

## ADULT CORE MINISTRY



I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you. Psalm 32:8



We mediate on this verse as we trust God and immerse ourselves in this new role. Both of our men's and women's ministries are informally meeting throughout the year in various forms. For example, a craft night happened with 80+ women participating. The men supported this event by preparing the woodwork for it as they enjoyed "coffee & sawdust" time.

Adult small groups are happening in a variety of ways. Some examples include Wednesday night video studies during Family Night, Sunday nights "Understanding the End Times" study at the Eby's home, and other ongoing informal study groups. There have been 12 people attending the small group at Eby's and they plan to start another group in September of 2017. Connecting the dots between Biblical prophesies and current events of today, in easy to understand terms.

The 50+ ministry continues to be active and vital to the LEMC. Verna & Neal Hardie, Ivadelle & Merle Coneybeare and Sharon & Grant Langridge are providing thoughtful and inspiring leadership as the group gathers on the first Tuesday of each month.

Mom's Connection continues to meet Friday mornings under the leadership of Kahley DeVries, Amy Weber, and Sarah Blazek. Here is what they have to say: "We have about 7-20 women out each week. We like the intimate size of the group and are enjoying being together very much. From moms with littles in town, to moms with all of their kids in school, all the way up to moms with older children – we are non-discriminatory! God is definitely working in the everyday of all of our lives. Some weeks something important is laid on one of our hearts by God and we share with the group – which ALWAYS (without fail) leads to more conversation amongst the ladies! We are reminded time and time again that God's plans are beautiful, and he lays things on our hearts for a reason. Losing Jen Desilest as our leader in 2016 was extraordinarily difficult for us as a group. None of us leads the way she did so us stepping up to the plate has been challenging. We knew right away that this was not a group the Lord wanted to end. Moving forward we are making this group into something new in many ways and we believe God has a hand in all things."

Some special events that occurred in 2016 including the Single Mom's event and the Christmas Blessing dinner pampered and showed God's love to many special people in the community. We are excited and inspired by all that God is doing in the area of Adult ministry at LEMC!



Yours in Christ,  
Sue & Norm Bedard  
Adult Core Ministry Leaders

# FIFTY PLUS MINISTRY

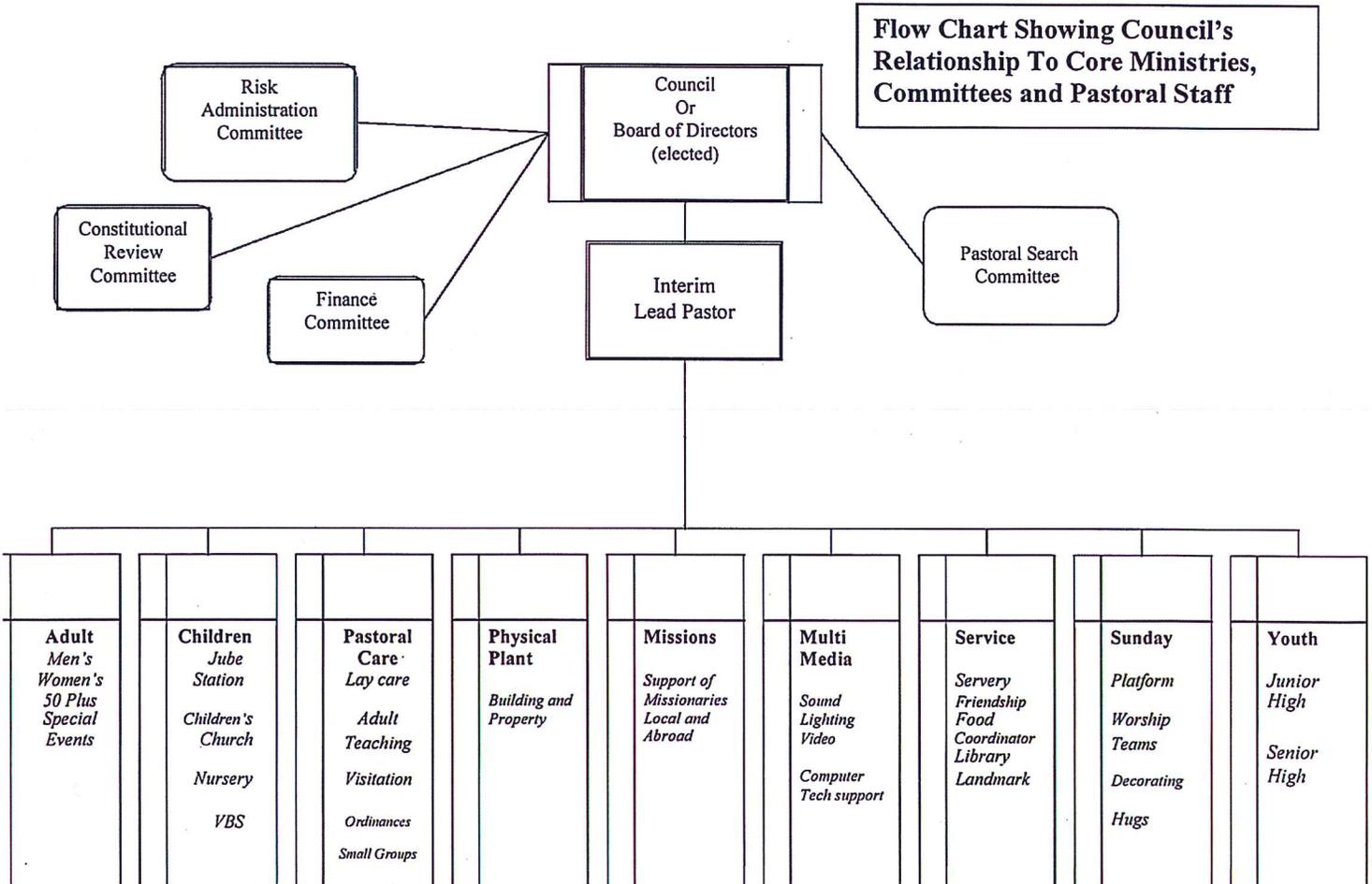
We had 9 different meetings this year. Some of the events were: watching the DVD “Joseph” (From Sight & Sounds in Lancaster, PA) Enjoying hot pancakes and fresh maple syrup at Hoovers (just outside of Atwood), having lunch at Anna Mae’s in Millbank then going to the Stratford Perth Archives & Museum at the edge of Stratford. In June, we car pooled and had lunch at the 50’s restaurant on Hwy 24 in Cambridge and then had a 1.5 hour tour at the Toyota Plant. September meeting was a BBQ at Versteeg’s with the sun shining bright and a gentle breeze under the weeping willow tree. Games day was held on October 4th at the church. On November 1st Norm and Sue Bedard gave their testimonies. On December 6th we held our Christmas Banquet with 55 people. Pastor James Park from Trinity EMCC in Waterloo was the guest speaker and Mrs. Tania Joy Skipper was special music. Joanne Weber prepared a delicious Christmas dinner for all. Two of our own went to be with the Lord — Glenn Scheifele and Nelda Roth. They are missed.

