

Vine Street Journal

Johnstown, PA

First Lutheran Church

May 2025

A message from Vicar Christy...

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven."

Ecclesiastes 3:1

So, after some thought – the snowblower was finally put to rest (well for the summer that is). The lawnmower is now out, and we look forward to the growing of green grass, the beautiful flowers, and gardens (I am still hopeful).

It is the season of change – Winter to Spring. And for most of us, that is a welcome change. We hear in Ecclesiastes, "for everything there is a season." We have the planting season and await the harvest season. We have the joys, laughter, and sadness of this time of year. This is the month that we can celebrate Mother's Day, college graduations, high school graduations, that much anticipated last day of school, and then we have Memorial Day to wrap it all up.

And it also a month of transition – people leaving for summer vacations, kids home from school trying to keep busy, high school graduates preparing for their first year of college, and college graduates embarking on their "first" jobs after graduation. Oh, those are all big transitions for all of us.

And as a church, we have a lot to look forward to. Ascension Day (May 29th) – that time after Easter where Jesus takes his place with God, the day the disciples realize they are on their own. Oh, but they were not, and we are not. Jesus did not ascend to leave us, but so that he may be with us always. Yes, the disciples were in a way alone here on earth - but they had each other. That is important for us to remember

– we have each other. Jesus is present with us; he is not gone!

During this Easter season – remember that Jesus gave a new commandment that we love one another. Look around friends, spread that message of Jesus' love everywhere we go. let us live in that hope, healing, and joy that is the love of Christ. He is with us always.

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Matthew 18:20

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

Vicar Christy



Lord of Resurrection, as we bask in the legacy of Easter, we seek your blessings. May the power of Your Son's victory be a constant source of strength, joy, and peace in our lives. Let your blessings pour forth, guiding our steps and illuminating the path of discipleship in the radiant light of the empty tomb. May the blessings of Easter's legacy be evident in our lives, reflecting your grace and love. Amen

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace."

Numbers 6:24-26



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+ + +

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, May 20
Share your news with us!

~ PASTORAL ACTS ~

Vicar Christy Harford

~ CONTRIBUTIONS ~

CHURCH PRESERVATION FUND

In honor of John Kiser's 90th Birthday
gifted by Heidi Staib

In honor of John Kiser's 90th Birthday
gifted by Barbara Pingatore

In honor of John Kiser's 90th Birthday
gifted older sister Beatrice

In honor of John Kiser's 90th Birthday
gifted by Shirley Hilbrecht

In honor of John Kiser's 90th Birthday
gifted by Jane Hanechak

In honor of John Kiser's 90th Birthday
gifted by Ann Furlong

In honor of John Kiser's 90th Birthday
gifted by David and Rose Harford

In honor of John Kiser's 90th Birthday
gifted by Richard and Patricia Schrott

In honor of John Kiser's 90th Birthday
gifted by Loose Cash

In honor of John Kiser's 90th Birthday
gifted by Roberta and Rick Sefick

In honor of John Kiser's 90th Birthday
gifted by Janet Shumaker

In honor of John Kiser's 90th Birthday
gifted by Stephen Swetz and
Karen Woods

In honor of John Kiser's 90th Birthday
gifted by Sean Swetz and Brian Kemp

SPECIAL OFFERING

In honor of John Kiser's 90th Birthday
gifted by Harry L. Bennett

Easter Flowers gifted anonymously in
honor of John Kiser's 90th birthday

ORGAN RESTORATION

Harry and Karen Bennett
Shirley Hilbrecht

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.

+ Congratulations to Kayla (Uveges) and Andy Freehling on the birth of their daughter, Sadie Rennee on April 16th. Sadie is the granddaughter of Amy (Swanson) and Shawn Helsel, great granddaughter of the late Robert and Caryl Swanson. God's blessings on this family.

Income and Expense Summary as of March 31, 2025

	Current YTD Actual Jan. 1 thru Mar 31, 2025	Current YTD Budget Jan. 1 thru Mar 31, 2025	Difference over+/under- Budget
Regular Offering Income	\$42,590.56	\$43,722.52	-\$1,131.96
Trust Fund Income	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other Income	\$0.00	\$799.00	-\$799.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$42,590.56	\$44,521.52	-\$1,930.96
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$47,524.48	\$44,669.10	\$2,855.38

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



Cambria City Mission

New hours of operation:
Mondays 10 am-1pm
Wednesday 4 pm-6pm



Council met on April 9 at 7:00 pm to review reports and conduct new business.

