



**First Lutheran Church,
Newton IA**

2016

First Epistle

From the Pastor...

Christ is King! Now what?

It was barely a week ago as I write this when we celebrated Christ the King Sunday. We celebrated the reality in the face of obscurity that Jesus the Christ truly is the king and ruler of this world. One week later we began our time of waiting for this king to arrive and show us in person who he is and what he's about. Later this month we will praise God that that king has arrived! And we will stand in awe that the king before us is a tiny helpless baby that appears to need more from us as caregivers than he can give himself. And yet there is no doubt this small baby is the King anticipated.

Now what? The king is here. The king appears unable to change the world around us—he is a baby after all. Powerful people change the world, not babies. I do not have children, so all I can do is watch from the outside looking in at siblings and friends with a newborn. It is fascinating, anyone with children know that those babies, despite being helpless, changes the entire world of everyone involved. The world all of a sudden revolves around that baby. When my niece was born, I saw a profound change in my brother. He was happy to let others hold and play with his new daughter, but she was his daughter and he would protect that baby from anyone being too cavalier with the small child. The king's arrival as a baby shows us precisely what to do next. The baby's arrival means care and compassion, empathy and love, attentiveness and action are the name of the game. We respond to the Christ who is king as a parent would care for a small baby. He is no less king and the baby dictates our response.

When we gather at the Lord's Supper we hear the words "this is my body" and "this is my blood". We eat and drink and we experience in a very tangible way the presence of Christ in us. Through this sacrament, we recognize that Christ the King dwells inside our bodies. The tiny Christ baby lives in all people. When we look in the mirror, we see Jesus. When we see people walking down the street, we see Jesus. When we look into the face of someone we do not like or do not trust or do not hold in high regard, we see Jesus. When we serve others, it is the Christ in the other whom we serve.

The king is here. Now what? Care. Compassion. Empathy. Love. Attentiveness. Action. When we see another person, whomever they are, no matter what has gone before or what will come after, we see the face of Christ. How we respond to the other is how we respond to the Christ child.

When God sees us, God sees a child in need of care and empathy and so provides. When God's anger is riled up, it is because God sees the abusive behavior we inflict upon one another. This is grace. God covers us with divine love and calls us to share that divine love with all others. As children of God called to love and serve the world, we are to treat all people as fully human—fully made in the image of God—no matter who they are. As people made in God's image and filled with the presence of the Christ child, we are called to stand up against any action that dehumanizes anyone else or attempts to downplay in any way the image of God inherent in all people.

This Advent season, remember that you have been fully accepted as you are by your heavenly Parent. Go, and share that wonderful gift with everyone.

Peace,

Pastor Zach

Sunday Worship
9:30 a.m.

Sunday Fellowship
10:30 a.m.

First Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Pastor's Office Hours

Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday
9:00-Noon
or by appointment

ANNOUNCEMENTS

First Sunday Potlucks at First Lutheran!

December 4th is the last potluck of the year. We will come down to the fellowship hall and eat right after the Congregational Budget meeting that follows service. In a very busy month, come spend some quality time with your church family.

Note cards featuring photos of the Chancel at First Lutheran will be available to purchase after church in the Narthex and weekday mornings at the church office. These cards feature the chancel decorated for Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving and another featuring just the tapestry. They are packaged, two of each card, in sets of 8 with envelopes and sell for \$10 each. All of the proceeds from card sales go into the 'organ fund'.

Please remember, if you are having trouble hearing: Listening devices are available. Please ask an usher.



Food Pantry
Donations Needed

The Food Pantry would like us to emphasize a specific item each month. Remember, you may bring any item you wish, but spreading this among the contributing congregations keeps a steady supply of their most basic needs coming each month. **For the month of December, paper products (towels, napkins, toilet paper), sanitary care items, and diapers have been requested.** There is a basket in the narthex for all food pantry items.

Thank you for being so generous.

Chancel Flowers

Dec. 4 —
Dec. 11 — Trees
Dec. 18 — Trees
Dec. 25 — Poinsettias

Fellowship

Dec. 4 — Potluck
Dec. 11 — Lois Circle
Dec. 18 — Lois Circle
Dec. 25 —

Please sign up to provide flowers and fellowship.

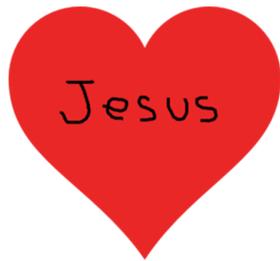


- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 12/2 Blake Baumgartner | 12/19 Mary Jo Greve |
| Connor Hayden | Allan Orsund |
| 12/3 Cailyn Grabe | 12/26 Charles Elliott |
| 12/6 Darcy VanDam | Tom Hayden |
| 12/7 Suzanne Von Seggern | Bob Sandquist |
| 12/12 Vicki Porter | 12/27 Craig Peterson |
| Pat Putz | 12/28 Ashley Swartz |
| 12/14 Morgan Allen | 12/29 Zach Bey |
| Jim McVey | 12/30 Garnet Beenen |
| 12/16 Lynette Marvelli | Mae VanDam |

Member's New Address

Beverly Russell, has a new address at an assisted living community in Marion, Iowa. If any church members and friends would like to send her a Christmas card we know she would enjoy hearing from her friends at First. Her new address is:

Beverly Russell
2120 Canvasback Ct
Marion, IA 52302



Chili and Caroling—December 11th at 5:00pm

Christmas Eve Worship & Children's Program—
December 24th at 7:00pm

Christmas Day Worship—December 25th at 9:30am

Don't Forget!

