

First News First

Volume 60, Issue 11

November 2025

From the Pastor's Desk – November Reflections

As the leaves fall and the air turns crisp, November invites us to pause and give thanks. It's a season when we gather around tables, share stories, and remember the blessings that fill our lives. Thanksgiving reminds us that gratitude is not only a response to what we have, but a way of seeing the world—a lens that reveals God's goodness even in times of change. We are privileged to have the Women of the ELCA leading our **Thank Offering Service** on **Sunday, November 9** with Deacon Chelle Huth, guest preacher from United Lutheran Seminary, proclaiming God's message to us.

This month also brings **All Saints Sunday on November 2**, when we pause to remember those who have gone before us in faith. We will be remembering Members, John Shearer, Tudy Gates, Garry Shatzer, Faye Ulrich, and Karin Woods along with friends of the congregation. These loved ones names and faces may stir both tears and smiles. They shaped our church, our families, and our lives in ways that continue to ripple through time. As we sound bells and speak their names, we remember that we are part of something larger than ourselves—a great cloud of witnesses cheering us on as we continue the journey of faith.

November also points us toward the end of the church year—a reminder that seasons turn, life changes, and **Christ the King (Celebrated on November 23)** is always doing something new among us. **On November 16** we have our congregational meeting to elect new council members. Following the meeting we will have lunch and then a **time of conversation** to listen to one another and reflect on how God is calling us into the future. (See the letter from our president on the next page.) These moments of conversation with God and one another will be a holy time, and I hope you will make a point to be with us.

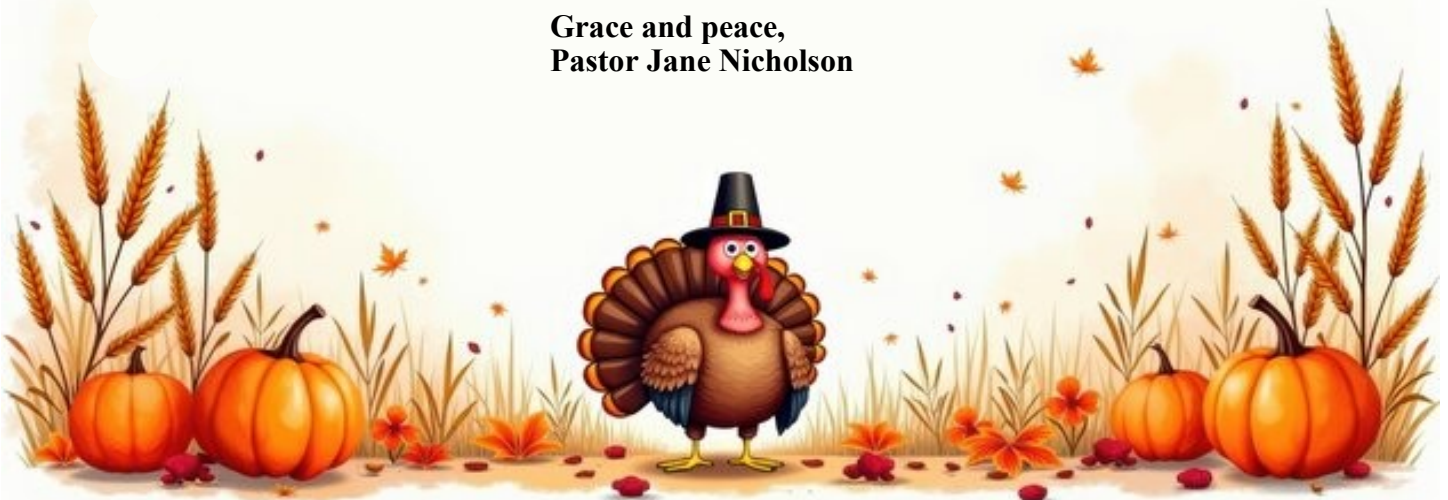
What a comfort it is to know that even when everything around us shifts, **God remains steady and sure**. The One who guided the saints before us is still guiding us now. The same love that held them holds us, too.

