Vine Street Journal

Johnstown, PA **First Lutheran Church** **November 2026**

A message from Pastor Christy…

November invites us to pause, give thanks, and celebrate the many ways God is at work in and through our congregation. As we move through this month, we have much to celebrate and many opportunities to share God's love with our neighbors.

October's Trunk or Treat in Central Park was a wonderful success! Thank you to Shirley Waclo who helped to decorate my trunk, volunteered her time, and joined me in welcoming all the children in downtown Johnstown. Events like this are a meaningful way to build relationships in our community and share the hospitality of Christ. We hope to be part of this event again next year!

As we begin November, we will observe All Saints Sunday, remembering with gratitude the saints who have gone before us. We give thanks for their faith, their witness, and the ways they have shaped our lives and our congregation. We are reminded that we are surrounded by the great communion of saints and held together by God's grace, both in life and in death.

We will also celebrate Youth Sunday, giving thanks for the gifts, energy, questions, and faith of our young people. They are not simply the future of the church; they are an important part of the church today. May we continue to listen to them, encourage them, and provide opportunities for them to grow in faith and share their gifts in ministry.

As Thanksgiving approaches, we are reminded that gratitude is more than a holiday tradition. It is a way of living in response to God's abundant grace. Even in challenging times, we can find reasons to give thanks and to serve our neighbors. May our gratitude lead us to generosity, compassion, and a deeper commitment to loving our neighbors as Christ has loved us.

November 29 also marks a special milestone in my own journey of faith and ministry: the one-year anniversary of my ordination. As I reflect on this past year, I am filled with gratitude for God's faithfulness, for the privilege of serving as your pastor, and for the ways we continue to grow together in faith. Ministry is a journey shaped by grace, shared joys and challenges, and the many ways God works through ordinary people to do extraordinary things. Thank you for your encouragement, your trust, and the opportunity to walk alongside you as we live out our calling to serve Christ and our neighbors.

This year, November 29 also brings us to the First Sunday of Advent, when we begin a new church year. Advent is a time of waiting, watching, and preparing our hearts for the coming of Christ. As we light the Advent candles and hear again the promises of hope, peace, joy, and love, may we be renewed in faith and reminded that God continues to come among us—in the Word, in the sacraments, in our neighbors, and in the promise of Christ's coming again. What a meaningful way to mark both a personal milestone and the beginning of a season filled with expectation and hope.

Thank you for the many ways you share your faith, serve our congregation, and care for our community. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, may we continue to be a church that welcomes all, serves our neighbors, and lives out the good news of Jesus Christ.

May God bless you with grateful hearts and hopeful spirits throughout this season of thanksgiving.

In Christ's peace,

Pastor Christy

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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

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PASTOR
Christy Harford

MINISTER OF MUSIC
Kim Rauch

OFFICE MANAGER

CLEANER
Paul Eisenhuth

HOUSEKEEPER
Deborah Jones

CHURCH COUNCIL
Barry Critchfield (Treasurer), *James Hargreaves, Karen Hargreaves, Josh Rinaman, Janice Hill, Vicki Price, Dick Schrott* (Vice President), *Fawn Slonka* (President), *Shirley Waclo* (Secretary).

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday 9:00 am – 2:00 pm.

~ PASTORAL ACTS ~

Wedding – Josephson/Becker
Funeral – David Ott
Funeral – Lawrence Smith (non-member)
Confirmation – Callie Bennear

~ CONTRIBUTIONS ~

CHURCH PRESERVATION FUND
Barry Critchfield
Richard and Patricia Schrott
Ann Furlong
Lance and Debbie Shomo
Carol Allison
Jane Hanechak
Barbara Penrod
Greer Koeller
Jen Bennear
Kathy Stephenson
Barbara Grodziski
Carol Allison

In memory of David Ott
Gifted by
Kathleen Baker
Shannon & Eric Walker
Cleone Rudisill
Peter Meredith & Ellen Berkov
Donna & William Zarycranski
Costello Family
Dennis Abruzzi
John Mark & Gina Demchyk
Jody Kirk
Raymond Gaylos

In Honor of Callie Bennear
Confirmation
Gifted by
Christopher & Jennifer Bennear



Next Journal Deadline
November 17, 2026
Share your news with us!

