

First Evangelical Lutheran Church

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(724) 478-1283

P.O. Box 275

Apollo, PA 15613
office@flcapollo.org

A congregation of the Southwest Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

PASTORAL PARAGRAPHS

June 2026

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

We are just about to summer; I'm glad it is starting to get warmer, but I'll probably be complaining by end of summer. We just celebrated Pentecost. In the passages read, there are two different perspectives of how the Holy Spirit interacts with us in Acts and John:

Acts 2:1-4

¹When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

John 20:19-23

¹⁹When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

We are more familiar with the Acts 2 version of the Holy Spirit interacting with the people in the group Peter was addressing. It was dramatic, with violent winds, divided tongues of fire, and all speaking in their home language but able to understand each other. The Holy Spirit came upon them in a "Whoosh!", suddenly and intensely.

However, in the John passage, while the disciples were locked in a room, grieving the loss of Jesus and in fear, Jesus appears to them and says, "Peace be with you" and has them feel his wounds. At that point, Jesus breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." This way of feeling the Holy Spirit was more intimate, less dramatic, and had a calming effect on the disciples.

Here are two ways we can receive the Holy Spirit, one intimate and one dramatic. It may just depend on where you are in your faith journey how you receive the Holy Spirit, and maybe God knowing what we need. Keep your faith and receive the Holy Spirit wherever you are and allow God into your heart; let God and Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, lead rather than you forcing your own agenda. God always knows best!

Peace, Pastor Caroline

The Reverend Dr. Caroline E. Clifford, Pastor

Southwestern
Pennsylvania Synod
Bishop Melissa Stoller
412-367-8222

Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
800-638-3522

COUNCIL

Mary Beamer
Lisa Carnahan
Pr Caroline Clifford
Carmen Cypher
Cal Deemer
Dorothy Doty
William Kerr
William Moore
Cindy Shaner
Leslie Smeltzer

STAFF

Pr Caroline Clifford
Ken Carnahan
Lisa Carnahan
Ben Coulter
Dorothy Doty
Gregg LeMay
Georgia Richardson
Leslie Smeltzer



May Council Highlights



The council meeting was held on May 13, 2026, at 10:30 AM. The following is a summary of the meeting:

1. The meeting was led by President Bill Kerr. Devotions were led by Carmen Cypher.
2. Action items:
 - a. We are waiting for the state inspection of the chair lift before use.
 - b. Letter was mailed and Dot filled out form to invite the Governor for our 100th building anniversary. The Bishop can attend the ceremony and dinner on Saturday but cannot attend service on Sunday.
 - c. The first check from the Ethel L. Verney Grant, for Food4Kids, was received.
 - d. A meeting was scheduled to update Policies and Procedures, for May 26 at 10 AM.
 - e. The removal of the corner stone for 100th celebration is being referred to B&G committee, to do so safely or not at all. We will add a time capsule at the anniversary. Dot will check on getting a vault to keep it waterproof.
3. One letter was received:
 - a. A letter was received from Mary Beamer to resign as Church Council secretary. Her services were appreciated. Lisa Carnahan was the temporary secretary for the day.
4. Treasurer's report: Account trends report as well as a chart of bills due each week was submitted and accepted.
5. Pastor Report:
 - a. Pastor Caroline reported business as usual. She will be taking vacation from June 1- June 8. We will be having a supply pastor on Sunday June 7, Pastor David Clement.
6. Old Business:
 - a. Surveys: Pastor Caroline has begun inputting surveys.
 - b. 100th Anniversary Church Building/Saturday, October 24 and 25, 2026. Dorothy Doty said that WELCA will be setting up for dinner. Dot will need a list of special guests. Since Bishop Stoller will not be able to attend our service the next day, Bill Kerr asked Pr. Caroline to contact the synod office to see if Pr. Jones or Pr. Asplin could attend and preach on Sunday,
7. New Business:
 - a. We elected a new council secretary: Leslie Smeltzer.
 - b. The Synod Assembly representatives for this year will be Bill Kerr and Dot Doty, along with Pr. Caroline.
 - c. Letter from Bethesda Lutheran Church: The council decided to put a pause on discussion with joining Bethesda Lutheran Church.
 - d. Bill Kerr and Dave Coulter met with Steve Vak on exploratory discussions about internal financial controls and practices.
 - e. Bill Kerr and Dave Coulter attended the Apollo Borough Meeting to propose them abandoning the alley way through our parking lots. If done, we can move forward with properly fixing the parking lot. Bill said he will talk with the Fire Department to invest in it since they use it also.

