FIRST LUTHERAN
CHURCH & SCHOOL

Reimagining Our Ministry

Flexible Governance - Amplified Outreach

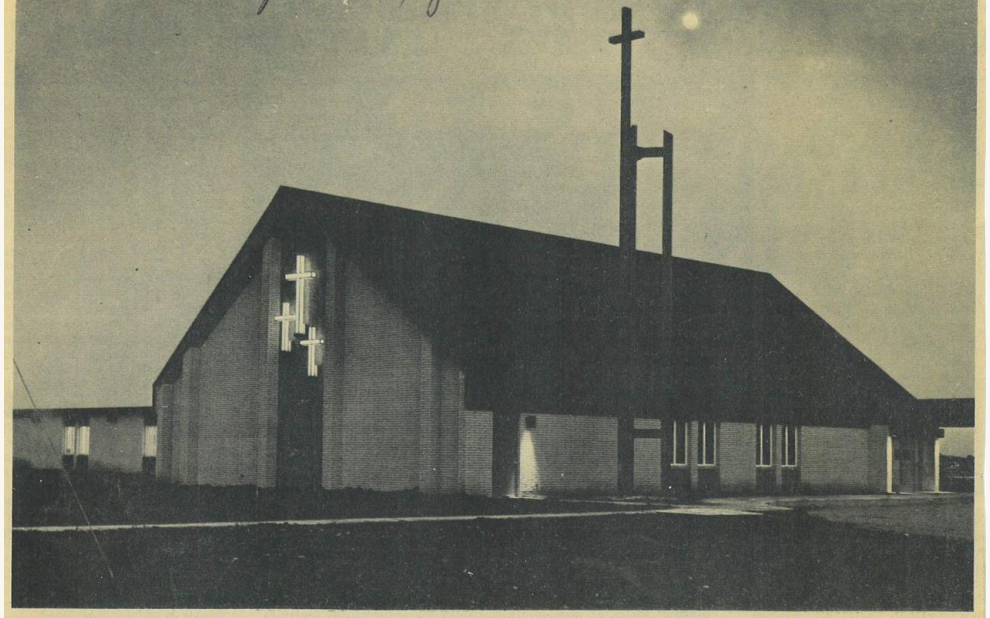
Feedback Gathering Session - 11/08/2026

Opening Prayer

Our Mission

We live as God's children, to be nurtured by the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacrament, and to share our Savior, Jesus Christ, with all people.

A Brief History of Governance



THE NEW FIRST EVANGELICAL Lutheran church provides an added dimension at the corner of Centralia and Devendorf streets now with the lighted crosses at dusk along with a full moon over the iron cross structure. Dedication services for the new sanctuary and adjoining education wing is scheduled for Sunday worship services at 8 and 10:15 a.m. and at 7:30 p.m. There will be an open house after each service and another from 2 to 5 in the afternoon. (Independent Photo)

First Lutheran Church Will Dedicate Facilities Sunday

Dedication Services Sunday at 8 and 10:15 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. in the evening, will officially inaugurate the new facilities at First Evangelical Lutheran church of Elkhorn. There will be Open House after all three services and from 2-5 in the afternoon to which the public is in-

was reached to build a new church and attached Sunday school and fellowship area.

Through the use of sound absorbing 4 foot movable panels and Modernfold accordian type movable walls, the large fellowship area is divided into eight completely enclosed and almost

of the hall, which is an extension of the spacious church entrance.

Featured in the new church are the beautiful lights from the old church, and the stained glass window showing the figure of Christ knocking on the door. The church is fully carpeted and the pews are padded. A modern

gives excellent acoustics for the pastor's portion of the service, and a factory directed installation of the Rodgers organ does a fine job of leading the congregation in singing and liturgy.

Three lighted crosses, made by Jack Gunyon, of Elkhorn, highlight the north end of the church

Our 1960s Constitution

Dedication of the new church June 9th, 1974

The 1960s Legacy in 2026

Rigid leadership structure

- Fixed administrative roles
- People placed in roles that don’t match their passion or talent
- More focus on reporting than doing
- Roles and responsibilities not clearly defined
- Some boards overloaded with responsibilities

Inflexibility & Culture

- Standards that served their time but don’t adapt easily
- Slow to respond to new opportunities
- Slow approval pathways
- Robert's Rules alienate casual or younger leaders
- “Ask for Permission” mindset

Administrative Burden

28

ELECTED MEN REQUIRED

The Scarcity of "Bodies to Fill Slots"

- **Fill 28 roles** every cycle, regardless of skill sets
- **Shuffle the same people** between roles
- **Reporting pushes out** spiritual care and mission

What's Next?

