

Organist and Music Director (Cantor)
First Lutheran, Decorah - Job Description (May 2018)

The Cantor at First Lutheran Church is understood to be the leader of the people's song. This is both a musical and ministry responsibility. It takes place within the congregation, the wider church and the world that Christ has commanded us to love and serve. As a member of the ministry team, the Cantor of First Lutheran Church needs to be a mature Christian, able to articulate the faith of the Church and to offer leadership in those areas having to do with musical and liturgical ministries. The Cantor also must be capable of leading and teaching others (and the entire assembly) as they grow and develop as a worshipping family. We expect this salaried position to require an average of 20-25 hours a week.

The following areas of responsibility describe the expectations of the congregation, but do not limit ministry opportunities.

1. The Cantor is a member of the staff team for ministry. This team works joyfully together, supports one another and prays with and for each other. The Cantor will:
 - A. Participate fully in the life and ministry of First Lutheran Church.
 - B. Administer the music program. The ministry of administration includes planning for all musical groups, scheduling, maintaining the music library, and purchasing music and other supplies, while limiting expenditures to the amount provided in the congregation budget. The Cantor will be responsible for seeing to the maintenance and repair of all musical instruments of the Church by qualified persons.
 - C. Attend weekly staff meetings and participate in planning and evaluation.
 - D. Meet weekly with the Pastors for worship planning. In concert with the Pastors, the Cantor will be responsible for liturgical planning, including the selection of hymnody and other music for worship.
 - E. Attend the annual Council Retreat.
 - F. Grow spiritually and in skills by regularly participating in continuing education.
 - G. Participate in annual staff evaluations.

2. The Cantor is responsible for the direction of a high quality musical program as an integral part of the worship life of the congregation. The Cantor will:
 - A. Serve as the principal musician (organist, pianist, and choral director) for all regular and festival liturgies, and will arrange for a qualified and capable substitute musician when on vacation (such vacation time to be cleared with the supervising pastor).
 - B. Serve as principal musician for the occasional services of the Church (including weddings and funerals), with additional compensation provided for each service.
 - C. Develop, direct and oversee the musical life of such choirs and ensembles (including hand bells and instrumentalists) as are needed and desired to provide for a wide variety of musical involvement and expression within the parish.
 - a. Direct the Adult Choir. This includes rehearsal time, selecting and planning musical offerings, and helping our musicians grow in musical competence and spiritual understanding of their role in worship and leadership. The Cantor will recruit, nourish, motivate, encourage, inspire, and build

- community. (The Adult Choir is currently a balanced ensemble of 24-30 regular singers.)
- b. Direct the Hand Bell Choir. This includes rehearsal time, selection and planning of music, and creating opportunities for the Choir to grow in their skills.
 - c. Direct the Youth Choirs (vocal and hand bell). The Cantor will work to create a learning environment in which the children and youth can grow in musical skills and musicianship while they are growing spiritually through learning programs such as midweek after-school, VBS and Sunday School. The Cantor will schedule the children's musical offerings in worship.
- D. Provide opportunities for children and adults with musical gifts to offer them in our worship services.
 - E. Put in adequate practice time.
3. The Cantor will coach and support the other musical ensembles in the congregation. The Cantor will:
 - A. Provide support, coaching, and training to New Song and its leadership as an advisor. The Cantor may participate in this group of singers and instrumentalists but is not expected to take over leadership.
 4. First Lutheran is committed to outreach and radical hospitality. The Cantor will support this commitment by:
 - A. Helping First Lutheran find ways to reach out to and welcome those beyond our walls who need to hear the message of what God has done for us in Jesus Christ.
 - B. The Cantor may use the church's instruments for private musical instruction.

Requirements:

- Minimum Bachelor's degree in Music/Organ or related field; Master's degree in Music/Sacred Music preferred
- At least three years of experience in a liturgical setting and/or familiarity of Lutheran worship and practice centered around the liturgical calendar
- Demonstrated ability to direct and teach choral singing and willingness to work with adults, children, and youth
- Demonstrated ability to direct and teach hand bell playing and willingness to work with adults, children, and youth

Skills and Qualities Desired:

- An expert musician who appreciates a spectrum of musical styles and will creatively employ variety, while respecting and emphasizing the unique identity and deep roots of the Lutheran tradition
- A well-organized leader who can effectively plan multiple music programs well ahead of time and who can communicate effectively with staff colleagues, choir members, and parishioners
- A strong teacher with a joyous sense of humor who can engage and coach multi-generational singers and instrumentalists, and other worshipers alike.

Compensation:

Salary \$25,000 - \$30,000, commensurate with experience and qualifications. Benefits Negotiable.

Four Sundays paid vacation.

Accountability:

The Cantor is responsible to the Associate Pastor for the performance of specific duties and responsibilities. This position description is reviewed each year by the Cantor, the Senior Pastor, and the Personnel Committee.