

# **First Lutheran Church Ministry Teams**

## ***First Lutheran Church, Le Sueur MN***

### **Overview, Organization and Policies**

This document summarizes the overview, organization and policy information of the First Lutheran Church Ministry Teams program. This document also summarizes this information for discussion, reviews and updates as needed.

An important goal of this document is to capture the primary characteristics of the Ministry Teams program. An equally important goal of this document and program is simplicity. These goals allow for better understanding and flexibility of the Ministry Teams program while avoiding unnecessary restrictions or complications.

A separate document, the Ministry Teams Guidebook captures specific details of the Ministry Teams information, activities and responsibilities.

The information in this document is subject to update, review and approval.

#### ***Ministry Teams Overview***

Ministry Teams is the name of a program at First Lutheran Church to organize and engage worship service volunteers. These volunteers assist with the variety of worship service activities, i.e. greet, usher, read, assist with communion, fellowship, etc. This program provides an opportunity for every person at First Lutheran Church to participate and share in the variety of worship service activities. Ministry Teams also provides the opportunity for every person to serve God in God's house of worship.

#### ***Ministry Teams Organization***

Monthly teams of volunteers make up the primary structure of the Ministry Teams program. These teams of volunteers work together to fulfill the volunteer worship service activities and responsibilities during their assigned months.

The entire congregation is divided into separate teams of volunteers. This gives every person in the congregation an opportunity to participate in the worship service activities.

Ministry Teams participation is voluntary. Every team member is encouraged to participate during the assigned month of his or her team. However, it is understood that not everyone may be able to participate in a worship service activity for a variety of reasons. Alternatively, a person may offer a prayer of support for their Ministry Team. A

simple act like this still allows everyone at First Lutheran Church to participate and positively contribute in the Ministry Teams program.

Ministry Teams rotate monthly. One team is active for a given calendar month. The active Ministry Team is responsible for all worship service activities during their assigned month. Upon completion of their month, the active team is finished. That team has no further obligation for worship service activities until their next assigned month. At the start of a new month, the next Ministry Team becomes the active team. In this manner, all teams rotate through the months of the calendar year. After the last team has completed its assigned month, the first team becomes active in the following month.

The active Ministry Team is responsible for all volunteer worship service activities in their assigned month. This includes but is not limited to: greet, usher, read, communion assistance, fellowship, etc. The active Ministry Team is also responsible for special services which may include: funerals, mid-week Lenten services, ecumenical services, etc. that might occur in the assigned month. The active Ministry Team works with the church pastor to determine the needs of the worship services.

Ministry Teams use simple identifiers to distinguish between the different teams. These team identifiers are used for communication and scheduling purposes. The identifiers should not conflict with existing team or group identifiers in use at First Lutheran Church. A simple numbering system may be used or each Ministry Team may select a simple and appropriate Biblical name, subject to pastoral review and approval.

There will be seven (7) Ministry Teams. This odd number ensures a rotation of Ministry Teams throughout the twelve months of the calendar year. One team is not always responsible for a particular month. This number of teams also ensures each Ministry Team eventually serves during each month of the calendar year over a multi-year period. The smaller number of teams also provides more opportunity for a given team to serve during the calendar year and simplifies program logistics.

The number of Ministry Teams and the congregation size determine the actual number of volunteers on each Ministry Team. The congregation is approximately equally divided among the specific number of Ministry Teams.

Stability of teams is important. Stable teams provide greater benefit as team members learn to work with each other, develop their skills and adjust for schedule constraints. After initial selection and assignment, the main criteria for updating Ministry Teams are members that join or leave the church. Other adjustments may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Each team has a Leader and several Assistants. The Leader and Assistants work with their team to schedule, coordinate and guide worship service volunteers. The team volunteers help their team Leader and Assistants fulfill the responsibilities of the worship service activities.

The Ministry Team Leaders and Assistants also provide instruction and guidance of the worship service activities as needed to their respective team of volunteers. This helps volunteers gain better understanding of the details of the variety of worship service activities. The Leaders and Assistants also benefit and receive greater understanding of the worship service activities when they provide their team with instruction and guidance.

The primary reference of information and details for worship service activities is the Ministry Teams Guidebook. Ministry Team Leaders, Assistants and volunteers may reference a copy of the Guidebook to learn more about the worship service activities.

Ideally, Ministry Team Leaders and Assistants remain in these roles for a period of two or three years. This provides leadership stability for the team without excessive commitment by these specific volunteers. After several years, they rotate out of these positions. Ministry Team Leaders can step up to the Ministry Team Coordinator position or they rotate back into their respective teams. A Ministry Team Assistant can step up to be a Ministry Team Leader if desired or rotate back into their respective team. Team members are encouraged to become Leaders or Assistants. This rotation provides the opportunity for everyone in the congregation to develop leadership skills, worship service experience and confidence.

A Ministry Team Coordinator helps oversee the Ministry Team Program. The Ministry Team Coordinator works with the Ministry Team Leaders and Assistants to communicate information, coordinate updates, help with program issues or provide advice. The Ministry Team Coordinator is the primary liaison of the Ministry Teams Program between Ministry Team Leaders and Assistants and church leadership, i.e. church Pastor, church Council, or Worship & Music team. This structure provides a simple, bi-directional and consistent communication channel. Ideally, the Ministry Team Coordinator remains in this role for two or three years. After that, the Ministry Team Coordinator rotates out of this position and back into his or her Ministry Team.

Additional information for Ministry Team Coordinator, Leaders and Assistants are documented in the Ministry Team Guidebook.

The Ministry Teams program at First Lutheran Church should be informally and periodically reviewed. A periodic review provides the opportunity to evaluate and adjust the program to the needs of First Lutheran Church. Early program reviews and adjustments may be quarterly or semi-annual. As the program matures and stabilizes, reviews and adjustments may be conducted annually. The appropriate church leadership conduct the informal reviews.

The Ministry Teams program is a goal of the 2009 First Lutheran Church Council. During the early stages of the program, the Ministry Team Coordinator reports directly to the Church Council and works as needed with the church Pastor. As the program matures and stabilizes, after several quarters or a year or more, the Ministry Team Coordinator may report directly to the Worship & Music team and indirectly to Church Council. This provides a review and feedback mechanism of the program for the church leaders.

## ***Ministry Teams Policies***

Current First Lutheran Church policies for the worship service volunteers apply to Ministry Team volunteers and program. Examples include age of volunteers, active membership status, partial membership of families, i.e. one spouse a member and other spouse is not, etc. Open and inclusive participation of Ministry Team volunteers should be encouraged.

Current First Lutheran Church worship service activities are to be followed by the Ministry Team volunteers and program. The Worship & Music committee, the church Pastor and the church council determine and approve worship service structure and content. Ministry Team volunteers simply carry out the necessary worship service volunteer activities.

This document contains information currently known and written for the Ministry Team program at First Lutheran Church. If the Ministry Team policies, information or volunteer activities require updates or additions, please notify one of the following: your Ministry Team Leader, the Ministry Team Coordinator, the Worship & Music committee, the church Pastor or the church council of any issues, changes or additions. Reviews and updates of this document occur periodically to ensure it contains the desired policies and information for the Ministry Team program and its volunteers.