



September 2025  
#787

# The Chimes

First Lutheran Church  
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## From Pastor Bill

September has always been synonymous with education for me. It's the month when our kids go back to school and the church restarts many of our programs. And many of our programs are educational in nature.

One of the great gifts that our congregation offers to our members and to the community is our educational ministry. While not trying to brag, I believe that teaching adults is one of my greatest strengths. Honestly, I love doing it, for it gives me energy for the totality of my job.

Can I encourage you to think about how you can connect to our educational offerings? Growth in understanding and wisdom is so important for our discipleship of Jesus. So, please make Christian education a priority for yourself this coming year. Yes, you have time for it. You have time for the things that are important to you.

First of all, make sure that your kids and grandkids are participating in Christian education. Faith formation on Sundays, including our Confirmation program, is important for your kids. It is obvious to many of us who lead in the church that our children are increasingly Biblically illiterate. Many of them don't even know who Biblical characters like Adam and Eve or Abraham and Sarah are. And that is, I am convinced, because they do not participate in Sunday faith formation.

Second, make sure that you as an adult find at least one education program here that will aid you in growing in your discipleship and knowledge. I offer the following possibilities:

- Sunday morning faith formation that begins with a 15 minute social time at 9:15 and some compelling classwork at 9:30
- Our lectionary Bible study on Thursdays at noon (online or in-person) and on Wednesdays beginning October 1 at 6:10 pm
- Our men's and women's breakfast groups that generally meet on the third Saturday of the month at 8:30 am
- Our new member classes that will start on Wednesdays at 6:10 pm, beginning on October 1
- The "Listening for the Word" group that meets on Sunday evenings during the month

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## From Pastoral Assistant Paula

As I write this article, the worship theme for Sunday, August 17 is, "It's a Hot Mess Out There." I would agree. Every time I see death, devastation and starvation flash across my screens, it brings me to tears. It doesn't matter what side of the political divide you find yourself on because as Christians, we cannot ignore the fact that Gaza has the highest number of child amputees per capita and has been rendered incapable of taking care of them. (*Aljazeera*, March 15, 2025) These statistics alone should shake us to the core and wonder what in the world humanity is doing to the precious gift of life - around the world and in the communities closer to home. Yes, it's a hot mess out there and sometimes I just want to get away from it all. But where would I go? To *whom* would I go?

In the sixth chapter of John's gospel, Jesus asks his disciples a similar question: "*Do you also wish to go away?*" *Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. And we have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."*

John's Jesus is asking the disciples if they, too, want to leave the community, an inclusive community modeled after Jesus' public ministry. Some of the Jewish Christians had already left at this point to seek other options of "doing business" or left the Jesus movement altogether. You know, sometimes being in community isn't easy and we have a hard time accepting the ways of others. And honestly, I wish we had better options that wouldn't involve pain and heartache, ours and that of others. I imagine the children and families in Gaza wish they had better options, too. But we are invited into this story to have an encounter with Jesus and that means an encounter with the suffering of the world, too. It means being a part of a faith community where struggles are part of the process.

Yup, it's a hot mess out there, but I wouldn't want to be anywhere else other than learning, growing and serving alongside all of you. So come, join me in worship, Bible study, Faith Formation classes, fund-raising opportunities to help children in Muskegon and in Bethlehem, Palestine; come to the table and eat, partake in the gift of God's grace.

"Allah maak" (له معك)  
"God is with you",  
Paula

### ***If Only We Had Better Options***

by Michael Coffey  
(Mystery without Rhyme or Reason)

do you also wish to go away  
he asked and stunned us like electricity,  
and we whispered under our breath

yes we would like an easier path  
clear cut through the oak forest  
something that made sense at last

or better, we wish you would go away  
Jesus, you keep complicating and confusing us  
and messing us up so we can't think straight

if only we could have not known you  
and heard your words that burn in us now  
and never felt your spirit radiate its way through us

right on into the infinite yes  
but then again, before you  
was only the deafening finite *no*

and the deathtrap of our anxious breathless days  
so, no, we don't want to go away  
because, honestly, where would we go?



## From Shar From the *Music World*

### Get Your Act Together!

It's time to start working on your special, secret and spiffy act for the upcoming variety show! Here are a few things to keep in mind:

1) ***There will be awards!!*** Do you have the cleverest use of the staircase? Do you have the most "unique" talent? Are you the crowd favorite? These are just a few of the categories!

2) ***Do you embrace the theme, Three Courses?*** Your evening will begin with delightful hors d'oeuvres – Course 1. It will continue with a smorgasbord of delightful talent – Course 2. Grab some sweet treats at intermission and enjoy the rest of the show in a sugar "haze"! – Course 3.

