

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
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PERMIT #436

**FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
GREENSBURG, PA**



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

office@felchurch.org

January 2024

Pastor's Note

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him."

(Lamentations 3:22-24, NRSV)

Dear Friends in Christ,

I hope that you all had a Blessed and Merry Christmas, as well as a Safe and Happy New Year! Often as we begin a new year, we take some time to reflect on the year behind us as we look to the possibilities of the year ahead. Hopefully, you will have some time for reflection as you find some rest from the busy-ness of the holidays.

In your considerations of the past year and the year ahead, I invite you to consider the passage from Lamentations above. The book of Lamentations is a collection of laments, which might often sound like despair or the opposite of faith to us. These verses, however, make clear that concerns, the laments of the author are offered to God because of faith.

In your reflections, I invite you to consider how you have experienced God's love, which never ceases. As you begin the new year, look forward in hope, because of God whose mercies are new every morning, and, of course, every new year. May you all have a blessed year, finding peace in the grace of God which is new every morning and brings us new life.

Together in Christ,
Pastor Chris



NOISY OFFERING FOR JANUARY

For January and February's Noisy Offering, we will be collecting for

Lutheran Summer Music Festival

LUTHERAN SUMMER MUSIC (LSM)

is the nation's premier faith-based music academy for high school students, grades 8-12. In addition to advanced musical instruction and numerous performance opportunities, LSM

students form an international community, living together for four weeks on the campus of Valparaiso University.

Since 1981, this program has guided the lives of young musicians, who credit LSM as the starting place for their future careers and vocations. Young musicians from across the country are invited to join this joyful community to expand their musical skills, build supportive relationships and lifelong friendships, and find welcome in using their musical gifts in worship. The music program includes private lessons, large ensembles, chamber music groups, musicianship classes, concerts, and recitals.

Worship is central to daily life at LSM. The three primary worship events are MORNING PRAYER, EVENING PRAYER, and SUNDAY EUCHARIST. This service is filled with music and follows a traditional Lutheran liturgy. Since its founding, LSM has reached musicians and music appreciators of all ages and faith traditions. LSM remains rooted in Lutheran music, worship and liturgical traditions.

2023 was a milestone year for LSM in countless ways. It saw a capacity enrollment, using every bed available from the university to house the students. It was a year of extraordinary generosity. Donors, alumni, parents, families, and churches all contributed to make LSM a transforming event. The connections made are immeasurable, getting to know oneself, becoming connected to others, and feeling closer to God. Your generosity helps make all of this happen. Thank you.

FIRLU HAS HEARD...



-that as of November 25th, our offering receipts were \$169,130. Last year they were \$169,605.

-that sympathy is extended to the family of Betty Koontz.

-that **Noisy Offering** will be collected the first Sunday of January to benefit Lutheran Summer Music.

-THANKS to Ruth Circle for providing toiletries to be distributed with emergency food.

-that assistance is greatly needed on Thursday, **January 18** at 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 February newsletter is Monday, January 15. Please be prompt. You may submit your articles to office@felchurch.org.

-that the ELCA wants to know what it is to be the church God is calling us to be. But we need **YOU**. Join us as we seek to discern God's Spirit and work to become the church God is calling us to be. This is Future Church; This is God's Love Made Real. Please take some time to go to <https://lovemadereal.elca.org> to watch a few videos and take a 15 minute survey. Thank you.

See you at worship,
FIRLU

Serving At Worship In January 2024

1/7

1/14

1/21

1/28

ACOLYTES

Noah Boggs	Molly Boggs	Aaron Woodley	Noah Boggs
Benjamin Gustafson	Addy Saraceni	Corrina Vuick	Nicholas Vuick

LECTORS

David von Schlichten	Kim Woodley	Kevin Reilly	Rebecca Brunetta
Jeanne Christensen	Bob Errett	Shirley Huls	Sunshine Keiser

ASSISTING MINISTERS

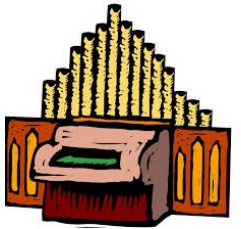
Dianna Marusko	Rebecca Brunetta	Carolyn Hanzel	Rebecca Brunetta
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ALTAR GUILD

Bev Attenberger
Shirley Huls



FROM THE ORGAN BENCH.....



Christ knocking at our heart by Richard O. Johnson

Christ comes knocking, not just at our minds and wills, but at our hearts, the innermost chamber of our lives. And it is the place that Christ is most eager to enter.