May Council Highlights - Continued

- f. Cindy Shaner was asked to liaison between Church Council and Meals on Wheels (MOW). MOW felt it wasn't necessary, but the council felt it was important since they use our property. Cindy and Bill will draft a letter to notify MOW and give them a list of Guiding Principles for use of the kitchen.
- 8. Standing committee reports:
 - a. Building and Grounds:
 - i. Authorization was made to send Bernie Zecca an additional payment to upgrade the undersized electrical supply system installed previously. It was estimated that the additional cost would be \$3,000.
 - b. Worship & Music: A recommendation from the joint W&M and Finance Committee to repair the organ as specified by Ray Colby. It was anticipated that costs would not exceed \$5,000.
 - c. Outreach/Service Committee:
 - i. Gifts were given to women for Mother's Day.
 - ii. A Hoagie Sale to collect money for many projects was done May 15, 2026. Pickup 4-6 p.m.
 - d. Endowment Committee: - Nothing to report.
 - e. WELCA: WELCA were to pay for carpets to be cleaned on May 26th.
 - f. Finance Committee: The treasurer was authorized to transfer funds between our Investment Funds accounts and the Church checking account in or to satisfy the needs of the congregation.
 - g. Safety Committee: The committee continues to meet to satisfy safety needs.

Next Council meeting will be held on June 10, 2026, at 10:30 AM.



**HAPPY
FATHER'S
DAY**

Happy Father's Day to all the fathers, grandfathers, and father figures in our church family. May you be guided by wisdom, patience, and the unwavering love of our Heavenly Father.



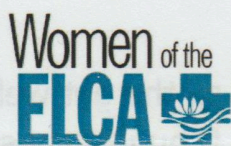
JUNE 2026



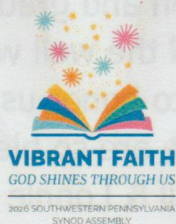
Mark your calendars

Ladies Lunch Bunch will meet June 13th at the church at 11:00 am to go to Moonlight Inn.

Men's Breakfast Buddies will meet June 13th at Valley Dairy Restaurant in Leechburg at 8:30 am.



Just a reminder! There will be no WELCA Meetings for June, July and August. Enjoy your summer!



Synod Assembly

Dot Doty and Bill Kerr will represent First Church at this year's Synod Assembly. The Assembly will be held on Friday, June 12th and Saturday, June 13th at PennWest California University.

New Members

Pastor Caroline will hold a New Members Class on Sunday, May 31st at 9:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Anyone interested in joining the church is invited to attend.

2026 Summer Concerts

Take a break on your Sunday afternoon and join us for our annual summer concerts at First Church Apollo. Be sure to invite your friends and neighbors! All concerts start at 3 pm. Watch the bulletin and upcoming newsletter for more details.



June 21st

July 19th

August 16th



First Communion

Pastor Caroline is planning a class for anyone that would like to make their First Communion. The class will be held on June 28th at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. Please contact the church office to sign up.





Congratulations to the Class of 2026!!



Calvin Michael Rodnicki will graduate from Apollo Ridge High School, Class of 2026. Calvin is considering electrical engineering apprenticeship with IBEW Local 5, Pittsburgh.

Calvin is the son of Lisa and Aaron Feerst and Marc Rodnicki. He is the grandson of Terri and Anthony Rodnicki and Debbie and Bill Kerr.

