

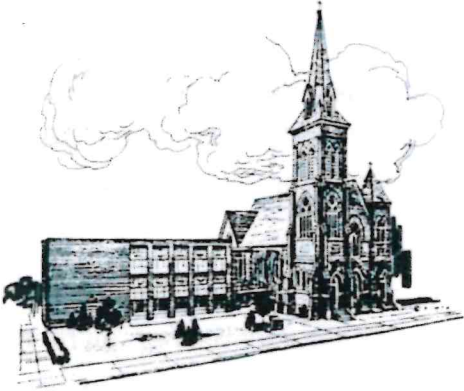
**FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
GREENSBURG, PA**

PHONE 724-834-1457

FAX 724-834-1469

office@felchurch.org

July 2026



Pastor's Note

Gracious Father, we pray for your holy catholic church. Fill it with all truth and peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in anything it is amiss, reform it; where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in need, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it; for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. AMEN.

Prayer of the Day – Reformation Sunday

Dear Friends in Christ,

As our nation approaches the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, I have been reflecting on this moment in our history and the challenges we face together. It is no secret that we find ourselves divided in many ways and on many issues.

While I wish things were different, history reminds us that periods of division and uncertainty are not new. I was less than a year old for the Bicentennial celebration in 1976. Looking back, it may seem like it was a simpler time, and in some ways it probably was. It certainly was a simpler time for me. Yet a closer look reveals a nation wrestling with significant challenges. The country was only a year removed from the end of the Vietnam War, a conflict that deeply divided Americans and sparked protests across the nation.

(Continued on Page 2)

The decade leading up to the Bicentennial witnessed the assassinations of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Senator Robert F. Kennedy. The 37th President, Richard Nixon, had resigned in the wake of the Watergate scandal. The times were complicated then and they remain complicated today.

As I reflect on our nation's history, I am drawn back to the documents that continue to shape our common life. The Declaration of Independence boldly proclaims that "all men are created equal" and are "endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights," including "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Throughout our history, Americans have wrestled with the meaning and application of these words.

Likewise, the Preamble to the Constitution begins with the familiar phrase, "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union...." In just his opening phrase the founders offered a guide for the generations. They recognized, that while they sought a "more perfect Union," it would not be perfect, there is always room for growth, improvement, and reform.

As children of the Reformation, we recognize a similar truth about the church. On Reformation Sunday, we pray that God would guide and renew the Church—correcting what is in error, strengthening what is faithful, and reforming what has gone astray. As Christians, ours is a journey of faith – growing with Jesus. In our baptisms we are forever united to Christ, and we are made citizens of God's Kingdom, one unlike any on earth.

As we celebrate Independence Day this July, I pray that you enjoy a safe and wonderful 4th. May we give thanks for the many freedoms we enjoy while also recognizing that our nation, like every human institution, is imperfect. And may our life together as Christians seek the good of all people, both in this country and throughout the world, as we live out our baptismal callings.

Above all, may we remember that in Christ we find true and ultimate freedom.

Together in Christ,
Pastor Chris

JULY NOISY OFFERING is FOR LUTHERAN SUMMER MUSIC

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.

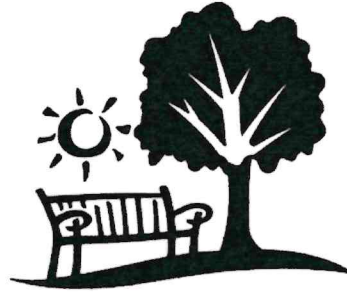
Since 1981, this program has guided the lives of young musicians, who credit LSM as the starting place for their future careers and vocations. Young musicians from across the country are invited to join this joyful community to expand their musical skills, build supportive relationships and lifelong 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.

The connections students make 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.



ALTAR FLOWERS are needed for August 2 and September 6, 2026. Contact the church office if you would like to provide altar flowers for any of these dates. Cost is \$50.00.



**Saturday Worship
In the Park**
Weather permitting

Worship in the Park is back!

This summer we will once again have worship in the park. It will be on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays in July and August. These services will be at 6:00 pm.

This is casual worship in the park (or the Fellowship Hall if necessary). Please bring your favorite camp chair and dress for the outdoors. Hope to see you there!

Please plan to stay after worship on July 25th for some kid's activities and an Ice Cream Social!

“The Lord your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all your undertakings ... because you turn to the Lord your God with all of your heart and soul.”

