



First Lutheran Church

First Hand August 2023

First Lutheran Church
208 West Sandusky Avenue
Bellefontaine, Ohio 43311
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Website:
www.flcbellefontaine.org



Pastor Larry Novak— lnovak@flcbellefontaine.org
Office Manager, Rachel Gillespie—rgillespie@flcbellefontaine.org
Director of Music, Judy Vassar—jvassar@flcbellefontaine.org
Bell Choir Director, Stephanie Oaks—sloaks1737@gmail.com

Mission Statement

Sharing God’s grace through
prayer, witness, and service.

OUR WELCOME STATEMENT

At First Lutheran, all means all, and the gifts of god are free. We welcome, love, affirm, and include everyone in our faith community regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Here in this place, you will find a warm, loving Christian family which strives to faithfully proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to all of God’s children. We renounce racism, discrimination, and persecution in any form, in faithfulness to the gospel, and to the best of our ability, we promise to provide ministries and pastoral care to all who seek God in this place.

GOD WELCOMES ALL, AND SO DO WE.

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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

I hate glitter. Can't stand it. Didn't even like it when I was a kid. There was something about it that made it cling to my body like iron drawn to a magnet. If I pick up a birthday card that has glitter on it, you can be assured that the glitter will somehow un-attach itself from the card and make its way over to my fingers within seconds. As a result, I try to stay as far away from glitter as possible. I thought of glitter when, last June, I came across one of the most horrifying videos I have ever seen. It was of a Lutheran pastor, presiding at a church service, who invited her congregation to stand and recite something I had never heard of before-the Sparkle Creed. I was thinking...the what? Sparkle? Like glitter? Well, suffice it to say, when I heard the Sparkle Creed, then looked up the words to make sure I had heard it correctly, I knew that I wanted to stay as far away from the Sparkle Creed as I want to stay away from glitter. I am hopeful that this was something this congregation did only one time, in honor of Pride month. But, as the protagonist in the movie "The Days of Wine and Roses" said about alcohol, "One is too many". The Sparkle Creed was written as a way to have a creed that is inclusive of the LGBT community. I am a strong supporter of civil rights for the LGBT community, but rest assured I shall never lead this congregation in any creed except the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed. Maybe every few years on Trinity Sunday, I will dust off the Athanasian Creed. If anyone was fearful that our becoming a Reconciling in Christ congregation meant that we would start reciting the Sparkle Creed...No, no, a thousand times no.

God is the creator of heaven and earth; all things seen and unseen. The Sparkle Creed says that God is non-binary and uses plural pronouns. What in the world does that mean? God is certainly above gender. I agree with that. But it is theologically incorrect to say that God is non-binary. And plural pronouns? Are they referring to the King James Version that used the king's English, as in "Let us create man in our image"? That was a grammar usage, not a statement about God. And yes, God is a Triune God, three in one. But that is far different from saying God uses plural pronouns. "I am the Lord, your God. You shall have no other gods but me". Those sound like singular pronouns to me. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all God, but the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Holy Spirit. None of the three persons of God are plural.

Jesus the Christ is God's only Son. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus is both fully human and fully divine. He was crucified, died, and was buried. On the third day, he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

All the Sparkle Creed says about Jesus is "that he wore a fabulous tunic and had two dads and saw everyone as a sibling child of God". I don't know if his tunic was fabulous, but I imagine it looked like everybody else's tunic. And while, yes, Jesus has God as his father and a human father in Joseph, who adopted Jesus into his family, the Sparkle Creed completely ignores his mother; not to mention his crucifixion, his death, his resurrection, his ascension, and his second coming. (I agree that Jesus sees everyone as a beloved child of God).

The Holy Spirit is what gives us faith in Christ. Through the Holy Spirit, we have forgiveness of sins and the promised hope of our own resurrection and eternal life.

The Sparkle Creed says: “I believe in the Rainbow Spirit that shatters our image of one white light and refracts it in a rainbow of glorious diversity” Well...okay...it’s nice poetry. But it says nothing of what the Holy Spirit does. Martin Luther’s explanation of the third article of the Creed; the one that speaks of the Holy Spirit, is as follows:

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church, He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day, He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.

