



November 2025
#789

The Chimes

First Lutheran Church
1206 Whitehall Road
Muskegon, MI 49445
Phone: (231) 744-1522
Fax: (231) 719-9015
office@firstlutheranmuskegon.org



From Pastor Bill

There are churches in our community that describe themselves as “vertical churches.” By that, I think they mean that they are churches that emphasize the vertical relationship between God and us humans.

I appreciate that, because our personal and corporate relationships with God matter deeply. We as Lutheran Christians want to nurture those relationships, thinking that that these relationships are foundational.

But we don’t think that the relationship with God can be spoken of without mentioning the horizontal relationships between people. The author of First John puts it this way: “Those who say, ‘I love God,’ and hate a brother or a sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they cannot see. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.”

To love God is to love people. To be in a relationship with God is to be in a relationship with people. Vertical and horizontal belong together. For me, you cannot have one without the other.

I realize that if the church says that it is a vertical church it is much easier to define the church’s mission. If the focus is on connecting God and people, you won’t have to deal with realities that seem tangential to the life of the church. If it is all about people’s relationship to God, then what you use your building for, for example, is clearly defined. It won’t need to be open for the sake of the horizontal dimension: the bike trail commission, people who play pickleball, the Lion’s Club, bunco and basketball players, traveling cyclists. They won’t be thought of as a necessary part of the church’s mission.

But for those of us who bring verticality and horizontality together, they are an integral part of our mission. We can’t do church without our connection to the community. And the community involves people of all kinds, groups of all kinds. For us to love is to open our doors to the horizontal. Now I know that this makes our life together more difficult, certainly messier. But it’s in the complexity and disorder of life that we are called to live out who we are. And it’s there, also, that we are discovered by the God who meets us at a cross, the ultimate symbol of the messiness of life and the ultimate coming together of the horizontal and the vertical.



From Pastoral Assistant Paula

Happy Thanksgiving! November is the month set aside to celebrate the harvest and give thanks for all the blessings we have received throughout the year. And while I think setting aside a day to offer thanks is good, I'm a firm believer in the *twelve-month-plan* where gratitude and thanksgiving are a part of our DNA. But truthfully, it's not easy to be grateful while living in a time when so many things in our country and in the world are in disarray. Armed ICE officers are strolling the streets in many cities in the US - looking for someone who fits a particular profile. Housing costs have risen, children are hungry and equitable healthcare seems a distant dream.

But... I am extremely grateful for the ceasefire and end to the war in Gaza. I am extremely grateful for the return of the Israeli hostages and the Palestinian prisoners who have been held on administrative charges for months and years. Yes, it's a time to celebrate with people who have been victims of injustice and now live life outside of bondage. But...I am extremely pained for those who are left behind in the fray of injustice.

I believe one of the hardest things to do as Christians is hold both suffering and celebration together. And if you know me well, I want life to fit a more orderly pattern. Embrace the suffering, see new life emerge and celebrate! Sometimes life does work out that way but more often than not, someone we love is suffering. People we know - or don't know - are living in war zones, starving, and filled with fear. People are in recovery from addiction, a new baby is born, and a broken heart is healed.

So what does the *twelve-month-gratitude-plan* look like? We give thanks, daily. We work toward peace and justice, daily. We lament with the suffering, daily. It's hard work and it's joyful celebration all wrapped up in one! Won't you join me in thanksgiving and prayer this month as we yearn for change, justice, liberation, wholeness AND sing praise for the harvest of abundance? Frederick Buechner stated, "The place God calls you (us) to is the place where your (our) deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."

I think this is the true nature of thanksgiving and what the *twelve-month-gratitude-plan* looks like.

Happy Thanksgiving and Peace be with You,

Paula

Confirmation

Confirmation is off to a great start!

Our third year students have met with their mentors and begun the process of working toward being confirmed in the spring. Mentorship is such a vital part of our confirmation program and I am thankful for the men who have said, "Yes" to walking alongside the students. These relationships are life-giving not only for the students but for the mentors, too. Please keep the mentors and students in your prayers as they embark on this journey.

Students

Matthew Besteman
Liam Simons
Michael Thomas

Mentors

Andy Luther
Jeff Lucht
John Jack



American Red Cross

The next Red Cross blood drive at First Lutheran will be held on Monday, November 17 between 11:30 a.m. and 5:15 p.m. You can sign-up to donate at www.redcross.org or contact Kim Westerholm at 712-539-8536.

The poster features a photograph of three lit candles in silver holders. One candle is white, and the other two are purple. They are set against a background of blue and white draped fabric. In the foreground, there are small green and gold decorative items and an open book with a red bookmark.








