

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



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

## **Pastoral Perspectives for February 2025**

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

Newsletter reports are always written ahead of time and as I put pen to paper it is Martin Luther King Jr. day. (He was Michael King Jr until his father toured the Reformation in Germany was so moved by the original Protestant Reformer Martin Luther that upon his return to the USA he changed their names to Martin Luther) on the day we honor the Pastor, Political philosopher and civil rights activist.

Growing up in Canada we didn't experience segregation and racism like America experienced during the 1960s. Don't get me wrong in many ways Canada looks polite on the service but had always been deeply racist unless you were a W.A.S.P, as they said (WHITE ANGLO SAXON PROTESTANT) (British).

In 1984 the IRISH BAND U2 composed the song *Pride In the Name of Love* and I was able to see them in concert in St. Paul Minnesota which was quite an experience as my first mega concert.

The song was written about MLK Jr. including the day he was assassinated early evening April 4<sup>th</sup> but the lyrics could easily fit another that was murdered upon a cross when we look at the opening lyrics are "*One man come in the name of love, one man come and go, One man comes he to justify, One man to overthrow.*"

Our Lord and Saviour did all that so much more! February is known for St. Valentines Day which the secular world now calls *Valentines Day*. February 14<sup>th</sup>, 269 AD was the day that Valentine was martyred for his Christian faith. Sadly, trying to find any factual information on Valentinus has been glossed over and rewritten where fact and fiction meet.

What I was told is that Valentine was imprisoned for his Christian belief and would not convert to the pagan roman gods and therefore sealed his fate but while he was awaiting his execution he wrote letters to other believers that were filled with **hope and love in Christ Jesus**; that is why notes and cards in Christian love are exchanged on Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>, however, like Christmas, it has been commercialized nowadays.

Martin Luther always called St. John 3:16 "*The Gospel in a nutshell*" which he believed was a simple and easy way to introduce people into the faith. One verse that wraps up how God feels about the world and about you and I!

***"For God so loved the world, that he gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."***

This is the best known bible verse throughout the world; this little verse says everything about God's sacrificial (agape) love for us and for the world, and that belief in Jesus as our Lord and as our Saviour leads not to death but to eternal life in Him!

Returning to the U2 song lyrics "*Free at last they took your life. They could not take your pride. In the name of love.*"

MLK Jr. was a devout Baptist minister and totally understood the Gospel in nutshell of John 3:16. He understood that salvation could not be found anywhere else but only in Jesus Christ Son of God and Son of Man.

At First Lutheran after the Christmas season we once again will end our services with the sending song for the congregation, "*Be the Love of Christ*". It is a wonderful reminder as we make our way out of God's holy house we are called to be (as Luther said) '*little Christs*' in the world through our thoughts, words and deeds and *imitate* Christ in our lives. As we are called to "*go now in peace, in hope, grace and truth and walk in the light, to go now in faith, in joy into the world and be the love of Christ*"

May we always be a beacon of God's love both inside and outside the church in Jesus' holy name and as the last word of the sending hymn '*amen*' which means "*so be it*".

Your servant in Christ

Rev. Robert B. Grewe

## Important Dates at First Lutheran

**Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>** Transfiguration Sunday with Holy Communion and the burying of the Alleluia Banner.

**March 5<sup>th</sup> Ash Wednesday** with the imposition of ashes and the Lord's Supper at 7 pm.

**March 9<sup>th</sup>** Daylight Savings Time

**March 12<sup>th</sup>** Midweek Lenten Holden Evening Prayer service at 7 pm and Council meeting to follow

**March 19<sup>th</sup>** Midweek Lenten Holden Evening Prayer service at 7 pm

**March 26<sup>th</sup>** Midweek Lenten Holden Evening Prayer service at 7 pm

**April 2<sup>nd</sup>** Midweek Lenten Holden Evening Prayer service at 7 pm

**April 9<sup>th</sup>** Midweek Lenten Holden Evening Prayer service at 7pm

**April 13<sup>th</sup> Palm/Passion Sunday** with the Lord's Supper

**April 17<sup>th</sup> Maundy Thursday** service at 7 pm with the Lord's Supper

**April 18<sup>th</sup> Good Friday** service at 3 pm

**April 20<sup>th</sup> Easter Sunday**



Dear First Lutheran Church Family,

It's hard to believe that it is already February. The good news is that the paperwork for our loan has finally been completed, and work will start on our roof as soon as weather permits.

The bad news is, once the work is started we will have the additional expense of the loan payment every month. I know this is daunting, but we have made it through tough times before. In 2020 we had a \$60,000 loan to fix the Sunday school wing roof, and we paid off the loan in half the time. During this time, we also had to replace the boilers on our furnace and replace both of the air conditioner units in the sanctuary. All of this has happened since 2020 and with the support of you, the congregation, we did it all without any hiccups!! So as scary as this seems, I know we can do it with your support. Your monthly donations are needed more than ever during this time. If you have any questions, feel free to ask someone on council or attend one of our council meetings.