We don’t need a Sparkle Creed in order to be more inclusive. The truths revealed in the Apostles, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds are truths for all people, male or female, young or old, gay or straight.

The creeds of the church are sparkle-free; glitter-free, except in how they reveal the amazing light of the one true God who creates, redeems, and sanctifies us all.

In the abiding hope of the empty tomb,

Pastor Larry



Many Gifts But One Heart

(Romans 12:5-8; NRSV)

5so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. 6We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; 7ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; 8the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness. (Romans 12:5-8; NRSV)

Collectively, we are the body of Christ. As one body, our various gifts flow out of a common heart of love for God. Please remember do your best to express your love through your giving. For as suggested by this text, our giving is a testimony that Christ and His body of Christ are alive and well.



Director of Music, Judy Vassar

August 2023

Summer special music has been exceptional. There are several more great musicians that will be sharing their talents.



Summer's Melody By Edel T. Copeland

Rippling crystal waters shine like silver to reflect summer's glow.
Soothing and calming in rhythm, echoing its lyrical flow.
Magical music of nature, a symphony of splendid delight.
Skies like blue oceans in paradise, birds soaring to grasp full flight.

Gentle swans glide gracefully, elegant yet proud and strong,
Birds and bees in unison, the joyful hum of nature's song.
Rolling summer meadows shimmer, like jewels in Mother Nature's crown.
Embellishing fields of emerald green draped in its golden gown.

Light sweet air blows softly, scented by sweet cherry blossom in bloom.
Delicate, pretty petals lifting to dance in harmony with summer's tune.
The sounds and scents of summer, its melody light and free.
Sands of gold that glisten, embracing waves of a warm and whispering sea.

Friend Poems, Aug 2019. <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/summers-melody>



Tuesdays In The Park

We will continue to meet for Lunch on the
1st and 3rd Tuesday in August

August 1st & 15th At Noon

Bring you lunch, lawn chair and a friend.

Any member of FLC and their guests are welcome to join us...women or men. We will enjoy the outdoors sitting over in Oakland Square Park, weather permitting.



PARK CLEANUP

Saturday, August 12th

**Help us prepare the park for our
Worship Service and Backpack
giveaway & picnic on August 13th.**

FELLOWSHIP and CHRISTIAN SERVICE & MISSION MINISTRY TEAMS

Will meet on Monday, August 14th at 7:00 pm in the lounge.

We will be discussing and planning future activities.

Come Join Us!!



BACKPACK SUNDAY

Service in Oakland Square Park

AUGUST 13th

Christian Service and Mission are planning to fill 40+ school backpacks this year. We are asking the congregation to donate the **backpacks only** (*a Thrivent grant was secured to purchase the school supplies*) for this event. ***Please have them to the church by Thursday, August 6th to enable the team to stuff them.*** Backpacks will be handed out to the neighborhood children.



9:00 am: Come early for an opportunity for fellowship with one another before the outdoor service. Doughnuts, coffee, and juice will be available in the park.

10:00 am: Park Worship Service. The service will feature a celebration of VBS, Blessing of the backpacks, Backpack give away and a picnic after the service with hot dogs and chips sponsored by the Fellowship Committee (in conjunction with Christian Service & Mission)



The 2nd bell seminar will be held on Saturday, August 19th @ 2:00 pm. This is for anyone who has ever wanted to ring one of the bells or just to see how the ringing is done. It is meant to be a fun, enjoyable experience. You too could become a “ding-a-ling”!!

MEET OUR NEW CUSTODIAN TONY JENKINS

My name is Anthony “Tony” Jenkins. I was born at MRH on July 29, 1957. I was raised in Huntsville and went to school at Indian Lake Schools and graduated in 1975. After graduation I joined the U.S. Army, 82nd Airborne Division as a combat arms specialist. The 82nd is a paratroop division, the largest combat division in the US Military. I wanted to make it a career but the lady I am married to said “No thanks” so I decided to go with my heart so I became a civilian and have been married for 45 years, thru thick and thin. We have a daughter, married and she has 3 children; a son that is in the military and flies Black Hawk Helicopters for the Army Air National Guard. He has served overseas on 3 deployments. He is married and has 3 children. Our youngest son joined the military with his brother and did 2 deployments with his brother in Iraq. He said after two times he was done. He was already engaged and wanted to get married and start a family. They have 4 girls and he is a gemologist for Michael Eller Jewelers in Findlay. My wife and I live on a small farm outside of Belle Center . We have 5 horses, 4 peacocks and several chickens. I retired as a custodian from Indian Lake Schools after 21 years. I feel that this job will be fine and God meant for it to be.



