




MARCH 2025

THE ENLIGHTENER

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
Feeding our Soul

33 Broadway Street
Shelby, Ohio 44875
Ph 419-347-7675
Email:
firstlutheranshelby@gmail.com

"Grace and Peace to you from Christ our Lord,

It always strikes me as amusing how little we Christians often know about facets of church life that are simultaneously ubiquitous in our lives and utterly foreign. For instance, the section of the church building that extends from the narthex to the chancel (the place where the congregation sits) is called the "Nave". The word nave in Latin means "ship"...why do we call it "a ship"? The answer lies in the fact that the ceiling of that section of the building often would be accomplished using shipbuilding techniques as the arched roof used the same methods as making the curved bow of a ship. So next Sunday as you sit in the pew think of the upside-down ship overhead.

Take the word "amen", or in the original Hebrew "אמן". We say it at the end of a prayer much the way we might say goodbye at the end of a conversation or "The End" at the conclusion of a movie. But in the original language, it means "this is most certainly true". There is nothing final or concluding about it. In fact, it almost leaves one wondering what else you are about to say. Just think if someone ended a statement with the phrase "I'm telling you the truth"... you might wonder what they might say next.

In 1 Thessalonians 5 St. Paul says, " Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" and we might rightly wonder how one is supposed to not cease from prayer? After all, when you are done with one prayer and say your "amen" are you supposed to start a new one? Or, maybe St. Paul, whose first languages would have been Hebrew and a local Hebrew dialect (Aramaic) would have thought of "amen" less as the period at the end of a sentence and more of a semicolon that implies that more is to come. Maybe we need to understand all of our lives as an ongoing conversation with God. Praying without ceasing may be less about never opening our eyes and saying amen, and more about being intentional in including God in all that we say and do as though He is always a part of every thought, action, or decision.... because he is.

So, I say to you, Amen.

Blessings, Pastor Rus.

CHURCH HISTORY

*I have been going through all the old Enlighteners and Bulletins, organizing them in binders to be preserved and easier to view. I found the following "Current Fund" letter dated January 1988 and thought you all might enjoy a little bit of history. **What goes around, comes around!** As history is showing us, there will always be a need to increase our individual monthly giving...there will always be a mission that needs our help and support.*

Debbie C

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
SHELBY, Ohio
Current Fund

Balance January 1, 1988	Receipts To Date	Expenditures To Date	Balance September 30, 1988
\$5,304.01	\$144,825.80	\$169,275.22	-0-

Even though Church Council has been able to keep expenses beneath the anticipated disbursements, our expenses in the Current Fund are over \$24,000 more than our receipts. The Current Fund consists of our day-to-day operating expenses and does not include benevolence or major property improvements. Over \$19,000 has been transferred from undesignated funds in order to meet these expenses. In these undesignated funds we have only \$19,000 left to transfer.

We are optimistic, however concerned about the present critical condition of our Current Funds.

If we want to continue the quality ministry that we enjoy, then we must respond to the needs and support our mission. We ask that you use the enclosed envelope to begin your increased financial support for your church for the balance of this year!

-Finance and Stewardship Committees

I'M GLAD THIS CHURCH NEEDS MONEY!
If it didn't, it would mean it wasn't supporting missionaries and preaching the gospel in other places.

I'M GLAD THIS CHURCH NEEDS MONEY!
If it didn't, it would mean it wasn't doing anything to support the homeless and needy.

I'M GLAD THIS CHURCH NEEDS MONEY!
If it didn't, it would mean it had "topped out" and wasn't interested in expanding into other areas of needed service.

I'M GLAD THIS CHURCH NEEDS MONEY!
If it didn't, it would mean it wasn't interested in providing wholesome activities for our teenagers.

I'M GLAD THIS CHURCH NEEDS MONEY!
If it didn't, it would mean it wasn't interested in educating children in those impressionable, formative years.

I'M GLAD THIS CHURCH NEEDS MONEY!
The fact it does means it has not forfeited its enthusiasm, compassion, evangelism, vision, expansion, concern, and future. This church needs my gifts and I'm glad of it! I wouldn't want to be a member of any other kind.

