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**APRIL 2026**

# THE ENLIGHTENER

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH Feeding our Soul**

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"Grace and Peace from Christ our Lord,

Did you know that much of the world does not use the word "Easter"? Spanish, French, Portuguese, Russian, Indonesian, Arabic, Turkish, Italian, and even ancient Latin all use their version of the word "Passover" for the holiday celebrating the resurrection of Christ. This is in remembrance of how Jesus took the Passover celebration and changed it from being about God saving Israel... to God using Jesus as a sacrifice to save all of humanity. Virtually all Asian languages call it the "Resurrection Festival" for fairly obvious reasons. Only English and German use variations on the odd-sounding word "Easter". The reason for this is that in Old English and Old German, we have the similar-sounding and identical-meaning words "Eastron" and "Ostron" respectively. Both Eastron and Ostron mean "the rising sun" or "dawn." (You may have heard some fallacy about the word "Easter" having ties to pagan holidays dedicated to Eostre or Ishtar; this is completely ignorant, revisionist nonsense.) It makes sense to call our resurrection celebration a "dawn celebration" for lots of reasons: the prevalence of sunrise worship services, the symbolism of Jesus rising, the return of the light of the world, the dawning of a New Covenant, etc.

One of my favorite Easter stories has to do with a young mother named Monica praying for her wayward son. Her son, though gifted with a sharp mind and a capable gift for speaking, had chosen to waste his life with gambling, partying, and drunkenness. Monica, as all good mothers do, wished for better for her son. So, she prayed for him. She prayed for him and loved him for 17 years of self-destructive addiction and ruin. Instead of getting better, her son got worse and eventually joined a cult. But Monica did not give up and prayed all the harder. One Easter Sunday, her son, depressed about the state of his life and his inability to change his self-destructive habits, heard a voice calling him to "Take up and read". Seeing a nearby Bible, he randomly opened it to Romans 13:13-14. Suddenly, there on the page was God's word directing him that the only way he could be saved from "carousing and drunkenness, sexual immorality and debauchery, dissension and jealousy" was to "clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ". In that moment, he realized that his salvation was not an exertion of his will and strength... both of which were not up to the task... but instead it could only be found in accepting the sacrifice Jesus made on the cross and sharing in the resurrection Jesus provided from the grave. Monica's son, none other than St. Augustine of Hippo, went on to become one of the greatest thinkers in all of Christian history. The monastic order that would go on to take up the name Augustinian and accept the instructions for monastic life left by St. Augustine would eventually give us Martin Luther, an Augustinian Monk.

Augustine used to say, "We are an Easter people, and Alleluia is our song!" By this, Augustine meant that during Lent, we commemorate Maundy Thursday and Good Friday as historical events that happened, but we celebrate Easter because it is what is continuing to happen in our lives today, and we celebrate it with a loud Alleluia. Augustine knew the experience of resurrection firsthand as

God had reached down and pulled him from his dead life to live resurrected, clothed in Christ. Easter is the continuing action of God who is making it possible for us to "Pass over" from death to life.

Augustine also knew firsthand that no one was too dead that the miracle of Easter could not raise them up. So, this Easter, remember it is not a day, not a season, not just a celebration...it is our identity and a continuing action of God in our midst that we set aside a season to celebrate. We are Easter people, and Alleluia is our song!

Alleluia!  
Pastor Rus. "



### **HOLY WEEK SERVICES 2026**

**Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026, at 10:00am**  
Passion Reading & Holy Communion

**Maundy Thursday, April 2, 2026, at 7:00pm**  
Foot Washing & Holy Communion

**Good Friday, April 3, 2026, at 7:00pm**  
Tenebrae Service

**Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026, at 10:00am**  
Holy Communion

### **“STEWARDING THE WHOLE OF LIFE”**

“Happy Spring!” from the Stewardship and Property Committees.

It is time for “Spring cleaning”. We are looking for lots of God’s Hands. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. Areas to clean: sweep main church floor, dusting, checking pews, rest rooms (mainly on Saturdays each week), and stairways. A date and time to be announced.

“God’s House needs you”.