Thank you,
Tony Jenkins



First Lutheran will be serving Our Daily Bread on August 21st @ 4:15 pm. If you are interested in helping please make the office aware. If you are interested in providing cookies, brownies or cupcakes they can either be taken to Our Daily Bread that day or they can be left at the church and we will make sure they get to Daily Bread.



Dear First Lutheran Church,
Thank you again for the CHEF scholarship. I am grateful to the members of FLC for continuing to show their support throughout my journey.

Sincerely, Jacob McKenrick

Dear First Lutheran Church,
Thank you so much for the CHEF scholarship and the continued support over the years! I am very appreciative for everything you all have done for me, and this scholarship will definitely help as well.

Thank you, Lucas McKenrick

First Lutheran Members,

Thank you for the altar flowers, phone calls, cards, words of encouragement and prayers for me during this trying time. Also a big thank you to Pastor Larry for bringing me communion and visiting me while I was in the hospital. It's going to be a long road to recovery and my church family means a lot to me...you are the best.

Sincerely, Gloria Kipker

LET'S GET BACK TO THE BASICS!

THIS IS MOST CERTAINLY TRUE-LUTHERANISM 101

A FAITH FORMATION COURSE THAT IS PERFECT FOR NEW MEMBERS
AND ANYONE WHO WANTS TO GET A REFRESHER ON THE BASICS OF
THE LUTHERAN FAITH



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

Topics include Lutheran history and heritage, Lutheran polity, and Lutheran beliefs about the following topics:

- God
- Jesus
- The Holy Spirit
- The Bible
- Humanity
- Salvation
- The Church
- Worship
- The Sacraments
- Christian Life
- The Reign of God

Join us Monday afternoons at 1:30 p.m. beginning September 11 or

Tuesday Evenings at 7:00 p.m. beginning September 12.



August Ministry Team Meeting Date:

8/1— 5:30 pm Christian Service & Mission
Ministry Team and Fellowship Ministry Team

8/1— 7:00pm Council Meeting

8/22—7:00pm Worship Team Meeting

2023 Church Council

President- Chris Hildreth Blair

Vice-President- John Bodin

Secretary- Carolyn Novak

Treasurer – John Belser

Financial Secretary – Judy Vassar

Members- Ray Kramer, Judy Lunz, Brittany Porter, Liz Rose, Kris Shannon, Brenda Shively, Ray Swisher



Sunday Attendance for June 2023

	<i>On Site</i>	<i>Online</i>
June 4	65	62
June 11 (Park Service)	57	51
June 18	70	38
June 25	69	52
Average	65	51

The deadline for the **September** newsletter articles is **August 22**



Highlights

Faith Circle

- Continue “Lunch in the Park”

Faith Formation Ministry Team

- VBS

Christian Service & Mission
Ministry Team and Fellowship
Ministry Team

- Backpack Sunday

Finance Ministry Team

- Monitoring of church finances

FLIRT

- Temple talk re: fire drills

Outreach Ministry Team

- Continued outreach to those unable to attend church

Property Ministry Team

- Continued maintenance of property

Worship Ministry Team

- Special music for summer
- Discussion re: contemporary service

Copies of reports from the monthly meetings of each ministry team is available for you to view in the Partners In Ministry Book located in the upper narthex.