Author Unkown

YOUTH GROUP, Brian Crum & Cassie Gates

Schedule for Youth Group Activities through April 2025

MARCH

- 2nd – 11:00am – Plan Spaghetti dinner fundraiser...**WE NEED SOME IDEAS!**
- 9th – TBD – Stained glass making class
- 16th – 6:00pm – St. Patrick's Day party! **WEAR YOUR GREEN!!**
- 23rd – 11:00am – Stump the Pastor
- 30th – 6:00pm – Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

APRIL

- 6th – 11:00am – Assemble Easter Gifts
- 13th – 11:00am – Deliver Easter Gifts to Shut-ins
- 20th – Happy Easter!! NO YOUTH GROUP
- 25th - Leave for Kalahari

FOOD PANTRY – Louise Hunter, Food Pantry Director

Donations for the Food Pantry for March

SOUP

ABC LEARNING CENTER – Heather Murray, ABC Director

As winter draws to a close, we look towards the warmth of spring. Our theme for the month of March is "Marching into Spring". We will be learning about Spring. The first week of March is Dr. Seuss week so we will be doing fun activities such as wacky Wednesday and cat in the hat day. The faith theme for the month is all about seeking Jesus. St' Patrick's Day is coming too so we will do fun activities such as having all green food for lunch. We are always looking for staff and children. So, if you know someone, give us a call.

Prayer for March, Pastor Russ

Heavenly Father, gracious and merciful God, as we approach the solemn season of Lent, we turn to You, seeking Your guidance and forgiveness, a deeper understanding of Your love. Grant us the strength to journey with Christ, to reflect on His sacrifice, and to prepare our hearts for the joy of resurrection, through Your Holy Spirit above.

Lord, we are reminded of St. Paul's powerful admonition, "Pray without ceasing," a call to constant communion with You. In the busyness of our days, in moments of joy and times of trial, help us to lift our voices, to offer our hearts in humble supplication. May our prayers be a constant thread, weaving us closer to Your divine will, a faithful connection.

We ask for Your blessing upon our congregation, our community, and the world. May this Lenten season be a time of renewal, of repentance, and of growth in faith. Grant us the grace to see Your presence in every moment, to serve You with gladness, And to share the good news of Your love, now and forevermore. Amen.

Prayer List

Greg Beeching	Meg Dean	Emanuel Martin	Diane Stiefel
Julie Beeching	Sandy Ensman	Joanne Matin	Jim Stine
Linda Bloom	Dorothy Foreman	Glenna McCoy	Bob Stover
Donna Bunting	John Hancock	Dave Melick	Vrendi Will
Shawn Cary	Cheryl Hock	Dale Metcalfe	Roberta Wilson
Martha Clark	Phil Jennings	Barb Peebles	
Annalisha Corwin	Kim James	August Schreiber	
Barb Davies	Cohen Lewis	Joe Sparks	
Jackie Davies	Becky Loveless	Myrna Spath	

*Condolences and prayers to...*the family of Veronica O'Keefe

Dates to remember ...

CHURCH BREAKFAST

March 15th - Social Hall, 8:00am to 10:00pm

MEET ME ON MONDAY

March 17th – Willard Varsity Club Sports Bar & Grille, 3598 Bullhead, Willard
April 15th (Tuesday) – Lyn-Way Restaurant, 1320 Cleveland Avenue, Ashland
May 19th – Gigi's Tacos and Margaritas, 1111 W 4th Street, Mansfield

LENTEN SUPPERS ... 6:00pm

March 12th – Mark and Peggy McKown
March 19th – Shirley Huskey
March 26th – Judy Hoover
April 2nd – Pam Blankenhorn
April 9th – Gaye Shira

COMMUNITY MEALS TO BEGIN

Beginning April 22, 2025

First Lutheran will host community meals on every 4th Tuesday of the month

Serving time: 4:30pm to 6:30pm

Free will donations

Interested in helping? Contact Gaye Shira

Email: gshira1.gs@gmail.com

Phone: 419-545-2277

or phone the church office: 419-347-7675

CHURCH DIRECTORY.... PHOTO SESSIONS

March 21st (Friday), 24th (Monday), & 25th (Tuesday)...hours are 2:00pm to 8:30pm

March 22nd (Saturday)...hours are 10:00am to 4:00pm

You may make your own appointment for photos on-line: www.ucdir.com, login in: oh2804, password: photos ... or ... contact the church office to do it for you at 419-347-7675.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Altar Guild is in need of volunteers. Responsibilities are as follows: communion preparations, parament changes, filling oil candles, and altar cleaning. Make sure supplies are filled: wine, grape juice, wafers, cups, and also baptismal napkins, etc. The altar candles are to be checked each week to be sure that they have enough oil for the weekend services. The Altar area and platform are to be swept and dusted as needed. If you might be interested in joining this important ministry, please contact Paul Martin or the Church office.