Deuteronomy 30:9-10

Lutheran Neighbors

H	S	T	M	A	T	T	H	I	A	S	T	E	N
J	A	E	F	K	A	J	E	S	M	H	S	T	I
E	S	E	M	A	J	T	S	A	N	D	E	P	S
E	C	A	E	P	F	O	E	C	N	I	R	P	I
H	S	H	E	P	T	E	H	L	T	O	M	G	N
L	T	D	R	E	H	P	E	H	S	D	O	O	G
M	J	I	H	A	R	R	O	L	D	Z	I	O	N
S	O	T	A	D	L	H	T	E	L	N	C	N	I
T	H	T	P	F	H	E	T	H	F	I	R	S	T
O	N	E	T	S	A	O	H	G	H	T	N	A	S
S	A	L	E	M	S	I	S	T	M	A	R	K	N
A	N	E	I	S	T	M	A	T	T	H	E	W	O
A	S	I	M	D	E	R	E	K	U	L	T	S	I
D	I	T	R	I	N	I	T	Y	I	T	A	S	Z

ZIONS
 STMATTHIAS
 HARROLDZION
 STJOHN
 SALEM
 FAITH
 GOODSHEPHERD
 PRINCEOFPEACE
 STJAMES
 FIRST
 STLUKE
 STMATTHEW
 STMARK
 TRINITY

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/9730296/>

SUMMER FOOD DRIVE

During the summer months, the Christian Outreach Committee will be collecting nonperishable items for our Emergency Food Cupboard. These items will be used to assist many individuals and families in our community.

We have also seen an increased need for personal care items. Anything you are able to provide is greatly appreciated!

July is “Carb Month”: Suggested items are:

- Pasta / pasta sauce
- Pouch / Box sides (pasta, rice, potato, stuffing, etc.)
- Mac & Cheese
- Crackers (saltines, etc.)



July Personal Care: Shampoo, Body Wash or Bar Soap, Deodorant

August is “Canned Food Month”: Items especially needed are:

- Soup
- Fruit
- Canned pasta (SpaghettiOs, etc.)

August Personal Care: Toothpaste, Toothbrush (single or 2-pack), dish liquid, laundry detergent (small size)

A basket is located in the education building foyer for your donations.

Please **check the expiration dates** before donating, as we cannot distribute expired items in the Emergency Food bags. Thank you!

APRIL CHRISTIAN OUTREACH UPDATE*25 bags of emergency food distributed**13 health/personal care kits distributed**372 FFTH lunches served**56 Households served through Food Bank*

Financial Update Through April 2026 Giving		
2026	2025	Budget
\$92,778	\$92,848	\$106,668
Expense		
2026	2025	Budget
\$154,149	\$186,068	\$199,581

Andy Rooneyisms - Too good not to share!!

I've learned.... That we should be glad God doesn't give us everything we ask for.

I've learned.... That money doesn't buy class.

I've learned.... That it's those small daily happenings that make life so spectacular.

I've learned.... That under everyone's hard shell is someone who wants to be appreciated and loved.

I've learned.... That to ignore the facts does not change the facts.

I've learned.... That when you plan to get even with someone, you are only letting that person continue to hurt you.

JULY 2026

Please note that this schedule of events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
			1 FOOD/HEART Noon	2
5 9:30 Worship NOISY OFFERING	6	7	8 FOOD/HEART Noon	9
12 9:30 Worship	13	14 Council Outing	15 FOOD/HEART Noon 6:30 Ch. Outreach	16 FOOD B
19 9:30 Worship	20 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	21	22 FOOD/HEART Noon	23
26 9:30 Worship	27	28 NEWSLETTER FOLDING	29 FOOD/HEART Noon 6:30 Property	30


s subject to change.



There is just one service
Sundays at 9:30 AM.

Worship in the Park on the 2nd
and 4th Saturdays of July and
August at 6:00 PM.

There will be no Sunday
Church School during the
summer months. SCS will
resume **September 13** with
Rally Recreation Day

	Friday	Saturday
	3 OFFICE CLOSED	4 
	10	11 Worship in the Park 6 pm
NK	17	18
	24	25 Worship in the Park 6 pm Kid's activities & Ice Cream Social after Worship.
	31	



FRIENDSHIP SUNDAY BOWLING PARTY

12:30 PM August 2

MAIN BOWLING CENTER

513 SOUTH MAIN STREET

GREENSBURG, PA 15601

\$5.00 per person—Bring a friend!

Price includes bowling, shoe rental, pizza & drinks.

RSVP to the church office no later than

Sunday, July 26.

FRIENDSHIP SUNDAY BOWLING PARTY

NAME _____

Number of Tickets _____ **x \$5.00 =** _____

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.