The Stewardship Committee  
Judy Hoover, Pam Blankenhorn. Barb Burky,  
John Medley, Pastor Rus Yoak

## **SEWING MINISTRY**

Our Sewing Ministry is looking for people to help with making quilts for the Lutheran World Relief. This ministry is more important than ever with all the disasters that have happened in the previous year around the world and at home. You are not required to be a member of a Lutheran church to participate in this ministry. If you can sew...WE WANT AND NEED, YOU!

THIS MINISTRY MEETS ON THE 2<sup>ND</sup> WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH AT 9:00 IN THE BASEMENT AT FIRST LUTHERAN. If you would like more information, please contact the church office. (419-347-7675)

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

Applications for High School Seniors and College students are now available from February through April 30, 2026. Please stop in the church office to pick up your application or you can also apply on line by visiting our website or clicking on the QR code below.



QR code to get the applications online.

# ***DATES TO REMEMBER***

Ashland University Choir to Visit First Lutheran Church  
**CONCERT: Tuesday, May 12, 2026, at 7:00pm**

We will be preparing a meal for the students and directors. Anyone interested in assisting with the meal preparation, or contributing financially to the dinner, please talk to Paul Martin.

***MARK YOUR CALENDARS!***

***SUMMER LUNCHES – June 8 – 12, 2026. More information to come.***

***THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY*** will resume on Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup> at 4:00pm.  
Lesson will be “Book of Romans”

***MEET ME ON MONDAY*** – Monday, April 20th at Noon– Uncle Dudley’s Kitchen in Willard

***CHURCH BREAKFAST*** –Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup> in the Social Hall

***COMMUNITY MEAL*** – Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup> in the Social Hall

Meal: Pulled Pork and Cheese Potatoes



**MOBILE PANTRIES  
2026**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each  
month, 10:00 am  
First Lutheran Parking Lot**

**April 21, 2026**

**May 19, 2026**

**June 16, 2026**

**July 21, 2026**

**August 18, 2026**

**September 15, 2026**

**ABC LEARNNG CENTER - Heather Murray, Director**

Welcome to April! April showers bring May flowers, green grass, budding trees, and warmer weather, making everything seem brand-new! Our faith theme we will be talking about Easter and sharing the good news. With Easter coming up we will be doing Easter activities such as an Easter egg hunt.

We are looking for staff members especially for the school age summer program coming up soon. If you know someone that would be interested, please give us a call. Also do you know someone that would be interested in volunteering to rock some babies, play with some toddlers, or read stories to our preschool children, please contact the childcare office at 419-347-9246 for more information.

**YOUTH GROUP ACTIVITIES - through May 2026**

**THIS SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. IF SO, YOU WILL BE CONTACTED BY YOUR LEADERS**

**SPRING SCHEDULE 2026**

**APRIL**

Apr 5 – No Youth Group. Happy Easter!

Apr 12 – 6pm, Youth Group activities

Apr 17 thru 19 – Youth Group Retreat

Apr 26 – 6pm, Youth Group activities

**MAY**

May 3 – 6pm, Lessons with Pastor Rus

May 10 – No Youth Group. Celebrate with your mom!!

May 17 – 11am, Summer BBQ



**PRAYER FOR THE MONTH, Pastor Rus**

"Gracious and Living God,

As the winter chill finally relents and the soil begins to stir with new life, we lift our hearts to You in profound gratitude for the arrival of April. This is a month where the quiet promise of spring meets the eternal victory of the empty tomb, and we thank You for the beauty of Your creation unfolding all around us.

We celebrate the miracle of Easter as the cornerstone of our faith. In the rising of Your Son, Jesus Christ, You have turned our mourning into dancing and our darkness into an everlasting light. May the joy of the Resurrection not be a single day on our calendar, but a transformative power that dwells within our congregation every day of our lives.

Lord, we ask Your blessing upon our community and the earth You have entrusted to our care. As the birds return to the trees and the first green shoots break through the earth, remind us of Your role as the Great Creator. In the quiet corners of Shelby, let us be a beacon of hope to our neighbors, ensuring our hands are Your hands as we reach out to the weary and provide comfort to those in need. Strengthen the bonds of fellowship at First Lutheran so that we may grow in grace, study Your Word with curiosity, and serve one another with humble hearts.

As we walk through this Easter season, let the reality of the Risen Christ embolden us. May we live as "Easter People" defined by hope, driven by love, and sustained by the assurance that you always have the final word. In the holy and triumphant name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen."