Anyone 50+ are invited to attend these meetings!



Respectfully submitted by,  
Neil & Verna Hardie, Merle & Ivadelle Coneybeare, Grant & Sharon Langridge  
50+ Committee

**Flow Chart Showing Council’s Relationship To Core Ministries, Committees and Pastoral Staff**



## CHILDREN'S CORE MINISTRY



## WELCOME HOME



Its very rare for a Sunday to go by where we don't have a visitor or newcomer stop in at the Children's Welcome Counter. This was the first stop for many who have come to call LEMC home. It is a very busy place and we are thankful for those who wake up early and are ready with a smile for parents and children alike. You would find Julie Kers greeting people most Sundays until her family was relocated to Owen Sound. We miss them and prayed that the void would be filled. Thankfully God provided a new team of people to meet our families, headed up by Angie Wassink both on Sundays and Wednesday nights. If you or your family are looking for a way to meet other families this is a terrific spot to serve.

## NURSERY

What a busy place these rooms are on Sundays! Our volunteers are ready to welcome the littlest people in our church and care for them as Moms and Dads are able to enjoy the service. Some of these volunteers have been cuddling little ones for decades and some are brand new. We appreciate the care given by each one. The nursery is also utilized many other times during the week. Specifically, we have opened the doors to the Early Years



Centre new moms group and every Friday morning there is a group called Mom's Connection where many of our older ladies volunteer to care for kids so that community mom's can connect and learn more about God. Sundays, we continue to have a lead team ensure that there are enough volunteers and everything is running smoothly each week. This year Amy Weber, Candice Lannin, LoriAnne Bonsma, Renee Beswitherick, Roberta Schaus and Sharon Ardnt have helped in this area - thank you to each of these ladies!

## SUNDAYS, WEDNESDAYS, EVERYDAY

Each month we introduce a theme that is the focus of our learning for both High Voltage on **Sundays**, Jube Station on **Wednesdays** and hopefully **Everyday** as families talk and learn at home. The Bible Stories all focus on that theme and they are taught in a variety of ways throughout the month. Both video and storytelling and in discussion and activities that engage the kids at their age and stage. We work at having relevant lessons that are applicable right now, as a child, and that speak to lifelong, eternal values.

### HIGH VOLTAGE—SUNDAYS

Sundays we present the theme and story in a big group. There is time spent worshipping that is lead by a group of our children each week. The lesson application is then unpacked in smaller groups with the JK/SK and Grade Ones leaving for smaller classes and the older kids staying together to discover more of what the story means to them. The 3 year olds also have their own class each Sunday. The big group time is lead by Cheryl and Joyce most weeks, with our pastors each taking the stage once in a while. We have a big group of volunteers that takes a turn every three weeks. We are thankful for this team!

### JUBE STATION—WEDNESDAYS

Wednesdays is the day many children from our community join our kids program. We fill the sanctuary and are lead in a time of worship and then we hear the Bible story in a new dynamic way. Right from the beginning of the school year the children are connected to a small group and a consistent small group leader for at least one year. It is wonderful to see the relationships that develop! Often if a leader is ill or late, the kids in the group will be asking Joyce or I where they are. I have heard from parents what an impact these adults have on their kids - even heard that one was "just like the Hulk!! After our big group time the groups each find a spot where they open their Bibles together. There is time for discussion and activities to reinforce the lesson and get the kids thinking deeper. There is time for sharing and praying and building relationships together. This is the beginning stage of some lifelong friendships. The night ends with activity stations where the kids get to have some fun with games or crafts etc. and a final song in the sanctuary before pick-up. Often we provide opportunities for the children to serve. This year we collected a bunch of items and filled a pile of shoeboxes!

