

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



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ICH-THUS
Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior

Pastoral Perspectives for May 2026

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

As I waited outside for members to enter the church for the Good Friday service there was a conversation about how, ***“Good Friday is just for the church it’s not a national holy-day.”*** Many people still had to work including the USPS! What was even more shocking was how many events, stores, and businesses were open on Easter Sunday!

Easter seemed to be treated like any other Sunday: from grocery stores to coffee shops. The Pirates played a three-game home series over Holy Week! The Penguins and Pirates had games on Easter Sunday!

The truth is we have no one to blame but ourselves because over the years as Christians have allowed the world to violate the 3rd Commandment, to keep the Sabbath Day and remained silent about it.

I remember a few years back when the Steelers played on Christmas Eve! And yet, so many of these professional players are professed Christians. They have the power over their employers to either say, ‘No we are not playing on the Sabbath day’! After all, without them showing up to play there wouldn’t be anything to watch then!

A British song writer/singer named Billy Bragg once wrote a song about the English Football club player I used to follow, the Wolverhampton Wanderers. The song is called ***“God’s Footballer”*** and is the true story of a professional player named Peter Knowles who gave up his career in the 1970’s for his faith because many of the games were played on the Sabbath Day!

Looking further I came across AJ Griffin (NBA) a 2022 first round draft pick who left the NBA to join full time ministry! What he called a ***“joyful surrender”*** rather than a loss, of the money and fame that he left behind to follow His Lord Jesus.

God the Father was clear as to what the 3rd Commandment is when He gave it to Moses on the mountain ***“Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.”*** The seventh day is to be a day of rest for man and beast!

Martin Luther in his Small Catechism wrote *What is this? Or What does this mean?* Answer ***“We are to fear and love God, so that we do not despise preaching or God’s Word, but instead keep that Word holy and gladly hear and learn it.”***

Now, I understand that there are certain jobs, duties and calls where people must be at work such as hospitals, emergency services and other needed fields. But stores like *Chic filet* and *Hobby Lobby* do just fine by following the 3rd Commandment and I am sure their staff are happy about having the Sabbath Day.

In Luther’s time there were multiple church services so that people could attend on the Sabbath Day. If they had to work or care for someone, they would still be able to come and worship God and receive the Sacrament of the Altar. Some Lutheran churches even offer Saturday evening services for this very reason.

When I served in the military I attended the Sunday Protestant services. I always wore my cross, which was blessed by my pastor, on my dog tags. I always received flack for that, but I refused to take it off for anyone! I gave that cross to Jonathan Luketich when he went into the armed forces to serve. Nathaniel and Wesley Black also have crosses which have been blessed.

The choice is ours, will we serve God or will we serve the world? It is the sacred versus the secular. For one day we will stand before God and answer for our actions.

To end this perspective, I recently saw a short video clip by comedian Pete Holmes talking about how he likes saying ***Happy New Year*** all year long because it doesn’t offend anyone. Unlike Merry Christmas which can be considered offensive to some non-Christians. Now, what he says instead is ***“May the birth of the One and Only True God Jesus Christ bestow a blessing of peace and grace on you and your household to the belittlement of every other false religion.”***

I wish I could remember this proclamation, but my long-term covid-fogged brain doesn’t allow me that privilege. Maybe I will put it on card? After all it is the TRUTH!

In Christ Jesus and no other false god

Rev. Robert B. Grewe



Dear First Lutheran Church Family,

First Lutheran Church needs your help. Am I talking about your weekly donations? Well, we do need them, but we have more important things that need your help – church repairs and maintenance. Chris Maust and Ron McGoogan have been working faithfully patching and painting walls in the church sanctuary and hallways. This is not hard work, but there is a lot of it that needs done. We need your help so that we can have our church repairs done before our celebration in June. Let Chris or Ron know that you are willing to help with repairs.

Lisa Hagar will be having knee replacement surgery at the end of May and will be unable to clean the church for about 2 months. We need volunteers to help get the cleaning done while she is recovering. Please let Pastor know you are willing to help. There will be a meeting with Lisa so she can show you what she does and where everything you will need is kept.

