A Brief Historical Sketch of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church  
Fort Madison, Iowa

The First Episcopal service in Lee County was held in Fort Madison on August 16, 1843, when The Rt. Rev, Jackson Kemper, the first Episcopal Missionary Bishop in the United States, preached to “a few zealous Episcopalians”. We have three chalices, three patens, and two cruets from this "Bishop of the Whole Northwest" given to us before 1855.

The Rev. William A. Leach arrived in Fort Madison July 15, 1848, and wrote: "It appears that a parish under the instrumentality of a zealous layman was organized in the year 1844, but for a variety of deteriorating causes, it soon began to decay." Rev. Leach held services at the Academy Building until 1850. The Rev. Mr. Bachelor conducted services occasionally until 1854 for the congregation known as St. Peter's, using the “Presbyterian house of worship, now unoccupied.” On Whitsunday, May 31, 1857, Bishop Henry Washington Lee, the first Bishop of the Diocese of Iowa, preached in the Court House twice, and in the evening at the Penitentiary. The Good Shepherd window over the altar is dedicated to Bishop Lee.

On March 25, 1854, the Episcopalians were formally chartered as Hope Church under the Rectorship of William Adderly.

- The Church Building was consecrated September 9. 1857 - "A beautiful and appropriate edifice tastefully and completely furnished with every requisite." The original cost was $4,000.
- A Sunday School was established in 1858.
- The first Confirmation Service was held May 2, 1858.
- The Brass Altar Cross was given in 1884.
- Altar Candles and a Linen Chasuble were dedicated in 1885.
- An organ was installed in 1887, also at a cost of about $4,000.
- Electric lights were installed in 1888.
- The fine Oak Altar dates from 1892.
- The brass jeweled Procesional Cross and the Eagle Lectern date from 1893.
- Red velvet pew cushions were given in 1893 and used until about 2010.
- Harvest Festivals were introduced in 1894 and attracted many visitors.
- The Oak and Brass Altar Rail was given in 1895.
- Midnight Christmas Eucharists were established in 1895 and attracted large crowds.
- On November 11, 1903, under the Rectorship of The Rev. Dr. Edward H. Rudd the church was renamed and dedicated to St. Luke.
- In 1905 Mrs. Rachel Albright made and presented to the parish a beautiful hand-worked silk replica of the original United States flag which had been made by her grandmother, Mrs. Betsy Ross. Conserved, it may be seen in the Parish Hall.
- In 1926 the Blessed Sacrament was reserved for the first time.
- The Parish Hall was dedicated November 1, 1929.
Two ordinations took place at St. Luke's prior to those of the Ministry Development Team ordinations which began in 2005:

- On October 12, 1941, the Rev. Russell J. Rauscher was ordained to the Priesthood; two decades later he became a bishop.
- On May 12, 1990, Julia K. Easley, the first parishioner to enter the ministry, was ordained to the Diaconate at St. Luke’s.

The words of Fr. Dew-Brittain still ring true: "The years gone by are a challenge to carry on.

List of St. Luke’s Rectors, Priests and Deacons

1848 – 2016

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<tr>
<td>The Rev. Mr. Bachelor</td>
<td>1850 – 1854</td>
<td>The Rev. William P. James</td>
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<td>The Rev. Willa Goodfellow</td>
<td>1997 – 2005</td>
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Ministry Development Team Members
Ordained to the Priesthood
(When a parish has a MDT the Bishop of the Diocese is considered to be the Rector of the church.)

The Rev. Lyle Brown
The Rev. Barbara Easley
The Rev. James Kannenberg
The Rev. Shelley Dowling

The Rev. Marilyn Wentzien

The Rev. Bonnie Wilkerson
The Rev. Kelly Shields

Ms. Alyce Lair

As of March 2016 all of the above MDT members are still actively serving at St. Luke’s.

During the period 2006 – to May 2010 supply priests and lay readers conducted services while the Ministry Development Team members were studying for ordination

Ordained to the Priesthood on May 10, 2010
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Ordained to the Priesthood on May 10, 2010
Ordained to the Vocational Diaconate on May 10, 2010
Ordained to the Vocational Diaconate on May 10, 2010
Ordained to the Priesthood on February 1, 2014
Ordained to the Vocational Diaconate on February 1, 2014
Commissioned as the Parish Administrator on May 10, 2010