We have some amazing, faithful leaders who say yes, year after year and have impacted many kids for the Kingdom. I think specifically of Chris Topp whose 60th birthday we celebrated this year! And Marv Smith who turned 60-something on a missions trip to Botswana. While we appreciate every new person who brings fresh enthusiasm to the job it is important to remember you are never too old to have something to give to our kids. Thanks for setting an example guys!

## CREATE CAMP

We hosted our second annual Create Camp for three weeks after midweek programs. Again, the evening of sign-up there was a line up outside the doors to the church as kids were hoping to get the activity of their choice. This is a joint partnership with the Junior Highs and this year we had Woodworking, Sewing, Crafts, Drum Circle, Food, and Sports. It is fun to see people that don't normally help in Children's Ministry jump in to mentor and share a talent or interest. We will be looking for volunteers for three Wednesdays beginning April 12 if you have time or a talent to share.

## IN THE HOME...EVERYDAY

The curriculum we use has some wonderful take-home portions to keep the discussions continuing at home. With videos and activities as well as daily age-appropriate devotional papers that can be used every day of the week. We have heard such great things from families that have dug deeper into the lessons and are seeing their kids "really getting it". Everyday life is where the truths of the Bible become real lessons. When you need to show patience or sacrifice for a brother or sister they get to live out what was just a concept until then. Life-change happens in the home and we love hearing how that is happening!



We often have people share how amazed they are at the many children who race to the front on Sunday mornings for dismissal.. We believe that the primary responsibility of raising children to know and love God falls to the parents of those children. But as we know - "it takes a village" and a church family we feel blessed to be able to partner with families as they shoulder this huge responsibility.



## FAMILY EVENTS

This year, in order to create family connections outside of Sunday mornings we hosted two Family Events. In February we headed up to MacGregor Point after church for skating. The chilly day started with everyone skating the track around the park, playing hockey at the rink and warming up with hot chocolate in the warming stations. We ended with roasting marshmallows and hotdogs over a winter campfire. In March we took a big group to the bowling alley for a fun time of bowling and pizza. If you would like to see pictures of these events, be sure to check out the LEMC Facebook page. Stay tuned for more in 2017!

## VBS

The first week of July LEMC was transformed into a bunch of giant caves. We all spent time spelunking through them being reminded that even when we are afraid - Jesus is the Light of the world. This was another amazing VBS partnering with Bethel CRC. We again packed out the church with about 200 children in total plus a pile of leaders singing, dancing and loving the kids of Listowel.

## LOOKING AHEAD

In April Joyce and myself will be going to the Orange Conference. This is a big conference in Atlanta hosted by the ministry that creates our curriculum. We are looking forward to getting away, learning and coming back with lots of ideas on how we can keep improving what we do for children and families at LEMC. We are blessed to serve with a staff that is creative and compassionate and above all loves God and truly loves each person at LEMC. There is a unity that makes serving a joy! We have a pile of leaders that help in every area of ministry and appreciate the team who keep saying yes to the kids. We won't name them here because we are sure to miss a few but know that we can see each of your faces and we thank God continually for you! If you are reading this and looking for an area to make a difference, know that we would love to meet with you and discover where you can get plugged in - a willing heart is what we need - we can train for the rest!



If your main contact with the church is Sundays at 10:30 we encourage you to come out on a Wednesday night, or one morning during VBS and see what God is doing here. The family of LEMC is working, connecting and shining a light in this community in so many ways. When we read of other church's closing or having no children or youth attending, we are so very thankful that this is not the case here. It is because of the vision of this church family to attend and to give of their resources; both their time and their finances. It is because of the prayers lifted up in homes and on early mornings in back rooms every day of the week that we have so many walking through these doors. Let us keep Welcoming Families Home. God is good!



Respectfully submitted by,  
Cheryl Stanley & Joyce Klumpenhauer  
Children's Core Ministry Leaders

# MISSIONS CORE MINISTRY



In the LEMC foyer, the sign reads:

*“Love God, Love others, Serve the World.”*

Each year we strive to live for Jesus and make His name known to the nations. Some travel abroad. Some serve at home. Some are prayer warriors. We all do our part.

## THE MCM HIGHLIGHTS for 2016:

During the last week of January and the first week of February, the fifth LEMC El Salvador team travelled to build ten homes. The ten team members worked alongside the local villagers to share their time, talents and love of Jesus.

April was Missions Month. Out of the 14 missionaries supported by LEMC, eleven of them were personally in our sanctuary sharing their powerful testimonies demonstrating how Jesus was working through their lives into the lives of others. There were Missions Electives before the service and a luncheon after it. Thanks to Ivadelle Coneybeare, one of our MCM member for her dedication to organize each luncheon!

In July, three leaders and one youth from LEMC joined a Youth for Christ work team and went to Botswana to help with various YFC projects. Jethro Sikma was led to share the Gospel to jews in Brooklyn for two weeks.