Congregational Budget meeting on December 4th

All confirmed members are encouraged to attend to elect new council members and a treasurer. The meeting will be directly after the worship service and then we will all head downstairs to the fellowship hall for a potluck lunch.



Wednesday Night Community Dinners:

THANK YOU to the people that helped with our Wednesday Night Community Dinner all this past year! We will not have a community dinner in the month of December. Please join us again in the new year to continue this very important community service. Help Jesus feed the hungry!

Affirmation of Baptism



On October 30, 2016 First Lutheran Church celebrated Affirmation of Baptism with Lane Christopher Rose (pictured left of Pastor Zach) and Brock Lawrence Jordan (pictured right of Pastor Zach). We welcome them as adults in the worship and fellowship practices of our congregation.

Adopt a Senior at Careage (Accura West)

First Lutheran will once again be giving Christmas gifts to residents at Careage nursing home. Gifts are to be \$5-\$10 and suggestions for gifts will be on the chart in the narthex. Wrap the gift and be sure to put the resident's name on it and that the gift is from First Lutheran. The gifts are to be brought to the church by December 18th. A box is in the narthex near the sign-up sheet for wrapped gifts.



Thank you on behalf of the Careage residents.

Prayer Corner

We pray for our families, friends and church family. Thank you Lord for the gift of your son, Jesus the Christ. He is Emmanuel, God with us, may we never feel alone. As we open our hearts to prepare a place for him, may we also open our hearts to others in our lives. Help us to take joy in the company and communications of our family and friends. Help us to keep warm and safe as the winter weather approaches. Help us to recognize the abundant blessings you give us all through the year and to in turn reach out to be a blessing to others. We continue to pray for our congregation, our leaders, our community and our world. Amen.

Congregational Budget meeting Dec. 4

All confirmed members are encouraged to attend to elect three new council members and a treasurer.

Chili & Caroling Dec. 11th, 5pm

We will gather at church, then set out to carol for 60-90 minutes. Then meet back at the church for chili. A sign up sheet will be in the narthex. Please come join us!



Children's Christmas Program

The First Lutheran Children's Christmas program will be combined with our Christmas Eve service this year. We are telling the traditional story with traditional well loved songs but it is also interactive for the entire congregation. This will be a playful and touching service for all. Please join us!

Charitable Shopping with Good Gifts



If you plan to do some Christmas shopping from the Good Gifts catalog this season, check in with the church office. There may be a gift ornament that matches with your purchase. We have them for water jugs, mosquito nets, school fees, food backpacks, immunizations microloans and others. Kellie will be happy to check for you, or walk by the office, available ornaments are displayed in the window.

Electronic Giving

If you would like to enroll or make any changes to your electronic giving for the new year please contact the office by phone or email.

2017 Offering Envelopes

Your 2017 offering envelopes will be available for pick up in the narthex later this month. This year they are in soft-bound packs instead of boxes. Tear one off each week. They are able to be mailed and you can keep a running total of your donations on the ledger bar at the top of each page. Please take them home for use starting in January 2017.

Zinga Choices in Mission Update

Our challenge in October was to help put the roof on the Mary Ellen Kitundu Memorial Birthing Center. The generous Choices In Mission match of \$5,000 enabled First Lutheran to send a check in the amount of \$11,186 to the Children's Hospital at Zinga, Tanzania. Thank you, everyone, for supporting this important mission and helping us make the match!

Even as Paula and Denny travel the States raising funds for the hospital, work continues at Zinga. Interior walls are going up in the birthing center, and soon, work on the roof will be underway. Sele and Dr. Jesse Kitundu had been looking for a door for the X-ray unit. Such doors are available in Kenya, but are very expensive. However, they were able to find a fundi, a technician, in Dar es Salaam who had built doors for the X-ray unit at a hospital there. The door meets the requirements of the atomic energy commission, at a fair price.

We thank God that excellent care is coming to the children of Zinga. Please keep the hospital and all who work there in your prayers, both those who bring health care and those who help build, and of course Paula and Denny as they travel.

