

First Lutheran Church
92 W. Walnut Street
Washington, PA 15301



Ixoye
ICH-THUS
Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior

Pastoral Perspectives April 2019

Grace and peace to you from God the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit amen.

Soon our Lenten journey will come to an end and we will once again rejoice as we greet the Easter morn! This year our church will follow the entire traditional services as laid out in the *LBW Manual on the Liturgy*. We began our Lenten journey on March 6th, on **Ash Wednesday** we had the imposition of ashes upon our heads; we are now approaching the high feast days of the church on April 14th with the **Palm and Passion Sunday**. Here our confirmation students will partake of their first Holy Communion and then four days later we will enter Holy Week.

Moving toward the traditional services of the Lutheran Church we will have the **Maundy Thursday Service**; with the intimacy of foot washing and the Lord's Supper and stripping of the altar to the 22nd Psalm. This is a powerful service to remind us of the suffering of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as we leave in silence.

The **Good Friday Services** are at 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.; we enter in silence to the shocking darkness and starkness of the altar space with black being the colour of the day; somberly the cross is brought forward for you and I to have the opportunity to nail our sins against Jesus upon a cross in the silence of the sanctuary (the pounding of the nails is deafening)! We may remain in the church as long as we feel in order to meditate upon the Word of God. At the end of the service a single voice high in the balcony will evoke powerful images with the hymn, "Were You There?" (ELW # 353).

Saturday evening is the **Easter Vigil Service**; gathering in silence at 7:00 p.m. we will begin with a bonfire outside our church and with candles we will enter the church in darkness and move into the light of Christ! This service is new to F.L.C. and is the last service to complete Holy Week as we move into **Easter** on Sunday morning at 11:00 a.m. with Holy Communion!

Please join us, and journey with us, through this amazing and powerful time of the holy days of the Lutheran church in Christ.

Rev. Robert B. Grewe

Rev. Dr. Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Cheap Grace vs. Costly Grace

“Cheap grace means the grace sold on the market like cheap jack's wares. The sacraments, the forgiveness of sin, and the consolation of religion are thrown away at cut prices.

Grace is represented as the church's inexhaustible treasury, from which she showers blessings with generous hands, without asking questions or fixing limits.

Grace without price; grace without cost!

The essence of grace, we suppose, is that the account has been paid, everything can be had for nothing.

Since the cost was infinite, the possibilities of using and spending it are infinite.

What would grace be if it were not cheap?

Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance or forgiveness without church discipline, Communion without confession, absolution without personal confession.

Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.

Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field for the sake of it man will go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price to buy which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble; **it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows Him.**

Costly grace is the Gospel which must be sought again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which the man must knock.

Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ.

It is costly because it costs man his life, and it is grace because it condemns sin and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of His Son:

“Yea were bought at a price,” and what cost God much cannot be cheap for us.

Above all, it is grace because God did not reckon His Son too dear a price to pay for our life, but delivered Him up for us.

Costly grace is the incarnation of God”

Warning from FLC!

It has been brought to our attention through another Lutheran Church in the USA that emails had been received through their church membership and also through their pastor that there was a request for money.

The email read both from the church and from the pastor that they were requesting money in the form of gift cards and other ways that cannot be traced back to the individual making the request!

This is called “**phishing**” and if the situation were to happen where you would receive an email from First Lutheran Church or from our Pastor requesting money you must know that **this is a scam! DO NOT SEND ANY FUNDS!**

You may have seen similar scams on the news with someone claiming to be from the IRS threatening victims with jail time if they do not send money in the form of gift cards to a certain number. The IRS never directly contacts people by phone but through the postal service. **If in doubt call the authorities ASAP!**

Another “**phishing**” scam that has even happened to members of our own congregation is a call from a so called “*grandchild*” that is in trouble with the law and is requesting financial assistance in custody! These scammers can be very convincing and the information that they have on your family is shockingly accurate and it has tricked many people over the phone for thousands of dollars!

Our Washington County Sheriff's Department has given us several informative magazines on how to be better prepared and safe in our homes and community. They are in the Narthex are free of charge.

