

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
 246 South Main Street
 Greensburg, Pennsylvania 15601-3183
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 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

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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 9:30 A.M.

Elevator and Hearing Assistance Available

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
 246 SOUTH MAIN STREET
 GREENSBURG, PA 15601-3183
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**FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
 GREENSBURG, PA**



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

office@felchurch.org

October 2024

Pastor's Note

“Dear Friends in Christ,

In his book, A Formula for Parish Practice, Timothy Wengert introduces each article of the Formula of Concord with a story. Below is his introduction for Article 12 and the final chapter of the book.

He did not see me walking my greyhound some forty yards behind him in that well-to-do Houston neighborhood. He simply picked up a newspaper lying on the sidewalk, walked up to the door of the house, and placed it on the front stoop. In light of the Golden Rule, it was a rather simple good deed — made vastly more significant for me because I knew who this man was: homeless, sometimes mentally confused, and the product of a grim childhood. This was even more powerful a scene than the widow’s mite in Mark 12, where the widow’s behavior demonstrated how religious institutions make rich hypocrites or impoverished believers of us all. This man simply did for others — people whom he did not know and who certainly did not know him — what he would want them to do for him. Imagine how this contrasts to a Lutheran Sunday school study book for teens published some years back. The point of the study was to give teenagers some sense of what living the Christian life entailed. Each chapter introduced a different historical personage for their consideration, including Francis of Assisi, Johann Sebastian Bach, Dr. Livingston (the missionary Stanley found in Africa), Elizabeth Fedde (founder of Lutheran deaconesses), Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Martin Luther King, Jr. All of them were Christian “pros,” whose idealized lives had no clear connection to the daily life in family, church, school, and society that teens in the 1980s faced every day. Too bad they couldn’t have included in the study book that fellow carrying the newspaper or even my plumber, who sometimes brought his profoundly mentally challenged son with him to work on a job and allowed the boy to carry his tools.

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When it comes to Christian ethics, the biggest danger and greatest lies arise for us when we trade in the real world and its messiness for an idealized Christian paradise on earth. The Formula of Concord wrestles with this issue in its twelfth and final article, addressed ostensibly to Anabaptists and others, who were in no way counted as Lutherans. Although the writers confronted a myriad of teachings that opposed Lutheranism in this article, the chief problem these Lutherans had with such groups was their idealized view of Christian life, which strove to take believers (and Christ!) out of this world and put them into some perfect Christian community. Such ideas flew in the face of one of Martin Luther’s most important discoveries, that daily life — replete with family ties, political and social responsibilities, work, sin, and imperfection — is the Christian life. As surely as Christ came into the flesh but is not of the flesh, so Christians are truly “in the world but not of the world.” For Christians, trying to escape from everyday life is simply immoral, to say nothing of impossible.¹

Wengert and the 12th article of the Formula of Concord speak to one of the things that I find so encouraging about our Lutheran understanding of Christianity. We are honest about the messiness of the world. We recognize that we are broken people living in a broken world. We live in the tension of being simultaneously Saint and Sinner as we live in a world where the Dominion of God has already begun but is not yet fully realized.

Given the challenges that we face in the world today, Wengert’s introduction above seemed very timely to me. Christian life is a life in the world, and it can be messy and frustrating. As Christians though we live knowing that we are never alone in the mess, Christ is always with us.

Together in Christ,
Pastor Chris

Financial Update Through August 2024		
Giving		
2024	2023	Budget
\$ 140,490.00	\$ 135,984.00	\$ 156,667.00
Expense		
2024	2023	Budget
\$ 277,058.00	\$ 244,959.00	\$ 300,433.00

¹Wengert, Timothy J.. A Formula for Parish Practice (Lutheran Quarterly Books) (pp. 197-198). Fortress Press, 2017. Kindle Edition.



FIRLU HAS HEARD...

- that as of August 24th, our offering receipts were \$121,823. Last year they were \$117,253.
- that **Noisy Offering** will be collected the first Sunday of October to benefit Lutheran World Relief—Ukraine.
- 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 sympathy is extended to the family of James Edward Skodak.
- that we thank Ruth Circle for providing toiletries, to be distributed as needed with emergency food.
- that Food Bank distribution is **Thursday, October 17**. 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, September 19, your effort will be greatly appreciated.
- that you are invited to attend **FIRST THURSDAY WORSHIP & LUNCH** at Zion’s Lutheran Church Thursday, October 3, 2024. Services begin at 12:05 PM and lunch is served following service at 12:30 PM. Suggested lunch donation- \$5.00.
- that the deadline for the **November newsletter is Friday, October 18**. Please be prompt. You may submit your articles to office@felchurch.org.
- that the Sunday School will have a Table or Treat event after church October 20, 2024 in the Fellowship hall with games for the congregation.
- that there will be Congregational Meetings following worship services November 3 and November 17.

