

FIRST HAND

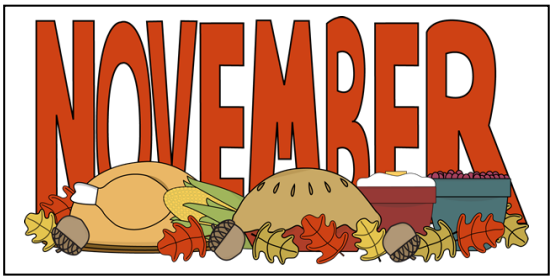
First Lutheran Church
208 West Sandusky Avenue
Bellefontaine, Ohio 43311
937-592-7699Website:
www.flcbellefontaine.org

Mission Statement:

Sharing God's grace through prayer, witness, and service

Vision Statement:

Connecting people to Jesus and one another





Pastor Larry Novak– lnovak@flcbellefontaine.org

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Director of Music, Judy Vassar – jvassar@flcbellefontaine.org

Bell Choir Director, Stephanie Oaks - sloaks1737@gmail.com

Custodian — David Linebaugh

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

So, who will be our next governor, Vivek Ramaswamy or Dr. Amy Acton? Who will we elect for the Senate; will we keep John Husted or bring back Sherrod Brown? And what about the issues? Will we vote for a new 1% local tax on earned income to fund Bellefontaine schools? Will we pass a new property tax increase for the Logan County Board of Developmental Disabilities? Or require that identification to vote be not only a state law, but also enshrined in the State Constitution? Shortly after this newsletter is published, we will know the answers.

Obviously, it would be completely inappropriate for me to tell you as a pastor who a "good Christian" should vote for, or what issues to support. I have read stories of pastors who, from the pulpit, have said that no good Christian could be a member of a particular political party, and I find such comments profoundly ungodly. I used to believe that while it was not OK for pastors to publicly support specific candidates, that it was okay for a pastor to support specific issues. But as I get older, I wonder if even this is a wise policy. I never would want to give the impression, for example, that if a person voted against the tax increase for schools that he or she did not back public schools or that they did not support our children. It may very well be that a person feels that the school district has not spent money wisely and chooses to withhold additional tax money until the schools do a better job of stewardship.

But while it is inappropriate for me to recommend people or issues to support, I CAN emphasize the importance of voting and of civic engagement.

On November 2, the downtown churches, hosted by First Lutheran, will hold an evening vesper service where we will pray for our newly elected leaders, calling them to have servants hearts, to care for the marginalized, and to pray for justice and peace. We also pray for an end to the vicious hatred that polarized politics can result in, hatred that demonizes those who disagree with us, hatred that end friendships and tears apart families. This will not be a partisan affair where we pray for this candidate or that candidate to be elected, or for any specific issues to pass or fail. We are not calling for the end of political differences so that we all think alike.

We call for a return to a commitment to engage one another with love and remember that Christians are all brothers and sisters in Christ, and those who are not Christians are still beloved children of God.

The most recent social statement of the ELCA, Faith and Civic Life, came out just last year. Article 48 of that documents states that:

The ELCA urges vigorous civic engagement for the public good as a responsibility of all U.S. residents and as one of our Christian callings. No single solution will reduce the increasingly fevered polarization of the U.S. or repair the damage that endangers our social fabric and democratic republic. One fundamental element is a renewed, constructively grounded, and thoughtful commitment to civic life across this nation. Hyperpartisan polarization is, in part, the result of individuals ***withdrawing*** *from widespread participation in civic life. This church holds that the return to a robust civic engagement as a public good is both our calling as Christians and our responsibility as residents of this country. The social message "Government and Civic Engagement: Discipleship in a Democracy" addresses at greater length the nature and purpose of a healthy civic engagement, especially in relation to citizenship. Among other elements, that message teaches that civic engagement takes numerous forms—informed voting, attendance at public meetings, holding public office, political party involvement, policy advocacy, community organizing, and nonviolent protest….The ELCA urges its members and all residents of this society to contribute to and urge robust civic participation.*

And the conclusion of the social statement says:

Your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread." As Jesus taught the disciples, so we pray in this church. We do so in concert with Christians down through the ages and into the future who, in the Spirit, are witnesses to God's will for just peace and well-being. We do so in faith, understanding that God's creative power is shared throughout all creation and is given to human beings to use in civic life for the good of all. May we walk humbly with you, O loving God, as we strive for justice, kindness, and peace in human society. May we as your church live wisely by the civic use of the Law in joining your purpose toward shalom. May we, as your

people, join all others of goodwill in the work of government as gift, aspiration, and responsibility to serve the common good of "we the people." May we, as your forgiven ones, be empowered by your gracious Word and Sacraments to courageously seek the well-being of all through our participation in civic life.