May your high school graduation be the beginning of a future filled with success and happiness! We wish you all the best! Congratulations!!

THANK YOU

Thank you for all the beautiful cards for my birthday and the many prayers for my recent surgery.

Leland Geer

Thank you for all the get well cards and for everyone's thoughtfulness in asking about me.

Robbie Deemer

Thank you to all who participated in our recent hoagie sale. We made a profit of \$312 which will be used for outreach activities.

Mary & Lisa

With appreciation and gratitude, we thank you for all the well wishes, phone calls and cards to honor us on our 70th anniversary. We are so blessed.

Bill & Lonnie



Time Capsule

To celebrate our 100th Anniversary in October, we would like to assemble a time capsule. We are asking for your help coming up with a list of items to put in the capsule! If you have any suggestions, please contact Dot Doty.

June's Memory Verse

Philippians 4:13
I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

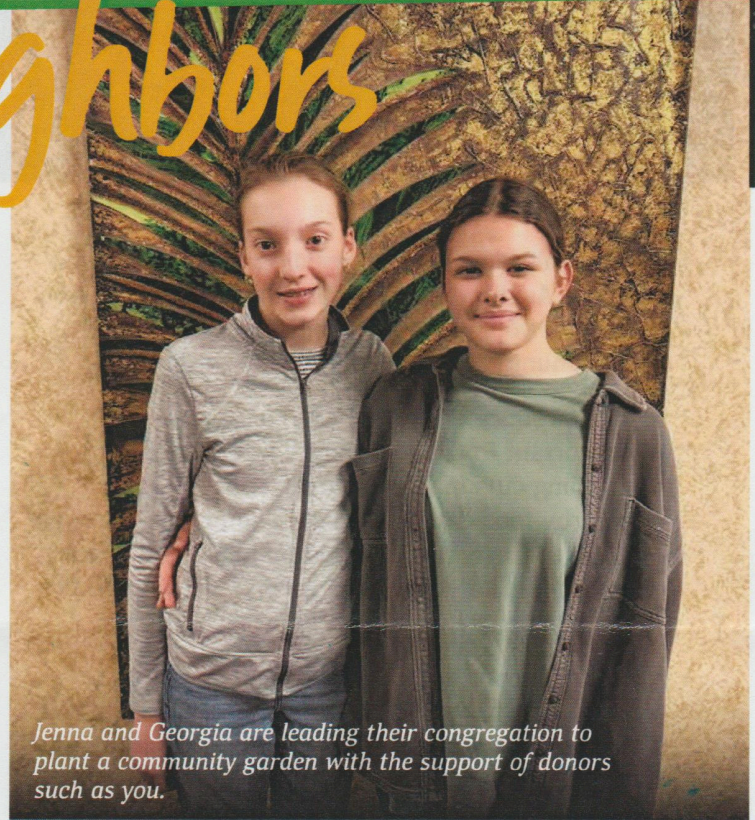


Growing Support for our Neighbors

Jenna and Georgia were in their second year of confirmation studies at Grace Lutheran Church in Fairmont, Minn., when a speaker came to talk to their class about hunger. The speaker shared global and local statistics that alarmed them. “It is hard to accept the fact that I cross paths with so many people experiencing food insecurity,” Jenna says.

The speaker also talked about the ways they could get involved in combating hunger. A lot of them – such as food drives and pantries – were activities their congregation was already doing. Every Wednesday evening, Grace hosts an “Open Door” community meal for anyone who wants a free, hot meal and some company. The congregation regularly welcomes about 200 people of all ages from Fairmont and the surrounding rural area, which has especially high rates of food insecurity compared to the rest of the state. Donors such as you are supporting this work through an ELCA World Hunger Daily Bread grant, which will allow Grace to expand its advertising, prepare more food and welcome more people through its doors.

