matched through our trust. You can get more details on how this works through the office or by having a conversation with one of the Finance members.

Mostly this morning, though, I want to tell you why I serve on the finance committee. It is a place where I can use my gifts...my faith toolkit... to help the mission of First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Greensburg and the wider church. Here I can use my faith toolkit to maintain relationships with our financial vendors, speak for our Finance Committee at Stewardship and Christian Outreach Committees, and be a boundary-spanner between our congregation and the non-profit and government agency community within our county, much as work with the Church in Society Committee drives me to build such relationships in our region, state and nation.

Serving in this way has allowed me to continue to learn and involvement in this and other committees here at First and within the synod have allowed me to use my God given gifts to build bridges --- to make a difference in areas I care deeply about, such as how our church works within our society. I have interests in creation care, immigration and refugee services, and the social determinants of health, such as housing, transportation, health care, food insecurity, clothing insecurity, and education. Advocacy is one of my best tools that I use to help people get the services they need. Writing and making grants is another. Helping others to learn how to manage what they have and asked for what they need is another.

*Continued on page 5*

## SWPA LDR – UPCOMING MISSION TRIPS

**Adults** – Registration is now open for a trip to Arden NC (Asheville area) on May 3-9. Registrations need to be completed by February 28, 2026.

**Youth** – Save the Date – plans are being made for a trip to Johnstown, PA on July 5-8. This trip will end with a celebration with a group of youth coming from the Nebraska Synod to work in the Pittsburgh area. Registrations need to be completed by May 1, but are not open yet.

If you are interested in either of these trips, please reach out to Pr. Chris for additional information.



The graphic features the text "save the date" in a pink, bubbly font at the top. Below it is a blue handprint icon with a white cross inside, set against a white house-shaped background. The main content is enclosed in a rounded rectangular box with a dark red border. Inside the box, the text "Synod Youth Mission Trip to Johnstown, PA" is in pink, with "July 5-8, 2026" in blue to its right. Below this, a blue handprint icon is followed by "Cost is \$150 per youth" in blue. At the bottom, "Celebration Dinner with Nebraska Synod Youth!" is in pink, with "Registration Deadline: May 1" in blue to its right.

Open to youth who have completed grades 6-12.  
Rising juniors and seniors in high school are able to apply to become Disciple Leaders who will be responsible for leading teams over the trip! Information to come soon.

*Stay tuned for more information!*



## Excerpts from BLESSED THEY ARE (Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber)

Blessed are they who doubt. Those who aren't sure, who can still be surprised.

Blessed are the preschoolers who cut in line at communion.

Blessed are they for whom death is not an abstraction.

Blessed are they who have buried their loved ones, for whom tears could fill an ocean.

Blessed are they who have loved enough to know what loss feels like.

Blessed are the mothers of the miscarried.

Blessed are they who can't fall apart because they have to keep it together for everyone else.

Blessed are those who no one else notices. The kids who sit alone at lunch tables. The laundry guys at the hospital.

Blessed are the forgotten.

Blessed are the unemployed, the unimpressive, the underrepresented.

Blessed are the wrongly accused, the ones who never catch a break, the ones for whom life is hard, for Jesus chose to surround himself with people like them.

Blessed are foster kids and special ed kids and every other kid who just wants to feel safe and loved.

Blessed are the burned-out social workers and the overworked teachers and the pro bono case takers.

Blessed are the kids who step between the bullies and the weak.

Blessed are they who hear that they are forgiven.

Blessed is everyone who has ever forgiven me when I didn't deserve it. Blessed are the merciful, for they totally get it.

*Continued from Page 4*

Using my gifts in these ways not only serves the church, but has strengthened my faith, which informs my work in the community with several non-profits that work on solutions to the social determinants of health as described earlier. The equation works both ways. It's not possible to know how we can help someone, if we do not ask them what they need. The same with the church. Instead of waiting to be asked, I asked the church what it needed. Leadership answered.

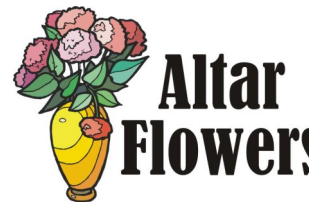
I invite you to consider joining the Finance committee --- you don't need any special knowledge, just a willingness to learn and serve..... If you want to know more - please reach out to me or anyone on the committee --- we would love to talk with you.

**Thank you!**

Robert W. Errett, MBA

Chairperson of the Budget and Finance Committee

First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Greensburg



**ALTAR FLOWERS** are needed for February 8 and March 15, 2026. Contact the church office if you would like to provide altar flowers for either of these dates. Cost is \$50.00.



Ruth Circle invites all ladies of the congregation to join them on February 12 at 7:00 PM in the church parlor. Join us for an evening of fellowship and our always delicious dessert.

## FEBRUARY NOISY OFFERING IS FOR FIRST LUTHERAN FOOD PANTRY

Christian Outreach is a very active ministry at First Lutheran Church. One of the ways we serve the community is through our Emergency Food Pantry. We maintain a supply of nonperishable food items which are used to assist many individuals and families. There is also a need for personal care items, which are stocked as well. Monetary donations help to purchase what is needed to keep the pantry well stocked. Donations of nonperishables and personal care items are always welcome and appreciated. The Emergency Food Pantry, along with our monthly Food Bank distribution and weekly Food From the Heart luncheon program are ways we are helping with the very serious problem of food insecurity in our community. Thank you for your support!

### DECEMBER PERFECT ATTENDANCE



*Kacie Colonna*

*Camden Kenderdine*

*Kinsley Colonna*

### Andy Rooneyisms - Too good not to share!!

I've learned....That sometimes all a person needs is a hand to hold and a heart to understand.