## VISITATION LIST March 2026

CRESTWOOD CARE CENTER-225 W Main St, Shelby 44875

- John Hancock, (Rm 11)
- Earl Lynch Sr
- Sue Egner

DAYSRING ASSISTED LIVING-3220 Olivesburg Rd, Mansfield 44903

- Candy Potts

ONTARIO ESTATES-2010 Walker Lake Rd, Ontario 44906

- Patricia Baird (Rm 217)
- Joann Rigg (Rm 331)
- LouEllen Sampsel (Rm 214)
- Joe Sparks (Rm 319)
- Joann Martin (Rm 221)

PRIMROSE – 1301 Millsboro Road, Mansfield 44905

- DiAnna White (Rm 221)

THE COURT OF EDEN VISTA – 289 East Saint Joseph Street, Apt 51, Green Bay WI 54301

- Miriam Lambert

The Waterford – 1296 S Trimble Rd, Mansfield OH 44906

- Denise Donnan (Rm 147)

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

Becky Loveless, 541 Bendle Avenue, Shelby

419-545-0537

Patricia Knapp, 25 Riverview, Shelby

419-564-5227

August Schreiber, 3391 St Rt 96E, Shelby

419-989-1322

Jeanne Sisinger, 634 McBride Rd, Mansfield 44905

419-589-0170

Shirley Stine, 18 W Maxwell, Shelby

419-631-9761

Gloria Turner, 20 Riverview Dr, Shelby

304-927-2347



## FLC WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS – APRIL 2026

| <u><b>GREETERS</b></u>  | <u><b>ACOLYTES</b></u>                | <u><b>ASSISTING MINISTERS</b></u>             |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| Apr 2 – (Maundy Thurs) Linda Bloomfield                             | Apr 2 – (Maundy Thurs) Abby Yoak      |   |
| Apr 5 (Easter Sun)- Kari Case Family                                | Apr 5 – (Easter Sunday) Kaylee Dabney | Apr 5 – (Easter Sun) Nancy Crum               |
| Apr 12 – Mary Hooks   | Apr 12 – Paysen Sensmeier             | Apr 12 – Gaye Shira                           |
| Apr 19 – Bobie Clevenger  | Apr 19 – Abby Yoak                    | Apr 19 – Pam Copper                           |
| Apr 26 – Sue Schiffer   | Apr 26 – Kaylee Dabney                | Apr 26 – Shirley Huskey                       |
| <u><b>LECTORS</b></u>   | <u><b>RECEIPTS</b></u>                | <u><b>ALTAR FLOWERS</b></u>                   |
| Apr 2 – (Maundy Thurs) Pam Blankenhorn                              |                                       |   |
| Apr 5 – (Easter Sun) Rebekah Case                                   | Apr 5 – Dave Keinath                  | Apr 5 - EASTER                                |
| Apr 12 – Gaye Shira   | Apr 12 – Linda Bloomfield             | Apr 12 – Susie Clark                          |
| Apr 19 – Mary Hooks   | Apr 19 – Pat Saltzgaber               | Apr – 19 – Fred Lee & Brad Berberick          |
| Apr 26 – Sue Vogel  | Apr 26 – Pam Copper                   | Apr 26 - <b>OPEN</b>                          |
| <u><b>COMMUNION ASSISTANTS</b></u>                                  |                                       | <u><b>ALTAR GUILD</b></u>                     |
| Apr 2 – (Maundy Thurs) Pam Blankenhorn, Carol McLaughlin, Deb Shick |                                       | Mar/Apr –<br>Pam Blankenhorn & Pat Saltzgaber |
| Apr 5 – (Easter Sun) Nancy Crum, Sandy Cornett, Ethan Beck          |                                       | May/June – Connie Brinson, Teresa Baird       |
| Apr 12 - Gaye Shira, Charlotte Butler, Pat Saltzbager               |                                       | July/Aug – Sandy Cornett & Hazel Bebow        |
| Apr 19 – Pam Copper, Mary Hooks, Sue Schiffer                       |                                       | Sept/Oct – Gaye Shira & Charlotte Butler      |
| Apr 26 – Shirley Huskey, Sue Vogel, Linda Bloomfield                |                                       | Nov/Dec – Barb Burky & Pam Copper             |

**BAPTISM** Welcome to our newest member, Josephine Mae Gates. Daughter of Aaron and Casandra Gates. Baptism March 22, 2026.