“ That Your ways may be known on earth, Your salvation among the nations Psalms 67:2

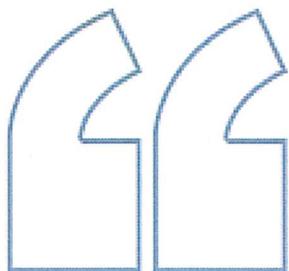
Two knotting/milk mat parties were successful in producing close to 20 quilts for refugees and 10 mats for African homes. Some quilts were delivered to Adam House in Toronto. Thanks for Verna Frey and Bev Nichol and their volunteers for spending their time to make warm quilts and cleaning sleeping mats for those in need. You don't have to go far from home to make a big impact on those around the world. Marv and Jane Smith went to a rainy Haiti in November to help with children's ministry and had some extraordinary stories to share when they returned. If you don't know the story about the calf on the motorcycle, you should stop them and ask about it!!

One of our LEMC members, Michael Sears, was called into the Transport for Christ ministry and accepted a position in Calgary as their chaplain. He left in December to begin his life ministering to truckers in Western Canada.

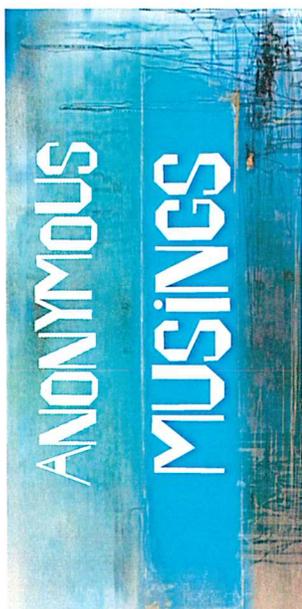
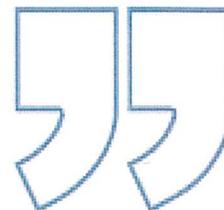
Over the course of the year, our MCM members meet, pray and discuss how we can engage, encourage & inspire LEMC to serve the world. Each member brings a unique set of gifts and talents to the table because of their dedication to their Lord and Saviour, we are truly blessed. Ruth Charter coordinates the weekly mission prayer items for the bulletin and is the contact person with our missionaries. Barb Siemon is the secretary. Lloyd Martin and Trent Stanley are the financial wizards. In addition to organizing luncheons, Ivadelle bring her knowledge of LEMC history. All share these and other talents generously and faithfully. Thank you!



Respectfully submitted by,  
Pauline Howard  
Missions Core Ministry Leader



## WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING...



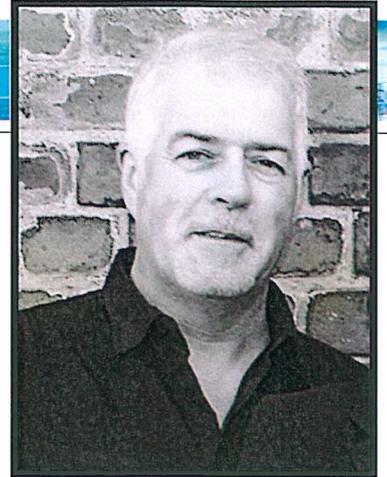
I am a local business owner from the Listowel area and have recently learned the importance of tithing.

I have a few clients who are members of your church and am always filled with joy by the stories that they share about giving back to this community. I have decided to give this donation of money because of that reason.

Signed,

*Love & Light*

# MULTIMEDIA CORE MINISTRY



Multi Media continues to enhance all aspects of ministry at LEMC through the use of sound, video, lighting, computers etc.

Audio & Video upgrades in late 2015 and early 2016 have enabled us to live stream video of all services and post the recorded video to our web site. We have recently switched to YouTube as the platform for our services. This provides a familiar and low cost solution for streaming and archiving all our video and viewership continues to grow.

Planned enhancements for 2017 are permanent small sound system in the gym, an electronic drum kit and other minor improvements.

I would like to thank the current members of the multimedia team for their time and dedication.

**Sound Techs;** Bruce Verhulp, Mike Snider, John Mann,  
Michael Siemen & Maynard Bauman

**Lighting** – Merle Coneybeare

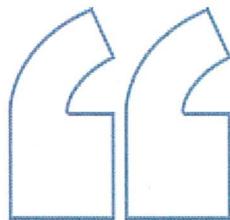
**Recording Tech** – Ray Coneybeare & Owen Frey

**Computer Techs-** Michael Siemon, Cameron V, Ryan Z, Owen Frey

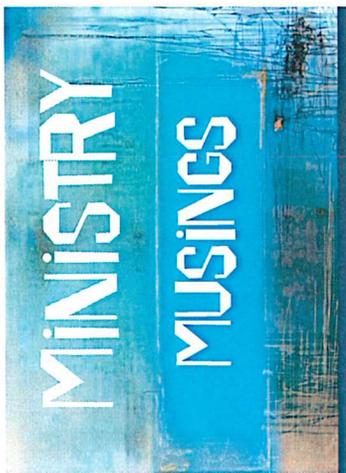
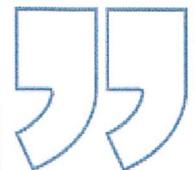
**Camera Operator's** -Taytum Bramhill, Zach Tummers,  
Becky Versteeg & Laura Koopmans



Yours truly,  
Maynard Bauman  
Multi Media Core Ministry Leader

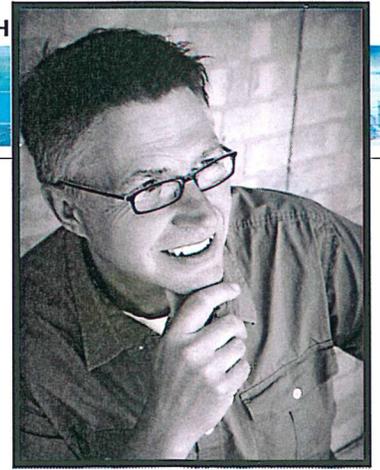


WHAT PEOPLE  
ARE SAYING...