See you at worship,
FIRLU

Serving At Worship In October 2024

10/6 10/13 10/20 10/27

LECTORS

Sue Boggs	Jean Miller	Kim Woodley	Kevin Reilly
Dan Krack	Joan Orr	Malcom Sias	Bob Errett

ASSISTING MINISTERS

Rebecca Brunetta	Carolyn Hanzel	Carolyn Hanzel	Rebecca Brunetta
		Tawnya Combs	

ALTAR GUILD

Kim Woodley



HARVEST HOME SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20

The First Family will celebrate Harvest Home on Sunday, October 20 at both worship services. Cornstalks and pumpkins will adorn the sanctuary and you are asked to bring canned goods and food staples to church. Your gifts will help in our Food Pantry with providing food to the needy in our area. "Now thank we all our God"!

Immediately following the 10:45 AM service, we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for a lunch. The menu includes:

Slider Sandwiches, Chips, Apple Dumplings / Ice Cream

Lemonade/Coffee/Tea

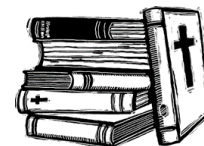
Reservation forms for the lunch are included in the church bulletin, use the form below or you may call the church office. Reservations are requested by **October 13, 2024**. All are welcome! Make sure to mark your calendar and come celebrate the Reformation!

Name_____

Number Attending:_____

A donation to defray expenses may be given if you so desire.

THE PARABLES OF JESUS



New Bible Study Series

Interested in Jesus teaching through parables? Join the conversation as we explore some of Jesus' most interesting and challenging teachings.

You have two opportunities each month to join. We will gather at 1:30 PM and 6:00 PM on October 14, November 18, and December 16. Hope to see you there!

"You cause your wonders to be remembered; you are gracious and full of compassion"

John 1:11

THE IN-BETWEEN TIME

by Rev. Ralen M. Robinson

“When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established;” (NRSVUE)

It’s fall, summer has come to an end. In this in-between time, I stand still, watching cotton candy skies above my head as cooler air surrounds me. I take time just to be. Songstress Sister Rosetta Tharpe once said, “Up above my head, I hear music in the air, And I really believe that there’s a Heaven somewhere.”

As the heavens open up, the rain showers have stopped, and the sky reflects the pools on the ground; I feel closer to God. The pink, blue, and violet colors remind me of God’s love. I can see the sky for miles on a clear day, and its vastness reminds me of God’s greatness.

This beauty encapsulates God’s power in creation. Often, I find myself staring up above and watching the birds soar and the sun reflect on the specs of clouds. It reminds me of wind chimes hanging in the window that throw reflections of color on the ground, mesmerizing me. At this moment, I can’t imagine being alone because God’s beauty surrounds me. I am reminded that everything created is done by a loving God who gave us something so vast, captivating, and striking.

It is easy to be blasé. We can easily miss or not notice it because it has always been there.

How often have we forgotten the beauty within ourselves or the gifts we possess? In this in-between season, I want you to look within yourself and marvel at the treasures in your treasure chest.

What gifts do you share and give to people and the communities you serve? We are called to be stewards of God’s creation, which means giving of our time, talent, and treasure to support and uplift the communities we call home; that means extending to our churches as well.

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NOISY OFFERING FOR OCTOBER

Lutheran World Relief for Ukraine

We are again collecting to support millions of people who have fled Ukraine, with millions more in dire need within their country. More information can be found in the October 6th bulletin.

MATCHING GIFT PROGRAM 2024

First Lutheran has sponsored a Matching Gifts program since 2002. Members of First Lutheran are invited to make a gift to any non-profit, human service organization whose mission is in accordance with First Lutheran’s mission, as agreed upon by our Community Outreach Committee. Write your check out to First Evangelical Lutheran Church and mark “Matching Funds” on the memo line on the bottom left corner of the check. Next to “Matching Funds” write the name of the organization(s) to whom you wish to donate matching funds (Example: Matching Funds...Westmoreland Food Bank). Such gifts will be matched by a First Lutheran Check and will be sent to the organization. Also, such gifts can be made throughout the year until the total budgeted amount of \$10,000.00 is met. More details regarding the Matching Gift Program are available from the office.