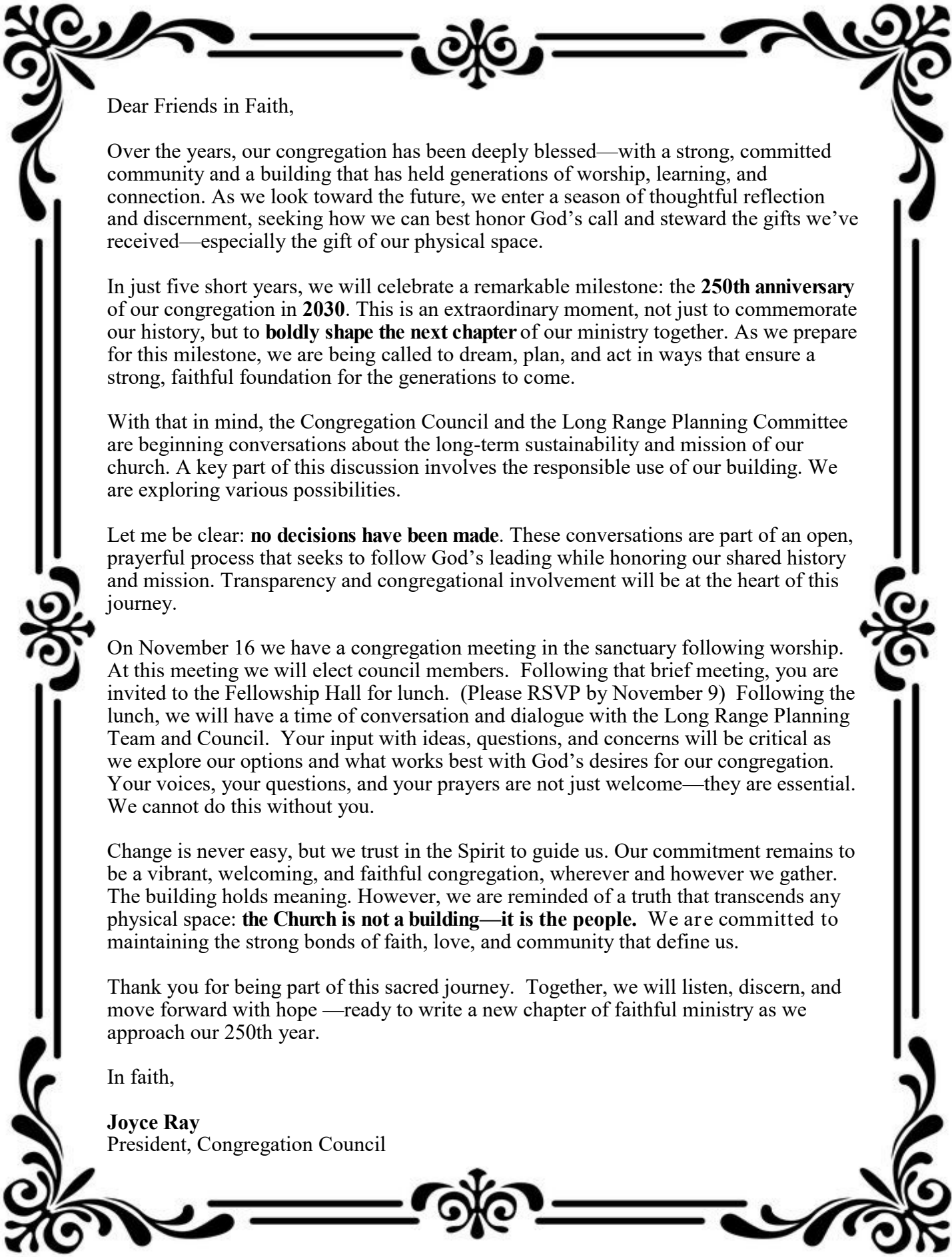
“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” — *Hebrews 13:8*

As we move through this season of gratitude and remembrance, may we open our hearts to what God is doing right now—through our community, our worship, and our daily lives. Let's give thanks for the saints who shaped us, the blessings that sustain us, and the changes that prepare us for what's next.

May your November be filled with gratitude, peace, and hope in the steadfast love of God.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Jane Nicholson





Dear Friends in Faith,

Over the years, our congregation has been deeply blessed—with a strong, committed community and a building that has held generations of worship, learning, and connection. As we look toward the future, we enter a season of thoughtful reflection and discernment, seeking how we can best honor God’s call and steward the gifts we’ve received—especially the gift of our physical space.