We often have people share how amazed they are at the many children who race to the front on Sunday mornings for dismissal. We believe that the primary responsibility of raising children to know and love God falls to the parents of those children. But as we know, it “takes a village” and a church family we feel blessed to be able to partner with families as they shoulder this huge responsibility!

*- Cheryl Stanley*



I am so excited about our PCCM! We were determined not to rush it and let God develop this ministry and I am so glad we did! Presently on this team we have:

Kendra Bakker  
Renee Beswitherick  
Sue Bedard  
Jim Cox  
Barb & Brian Klein  
Donna Mitchell  
Art Versteeg  
Pastor Carter Whyte

It has taken a long time to establish this team and get the vision and dream of the PCCM hammered out. It is developing nicely and the plan is being put into action! The vision of PCCM is to care for the pastoral needs of our church family, to assist the pastoral staff spiritually with ideas, input and establish and oversee prayer initiatives.

The PCCM reaches out to those who need visitation, spiritual encouragement and prayer. Under the leadership of Kendra Bakker we have set up prayer teams for every Sunday morning where we will meet and pray with anyone after the service. We are also going to take time on communion Sundays for praying for those with physical, spiritual or emotional needs. This is very exciting and we are seeing God move through our prayers. Anyone is welcome to be on a prayer team, those interested should speak to Kendra Bakker. We also encourage people to take part in the things that are going on around our community like The Ship and Unite Tonite.

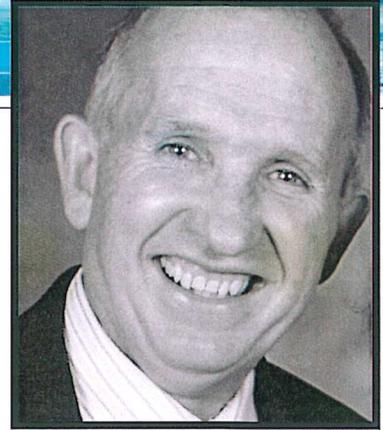
Small Groups also falls under the PCCM. While there are still some small groups that meet regularly the small group ministry of LEMC for some reason has never quite been what we had envisioned it. PCCM has done some discussion on this and will look into this area deeper in 2017 now that some of the other key areas of PCCM are up and running.

This is a great team of committed, dedicated, caring followers of Jesus. We are so blessed to have our PCCM.



Respectfully submitted by,  
Pastor Jeff Wood  
Pastoral Care Core Ministry Leader

# PHYSICAL PLANT CORE MINISTRY



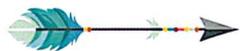
2016 was a busy year for Physical Plant. We have been blessed with an exceptional facility which makes so much ministry possible. We have worked to maintain what we have and worked with other ministries to make improvements. I thank the men on our team Jay Leis, Simon Koopmans, Tyler Weber and Steve DeVries.

Major projects we completed in 2016 were the replacement of the flat roof, re-shingling the southeast section of the main roof with steel shingles, replacing the outside lighting with LED lights and some improvements to storage. We deferred some smaller projects until 2017 because the flat roof cost a lot more than estimated and we had over-spent our budget.

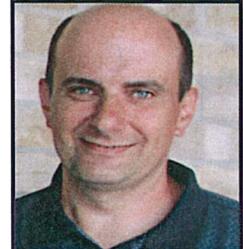
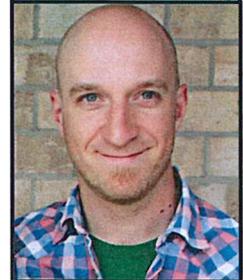
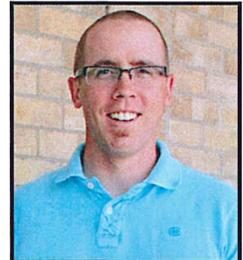
Special thank you to Jim Cox for organizing and managing the roofing project.

This year we also had our tile floors stripped and rewaxed professionally with good results. This should probably be done every year to keep the floors in good shape.

We are looking forward to a busy year in 2017 as well. As our building ages there will continue to be things which need to be replaced and upgraded. We want our property to be a welcoming and comfortable place for people to come to, and feel like they've come home. We see the physical plant as an active partner in the ministry we do as we seek to build God's kingdom together.