Vicar Christy has completed all of her coursework and final paper. Evaluations from Pastor Hamer, the Internship committee, and others are being submitted to the bishop's office. She will then meet with the candidacy committee for approval for ordination, which should be this summer.

The Property committee gave an update on the sanctuary. Some sections of the repaired plaster are taking longer to dry than expected. The final painting will be done when that is dry. Once the painting is finished, the detailed artwork can be done.

Council approved a recommendation from the Worship and Music committee to move Sunday worship to the Social Hall during the months of July and August where it will be cooler.

The next regular council meeting will be held May 14, 2025 at 7:00 pm.



PENTECOST SUNDAY JUNE 8

BEAUTIFUL GERANIUMS

will decorate the sanctuary for our Pentecost celebration. You may support the decoration with as many geraniums as you wish. The cost is \$4.00 for 4

inch plant and \$6.50 for the 6 inch plant. After worship, you may take the flowers you have sponsored to plant at gravesides or in your garden.

Any remaining flowers will be planted in the church garden. Call the church (814-536-7521) to reserve your plants or sign up in the Lounge. Payment is requested upon sign-up. Envelopes will be available at the Lounge desk.

May Readings and Psalm

May 4 – Third Sunday of Easter

- Acts 9:1-6 [7-20]
Paul's conversion, baptism, and preaching
- Psalm 30
You have turned my wailing into dancing.
- Revelation 5:11-14
The song of the living creatures to the Lamb
- John 21:1-19
Jesus appears to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias

May 11 – Fourth Sunday of Easter

- Acts 9:36-43
Peter raises Tabitha/Dorcas from the dead
- Psalm 23
The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.
- Revelation 7:9-17
A white-robed multitude sings before the Lamb
- John 10:22-30
Jesus promises eternal life to his sheep

May 18 – Fifth Sunday of Easter

- Acts 11:1-18
Peter's vision: God give the Gentiles repentance that leads to life
- Psalm 148
The splendor of the Lord is over earth and heaven.
- Revelation 21:1-6
New heaven, new earth: springs of living water in the new Jerusalem
- John 13:31-35
Jesus gives a new commandment: Love one another as I have loved you

May 25 – Sixth Sunday of Easter

- Acts 16:9-15
Lydia and her household are baptized by Paul
- Psalm 67
Let the nations be glad and sing for joy.
- Revelation 21:10, 22—22:5
The Lamb is the light of the city of God
- John 14:23-29
The Father will send the Holy Spirit
- John 5:1-9 (alternate)
Jesus heals on the Sabbath

May 29 – Ascension of Our Lord

- Acts 1:1-11
Jesus sends the apostles
- Psalm 47
God has gone up with a shout.
- Psalm 93 (alternate)
Ever since the world began, your throne has been established.
- Ephesians 1:15-23
Eyes to see the risen and ascended Christ
- Luke 24:44-53
Christ present in all times and places

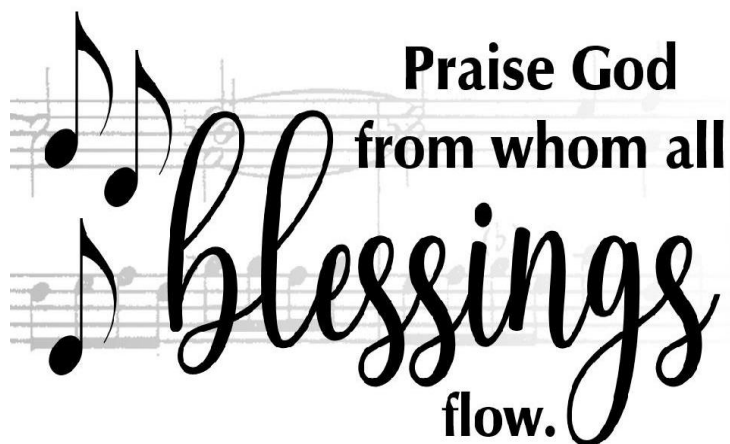


SPRING CONCERT

Inclined to Sing
The Children's Chorus of the
Johnstown Symphony Orchestra
SPRING CONCERT
Sunday, May 4, 2025 at 3:00 p.m.
First Lutheran Church

Thought for the month. . .