3) ***Be there!*** The fun will take place on Friday, October 17 starting at 6:00 p.m. We plan to send the proceeds to a "yet-to-be-determined" charity. **NONE** of the proceeds will be used to pay for any of the coveted awards!



(Continued from page 1)

- Paula's book studies that happen throughout the year

Find a way to connect to at least one of these educational ministries this year. I think I can be bold enough to say that you will be glad you did. These opportunities are some of the best hours of our common life. Truthfully, many of us haven't taken time to participate in Christian education since our youth. Our discipleship is certainly stunted by this reality. It is time to grow up in our faith understandings.

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Weekly Scripture Readings</b>
9/7	Deut 30:15-20, Ps 1, Philemon 1-21, Luke 14:25-33
9./14	Exod 32:7-14, Ps 51:1-10 1 Tim 1:12-17, Luke 15:1-10
9/21	Amos 8:4-7, Ps 113 1 Tim 2:1-7, Luke 16:1-13
9/28	Amos 6:1a, 4-7, Ps 146 1 Tim 6:6-19, Luke 16:19-31

# Confirmation

## Calling all Confirmation Students!

We will begin our classes on September 7, at 9:15 a.m. We look forward to seeing the kids together again and watch them grow in their faith and friendships!

If you have any questions, please contact Paula or Pastor Bill.



## Women's Retreat is Coming!!!

**When:** September 19 -21  
Arrival time: 4:00-6:00 p.m.

**Where:** Grace Adventure Retreat Center  
2100 N Ridge Rd, Mears, MI 49436

**How:** Sign ups will be at the information stations;  
space is limited so sign up today!

**Contact** Paula with any questions.  
[paula@firstlutheranmuskegon.org](mailto:paula@firstlutheranmuskegon.org)



- ✝ Faith Formation Classes begin September 7 at 9:15 a.m.
- ✝ Jeff Lucht will be teaching the high school class
- ✝ The first adult faith formation class is called "Life, Death, Heaven and Hell: Your Future and Ours". In this class we will consider the Christian teachings on death and on the symbols of heaven and hell. We will wonder about where life and creation are going. We will think about what it means to prepare for death. We will reflect on whether faith is a matter of "accepting Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior" and thus securing for yourself a place in heaven. The class will begin with 15 minutes of socializing at 9:15. The classwork will begin at 9:30.



## ***Step Right Up!*** **First Lutheran Annual Church Carnival & Picnic September 7th after 10:30 a.m. Service**

We are providing hamburgers and hot dogs, tea and lemonade. We also will have cotton candy and popcorn and a bounce house. Please bring a dish to pass as follows with last name starting with

*A- L Hot Dishes*

*M- Z Cold Dishes.*

We are asking for donations of whole pies from anyone. We are having a pie auction to help raise money for Love Cafe. You can buy your pie and eat it too! Sign-up sheet for bakers at information stations.

We have kids and adults games together this year. We would really like everyone to participate. It will be a lot of fun.

If you have any questions please call Deb Roest at 231-744-1936 or Diane Kroll at 231-557-4637.



## Plastic Bag Recycling Coming Soon!

Beginning in September, FLC will be participating in the **NexTrex Recycling Challenge**. The Trex Company has hosted the recycling challenge since 2006, with the goal of educating the public on the importance of plastic film recycling through school and community recycling programs.

FLC will be collecting plastic film (bins will be near the information stations), which Trex will recycle into decking and other materials. Our goal will be to recycle a minimum of 1,000 pounds of plastic between September 2025 and August 2026. This program is for plastic films only – think **grocery bags, bread bags, Ziplocs, bubble wrap**, etc. – not water bottles or other hard plastics. Please see the graphic for items that can be recycled and note that these items must be clean, dry, and free of food residue. This is another opportunity to care for creation by keeping these materials out of landfills.

Contact Kathryn Hall (734.612.8690) if you have questions.

### What can be recycled?

*All plastic must be clean, dry and free of food residue.*



Grocery bags



Bread bags



Bubble wrap



Dry cleaning bags



Newspaper sleeves



Ice bags



Plastic shipping envelopes



Ziploc & other reclosable food storage bags



Cereal bags



Case overwrap



Salt bags



Pallet wrap & stretch film



Wood pellet bags



Produce bags



## Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup



As part of our care for God's creation, First Lutheran has made a commitment to participate in the MDOT Adopt-A-Highway (AAH) program (<https://www.michigan.gov/mdot/programs/highway-programs/roadside-property-management/adopt-a-highway>). Every year, AAH volunteers collect more than 60,000 bags of trash from Michigan's roadsides! (Don't let that scare you - we usually collect no more than 8-10 bags.)