The Ugly news is that the Sunday Offering deposit for the Sunday that I counted in January was \$1,993.00. The weather was not bad this day and we had minimal attendance that was mostly made up of those that very rarely miss a Sunday. I am not saying that those who attended should have given more, because I know they give what they can regularly, but attendance was very low. I hope that I will see more of you soon in church and that you understand how important your regular offering is, no matter what the amount.

The Fun news: We will be doing a new fundraiser this year – a 5k! Look for more information to come. AND... we will be having a Penguins Quilt raffle shortly that will include a surprise gift!!

With the start of the new year, the pointing repairs and new roof, we will have other projects to do. Once the roof is complete, we can look at some plaster repair and painting, along with the usual maintenance needed for our church. Please consider donating some of your time and talents to help.

Have you seen the Light? Has anyone noticed anything different with our outside sign? A big thank you to Karl Group for replacing old parts and putting in new lights on one side of the sign. The difference is incredible!

Shortly we will have our mid-week Lenten services. I hope to see you there. Please look for information on the times and dates of our Lenten services.

Blessings, Jennifer Black,

FLC Council President

## **TREASURER'S REPORT FEBRUARY 2025**

Greetings to the Congregation,

Quite honestly, not a lot to report. The website should be completed by January 20th, once completed, we can begin to determine the many ways it can benefit us moving forward.

Our loan process has been now completed, now we wait for better weather to begin the two initial construction projects, a new roof and pointing the top half of the main building.

There are many details that continue to be worked on, for example building permits needed to do the construction and research into companies to perform future projects. We look forward to having more information in March's Report.

May All Be Well,

Ron

## **SARRIS EASTER CANDY FUNDRAISER**

With Easter around the corner, please watch for the Sarris Easter Candy Order Forms. You can order all of your Easter treats and support the Church Restoration Fund! All orders must be placed by Sunday, March 2nd. The candy delivery will be Sunday, April 6th. If you have any questions, please contact Caitlyn or Vickie Group – 724-44-0565.

All of your support is GREATLY appreciated!

Many thanks,  
Caitlyn and Vickie Group

## **Disaster Response: Fires in California**

The best way to help those affected by the fires in California is to send monetary donations and gift cards.

Send Gift cards (Walmart, Lowes, Home Depot, Tractor Supply) to:

NALC Disaster Response Warehouse  
16500 Noble Ave.,  
Caldwell, OH 43724

### Monetary Donations:

Write checks to: North American Lutheran Church  
Memo: Disaster Response

North American Lutheran Church  
2113 Harwood Road, Suite 309, PMB 409  
Bedford, TX 76021-4703

Or online <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZHRP/home> and look for the Disaster Response option.  
You can also go to [www.thenalc.org](http://www.thenalc.org), then select "giving."  
From there, select Disaster Response.



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### 1st Annual Corny 5k & 1 mile Run/Walk

We are excited to announce a new fundraiser for our church restoration fund. We will be holding our 1st Annual Corny 5k & 1 mile Run/Walk on Saturday, August 16, 2025 at The Claysville National Pike Trail! We are calling it the Corny 5k & 1 mile Run/Walk because it will be during the corn harvest season and this event will be a family friendly activity for people of all ages and abilities!

How you can help....

1. Sign up to participate in the 5k or 1 mile run/walk (sign-up coming soon!)
2. Ask your family and friends to participate in the 5k or 1 mile run/walk (sign up flyer coming soon!)
3. Be a sponsor (form provided)
4. Ask businesses you frequent to be a sponsor (form provided)
5. Be a volunteer! If you can't or don't want to run or walk we will need volunteers on race day
6. Follow/Share/Like the posts about the race on social media

We hope you will join us in making this event a success and a great fundraiser for our church!

If you have any questions or suggestions please see a member of our committee.

Members are: Caitlyn Group, Cara Group, Vickie Group, Judy Sarver, and Joe Sarver



**February Lay Readers**

2 Kimberly Grewe  
9 Lisa Maust  
16 Dennis Schmidt  
23

**February Altar Flowers**

2 Bob & Anneliese Christian  
9 Sherman Marker  
16 Cristina Serbak  
23

**February Acolytes**

2  
9  
16  
23

**February Ushers**

2 E. Goga; R. Johnson; J. Ulanich  
9 R. Phillips; J. Sakerka; D. Wheeler  
16 K. Carl; C. Group; C.R. Group; D. Lacko  
23 J. Sarver; Tony Stefanik

**February Counters—Alternate: Heather Quedenfeld**

2 J. Black and Linda Coleman  
9 R. Williams and L. Sten  
16 K. Luketich and D. Schmidt  
23 C. Group and V. Group

**February Altar Team**

Sonie Rea

## **FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS**

1 Robert Gosnell

4 Alissa Hixson

5 Patricia Platts

6 Dr. Angelica Houston

10 Brice Berry

17 Alan Sten

Debbie Hoffer

20 Billie Sue Serbak

Sharon Maust

21 Michelle Williams

24 Ann Christian

25 Sandra Rea

28 Donald McWreath IV