"Just as Christ was raised from the dead
through the glory of the Father, we too may
live a new life." Romans 6:4
Christ has risen! He has risen indeed!



Music Sunday

We celebrate and honor all our musicians on April 28, Music Sunday.

Once known as "Cantate," the fourth Sunday after Easter is the appropriate day to celebrate music in the church. We are grateful for all who sing, play an instrument, participate in Hand Bell Choir and the Adult Choir, play the tower bells, provide music for Saturday worship, offer outreach via the Tuesday Noon Recitals, and those who are involved in planning music in worship. First Lutheran truly has a talented and working force who contribute talents and gifts of music. We are richer for their generosity.

Upcoming worship opportunities:
TO ALL OUR MUSICIANS – THANK YOU!



WORSHIP

May 18 – 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

YOU'RE INVITED!

GRAND HALLE ANNUAL SPRING TEA

Basket Raffle

Soup
Sandwiches
Cookies



THE ROARING TWENTIES
MAY 10, 2025 | 4:00PM

LIVE MUSIC FROM
TOM ROBERTS!



\$30 per ticket or \$210 for a table of 8.
Tickets must be purchased in advance. Scan or visit GrandHalle.com for tickets.

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.





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.

Contributions continued from page 2. . .

CHURCH PRESERVATION FUND

Jennifer Bennear
Beverly and Donald Brocious
Barry A. Critchfield
Greer Koeller
Don Kubovcik
Sharon Orner
Barbara Penrod
Catherine and Frederick Rhode
Debbie and Lance Shomo
Nancy Turner

Tuesday Noon Recitals

2024-2025

Series Sponsors

Dr. Violette C. Eash
Kim Rauch
Thrivent

Program Sponsors

Rob Abele
Anonymous
Carol Allison
Harry and Karen Bennett
Heather and William Brice
Anne and George Fattman
Roger Felix
First Lutheran Bell Choir
Raymond A. Gaydos
Jeanne Gleason

Ms. Jane Hanechek
Jim and Kathy Howanek
Jim and Susie Hutchinson
Wally & Barbara Penrod
Dr. James and Christine Richey
Paul Savering
Patricia and Richard Schrott
Mina Mack Zlato

Contributors

Anonymous (2)
Chris, Jen and Callie Bennear
Marilyn Billow
Jeanne B. Burr
Rebecca Catelinet
Samuel and Kathy Coco
Amy Uveges Helsel
Ann Furlong
IMO Walmer T. Gay, Jr.
Elizabeth Good and Mark Weakland
Drs. William M. and Nancy Grove
Polly and Bill Grubb
Vicar Christy Harford
David and Rose Harford
Mary and Becky Heinlein
Shirley Hilbrecht
Patricia Hofscher
Pat Huntsinger
Rita King
Harriett Miller
Minahan Family Trust
Daniel Mollura
Maria Naylor
Mary Jo Pavlosky
Larry and Susan Pearce
Adele C. Picking and Howard Picking
Barbara Pingatore
Barry and Barb Poglein
Judy Roberts
Bridget Sarosi
Heidi Staib
Sharon Streletz
Caryl Swanson
Dr. Florence A. Warfel



A Prayer for Mothers



Heavenly Father, this prayer is spoken now in gratitude and praise for the gift of mothers – all mothers. Thank you for the role they play in all families. Thank you for their teachings, wisdom, patience, and understanding.

Thank you for the physical, emotional, and spiritual gifts they possess.

Help mothers all across the world to be a blessing to their children. Whether delivering affirmation or discipline, Help every word and action to be done in love. And I pray that children worldwide will take time to honor their mothers.

May these mothers also act as a blessing beyond their households, reaching into their extended families, communities, churches, and schools. May the impact of motherhood be revered throughout society and that these women are acknowledged for their everyday impact on the world. May you guide each of them into fulfilling their purpose here on earth. Amen.

Good Neighbor Dinner A TASTE OF Germany

Welcome to Germany!



Wednesday, May 22 - 5:00 pm
Doors Open at 4:30 pm

STUVER'S NURSERY COUPONS

Spring has arrived and so have the flower coupons for Stuver's Nursery. 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 are available following church Saturday and Sunday. You may also contact Donna Kovalchek, Fawn Slonka (Saturday sales) or Cindy Fabo (Sunday sales).