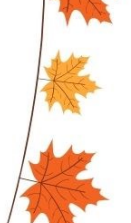
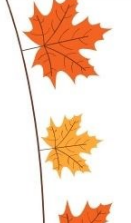
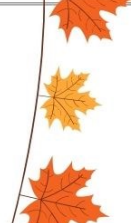
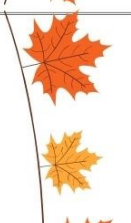
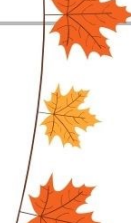
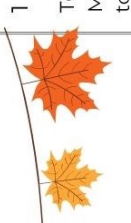
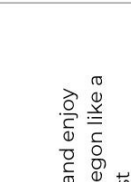


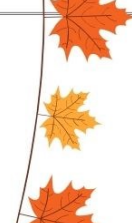
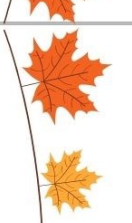
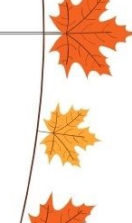
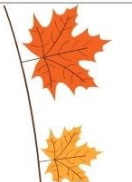
Advent by Candlelight

November 30, 2025

Women are invited to attend Advent by Candlelight on November 30, 2025 from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. This is a special time for us to prepare our hearts for the season of Advent and the birth of Jesus. It is a quiet meditative time with simple table decor. Each host brings a savory and a sweet item to share. The individual, plated food will then be part of a gathering table for all participants.

If you are willing to host a table, please contact Paula at 231-343-2644 or paula@firstlutheranmuskegon.org.

NOVEMBER 2025 GRATITUDE PROJECT

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						
						
2 ALL SAINTS SUNDAY Psalm 69:30 I will praise God's name in song and glorify him with thanksgiving	3 Make yourself your favorite hot beverage today	4 What dream or desire of yours are you grateful for and why?	5 Recall a favorite memory that you're grateful for	6 What changes in your life are you grateful for?	7 Tell your loved ones why you love them	1 Tour and enjoy Muskegon like a tourist
9 Do a random act of kindness	10 Write a letter to at least one person you are giving thanks for this week	11 VETERAN'S DAY Thank a veteran for their service to our country	12 Volunteer to do an unpleasant task	13 List qualities you admire in others, then look for ways to develop those traits in yourself.	14 What is something that made you laugh this week?	15 Name one person who makes your life more exciting
16 Spend time with someone you care about today	17 Spend time in nature today and thank God for his creation	18 What is one good thing that you often take for granted?	19 What do you appreciate about yourself?	20 What made you smile today?	21 What is the best gift that you have ever received?	22 What are your favorite nourishing meals?
23 CHRIST THE KING Bring your items to the church in reusable shopping bags						



November 2025 Gratitude Project



Items Needed

- Feminine Pads
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Toilet Paper
- Detergent
- Fabric Softener
- Cleaning Products
- Deodorant
- Paper Towel
- Toothbrushes
- Body Wash
- Noodles
- Marinara Sauce
- Alfredo Sauce
- Canned Tomatoes
- Canned Tuna
- Canned Chicken
- Tuna Helper
- Chicken Helper
- Rice
- Boxed Potatoes
- Tuna Helper
- Chicken Helper
- Rice
- Boxed Potatoes
- Peanut Butter
- Jelly
- Soups
- Canned Beans (Kidney, black...)
- Canned Gravy
- Meals in a Box
- Mac & Cheese
- Pop Tarts
- Pancake Mix
- Syrup
- Oatmeal
- Canned Fruit
- Canned Stew
- Canned Chili

Many people in our communities continue to struggle with food insecurity. Please consider collecting the items listed to the left. Then bring them to the church in reusable shopping bags (available at all grocery stores), by **Sunday, November 23rd**. Look for tables by the entrances to drop off your food bags.

We will be giving your donations to the Reeths-Puffer Schools so that the food and items may be given to area families in need of assistance.

Thank you for sharing your love and care with our community neighbors!

Dinner at the Lumberman's Vault Everyone's Welcome!

You can invite family and friends too!

The Fellowship Board has arranged for dinner at the Lumberman's Vault (AKA The Core) on Friday, December 19 at 5:45 p.m. We will then see The Christmas Carol at The Stage at the Corner ([280 W. Western Ave](#)- Downtown Muskegon). You will pay for your own dinner, and the play tickets are \$10.00.