Whether you vote red or blue or purple, God loves you, and so do I.

In the abiding hope of the empty tomb,

Pastor Larry



FINANCIAL SECRETARY

November – Your budget is a statement of faith

Does your church look at the annual budget as an accounting tool, a spreadsheet that shows where the money goes? That's another way that can help you express your church's mission!



Director of Music

November Newsletter

The chancel choir provided some wonderful music in October. The women's choir number on November 11, 2026, was exceptional.

Bell choir will be welcomed back in November.

The Joint Thanksgiving Service this year will be at Philadelphia Lutheran Church on Sunday, November 22, 2026, at 3:00 PM.

Cherished Moments
Each memory we share,
like a precious stone,
Is a testament to friendship,
and love shown.
For the laughter, the tears,
and moments so fond,
Thank you for the bond,
that goes beyond.
Here's to more memories,
and times we'll go through,
With deepest gratitude,
I thank you.

Famous Quote of the Month

Music is a language that doesn't speak in particular words. It speaks in emotions, and if it's in the bones, it's in the bones." — Keith Richards



Suggested Food Items for November

- soup
- crackers
- canned veggies

There are several donation bins in the lower narthex always collecting something. However, there is one bin in particular that I've noticed has somewhat faded into the background. And that is the bin for LCS Food Pantry. In these difficult times, our donations are needed more than ever.

Christian Action Ministry Team is stepping up to bring more awareness to Food Pantry donations. There will be a monthly suggestion for donated food items.

As you are doing your weekly or monthly grocery shopping, consider throwing some additional food items into your cart. It doesn't take much and will provide much-needed food to our neighbors. THANK YOU!

Our Daily Bread

The next evening, we will be serving Our Daily Bread is **Monday, November 16th.** If you can't help us serve, but would still like to help you could provide the dessert. Desserts needed are cupcakes, cookies or brownies. Volunteers are asked to arrive at Our Daily Bread about 4:15 pm prior to the serving time of 4:30 pm. If you are planning to help, please let the office know.



Quilt News

The quilters who meet at First Lutheran every Tuesday morning have placed 200 quilts on the pews that will be sent to Lutheran World Relief. Some other quilts have gone to the homeless here in our community. One was donated to Marmon Valley Farm for their scholarship fund.
The following quilters participated this year:

Gloria Anderson
Jane Bialecki
Cindy Blair
Marjorie Bixler
Ginger Buchenroth
Jan Canaday
Jodie Cavanaugh
Jinny Fergus
Linda Goff
Rosalee Horn
Jay Hunt
Kathy Ivan
Eleanor Kirkbride
Elaine Lattimer
Nancy Losey
Dianna Small
Lois Stoll
Mary Beth Stoltz
Sarah Stump
Kendra Thurman
Cindy and Tom Weikart

Thank you to everyone who donated. A total of 208 quilts were sent to Lutheran World Relief this year.

SUNDAY ATTENDANCE FOR September

	On Site	Online
September 6	59	71
September 13	45	0
September 20	65	105
September 27	65	5
TOTAL	234	181
Average	59	60



TUESDAY

LUNCH IN THE COURTYARD!

Lunch in the Courtyard will meet on Tuesday November 3rd & 17th at noon.

Bring your lunch and lawn chair in the hopes of being able to sit in the park. If the weather doesn't cooperate, we'll meet in the Courtyard

This is a time for good fellowship. Come, Join Us! Women and Men, All are invited!

Faith Circle will meet Tuesday Nov 17th at noon. Bring your lunch. We will be signing up for Sunshine Bag items.

FALL FESTIVAL

A Chili Cook-Off!

Sunday November 15 following worship



Enter to Win!
1st prize - $50
2nd prize - $30
3rd prize - $20

Enter your favorite pot of chili – or soup.

Attendees will vote for their favorite.

Please pre-register and submit a copy of your recipe to the church office.

YOUTH OUTING-FOR KIDS OF ALL AGES

LET'S GO BOWLING!

