

Vine Street Journal

Johnstown, PA

First Lutheran Church

April 2025

A message from Vicar Christy...

At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.
Mark 1:12-13

As we journey through this Lenten season you will notice the 7 candles that are placed on the table in front of the altar. These candles represent each week of Lent, with the first candle being lit on Ash Wednesday. As we hear the seven readings of The Way of the Cross on Good Friday, we will extinguish these candles. On Easter Sunday – we will once again see the light of Christ with our sanctuary full of lit candles – to remind us that Christ is the light of the world.

Beginning with Ash Wednesday, we are reminded that “we are dust, and to dust we shall return.” Through Lent we will hear about the wilderness, protection, care, welcoming, all things made new – which will lead us up to Palm Sunday as Jesus enters Jerusalem to shouts of “Hosanna!”

Through Holy Week we are reminded of Jesus commandment that we are to love one another, in the washing of feet or to be servants to one another. On Good Friday we see life and death – Jesus’ death offers life to us all through that cross at Calvary. And as we leave in silence – we return on that glorious Easter morning to hear of Jesus’ resurrection and to once shout “Alleluia” from the mountain-tops.

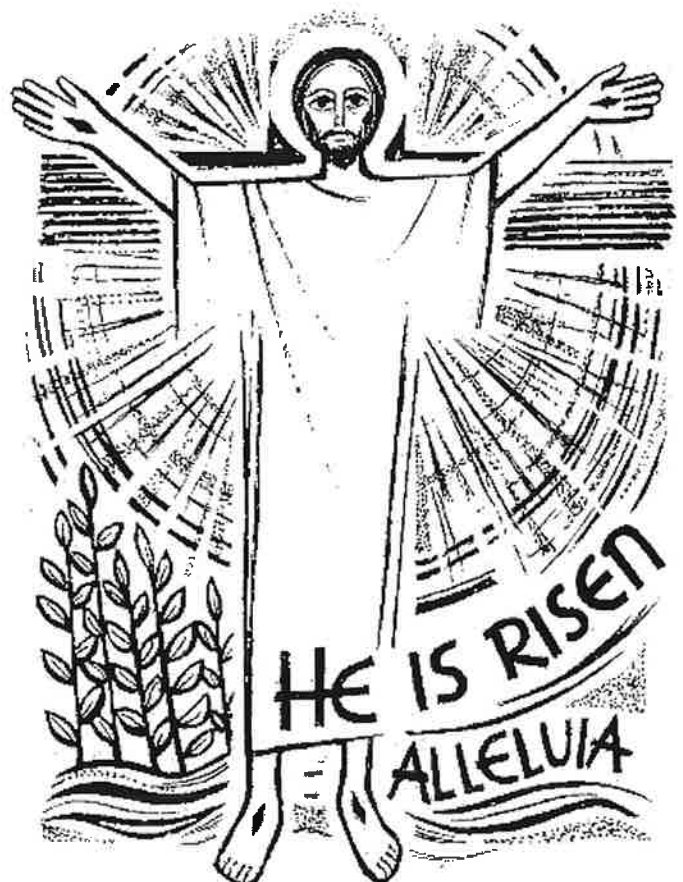
As we hear about “all things new” – you will see that there is a lot going on in our sanctuary. This will be on-going over the next several months; however, I just wanted to take this time to thank all those who have

stepped up to make this change possible. We could not do the “things” we do without the help of all of you!! We are the church – we are a family! As you gaze up at the top of the scaffolding (it is really high) – you will begin to see the “new” which is really the “old” just coming back to life. And very soon, the organ that we all so love, will leave us to come back fresh and full of glorious sounds!!

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!! Alleluia!!

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.
Romans 6:4

Christ is risen!!
Vicar Christy





Vine Street Journal

Published by the
FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

415 Vine Street
Johnstown, PA 15901
Phone: 814-536-7521

Email: firstlutheran@wpia.net

Fax: 814-536-0855

WEB SITE ~www.firstlutheran.info

Like us on Facebook

+ + +

VICAR

Christy Harford

MINISTER OF MUSIC

Kim Rauch

LEARNING MINISTRY ASSOCIATE

Barbara J. Pingatore, R.N.