Ephesians 5:6

Lenten and Holy Week Services for 2019 at FLC

March 6th at 7 pm Ash Wednesday with Holy Communion

March 13th 11:55 am Suffrages with luncheon after and evening service at 7pm

March 20th 11:55 am Suffrages with luncheon after and evening service at 7 pm

Mar. 27th 11:55 am Suffrages with luncheon after and evening service at 7 pm

April 3rd 11:55 am Suffrages with luncheon after and evening service at 7 pm

April 10th 11:55 am Suffrages with luncheon after and evening service at 7 pm

April 14th Palm and Passion Sunday Service with procession and Holy Communion and graduation of the Confirmation Class with tea to follow the service

April 18th Maundy Thursday service at 7 pm with foot washing and Holy Communion

April 19th Good Friday service at 1 pm and at 7 pm

April 20th The Easter Vigil service at 7pm with bonfire and Holy Communion

April 21st **Easter Sunday Service at 10 am** with Holy Communion

A brief note about vigilance as we observe the Lenten Season.

It is rather redundant to remind everyone that our world has greatly changed its relationship to our church in the last five, or so years. The Christian faith has lost much of the respect that it once garnered since most of us were children. That respect for God afforded us a certain insulation from the material world while we worshiped. But the profane world no longer hesitates to violate that invisible boundary.

The Lord's house is open to all that seek Him, and we may not deny that. As we approach the time of the Passion it is important to remember that it can be a time of great emotion. Some who have lost the path or those that have never sought it may be moved in unpredictable ways during this time. We need to pray for more of these people to find Christ and accept him into their hearts. We also need to be aware that there are those who walk in the guise of the seeker, looking for kindness and charity. They see this as weakness and opportunity. Like the Devil, they are crafty and persistent.

So, please take great care during this Holy Season. Be vigilant in your personal safety, trust & generosity and in our House of Worship. In closing, I would like to remind you of 2 phrases that you have heard before.

“Stranger-Danger” and “Trust but, verify.”

Your Brother in Christ

Mark

While listening to my daily devotional broadcast, the guest speaker was introduced as possessing a “contagious passion” for studying scripture. This motivated me to find notes taken from a message delivered in a similar broadcast by Chuck Swindoll. May the Holy Spirit ignite this “contagious passion” in our life.

Daily Reminder

This is my bible.

I am who it says I am.

I can do what it says I can do. I am going where it says I will go (Heaven).

God's word is milk for my soul.

God's word is seed for my faith.

God's word is light for my path.

God's word is power for my victory.

God's word is freedom for my life.

When I read God's word it brings me joy.

When I study God's word it keeps me from shame.

When I memorize God's word it purifies my soul.

When I quote God's word it defeats my enemies.

When I meditate on God's word it brings me success.

When I abide in God's word it brings me confidence.

I am a follower of Jesus Christ.

AMEN

(May it be so)

Think “others first.”

Isn't that what Jesus did on the cross? John 15:13 says, "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends." Our biggest accomplishments in the Kingdom are our daily, faithful displays of Jesus to others. The easiest way for people to see Him is through our small, seemingly insignificant acts of His love for others instead of ourselves.

As Pastor Grewe has told us, Martin Luther says we are to be like "little Christ in everything we do."

My parents' testimony is one of putting God first in all things. We own nothing – God owns it all. He gives us gifts and talents; all we do is administer these things.

We are pardoned people, purchased and redeemed. He is returning to claim his own, and that is the propounded motivation as to how we should live.

"For by the grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." Ephesians 2:8-9

Dennis Schmidt-

Do you have a favorite hymn?

At the Wednesday evening service, two weeks ago, the choir sang "In the Garden". I sat listening, singing along and had tears in my eyes. Does a hymn ever do that to you? Many hymns do that to me but this one was special. "In the Garden" was my mother's favorite. The reason is that her dad sang it to her and her siblings and my mother sang it to my brothers and I when I was young. In turn, I rocked both my children to sleep at night singing it to them. My son played this song at my mother's funeral and I know she was smiling. For the longest time I could not listen to certain hymns because I was sad and missing my mother. But now when I hear her favorite hymns, I sometimes hear her singing and smile knowing an angel is singing to me. So the next time you hear your favorite hymn, enjoy it and sing your heart away.