You must sign up by December 12th for tickets to be reserved. Sign-up sheets are on the information stations. If you prefer to buy your own tickets, you can do so by going to their Facebook page but please put on the sign-up sheet that you got your tickets ahead of time. If anyone needs a ride, call Deb Roest at 231-744-1936 and put this on the sign-up sheet too. Please come and join us for a wonderful evening to celebrate the joyous Holidays .

Any questions call Deb Roest at 231-744-1936 or Diane Kroll at 231-557-4657.



November 14th at 12:00 noon. Everyone Welcome!

We are going to have lunch at the Love Café at [557 W. Western](#) in downtown Muskegon. Look for the sign-up sheet at both Information Stations. You must be signed up by November 7th so we can make reservations. If you need a ride , please contact Deb Roest at 231-744-1936.

OPTIONAL: We also may go on a museum tour or a movie if you would like.

Please contact Deb Roest at 231-744-1936 or Diane Kroll at 231-557-4637.



Dar Al-Kalima Fundraiser

Mark your calendars for our annual fundraising event to support the ELCA school, Dar Al-Kalima in Bethlehem, Palestine!!! This auction raises monies for the Family Scholarship Program. Each scholarship is \$1600 - which helps those struggling with tuition, teacher supplies, transportation and food. Last year we raised over \$10,000 - which created over six Family Scholarships!

This year, our goal is to raise enough funds to provide ten Family Scholarships. The needs of our Palestinian Christian brothers and sisters are greater than ever and due to the increase of checkpoints around Bethlehem, many parents are not able to leave the area for work.

Auction items will be on display from **Sunday, October 26 - Wednesday, November 5** when we finalize the bids during our Wednesday night dinner. The Outreach Ministry will provide a meal of chicken, baked potatoes and salad - and desserts!!!

If you have any questions about the auction or how to give toward a scholarship, please contact Paula Dusseljee @ 231-343-2644 or email: paula@firstlutheranmuskegon.org.

Thank you from the Fellowship Board Deb Roest and Diane Kroll Co-Chairpersons

Summer Concert Series

Thank you to all attended the concerts in Walker Park this August. The Fellowship Board has overseen providing food and drinks and treats for the 3 weeks that we have the concerts. The Fellowship Board members were not able to attend, so the Worship and Music Ministry stepped up to help with the first concert to provide volunteers and serve food and drinks Thank you to the Fellowship Board for preparing and setting up and serving the food and drinks for the 2nd and 3rd weeks. Everyone seemed to love the grilled hot dogs and the other snacks and drinks. A special shout out goes to Steve Ferski and Dale Roest for being there every week to help. Thanks to Kaitlynn Sutton for her expertise in the food business. Thanks to Lisa, Joanne, Barb and Julie from the Fellowship Board for helping too. The music was wonderful, and everyone had a great time.

We were able to provide the Love Café \$300.00 and the Quilters and the Grief Support group \$140.00 each. Thanks again for supporting the music and concerts in the park. See you next year.

Annual Church Picnic

Thank you to all the ministries of our church for participating in our annual church picnic on September 7. It was a very fun day. We appreciate all your help with the grilling, set up and clean up and attending to all games. We saw kids and adults interacting with all the games; that is what we love. Thank you to Barb Bonifield's crew for setting up and decorating the gym. It looked great!!! Thank you to all the church members for bringing all the potluck dishes. Yummy !!! Thank you to the Fellowship Board for organizing the event and doing the dessert auction. We have some wonderful bakers here at First.

We were able to raise \$660.00 for the Love Café. Thank you to everyone for supporting our church and the community.

Lumber Queen

Thank you to all our church members who came out to support Muskegon arts by seeing the "Lumber Queen" at the Stage (The Corner) on October 4. We had a great dinner at the Lumber Town Vault (AKA "The Core") before the play. We had great food, and we were able to talk with our church family members and had some great Fellowship with each other. The food was excellent, and we would highly recommend this place to others. We then went to the play. What an awesome show!!! We have such wonderful talent here in Muskegon including our own Mary Beth Liskey. Dana Olsen and DJ Hilson and all the others were spectacular. Thanks again for the great turn out from First Lutheran. WAY TO SHOW UP FOR OUR COMMUNITY!!!

Werling Fundraiser

Thank you to Donn and Diane Werling and family for having the fundraiser to buy First Lutheran some new trees and plants for the church grounds. Thank you to Elise and Shar for helping them provide the special music that they had for the fundraiser and to celebrate their 55th wedding anniversary. The music was wonderful.