OFFICE MANAGER

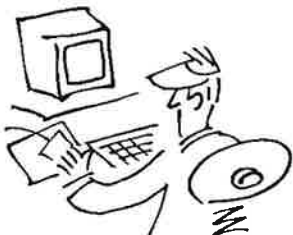
Deneillia (Danny) Mitchell

CLEANER

Paul Eisenhuth

CHURCH COUNCIL

Barry Critchfield (Treasurer), Rob Abele (Vice-President), Bill Price (President), James Hargreaves, Karen Hargreaves,, Heidi Piurkowsky, Joel Hoshaw, Jody Kirk (Secretary), Rick Blackford, Josh Rinaman, Janice Hill, Dick Schrott, Fawn Slonka, Shirley Waclo.



Next Journal Deadline

Tuesday, April 22.
Share your news with us!

~ PASTORAL ACTS ~

Vicar Christy Harford

March 8 – Burial Judith Dembroski

~ CONTRIBUTIONS ~



In memory of Joyce Schmid
gifted by Global Printing and Packaging.

Organ Restoration Donors

In Honor of First Lutheran Musicians
by Caryl Swanson

Tom Dixon

Bill and Polly Grubb

Jane Hanechak

John Kiser

Christina Kaltenbaugh

Wally and Barbara Penrod

Richard and Patricia Schrott

Linda Sipes

Fawn Slonka

**Please note that the list in the March VSJ included TNR donors and Organ Restoration donors, it should have only listed restoration donors. The above is the corrected list.

MUSIC

Sunday



On Sunday, May 11 we will celebrate our music ministry and all those who serve and support this important ministry. Join the celebration of our adult choir, our bell and chime choir, our musicians, organists, pianists and others.

Take time to offer your thanks and appreciation for their ministry. Come and make a joyful noise to the Lord!



In our prayers

In the life of our congregation, there are often important events which touch the lives of the First Lutheran family. We commend them to you and encourage you to share news with us.

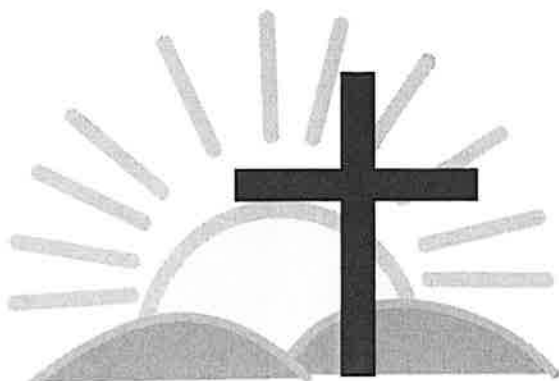
+ **Sympathy and prayers** to the family and friends of Judith Dembrowski who died February 27.

+ **Sympathy and prayers** to the family and friends of Grace C. Hillegas who died February 25. Grace served First Lutheran Church for 41 years as the administrative secretary.

Income and Expense Summary as of February 28, 2025

	Current YTD Actual Jan. 1 thru Feb. 28, 2025	Current YTD Budget Jan. 1 thru Feb. 28, 2025	Difference over+/under- Budget
Regular Offering Income	\$27,892.06	\$27,316.67	\$575.39
Trust Fund Income	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other Income	\$0.00	\$541.00	-\$541.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$27,892.06	\$27,857.67	\$34.39
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$32,283.82	\$30,029.40	\$2,254.42

Thank you for your continued generosity and faithfulness to First Lutheran Church. God bless.



Council met on March 12 at 7:00 pm to review reports and conduct new business. Treasurer Barry Critchfield reported that contributions for January and February have met budgeted predictions.

Vicar Christy cheerfully reported approximately 11 individuals are interested in becoming members of the congregation.

The Property committee gave an update on the sanctuary. Elias has set up the scaffolding and will begin repairing and plastering the area. The plaster will need to be thoroughly dry before painting, and if all goes according to plan the project should take 5-6 weeks. Volunteers will clean any dust on Saturdays.

Council approved the donation of the Forest Lawn cemetery plots to the Veterans Memorial Trust.