Paul Martin
Minister of Worship & Music

The church office is in need of a volunteer housekeeper. Those of us that volunteer to keep the office up and running are now so busy that the housekeeping part of this job is getting difficult to keep up with. This is about a two-hour job once a week. Our needs are gathering up the trash, running the sweeper, mopping some areas, wiping down the two bathrooms and sanitizing the tabletops. Especially at this time of year, the bus kids bring in a lot of salt, snow and mud.

Anyone that might be interested in helping out, please call the church office.

Debbie Crum
Office Manager Volunteer

VISITATION LIST ...Gaye Shira

MARTHA CLARK – CRESTWOOD CARE CENTER, 225 W. Main Street, Shelby 44875
CANDY POTTS - DAYSPRING ASSISTED LIVING-3220 Olivesburg Rd, Mansfield 44903
VERONICA O'KEEFE - GOOD SHEPHERD OF FOSTORIA-725 Columbus Ave, Fostoria 44830
ALMEIDA MCKOWN - LUTHERAN VILLAGE OF ASHLAND-330 Davis Rd, Ashland 44805
MIRIAM LAMBERT – CARRETTA BELLEVUE, Apt 316, 1780 Servant Way, Bellevue, WI 54311-9616
PATRICIA BAIRD (Rm 217), JOANNA RIGG (RM 331), LOU ELLEN SAMPSEL (Rm 214), JOE SPARKS (Rm 319),
EMANUEL AND JOANNE MARTIN (Rms 314/316)- ONTARIO ESTATES-2010 Walker Lake Rd, Ontario 44906

Bob Adams , 39 Mickey Rd, Shelby	419-347-8868
Marge Baird , 29 Riverview Dr, Shelby	419-347-2293
Jane Beeching , 47 Marvin Ave, Shelby	419-347-5255
Dorothy Foreman , 551 Bendle Ave, Shelby	419-612-1696
John Hancock , 31 Sherwood, Shelby	419-543-0392
Patricia Knapp , 25 Riverview, Shelby	419-564-5227
Pat Rank , 4 Park Village, Shelby	419-347-4211
August Schreiber , 3391 St Rt 96E, Shelby	419-989-1322
Renee' Simpson , 5690 Racoon Valley Rd, Alexandria 43001	740-924-2061
Jeanne Sisinger , 634 McBride Rd, Mansfield 44905	419-589-0170
Jim & Shirley Stine , 18 W Maxwell, Shelby	419-631-9761
Bob Stover , 16 Riverview Drive, Shelby	419-347-5035

MINISTRY TEAM

PASTOR RUSSEL T. YOAK, SENIOR PASTOR: RUSYOAK@GMAIL.COM, 419-989-1575
GAYE SHIRA, LAY MINISTRY OF VISITATION: GSHIRA1@YAHOO.COM, 419-545-2277
PAUL MARTIN, MINISTRY OF WORSHIP AND MUSIC: FLCSHELBY@GMAIL.COM, 419-289-6361
ABC CENTER: ABCLEARNINGCENTERSHELBY@GMAIL.COM, 419-347-9246
BRIAN CRUM, TREASURER: BRIANCRUM83@GMAIL.COM 419-543-1819
SARAH MARTIN, CHILDREN'S MINISTRY: MRS.SARAHMARTIN@GMAIL.COM, 419-571-6796
LOUISE HUNTER, FOOD PANTRY DIRECTOR: WEZJIM@NEO.RR.COM, 419-295-3019
CHURCH OFFICE 419-347-7675

Website: FLCshelby.org

Facebook: [First Lutheran Shelby](#)

YouTube: [Pastor Rus Yoak](#)

