

→ **By Transfer:** Anyone who desires to transfer must be a member of a congregation which is in fellowship with the LCMS. If you are interested in transferring, please tell the pastor of your desire and plan to meet with him to get better acquainted.

→ **By Profession of Faith:** Anyone who has already been confirmed as a Lutheran – *but is not currently a member of a congregation which is in fellowship with the LCMS* – may join by profession of faith (please request an application). If you are interested in joining, please tell the pastor of your desire and plan to meet with him to get better acquainted.

Bible Basics Course

Taking this course is a good way for **anyone** to find out more about the teachings of Bethlehem Lutheran Church!

This course is the way in which non-Lutheran youth, older teens, and adults become communicant members of Bethlehem.

The course includes:

- Introductions to the Bible and Luther's Small Catechism.
- A study through the Six Chief Parts of Luther's Small Catechism.
- A comparison between the LCMS and other Christian Church Bodies.
- An explanation of our Divine Services, so that all who attend will rightly understand and thoroughly benefit!

The course is offered in various ways (self-study, regular classes, etc.) and at various times. All who are interested in attending should express their interest to the pastor.

Youth Confirmation Classes

- For those in sixth grade and older, who have not yet been confirmed.
- Classes: September through April.
- Curriculum: Bible Basics Course.
- The requirements include class attendance, sermon notes, and more. To be confirmed, youth complete two years of academic requirements.
- Contact the church office to register.

Conclusion

Members and non-members are always welcome to join us for our Divine Services, Bible Classes, Sunday School Classes, and Various Activities.

As questions arise, *please ask!*

If you have special prayer requests or needs, *please let us know! Pastor Green*

You Are Invited to Attend and Benefit

- Website:** BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com
Location: 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134
(Just South of Pleasant Valley Road)
Schedule: See our "Join Us" brochure
Facebook: "Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma"
Podcast: "Benefit from the Bible"
Phone: 440-845-2230

(Last Update: 4-21)

Membership



Introduction

Dear Friend: I am glad to hear of your interest in becoming a member of Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Since ♦the Bible is God's Word, ♦all have sinned, and ♦Jesus is the only way to heaven, membership *in God's kingdom and in a Bible-believing congregation* is important!

As the pastor of Bethlehem, it is my desire to help every member grow in *being* and *functioning as* a disciple of Jesus!

By reading this brochure, attending our Divine Services, and studying with us:

- Learn more about what we believe.
- Compare our teachings with the Bible.
- Get acquainted with our BLC family.
- Be fed by the Spirit through the Word.
- Live for Jesus, who lived and died for us.
- Become a member of our BLC family.
- Support God's work to bless others.
- Serve with us in God's kingdom.

Lutherans in General

There are approximately 40 different Lutheran Church Bodies in North America. Some hold very closely to God's Word, the Bible, which is our position at Bethlehem (see our "New Visitors" brochure for more about Bethlehem). Others are using a different method of Bible interpretation, which can lead to different teachings – some of which are contrary to Scripture.

Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod

That is the name of our Church Body; we go by the letters: LCMS. The LCMS has approximately 2 million members in 6,000 congregations across the United States.

The LCMS is the *oldest* and *second largest* Lutheran Church Body in the United States. The LCMS was established in 1847 by German immigrants.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Bethlehem is one of those 6,000 congregations. Bethlehem, Parma was established in 1904 by members of St. Mark, Cleveland. Bethlehem has approximately 200 members.

These are some key ingredients of Bethlehem Lutheran Church:

- We base all we believe, teach, and confess on a careful interpretation of the Bible.
- We encourage every member to be faithful in daily devotion, weekly attendance, and living God's Word.

- God is our Father and Jesus our Savior, so we are one forever family.
- We are small enough to be personal, but large enough to accommodate the needs of most believers.
- We offer various fellowship and service opportunities.
- We desire to reach out to those who do not yet know Jesus as Savior!

Attendance Prior to Joining

Prior to being accepted into *baptized* or *communicant* membership, all must attend Divine Service a minimum of six (6) times over a period of three (3) months. *Doing so will help you get to know us better!* (Some exceptions include the homebound, those in care facilities, prolonged illness, military, etc.)

Two Types of Membership

- **Baptized** – All members are baptized members.
- **Communicant** – All members who have been confirmed as Lutherans are also communicant members. (*Confirmation takes place after the completion of our Bible Basics course – see the back for more information.*)

Become a Baptized Member

- **By Baptism:** Any person desiring baptism for himself/herself or his/her child should ♦obtain a Baptism Information packet, ♦work through the Baptism Study brochure, and ♦schedule a meeting with the pastor to discuss the study and set the baptism date. Everyone baptized in connection with this Congregation automatically becomes a baptized member of this Congregation.
- **By Transfer:** Previously baptized children and youth (17 years old or younger), whose parents become communicant members of this Congregation, become baptized members along with their parents.

Become a Communicant Member

Since we believe it is very important for every *communicant* member to ♦profess Jesus as Savior, ♦understand the basic teachings of the Lutheran Church, and ♦apply God's Word to daily life, all who desire to be *communicant* members will be blessed through the admission process as they do what is noted below.

- **By Confirmation:** Complete our Bible Basics course; then participate in the rite of confirmation.