

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



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

## **Pastoral Perspectives for February 2026**

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

I'm writing this perspective in January due to time constraints and still feeling the joy of celebrating another Christmas at First Lutheran; and yet it's hard to believe we will soon gather for Ash Wednesday and begin our Lenten journey.

If you followed our midweek Advent services you would have heard how the time of Advent is a time of waiting and preparing for the coming of our Lord Jesus, as a community in Christ. Lent on the other hand is a time of self-reflection as we examine our own relationship with Jesus.

The journeys of walking forty days in Advent and Lent are similar with fasting, prayer and examination. Remember, only the third Sunday in Advent is the joyful Gaudete Sunday usually represented by the rose-colored candle while the other three are the same purple colour of Lenten season (although Lutherans in different parts of Europe use red and white candles to use for Advent). The 12 days of Christmas were the time of feasting and joy (*Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> to Jan. 25<sup>th</sup>*)!

Both seasons are important because they require us to focus on our relationship with Christ as community (Advent) or as individuals (Lent). We should ask ourselves: Where is Jesus in our lives? Are we praying daily with thanksgiving when we wake until we go to sleep? Are we thanking God for each meal we eat with prayer? Are we taking time out each day to open our Bible and read and reflect on a passage? Are we worshiping with the community at First Lutheran? Or are we treating Jesus like a band aid only to be taken out when an injury happens to us, in body, mind or spirit?

The Lenten journey begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm with the imposition of ashes from last years celebratory palm branches burnt and formed upon our heads in the sign of the cross invites us to journey in Word and Sacrament for the next forty days. Jesus invites us all to come and walk with Him. **I look forward to seeing you there.**

Rev. Robert B. Grewe

## Services during Lent in 2027 and Holy Week

**February 18<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm Ash Wednesday** service the date of Martin Luther's death in 1546

February 25<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm Midweek Lenten service #1

March 4<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm Midweek Lenten service #2

March 11<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm Midweek Lenten service #3 with Council Meeting to follow.

March 18<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm Midweek Lenten service #4

March 25<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm Midweek Lenten service #5

**March 29<sup>th</sup> at 11 am Palm/Passion Sunday service**

**April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7 pm Maundy Thursday service**

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

**April 5<sup>th</sup> at 10 am Easter Sunday service**

## IF MY BODY WERE A CAR...

If my body were a car, this is the time I would be thinking about trading it in for a newer model. I've got bumps and dents and scratches in my finish, and my paint job is getting a little dull. But that's not the worst of it. My headlights are out of focus, and it's especially hard to see things up close.

My traction is not as graceful as it once was. I slip and slide and skid and bump into things even in the best of weather.

My whitewalls are stained with varicose veins. It takes me hours to reach my maximum speed. My fuel rate burns inefficiently.

**But here's the worst of it --**



Almost every time I sneeze, cough or laugh, **either my radiator leaks or my exhaust backfires.**

## Presentation



Dear First Lutheran Church Family,

*“Stewardship is not only a matter of faithful giving but of faithful living. In response to the Gospel, we submit our lives to the rule of God, to the lordship of Christ, and to the direction of the Holy Spirit, so that we may be the people God wants us to be and have the lives God wants us to have.”* **–Mark Allan Powell**, author of *Giving to God*.

*Yikes! It's February, and the bathroom scale shows that, once again, I've gained a few pounds in the five-week blitz-feast of Thanksgiving-Christmas-New Year . Clearly, I need to steward my health better in 2026.*

*Though it's not the most common use of the word, steward is also a verb, an action word. We steward all that God has entrusted to us, making choices that, as Mark Allan Powell says, help us “be the people God wants us to be and have the lives God wants us to have.”*

*We steward our lives through our decisions and choices – the food we eat, the people we call friends, how we spend our money, the entertainment we select, the hobbies we enjoy, the many ways we spend our time, and so on.*

*To steward faithfully, we have to live in prayerful awareness and make conscious, thoughtful decisions that will advance us in Godly directions.*

*As 2026 begins, prayerfully consider the most important areas of your life, such as your physical, mental and spiritual health, as well as your relationships and time, and ask God to help you steward them in ways that will help you be the person God wants you to be and have the life God wants you to have.*

*As for me, it will not only help me lose those extra holiday pounds but also give me my best year ever. Copyright © 2020, Rev. Robert Blezard. Reprinted by permission. Pastor Blezard*