Thank you to Kathleen Cobler and her crew for setting up and decorating the gym. It looked beautiful. Thanks to the Building and Grounds team for helping her, too. A big shout out goes to the Fellowship Board which includes Deb Roest, Diane Kroll, Lisa Ferski, Kaitlyn Sutton, and Julie Traver. Also helping was Steve Ferski and Cameron Moore with the cooking, assisting Kaitlyn Sutton with her magic. Thank you to the Fellowship Board for organizing, shopping, preparing the food and cooking and serving. The luncheon was so wonderful and delicious and surely reminded us of October Fest. The food was a big hit. Thank you to Julie Traver for her apple bars. They were so tasty. Thank you to Tina Trulsen for chipping in and helping in the kitchen and clean up. Thanks to the cleanup Lisa Ziemelis, Amy and Grace Werling, Kent Johnson, Jim Sutton and others. Thank you to all the church members who donated food for the event. We couldn't have done this without the help of everyone. Thanks again. We were able to raise over \$600.00 for this project. Way to go First Lutheran!!!





Thanks to the October Chimes assemblers:

Dave and Theresa Buchan



Thanks ever so much to all my church family “sisters” who helped after my recent surgery! I couldn’t have managed without you!

Humbled and grateful beyond words!
Debby Jaquith

From the Stewardship Ministry and Pastor Bill

Thanks to all of you who participated in our recent stewardship campaign, especially those of you who completed a financial commitment card. Those commitments help us in our planning. Right now, we are in the process of planning our budget for 2026. Because of our financial situation, you will likely see some major cuts in our budget. Some of those cuts will come in staffing, since more than 60% of our ministry expenses are in staffing. This will likely result in changes in some of our staffing, something you will hear about in the upcoming months.



Official Acts



Baptism

10/23/2025

Josephine (Josie) Margareta Strong

Date of Birth: 04/02/2020

Parents: Rob and Sarah Strong

Sponsors: Barb and Christopher Egeler



Weekly Offerings

For week ending: 09-07-2025:

General Fund: \$9,596.55

Building Rent: \$1,302.00

Building Enhancement: \$65.00

Dollar A Day (for carpet): \$527.51

Abiding Memorial: \$30.00

For week ending: 09-14-2025

General Fund: \$7,161.49

Building Rent: \$377.00

Building Enhancement: \$110.00

Dollar A Day: \$92.00

Noisy Offering (for Lutheran World Relief): \$189.03

Abiding Memorial: \$50.00

Week ending 09-21-2025:

General Fund: \$9,108.75

Building Rent: \$185.00

Building Enhancement: \$215.00

Noisy Offering (for Lutheran World Relief): \$73.00

Abiding Memorial: \$100.00

Week ending 09-28-2025:

General Fund: \$5,367.83

Building Rent: \$137.00

Building Enhancement: \$165.00

Noisy Offering (for Lutheran World Relief): \$189.72

Sunday	Weekly Scripture Readings
11/2	Dan 7:1-3, 15-18, Ps 149 Eph 1:11-23, Luke 6:20-31
11/9	Job 19:23-27a, Ps 17:1-9, 2 Thess 2:1-5, 13-17, Luke 20:27-38
11/16	Mal 4:1-2a, Ps 98 2 Thess 3:6-13, Luke 21:5-19
11/23	Jer 23:1-6, Ps 46 Col 1:11-20, Luke 23:33-43
11/30	Isa 2:1-5, Ps 122 Rom 13:11-14, Matt 24:36-44



November Birthdays

1	Olivia LaChapelle	11	Michael Jones Peter Nyblad	25	Suzie Udell
2	Bill Uetracht Noah Rop Ben Rop Deb McCarthy	12	Nick Garcia	26	Douglas Fenbert
3	Megan Tanis	13	Stefanie Freeland Michael Shields	27	Karen Crummel Sandie Fazer
5	Dale Roest Sharon Genter Kevin McClurken	15	Rachel Metiva Barbara A. Pellerin Lincoln Daniell	28	Jennifer LaChapelle
6	Mitchell Anderson	16	Scott Hanson Simon Werling Beth Milligan	29	Mac McDonnell Natalie Dunlap Ellen Bisson
8	Ronald Rich Cassidy Alger	21	Mark Nelson		
9	Rachel Glavich	22	Mandy Wheeler Darrell Van Fossan		
10	Barbara Bonifield Rhonda Meloche Daniel Breunsbach	23	T.J. Udell Sandra Nord Steve Byrd		