- **Elevate** the fellowship experience
- **Infuse flexibility** into our daily activities
- **Bring up a new generation of church leaders**!

Our Biblical Blueprint

Heirs Together

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

— 1 Peter 2:9

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

— Revelation 1:5-6

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

— Romans 12:1

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

— 1 Peter 4:10

Shining as Stars in the Sky and the Light of the World

> *Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain.*
>
> **— Philippians 2:14-16**

Are we shining?

Can we do better?

Can we revisit the biblical principles and make fresh applications in a way that pleases God and builds up current and future generations of believers?

Rescuing & Redeeming
the High and Holy Calling of Head & Helper

Culture is Not King, Jesus Is

How did we get here?

What happens when society forgets the unique callings of male and female?

Head and Helper

- The doctrinal principle is that God designates **men as head**, and **women as helper**.
- The challenge for Christians now is to determine how best and most faithfully to apply this doctrine, without being **legalistic** or **lax**.

Serving in the Roles God Has Given: Head

- **Head is a high and holy calling from God in which he entrusts his authority to someone who is to exercise that calling in a spirit of humble servant love for those under the head's care.**
- Someone whose calling is head serves under God's blessing with God-given gifts and talents. The head is God's visible tool to bring physical and/or spiritual blessings and protection to those placed under the head's care. That head is ultimately responsible to God for faithfully carrying out the assigned task.
- A wise head carries out that task in partnership with those God has given as helpers. That may also often include equipping those helpers so that they can make the most of their gifts.

Serving in the Roles God Has Given: Helper

- **Helper is a high and holy calling modeled after God's own saving help to his people.**
- Those he calls to that position serve as God's visible tools with their God-given gifts and talents together with, and under the authority of, their head(s).
- Those who are helpers are also responsible to God for the faithful use of their gifts and talents.
- Helpers work in partnership with the head(s) God has given to equip them to accomplish the God-appointed task.

Blessed Service to God

The Bible guards us against rating the service of women or men. They are not more or less important based on how spectacular their gift. Nor are they more significant if they are in more “public” service in church compared to more “quiet” service rendered to God and neighbor.

Blessed Service to God

> 4 *There are different kinds of gifts, but the same*
> *Spirit distributes them.* 5 *There are different kinds of*
> *service, but the same Lord.* 6 *There are different*
> *kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone*
> *it is the same God at work.*
>
> **— 1 Corinthians 12:4-6**

Serving the Lord Together as Members of the Body of Christ

> [1] *I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae.* [2] *I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been the benefactor of many people, including me.* [3] *Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus.* [4] *They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them.* [5] *Greet also the church that meets at their house. Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia.* [6] *Greet Mary, who worked very hard for you.* [7] *Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Jews who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.*
>
> **— Romans 16:1-7**

Greetings to the Brothers & Sisters in Christ

> 8 *Greet Ampliatus, my dear friend in the Lord.* 9 *Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ,*
> *and my dear friend Stachys.* 10 *Greet Apelles, whose fidelity to Christ has stood the test.*
> *Greet those who belong to the household of Aristobulus.* 11 *Greet Herodion, my fellow Jew.*
> *Greet those in the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.* 12 *Greet Tryphena and*
> *Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord. Greet my dear friend Persis, another*
> *woman who has worked very hard in the Lord.* 13 *Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his*
> *mother, who has been a mother to me, too.* 14 *Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas,*
> *Hermas and the other brothers and sisters with them.* 15 *Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and*
> *his sister, and Olympas and all the Lord's people who are with them.*
>
> **— Romans 16:8-15**

God's Good Plan: Head & Helper

God has a good plan. He made it in perfection.