For our Zinga Mission,
Marie Quanbeck

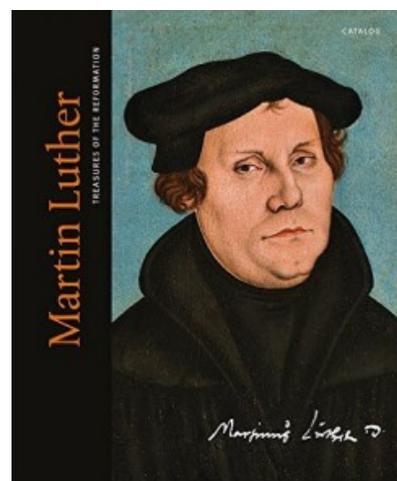
Martin Luther: Art and the Reformation

Five hundred years ago, one man took a stand that shook Europe and changed the world. Now you can see the story of Martin Luther and the Reformation brought to life through astonishing artworks and historical objects, traveling outside of Germany for the first time ever. Luther used art and the newly invented printing press to challenge Europe's leaders and spread a revolution of religious, cultural, and societal change. This exhibition includes paintings, sculptures, gold, textiles, and works on paper - as well as Luther's personal possessions and recent archaeological finds - that shed new light on an explosive era and the man who ignited it.

This exhibit is open now through January 15, 2017, at the Minneapolis Institute of Art.

Ticket prices and more information can be found at;

<http://new.artsmia.org/luther/>



POINSETTIAS NEEDED

On Christmas Eve, the sanctuary will again be filled with the bright red foliage of poinsettias. We need your help in providing these plants. To order a poinsettia, please complete the form below, enclose your check or cash (\$8.50) and either put it in the offering plate, bring it to the church or mail it.

**Checks should be made out to Hy-Vee for \$8.50
The deadline for ordering is noon on December 19th.
Poinsettias may be taken home after service on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.**

Name _____

Phone _____

Poinsettia(s) ___\$8.50/each (Check payable to Hy-Vee)

Given in honor of

Given in memory of



Merry Christmas from LSI

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” – John 1:5

As Christmas approaches, we give thanks for you! Every day, as a ministry partner of LSI, you help bring the light of Christ to others.

At LSI, we know many people experiencing deep darkness. We know adults with disabilities who have no caring family presence in their lives. We know families in Des Moines who spent 20 years living in refugee camps and are finally regaining some hope for the future. We know teens who are aging out of the foster care system and fear they will never belong to anyone or have a family to love them.

LSI’s work is Christmas work, shining love, compassion and light in places of darkness, despair, abuse, neglect, addiction and crisis. We could not do this important work without you, and we are so grateful.

Wishing you a blessed and merry Christmas from LSI!

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at www.LSIowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

A New Kind of Family

For Kristie, respite caregiving through LSI’s Services for People with Disabilities is more than just a job. It’s a time for her to be with family.

Kristie has helped to take care of Trevor since she began working with LSI. Trevor stays one night with her family most weekends and during many weeknights, he spends time and eats dinner with Kristie’s family.

“He gets to come over and go to sporting events, or go camping, or go to family functions with us,” Kristie says. “He likes to interact with my own children, who are about the same age.”

The whole family has developed a relationship with Trevor, and even extended family members consider him as “one of the kids.”

“Respite care has been a great outlet for me and my kids, and it’s a growing opportunity for all of us. I’ve developed a relationship with Trevor’s family. It gives them a break, and my kids can learn and grow,” Kristie says. “This gives me an opportunity to work with kids and still be able to do things with my own family. It doesn’t interfere with my life. It adds to it.”



December 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6:00 Book Study	2	3
4 2nd Sunday of Advent 9:30 Worship Congregational Meeting 11:00 Potluck	5 <i>5:00 Bible Study</i>	6	7 <i>6:30 Property</i> <i>6:30 Confirmation</i>	8 6:00 Book Study	9	10
11 3rd Sunday of Advent 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship 5pm Chili & Caroling	12 <i>5:00 Bible Study</i> <i>7:00 Hannah</i>	13	14 <i>6:30 Confirmation</i>	15 6:00 Book Study 7:00 Eunice	16	17
18 4th Sunday of Advent 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship	19 <i>5:00 Bible Study</i> Newsletter articles due this week	20 <i>6:00 Council</i>	21 <i>9:00 Lois</i> <i>1:00 Martha</i>	22	23	24 Christmas Eve 7pm Worship & Kids Program
25 Christmas 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship	26 <i>5:00 Bible Study</i>	27	28	29	30	31

December Serving Schedule

Sunday 9:30am	Acolyte	Council on Duty	Greeters	Lector	Ushers	PA
December 4th	Lane Rose	Candy Thompson	Pat & Steve Putz	Jane Odland	Dave Troen, Dirk Amundsen, Alex Anderson	Duane Quanbeck
December 11th	Blake Baumgartner, Thomas Hodnett	Julie Laube	Judy & Mark Monroe	Beth Baumgartner	Lee Swenson, Aaron Bartholmey,	Matt Coyle
December 18th		Terri Hayden	Jane & Ken Odland	Marie Quanbeck	Bob Floss, Stan Kirchhoff	
December 24th Saturday 7pm				Marlys Amundsen	Captains	
December 25th		Pat Foote	Judy & Lee Swenson	Dirk Amundsen	Gary Johnson, Jim Lammey,	

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