RUTH CIRCLE plans to assemble Disaster Relief Buckets in November. Ten buckets of cleaning supplies will be delivered to the UMC distribution center in Cranberry.

The congregation can help with monetary donations to purchase the required items. Checks can be written to FELC, with Disaster Buckets on the memo line.

All women are welcome to participate in Ruth projects, fellowship and, of course, delicious desserts. Meetings are held the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7 pm. **God’s Work Our Hands**



BIBLES FOR LOVE PACKAGES

We had a very successful Bible Drive and thanks go out to all who brought in Bibles, books, magazines, etc.

First Lutheran collected a total of 173 pieces in 9 banker's boxes of Christian Literature which include 71 Bibles and 102 pieces of New Testament books, hymnals, Sunday School materials, Christian books for children, and many Christian interest books, etc.

These boxes have been delivered to a Love Packages drop off church in North Canton, Ohio who will then transport them to the main center in Butler, Illinois. From there the literature will be shipped out to a country in need.

As of September 10, 2024, Love Packages has shipped its 77th load for the year. Their goal for 2024 is to ship 110. These loads are packed to the brim in 28-foot shipping containers, then shipped to Kenya, Thailand, India, Belize, Honduras, South Africa, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Philippines, just to name a few.

Proud to say First Lutheran, Greensburg will be a part of that 110 containers sent!!!

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS, NOVEMBER 3 AND 17

Brief congregational meetings will precede worship services on November 3 and 17 for the purpose of nominating and electing congregation council members.

On November 3, nominations will be received. Balloting and/or elections will follow two weeks later at the Sunday, November 17 meeting.

THE IN-BETWEEN TIME: Continued from page 4

God has entrusted us to care for and serve God's creation. We are a part of this beautiful tapestry, so we must use our gifts to sustain and edify the world, for God trusts us enough to do so.

In Psalm 8, King David praises God's beautiful creation. God is right in front of our faces because God has always been and will be there, especially in times of transition.

God's presence envelops us and covers us wherever we go and whatever space we are in. God's handiwork is seen. All you have to do is look above your head. Because when you do, God's light shines on you and equips you to use your gifts.

When was the last time you admired the birds of the air, the sky's pillowy clouds stretching across and changing colors? When was the last time you were grateful for God's creation? Give thanks and praise for it. This season, as we step further into October, take a moment to see how you are using your gifts and cherishing what was entrusted to you from the one above.

"We are called to be stewards of God's creation, which means giving of our time, talent and treasure to support and uplift the communities we call home."

Ralen M. Robinson is a pastor at Reformation Lutheran Church in Wichita, Kan. When she is not pastoring, she is pursuing her Doctorate of Ministry in Homiletics, serving as a board member of Child Protective Services of Sedgwick County, and participating in leadership roles in the wider church. Ralen believes her faith and a good pair of shoes can take you a long way.

This was excerpted from Bold Connections, a monthly newsletter prepared by Women of the ELCA. Used with permission.



RUTH CIRCLE will meet Thursday, October 10 at 7:00 PM in the church parlor. We invite all ladies of the congregation to join us for fellowship, study, and always delicious dessert.

October 2024 *Please note that this schedule of events is subject to change.*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 6:00 Council	2 FOOD/HEART Noon 6:30 Fellowship	3 6:15 Handbells	4	5
6 8:15 Worship 9:30 SCS 10:00 Choir 10:45 Worship NOISY OFFERING	7	8	9 FOOD/HEART Noon	10 6:15 Handbells 7:00 Ruth Circle	12	12
13 8:15 Worship 9:30 SCS 10:00 Choir 10:45 Worship JAVA TABLE	14 1:30 & 6:00 Bible Study	15 6:30 Finance	16 FOOD/HEART Noon 6:30 Stewardship	17 FOOD BANK 6:15 Handbells	18 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	19
20 8:15 Worship 9:30 SCS 10:00 Choir 10:45 Worship Harvest Home Bible Distribution	21	22 6:30 Ch. Ed./Youth	23 FOOD/HEART Noon	24 6:15 Handbells	25	26
27 8:15 Worship 9:30 SCS 10:00 Choir 10:45 Worship Reformation	28	29 NEWSLETTER FOLDING	30 FOOD/HEART Noon 6:30 Property	31 6:15 Handbells		

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST



Every Sunday
between services.

Sign up calendar and
instructions are on the table
in the narthex. Please sign
up for a Sunday.

JAVA TABLE



The Java Table will be open
on the second Sunday of each
month between services.