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

GREETERS	ASSISTING MINISTERS	LECTORS
Mar 2 nd - Sue Schiffer	Mar 2 nd – Pam Copper	Mar 2 nd – Kevin Calver
Mar 5 th - (Ash Wed)	Mar 5 th – (Ash Wed) Gaye Shira	Mar 5 th – (Ash Wed) Pam Blankenhorn
Mar 9 ^h - Sandy Cornett	Mar 9 th – Nancy Crum	Mar 9 th – Shirley Huskey
Mar 16 th – Bobbie Clevenger	Mar 16 th – Shirley Huskey	Mar 16 th – Sue Vogel
Mar 23 rd - Cathy Dodge	Mar 23 rd – Kristie Yoak	Mar 23 rd – Renee Nastasi
Mar 30 th – Carol McLaughlin	Mar 30 th – Pam Copper	Mar 30 th – Kari & Rebekah Case
ACOLYTES	RECEIPTS	ALTAR GUILD
Mar 2 nd – Abby Yoak	Mar 2 nd – Cece VonStein	MARCH/APRIL
Mar 5 th – (Ash Wed) OPEN	Mar 5 th – (Ash Wed) Helen Eckenrode	Peggy McKown
Mar 9 th – Jenna Cianflone	Mar 9 th – Darin Zinn	Mark McKown
Mar 16 th - Ethan Beck	Mar 16 th – Sarah Martin	
Mar 23 rd – Lillian Beck	Mar 23 rd – Bill Parr	
Mar 30 th – Paysen Sensmeier	Mar 30 th – Carol McLaughlin	
COMMUNION ASSISTANTS	ALTAR FLOWERS	
Mar 2 nd – Pam Copper, Mark & Peggy McKown	Mar 2 nd - OPEN	
Mar 5 th – (Ash Wed) Gaye Shira, Charlotte Butler, Linda Bloomfield, Pat Saltzgeber	Mar 5 th – (Ash Wed) OPEN	
Mar 9 th – Nancy Crum, Sandy Cornett, Ethan Beck	Mar 9 th – Jackie Davies	
Mar 16 th – Shirley Huskey, Sue Vogel, Pam Blankenhorn	Mar 16 th - OPEN	
Mar 23 rd - Kristie Yoak, Renee Nastasi, Cathy Dodge	Mar 23 rd – OPEN	
Mar 30 th – Pam Copper, Carol McLaughlin, Kari Case	Mar 30 th - OPEN	

Birthdays

March 1st - Robert Brinson
 March 3rd - Martin Boor
 March 4th - Shane Myers, Samuel Sensmeier
 March 5th - Tanner Ernst
 March 6th - Steven Rhodes
 March 7th - Andre Hill
 March 8th - Patricia Knapp
 March 9th - Kristi Yeager
 March 14th - Jaxon Curren
 March 16th - Lori White
 March 18th - Daniel Crum, Jason McCoy, Harold Stiefel
 March 20th - Laura Calver
 March 22nd - Robert Philbrick, Robert Stover
 March 23rd - Connie Brinson
 March 26th - Lillian Beck, Grace Stover
 March 28th - Debra Hull, Keegan Sensmeier
 March 29th - Kimberly Burky
 March 30th - Naomi Amstutz

Anniversaries

March 12th - Brian and Renee Simpson
 March 17th - Ronald and Myrna Spath
 March 19th - Justin and Kristina Dabney
 March 27th - Rodney and Vicky Barre
 March 31st - Mike and Pamela Martin



MEET OUR 2025 CHURCH COUNCIL

During the February Council Meeting new officers were elected. Pam Blankenhorn became our Council President, Mark McKown was elected as Vice President, and Carol McLaughlin was elected to the Secretary position. Other members of our council are Brian Crum, Mary Lee Barr, Greg Eyster, Helen Eckenrode, Sarah Martin, Bill Par, Darin Zinn, Kelly Crum, Cassie Gates, CeCelia Von Stein Pastor Rus Yoak, and Paul Martin.

If you have any church concerns; these are the people to best help you. Please feel free to reach out to any of them at any time.