In just five short years, we will celebrate a remarkable milestone: the **250th anniversary** of our congregation in **2030**. This is an extraordinary moment, not just to commemorate our history, but to **boldly shape the next chapter** of our ministry together. As we prepare for this milestone, we are being called to dream, plan, and act in ways that ensure a strong, faithful foundation for the generations to come.

With that in mind, the Congregation Council and the Long Range Planning Committee are beginning conversations about the long-term sustainability and mission of our church. A key part of this discussion involves the responsible use of our building. We are exploring various possibilities.

Let me be clear: **no decisions have been made**. These conversations are part of an open, prayerful process that seeks to follow God’s leading while honoring our shared history and mission. Transparency and congregational involvement will be at the heart of this journey.

On November 16 we have a congregation meeting in the sanctuary following worship. At this meeting we will elect council members. Following that brief meeting, you are invited to the Fellowship Hall for lunch. (Please RSVP by November 9) Following the lunch, we will have a time of conversation and dialogue with the Long Range Planning Team and Council. Your input with ideas, questions, and concerns will be critical as we explore our options and what works best with God’s desires for our congregation. Your voices, your questions, and your prayers are not just welcome—they are essential. We cannot do this without you.

Change is never easy, but we trust in the Spirit to guide us. Our commitment remains to be a vibrant, welcoming, and faithful congregation, wherever and however we gather. The building holds meaning. However, we are reminded of a truth that transcends any physical space: **the Church is not a building—it is the people**. We are committed to maintaining the strong bonds of faith, love, and community that define us.

Thank you for being part of this sacred journey. Together, we will listen, discern, and move forward with hope—ready to write a new chapter of faithful ministry as we approach our 250th year.

In faith,

Joyce Ray
President, Congregation Council

WORSHIP



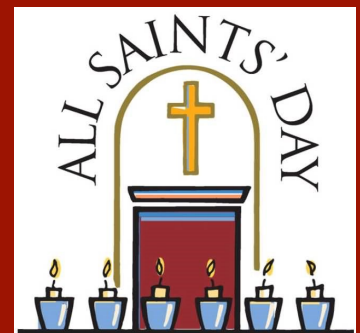
- November 2** All Saints Sunday with Holy Communion
- November 9** Thank Offering Sunday
with Deacon Chelle Huth from ULS Seminary preaching.
- November 16** Holy Communion
Following worship - Congregational Meeting to
elect council Members followed by lunch and a
conversation relating to the use of our building.
- November 23** Christ the King Sunday with Holy Communion
- November 30** First Sunday of Advent. Pastor Angela
Zimmann leading worship



**The church offices will be closed November 27 and 28 for the Thanksgiving Holiday.
There will be no Sunday School on November 30.**

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2025

If you have a loved one who has entered the church triumphant between November 1, 2024 and October 31, 2025 whom you would like to have remembered by name on All Saints Sunday, please contact the church office and include the spelling of the name, and date of death if available. felccoffice@gmail.com



WORSHIP

Christmas
Eve
Worship



CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

First Lutheran will be having worship services on Wednesday December 24 at 3 pm and 7 pm. The two services will be similar. The 3 pm service will be completed prior to dusk, for safe driving home. We will not have worship at the church on Thursday, December 25.

ADVENT WORSHIP



- This year we have a delightful Sunday worship series for the children's message entitled, "A Nativity Story." We will show a segment each week and then have the conclusion on Christmas Eve. It is an enjoyable message for all ages.
- We will also be lighting the advent wreath especially for the season.
- The cantata will be on December 21 during worship.
- The ChambersBellFest will be at St. John on Sunday, December 14 in the evening.

Hope you will be able to join us.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS



We will be decorating the Chancel with poinsettias for Christmas. Anyone who wishes to place a poinsettia in the church may do so in honor of or in memory of relatives, friends, and loved ones, or to the Glory of God. Poinsettia order forms are included in the newsletter. The deadline for poinsettia orders is November 30th. Poinsettias will be \$10 each.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING



First Lutheran will be having a congregational meeting on Sunday, November 16 following the 10:45 worship service. The purpose of this meeting will be to elect council members to serve a three year term beginning January 1, 2026. Our meeting will adjourn and move to the Fellowship Hall for lunch. Following lunch, we will be having a time of conversation related to the future use of our building. The sign up sheet will be placed in Memorial Hall on October 19. Please sign up by November 9.