Council approved the appointment of Tom Roberts to the Audit Committee.

The next regular council meeting will be held April 9, 2025 at 7:00 pm.

Easter Lilies



The magnificent white Easter Lily long stood as a symbol of purity, hope, innocence, and peace. Often called the "white robed apostle of hope", lilies were found growing in the Garden of Gethsemane after Christ's agony. Tradition has it

that the beautiful lilies sprung up where drops of Christ's sweat and tears fell to the ground on his final hours of sorrow and deep distress.

Please help to deliver the beautiful lilies, which will adorn our sanctuary and altar on Easter Sunday, to our homebound members and friends.

Lilies may be taken following the 11:00 am worship on Easter Sunday or picked up on Wednesday, April 23 from 9:00 am until 2:00 pm. Thank you for sharing the joy of the resurrection.

March Readings and Psalm

April 6 – Fifth Sunday in Lent

- Isaiah 43:16-21
The LORD gives water in the wilderness to the chosen people
- Psalm 126
Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy.
- Philippians 3:4b-14
To know Christ and his resurrection, to share in his sufferings
- John 12:1-8
Mary anoints Jesus for his burial

April 13 – Passion/Palm Sunday Procession with Palms

- Luke 19:28-40
Entrance into the final days

Readings and Psalm

- Isaiah 50:4-9a
The servant of the LORD submits to suffering
- Psalm 31:9-16
Into your hands, O LORD, I commend my spirit.
- Philippians 2:5-11
Humbled to the point of death on a cross
- Luke 22:14—23:56
The passion of the Lord
- Luke 23:1-49 (alternate)
The passion of the Lord

April 17 – Maundy Thursday

- Exodus 12:1-4 [5-10] 11-14
The Passover of the LORD
- Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
I will lift the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD.
- 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
Proclaim the Lord's death until he comes
- John 13:1-17, 31b-35
The service of Christ: foot washing and meal

April 18 – Good Friday

- Isaiah 52:13—53:12
The suffering servant
- Psalm 22
My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
- Hebrews 10:16-25
The way to God is opened by Jesus' death
- Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9 (alternate)
Jesus is our merciful high priest
- John 18:1—19:42
The passion and death of Christ

April 20 – Day of Resurrection

- Acts 10:34-43
God raised Jesus on the third day
- Isaiah 65:17-25 (alternate)
New heavens and a new earth
- Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.
- 1 Corinthians 15:19-26
Christ raised from the dead, the first fruits
- Acts 10:34-43 (alternate)
God raised Jesus on the third day
- Luke 24:1-12
The women proclaim the resurrection
- John 20:1-18 (alternate)
Seeing the risen Christ

April 27 – Second Sunday of Easter

- Acts 5:27-32
The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus
- Psalm 118:14-29
You are my God, and I will exalt you.
- Psalm 150 (alternate)
Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.
- Revelation 1:4-8
Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead, is coming
- John 20:19-31
Beholding the wounds of the risen Christ



Holy Week



**April Tuesday Noon
Recitals Announces
Lineup**

Spring Recital

The **Johnstown Christian School Bell Choir** will play its on-tour program when it opens the Tuesday Noon Recital Series **April 8.**

Kristen Lloyd will direct the bell choir, which is a frequent performer at First Lutheran.

On **April 15** the series will present the annual program by the **Johnstown Area All-Star Jazz Band.** Students from four high schools will perform together for the first time. Their performance is thrilling. It attracts our biggest audience.

On **April 22 fiddlers** *Gary Noll and Carl Rahkonen* will play a program of Irish tunes. They are among artists who look forward to reappearances in the popular recital series.

On **April 29 HighStrung.** From the Heart *Smitty and Deese.* *If It Ain't Broke, Don't Fix It.* *A fresh look at folk songs.*

The recitals, followed by lunch, are presented at no charge because they are prepaid by donations plus grants from the 1889 Foundation and Thrivent Financial

Where else can you spend an afternoon of exciting and unique musical programs and share a delicious lunch served with warm hospitality and filled with great fellowship?? Tuesdays in April at noon here at First! See you there!

Thought for the month. . .

