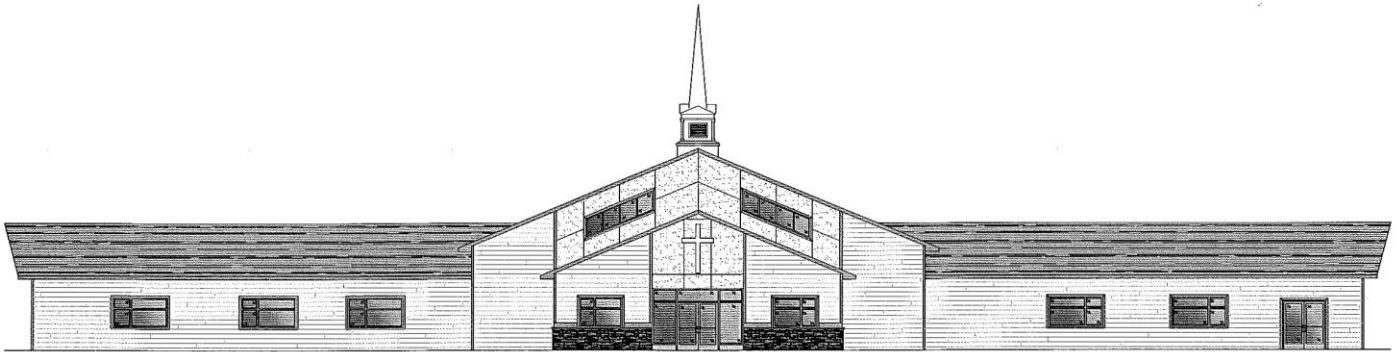


New Member Handbook

This booklet has been prepared to acquaint members with the ministry of this congregation.



First Lutheran Church - LCMC

We are a member of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.

Growing God's Family by Serving

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“What is LCMC?”



LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS IN MISSION FOR CHRIST IS AN ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE:

- ◆ **FREE IN CHRIST;**
 - ◆ **ACCOUNTABLE TO ONE ANOTHER;**
 - ◆ **ROOTED IN THE SCRIPTURES AND THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS —**
- WORKING TOGETHER TO FULFILL CHRIST’S GREAT COMMISSION TO GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS.**

Tell me more about what that means.”

- ◆ **We are free in Christ.**

Lutherans always have celebrated the freedom we have in Christ. Our freedom is based in the Biblical notion of freedom that Paul set forth in Romans 6. It is a wonderful paradox that Christians find their freedom by being bound to Christ. As we submit ourselves to the Lordship of Jesus Christ we discover the joy of real freedom.

- ◆ **We are accountable to one another.**

LCMC is an association of congregations. We have a great respect for the reality that the church is where the people of God are gathered together around Word and Sacrament. The local congregation is where the church becomes a concrete reality for God’s people.

At the same time we are joyously aware that each congregation is a part of the greater body of Christ. The actions of each congregation within our association reflect on our association as a whole. And the actions of our association reflects on the whole body of Christ. For this reason we have committed ourselves to a common set of ministry standards.

Congregations have significant latitude in ordering and shaping ministry in their local setting, and we intentionally have made joining and leaving the association simple. We also have a disciplinary process for addressing congregations whose actions violate our agreed-upon statements of faith and practice.

◆ **We are rooted and grounded in the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions-**

Our association is firmly committed to accepting the normative authority of the Bible. We reject the notion that science, personal experience, tradition, or other human endeavors have equal footing with the Bible. We are certainly aware that these endeavors contribute to our conversations and deliberations, but the Bible must be our final authority in matters of faith and practice.

We also believe that the Lutheran Confessions offer us accurate interpretations of the Biblical witness and we commit ourselves to being guided by them in our life together as an association.

. . . WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER TO FULFILL CHRIST'S GREAT COMMISSION TO GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS.

LCMC has one primary mission: that of sharing the life-giving **Gospel of Jesus Christ**. We are focused on starting congregations in this country, supporting missionaries around the world, and raising up and training leaders to serve Christ and His church.

LCMC is committed to knowing Jesus and making Jesus known. The association is dedicated to helping member congregations live out this mission.