**CONDOLENCES** to the family of Scott Hancock.

**PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE MONTH**

|                 |               |                       |                  |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Greg Beeching   | Nell Harris   | Paula Lewis           | August Schreiber |
| Julie Beeching  | Sally Hays    | Becky Loveless        | Elsie Shepherd   |
| Ruth Bolles     | Charles Hill  | Earl Lynch, Sr.       | Joe Sparks       |
| Diane Vencil    | Louise Hunter | Joanne Martin         | Myrna Spath      |
| Meg Dean        | Phil Jennings | Judy Ream             | Bob Stover       |
| Jim Fellows     | Mary Knapp    | Tom Roberts           | Andy Thompson    |
| Dorothy Foreman | Marvin Lash   | Emerson<br>Saltzgeber | Gloria Turner    |
| John Hancock    | Cohen Lewis   | David Scull           |                  |

**THANK YOU**

A heartfelt **thank you** to Pam Copper for graciously volunteering to oversee the Funeral Dinners beginning in August.

Our church has been very blessed to have wonderful volunteers to help with these dinners. Currently, Naomi Amstutz and Barb Burky are overseeing this ministry. While they are giving up their position overseeing the dinners, they will still be helping.

THANK YOU, LADIES!!!!

First Lutheran Staff

A special thank you to the Property Committee, especially Mark McKown, Bill Parr and my hubby, Dan Crum, for tackling the restrooms and lobby at the Administration Building. They are nearing completion of enlarging the lady's restroom to make it a unisex, handicap accessible restroom. They are transforming the Lobby to make it a brighter, more welcoming area.

A sincere thank you to the Endowment Committee and numerous church members that donated funds to this project. Thank you to Austin Keinath who donated a large door for the restroom and to Brian Crum Accounting and Taxation Services for donating the flooring.

This turned out to be a very time-consuming project, but the outcome will be enjoyed by our church community and guests for many years to come.

I invite you to stop in and check it out when the project is completed, hopefully within the next couple of weeks. Now that we have a handicap restroom and a handicap ramp, I encourage our community to use this facility for meetings and special events. Should you like to reserve our conference room please contact the church office.

Debbie Crum



Apr 2 – Sandra Cornett  
Apr 6 – Carol Linn  
Apr 6 – Mary Naumann  
Apr 8 – Jeanne Sisinger  
Apr 10 – Brad Berberick  
Apr 10 – Harold Gibson  
Apr 10 – Alfred Vogel  
Apr 11 – Geraldine Lynch  
Apr 12 – Nancy Crum  
Apr 12 – Nancy Medley  
Apr 13 – Joshua Yoak  
Apr 14 – Gail Claytor  
Apr 16 – Douglas Huskey  
Apr 24 – Suellyn Lynch  
Apr 26 – Jeremiah Roth



April 4 – Steven & Jody Yockey  
April 6 - Roger & Theresa Baird

**MINISTRY TEAM**

PASTOR RUSSEL T. YOAK, SENIOR PASTOR:

[RUSYOAK@GMAIL.COM](mailto:RUSYOAK@GMAIL.COM),

419-989-1575

GAYE SHIRA,

LAY MINISTRY OF VISITATION: [GSHIRA1@YAHOO.COM](mailto:GSHIRA1@YAHOO.COM),

419-545-2277

PAUL MARTIN,

MINISTRY OF WORSHIP AND MUSIC:

[FLCSHELBY@GMAIL.COM](mailto:FLCSHELBY@GMAIL.COM), 419-289-6361

ABC CENTER

HEATHER MURRAY, DIRECTOR

[ABCLEARNINGCENTERSHELBY@GMAIL.COM](mailto:ABCLEARNINGCENTERSHELBY@GMAIL.COM),

419-347-9246

BRIAN CRUM, TREASURER:

[BRIANCRUM83@GMAIL.COM](mailto:BRIANCRUM83@GMAIL.COM)

419-543-1819

SARAH MARTIN, CHILDREN'S MINISTRY:

[MRS.SARAHMARTIN@GMAIL.COM](mailto:MRS.SARAHMARTIN@GMAIL.COM),

419-571-6796

LOUISE HUNTER, FOOD PANTRY DIRECTOR:

[WEZNIJIM@NEO.RR.COM](mailto:WEZNIJIM@NEO.RR.COM),

419-295-3019

CHURCH OFFICE 419-347-7675

Website: [FLCshelby.org](http://FLCshelby.org)

Facebook: [First Lutheran Shelby](#)

YouTube: [Pastor Rus Yoak](#)



**APRIL 2026**

| SUNDAY   | MONDAY   | TUESDAY  | WEDNESDAY   | THURSDAY   | FRIDAY   | SATURDAY  |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|---|
|  |  |  | 1<br>Church Office<br><u>Open 9-Noon</u><br>Food Pantry<br><u>9-11:30am</u><br>Choir -<br>5:00pm<br>Bells -8:00pm   | 2<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon<br><br><b>MAUNDY THURSDAY</b><br><b>7:00pm</b>     | 3<br><b>GOOD FRIDAY</b><br>7:00pm<br><br><b>ABC - CLOSED</b>             | 4   |
| 5<br><b>EASTER</b><br><br>Table Talk<br><u>8:45am</u><br>Worship -<br><u>10:00am</u><br><br><b><u>NO YOUTH GROUP</u></b><br>.                          | 6<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon<br><br>ABC –<br>CHILDREN’S<br>EASTER HUNT  | 7<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon<br><br>Stewardship<br>Committee 11am<br><br>Property<br>Committee 7pm<br><br>Worship<br>Committee 7pm        | 8<br>Church Office<br><u>Open 9-Noon</u><br>Food Pantry<br><u>9-11:30am</u><br>Choir -<br>6:00pm<br>Bells -7:00pm<br><b>Sewing<br/>Ministry<br/>at 9:00am</b> | 9<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon<br><br>Bible Study<br>4:00pm<br>Book of<br>Romans  | 10<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon                                       | 11<br>Worship Team<br>10:00am   |
| 12<br>Table Talk<br>8:45am<br>Worship -<br>10:00am<br><br>Confirmation<br>Class following<br>Church Service<br>Office Conf. Rm.<br><br>Youth Group 6pm | 13<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon<br><br>ABC Finance<br>10:00am   | 14<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon<br><br>Church Finance<br>11am<br><br>Council Meeting<br>7pm<br><br>Outreach<br>Committee – after<br>Council | 15<br>Church Office<br><u>Open 9-Noon</u><br>Food Pantry<br><u>9-11:30am</u><br>Choir -<br>6:00pm<br>Bells -7:00pm  | 16<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon<br><br>Bible Study<br>4:00pm<br>Book of<br>Romans | 17<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon<br><br><b>YOUTH GROUP<br/>RETREAT</b> | 18<br><b>Community<br/>Breakfast<br/>8:00 - 10:00am</b><br><br><b>YOUTH GROUP<br/>RETREAT</b> |
| 19<br>Table Talk<br><u>8:45am</u><br>Worship -<br><u>10:00am</u><br><br><b>YOUTH GROUP<br/>RETREAT</b>   | 20<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon<br><br><b>Meet Me on<br/>Monday –<br/>Uncle Dudley’s<br/>Kitchen,<br/>Willard</b> | 21<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon<br><br><b>MOBILE FOOD<br/>PANTRY 10AM</b>   | 22<br>Church Office<br><u>Open 9-Noon</u><br>Food Pantry<br><u>9-11:30am</u><br>Choir -<br>6:00pm<br>Bells -7:00pm  | 23<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon<br><br>Bible Study<br>4:00pm<br>Book of<br>Romans | 24<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon                                       | 25  |
| 26<br><br>Table Talk<br><u>8:45am</u><br>Worship -<br><u>10:00am</u><br><br>Youth Group 6pm  | 27<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon   | 28<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon<br><br><b>Community Meal<br/>4:30 – 6:00pm</b>  | 29<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon<br>Food Pantry<br><u>9-11:30am</u><br>Choir -<br>6:00pm<br>Bells -7:00pm   | 30<br>Church Office<br>Open 9-Noon<br><br>Bible Study<br>4:00pm<br>Book of<br>Romans |  |   |