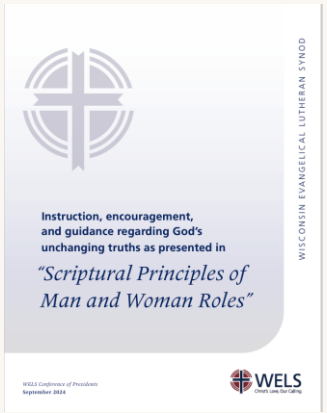
We are no longer perfect. However, we can learn a lot from his original and wise, balanced and beautiful design.

Christ who is the perfect head of the church makes us new through the power of the gospel so that we may appreciate and champion and proclaim his good and gracious will.

Let us live as his kingdom of priests as we serve each other in the roles that God has given to us, and in this way we can be salt and light in our fallen culture, and we can serve as a blessing to those around us.

Let us learn and live his Word!
From generation to generation let us serve the Lord!







Open the Gates!

Open for me the gates of the righteous; I will enter and give thanks to the LORD.
- Psalm 118:19

Open the gates for all those made righteous in Christ

Open the Gates “For Me”

- Highlighting that we are heirs together
- Eliminating unnecessary barriers while upholding biblical instructions
- Matching roles with individual passions and talents
- Updating service roles for today’s ministry and tomorrow’s
- Spreading the mission across more of the body of Christ
- Unleashing action-focused serving

Culture of Thankful Service & Praise

- Shining example of men and women working together within the good roles that God has established
- Intentional acknowledgement of God-given gifts and faithful service of all God’s people
- Opening pathways of active service and cooperation for men and women, young and old
- Removing barriers of communication while respecting God’s call to submit to his expectations and to serve one another in love

Open the Gates!

Open for me the gates of the righteous; I will enter and give thanks to the LORD.
- Psalm 118:19

Empowering the Whole Body

Recognize the Whole Body of Christ: Intentional celebration of unique gifts and how we are created by God for the blessed task of serving together.

Empower Talents: Match members to service based on their unique passions rather than rigid slots.

Prioritize Action: Empower service teams to act with autonomy, eliminating permission-seeking loops.

Foster Consensus: Seek congregation-wide consensus rather than relying on formal business meetings.

Modernize Language: Update our vocabulary to emphasize relationships over administration.

The New Structure

Governance & Ministry Framework

Council of Ministry

Formal Strategic Administration

A streamlined team of 9 elected officers (plus Pastor & Principal as Advisors) providing church oversight, strategic vision setting, financial integrity, and human resources.

Exercises scriptural "headship" responsibilities, handles binding legal resolutions, and any needed church discipline.

Connect Groups

Active Ministry & Community Impact

Organic, action-oriented groups formed around common themes, open to all congregation members (both men and women) to run, coordinate, and execute our daily missions.

Built for collaborative service, execution autonomy, and relational fellowship.

School Ministry Team

Assists the Principal & School

Current Groups		Proposed Groups
Church Council	→	Council of Ministry
Board of Christian Education	→	School Ministry Team
Committees Boards Small Groups Helpers Aid Groups Volunteer Groups	→	Connect Groups

Council of Ministry Roles

2 year terms, 3 terms total

President: Overall vision and church leadership.

VP: HR - benefits and staff care.

Secretary: Church record keeping.

Treasurer: Fiscal integrity over inflows/outflows, yearly audits, and budget coordination.

Buildings & Grounds: Coordinates maintenance Connect Groups and oversees large-scale facility initiatives.

Soul Care: Strategies for reaching lost sheep, caring for the spiritual well-being of members and non-members.

Outreach: Strategies for reaching visitors, large event coordination, and marketing.

Member Engagement: Guides Time, Talents, and Treasures, while serving as the strategic shepherd for the overall Connect Group program.

School Ministry: Assists school leadership with accreditation policies, school guidance, and student discipline escalations.

School Ministry Team

- Team assists the Principal in carrying out the mission of our congregation's formal school system:
  - Wrap Around Care
  - Pre-Kindergarten
  - Lutheran Grade School
- Six members:
  - Principal
  - School Ministry Councilman
  - Four members appointed by the Council of Ministry upon the recommendation of the Principal

- Led by the Principal.
- The Principal is accountable to the Council of Ministry, not the School Ministry Team.
- Any communicant member, man or woman, over the age of 18 can serve.
- The appointed members will serve two-year terms with no term limits.