Jill Sabol

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

BALANCE SHEET

As Of February 28, 2019

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

9000—Washington Financial Bank	14,406.02
9200—Northwest Mutual CD	10,000.00
9300—Washington Fin Money Market	
9301—Organ Fund	24,625.00
9302—Roof Fund	9,724.75
9303—Restoration Fund	5,635.18
9304—Maintenance Fund	1,497.88
9300—Washington Fin Money Market—Other	69,175.49
Total 9300—Washington Fin Money Market	110,658.30
Total Checking/Savings	135,064.32
Total Current Assets	135,064.32
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>136,064.32</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	0.00

Shannon Family

The Shannon family will be moving to Syracuse, New York. Jerry will be working as director of Elmcrest School. www.elmcrest.org

Elmcrest is a non-profit organization for children and families. It provides support and community based programs for children and families, and youth who have experienced trauma. They are in the process of building an apartment building for homeless and abused women and children.

The organization has been in existence for over 100 years. It provides many services for children and families.

The school provides a wide range of educational services to meet the special needs of children with behavioral issues.

Since they have started their journey of service, God has provided for them. On the Elmcrest campus, there is a house that is available for the family. They will be moving to Syracuse in May

NOTE: The children saw snow for the first time two years ago when they were visiting their grandparents in Hollidaysburg and were fascinated. Syracuse, NY will be an experience for all of the family with the abundance of snow they receive each year.

Part of their hearts will always be with Embracing Hope and ask everyone to continue their giving to the families in need. Our church is continuing our commitment to Embracing Hope Ethiopia. Any money put in the Love Offering envelope will go toward that commitment. If you wish for it to be recorded, write your envelope number on the envelope. Thank you for opening your hearts to this mission.

1st Lutheran Thoughts & Tidbits April 2019

A Text Message from God

There is more than 20 billion texts sent every day. First came smoke signals, then the Pony Express, then the telegraph, then the telephone, then email----and now texting seems to have become the most common way of communicating in the twenty-first century.

What does God think about social media?

Would Jesus have used texting as a way to communicate with His disciples if it had been available? Those are speculative questions, of course. But here's one that might hit more where we live today: If God decided to text you about the future---about the prophetic events yet to unfold on earth, including Christ's return---what would He say? Would God send a text message?

It's not as outlandish as you might think. For instance, God inspired over forty people to write His words to mankind in the book we call the Bible. Narrowing the focus a bit (and this even sounds like someone texting!), the "finger of God" wrote the Ten Commandments for Israel on tablets of stone on Mount Sinai (Exodus 31:18; Deuteronomy 9:10). But the most text-like message in the Bible----to one individual, short and to the point----is found in Daniel 5 (and it, too, involved "the fingers of a man's hand").

The story takes place in Babylon when Belshazzar, the successor-king to the famous Nebuchadnezzar, is hosting a sumptuous feast for a thousand of his nobles. In acts of disregard and profanity, the sacred vessels from the temple in Jerusalem were being degraded and debauched. It was a setting teeming with the possibility of God's judgment----and said judgment came.

To the shock of Belshazzar and his guests, a human hand appeared in the air and began writing words in Aramaic on the wall of the banquet hall: **MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN** (Daniel 5:25). Belshazzar "turned pale with fright. His knees knocked together in fear and his legs gave way beneath him" (verse 6, NLT). It was a text message from God to Belshazzar----the first one in history! Belshazzar could read the Aramaic words---but he had no idea what the words meant. What was the message being sent to him by God? The queen, remembering the success Daniel had in interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dreams, encouraged the king to call for this wise Hebrew advisor, which he did.

Daniel's interpretation of God's text was fearful: God had weighed (evaluated) Belshazzar's kingdom and found it wanting; the kingdom would be divided between the Medes and Persians (verses 26 – 28). And so it happened. That very night, the Medes invaded Babylon, killed Belshazzar, and took over the kingdom. Whew! A four-word text message with life – and kingdom-altering consequences.

But that is the nature of God's prophetic words to the world ----we ignore them at our peril. We need to read our Bible, to make us better prepared for what lies ahead: specifically, the glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The sender is God; the text messages are found in His Word; and we are the recipients. Let us prepare for the future by reading and heeding His prophetic Word.

God bless.

WNALC—April 2019

The WNALC thanks everyone who brought items for the Christian Love Academy. Kris Briggs will see they are delivered.

The Confirmand Tea will be held Palm Sunday after church service in the social room.

The women's Mission District meeting will be held April 6th in Export, PA. Anyone wishing to attend, see Emogene Salvucci. Lunch is \$6.00 and we leave for home after lunch. All women are welcome.