Mowing and upkeep with the outside of the church is beginning. Volunteers are needed to help with this also so that Larry, Olivia and the Groups don't have to do it all.

The more volunteers we have help with repairs, cleaning and maintaining, the faster it will go.

Blessings,

Jennifer Black, FLC Council President



INFORMATION ON LYME DISEASE

After being diagnosed with Lyme Disease in June 2024, I was anxious to find out as much as I could to understand its possible impact and why so many weird things were happening to my body.

Initially it was two whole days of fever, extreme chills and fatigue, with subsequent bouts of head pain and general discomfort.

Unable to get a doctor appointment until a month later, Lyme took hold and sent me into heart malfunction and Afib. A heart ablation and three daily medications since has my ticker regulated, but other symptoms waxing and waning. Biggest, most significant is brain fog and exhaustion.

This led me down the path of wondering who and what was going on in the bigger world. Thus began what has now become semi-regular open meetings at Citizens Library for other sufferers. We've had seven to twenty-one folks of all ages joining us to share their experiences. The most recent one included a Lyme-literate doctor (a kind, caring and infected man.)

If interested in joining us, please contact Sandy Mansmann at s_mann41@hotmail.com or 724-413-9921.

WNALC May Newsletter

The WNALC Board will meet Wednesday, May 6th at 10 AM in the lounge. Please note change of day due to election day on May 5th.

Mother/Daughter Banquet will be held Monday, May 11 at 6:30 PM in the Delfini Room in Meadowlands, PA. Reservations must be made by May 3rd. All women are invited as we are mothers, grandmothers, daughters, aunts, or cousins.

Tickets may be purchased from Joanne Marker, Michelle Williams, Ruby Rogers, or Sonie Rea. Tickets are \$25.00, children 6-12 \$10.00, 0-5 free.

Please come and enjoy a delicious and fun evening.

Circle meeting will be May 28 at 10:00 AM in the lounge for Bible Study and lunch. Linda Coleman will be leader and Joanne Marker hostess. All women are welcome.

God bless,
Sonie Rea

100th Anniversary Celebration
May Newsletter

A special thank you to everyone that helped make our church tour on April 12, 2026 a success.

The memorabilia display is 95% complete and is in the social room. We are still adding final items.

Armed Forces Day is Saturday May 16, 2026, and on **Sunday, May 17** we are going to celebrate and honor our veterans. Sergeant Major Neil Hoffman (Retired) from Somerset, PA, will be attending to help us honor our veterans. Please attend and show your support.

Tickets for a painting of First Lutheran Church, painted by a local artist, Richard Celani, shortly before his death, is on sale for \$5. (On display in church narthex) They can be purchased at the coffee hour the first Sunday in May and June, or by contacting Heather Quedenfeld 724-263-3253 or Linda Coleman 724-225-8011.

Sunday, June 21, 2026 is almost here. Our rededication Sunday to celebrate our beautiful, historical 100 year old church. Let us join together and fill the pews with our voices in praise and thanksgiving.

An invitation to the banquet following the service is attached. Reservations can be made by sending to church office or placing in offering plate.

Anniversary Committee

Join Us in Celebration

Church Building

100th Anniversary



We welcome you to
rejoice with us and give
thanks for this special
milestone!

First Lutheran Church

Sunday June 21, 2026

11am service
Lunch following
\$25-adults
\$10 children 6-12

RSVP by June 14
checks to First
Lutheran Church

92 W. Walnut Street Washington, Pa 15301

Veterans of First Lutheran Church

Black, Jennifer served in U.S. Army 1990-1998

28th Signal Battalion, PA National Guard, stationed at FT. Gordon, GA. 1991.
Signal Corps Officer, planned and supervised communication networks. Served state side during 1st Gulf War.

Black, Mark served U.S. Army 1988-1997

112th Infantry Regiment, PA National Guard stationed Ft. Benning, GA 1988-1997.
Infantry Officer, trained and lead soldiers in ground combat operations. Served state side during 1st Gulf War.