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay."
Matthew 28:5-6



Passion/Palm Sunday + April 13
11:00 am - Word and Sacrament
Procession with palms

+++++

Maundy Thursday + April 17
12:30 pm - Benscreek
7:00 pm - First

+++++

Good Friday + April 18 + First
2:00 pm - Service of the Cross
7:00 pm - The Way of Sorrow

+++++

Saturday, April 19
5:30 pm - Eve of the Resurrection

+++++

Easter Sunday + April 20
Resurrection of Our Lord
Sunrise 6:00 am - Benscreek Grove
9:00 am - Benscreek
11:00 am - Word and Sacrament





The generosity of First Lutherans reaches beyond our church walls, into the community, the church at large and globally. We receive notes of thanks and acknowledgements for many of the gifts given. Acknowledgements received are noted each month in the VSJ and posted on a bulletin board located in the Lounge.

Grove Avenue United Methodist Church



Grove Avenue Methodist Church has an outreach program called Free Store. It provides personal hygiene and cleaning products to those who reside in the Moxham section of Johnstown. They are asking for area churches to help with donations to meet growing needs.

First Lutheran's Outreach Team has adopted this program as a Lenten Ministry. Members are encouraged to pitch in to help our neighbors.

The Free Store is in special need of:
 infant diapers (all sizes) ,
 toddlers pull ups (all sizes),
 adult diapers (all sizes),
 toilet tissues,
 kitchen size garbage bags.

Please give prayerful consideration to making a donation. Collection tubs are available in the Social Hall and in the Lounge for your donations.

Thank you for helping our brothers and sisters in Moxham.

Heavenly Father,



On this blessed Easter Sunday, we come before you with hearts full of gratitude and joy. We rejoice in the resurrection of your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. As we gather with loved ones and fellow believers, we are reminded of the glorious victory over sin and death that He accomplished on the cross.

Lord, we thank you for the promise of new life and the hope that Easter brings. Your mercy and grace shine brightly on this day, illuminating our lives with the warmth of your love. May we never forget the incredible sacrifice of Jesus and the profound significance of His triumph over the grave.

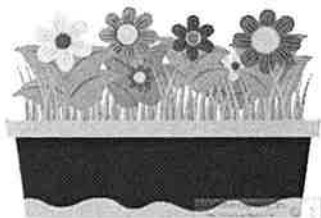
On this sacred day, fill our hearts with the joy of the resurrection. Help us to experience the transformative power of your love, renewing our spirits and strengthening our faith. As we celebrate together, may the message of Easter resonate deeply within us, inspiring us to live as reflections of your grace and compassion.

As we rejoice in the miracle of Easter, we lift our prayers for those who may be struggling, lonely, or in despair. May your comforting presence be with them, bringing healing and hope. Use us, Lord, as instruments of your peace and vessels of your love in the world.

We dedicate this Easter Sunday to you, grateful for the promise of redemption and the assurance of your unfailing love. May our lives be a testament to the power of your resurrection as we seek to follow you faithfully.

In the precious name of Jesus, we pray.
 Amen.

STUVER'S NURSERY COUPONS



Spring has arrived and so have the flower coupons for Stuver's Nursery. The sale of these coupons is an annual fundraiser

hosted by the Outreach Team.

The cost of a hanging basket coupon is \$19.00. The flat (consisting of 8 market packs of annual flowers is \$14.50. If you would like to purchase vegetables you can use a flat coupon and pay an additional \$2.00 at Stuver's (\$16.50 total for vegetables).

Coupons will be available beginning the first week of April, following church Saturday and Sunday. You may also contact Donna Kovalchek, Fawn Slonka (Saturday sales) or Cindy Fabo (Sunday sales). ???contact Cindy Fabo 814-322-1211.

These make wonderful gifts for flower lovers, Mother's Day, birthdays, and personal home decorating.



Sunday Coffee Hour/ Hospitality

Call it what you like, coffee hour or hospitality, everyone loves to gather in the Lounge following the service each Sunday. There is meeting and greeting others, warm hospitality, yummy snacks. A signup sheet for hosting is available in the lounge. Please consider hosting a Sunday. Nothing fancy is expected – think simple! Just a bit of a treat for our time together, see you all at noon.