I've learned....That simple walks with my father around the block on summer nights when I was a child did wonders for me as an adult.

I've learned....That life is like a roll of toilet paper. The closer it gets to the end, the faster it goes.

## RECYCLING CHALLENGE

CHRISTIAN OUTREACH is participating in the **NexTrex Recycling Challenge**. Before October 1, 2026, we hope to collect 1000 pounds of plastic bags. This plastic will be recycled into decking boards and First can earn a park bench made of these boards. There are collection bins located in the Fellowship Hall, Education Building and the Narthex for you to deposit **your clean, dry and free of food residue plastic bags**. Since October, 2025, 247 pounds of plastic have been deposited and taken to Westmoreland Cleanways for recycling.

Examples of what can be recycled:



### DO NOT INCLUDE:

Frozen food bags, candy wrappers, chip bags, net or mesh bags, mulch or soil bags, degradable/compostable bags/film, pre-washed salad mix bags, pet food bags, hot dog or meat wrap packaging, six-pack rings, PPE gloves, masks or protective wear, pool covers, lamination film, silage and hay bags, vinyl shower curtains or table cloths, bedding or linen packaging, shiny, crinkly film like floral wrap or backyard ice rinks.

## SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The Educational Society of Westmoreland County awards scholarships to Lutheran students in Westmoreland County who will be attending a Lutheran affiliated college or seminary (can be a Lutheran College out of state).

The applicant must:

1. Be a member in good standing in a Lutheran Church within the boundary of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, and said church must be affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).
2. Be attending or planning to attend an educational institution that is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).
3. Be a citizen of the United States of America.
4. Be a resident of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.

Scholarship applications can be obtained by contacting Teresa Graziotto ([grazebear@gmail.com](mailto:grazebear@gmail.com) or 724-331-7134). Paper applications and/or a google form application are available. Scholarship application due date is March 31, 2026.

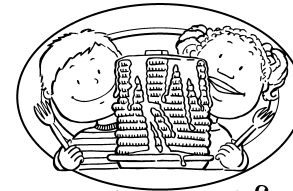
## **DECEMBER CHRISTIAN OUTREACH UPDATE**

12 bags of emergency food distributed

8 health/personal care kits distributed

228 FFTH lunches served

68 Households served through Food Bank



Pancake Breakfast

## **SHROVETIDE BRUNCH SUNDAY, February 15**

The First Family will gather for a “Shrovetide Brunch” the Sunday before Lent, February 15, following the 10:45 AM worship service.

The menu will include: pancakes, sausage, syrup, orange juice, coffee, and tea. Reservation forms will be included in the Sunday bulletin. A donation to defray expenses may be given if you so desire.

Shrovetide traditions of the past included using all of the flour in the house in preparation for the fasting of Lent. The days preceding Ash Wednesday became festive days with focus on increased baking, fellowship, and fun (as in the Mardi Gras tradition). We adapt this tradition with our pancake brunch for the First Lutheran family. Join us as we enjoy this time of food and fellowship.

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### **SHROVETIDE BRUNCH**

IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND, PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM BY **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9<sup>th</sup>** OR CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE TO LET US KNOW SO WE CAN PLAN.

FAMILY NAME\_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER ATTENDING SHROVETIDE BRUNCH\_\_\_\_\_

# FEBRUARY 2026

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

| Sunday  | Monday  | Tuesday   | Wednesday   | Thursday  | Friday    | Saturday                                       |
|---|---|---|---|---|-----------|--|
| <b>1</b> 9:30 Worship<br>NOISY OFFERING<br>Congregation<br>meeting & lunch      | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b><br><br>6:00 Executive                            | <b>4</b> FOOD/HEART<br>Noon   | <b>5</b><br><br>6:15 Handbells                      | <b>6</b>  | <b>7</b><br><br><b>Council<br/>Retreat 9-2</b> |
| <b>8</b> 8:15 Worship<br>9:30 SCS<br>10:00 Choir<br>10:45 Worship<br>JAVA TABLE | <b>9</b>  | <b>10</b>   | <b>11</b> FOOD/HEART<br>Noon  | <b>12</b><br><br>6:15 Handbells<br>7:00 Ruth Circle | <b>13</b> | <b>14</b>                                      |
| <b>15</b> 8:15 Worship<br>9:30 SCS<br>10:45 Worship<br><br>SHROVETIDE<br>BRUNCH | <b>16</b><br>NEWSLETTER<br>DEADLINE<br><br>Bible Study<br>1:30 & 6:00 | <b>17</b><br><br>6:30 Finance                             | <b>18</b> FOOD/HEART<br>Noon<br><br>Ash Wednesday<br>Services at 11 & 6                   | <b>19</b><br><br>FOOD BANK<br><br>6:15 Handbells    | <b>20</b> | <b>21</b>                                      |
| <b>22</b> 8:15 Worship<br>9:30 SCS<br>10:00 Choir<br>10:45 Worship              | <b>23</b>   | <b>24</b> NEWSLETTER<br>FOLDING<br><br>6:30 Ch. Ed. Youth | <b>25</b> FOOD/HEART<br>Noon<br>6:00 Lenten<br>Worship<br>6:30 Handbells<br>6:30 Property | <b>26</b>   | <b>27</b> | <b>28</b>                                      |

## CONGREGATION DINNER / MEETING February

Join the First Lutheran Family for business and fellowship on February 1st immediately following the one worship service at 9:30 am. **Lunch and fellowship will include a meal with meat, rolls, beverages, and dessert provided. You are asked to bring a covered dish of vegetables or salad and your own place settings.**



There will be printed copies available at the back of the church and also when we gather for the annual meeting on February 1st. **Constitution** updates will also be considered at the annual meeting. Copies are available.