Income and Expense Summary as of September 30, 2026

	Current YTD **Actual** Jan. 1 thru September 30, 2026	Current YTD **Budget** Jan. 1 thru September 30, 2026	**Difference** over+/under- Budget
Regular Offering Income	$106,694.14	$105,147.51	$1,546.63
Trust Fund Income	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Other Income	$2,341.34	$2,137.46	$203.88
TOTAL INCOME	$109.035.48	$107,284.97	$1,750.51
TOTAL EXPENSES	$140,797.34	$136.131.81	-$4,665.53



Upcoming worship opportunities:

November 1: All Saints Day
November 4: Prep for Family Kitchen Meal. 1:30
November 5: Deliver and Serve Family Kitchen Meal. 10:30
November 8: Remember our Veterans
November 12: The Chosen at First Lutheran 6pm
November 19: The Chosen at Benscreek 6pm.
November 20**: Friday Helping Hands 9-11am**
November 26: Thanksgiving Day Service
November 29: Advent 1. Hanging of the greens.



The Church Council met on October 21, 22026. Of note, Barbara Pingatore, our late Learning Minister, has bequeathed monies to First Lutheran Church. By approval from Council, the monies will be used to start the "Barbara Pingatore Youth and Education Fund. The remaining monies will be added to First Lutheran's Bequest Fund. Counsel approved the hiring of Monica Nobrege as our church secretary, beginning Monday October 26. She will be in the office Mondays, Tuesday, Thursday and Fridays from 9AM -2PM. Please stop by to welcome her. Volunteers will man the office on Wednesdays from 9AM-2PM. Tuesday Noon Recitals in October have been very well attended. We have also been taking the music to area nursing homes following each recital. This month, visits were made to McCullough Place, Quality Life Services, Horizon Villa, and Graystone Court. These visits have been very well received by their residents. Looking ahead to Christmas, two 8 foot trees have been purchased and will be placed on either side of the Altar during Advent. There are many special activities planned for the upcoming weeks before Christmas. Please take time to participate as much as you can; you will be blessed! Information will be available in the Vine Street Journal and in Sunday bulletins. Next Meeting will be held on November 18th at 7pm.

November Readings and Psalms

November 1: All Saints Day

Revelation 7:9-17
The multitudes of heaven worship the Lamb
Psalm 34:1-10, 22
Fear the Lord, you saints of the Lord; for those who fear the Lord lack nothing.
1 John 3:1-3
We are God's children
Matthew 5:1-12
Blessed are the poor in spirit

November 8: 24th Sunday after Pentecost

Amos 5:18-24
Let justice roll down like waters
Psalm 70
You are my helper and my deliverer; O Lord, do not tarry.
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
The promise of the resurrection
Matthew 25:1-13
The story of the wise and foolish bridesmaids

November 15: 25th Sunday after Pentecost

Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18
The day of the Lord
Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12
So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.
1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
Be alert for the day of the Lord
Matthew 25:14-30
The story of the slaves entrusted with talents

November 22: Christ the King

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24
God will shepherd Israel
Psalm 95:1-7a
We are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand.
Ephesians 1:15-23
The reign of Christ
Matthew 25:31-46
The coming of the Son of Man; the separation of sheep and goats

November 29: Advent 1

Isaiah 64:1-9
Prayer that God would come with power and compassion
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Gifts of grace sustain those who wait for the end
Mark 13:24-37
The sudden coming of the Son of Man

FLOWERS for 2027

Altar and Organ flower listings will roll over to 2027. Please check your listings for accuracy. Charts are now on the table in the lounge along with the bulletins and ads. Check the charts and OK the listing if it is correct. Please leave us a note on the form provided for any changes. Also, let us know if you would like to take your flowers home or if you would like them to go to homebound members.