AREA CHURCHES



TRINITY LUTHERAN

You are invited to the installation service of Pastor Thomas Wimsae at Trinity Lutheran Church in Chambersburg on Sunday, November 2 at 2:00 p.m. A reception will follow the service.



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN

Pastor Rosalie Brunner has been called as Associate Pastor at Evangelical Lutheran in Waynesboro. She is working on planning her ordination service which she is hoping will be at her home church in Robeson, PA near Reading. Her installation date at Evangelical is still being determined.



ST. LUKE LUTHERAN

Our prayers are with St. Luke Lutheran in Chambersburg and Shelly Davies upon her resignation. Shelly has initiated the partnership of having St. Luke work with First Lutheran for many Neighborhood Task Team Events. Shelly and her family are moving to Canada.

TRINITY EPISCOPAL

Trinity Episcopal Church in Chambersburg will be served by Deacon Ford Brooks, as Mother Pat Dickson retired at the end of October.

NEIGHBORHOOD TASK TEAM

Sharing God's love in our community

CHRISTMAS PROJECT

This year for our Christmas Project, First Lutheran is working with the Chamber of Commerce to collect items for the appreciation of our First Responders in the Borough. Below is a list of items that would be welcome contributions. Please place your thank you notes and gifts in the Box in Memorial Hall by Sunday, December 7.



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Make a thank you card to include in our care packages.

Donate any of the following items:

Snacks/beverages that are individually wrapped such as: Granola/protein bars, gum, nuts/trail mix, mints, cheese and peanut butter crackers, beef jerky, candy, donuts, chips, drink powder packets, sports drinks, microwave popcorn.

Supplies for the station such as large cans of coffee, k-cups, hand sanitizer, little memo books, sticky notes, highlighters, black ink pens, lip balm.

Monetary donations labeled "Christmas Project" or "First Responders" may be placed in the offering plate.

Don't miss this opportunity to meet and serve our neighbors in need. Saturday, November 8 at St. Seraphim Soup Kitchen on Lincoln Way West. Hours are 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Contact Mary Gotwald for more information. 717-264-4759 or 717-997- 9437.

Collections for Little Daisy's Closet are being accepted in Memorial Hall. Items you may contribute include seasonal clothing and coats for adults and children, plus shoes, socks and underwear. LDC also accepts household items, blankets, and personal care items.

THANK YOU

Thank you to our church family for your prayers, cards, texts, and visits. Mom loved the church and your care for her throughout her life. Thank you for your compassion.

Love,

Barb and Chuck, Steve, and Tom



Thank you to Faye Ulrich and her family. Figurines of Bible Stories were presented to the church from her estate. You are welcome to look at them in the display case in the Parlor.



SCAN (Student Clothing Assistance Network) is a project of the Neighborhood Task Team. Working with the social workers and guidance counselors of the school district, SCAN volunteers fill emergency requests for clothing and school supplies. When a request is received, it is assigned to a volunteer or volunteers to acquire the necessary items, either through purchase or donation. We have already filled 3 requests for this school year. Requests do not come in on a regular schedule. But when they are received the need is usually urgent. The children involved are usually in crisis situations— domestic upheaval, homelessness, unexpected relocations. If you are interested in participating in this ministry, or have questions, please contact Tim or Mary: 717-264-4759, 717-491-0611, tim@gotwald.org, mary@gotwald.org Thank you for considering.

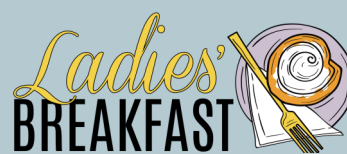
WELCA



The Women of the ELCA (WELCA)

will gather for Bible Study and fellowship on Thursday, November 13 at 1:00 p.m. in Meeting Room 1. Jane Love will be the study leader.

All women of the church are welcome!