Dina Donohue’s modern classic Christmas story, “Trouble at the Inn,” tells the story of Wally Purling, one of those kids who wasn’t exactly the most popular boy in class. He had repeated a couple of years, so he was older than his classmates, and bigger, and clumsier, and a bit slow. When the time came for the Sunday School Christmas pageant, Miss Lombard decided to cast him as the innkeeper, mostly because he could just stand in one place and he only had a couple of lines to learn.

When the time came for the play and the boy playing Joseph knocked on the door, Wally the innkeeper was ready, “What do want” he gruffly demanded. “We seek lodging,” Joseph replied. “Seek it elsewhere, the inn is full,” Wally growled. “There is no room here for you.”

“Please,” said Joseph, “my wife is heavy with child and she needs a place to rest.” Wally paused. The prompter fed him his line, which he obediently repeated: “No! Be gone! There’s no room!” Joseph and Mary wearily turned away. Wally stood there staring after them, his little part in the play now completed. All eyes were on the weary couple, though if anyone had been watching Wally, they would have seen his eyes filling with tears. But even if they weren’t watching, they couldn’t miss what happened next. “Wait Joseph!” he called out. “Don’t go! You can have my room!”

And so it was that a clumsy and awkward nine-year-old boy taught the town something about making room, room in the heart, for Jesus.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS BIBLE STUDY SCHEDULE—SPRING 2024

Two sessions each day at 1:30 & 6:00 PM.

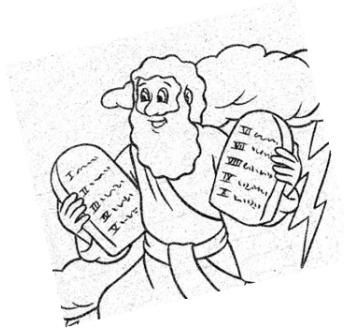
January 29, 2024

February 26, 2024

March 18, 2024 (note: March 25 is Holy Week)

April 29, 2024

May 20, 2024



MEMORIAL GIFTS RECEIVED

First Lutheran Church's Memorial Fund has received a gift in memory of Betty Koontz from Alpheus Shutt.

LOOKING FOR A WAY TO SERVE AT FIRST?

We are in need of volunteers to serve as lectors, particularly at the 8:15 service. We are also in need of Worship Assistants and members to serve on Altar Guild. Please consider if this is a way you can use your gifts at First. If you have any questions about what is involved, please get in touch with Pastor Chris.

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

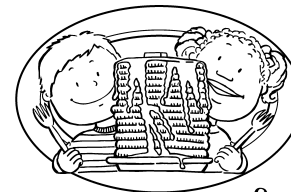
Boxes for your items will be located in the Narthex, the Education Building and the Fellowship Hall.

For more information on Love Packages check them out on lovepackages.org.

Angel Tree Thank You

Thanks to the generosity of the congregation, we were able to provide 26 children in the food pantry program with gifts this Christmas.

SHROVETIDE BRUNCH - SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11



Pancake Breakfast

The First Family will gather for a "Shrovetide Brunch" the Sunday before Lent, February 11, 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.

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.



The Ruth Circle will meet Thursday, January 11 at 7:00 PM in the parlor for an evening of fellowship. On the agenda is a business meeting, a program and a delicious dessert. All church women are invited and welcomed.

"I can do all things through the Christ which strengthen me."

Philippians 4:13

Andy Rooneyisms - Too good not to share!!

I've learned.... That the best classroom in the world is at the feet of an elderly person.

I've learned.... That when you're in love, it shows.

I've learned.... That just one person saying to me, 'You've made my day!' makes my day.

I've learned.... That having a child fall asleep in your arms is one of the most peaceful feelings in the world.

2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES have arrived! The boxes are

Offering Envelopes in the Narthex. You are asked to pick up your envelopes before or after worship, or anytime during the week. Please deliver a box to a shut-in, family member, or neighbor who may not be able to take their box. **NOTE:** Your envelope number may have changed

- **DO NOT** use 2023 envelopes now. Please only use 2024 envelopes.



January 2024

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 FOOD/HEART Noon 6:30 Fellowship	4	5	6
7 8:15 Worship 9:30 SCS 10:00 Choir 10:45 Worship NOISY Offering	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 FEB. NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	16 6:30 Finance	17 FOOD/HEART Noon	18 FOOD PANTRY 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	25 NEWSLETTER FOLDING 6:15 Handbells	26	27
28 8:15 Worship 9:30 SCS 10:00 Choir 10:45 Worship	29 1:30 & 6:00 Ten Commandments	30	31 FOOD/HEART Noon 6:30 PM Property			

CONGREGATION DINNER / MEETING February 4

Join the First Lutheran Family for business and fellowship on February 4 immediately following the 10:45 AM service. **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 beginning January 21 and also when we gather for the annual meeting on February 4.