Connect Groups

Organic, Functional Service

Low Bureaucracy: Action-oriented execution. Groups act with autonomy and trust, eliminating permission-seeking loops.

Inclusive Coordinators: Anyone with a passion can coordinate - man or woman.

Digital Integration: Managed communications through a single unified digital tool for ease of access and clear church-wide promotion.

Committees, Boards, Groups -> Connect Groups



A Vibrant Ecosystem of Groups

1. Spiritual Study

Spiritual Growth: Gatherings structured for scriptural discussion and relational community.

- Women's & Men's Bible Studies
- Pioneers & Sunday School
- Youth Ministry (FLY)
- Small Group Bible Studies
- Coffee and Bible Bites... Etc.

2. Active Service

Hands-on Execution: Standing teams and short-term groups focused on getting things done.

- Worship Experience / Ushers
- AV, Choir, Handbells, Music
- VBS, Soccer Camp, Parade
- Buildings, Grounds, Gardening
- Soul Care, Visitor Follow-up
- Homebound, Meals on Wheels
- Ladies Aid, Funeral Team

3. Social Fellowship

Relational Equity: Gathering around hobbies, life stages, or purely social interests.

- Moms of Might
- Book Clubs, Dartball
- Toddler Open Gym
- Golf, Tennis?
- Games and Giggles
- Camp Oakridge

Let's Dream Together:
What's Your Connect Group?

How to coordinate them?

Connect Group Coordinators

Servant Leadership

Qualifications? Passion! Bring your own flair to a ministry you care about.

Gather Interest: Start a new group that you feel could improve something, work together with others to make it happen!

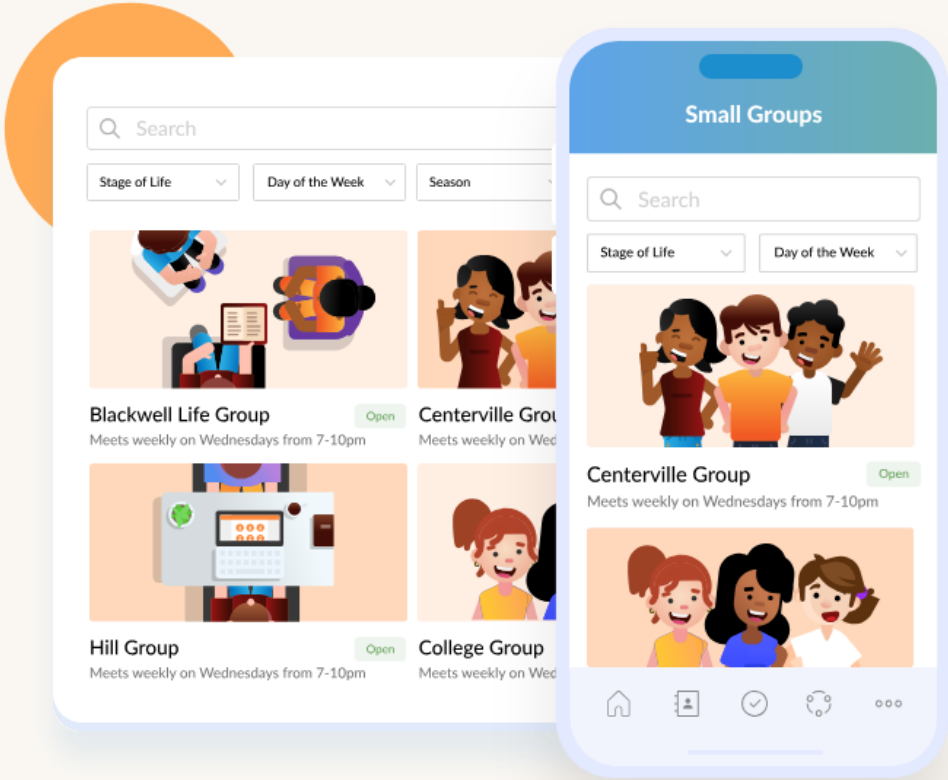
Coordination: Use the church app to communicate with group members, set up schedules, and bring others into the work.

Want to be a coordinator or start a new group? We have a flyer for that!