Thanks,
Vicki Price



Great volunteers make the Tuesday Noon Recitals a success. Our kitchen staff always make delicious meals, and there is plenty for all. The kitchen crew includes Calvin Anderson, Vic and Robin Kohler, Caryl Swanson, Greer Koeller, Jeanne Kuhs, Heidi Staib, Cindy Fabo, Shirley Walco, Bill and Polly Grubb, Donna Kovalcheck, Kathy Huwanek., Rick Blackford, and Fawn Slonka. Other volunteers with TNR include Bill Price, Vicki Price, George Fattman. Pastor Christy also deserves our thanks for closing each program and sending the audience well-blessed to lunch.

Kim Rauch



Christmas Flower Order and Charity Listings 2026

Poinsettias to decorate the chancel are $10 each.

Charity Listing is any amount.

Make Payment to First Lutheran Church, 415 Vine Street, Johnstown, Pa 15901. 814-536-7521.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Choose: _____ Poinsettia $10 each or _____ Christmas Charity

In Memory Of *or* In Honor of:

_____

_____

_____

Given By:_____

Amount Enclosed _____ Phone # _____

Deadline: December 2, 2026 Please Indicate if you want the poinsettias



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 acknowledgement 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.

Family Kitchen Meal.

We will gather on Wednesday, November 4th at 1:30pm to prepare a meal for the Family Kitchen. The menu that we have selected to prepare is: Meatloaf, Funeral Potatoes, Green Beans, Cole Slaw and Pistachio cake. On Thursday, November 5th we will gather at 9am to reheat the meal and deliver the meal to the Family Kitchen by 10:30am. Anyone interested in serving can come to the Family Kitchen by 10:30am. Look for sign-up sheets in the Lounge and the Social Hall.

Pet Food Donations

More than 75 cat and dog items were donated by you for our St. Francis Feast Day recognition. Thanks so much to all of you at First and at Benscreek. You have made many animals happy, and you have made many animal lovers happy. You live generously and this makes our Lord happy also.
Ann Furlong

Friday Helping Hands
Friday's Helping Hands had another great day cleaning and organizing the conference room. Special thanks to Cindy Fabo, Rose Harford, and Donna Kovalcheck for their hard work and efforts.
Our next session will be on November 20th at 9:00 AM, and we will be working in the Sanctuary. If you are able to help out, please feel free to stop by!
Thanks, Fawn

Thank You to Howard Bennett for taking on the job of updating the Hymn Boards weekly, and for gathering all the food for the West End Food Pantry

Thank You for Bill Price III for posting the secretary job on Indeed. We got many resumes.

CLOTH BOOKS by Carol Massingill. Looking for a baby/young child gift? For $15 each you can give a cloth book made by Carol. Proceeds will go to Carol for her needs at the Assisted Nursing Facility. Books are:

+Skipper's Snow Day
+You are my Sunshine Little Girl
(An Angel telling Nativity Story)
+Little Miss It's Time for Bed
+A Beautiful Day
+Santa's Friends
+Farm-Tastic Friends
+Whose Baby Am I
+Let's Take a Ride-2 copies
(All kinds of motor vehicles)
Call Kathy Kristofko:814-288-3105



Every 11:00AM Sunday worship service is now live on Facebook! If you can't attend in person, please join us on Facebook!

We will continue to post videos of weekly recorded 11:00AM Sunday worship on YouTube.com, First Lutheran Johnstown channel. We plan to have live worship also on YouTube in the future.

Many thanks to our video ministry team, *Bill Grubb, Bill Hargreaves, Bill Price, Bill Weible and Rob Abele* for shooting the video for YouTube & Facebook each week. Thanks also to *Bill Grubb* and *Barry Critchfield* for helping to run the internet cables that made these live broadcasts possible.