"Where can I get more information?"

www.lcmc.net

**Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
7000 Sheldon Road
Canton, MI 48187-2753
Phone: 734-207-5400
Toll Free: 866-720-LCMC (5262)
Fax: 734-459-2311**



Worship at First Lutheran

Worship is the heart and soul of a church. It is the time where we as the Body of Christ are called and gathered together to hear God's Word and to receive the Sacraments in our school of faith.

There are two options for Sunday worship: 8:30 AM is a contemporary service and 10:00 AM is our traditional service. A time of fellowship follows each service. Communion is served on the 1st and 3rd Sundays.

Greeters

Greeters warmly welcome all visitors to the building on Sundays between the two services.

Ushers

Ushers assist during the service by handing out bulletins, collecting the offering, and ushering the congregation forward on communion Sundays.

Scripture Readers

Members of the congregation volunteer to read appointed scriptures at the traditional service.

Altar Guild

Those who serve on the Altar Guild prepare the altar for communion. Volunteers serve one or two months out of the year usually with a partner.

Choir

The choir meets Sunday evenings at 7:00 p.m. from September—May and sings periodically at worship services.

Special Music

If you can play a musical instrument or enjoy singing in small groups other than the choir you are welcome to compliment our worship services with your talents. You may contact our music director, Brian Wick at 715-263-2739 to volunteer.



Christian Education

Growing in faith requires the study of the Bible. From our earliest years we should have opportunity to hear God's Word. First Lutheran has a variety of programs for spiritual growth and all members are encouraged to be involved.

Sunday School

All children of the congregation are encouraged to attend Sunday School during the school year. Children begin classes at 4 years old and continue through 6th grade.

Vacation Bible School

Every summer a week-long Bible school is held. Children are invited to register for a time of Bible study, singing, games, and crafts.

First Communion Instruction

First Communion is offered to our 5th graders on Maundy Thursday. Instructional classes are held during Lent before that time.

Confirmation Classes

Confirmation classes meet on Wednesdays for 7th through 9th graders. A Confirmation service is held for the 10th graders who meet all of the requirements of the program on Reformation Sunday.

Additional opportunities for Bible study are available through Lutheran Men in Mission for Christ, Women of the Word, and our Youth Group.

Library

A small library is available for all members to utilize. There are parenting and grief resources as well as Bible study volumes and theological works. The check out procedure is posted on the shelves.



Outreach Ministries

The local church seeks to reach out with the love of Christ. We pray for one another and embrace each other in our times of trial. We visit our sick and share love in an informal network of compassion. We share our faith and seek to bring others to Christ. There are additional opportunities for service described below.

Quilting & Sewing Ministry

Tuesdays at 9 a.m. a group of women meets to assemble quilts that are provided to people in need. All are welcome and you do not need to be an experienced quilter. These women also sew dresses, shorts and sleep sacks and knit hats. Their love warms many worldwide.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The last Wednesday of the month at 9:00 AM a group of women meet to pray and make prayer shawls to be given to any person experiencing trial or joy. Everyone is welcome to come or make and donate. Anyone who would like to give a prayer shawl is welcome to take one from the racks in the church entry at no cost. Please do sign up so prayers can be given for the individual receiving the prayer shawl.

Lifeline Food Pantry

The Lifeline Food Pantry is a non-profit organization located in the Community Center in Clear Lake. There is a collection basket in our entry. You might also consider donating your time to provide assistance for distributing food from the pantry site. Contact the Lifeline Food Pantry directly at 715-263-3846.

Every year any number of special projects are also undertaken. Some of the activities have routinely included care packages for military personnel, toy drives at Christmas, school supply drives, the Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign, Habitat for Humanity workdays, and Red Cross Blood Drives. Special events are often held for those facing extreme medical bills or the loss of homes, and numerous offerings are received for disaster response, world hunger and evangelistic outreach. There are many ways to love thy neighbor through First Lutheran.



Fellowship Ministries

There are three main avenues of fellowship at First Lutheran in addition to a time of fellowship following worship services every Sunday. These avenues are described below. Christ desires us to be one body building each other up in mutual support and encouragement. Our fellowship groups bring people together for friendship, spiritual growth and service. You are invited to get connected.

Women of the Word (WOW)

The women's ministry currently runs three Bible study fellowships. Priscilla, Joanna and Evening Grace meet monthly. Current church newsletters will detail times and places.

The Women of the Word also meet quarterly for business, planning and a devotional fellowship.