We work along a stretch of M-120 to pick up trash three times each year. Anyone aged 12 and over is welcome to participate. We work in small groups, each covering a portion of the route (~1 mile of walking). This is a great opportunity to do something good in the community, care for creation, and get to know others from FLC. Please join us – many hands make light work!

Our final cleanup of 2025 is scheduled for **Saturday, September 20 at 10:00 a.m.** Most teams cover their route in 60-90 minutes – we should be finished before noon. We'll meet at the church, have a brief safety meeting, and then head to our assigned location. Trash bags and safety vests will be provided. "Grabbers" are also available so there's not a lot of bending, but you might want to bring some work gloves. Make sure to dress for whatever Michigan weather we're having that day!

Sign-up sheets will be available at the information stations. Please contact Kathryn Hall (734-612-8690 or [kathryn.a.sweet@gmail.com](mailto:kathryn.a.sweet@gmail.com)) if you have questions. We hope you can join us!

## Wednesday Night Programming Returns

October 1

5:30 p.m. Dinner  
6:00 p.m. Kids' Music Class  
6:10 p.m. Bible Study  
6:10 p.m. New Member Class

Please Join Us!



## Update from Stewardship Ministry

The theme for our Stewardship Ministry this fall is “**In It Together**”. We chose this theme to emphasize the importance of belonging to this community, where everyone matters and has a place. During the month of October, we will explore this theme, including how we build community, serve others, and practice generosity. Each week, we’ll have a brief reflection on these topics, and during worship on October 23 and 26, everyone will be invited to offer a pledge of support for the church’s ministries in 2026.

We look forward to exploring with you how we’re “In it together!”



## New Member Classes Begin

Wednesday, October 1  
6:10 p.m.



## Men's Breakfast

September 20

8:30 a.m.

Join us for this first gathering  
of 2025/26



YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO THE  
**INSTALLATION**

OF THE

**REVEREND JULIE  
SCHNEIDER-THOMAS**

AS BISHOP OF THE NORTH/WEST LOWER  
MICHIGAN SYNOD OF THE EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

SEPTEMBER

SATURDAY

**13**

4:00 PM

2025

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

2700 FULTON ST E, GRAND RAPIDS, MI

ROSTERED MINISTERS ARE INVITED TO VEST AND PROCESS

THE COLOR OF THE DAY IS RED





*Thanks to the August Chimes assemblers:*

Dave and Theresa Buchan



## Weekly Offerings

### **Week ending 07-06-2025:**

General Fund: \$8,685.84  
Building Rent: \$487.00  
Building Enhancement: \$95.00  
Dollar-a-Day: \$348.00  
Abiding Memorial: \$2,475.00

### **Week ending 07-13-2025:**

General Fund: \$29,029.86  
Building Rent: \$237.00  
Building Enhancement: \$220.00  
Dollar-a-Day: \$188.00  
Noisy Offering (Supper House): \$250.71  
Abiding Memorial: \$500.00

### **Week ending 07-20-2025:**

General Fund: \$5,546.84  
Building Rent: \$990.00  
Building Enhancement: \$125.00  
Noisy Offering (Supper House): \$173.51

### **Week ending: 07-27-2025:**

General Fund: \$4,061.18  
Building Rent: \$449.00  
Building Enhancement: \$225.00  
Noisy Offering (Supper House): \$172.21



## September Birthdays

1	Jeff Lucht Lorey Montgomery	13	Erin Schmitz	23	Deborah Roest Mike Strait
2	Karl Ziemelis Chris Corbett	14	Carolyn Ness	25	Amia Mackay
3	Jake Frietsch	15	Renee Petersen Mary Beth Liskey	26	Gail Taggart
5	Dorothy Pfhistner LouAnn Hansen	17	Nancy Burton Matthew Cregg	28	Mylie Neel Richard Sahlhoff
6	Chloe O'Connor	18	Ronald Hansen Sylvia Koski	30	Marcy Joy
8	Roland Crummel Kaitlyn Sutton Andy Will Roger LeMieux	19	Merritt Archer Lana Cassidy		
9	Einar Ness Debra Shields	21	Charles Joy Dianna Radel Nancy Miller-Corbett Kim Westerholm		
11	Jeri Staudacher Cama Shunta	22	Joshua Pfhistner Beverly Uetrict Gerald Crenno Kaleb Kitchka		
12	Patricia Shafer				