Because of Open Door and other feeding ministries at Grace, Jenna and Georgia already knew some ways they could answer God’s call to feed their neighbors. Still, they wanted to do more – and the confirmation speaker mentioned one thing Jenna and Georgia hadn’t thought of before: a community garden.



Jenna and Georgia are leading their congregation to plant a community garden with the support of donors such as you.

They brought the idea to their pastor, who suggested that they could use an old Girl Scouts garden plot nearby to grow produce for the Open Door meals. Last summer, Jenna and Georgia started weeding the plot, cleaning it up and planting seeds. Unfortunately, they had to pause the project due to their busy schedules and a lack of funds for supplies.

This year though, donors such as you are going to help them make their dream of a community garden a reality. Your gifts have helped provide Grace with an additional ELCA World Hunger grant



Your generosity provides care for our closest neighbors. By supporting programs here at home, such as feeding ministries, you help meet immediate needs for the most vulnerable and strengthen communities for years to come.



that will allow the congregation to buy seeds and tools. As the gardening ministry grows, it will also include volunteers from the congregation and community who can care for the garden.

The produce they grow will be especially important to the community as government funding cuts make resources scarcer. Other nearby food distribution sites sometimes struggle to keep fresh, healthy food on hand. The Grace congregation hopes their garden will help fill the need for nutritious fruits and vegetables.

Overall, Jenna and Georgia believe this project will bring their neighbors closer together. "While our church members are working together in partnership to grow a garden, they will be living out our faith through actions," Georgia says. "Our church will feel closely linked to our community, ensuring that no family worries about where its next meal comes from."

Your generosity is helping Grace deepen roots in the community and grow in new directions.



Daily Bread Grant Update

In recent months, rising inflation, job losses and reduced government benefits have made it harder for families nationwide to afford the food they need. Feeding ministries across ELCA World Hunger's network are reporting lines two or even three times longer than before, with fewer donations coming in.

Thanks to your generosity, our church is rising up to meet this challenging moment.

ELCA World Hunger Daily Bread grants are gifts of up to \$500 that go to ELCA congregations and ministries that serve their closest neighbors through existing feeding programs. In 2025, ELCA World Hunger received over **15 times** the number of Daily Bread grant applications than in 2024. Your gifts to ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response made it possible to quickly expand the Daily Bread program.



665 Daily Bread grants were awarded.



172 grants (of the total 665) were supported by your gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response.



65 ELCA synods had feeding ministries that submitted an application (that's 100%).

Because of you, more of our neighbors have the daily bread they need. *Thank you!*



Scan to learn how you can give the gift of a Daily Bread grant!

CONGRATULATIONS to all those celebrating Birthdays:

4	John Hollis	14	Gracen Feerst	22	Greg Kerr
7	Brittany Setaro	16	Nancy Kochka	22	Shawn Davis
7	Denise Burns	17	Lisa Carnahan	23	Laurie Meier
8	Pearl Held	18	Bodie Coulter	24	Cindy Bush
10	Gregg LeMay	20	Amara Sacik	26	Shirley Milanak/91 st

CONGRATULATIONS to all those celebrating Wedding Anniversaries:

6	Steven & Taryn Olson/11 th
8	John & Sandra Hollis/52 nd
21	Kevin & Mary Gibbons/29 th
25	Rich & Tanya Frain/32 nd
29	Ben & Cara Coulter/13 th

Members & Friends in our prayers: *Melissa, Baby Luke, Tanya Stone, Jean Nulph, Kelly Gourley, Robbie Deemer, Ashlee Crum, Leland Geer, Annette Cholock, Don Rosensteel, Geri Rosensteel, Reese Stefaniak, Baby Hollis, Michael Toland, Karen Cook, Evelyn Stoughton, Jan Clepper, Jim Davison, Cherise Rachal, Teri Mannarelli, Al Kochka, Nancy Kochka, , Vicki Held, Larry Flickinger, Anthony "Butch" Rodnicki, Shirley Milanak.*

