

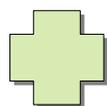


## First Lutheran is a Christian community, grounded in grace and called to bring light to a changing world.

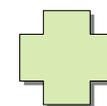


After listening to God, to ourselves, and to each other, this is who we are and who we are called to become.

We are Grounded in Grace	We Build a Community of Authentic Relationships	We Strive to Be Welcoming	Worship and Its Music Connect Us	We Connect to Pastors
<p><b>We want members and others to know what "Good News" grace really is by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exposing young and old to Jesus' central message that, before we ever ask, we are simply and completely loved by God.</li> <li>• Infusing all areas of discipleship with grace, and nourishing the experience of it throughout the life of the church.</li> <li>• Providing opportunities to learn and accept grace as paramount.</li> <li>• Deepening our conviction that, once we realize gratitude for what God has already shared with us, we want to share it with others.</li> </ul> <p><i>Christians can differ about how grace works, but we agree that God loves us and we need it. FLC strives to keep always before us the understanding that grace, God's original love for all people, is the cornerstone of our faith. Grace is freely given through Jesus Christ. We have good reason to respond gratefully in all we do.</i></p>	<p><b>We strive to grow a community of safer, more sincere, caring, and spiritual relationships by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intentionally including others, and having fun doing so.</li> <li>• Respecting, sharing, and celebrating our varied faith practices and worship styles.</li> <li>• Developing relationships and gatherings that reach well beyond worship.</li> <li>• Working to communicate to everyone in ways that can respectfully involve all who want to participate.</li> <li>• Preparing congregation leaders to create and seize opportunities to foster deeper, more meaningful connections.</li> </ul> <p><i>We have been taught that we truly meet Christ in each other when we stop to notice. We hope to deepen our relationships and help all who seek it to find family within our congregation. Inside and outside its walls, FLC is to be a place where all of us can satisfy our hunger for a place to gather as people of God, make dependable ties, and find Jesus in each other.</i></p>	<p><b>We want to be welcoming to all, without bias, engaging all as friends by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being warm, approachable people.</li> <li>• Growing the process of embracing and inviting in new people.</li> <li>• Identifying and approaching visitors, sponsoring and connecting new members.</li> <li>• Forming new ministries dedicated to extending welcome to visitors and guests and renewing welcome among members.</li> <li>• Providing clear information and directions for those trying to find their way around the building and the organization.</li> <li>• Uniting in our goal to grow God's people, in and through our congregation.</li> </ul> <p><i>FLC strives to provide a welcoming atmosphere for all people. We take up Jesus' command to love one another in how we welcome, invite, and include others.</i></p>	<p><b>We desire rich, evocative worship experiences to bring God's love and call close in our lives by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging a varied Christian community through a variety of traditional and modern liturgy, music, and arts.</li> <li>• Meeting our own needs for familiarity and newness, reverence and passion in organized worship services.</li> <li>• Exploring further how shared worship practices and experiences can connect us to each other.</li> <li>• Actively exploring how worship can serve evangelism.</li> <li>• Going beyond worship as an organized activity to worship as a way of life, promoting prayer and passionate spirituality.</li> </ul> <p><i>All hearts, minds, bodies, and souls are welcome in God's presence. Although we may recognize different ways, we all approach worship experiences to bring God closer, inspiring us to ask God further into our hearts and more freely offer ourselves to God's work in the world.</i></p>	<p><b>We love approachable, inspiring pastors, and seek healthy, thriving relationships with them by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeking a stimulating, nurturing exchange in which closer, more caring relationships with pastors flourish.</li> <li>• Learning from thought-provoking sermons.</li> <li>• Asking pastors to be available to members for counseling, teaching, and caregiving on an individual basis.</li> <li>• Developing the kind of team approach to caregiving — Luther's "Priesthood of All Believers" — that a church our size depends on to visit new members, the sick and homebound, the disaffected, and others who need or want spiritual care.</li> </ul> <p><i>While we have many instincts, we agree that we need pastors who can relate, teach, and care. A church our size is challenged to join them in caregiving and build a culture in which we expect as much from ourselves as from them.</i></p>