During the past month we have remembered many in prayer. We remember in prayer all who are in need of God's presence and care ... especially:

Health Issues

Jordan Banks

Kay Lilly

Terri Heath

Randy Neer

Michael Myers

Sophia Porter

Ed Hildreth

Gene Barger

Ralph Shively

Gloria Kipker

Entered the Church Triumphant

Jon Wallace

Mary Pummel



- 8/1 Rachel Gillespie
- 8/5 Samantha Starkey
- 8/5 Sarah Starkey
- 8/6 Julie Zoldak
- 8/11 April Fultz
- 8/12 Joy Badenhop
- 8/14 Walt Stephan
- 8/14 Ray Kramer
- 8/14 Steve Heath
- 8/16 Peggy Dishop
- 8/18 Margie Anderson
- 8/18 Nicole Clifton
- 8/21 Alexza Clifton
- 8/28 Terry Lunz
- 8/31 Rita liams



- 8/22/2014 Dave & Diane Anderson
- 8/26/1961 Ron & Judy Hadley
- 8/16/1964 Paul & Joann Karn
- 8/09/1957 Keith & Barb Krueger
- 8/24/1973 Ed & Deb Pulfer
- 8/18/1973 Bob & Pat Taylor
- 8/17/1968 Dave & Judy Vassar



VBS THANK YOU

“A big Thank You goes out to our brothers and sisters in Christ for their dedication and generosity throughout VBS week—

Babylon was a BLAST!

We thank God for you.

From your friends at First United Methodist Church

Ashley Reser

Worship Assistant:

August 6 Brenda Shively
August 13 Chris Hildreth Blair
August 20 Cindy Weikart
August 27 Dave Vassar

Communion Assistant:

August 6 Jan VanHoose
August 20 Kris Swisher
August 27 Colleen Bodin

Usher:

August 6 Walt Stephan
August 13 Stacie Jones
August 20 Chris Hildreth Blair
August 27 Ray Kramer

Reader:

August 6 Beth Harman
August 13 Jean Wright
August 20 Kris Swisher
August 27 Margie Bixler

Greeter(s):

August 6 Jim & Janet Donnelly
August 13 Bodin Family
August 20 Misty Kipker
August 27 Carl & Rachel Gillespie

Acolyte:

August 6 Misty Kipker
August 20 Carl Gillespie
August 27 Winnie or Lottie Bodin

Altar Guild:

Colleen Bodin & Kris Swisher

Communion Bread:

Chris Hildreth Blair

August 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 CHEF Sunday Installation of custodian Noisy Money Sunday 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Worship Service	31 10:00am Staff Meeting 12:00pm AA (RH)	1 9:00am Quilters 12:00pm Lunch in the Park 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting	2 11:00am Shelter Team 12:00pm NA (RH)	3 9:00am Homeless Board Meeting 12:00pm NA (RH) 12:00pm NA (RH)	4 Office Closed	5 Office Closed 10:00am Extending the Branch
6 Backpacks Due 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Communion Worship Service	7 10:00am Staff Meeting 11:30am Chaplain MRH 12:00pm AA (RH) 7:00pm Council Meeting 7:00pm Dulcimers	8 9:00am Quilters 11:00am Chaplain MRH 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting	9 11:00am Chaplain MRH 12:00pm NA (RH)	10 11:00am Chaplain MRH 12:00pm NA (RH)	11 Office Closed 10:00am Backpack Stuffing	12 Office Closed 10:00am Extending the Branch 11:00am Park Cleanup 11:30am Extending the Branch
13 Backpack Sunday 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Park Worship Service 11:00am Picnic in the Park 4:00pm Extending the Branch	14 10:00am Staff Meeting 12:00pm AA (RH) 7:00pm Fellowship & Christian Service & Mission Ministry Meeting	15 9:00am Quilters 12:00pm CORE Meeting 12:00pm Lunch in the Park 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting	16 12:00pm NA (RH) 3:00pm CORE Meeting	17 12:00pm NA (RH) 6:00pm Outreach Meeting	18 Office Closed	19 Office Closed 2:00pm Bell Seminar 7:00pm Dulcimers
20 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Communion Worship Service	21 10:00am Staff Meeting 12:00pm AA (RH) 4:15pm Our Daily Bread	22 9:00am Quilters 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting	23 12:00pm NA (RH)	24 12:00pm NA (RH)	25 Office Closed	26 Office Closed 1:00pm Extending the Branch
27 6th Grade Bible Presentation 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Communion Worship Service	28 10:00am Staff Meeting 12:00pm AA (RH) 7:00pm Worship Ministry Team Meeting	29 9:00am Quilters 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting	30 12:00pm NA (RH)	31 12:00pm NA (RH)	1	2