 Respectfully submitted by,  
Art Versteeg  
Physical Plant Ministry Leader

## FACILITIES TEAM



# SERVICE CORE MINISTRY



This was my second year as Service Core Ministry Leader and I have enjoyed seeing the commitment by a variety of member of our congregation to serve others within servery, the library and through the planning of events to celebrate new marriage and new life. I continue to be amazed with our “kitchen team” who always know exactly what we need, how much time it takes and quickly gather a crew to help when there is goof to prepare and organize. Thank goodness for their weekly dedication to Sunday morning coffee too. Without this aspect of service, I am certain Sunday mornings would look very different.

I am equally in awe at the dedication of those who run our library. They seem to know exactly what we need and the latest in books and movies and they are in our library in such a timely fashion. The year, Karen and Kathy have been diligently setting things up to begin an online database of the collection of books in our library. Searching and finding the book you want and being able to quickly identify if they are available or not will be a beautiful improvement and we are thankful for the ways they work to keep everything up-to-date.

I would also like to thank those involved in our friendship ministry who have helped to welcome new life and congratulate those on their upcoming marriages. We’ve celebrated a number of weddings this year, including our very own Pastor’s daughters! A soup and salad luncheon and pantry shower was also organized for Pastor Carter and Kimberly when they moved to Listowel in the fall.

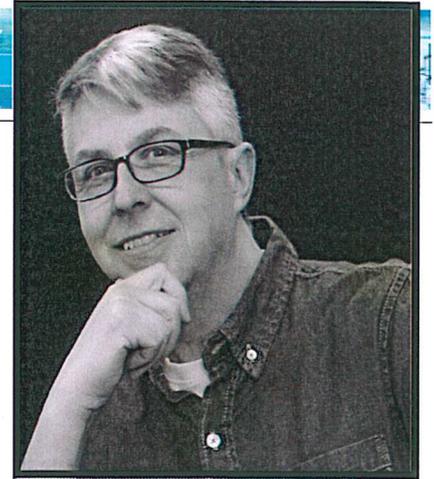
At this point I am feeling God’s call to serve Him in different ways and have decided to step down from Service Core Ministry leader at this time. I wish my successor all the best in this area of ministry at LEMC.



Respectfully submitted by,  
Jodie Tummers  
Service Core Ministry Leader



# SUNDAY CORE MINISTRY



## PLATFORM

Platform ministries includes everything that takes place on the platform, particularly our weekly Sunday service. From special presentations, music, speakers, even announcements the goal for platform ministries is to use whatever takes place on the platform to glorify God and enhance our purpose statement as well as being edifying, encouraging or exhorting the people of God.

This year was our 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and we heard from EMCC President Phil Delsault. We also had a choir for this special event and it was a real hit!

## WORSHIP IN MUSIC

LEMC is blessed to have so many people who take part in this ministry.

The goal of our worship music is exalting the name of Jesus and helping people draw into a deeper worship experience. Our leaders take this ministry very seriously and I appreciate them so much. These people are committed to using their unique personalities, music styles, techniques and gifts to give variety to our worship music. Listening to what the Holy Spirit says and choosing and playing songs to please Him is the most important aspect of our music ministry. Our teams are not there to perform and they try to encourage everyone of all ages to engage in singing praises to our Awesome God!

I am so thankful to our seniors and those who may not be that “into” music. Our seniors never grumble or complain about music styles, instruments or volume. They understand the importance of us as a church being relevant to younger styles and are happy to see their children and grandchildren singing along and getting involved in the area of worship music. This is huge and makes all the difference in helping the next generation learn how to worship Jesus.

## HOSPITALITY/USHERS/GREETERS/SPOTTERS (HUGS)

When anyone walks into LEMC, whether for the first time or been coming for years, it is important that they feel at home! This is why our HUGS team plays a crucial role in this ministry. Pauline Howard oversees the Welcome Centre and is extremely gifted at the art of welcoming people home. Pauline is not alone and sets up greeters and oversees making sure that everyone coming in has the information they need and/or gets connected with different ministry leaders. Part of her job is also relaying any pertinent information regarding newcomers to myself, Pastor Carter, Children’s Ministry or other CML’s as well as the office.

Wayne Stickley is the head of the ushers and oversees their important role at LEMC. Thanks to all who do such a great job on our HUGS team.

## DECORATING

Many may underestimate the power of décor and the role it plays in making people feel welcome and at home here at LEMC. We have volunteers who work hard at making sure every season is special and that the place looks great! Thank you all who help out in this area!

## STAGING (SOUND, LIGHTING, MEDIA SHOUT)

There are so many people who work together to use technology in a way that directs people to focus on God and worship Him. We have recently started live streaming our services and while I cannot bring myself to watch “me” online yet, but I am told by others that they really appreciate it. I am so thankful for Maynard who leads the tech crew. These people are pushing boundaries, constantly learning new things and with the use of technology are spreading the gospel not only to our community but around the world.

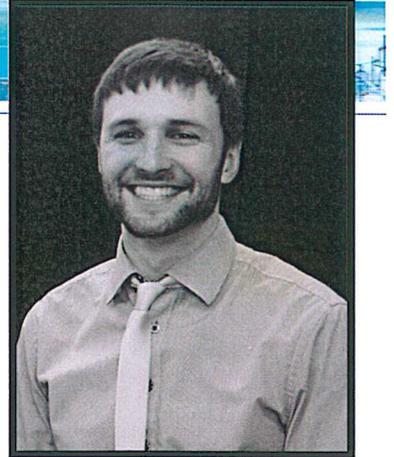
Sundays are a big deal here at LEMC, and because of all of the people who help out in this area, they are fantastic! A huge THANK YOU to everyone who contributes to this core ministry.