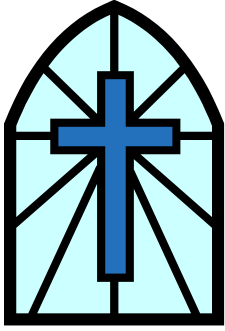
There are four groups that serve on a rotating basis for funeral dinners and other special events as well. All women of the congregation are assigned to one of the groups and are called as needed for service.

Lutheran Men in Mission for Christ (LMMC)

Lutheran Men in Mission for Christ is a group of men from First Lutheran and the community that meets the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month for breakfast, Bible study, and fellowship. Breakfast is served at 6:30 AM and is followed by a study at 7:00 AM

Youth Group

The youth fellowship meets at least once a month. All youth grades 7-12 meet together for service projects, discipleship, and fun. Friends are most welcome. Every summer youth are encouraged to attend Bible Camp or a Servant Trip. High School youth meet on Wednesdays from 7-8:00 AM for a light breakfast and Bible study during the school year. Our youth also have a room of their own that is open on Wednesdays and Sundays for games and conversation.



Committees

Every congregation has a structure for organizing its ministry. At First Lutheran we have a Council which oversees all the ministry and property of the congregation. Several additional committees are also organized for specific tasks as described below. The Council and the various committees are always looking for committed members to share in their work on an as needed basis.

Church Council

The Church Council conducts the overall ministry of the church at monthly meetings. The Council consists of twelve members. Each member is voted to a three year term by the congregation at our Annual Meeting. All other committees of the church are responsible to the Church Council. Each Council member is involved with one of the following committees:

Worship – This committee sees that adequate provisions are made for such things as a choir, special music, ushers, acolytes, altar arrangements, banners, etc. This committee should meet semi-annually in January to make preparations for Lent and Easter worship and September to make preparations for Advent and Christmas worship.

Education – This committee oversees all child and adult education. The major avenues for this include Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Confirmation, First Communion, adult and teenage study series, and workshops. This Committee should meet annually during the summer months to make preparations for Sunday School and Rally Day.

Finance – This committee oversees all financial matters, and any stewardship appeals. Their concerns include offerings, counters, memorials, budget recommendations, insurance, special appeals and publicity of needs. This committee should meet annually in November to draft a church budget and arrange for the audit of the General Fund.

Property – This committee provides for the repair and upkeep of the church, parsonage, lots and contents of buildings. They supervise any personnel who care for the physical maintenance. This committee should meet annually in April to plan a clean-up day for the church grounds and any needed workdays for inside projects as well as preparing for any maintenance projects for the upcoming year.

Outreach – This committee promotes Christian concern and contact with new members, prospects, inactives and shut-ins. They seek to provide evangelism education among our members for mission locally, nationally and world-wide. They oversee the greeting of visitors and literature for prospective members. This committee also educates and encourages our congregation in matters pertaining to the social needs and well-being for our members, our local community, the nation and world. This committee meets as often as needed to carry out its duties and works in cooperation with the local ministerial.

Youth – This committee supervises and promotes youth activity in our church. This committee should meet monthly during the school year to coordinate youth events. An Executive Committee of youth officers should be elected in October at a youth group kick-off meeting. Such youth officers will work in cooperation with adult supervisors to manage and lead the affairs of the youth group including finances.



A Note About Stewardship

Stewardship at First Lutheran is an opportunity that all of us share in. We can describe most of our role as God's stewards in three statements:

1. EVERYTHING WE HAVE COMES FROM GOD.

We may work hard for what we have but we do it using talents and opportunities that come from God. As good stewards, we should share the time and talents God gives us as well as the treasure they allow us to earn. John's Gospel tells us, "For of his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace" (1:16).

2. GOD GAVE ALL THIS TO US FOR A REASON.

God easily could have given each of us all that we need to live as totally independent beings. Yet each of us has been given more than we need of some things and less than we need of others. So rich in some resources but not in all we need to share to receive. As Peter writes in his first letter, "As each one of us has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (4:10).

3. I AM BLESSED SO I MIGHT SHARE

Members are asked to prayerfully consider the matter of personal stewardship. Each member receives offering envelopes and is informed of additional needs for giving as they arise. Every member will also fill out a Time and Talent Survey so they might indicate those areas in which they can serve. Special appeals may be made from time to time as need arises. Each member is expected to contribute in some manner joyfully and sacrificially so God's work can be done through your congregation.