

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 August 2026

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

Matthew, our candidate for seminary, recently read, *"Winning the War in your Mind"* by Craig Groeschel. One section describes how the prince of lies traps us without even having to do much work on his part! Matthew explained *"The devil doesn't need to trap us, he just needs to **convince us** that we are trapped. Satan's strategy to win the battle for your mind is getting you to believe lies. A lie believed as true will affect you as if it were true."*

One example the author used was how the famous escape artist Harry Houdini was finally defeated by one jail. He couldn't get out of it no matter what he did! The secret was that the jailer had tricked Houdini by not locking the door. However, the escape artist believed it was locked (he thought he was trapped) when the entire time the door was unlocked. Instead of simply trying to open the door; he kept locking himself in! Houdini believed it was locked when it was open the whole time! The devil uses this same tactic on you and I.

At times when we are feeling low, anxious, depressed, unloved, afraid or lonely, the devil just allows us to be trapped by these lies! The truth is we are never alone or unloved. We can be cheered up by praying to God, reading our Bible, being active in His church community and knowing He is always with us: just as God promised!

Some may have missed church over a few weeks, months or years. They may feel too embarrassed to come back or wrongly believe they won't be welcomed. Only the devil agrees with that type of thinking and encourages those kind of lies. However, the opposite is true!

God loves us and holds you and I as precious to Him. He will seek us out no matter where we have gone or what we have done. I believe that many cannot fathom the amount of love, grace, mercy and compassion God has for us! Our God is a God of second chances. I shouted this out from my car to a person who had defeated addictions but he was embarrassed when I praised him for the newfound freedom.

For Christ and His cross are the bridge over the troubled waters that toss and turn us in the storms of life. And God rejoices, the angels in heaven rejoice as does your pastor in seeing you at worship! Just look at the parable of the lost sheep and see how far Jesus will go to bring you back into the fold!

I understand life is busy and many use Sunday to catch up on life itself. Yet, is that truly the best use of the Sabbath Day God has given us in His Commandments? I believe the best way to catch up on life is to top your faith up with attending worship, reading your Bible, praising God with your voice, hearing God's Holy Word, listening to the message, partaking of the sacrament of the altar and being part of the community of Christ here at First Lutheran church. Families have done so in this church for 100 years now!

There are many opportunities to get involved in the church such as: bell choir, choir, children's and adult Sunday schools, adult catechism, confirmation class, movie and meal, hosting a coffee hour, coming down for coffee hour, helping paint, plaster, yard work, men's club, or being part of the chess club. The list is long and there is a lot to do!

So, I ask you to pray and see where God is calling you in life. Ask yourself if you are using your time and talents to glorify God or are your time and talents being spent in other ways that don't glorify God? At the end of your Sunday ask yourself if you have been filled with the Holy Spirit or emptied of Him?

It was only a short time ago that we gathered to celebrate the 100th anniversary of our current house of worship. Seeing the dedication and faith of the people of God back then was powerful in their commitment and their faith in God!

May we too be moved by the Holy Spirit to feel called to gather for worship and proclaim God seven days a week in our lives, giving thanks to God for all He has done and continues to do in our lives through His Son Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

Your servant,

Rev. Robert B. Grewe



Dear First Lutheran Family,

August is here and before we know it December will be upon us!
Don't forget about our Corny 5K fundraiser and our church picnic.

Please see Caitlyn to let her know when you can volunteer to help.

I would like to thank all those who have been helping to clean the church while Lisa is recovering from her knee surgery. You have done an amazing job. Also a huge thanks to all of our volunteers who worked so hard to make the outside of our church look amazing for our 100th celebration. And words cannot express the thanks to our 100th Celebration Committee for putting together the displays and all the other work they did to make that day so special.

We have a group continuing to work on the church to keep it looking good, to include redoing the nursery and fixing the speaker. A huge thank you to them. And as all this work continues, help is still needed. Consider donating a couple of hours of your time to help this get done.

Our Church Picnic will be here before we know it. This is always a fun time with good food and good fellowship. We need volunteers to help with cooking, setting up and baskets for our raffle. And now is the time to start going through your recipes to decide on a delicious dish to share!

September means our activities will be starting. This year would be a great year for you to join our choir, dartball team, or fundraising committee.

Blessings,

Jennifer Black, FLC council president

CHURCH PICNIC

DATE: SUNDAY AUGUST 9TH

TIME: RIGHT AFTER CHURCH SERVICE

PLACE: COMMUNITY PARK MAIN PAVILION

LOCATION: 750 FLORAL HILL DRIVE IN SOUTH STRABANE, WASHINGTON

FUN * FELLOWSHIP *** GAMES *** PRIZES*****

For those who have been watching the church services on-line and would want to attend, please call the church office. Kathleen will mark you down and the side dish you would like to bring. We would love to see you.