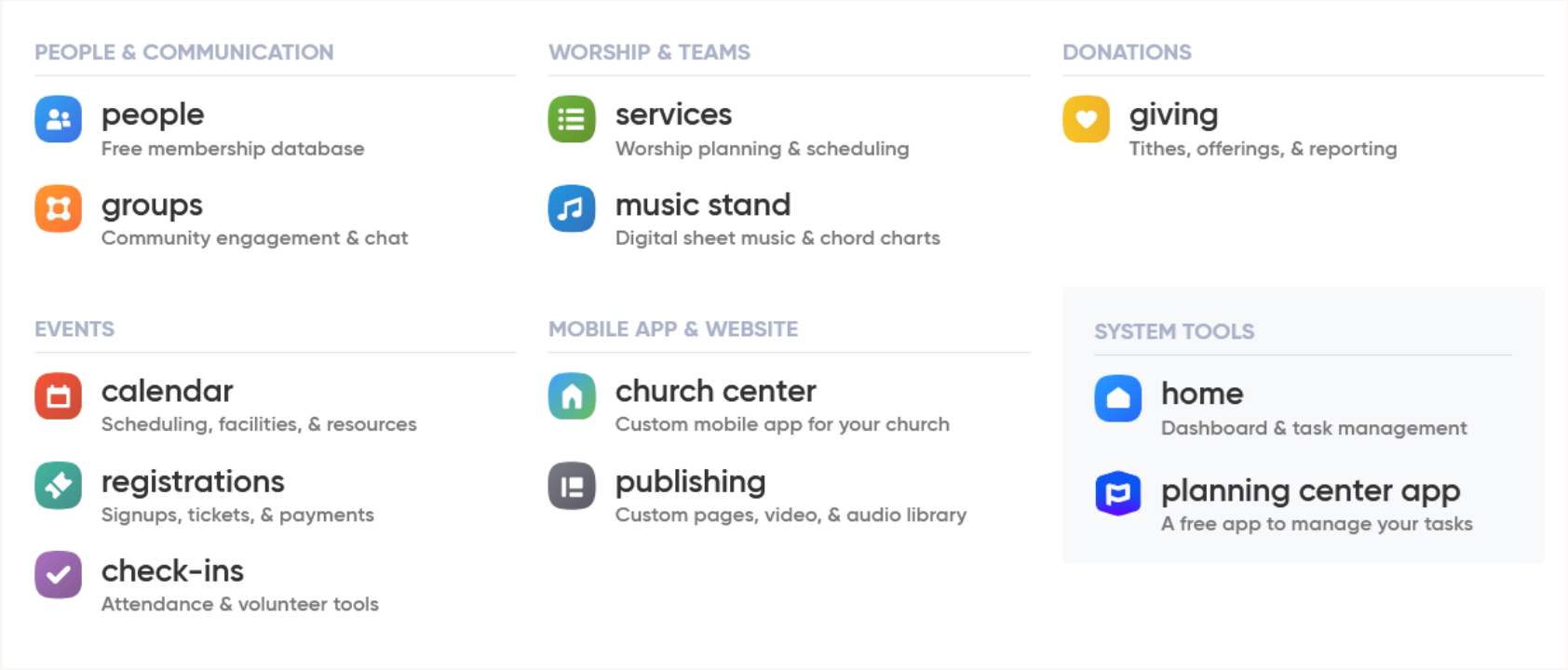


Our Church App

- Browse and Discover Connect Groups
  - Instant group signup
  - Everyone is in the know
- Easy Communication within a group
  - Message groups directly
  - Coordinator shares schedules, updates, and other resources
  - Centralizes every group together
- Easy to Stay Organized
  - Syncs events to your calendar
  - Counts RSVPs



Other Church App Functions



3:47

PL

Me

PL

Hello, Paul!

My profile and settings

Schedule

Actions

Upcoming events you bookmark, register for, along with your group events and serving schedule, will appear here

Explore upcoming events

Activity and involvement



Camp Oakridge



Council of Mi...

My giving

Home

Give

Groups

Calendar

More

3:47

PL

Give

$0

Fund

General

Give to another fund

Frequency

Once

Monthly

Weekly

Every

Continue to give

View my giving

Home

Give

Groups

Calendar

More

Me

Requests

Actions

April 17

Weekend Services

Signups available

Sign up

Schedule

Actions

SATURDAY, APRIL 2

8am - 5pm Youth Retreat

Parent

SATURDAY, APRIL 2

Home

Signups

Check-ins

Groups

More

Governance In Practice?