Respectfully submitted by,  
Pastor Jeff Wood  
Pastoral Care Core Ministry Leader



# YOUTH PASTOR'S REPORT



## JR. YOUTH

This year of ministry has been energizing and inspiring! Much of my inspiration comes from our volunteers. In Jr. Youth, we have Joanne Snider, Dale Merkley, Ainsley Stanley, Jannelle Bonsma, Dave Beswitherick, Julie Frey, Jane Smith, Marv Smith, Mike Snider, and our newest addition, Aaron Foell. Each of these leaders have taken up their roles with enthusiasm, are faithful volunteers, and this ministry wouldn't be as effective if any one of them were missing. They work together, make kids feel accepted and affirmed, and they take their contribution seriously. I am very proud of them, and am honored to grow alongside them!

In Jr. Youth each week, we enjoy time to worship, to learn, and to play games. We have been focusing our teaching on learning the basics: about God, about the gospel, and about how to be a Christian. These lessons have been helpful and inspiring, even to myself, and have opened up discussions between youth and leaders about commitment to Jesus. In our lessons, we have changed our structure towards prioritizing small groups, where volunteers lead discussions about faith, pray with those in their group, and connect with kids in a deeper way. Our kids are growing to feel accepted, heard, connected to each other, and encouraged. We are excited to keep taking them further on their journeys with God! Of the youth that regularly attend, we have the presence of church youth, as well as many youth that do not go to church regularly. It's a privilege to serve this diverse group, and to see that with in-depth and thoughtful teaching every week, they want to come and they value what they learn.

We look forward to our next few months together, which will include a hip-hop ministry team called "The Found and Free", Create Camp, and a local service experience! I am particularly amazed at the meaningful connections that have been made between leaders and youth, and the love that they share weekly. Every week, we are so glad to get to know youth in a deeper way, to support them in their struggles, to help answer their questions, to make them feel accepted, and to encourage their positive decisions.

## SR. YOUTH

The Senior Youth volunteers are just as amazing as the Jr. Youth volunteers! They are Carrie Henhoeffler, Laura Koopmans, Paul Okoye and Kimberly Whyte. They have hearts and skills that make youth feel accepted, feel free to ask questions, and more interested in following Jesus. They are willing to go two miles, when I have only asked them to go one. They encourage me and teach me with their example, and I am honored to be part of their team!

As a team, our attention has been directed to helping youth think seriously about their lives and faith, through interactive lessons including small group time. Youth have grown more comfortable with each other to share, and to ask questions openly. We are seeking to get closer as a community through events like the Connect Retreat in March, and the New York Week of Hope in July, and through the simplicity of caring for each other on a regular basis. Our youth are caring, amazing, and full of potential to make a difference in their world. As a leadership team, we are honored and motivated by the opportunity to serve and encourage them in their faith, and in how they live! I am so encouraged to see them asking real, deep questions, and being heard by leaders and peers. We enjoy opportunities to hang out as well, either at events like tubing, or going to the homes of adults in the church. Sr. Youth has been an exciting community to be a part of!

## YOUNG ADULTS

TheSHIP Young Adults Gathering has been going strong with high spirits and a great leadership team! The volunteer leadership team is growing stronger under the leadership of Matt VanVeen and Tristan Lansveld. The whole team has moved more towards participatory, discussion-based events, with the purpose of equipping young adults for daily living, and increasing their faith in Jesus.

The leaders are enthusiastic and wonderful examples, as they too grow themselves in understanding and leaning on God. We have been privileged to learn about, discuss, and experience things like healing, sharing our faith stories, and overcoming fear. The vision for the future of this group is encouraging and very optimistic! It is a privilege to be part of this team, and to be involved in these events.

Another opportunity for young adults to grow in their faith began at the beginning of March with a weekly Bible Study for young married couples. A group of more than a dozen have connected, and begun studying the Bible together on a weekly basis. It's been great, for Kimberly and I, to get to connect with others in our church who are also fairly new and who want to grow in their faith. We are encouraged and thankful to be a part of this group.

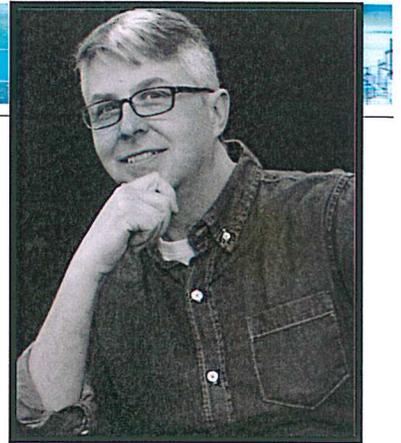
## OTHER

It's been a great experience to be involved in other opportunities here at the church and in this community. I have enjoyed speaking occasionally on Sunday mornings, being part of ministry with Youth for Christ at the high school, leading services at Caressant Care, speaking at 50+, and volunteering occasionally at Youth for Christ drop-ins. Each of these opportunities have allowed me to grow connections in the community and serve the church at large!