## 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**

1681 Sycamore Dr  
Muskegon, MI 49445-3400

### **Keith Stapel**

1228 Lawrence St  
Muskegon, MI 49442

### **Dave Walborn**

18552 W Spring Lake Rd  
Spring Lake, MI 49456

### **Mary Warden**

1740 Village Dr. Apt 222  
Muskegon, MI 49442-4283

# First Lutheran Church

# September 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> * Labor Day * * Office Closed * 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	<b>2</b> <b>Bulletin Deadline</b> 9:00AM-Pickleball 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 9:30AM-Grow a Little Reader 10:00AM-Lion's Board Meeting 11:30AM-MARSP Meeting 4:00PM-New Bells 6:00PM-Lion's Club Meeting 6:00PM-Grief Share 9:30PM-Compline	<b>3</b> 9:00AM-Pickleball 12:00PM-Staff Meeting	<b>4</b> 9:00AM-P.E.O. Meeting 9:00AM-Read Muskegon-ABCs of Cooking 12:00PM-Lectonary Bible Study 3:00PM-Clipper Preservation Meeting 6:00PM-Worship 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	<b>5</b> 4:00PM-Lion's Club 7:00PM-AA Meeting	<b>6</b> 9:00AM-Care Team Mtg 10:00AM-Lion's Club
<b>7</b> **Dollar-a-Day Weekend ** 9:15AM-Children's Choir-PreK-5th gr 9:15AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person/On-Line Worship/Blessing of Backpacks 12:00PM-Church Picnic 7:00PM-AA Meeting	<b>8</b> 12:00PM-Quilter's Group 3:00PM-Sons of Norway Board Mtg 5:00PM-P.E.O. Group 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	<b>9</b> <b>Bulletin Deadline</b> 9:00AM-Pickleball 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 9:30AM-1st on 2nd Quilt Bee 9:30AM-Grow a Little Reader 10:00AM-Lion's Board Meeting 4:00PM-New Bells 6:00PM-Grief Share 6:30PM-Choir 7:30PM-Band 9:30PM-Compline	<b>10</b> 9:00AM-Pickleball 12:00PM-Staff Meeting	<b>11</b> 9:00AM-Read Muskegon-ABCs of Cooking 12:00PM-Lectonary Bible Study 6:00PM-Worship 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	<b>12</b> 5:00PM-Sons of Norway 5:30PM-Bunco 7:00PM-AA Meeting	<b>13</b> 10:00AM-Music Together Classes
<b>14</b> 9:15AM-Children's Choir-PreK-5th gr 9:15AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person/On-Line Worship 7:00PM-AA Meeting	<b>15</b> <b>Chimes Deadline</b> 12:00PM-Red Cross Blood Drive 12:00PM-Quilter's Group 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	<b>16</b> <b>Bulletin Deadline</b> 9:00AM-Pickleball 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 9:30AM-Grow a Little Reader 11:30AM-Muskegon County Garden Club 4:00PM-New Bells 6:00PM-Grief Share 6:00PM-Lion's Club 6:30PM-Choir 7:30PM-Band 9:30PM-Compline	<b>17</b> 9:00AM-Pickleball 12:00PM-Staff Meeting 2:00PM-Grief Support Group Get Together	<b>18</b> 9:00AM-Read Muskegon-ABCs of Cooking 12:00PM-Lectonary Bible Study 6:00PM-Worship 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	<b>19</b> 6:00PM-Crafty Group 7:00PM-AA Meeting	<b>20</b> 8:30AM-Men's Breakfast 10:00AM-Highway Cleanup 10:00AM-Music Together Classes 12:00PM-Rental
<b>21</b> 9:15AM-Children's Choir-PreK-5th gr 9:15AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person/On-Line Worship 7:00PM-AA Meeting <b>Women's Retreat</b>	<b>22</b> 12:00PM-Quilter's Group 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	<b>23</b> <b>Bulletin Deadline</b> 9:00AM-Pickleball 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 9:30AM-Grow a Little Reader 4:00PM-New Bells 6:00PM-Grief Share 6:30PM-Choir 7:30PM-Band 9:30PM-Compline	<b>24</b> 9:00AM-Pickleball 12:00PM-Staff Meeting	<b>25</b> 9:00AM-Read Muskegon-ABCs of Cooking 12:00PM-Lectonary Bible Study 4:00PM-Burnished Brass Rehearsal 6:00PM-In-Person Worship 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	<b>Women's Retreat</b>	
<b>28</b> 9:15AM-Children's Choir-PreK-5th gr 9:15AM-Faith Formation 10:30AM-In-Person/On-Line Worship 6:00PM-Taize' Worship Service 7:00PM-AA Meeting	<b>29</b> 12:00PM-Quilter's Group 6:00PM-Overeaters Anonymous 7:00PM-AA Meeting 7:00PM-Cardio Drumming	<b>30</b> <b>Bulletin Deadline</b> 9:00AM-Pickleball 9:00AM-Seniors Helping Our Parish (SHOP) 4:00PM-New Bells 6:00PM-Grief Share 6:30PM-Choir 7:30PM-Band 9:30PM-Compline			<b>26</b> 7:00PM-AA Meeting	<b>27</b> 10:00AM-Music Together Classes