Keepers

Evelyn Borreson

5847 Stapel Rd
Twin Lake, MI 49457-9342

Gerald and Betty Crenno

1740 Village Dr Apt 318
Village at the Oaks
Muskegon, MI 49442-4288

Theresa Hansen

Robbinswood-Northcrest Campus
2650 Ruddiman Dr
North Muskegon, MI 49445

Tom Mullinnex

2284 Riverwood Dr
Twin Lake, MI 49457-8868

Cheryl Parmeter

Keith Stapel

1228 Lawrence St
Muskegon, MI 49442

Dave Walborn

18552 W Spring Lake Rd
Spring Lake, MI 49456

First Lutheran Church

November 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 6:00PM-Puzzle Competition Fundraiser
2 **Dollar-a-Day Weekend ** 9:15AM-Children's Choir-PreK-5th gr 9:15AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person/On-Line Worship 12:00PM-Bell Choir Rehearsal 12:00PM-New Members Potluck 6:00PM-Listening for the Word 7:00PM-AA Meeting	3 12:00PM-Quilter's Group 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	4 Bulletin Deadline 9:00AM-Pickleball 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 10:00AM-Music Together Class 11:30AM-MARSP Meeting 5:30PM-Ministry Council Mtg 6:00PM-Lion's Club Meeting ** Tues Night Programming **	5 9:00AM-Pickleball 12:00PM-Staff Meeting ** Wed Night Programming **	6 10:00AM-Music Together Classes 12:00PM-Lectonary Bible Study 3:00PM-Clipper Preservation Meeting 4:00PM-Burnished Brass 6:00PM-Worship 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	7 6:00PM-Wedding Rehearsal 7:00PM-AA Meeting	8 8:00AM-Worship & Music Ministry Meeting 4:00PM-Dibble Wedding 6:00PM-Bonnie Bash
9 9:15AM-Children's Choir-PreK-5th gr 9:15AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person/On-Line Worship 12:00PM-Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00PM-AA Meeting	10 12:00PM-Quilter's Group 3:00PM-Sons of Norway Board Meeting 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	11 Bulletin Deadline 9:00AM-Pickleball 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 9:30AM-1st on 2nd Quilt Bee 10:00AM-Lion's Board Meeting 10:00AM-Music Together Class ** Tues Night Programming **	12 9:00AM-Pickleball 12:00PM-Staff Meeting ** Wed Night Programming **	13 10:00AM-Music Together Classes 12:00PM-Lectonary Bible Study 4:00PM-Burnished Brass 6:00PM-Worship 6:00PM-Rental 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	14 5:00PM-Sons of Norway 6:00PM-Wedding Rehearsal 7:00PM-AA Meeting <div>Charge Retreat</div>	15 Chimes Deadline 8:30AM-Men's Breakfast 8:30AM-Women's Breakfast 4:00PM-Goodwin Wedding 5:00PM-Goodwin Reception
16 9:15AM-Children's Choir-PreK-5th gr 9:15AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person/On-Line Worship 12:00PM-Bell Choir Rehearsal 6:00PM-Listening for the Word 7:00PM-AA Meeting	17 11:30AM-Red Cross Blood Drive 12:00PM-Quilter's Group 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	18 Bulletin Deadline 9:00AM-Pickleball 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 10:00AM-Music Together Class 11:30AM-Muskegon County Garden Club 6:00PM-Lions Club ** Tues Night Programming **	19 9:00AM-Pickleball 12:00PM-Staff Meeting ** Wed Night Programming **	20 10:00AM-Music Together Classes 12:00PM-Lectonary Bible Study 4:00PM-Burnished Brass 6:00PM-Private Group Mtg 6:00PM-Worship 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	21 6:00PM-Crafty Group 7:00PM-AA Meeting	22
23 9:15AM-Children's Choir-PreK-5th gr 9:15AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person/On-Line Worship 12:00PM-Bell Choir Rehearsal 6:00PM-Taize' Worship 7:00PM-AA Meeting	24 12:00PM-Quilter's Group 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	25 Bulletin Deadline 9:00AM-Pickleball 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 10:00AM-Music Together Class 6:00PM-Grief Share 7:00PM-Thanksgiving Worship 9:30PM-Compline	26 9:00AM-Pickleball 12:00PM-Staff Meeting	27 **Thanksgiving ** ** Office Closed ** 11:00AM-Klinger Rental	28 ** Office Closed ** 7:00PM-AA Meeting	29
30 9:15AM-Children's Choir-PreK-5th gr 9:15AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person/On-Line Worship 12:00PM-Bell Choir Rehearsal 6:00PM-Advent by Candlelight 7:00PM-AA Meeting	Tuesday Night Programming 6:00PM-Grief Share 6:30PM-Choir 7:30PM-Band 9:30PM-Compline					Wednesday Night Programming 5:30PM-Dinner 6:00PM-Kids' Music Class 6:10PM-Bible Study