Sponsorships

Bulletins Sponsorship & Tribune Democrat Sponsorship is available.

Coffee Hour for anyone interested in hosting. Sign-ups are in the Lounge

Friday Helping Hands is November 20

Kids Closet

Look in the Bulletin and future Vine Street Journals for information regarding an ongoing project called "Kids Closet." It is to be a collection of school appropriate clothing for students in grades K through 12. As you clean out closets this fall keep in mind that we will be accepting donations for new or gently used kid's clothes. The immediate need is for boys' underwear and pants sizes 3t – 8 and girls' underwear and pants size 3t – 6.



Opportunities to Serve Annual Thanksgiving Dinner

We will once again be having our annual Thanksgiving Dinner on Tuesday, November 24th. This is my favorite outreach function that we do. Doors will open at 4:30pm and we will serve dinner at 5:00pm. There are no takeout dinners.

We offer a complete meal of turkey, filling, mashed potatoes, vegetable, cranberry sauce, rolls, and pumpkin pie.

We ask that everyone coming, no matter what the age, gets a ticket from our church office to attend. This will be sure to give a head count for seating and enough food. As always there is no cost for this. Tickets will be available Monday, November 9th.

Please help spread the word to all. This is wheelchair and walker friendly. Anyone that may be alone for one reason or another should come and join us.

Any questions, please text or leave a message with Howard at 814-421-5429 or email taketimeandhurry13@gmail.com





Worship and Music Notes:
October & November
Vicki Price

LOOKING AHEAD:

All Saints Day Sunday is October 31st, November 1st.

We will honor our **Veterans** on November 8th. Please let us know if you were not included on last year's list.

Healing Service will be November 14th and 15th. No Communion

Christ the King Sunday is November 22nd. This is the last Sunday of the church year.

Hanging of the Greens and setting up the **Christmas (Advent) Trees** is Sunday, November 22nd after service and a light lunch. We bought 2 new trees which are 8 feet tall. These trees will be easier to put up and decorate.

Advent starts on November 29th.

Advent 2 is December 6th, which will include **St Nicholas Day,** and lunch. Pastor Nathan Pile will be our minister that day.

The Longest Night Service will be held on Saturday, December 19th at 5pm **Christmas Eve services** will be at 2pm and 9:30pm again this year. Benscreek will offer their service at 6:30pm.

THANK YOU.....

September/October Altar Guild: Caryl Swanson, Greer Koeller, Vicki Price, Donna Caprous, Shirley Waclo, Kathy Stephenson, Patti Schrott, Karen Hargreaves, Fawn Slonka, Donna Kovalchek, and Annie Hayes

To the **September/October pianists**: Joel Hoshaw, George Fattman, Heidi Staib, Vicki Price, and Linda Prozialeck. Joel Hoshaw for accompanying on Sundays.

To the **Tower Bell ringers**: Heidi Staib, Pastor Christy, George Fattman, Anne Fattman, Vicki Price, and Kim Rauch

To **September/October Lectors, Worship Assistants, Communion Assistants and Cantors:** Dan Hill, Caryl Swanson, Jim Hargreaves, Shirley Waclo, Bill Hargreaves, Abbie Savering, Barry Critchfield, Jessica Boring, Tom Roberts, Linda Prozialeck, Heidi Staib, Josh Rinaman, Eli Kirk, Howard Bennett, Jody Kirk, Ann Furlong, Vicki Price, Joel Hoshaw, George Fattman, Rick Blackford, and Fawn Slonka.

New Schedules are out! If you do not know your assignments or have not received a copy, please contact Vicki Price. Copies are in the Lounge.