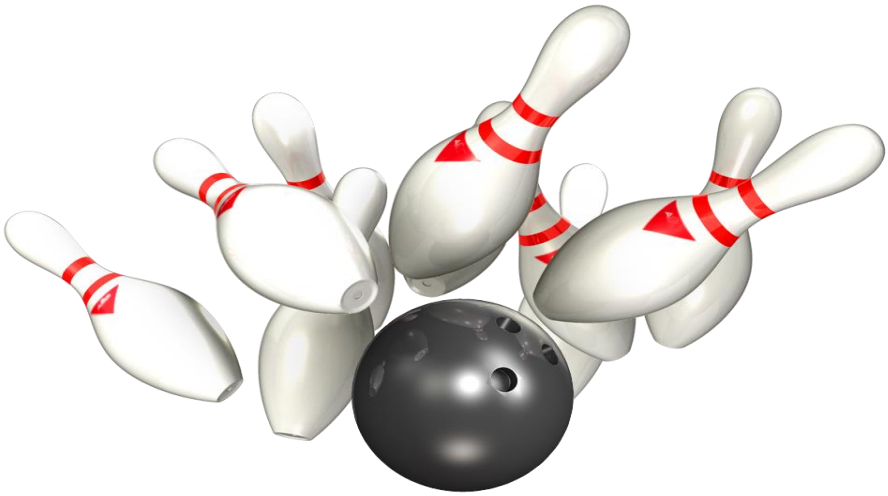
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2026-1:00 PM TO 3 P.M.

TP LANES

300 E LAKE AVE, BELLEFONTAINE

PARENTS WELCOME

THE CHURCH IS PAYING FOR THE YOUTH-ADULTS PAY $14 PER BOWLER (COVERS BOWLING, SHOES, PIZZA, DRINK)



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Sign up required so T.P. Lanes knows how many Pizzas to make!
(One pizza for every five bowlers)

Ministry Team Meetings

11/11	7:00 pm	NLCF
11/14	9:00 am	Property
11/17	7:00 pm	FLIRT
11/23	7:00 pm	Worship

Church Council– 2026

President – Sue Neer

Vice-President– Brian Hogan

Secretary– Stephanie Oaks

Financial Secretary - Judy Vassar

Treasurer—Rita Iiams

Members—Amy Adkins**,** John Bodin, Marshall Blair Hildreth, Gary Kauffman, Jessica Morris, Kathy Fultz



Articles for the November 2026 Newsletter will be due by Monday, **November 19th.**



Highlights

- ***Christian Action***

Projects

- ***FLIRT***

Continued safety plan

- ***NLCF***

Continued grant requests

- ***Outreach***

Developing new ways to reach neighborhood families.

- ***Property***

Repairs

- ***Worship***

Special services

Contemporary Services

- ***WELCA***

Tuesdays in the Courtyard

Projects

- ***Quilters***

275+ quilts in 2024

- ***CHEF***

6 grants given in 2024

- ***FAITH FORMATION***

Sunday School

Youth Events

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 or Surgery

Gauge Iiams **Debora Shannon** **Beth Novak**

Erica Nance **Susan Wyckoff** **Gary Fergus**

Entered the Church Triumphant

Woody Amidon

11/03 Lucas McKenrick
11/04 Jeff Smith
11/05 Brayten Swisher
11/06 Amy Heath
11/08 Maxine Brunke
11/10 Gail Keck
11/11 Ed Pulfer
11/17 Carl Gillespie
11/22 Chris McKenrick
11/24 Keith Krueger
11/28 Brent Swartz
11/30 Winnie Bodin
11/30 Brooks Bodin





11/24/1991 Mike & Julie Zoldak



Grieving a loss?

Find hope and healing after the death of a loved one.

Join us at

GriefShare®

Weekly grief support group

Bellefontaine First UMC
201 N Main St
Bellefontaine, OH

Tuesdays 6-8 pm

Sept 1st—Dec 8th

Register by calling
937-592-9651

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Santa's Gift Shop

First Lutheran Church will be hosting Santa's gift shop in Rice Hall on Saturday, December 12th from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Kids from the neighborhood can come in and "buy" (it's free!) a gift for Mom, Dad, Brother, Sister, or Grandparent. Cookies and juice boxes will be available.