Briggs, Kristine served U.S. Airforce 1983-1987

Basic Training, Lackland AFB, San Antonio, TX; Lajes Field AFB, Terceira Island, Azores, Portugal 1984-1986; and Offutt AFB, Omaha, NE 1986-1987.
Telecommunications-monitoring and maintaining communications between U.S. and Europe. And surveillance and monitoring of mainland U.S. security defenses.

Goga, Ed served in U.S. Army 1975-1978

Stationed Missouri and California 1975-1976 and Germany 1977-1978, Worked in construction. Served doing the U.S. Bicentennial Celebration in 1976.

Lacko, Joseph Judson served U.S. Airforce 1962-1966

Stationed at Keesler AFB Mississippi. Airborne Radar Repair, Medical Lab Tech. Was nominated to service radar on Air Force One.

Maust, Chris, served in U.S. Army 1978-1981

Stationed Frankfurt, West Germany, repaired station communications, working on landline phone communications. Served during Iran's Hostage, and Russian invasion of Afghanistan 1979.

Sakerka, John served U.S. Army 1971-1973

Stationed at Ft .Bliss TX 1971-1972, and Schofield Barracks, Hawaii 1972-1973. Squad Leader of Chaparral Missile Launcher used to shoot down enemy aircraft.

Ulanich, Jeffery served U.S. Army 1969-1970

Served in Vietnam at Camp Evens as a combat Medic. Was on Hamburger Hill in the Jungle taking care of 70 men. **Awarded the Bronze Star with Valor.**

Members Currently Serving in Armed Forces

Black, Nathaniel serving in U.S. Army joining 2023

Now serving - 1st. Cavalry Division at Ft. Hood TX. Serving as a Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic. Was deployed to Poland for 7 months.

Black, Wesley serving U.S. Army joining in 2025

82nd Airborne Division serving as Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic and has been Airborne Qualified

Luketich, Jonathan, U.S. Army joining in 2021

Commissioned as Military Police Officer through the Officer Candidate School, Fort Benning, GA 2021. Executive Officer and Platoon Leader of Military Police Battalion, Ft. Bliss, TX. 2023. Earned his Master of Science in Legal studies from Penn West University in 2025. Awards and decorations include the Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense service Medal, Army Service Medal, and German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge (Silver)

Fundraiser Updates

Sarris Easter Candy Fundraiser

Thank you to all who supported the Sarris Easter Candy Fundraiser. Our profit for this fundraiser was \$738.15 that benefits the Restoration Fund.

The Hanging Basket Sale

Get ready for Spring by purchasing beautiful hanging baskets for you to enjoy or to share as a wonderful Mother's Day gift. All orders for the Hanging Basket Sale are due on Sunday, April 26th. Flowers will be delivered on Saturday, May 9, 2026. Checks made payable to First Lutheran Church.

Any questions, please contact Vickie Group at 724-344-0565.