Volunteer Page - Month of November

SATURDAY ALTAR GUILD
7 Fawn Slonka, Donna Kovalchek
14 Annie Hayes
21 Fawn Slonka, Donna Kovalchek
28 Annie Hayes

COUNCIL GREETERS – Fawn Slonka

FLOWER DELIVERY– Dick Schrott

COMMUNION ASSISTANT
1 Dan Hill, Josie Hill
7* Fawn Slonka
8 Jody Kirk, Caryl Swanson
14* Annie Hayes
15 No Communion
21* Fawn Slonka
22 Tom Roberts, Shirley Waclo
28* Annie Hayes
29 Rick Blackford, Barry Critchfield

WORSHIP ASSISTANT
1 Callie Bennear
7* Fawn Slonka
8 Jody Kirk
14* Tom Roberts
15
21* Rick Blackford
22 Tom Roberts
28* Rick Blackford
29 Rick Blackford

LECTORS
1 Josie Hill
7* George Fattman
8 George Fattman
14* Joel Hoshaw
15
21* Heidi Staib
22 Tom Roberts
28* Vicki Price

ACOLYTES
1 Josie Hill, Callie Bennear**
8 Ushers
15 Ushers
22 Ushers
29 Ushers
**Crucifer

SATURDAY PIANISTS
7 George Fattman
14 Joel Hoshaw
21 Heidi Staib
28 Vicki Price

VIDEO
1 Rob Abele
8 Bill Weible
15 Bill Grubb
22 Rob Abele
29 Bill Price

SOUND
1 Rick Blackford
8 Calvin Anderson
15 Rob Abele
22 Bill Grubb
29 Chuck Staib

TOWER BELLS

Vicki Price	Sunday 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Christy Harford	Monday 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
George Fattman	Tuesday 3, 10, 17, 24
Anne Fattman	Wednesday 4, 11, 18, 25
Vicki Price	Thursday 5, 12, 19
Kim Rauch	Friday 6, 13, 20, 27
George Fattman	Saturday 7, 14, 21, 28

November 2026

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*
1 All Saints Day 9:45 – Sunday School 10:00 – Choir Practice **11:00-Word & Sacrament** Noon Hospitality	**2** 11:00 – Staff Meeting 1:00 – Prayer Meeting & Communion	**3** 6:30 - Bell Choir Pastor Christy away →	**4** 1:30 Meal prep for Family Kitchen Meal	**5** 9 Delivery Family Kitchen Meal 1:30 Serving	**6**	**7 Pentecost 24** **5:00-Word and Sacrament**
8 24th Sunday after Pentecost 9:45 – Sunday School. 10:00 – Choir Practice **11:00-Word & Sacrament** Noon Hospitality	**9** 11:00 – Staff Meeting 1:00 – Prayer Meeting & Communion	**10** 6:30 – Bible Study 6:30 – Bell Choir	**11**	**12** 6: The Chosen, First	**13**	**14 Pentecost 25** **5:00- Service of the Word** **Healing Service**
15 25th Sunday after Pentecost 9:45 – Sunday School 10:00 – Choir Practice **11:00-Service of the Word** **Healing Service (Youth)** Noon Hospitality	**16** 11:00 – Staff Meeting 1:00 – Prayer Meeting & Communion	**17** **VSJ Deadline** 6:30 – Bell Choir	**18** **7 – Council**	**19** 6: The Chosen, Benscreek	**20** 9-11 Friday Helping Hands	**21 Christ the King** **5:00- Word and Sacrament**
22 Christ the King 9:45 – Sunday School 10:00 – Choir Practice **11:00-Word & Sacrament** **12:00 Light Lunch** **12:30 Hanging of the Greens/Trees**	**23** 11:00 – Staff Meeting 1:00 – Prayer Meeting & Communion	**24** 5:00 – New Day Thanksgiving Dinner 6:30 – Bible Study 6:30 – Bell Choir	**25**	**26** 9:00am – Community Thanksgiving Service	**27**	**28 Advent 1** **5:00- Word and Sacrament**
29 1st Sunday of Advent 9:45 – Sunday School 10:00 – Choir Practice **11:00-Word & Sacrament** Noon Hospitality	**30** 11:00 – Staff Meeting 1:00 – Prayer Meeting Communion	**31** 6:30 – Bell Choir				