Members and friends in our continuing prayers: *Thomas Hileman, Barry DeMay, Orvil Smith, Michael Hooks, Fay Klingensmith, Debbie Townsend, Pastor Al Petrill, Ed Smith, Scott Aikens, Brian Stone, Jim Stone III, Heather Eppley, Al Kochka, Audrey & Susan Siems, David Ellison, Debbie Hill, Virginia Madison, Jack Tickle, Darlene Davis, Ed & Rose Haberchak, Bill & Diane Sloan, Luke Kanish, Tim Kanish, Dakota Stone, and Shane Carnahan.*

Our Homebound Members: *Debbie Zahumensky, Cindy Bush, Donna Wilver, Lillian Yamber, Annette Cholock, Judy Altman, Yvonne Hilty, Earliene Klingensmith, Frances Klingensmith, Jim Myers, Richard Mangus, and Tom Mangus.*

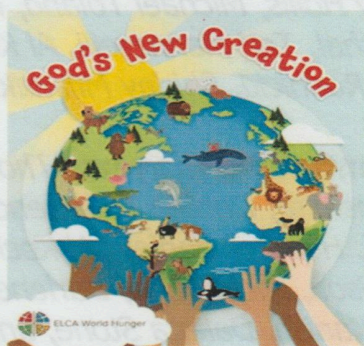
We ask God's care for the following Military Personnel and their loved ones:
Stephen Porter and Nevin Downey.

Memorial Calendar Open Memorials



Altar Flowers \$50	June 7, 14, 21 & 28	July 12
Bulletins \$10	June 14, 21 & 28	July 5, 12, 19 & 26
Celebrates \$10	June 7, 14, 21 & 28	July 5, 12, 19 & 26
Wine \$15	Available	Available
Wafers \$15	Available	Available
Glasses \$10	N/A	N/A
Oil \$20	N/A	Available

**Please call or stop by the office to sign up.
Thank you!**



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH ADULT VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Save the dates!

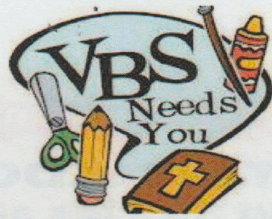
July 27th – July 31st, 6 pm – 8 pm

Come and join us for a week of Bible fun, crafts and snacks at Adult Vacation Bible School. Watch our Facebook page and weekly bulletins for more information.

C O M I N G S O O N



Join us for a Summer Concert at First Church!
Sunday, June 21st at 3:00 p.m.
Free will offering will be taken for Randy.
Everyone is welcome!



First Lutheran was asked to donate 100 fruit cups, small bottles of water and Capri Sun drink pouches for the Apollo Community VBS. If you would be interested in donating any of the items or making a donation towards them, please let Lisa know.

Also, if anyone is interested in helping with crafts or assisting the teachers for the Apollo Community VBS, please contact Lisa.

If you are in need of a pastoral visit or are in the hospital or have been in the hospital, please contact the office @ 724-478-1283 or Pastor Caroline at 814-769-5662. The Pastor is unable to visit if she isn't alerted to your condition.



Emergency Plans

First Lutheran Church presently has two emergency plans, Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and Safety and Security Plan (SSP). Both plans are confidential with limited access. The EOP lists many threats that could occur having a direct or indirect effect on our church and community. These range from severe weather, community hazards, intruders, bomb threats, and active shooter to name a few. There are two main responses to the threats, either evacuate the church or shelter-in-place. The location to shelter-in-place is the church's social room. The Safety Team representative will indicate which response we will activate and provide guidance.

- The purpose of the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is to identify potential impacts and the risks associated with the loss occurring from those impacts by the preparation, implementation, and maintenance of a comprehensive plan.
- The Purpose of the Safety and Security Plan (SSP) is to document the existing status of facilities infrastructure, policies, and procedures and then develop a plan to further develop a more integrated system.