*As you think about how you can be better at stewardship in 2026, think about how you can help First Lutheran Church. Do your donations matter? Yes, they help us keep up with the monthly expenses and maintenance that we need. Does your volunteering to help on committees make a difference? YES! It makes a huge difference. Would your joining the Adult Choir make a difference? Yes, it will only make our beautiful service even better. There are so many things that you can do to help in our church. And what makes us a better church family? YOU, and the help you give and the fellowship it will bring. Ask Council or Pastor Grewe what you can do to help.*

Blessings,

Jennifer Black, FLC Council President



## TREASURER'S REPORT—JANUARY 2026

Greetings to the Congregation,

Welcome to a new year 2026. We celebrate our 100 year anniversary this year, which many of you of course already know. However, how many of your friends, neighbors, extended family know? I can't think of a better opportunity to introduce First Lutheran to so many, including strangers. Simply strike up a conversation, maybe ask if their church is 100? Oh! You don't have a church, well you might want to check mine out, there are a lot of interesting artifacts and we have a crypt.

Our council is in the process of working on our next project, details to follow in March. Please prayerfully consider contributing an increase in your giving this year. If I gave \$10.00 a week last year and I can give \$10.50 a week this year, that is a 5% increase in my giving, which beats inflation and helps get those projects done faster.

We also still have burial plots for sale at Forest Lawn Cemetery for anyone interested. All are welcome to inquire. Please reach out to anyone on council or contact me directly.

A new year brings new opportunities to use your talents for our church community. We can use you on council, in the choir or ushering.

Are you a collector? My father collected coins. Today a 1 ounce silver eagle dollar coin is worth \$75.

May All be Well,

Ron McGoogan

## Sarris Easter Candy Fundraiser

If you like having candy for Easter, here is your chance to satisfy your sweet tooth and help the First Lutheran Church Restoration Fund! Orders are due by Sunday, February 22nd. Candy will be delivered Sunday, March 29th. If you have any questions please contact Vickie Group - 724-344-0565.

Appreciate your support!

Many thanks,

Caitlyn and Vickie Group

Veterans of First Lutheran Church, we would like to thank you for your service and recognize your service during our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year. As part of it we would like to get some information from you. Please fill out the following questionnaire and return it back to the office or put in the offering plate so that we can gather the information for our presentations.

Please tell up something about your service:

Your name:

What years did you serve:

What branch of the service:

Where were you stationed and when:

What did you do while in the service? What was your job, role:

Any special events that happened to you while serving:

Please return this form to the church office by March 1, 2026

## **DARTBALL**

The First Lutheran Dart Ball team is looking for some more players. We have seven more weeks of scheduled games, then there is the Playoffs. This would be a great chance to come out and see if you think you would enjoy playing dart ball with our fellow church members.

We play every Tuesday night @ 7:00 PM. Practice starts at 7 and the games start at 7:30. Anybody over 11 years old is eligible to play.

I hope some would come out and try it, because we need to have three or four more players that would help us to become a stronger team.

Dennis Schmidt

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## **Thank You!**

I want to thank everyone, Pastor Grewe, Council and members of First Lutheran Church families.

Thank you for my 45 years of Anniversary of serving God's House. It was and still is my honor . Again thank you!

Your Sister in Christ Jesus,

Lisa Hager (Sexton)

### **February Lay Readers**

1  
8  
15 Dennis Schmidt  
22 Sonie Rea

### **February Altar Flowers**

1 Bob & Anneliese Christian  
8 Sherman Marker  
15  
22

RELATED

### **February Acolytes**

1  
8  
15  
22

### **February Ushers**

1 C. Ringer; D. Schmidt; . Mason; M. Verderber  
8 E. Goga; R. Johnson; J. Ulanich  
15 R. Phillips; J. Sakerka; D. Wheeler; J. Stolfer  
22 K. Carl; C. Group; C.R. Group; D. Lacko

### **February Counters—Alternate: Rick Williams**

1 R. McGoogan and D. Schmidt  
8 J. Black and L. Sten  
15 K. Luketich and S. Rea  
22 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 Sharon Maust
- 21 Michelle Williams
- 24 Ann Christian
- 25 Sonie Rea
- 28 Donald McWreath IV