The Circle Meeting will be held April 25th upstairs in the lounge. Leader will be Sonie Rea, hostesses Kris Briggs and Joanne Marker.

Congregational meeting will be held following service April 28th.

The Mother-Daughter Banquet will be held May 13th at 6:30 in the social room. The program will be presented by Cindy Speck, a ventriloquist who uses puppets to entertain.

Remember all women are daughters. Bring a friend or relative to share a great evening.

Tickets will be available by the first of April. See Linda Coleman, Carolyn Wright, Emogene Salvucci, or Sonie Rea.

We hope to see everyone. Happy Easter.

Church Council will meet on Wednesday, April 10 at after Service.

Youth Group will meet on Friday, April 26 from 7PM - 9PM.

Adult Catechism meets on Tuesday, at 11:00 AM and 7:00 PM; you may choose which time is best for you.

Adult Choir practice is on Sunday's at 9:00 am. Everyone is welcome to join the choir!

Bell Choir practice is on Thursday's at 7:00 PM. Everyone is welcome.



Felix Mendelssohn

Pianist, Composer,, Conductor (1809-1847)

German Romantic composer, pianist and conductor Felix Mendelssohn wrote Overture to a Midsummer Night's Dream and founded the Leipzig Conservatory of Music.

Pianist, composer and conductor Felix Mendelssohn was born Jakob Ludwig Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy in Hamburg, Germany, on February 3, 1809. His parents were Jewish, but converted to Christianity before he, his brother and two sisters were born. When Mendelssohn was 2 years old, he moved to Berlin with his parents and siblings. In Berlin, the young Mendelssohn began taking piano lessons with Ludwig Berger. Mendelssohn also studied composition under composer K.F. Zelter as a child. In 1816, he broadened his lessons, studying under pianist Marie Bigot during an extended stay in Paris, France.

Mendelssohn was quick to establish himself as a musical prodigy. During his childhood, he composed a handful of operas and 11 symphonies. At just 9 years old, he made his public debut in Berlin.

In 1819, Felix Mendelssohn joined the Singakademie music academy and began composing non-stop. In 1820 alone, he wrote a violin sonata, two piano sonatas, multiple songs, a cantata, a brief opera and a male quartet. In 1826, Mendelssohn produced one of his best known works, *Overture to a Midsummer Night's Dream*. He presented his opera *The Marriage of the Camacho*, the following year in Berlin. It was the only opera of his performed in public during his life.

Mendelssohn suffered from bad health in the final years of his life, probably aggravated by nervous problems and overwork, and he was greatly distressed by the death of his sister Fanny in May 1847. Felix Mendelssohn died later that same year after a series of strokes, in [Leipzig](#). He is buried in the *Dreifaltigkeitsfriedhof* (Trinity Cemetery) I in [Berlin](#)-Kreuzberg.

April Lay Readers

7th Kimberly Grewe
14th Dennis Schmidt
21th Lisa Hagar
28th Lisa Maust

April Altar Flowers

7th
14th Palm Sunday
21st EASTER
28th Rich & Jill Sabol

April Acolytes

7th Alexander Chadwick, Andrew Serbak, Emily Buel
14th Brice Berry and Nathaniel Black
18th Brice Berry and Nathaniel Black
19th Good Friday—Confirmation Students can attend either or both services.

Day Service—Maria Sobocinski, Andrew Serbak

Evening Service— Lillah Clark, Caroline Quedenfeld,
Alexander Chadwick

21st Nathaniel and Wesley Black
28th Collin and Lyndsay Berry

April Ushers

7th N. Bassi; R. Phillips; J. Sakerka; D. Wheeler
14th K. Carl; C. Group; C.R. Group; G. Salvucci
21st A. J. Chadwick; M. Mazzotti; A. Serbak; J. Sarver
28th K. Brehens; D. Looman; E. Oliver; H. Snyder

April Altar Team

Lisa Hagar and Joanne Marker

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

1	Lindsay Mankey	17	Deny Lacko
4	Ryan Bassi	18	Sally Lacko
7	Sharon Battistone	23	Kameryn Johnson
8	Joyce Streator	24	Cara Group
	Tillie Shawin		
9	Chester Krcil	25	Rollin Swank
10	Dorothy Dillemoth		Douglas Mazzotti
13	Carol Snyder	28	Keith Briggs
15	Jonathan Luketich	29	Donald Hazlett
			Richard Sabol