We are looking for people to donate small new gifts suitable for men, women, or children. Suggested items are books (adult and kids), coffee mugs, wallets, hand creams, perfumes, costume jewelry (in original packaging), new toys, flannel throws, etc. We are discouraging gifts of clothes other than gloves, hats, scarves, or new socks, because young children have no idea what size their parents wear. We also need Christmas wrapping paper. Monetary donations will also be accepted.

Please bring the items to the church on or before Sunday, December 6th. There will be marked boxes in Rice Hall.

We will also need people to volunteer on the day of the event to help kids wrap presents, and serve Christmas Cookies and juice boxes to kids. Sign up sheets will be in the lower narthex closer to the date. Help us spread the joy of Christmas!



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Serving in Our Worship– November 2026 10:00 am service

Worship Assistant

11/1	Alexis Hogan
11/8	Brenda Shively
11/15	Kris Shannon
11/22	Chris Hildreth Blair
11/29	Chris McKenrick

Communion Assistant

11/1	Dave Comstock
11/8	Cheri Comstock
11/15	Liz Rose
11/22	Barb Triplett
11/29	Misty Kipker

Reader

11/1	Mike Adkins
11/8	Marjorie Bixler
11/15	Jean Wright
11/22	Jessica Morris
11/29	Beth Harman

Altar Guild

Stephanie Oaks

Greeters

11/1	Ginger Buchenroth
11/8	Betty Vondenhueval
11/15	Jinny Fergus
11/22	Walt Stephan
11/29	Mike, Amy Adkins & Family

Acolyte

11/1	
11/8	
11/15	Delaney Reffner
11/22	
11/29	Brooks Bodin

Ushers

11/1	
11/8	
11/15	Misty Kipker
11/22	
11/29	

Communion Bread

Cheri Comstock

November 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:45am Adult Bible Class 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am All Saints Communion Worship Service	**2** 10:00am Staff Meeting 6:30pm Dulcimers (RH) 7:00pm Council Meeting	**3** 9:00am Quilters 9:30am Cluster Meeting @ Philadelphia Lutheran 12:00pm Lunch in the Courtyard 12:00pm Speaker's Bureau Meeting	**4** 3:00pm NA (RH) 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting	**5** 12:00pm Homeless Shelter Meeting 3:00pm NA (RH) 7:00pm Choir Practice 8:00pm Bell Practice	**6** Office Closed	**7** Office Closed
8 8:45am Adult Bible Class 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Communion Worship Service 2:30pm Green Hills Service	**9** Chaplain MRH 10:00am Staff Meeting	**10** Chaplain MRH 9:00am Quilters	**11** Chaplain MRH 3:00pm NA (RH) 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting 7:00pm NLCF Meeting	**12** Chaplain MRH 3:00pm NA (RH) 7:00pm Choir Practice 8:00pm Bell Practice	**13** Chaplain MRH Office Closed	**14** Office Closed 9:00am Property Meeting [Lounge]
15 Fall Festival in Rice Hall after Service 8:45am Adult Bible Class 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am WELCA Thankoffering Communion Worship Service	**16** 10:00am Staff Meeting 4:15pm Our Daily Bread 6:00pm LCS Board Meeting	**17** 9:00am Quilters 12:00pm Lunch in the Courtyard 7:00pm FLIRT Meeting [Lounge]	**18** 8:00am Logan County Pastors Breakfast @ Goshen Friends 3:00pm NA (RH) 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting	**19** 3:00pm NA (RH) 7:00pm Choir Practice 8:00pm Bell Practice	**20** Office Closed	**21** Office Closed 1:00pm Youth Outing - Bowling
22 8:45am Adult Bible Class 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Communion Worship Service 3:00pm Thanksgiving Eve (Eve) Service @ Philadelphia Lutheran	**23** 10:00am Staff Meeting 7:00pm Worship Ministry Team Meeting	**24** 9:00am Quilters	**25** 3:00pm NA (RH) 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting	**26** HAPPY THANKSGIVING - GOBBLE GOBBLE! Office Closed 3:00pm NA (RH)	**27** Office Closed	**28** Office Closed
29 Noisy Money/CHEF 8:45am Adult Bible Class 9:00am Fellowship Time 10:00am Communion Worship Service	**30** 10:00am Staff Meeting	**1** 9:00am Quilters 12:00pm Lunch in the Courtyard	**2** 3:00pm NA (RH) 3:00pm Pastor's Meeting	**3** 3:00pm NA (RH) 7:00pm Choir Practice 8:00pm Bell Practice	**4** Office Closed	**5** Office Closed