The Journey of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish

Today is our parish's 15th anniversary!
On **December 17, 2010**, Bishop Richard Pates from the Diocese of Des Moines held a press conference at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church in Ankeny, where he announced the formation of a new Ankeny parish, St. Luke the Evangelist, on the west side of the city.

One of the original parishioners of Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church (OLIH), Fern Ringgenberg, gifted 35 acres of land along Wiegel Drive, and Don and Charlene Lamberti, also parishioners of OLIH and owners of Casey's Convenience stores, gifted $2 million for a future grade school (K-8) to be at St. Luke the Evangelist Parish.

The first St. Luke's Masses were held in the basement of the OLIH rectory, with 40 registered parishioners.
In March, 2011 the necessities of Mass were stored in a trailer and hauled around to an elementary school gym, a middle school auditorium stage, and little St. Anne's Episcopal church.

September 2013 – 185 registered families at St. Luke's.

In **May of 2015**, the primary building was completed. The pews were from St. Mary's in New Hampton, IA and refinished by Prison Industries, who also constructed the ambo, altar, presiders' chairs, and baptismal font. The specs for these pieces of furniture were drawn up by Father Larry Hoffmann and his brother Tom, who visited from Texas.

The baptismal font has an interesting story. The octagonal wooden base was constructed. Father Larry thought we should be able to find a large marble or glass bowl for the top. We couldn't. The Holy Spirit interceded big time when the Liturgy Committee was meeting with a representative from the Omaha Catholic Supply Co, Cosgraves. As we talked about the dilemma, the rep opened his catalog stuffed with papers, and pulled out an email from a man in North Dakota who had recently notified him he had two octagonal baptismal font marble bowls. The dimensions were EXACTLY what we needed! It fit on the font like it was specially designed for it.

Since there was no choir loft with an organ, music director, Cari Higgins, donated a vinyl quote for the very bare west sanctuary wall.

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind." Luke 10:27

was a favorite quote and, by her suggestion to principal Tonya Eaton, the song by Lincoln Brewster soon became the school's theme song.

June 20, 2015 A Dedication Mass was officiated by the Archbishop of the Dubuque Diocese, Jerome Hanus, St Luke's pastor, Father Lawrence Hoffmann, and Deacon Dan McGuire with 310 registered families.

August, 2015 St. Luke's School opened with 42 students enrolled in K-3 grades. One grade was added each year until K-8 was achieved.

October, 2020 Groundbreaking began for the *Phase II Growing Together* Capital Campaign–School Expansion, which added several classrooms and parking spaces.

December 2022 St. Luke's Parish Statistics: 740 Registered Families, 66 Baptisms, 94 First Communions, 35 Confirmations, 373 RE students.

December 2025 St. Luke's Parish Statistics: 925 registered families. 386 school students (K-8, 2 sections per grade). 380 additional students enrolled in RE.

FUN FACTS

- School colors are green because it is Fr. Larry's favorite color.
- Our school students are *St. Luke's Longhorns*–the mascot is an Ox, as St. Luke is always pictured with one.
- St. Luke's feast day is October 18th, so our annual parish celebration is in October and is called Oxtoberfest
- Our baptisms *immensely* outnumber funerals; a ratio of almost 14:1–which means our services are often a little more exuberant than most churches