

Here are the results from the sessions of “Who Are We Now In 2019?” This first part was sent to all. Following this is more information that was gathered. First Lutheran Church is a church that:

Wants to serve Jesus and has a firm basis in God’s Word. It has a strong music and worship foundation. There is a sense of warmth and welcome in the church but it may be missing some intentionality in continuing ways of helping people feel included and important. The church is financially stable but there are concerns that it is struggling and there is some variance of opinion in how money should be spent. The church cares deeply for the community and social needs both locally and internationally. There is also a strong desire to keep looking at how the church reaches out to the community.

Depends heavily on volunteers to operate in many areas. There is a strong need to have more volunteers due to the “greying” of volunteers and concern for “burnout”. The need for the younger generations to step forward is recognized but how to do that is uncertain.

Has many good activities that make it a vibrant and active church. The facility is very busy through the week. There is a sense that the church is a good place offering quality ministry. Communication of these ministries to members themselves and outsiders is an area where growth is needed. The church needs to use as many means as there are to communicate in the different ways people receive and give information.

Needs to develop strategies and tactics to address the younger generations: singles, couples, and families. These groups want to be involved in the church but face challenges due to work, activities and responsibilities. As a result, worship, volunteer time, education for children and adults and other aspects of ministry end up being parts of life that become difficult to balance. How does the church communicate with them? How does the church find ways to involve them? How does the church help them know they are important, necessary to the ministry of the church and give them spiritual food? Being fed spiritually is a common desire for all ages in this church.

Needs to continue to find ways to update the educational facilities of the church. While there is lots of room, some of it is not big enough or not readily available. The church knows that some areas need more work to make it look attractive. The youth use and appreciate the facilities but also know more space in some areas would be helpful.

Must continue to look at more ways to help all members be involved in contributing financially to their church. In an electronic world, how can the church offer as many possibilities that the varying members may want to use?

Needs to spend time and energy in marketing the church to members so they know who the church is and what it does. The church also needs to devise ways to market the church to the lake people who are here on weekends and to those who are moving into the area to live permanently.

Needs to spend time on the training of leaders from Council members to those leading various ministries, missions and committees. The church consists of people who want to serve their Lord. However, more intentional and continuous training of people to help them do the jobs and roles would be appreciated and is essential to create a more effective church ministry. This is also a part of the Strategic Plan that was developed two years ago.

Some of the issues above will be the responsibility of the Council to move on and others we will be asking the new senior pastor to help us with.

WHO ARE WE NOW---RESULTS These comments add to what we know about our church.

Our Picture of a Perfect Church

Our perfect church is one that is joyous, welcoming, friendly and has diversity. It has good communication. Worship is full, with good music for a variety of types and ages, both contemporary and traditional. It is open to community needs and reaching out to the community. It is Biblically based, and active in social justice. There are many volunteers of all ages being utilized. Members support the church with their offerings. It has a tree in the middle where kids or anyone can climb. It has a pool also. The facility is attractive and the education wing has big rooms along with areas for youth to meet. The church is wider and larger than the building and members have a sense of being the church both inside and outside of the formal programs. Members support and encourage one another, listening to one another in all situations.

Want the Church Wants in a Senior Pastor

First Lutheran Church wants a spiritually based person who relates to members of all ages. The pastor is warm, friendly and able to engage with all ages. The pastor is organized but will let the business of the church be done by other members. The pastor will share, allow and enable the laity to do ministry. They will be a good preacher and give listeners at least one takeaway from each sermon.

The pastor will be a motivator and have a heart for service. They will be able to market the church and be technologically competent to use technology to speak to the generations that live with that on an everyday basis.

They will engage in recruiting and supporting volunteers and be able to develop leadership training for those in leadership positions. This will enable those people to do their jobs better and enhance a sense of accomplishment by committees and ministries.

The pastor will need to be able to relate to families, their time and energy commitments, their interest in growing spiritually and desire to help in passing on the faith to themselves and their children.

Further Comments on what people want in a Senior Pastor

Allow people help the pastor more. Good preaching ability. Love of people. Have a wisdom of the Bible. A heart for service. Spiritual leadership. Get to know families. Be a motivator. Humorous. Kid friendly, baptizing youth, teaching Holy Communion. Interacting with youth. Willing to live in the area, pay taxes, support the community; be here. Good music background. Gospel message and hope explained. Open to letting people do ministry. Let Church Council and leaders do the business of the church. Have sensitivity but confidence to lead worship. Good worship leader. Be organized. Sound theology. Good communication skills. Not an empire or resume builder. Ability to develop stewardship. Spiritual leader but not run the church. Make people feel they are important to the congregation. Thick skin. Punctual. Preach good sermons but also walk the walk.

The Top Needs The Church Must Address—Or--Who We Are Now! Brief Form

More volunteers of all ages to do the ministry the church wants to be involved with.

Market the church more effectively using technology that those of younger generation use on a daily basis.

Train leaders in the congregation to be leaders, giving them the tools to do their jobs.

Develop strategies to minister to the younger generations and engage them in spiritual development, volunteer participation and worship attendance. Help the middle and younger generation to be able to be the church in this time.

Update facilities in terms of education rooms, gym, youth and make the church look attractive both physically and electronically.

Build a better base of offerings through electronic and automatic avenues.

Special Considerations for Millennial Families and Individuals

Make the church a place to encourage young families in this busy world. Invite the community to church activities, seek out families. Market the church. Pastor needs to be able to address the millennials and younger ages. To those who say: We are too busy for the church—how to address them and their needs. Need to keep future generations coming to church. Kids are here but parents are not involved. Help reduce the divide between generations.

Thinking Outside the Box –What new ideas that should be considered

Alumni of Tiny Tots contacted to help support it. A grant writer for more programs in the church. More jobs for young people in community so they can stay here. Move food pantry to old Paulbeck's store and combine with the other food pantries in town. Pet Day at church. A tree in the church so kids and others can climb on it.

Membership Involvement

More needs to be done after joining the church to get people involved in the church and its ministries.

Public Relations/Marketing

More PR. How can we help members know about the needs in the church and community and how they can help. There is a lack of communication at times. Inform people of what the church does so they want to part of it. There is a sizeable lake community that should be informed, contacted, made aware of what First Lutheran Church has to offer them. How can we train members to share "elevator speeches" to those they meet. Link our website to school, Chamber of Commerce, Lions, Rotary and other groups.

Building and Facility

A need for more facility upkeep. Repaint the whole building. Make it open to more groups. Education and youth rooms not large enough or enough rooms. Make sure the facility looks attractive to a prospective pastoral candidate.

Youth

Energizing, embracing and empowering our youth with patience and understanding. Have a “youth friendly” attitude. Gym use is limited when fellowship hall is being used. Prepare youth for their departure from church and community to other places.

Finances

It is believed that giving is down and that the budget needs help. This may not be entirely accurate.

Volunteers

Need more people willing to stay and help at events. Have almost everyone in the church do at least one volunteer event per year. More Sunday School volunteers needed. More community projects need to be done. There is a lack of small group leaders for Confirmation. “Burn Out” is happening to volunteers and they are also greying. Need to renew sense of volunteering for ministry. Use seniors more because they have more time. Help find a person’s passion and then build on it for service and volunteering. Make the laity more active. Greeters at doors and use “Muggers” again. Pick up those that need a ride to church.

Ecumenical and Cooperation with Other Churches

Work with other churches to do some projects. Have an attitude of sharing ministry with them. Be willing to work as a group for jail ministry. Discussion has been held and will continue with the other local Lutheran churches to foster collaboration and potential linkage with them for staff and programs.