ALTAR/ORGAN FLOWERS

Here is a listing of flowers available. Please sign up on the boards in the lounge.

Altar dates available:

April 27; June 29

Second listings will be accepted for all other April, May June dates.

Organ dates available:

April None; May 4, 18, 25, June 22

Sign-up boards are available for reserving your flower requests. The charts are located on the wall in the Lounge area. You can sign up on the boards but please notify the church office that you reserved a date. Or you can call the church office and reserve the date you want.

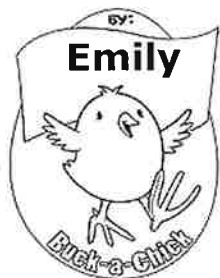
One board is for Altar Flowers - \$40. (If there are 2 listings on the same day, the flowers are only \$20) the other is for Organ Flowers - \$30. Payment will be due on or before the date you have chosen. Thank you!



April 12, 1935

May your day be filled with comfort, peace, joy, hope, love and God's blessings. Happy Birthday!

*Love,
First Lutheran Church Family*



**Still time to
Buck-a-Chick!**

Purchase a chick(s) in honor of or in memory of someone special to you. Fill your Easter baskets with chicks! Ask your friends and neighbors to buck-a chick! Your gifts will bring food, hope and survival to families living in poverty.

Chicks may be purchased and displayed at the tables located in the Lounge and the Social Hall.



**Sequanota Spring Benefit Dinner
Friday May 2, 2025**

Suggested donation of \$60/person

- 4:45 PM Tours of camp**
- 5:30 PM Appetizers & Trivia Time**
- 6:00 PM Dinner**
- 6:45 PM Entertainment & Annual Report**

An evening of fellowship to support camp and raise money to help kids attend summer camp. Three meal options for those attending in person: two meat options, one vegetarian. Please choose one when RSVP-ing. If you are unable to attend in person but would like to hear a camp update, please join us on Zoom for summer staff introductions, camp songs, and the annual report presentation.



**ELCA World Hunger's 40 Days of Giving
Continues. . .**

Each week during Lent we will ask for many items needed by the West End Food Pantry.

Lent 4 – March 30-April 5

Canned or packaged meats, fish – tuna fish, chicken, Spam, stew, chili, corn beef;

Lent 5 – April 6-April 12

Paper supplies – Toilet paper, paper towels, napkins, facial tissues;

Holy Week – April 13-April 20

Soap items – Bar soap, hand soap, dish washing liquid, laundry soap, baby wipes.

Any of these items may be donated during Lent and left in the Lounge area near the grocery cart.

"A generous person will be blessed, for he gives some of his food to the poor." Proverbs 22:9



Plans are set for the Sunday Matinee of the Sight and Sound movie – JESUS. Join us following worship at

noon.

We will have we will have pizza and popcorn and boxes of movie candy such as Dots, Boston Baked Beans, Snow Caps and all.

This is a special time for family and friends. See you there!



**First
Lutheran
Walkers**

First Lutheran Walkers are gearing up for the Johnstown Walk of Hope to be held Saturday, June 7. The Johnstown Walk of Hope is a nonprofit initiative started in 2016, with the goal of raising money for patients with a cancer diagnosis. The JWOH mission is to lessen the financial load so that patients can concentrate on staying strong and getting well.

The money raised supports patient expenses that include medical, household and travel expenses. ALL donations support patients who receive care **LOCALLY** regardless of where they live in Cambria, Somerset and Bedford Counties.

Look for the parking meter where folks are depositing their donations in support of the walk. Walkers of all ages are invited to participate in the walk. It will be a fun day supporting a great cause! Questions may be directed to Ann Furlong.



Upcoming worship opportunities:

- May 11 – Church Music Sunday
- June 8 – Pentecost
- June 15 – Holy Trinity
- June 21 and 22 – Of Land and Seasons
Start of Summer
- June 28 and 29 – Service for Healing
- August – Worship Series on Psalm 23
- August 9 – Outdoor Service
- August 23 and 24 – Service for
Healing

Make a joyful noise unto the LORD! Psalm 100

BYOT (Bring Your Own Tools)!!??