A letter from our new Council President...Pam Blankenhorn

How do I introduce myself as the President of First Lutheran Church? Well, many of you may know me from when I was a member during the first 33 years of my life. Our family transferred our membership in 1977, while we were living in Kettering, Ohio and we found a church nearby that we liked (Epiphany Lutheran in Centerville). Then when we moved back to Mifflin Township area in 1980, we decided to join St. Timothy Lutheran, since it was close to our home. We were members there for 15 years before making the decision to transfer our membership to First English in Mansfield. In 2013, Bob and I decided that we wanted to come back to First Lutheran, Shelby, where we felt right at home again.

I was baptized in this church 80 years ago on Easter Sunday, April 1, 1945. Bob and I were married here, and all three of our children were baptized here. And in 2020, the year after Bob passed away, I decided to move to a condo in Shelby (across the street from my sister Mary Lee Barr). I usually tell people that I am back where I started.

My roots are very deep at First Lutheran as 18 of the 40 charter members of this congregation were relatives of mine. My parents were Ernest and Florence Hannafus. I was number four of five daughters and we all grew up in Shelby and this church. I have two daughters, Tonya Prewitt and her husband Blake, who live in Newaygo County, Michigan and Kari Case and her husband Chris, who live just south of Mansfield and a daughter-in-law, Sondra Blankenhorn-Cook and her husband Ryan, who live in Leo, Indiana. My seven grandchildren are Michael and Kyle Prewitt, Jonah and Rachel Blankenhorn, Rebekah and Leah Case and Ethan Cook.

Our son Aaron was a minister at Trinity English Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne, Indiana until his fatal accident in October of 2006.

My activities in the church are choir, lay reader, altar guild, funeral dinners, stewardship committee, and volunteering in the church office on Friday mornings.

I look forward to getting to know lots of the members (our new church photo directory will defiantly help with that) and learning what all the committees do. The thought of being our church council president seems somewhat daunting to me, but I will do my best with God's guidance. And thank you for having confidence in me.

*God's blessings,
Pam Blankenhorn*

MARCH 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 Table Talk 8:45 – 9:30 Worship 10:00am Youth Group – 11:00 Plan Spaghetti dinner fundraiser.	3 Church Office open 9-12	4 Church Office open 9-12	5 Church Office open 9-12 Food Pantry 9-11:30 Choir 6:00 Bells 7:00	6 Church Office open 9-12	7 Church Office open 9-12	8
9 Table Talk 8:45- 9:30am, rm 6 Worship 10:00am Youth Group - TBA- Stained glass making class	10 Church Office open 9-12 FINANCE COMMITTEE ABC COMMITTEE	11 Church Office open 9- 12 COUNCIL MEETING 7:00	12 Church Office Open 9-12 Quilting 9:00am Food Pantry 9-11:30 Choir 6:00 Bells 7:00 Lenten supper 6:00pm	13 Church Office Open 9-12	14 Church Office open 9-12	15 CHURCH BREAKFAST 8:00 – 10:00am Social Hall
16 Table Talk 8:45- 9:30am, rm 6 Worship 10 am Youth group -6:00pm St Patrick's Day party. WEAR YOUR GREEN!	17 Church Office open 9-12 MEET ME ON MONDAY – NOON WILLARD VARSITY CLUB SPORTS BAR & GRILL HAPPY ST PATRICK'S DAY	18 Church Office open 9-12	19 Church Office open 9-12 Food Pantry 9-11:30 Choir 6:00 Bells 7:00 Lenten Supper 6:00pm	20 Church Office open 9-12	21 Church Office open 9-12 CHURCH PHOTOS - MAKE APPT. 2:00 – 8:30pm	22 CHURCH PHOTOS- MAKE APPT. 10:00 – 4:00pm
23 Table Talk 8:45- 9:30am, rm 6 Worship 10:00am 11:00AM – Stump the Pastor	24 Church Office open 9-12 CHURCH PHOTOS- MAKE APPT. 2:00 – 8:30pm	25 Church Office open 9-12 CHURCH PHOTOS- MAKE APPT. 2:00 – 8:30pm	26 Church Office open 9-12 Food Pantry 9-11:30 Choir 6:00 Bells 7:00 Lenten Supper 6:00pm	27 Church Office open 9-12	28 Church Office open 9-12	29
30 Table Talk 8:45- 9:30am, rm 6 Worship 10:00am Youth Group – 6:00pm Spaghetti Dinne Fundraiser	31 Church Office open 9-12					