Voice Over Votes

Open Forums

Collaborative Dialogue

Replaces procedural church meetings

WHEN

3x a year, before Business Meetings

FOCUS

Updates, finances, events, Connect Groups

DECISIONS

No formal votes, consensus only

Business Meetings

Minimum Voting, Maximum Consensus

For decisions that bind the congregation

WHEN

Annual Meeting and Special Meetings

FOCUS

Discuss first to find a unified way forward

DECISIONS

Unanimous consensus first; vote if needed

A Sample Open Forum Agenda

TIME	AGENDA ITEM	LED BY
5 min	Welcome & Opening prayer	Pastor
10 min	Ministry and congregation updates	Council of Ministry
5 min	Financial health check	Treasurer
10 min	Connect Group and event highlights	Coordinators
20 min	**Open discussion and Input Gathering**	Facilitator
5 min	Closing prayer	Pastor

How it works

- **No vote.** Members give input; consensus is gathered if needed.
- **Shared in advance.** Topics and materials go out early.
- **Two roles.** President keeps order; facilitator guides.
- **Everyone is heard.** Men and women share ideas and questions.

A Sample Business Meeting Agenda

TIME	AGENDA ITEM	LED BY
5 min	Welcome & Opening prayer	Pastor
10 min	Ministry and congregation updates	Council of Ministry
5 min	Financial health check	Treasurer
10 min	Elections	Facilitator
30 min	**Budget & Ministry Plan Approval**	Facilitator
5 min	Closing prayer	Pastor

How it works

- **Consensus first.** Discuss until the room is unified.
- **Everyone is heard.** Men and women give input first.
- **Vote when needed.** Ballots for elections and binding items after consensus.

A Sample Call Meeting Agenda

TIME	AGENDA ITEM	LED BY
5 min	Welcome & Opening prayer	Pastor
10 min	Discuss Candidates Strengths	Council of Ministry
30 min	**Consensus Gathering**	Facilitator
1 min	Unanimous Vote	Voters
5 min	Closing prayer	Pastor

How it works

- **Consensus first.** Discuss until the room is unified.
- **Everyone is heard.** Men and women give input first.
- **Unanamous Vote.** Consensus should be had before voting.

Terminology Refresh

Old Wording	New Wording	The Shift
Church Council	Council of Ministry	Focuses leadership on spiritual ministry and active strategic care, rather than clinical administrative oversight.
Elders	Soul Care	Recenters our focus on overall spiritual well-being and consistent care of souls - beyond mere acts of church discipline.
Committees	Connect Groups	Shifts the team structure from a passive oversight body to organic, relationship-driven task groups.
Voters' Meetings	Congregational Open Forums	Transforms stoic one-sided business operations into open, collaborative, and healthy dialogues while utilizing the biblical head and helper roles.
Board Presidents	Coordinators	Highlights and makes better use of the variety of gifts and talents among this body of believers.
Board of Christian Education	School Ministry Team	Laser-focused on running the school and its importance in our ministry.

Constitution / Bylaws Updates

- Updates verbiage provided by WELS
  - Right of Appeal of Excommunication added
  - Adds “Administrative Removal” of membership for lack of contact or self-exclusion
  - Church attendance required for voting members
- Council of Ministry
  - Excommunication authority moves to Council of Ministry with Pastoral vote required
  - Membership changes move to Council of Ministry - report changes to assembly
  - Clarifies Pastor & Principal are advisory roles
- Council of Ministry delegates to School Ministry Team:
  - Student Discipline and Expulsion
  - Parent appeal body
  - School Policies and Accreditation

Timeline

2026

November	- Congregational open forums
Dec	- Congregational vote to Adopt

2027

	- New governance in place
	- Connect Groups Take Shape
	- First Open Forums & Ministry Planning
July	- First Business Meeting

Questions and Answers

Closing Prayer

FIRST LUTHERAN
CHURCH & SCHOOL

Open the Gates!

Flexible Governance - Amplified Outreach

Feedback Gathering Session - 6/16/2026