Wondering what this is?? Well, clear your calendars for Saturday, May 3 for a church clean-up day and a picnic lunch!



Yep, we are planning to gather the troops, asking you to bring your own tools (BYOT) – gardening tools, hand held vacuums, buckets, rags, and any other

cleaning tools you think might be needed.

Outreach is planning for this day with Dick Schrott’s guidance putting together a chore list. There will be plenty for everyone to do.

The group will stop mid-day to share a picnic lunch. Mark the date now.

Remember many hands make for light work! And don’t forget to BYOT!!



**Holy Week Worship
to be Live Streamed**

In addition to our Sunday morning worship the following Holy Week services will be life streamed on Facebook:

- Passion/Palm Sunday
April 13th – 11:00am
- Maundy Thursday – April 17th – 7:00 pm
- Good Friday – April 18th
Service of the Cross – 2:00 pm
- The Way of Sorrow – 7:00 pm



Easter Flower Order Easter Charity Listing

If you would like to order an Easter lily(s) to decorate the chancel (or if you want to contribute toward the Walden M. Holl Fund, place your order on the form below and mail with payment to First Lutheran Church, 415 Vine Street, Johnstown, PA 15901. Orders will not be automatically renewed for those who have had orders in the past. **Please make sure you fill out all the information on the form.** **The cost of the lilies is single stem with five blooms for \$13.00.** Orders may also be called to the church.

If you have any questions, please call Danny at the church office 814-536-7521. There will be envelopes available in the Lounge and Narthex for your convenience.

The deadline for placing an order will be **Sunday, April 6th**.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

FOR:
(please circle your choice)

Easter Flower Order
Walden M. Holl Fund

In memory of *-or-* in honor of: _____
(please indicate)

Given by: _____

Amount Enclosed - \$ _____ Phone # _____




Fat Tuesday





Mardi
GRAS



April 2025

First Evangelical Lutheran Church – Johnstown, Pennsylvania
814-536-7521 email: firstlutheran@wpia.net
Office Hours: Mon. thru Fri. 9 am – 2:00 pm

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Easter He IS Risen!</p> <p>6 Fifth Sunday in Lent 10:45-Sunday School 11:00- Word and Sacrament Vicar Harford Noon-Hospitality</p>	<p>7 11:00–Staff Meeting 11:45-Communion 12-Prayer Meeting.</p>	<p>1 6:30-Bellchoir</p> <p>8 6:30-Bible Study 6:30-Bellchoir</p>	<p>2 7-Council</p> <p>9 7-Council</p>	<p>3 10</p> <p>28 MAUNDY THURSDAY 7:00 Holy Communion Stripping of the Altar</p>	<p>4 11</p> <p>29 GOOD FRIDAY 2:00- Service of the Cross 7:00-Way of Sorrow</p>	<p>5 Eve of Lent Five 5:00 -Word and Sacrament Vicar Harford</p> <p>12 Eve of Passion/Palm Sunday 5:00 -Word and Sacrament Vicar Harford</p>
<p>13 Passion/Palm Sunday 10:45-Sunday School 11:00- Word and Sacrament Vicar Harford Noon-Hospitality</p>	<p>14 11:00–Staff Meeting 11:45-Communion 12-Prayer Meeting.</p>	<p>15 6:30-Bellchoir</p>	<p>16 11-Tower Moments</p>	<p>19 Eve of the Resurrection 9:00-Sanctuary Decorating 5:00 -Word and Sacrament Vicar Harford</p>	<p>22 12-VSJ Deadline 6:30-Bible Study</p>	<p>26 Eve of Easter Two 5:00 -Word and Sacrament Vicar Harford</p>
<p>20 Day of Resurrection 10:45-Sunday School 11:00-Resurrection Celebration Vicar Harford Noon-Hospitality</p>	<p>21 OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>22 12-VSJ Deadline 6:30-Bible Study</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	
<p>27 Easter Two 10:45-Sunday School 11:00- Word and Sacrament Vicar Harford Noon-Hospitality</p>	<p>28 11:00–Staff Meeting 11:45-Communion 12-Prayer Meeting</p>	<p>29 6:30-Bellchoir</p>	<p>30</p>			