Respectfully submitted by,  
Carter Whyte  
Youth Pastor

## LEAD PASTOR'S REPORT



“So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long distance away, his father saw him coming, and was filled with loving pity and ran and embraced him and kissed him.”

**Luke 15:20**

### **Welcome Home!**

One of the greatest parables Jesus told is the story of the prodigal son. I think it is such an impacting story because so many of us can relate. I am sure we would be hard pressed to find anyone who at one time or another didn't wander away (even a little bit) from their Heavenly Father thinking that their own way was better. The beauty of this is that when we finally come to our senses our Father is always there to welcome us home, to extend His strong arms and embrace us in a great big bear hug that only dads can really do.

It is said that “Home is where the heart is.” I realize more than ever how important home is now that we have children that have moved away from home. As each child spreads their wings and flies away a part of you goes with them. For us, home isn't so much a place as it is people. Home is when we are all together under one roof regardless of where we are.

No matter where you go, how far you move away, “home” always has a special connection. I am not overly patriotic, but after traveling to a poverty stricken, potentially dangerous, sometimes scary country, when I crossed the border back into my home land I felt a huge sense of relief and love for the nation of my birth. Even after a long drive somewhere there is always a sense of appreciation to the “Welcome to Listowel” sign. We made it home. Unless there have been unfortunate circumstances, for the most part home brings people a good feeling, a feeling of security, love, acceptance, tolerance, grace, mercy, peace, hope, fun, joy, happiness, where people are free to be themselves.

As a pastor, my vision for LEMC is to see it as not only a community of believers that grow in their faith in Christ, but to be a FAMILY. One can live in a community and never get to know their neighbours right next door, but as a family, the way that God calls us to be it means working hard to follow the example of our Heavenly Father and see all as brothers and sisters in Christ. It is important to remember that no home is perfect, that there will be mistakes made and there will always be the need for patience and grace.

I pray that LEMC would feel like HOME to all who walk through the doors. For people of all ages and walks of life, for those who are close to God and those who are searching. For the prodigals who have walked away from their Heavenly Father and decided to come back, I pray that they would find all the good aspects of what HOME means here at LEMC. For those who have experienced heartache and pain from dysfunctional homes, may LEMC be a place of healing, hope, life and joy. Every Sunday is like coming HOME to a family reunion where we all celebrate our amazing God then we take all this goodness into the worlds we live in and share the Good News, being missionaries, taking a little bit of home with us wherever we go.

It has been a year full of so many wonderful things I don't even know where to begin. We had thirteen baptisms, a number of child dedications and many wonderful testimonies shared about the goodness of God.

To be able to share the joy of the weddings of Bailey and Mike and Morgan and Jacob with our church family was so wonderful. For those who were able to join us, having you there meant so much to our family and reinforced once again what a wonderful church we are a part of.

In June we had some tearful farewells as we bid adieu to Pastor Dan, Jen, Olivia and Isaac as Dan felt the call to move from Listowel. After serving the church as custodian for many years Winnie Bell resigned from this position. These changes were huge and had us wondering how we would ever fill these important roles. Needless to say our Council and hiring committee had a busy summer ahead of them. It is so good to know that God is always faithful and heard our prayers. From our own congregation Anna and Abe Neufeld became the new custodians at LEMC and they do a fantastic job.

After much prayer and consideration it was decided that we would look for a Youth Pastor as opposed to an Associate Pastor. We had numerous applications and a few interviews and even though the interviews were good, God showed me the man that was supposed be here, He just had to convince him and boy did I pray! I cannot say how thankful and happy I am that Pastor Carter and Kimberly said yes to coming to Listowel.

Children are so important to our church and we have a gifted and capable team in Joyce and Cheryl to oversee all of the volunteers and ministry. They not only run a great program to teach kids about our Awesome God, they love our kids and take the time to pour into each one.

Our office administrator is the one who really keeps everything running smoothly! Laura's job description is full and she does all that and even more so proficiently and joyfully, I don't know what we would do without her. LEMC is incredibly blessed with an amazing ministry team. I exhort you church not to take these wonderful, godly, gifted people for granted and to encourage and appreciate them regularly.

Even though we see new faces regularly our attendance stays steady around the 300 mark. A number of families have moved away and others have moved into our area. Our directory still holds around 500 names but we never see everyone here on a given Sunday. There is a cultural shift where people have a church that they call home but attendance is not regular.

One of the highlights of this year was our Christmas Musical. Laura Koopmans took charge of this endeavor and it was so much fun! It was unanimous from those involved that this was going to happen again. A huge thank you to all who took part and made this such a huge success.

There is spiritual growth at LEMC, people are living out their faith, sharing the good news with others, people take missions seriously and have gone on short term mission trips or have been diligent to the mission in our community. God is moving in our midst and we are seeing the fruit. There is joy and love in the church here and a genuine desire to seek first the kingdom of God.

My family and I have been a part of LEMC for eight years now! Time has flown and I can honestly say I love this ministry more and more, it is our home. As a pastor I am encouraged and blessed to serve along side all of you as we strive to share the Good News with people. I am thankful that you love me in spite of my short comings and I look forward with excitement and hope for the coming year.

Wherever you have been, wherever you are at, may you know that whenever you walk through the doors of this church you can always know that you are *welcome home!*

- PJ