Many thanks for all the support,

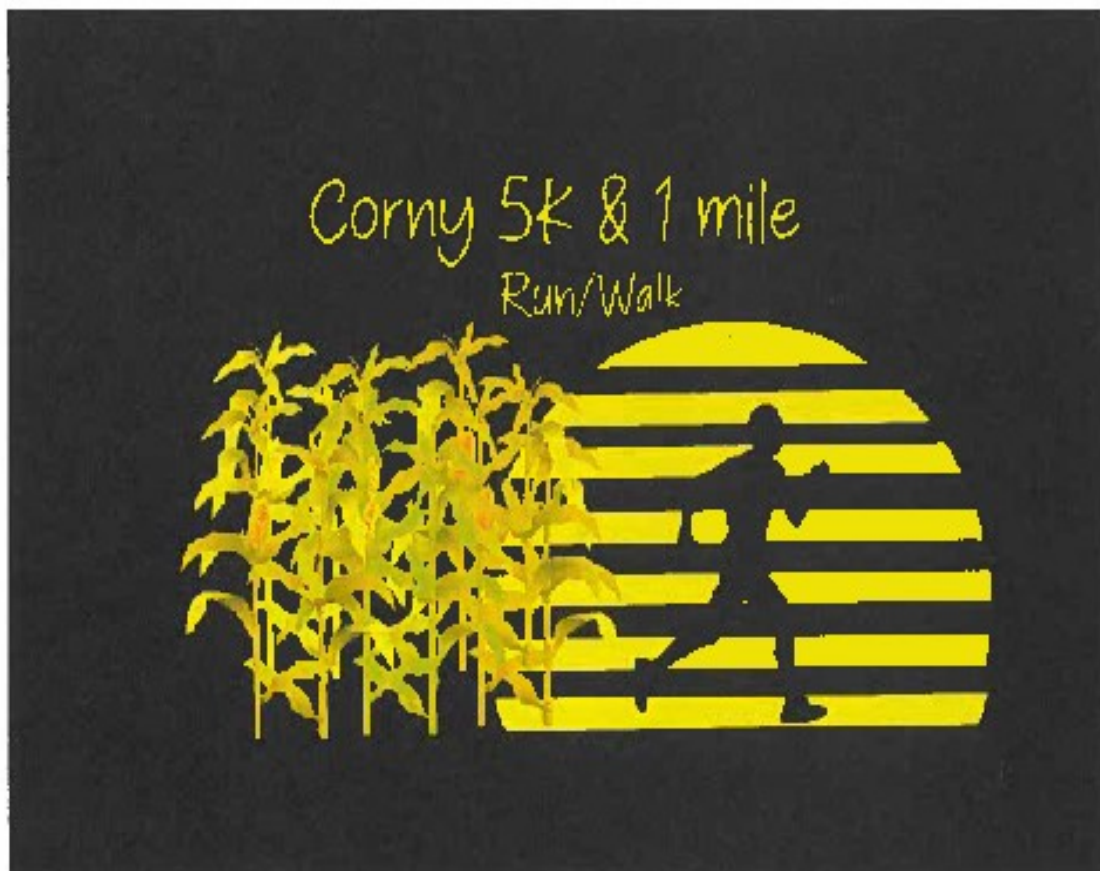
Caitlyn and Vickie Group

SAVE THE DATE!

THE SECOND ANNUAL CORNY 5K & 1 MILE RUN/WALK

WILL BE HELD ON AUGUST 15, 2016!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW AND JOIN US FOR A FUN
DAY!



Church Picnic – Save the Date!

Our annual church picnic will be held on **Saturday, August 9.**

It's never too early to start thinking about what food item you may want to bring, so keep that in mind as you plan ahead.

The picnic will be held at the **Community Park in South Strabane**, the **same place as previous years.**

More details will be shared as the date gets closer. We look forward to a fun day of fellowship, food, and time together!

Any questions, please see Kim Luketich.

May Lay Readers

- 3 Dennis Schmidt
- 10 Dennis Schmidt
- 17 John George
- 24 Lisa Maust
- 31 Kimberly Grewe

May Altar Flowers

- 3 Cristina Serbak
- 10 Olivia & Larry
- 17 Sarah Caddies
- 24
- 31 Sarvers

May Acolytes

- 3 Heidi and Denico Walsh
- 10 Elijah Clark
- 17
- 24 Jacin and Trevor Flowers, Julia Jeffcoat
- 31 Julia Jeffcoat

May Ushers

- 3 C. Krcil; R. Williams; Ron McGoogan
- 10 C. Ringer; D. Schmidt; Z. Mason; M. Verderber
- 17 E. Goga; R. Johnson; J. Ulanich
- 24 R. Phillips; J. Sakerka; D. Wheeler; J Stolfer
- 31 K. Carl; C. Group; C. R. Group; D. Lacko

May Counters—Alternate: Heather Quedenfeld

- 3 J. Black and L. Coleman
- 10 R. Williams and S. Rea
- 17 C. Group and V. Group
- 24 D. Schmidt and K. Luketich
- 31 L. Sten and R. McGoogan

May Altar Team

J. Marker

MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Jessica Muise
- 4 Leann Vitteck
- 10 Klaus Behrens
- 13 Cristina Serbak
Derek Ford
- 15 Jennifer McWreath
- 18 Robert Christian
- 20 Melissa Carpenter
- 23 Keith Bassi
- 24 Teresa Maust
- 27 Vickie Group
John Sakerka
- 30 Brian Gavazzi
Justin Gavazzi
- 31 Marianne West