SIGN UP SHEET WILL BE PLACED ON BULLETIN BOARD OUTSIDE OF CHURCH LOUNGE

We need a few good workers for set up and clean up. Please sign up on the attendance sheet or see me. If you can provide a basket for the Chinese Auction let me know. You can bring the day of or give to me beforehand. Tickets will be sold day of picnic. If you can provide a bingo prize let Sonie know. If you want to volunteer to call bingo let her know.

I want to thank all those that have donated baskets for the auction. These baskets have been awesome! Last year the church made \$955. How great is that?? All profits go back to the church for much needed repairs to keep our church in pristine condition.

Any questions feel free to call me. Kim Luketich 724-222-4610(home) 724-678-5766(cell) Or see me before/after church service.

GIFT BASKETS/PICNIC

We will be doing a gift basket raffle again during the church picnic. Please provide a basket if possible. We have great ones every year, so let's keep it up! Remember all profits go towards our Restoration Fund. We have made significant progress in our enhancements to our esteemed church, yet it is imperative that we maintain this momentum as there remains substantial work to be undertaken. Let me know if you can provide. Kim Luketich

724-678-5766

kjluketich@gmail.com

WNALC August Newsletter

There will not be a Circle meeting this month.

We hope to see everyone at the church picnic.

God bless,

Sonie Rea

THE LURE OF IDOLATRY

The Word In Season

Isaiah 44:18-20

Do we worship our phones? Take any public transportation. Sit in a restaurant. Even amid the natural beauty of a park. It seems all heads are buried in those little portable computers. Do we really need to know time, weather, and who won the 1977 World Series right now? NO! But our habit has become our obsession. It seems we all need something to idolize.

The prophet Isaiah called out those who were making, then worshiping, idols made from pieces of wood. How could they use some of the wood to cook food over a fire, and carve the rest into a "holy" image? It made no sense. The idol-worshippers were too emotionally invested in their creations to even notice what they had done. They needed something to idolize, yet God, who was divinely worthy of their worship, was ignored.

Can we look up from our own modern-day electronic idols? Can we focus on God?

Linda Coleman

Mum Sale

Get ready for Fall by purchasing mums for you to enjoy or to share as a wonderful gift. This fundraiser is to support the First Lutheran Church Restoration Fund. Orders must be placed no later than Sunday, August 30, 2026. Flower pickup will be Saturday, September 19, 2026 from 9:00-11:00 at FLC. Checks made payable to First Lutheran Church.

Flower Options:



Bronze Mum- \$15.00 # _____



Red Mum - \$15.00 # _____



Yellow Mum - \$15.00 # _____



White Mum - \$15.00 # _____

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

*Turn in flower order ASAP to guarantee your color choice. Any questions contact Vickie Group at (724)344-0565. Turn in orders to Vickie Group or the church office. Thank you for your support!



The Corny 5K & 1 Mile Run/Walk will be on August 15, 2026 on the Claysville National Pike Trail. All proceeds will go to First Lutheran Church to help restore our 100 year old building.

All participants who register by August 1st are guaranteed to receive a commemorative race T-Shirt and Swag bag! Participants who register after August 1st will receive a shirt if still available so be sure to register early.

Date: August 15, 2026

5K Race Time: 8:30am (\$30)

1 Mile Run/Walk Time: 8:35am (\$25)

Online Registration is also available at:

<https://runsignup.com/Race/PA/Claysville/CornyK>

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Gender: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

EVENT: ____ 5k ____ 1 mile T-Shirt Size: _____

August Lay Readers

2 Lisa Maust
9
16
23 Dennis Schmidt
30

August Altar Flowers

2
9
16 Anneliese and Bob Christian
23
30 Sarver's

August Acolytes

2 Jacin and Trevor Flowers
9
16
23
30

August Ushers

2 D. Looman; H Snyder
9 C. Krcil; R. McGoogan
16 C. Ringer; D. Schmidt; Z. Mason; M. Verderber
23 E. Goga; R. Johnson; J. Ulanich
30 R. Phillips; J. Sakerka; D. Wheeler; J. Stolfer

August Counters—Alternate:

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

August Altar Team

2 Joanne Marker

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

6 Samantha Sakerka

Holly Rea

11 Michelle Burbank

12 Lori Goga

Anne Belski

17 Jason Webeck

21 Karen Stofan

Jared Battistone

24 Michelle Bartanus

28 Richard Johnson

31 Linda Nickles

Myra Bernhart