The Women's FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

will be held at 8:30 a.m. on
November 19 at Sunrise Diner

Quilts and kits were
loaded and taken
to New Windsor, Maryland
on October 8.



FRAUD ALERT

In October someone was impersonating Pastor Nicholson by creating a g-mail address using Pastor Nicholson's name and picture. They then attempted to email everyone in the congregation to ask for gift cards and signed Pastor Nicholson's name. Please be leery of texts or emails asking for gift cards or money. If you are uncertain if the correspondence is valid, please contact the church office or Pastor directly. If the church collects money or gift cards, please always bring the cards and money to church. Do not give out numbers via email or text or over the phone. I was proud of those who were uncertain and called to investigate. Smart move. Thanks to everyone who worked together to protect others in our congregation.

NAWAKWA & SPIRITRUST



The Lutheran Camping Corporation
of Central Pennsylvania
Kirchenwald, Nawakwa, & The Wittel Farm

**Quilt
Auction**

November 2

2:00 p.m.

Lutheran Camping
Quilt Auction
at Nawakwa



November 7-9

Women's Craft
Retreat

DISCOUNT CARDS

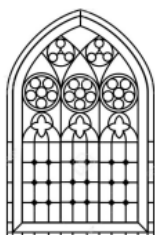
**SpiriTrust Lutheran
Auxiliary**

is selling discount cards. For \$5 each.
Money raised will help The Inn. The
card is active now through 9/1/26 and
may be used for discounts at various
area businesses. Please see
Mary Beth Warne to purchase.

STEWARDSHIP

Stained Glass Window & AC Unit Update

(Information as of October 15, 2025)



Windows

Total Cost: \$79,806

Donations Received: \$35,950

Still Need: \$43,856



AC Unit

Total Cost: \$47,035

Donations Received: \$8,060

Still Need: \$38,975

THANK YOU

to everyone who has returned their anticipated giving cards for 2026. We are grateful for the blessing of you joyfully sharing with the church and all of God's ministry that takes place here. If you have not yet returned your card, you may still place it in the offering or mail/give it to the Parish Administrator. Extra cards are on the first floor near the elevator.

HELPING HANDS

2025 Council

President: Joyce Ray
 Vice President: Mike Ross
 Secretary: Gerry Wilson
 Treasurer: Sally Herritt
 Pastor: Jane Nicholson
 Deacon: Freda Dorand
 Martha Carbaugh
 Jeff Dorand
 Gary Kennedy
 Marianne Kennedy
 Financial Secretary: Carol McCoy



PRAYER CHAIN

May we include you in our prayers? Do you have a prayer need that we can help you with? If so, please call our prayer chain group leader:

Marcia Hunt @
 717-263-0781

Names are kept on the prayer chain for 1 month. After that month, please contact the office again if you would like to have a name on for another month.

Nancy Lawyer	11/01	Peggy Stout	11/14
Rebecca Hoover	11/01	Bill Nienstedt	11/17
Debra Fleegal	11/04	Dorothy Hammer	11/20
Patti Nitterhouse	11/04	Gary Kennedy	11/21
Bill Coy	11/05	Nicki Johnson	11/21
Sharan Carbaugh	11/06	Barb Evans	11/23
Jeff Dorand	11/08	Andrew Hefner	11/25
Mary Julia Gotwald	11/09	Bob Lawyer	11/25
Mary Wingert	11/12	Debra Umbrell-Tressler	11/29

TRANSPORTATION

Need a Ride?

Our church provides transportation to church on Sundays!

Please call if you need a ride. Church office: 717-264-2015



**Deadline for
the December
Newsletter
will be
November 15**



FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

43 W. Washington Street

Chambersburg, PA 17201

E-mail: felccoffice@gmail.com

Website: www.felcc.org



@FirstEvangelicalLutheranChurch

@felccyouth



Church Office Hours

Monday-Thursday

9 a.m.-1 p.m.

CHURCH OFFICE	717-264-2015
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Parish Administrator	ext. 1
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Director of Music	ext. 3
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Pastor	ext. 4
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All Saints Celebration

**Join us on All Saints Sunday,
November 2, 2025 at 10:45 a.m.**

as we remember the saints who have gone before us and have entered
into the church triumphant during the past year.