Zion's Women of the ELCA invite you to join us in a three-part Bible Study from Gather Magazine entitled "I am Worthy." This three-part Bible Study will help us define who we are, what we can be, and what we do in the world in light of our God given giftedness, identities, and relationships. We will meet the second Wednesday of each month: July 8, and August 12 at Zion's

located at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Second Street in downtown Greensburg. Use the Second Street door (there is one step). Doors will open at 5:30 PM for light refreshments and fellowship to be followed by the Bible Study from 6 to 7 PM.

Each month we will collect "\$Change\$ for a Change" to support our Synod Women's Organizations (SWO) designated outreach, Reagan's Journey. Their mission is to meet the needs of disabled children who require specialized equipment. They are requesting financial donations so they can support families and assist them in acquiring what each child needs. Bring your \$change\$ to be placed in a piggy bank. It will be taken to the Fall Retreat at Lutherlyn which will then be given to the folks at Reagan's Journey.

Stewardship: All Things Great and Small

For Martin Luther, stewardship means that all of life and its resources are gifts from God. Rather than a burden, it is a joyous calling. Since God does not need our good works, Luther taught that we act as His caretakers so we can serve our neighbors and benefit the community.

Luther fundamentally reshaped how Christians view their responsibilities on earth through a few core principles:

1. The Dignity of Daily Work

- **No Sacred-Secular Divide:** Luther collapsed the idea that only church leaders did holy work. He taught that a farmer, cobbler, or homemaker doing their job well is serving God just as much as a priest.
- **Vocation as Service:** Every day, tasks and occupations are your active contribution to the bodily and spiritual welfare of your neighbor.

2. Whole-Life Stewardship

- **Faith and Charity:** Luther believed that the Christian life boils down to faith in God and charity toward others.
- **Not Buying Salvation:** Because we are saved freely by God's grace (not by works), stewardship is a joyful, thankful response to that mercy rather than an attempt to buy salvation.
- **Everything Counts:** It involves managing your time, your mind, your abilities, and your material possessions to the glory of God.

3. Love and Care for the Neighbor

- **Neighbor-Focused:** One of Luther's most famous concepts is: *"God doesn't need our good works, but our neighbor does."*
- **Actionable Love:** Stewardship is the active practice of sharing God's love to physically and spiritually care for people in your community.



Trex Recycling Challenge **Plastic Patrol**



Everyone is now a part of the Plastic Patrol of First Lutheran Church. Keep bringing in your plastic bags, etc. so we can **keep it out of our landfills** and get a *chance(s) each quarter to win a Trex bench for our park.

Totals to date:

Oct-Dec. 2025 166 pounds

Jan-Mar. 2026 253 pounds

Apr – Jun 2026 252 pounds (as of June 18, 2026)

Grand total to date: 671 pounds

LET'S KEEP RECYCLING THAT PLASTIC!!!

**for each 250 pounds of plastic collected per quarter, one entry into a random drawing to win and choose a bench or one of 4 other prizes.*

Serving At Worship In July 2026

	7/5	7/12	7/19	7/26
9:30 Acolyte	Rachel Boggs	Nathaniel Boggs	Levi Boggs	Owen Lenhart
9:30 Lector	Megan Zobb	Jean Miller	Liz Rowe	Jeanne Christensen
9:30 Worship Assistant	Rebecca Brunetta	Rebecca Brunetta	Kim Woodley	Dianna Marusko

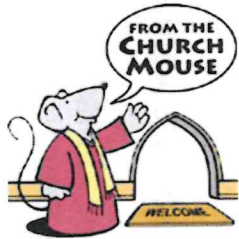
Altar Guild for July includes Roberta Laciak and Ann Copper.



Agree with God
Move with God
End with God
Never doubt God

Volunteers Needed!

To set-up and clean-up
 for outdoor worship
 in the park.



FIRLU HAS HEARD...

*** that as of May 30th, our general offering receipts were \$83,350. Last year they were \$82,140.

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

*** that there is interest in some church trivia and we need your help. Do you know some interesting facts about First? Please e-mail your trivia questions (and answers) to the office. Then look for those questions in upcoming editions. **Example:** When was the Education Building dedicated and where can you find that information in the building?

*** that together we are making great strides in keeping harmful plastic out of our landfills!! Thank you to all who bring in their plastic, those who sort the plastic and compact it, and those who deliver the plastic to Westmoreland Cleanways.

*** 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 Food Bank distribution is **Thursday, July 16**. 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 **August newsletter is Monday, July 20**. Please be prompt. You may submit your articles to office@felchurch.org.

Have ideas for other newsletter items? We would love to hear those too. Please send into the office.

Do you have any special announcements to share with FIRLU? Please share them with the office.

See you at worship,
FIRLU