A colorful poster for a VBS event. At the top, it says "Apollo Community VBS" in a red banner, followed by "Animals Abound!" in large blue letters, and "Wild Stories about God's Love" in green. Below this, it says "Held at Boiling Springs Church; 1668 Pa-56 Spring Church" and "MON. JULY 13 - THUR. JULY 16 5:45 PM - 8:15 PM". There is a QR code and a list of activities under "WHAT TO EXPECT". At the bottom, there are illustrations of a church, a donkey, a sheep, a goat, a fish, and a chicken. A blue banner at the bottom says "All kids welcome!".

Apollo Community VBS
Animals Abound!
Wild Stories about
God's Love

Held at Boiling Springs Church; 1668 Pa-56 Spring Church
MON. JULY 13 - THUR. JULY 16
5:45 PM - 8:15 PM

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Interactive Bible Stories
- Exciting Games & Activities
- Creative Crafts
- Music & Singing
- Friendship & Fun

CONTACT US
(724) 478-1523
boilingspringschurch@
yahoo.com

All kids welcome!



June 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 7 Pastor on Vacation 11 a.m. Worship	1 Pastor on Vacation Lions Club Mtg. @ 6 pm	2 Pastor on Vacation	3 Pastor on Vacation Council Meeting @ 10:30 am	4 Pastor on Vacation Quilt Club Meeting @ 7 pm	5 Pastor on Vacation	6 Pastor on Vacation Men's Breakfast Buddies will meet at Valley Dairy/Leechburg @ 8:30 am Ladies Lunch Bunch will meet at the church at 11:00 am to go to the Moonlight Inn. Quilt Club Sew-In
14 11 a.m. Worship 	15	16 Finance Committee Mtg. @ 4 pm	17 Pastor in the office	18 Quilt Club Meeting @ 7 pm	19	20
21 1 st Day of Summer 11 a.m. Worship  3 p.m. - Summer Concert/Randy Quinn	22 Lions Club Mtg. @ 6 pm	23	24 Pastor in the office Newsletter Assembly & Mailing @ 10 am	25	26	27 Quilt Club Sew-In
28 9:30 a.m. - First Communion Class/Fellowship Hall 11 a.m. Worship	29	30	<div style="border: 2px solid blue; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> SYNOD ASSEMBLY June 12-13 PENNWEST UNIVERSITY CALIFORNIA, PA </div>			



June 2026



DATE	7	14	21	28
ASSISTING MINISTER	William Kerr	Carmen Cypher	Tammy Manko	David Coulter
COMMUNION ASSISTANT	Lisa Carnahan	Georgia Richardson	Carmen Cypher	William Kerr
LECTOR	Georgia Richardson	David Coulter	Tammy Manko	René Copeland
CANTOR	David Coulter	David Coulter	David Coulter	David Coulter
USHERS	Melvin Silvis Kim Harmon Kim Knepshield Eloise Loughlin	Melvin Silvis Calvin Deemer Vivian Boyer Sandra Hollis	Melvin Silvis Donna Stone Beverly Tickle Jack Tickle	Calvin Deemer Kevin Geer Leland Geer Joe Marchitelli
GREETERS	Cindy Shaner Leslie Smeltzer	Cindy Shaner Leslie Smeltzer	Cindy Shaner Leslie Smeltzer	Cindy Shaner Leslie Smeltzer
ACOLYTE	Kim Harmon	Brennon Faulkner	Calvin Deemer	Matthew Faulkner
ALTAR GUILD	Vivian Boyer Eloise Loughlin	René Copeland Marlonna Moore	Georgia Richardson Grace Olson	Lisa Carnahan Kim Harmon
PEW COMMITTEE	Leslie Smeltzer	Leslie Smeltzer	Leslie Smeltzer	Leslie Smeltzer
CAMERA PERSON	Kevin Geer	John Shaner	Kevin Geer	Lisa Carnahan

Please obtain your own substitute if these dates conflict with your schedule.

Please notify the church office by Wednesday of any changes.

If we are not in the office, you may leave a message on the answering machine.

Thank You!