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The Church Has Left the Building	We Value Religious and Cultural Diversity	Keep Lifelong Faith Formation Vibrant	Youth Matter to Us	We Are Living Out Lutheran Heritage Today
<p>Community outreach is an integral part of who we have become. We proudly embody God's message by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing to reach out to those in our community who need assistance with food and shelter.</li> <li>Growing the many opportunities we have (and enjoy!) to serve others, to work for social justice, and otherwise to put our hands to God's work.</li> <li>Living out the ELCA slogan, "God's Work Our Hands", in a way which not only does true good but recalls how we represent God, FLC, and the whole church.</li> <li>Growing in overall stewardship, where time, talents, and financial support all come forth abundantly.</li> </ul> <p><i>We want to continue to be known in the community as the church who lends a hand to anyone in need. Through our outreach we are able to heal as God intended, tangibly sharing God's message for all of us, and become more and more the godly people Jesus asked us to be.</i></p>	<p>Every member of our congregation is unique. We strive for a rainbow of thoughts and ideas by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintaining and growing a safe space where people can dialogue or debate without fear of being judged for their opinions.</li> <li>Throwing the doors open wider to all races, ethnicities, special needs, and orientations.</li> <li>Being welcoming to seekers, lifelong Christians, people from different denominations, and people new to the faith.</li> <li>Emphasizing in available media how everyone is welcome.</li> <li>Developing ways to reach out to, and re-connect with, persons who may be subjects of bias.</li> <li>Continuing to develop partnerships with cultural and cross-cultural programs in our community.</li> </ul> <p><i>Diversity of thought and belief makes for a richer experience and an opportunity to live out Christ's call to unity. We seek to better obey the command to make room for the stranger at our table.</i></p>	<p>We value opportunities to grow in our faith and strengthen our fellowship by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having diverse classes appropriate to all ages.</li> <li>Identifying opportunities both to learn and to teach, within and beyond the classroom.</li> <li>Encouraging, developing, and nurturing small groups of various kinds.</li> <li>Maintaining a meaningful, in-depth program that energizes children, youth, and their parents to remain actively involved in faith and builders of good relationships throughout life.</li> <li>Respecting intelligence and opinion, allowing for doubts and challenges to faith as necessary steps to growing it.</li> </ul> <p><i>Opportunities to learn should be varied enough to meet the many learning styles and needs of members. We value time spent broadening and exchanging ideas, through Bible and topical studies, in formal and informal settings, and within and outside worship.</i></p>	<p>Youth are the future of this congregation and others'. We strive to provide what they need by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regularly scheduling youth events that excite for faith- and relationship-building.</li> <li>Passing on Lutheran principles through effective and innovative faith formation classes.</li> <li>Regularly providing outreach and "in-reach" service opportunities.</li> <li>Increasing pastoral involvement in faith formation and youth activities, similar to having a youth pastor.</li> <li>Creating an organized ministry that carries beyond confirmation, bridging into young adulthood,</li> </ul> <p><i>In this ever changing world, our youth desire and deserve a safe, nonjudgmental, and engaging environment in which they can learn about faith, formulate beliefs, build healthy relationships, and establish a foundation for adulthood.</i></p>	<p>We value our Lutheran heritage and want to keep it relevant by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remaining rooted in scripture, grounded in grace.</li> <li>Educating ourselves about others and building bridges with other denominations and faiths where possible.</li> <li>Involving ourselves with others, in ways that bring the reconciling word and example of Jesus to life here and now.</li> <li>Educating ourselves on the changing ways in which church and world can interact and continually reforming to help timeless truths speak to our own time and place.</li> </ul> <p><i>Lutherans are well-placed to make God's transforming love well-known within a rapidly changing world. As followers of Jesus, we are to love, serve, and help reconcile all to God and to each other. We recognize and respect both sinner and saint in each other. We continually reform ourselves, our community, our actions, and through them, the world.</i></p>