He Ascended, and We in Him

"Two men in white robes" acknowledge the great mystery that scripture and the creeds attest to: "He ascended into heaven." Jesus has been taken up from us, ascending into heaven, back to the right hand of the Father. Yet he is taken up *for* us, both as a pledge of our own future bodily resurrection following his, but also as a means of empowering our witness to him on earth amongst all sorrowing flesh.

Having descended from heaven to take up our flesh, fulfilling scripture and accomplishing our salvation, Jesus now ascends back from whence he came, bearing our humanity into the presence of God forever. Our human flesh, in all its frailty and redeemed glory, is now before God forever! So no longer are things in heaven and life on earth far apart, and no longer is the suffering and weakness of our own flesh far off from God's own life.

Thus the two men ask the gawking disciples, "Why do you stand looking up toward heaven?" Just as God has put God's great power to work in raising up Christ above all things, so in this same ascension God has given us a glimpse of the heavenly glory that we too one day shall share in, and that we share in already within the church, "which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all." Confident that Christ has brought our humanity on high, we are unleashed to be his people in this world.



ALTAR/ORGAN FLOWERS

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

Altar dates available:

June 29, July 13, 27, August 24

Second listings will be accepted for all other June, July and August dates.

Organ dates available:

May 4, 18, 25, June 22, July 20

August 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

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!



THANK YOU to the many who made Holy Week, the Three Days and this Easter morning meaningful with music, special music, preparing the altar, decorating, office work, cleaning, and extra service as ushers, greeters, communions assistants,

musicians, acolytes, lectors and readers. "Liturgy" means the work of the people, and it is good work we do together in the name of our risen Lord!

to everyone who supported our many Lenten outreach ministries. Our partners at the West End Food Pantry, ELCA World Hunger-Buck-a-Chick, and the United Methodist Free Store. Our partners in ministry are grateful for the donations we provide to them. Thank you for serving Christ by serving others.



A Prayer for Memorial Day

Dear God, We thank you for the freedom you have given to us, and for the price that was paid by Christ so that we could live free. We remember today. The cost of it all. The great sacrifice for freedom.

We thank you for the brave men and women who have fought, and continue to fight, so courageously for our nation. We ask for your covering and blessing over them and their families. We pray that you would be gracious and encircle them with your peace. We pray for your great favor and goodness to be evident in their lives.

Please be with all those who wear the uniform, who serve our communities and nation every single day. We ask that you provide your protection, that you would be their guiding force who leads the way, and their rear guard who keeps them safe from behind. We ask that you would draw them to yourself amidst the dangers they face in a dark world, for you are the Truth, you are the Way, you are the Light. Amen.

Volunteer Page - Month of May

ALTAR GUILD

Saturday

3 Annie Hayes and Carol Massingill
10 Fawn Slonka, Donna Kovalchek
17 Annie Hayes and Carol Massingill
24 Annie Hayes and Carol Massingill
31 Fawn Slonka and Donna Kovalchek

Sunday

6 Carol Allison, Vicki Price
13 Carol Allison, Vicki Price
20 Carol Allison, Vicki Price
27 Carol Allison, Vicki Price

COUNCIL GREETER – Jody Kirk

FLOWER DELIVERY– Dick Schrott

ACOLYTES

4 Ushers
11 Ushers
18 Ushers
25 Ushers

COMMUNION ASSISTANT

4 Josh Rinaman
11 Dan Hill
18 Jody Kirk
25 Barry Critchfield

LECTORS

3* Heidi Staib
4 Josh Rinaman
10* Fawn Slonka
11 Dan Hill
17* Joel Hoshaw
18 Jody Kirk
24* George Fattman
25 Ann Furlong
31* Vicki Price

***Saturdays**

SATURDAY PIANISTS

3 Heidi Staib
10 Harriett Miller
17 Joel Hoshaw
24 George Fattman
31 Vicki Price

SOUND

4 Rick Blackford
11 Calvin Anderson
18 Bill Grubb
25 Rob Abele

VIDEO

4 Rob Abele
11 Bill Grubb
18 Bill Price
25 Bill Hargreaves

TOWER BELLS

George Fattman	Saturday 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
Pam Rizzi	Sunday 4, 18
Vicki Price	Sunday 11, 25
Harriett Miller	Monday 5, 12, 19, 26
George Fattman	Tuesday 6, 13, 20, 27
Anne Fattman	Wednesday 7, 14, 21, 28
Vicki Price	Thursday 8, 15, 22, 29
Kim Rauch	Friday 9, 16, 23, 30

