

First Lutheran Church, Newton IA

FEBRUARY

2015

First Epistle

From the Pastor...

Questions and Answers

Here I am, one day before I leave for some continuing education at Luther Seminary and then some vacation time with friends in Minnesota, and it is time to write another newsletter article. Here I am, banging my head trying to think about what should be said. Are there any issues that need to be addressed in this medium? Can I lay the foundation of this or that topic that needs to be thought about in this place with my words? And as is often the case as I prepare to write these articles, my mind is blank. All the ideas that swam through my head last week have aggravatingly fluttered away and I am left staring at a blank computer screen wondering what to write.

My hope as I write these articles is that something in it will get you thinking about life as a follower of Christ. In the past I've done this by emphasizing remembering and living in and telling our story—both the story we find in the Bible of God's entering in to the life of those God loves and the story that we live each day working, learning, playing, and relaxing. I have asked questions and shaped ideas with the intent to connect these two sets of stories, perhaps in a new way. Nevertheless, if you are at all like me, we often struggle to do this. Often we find it difficult to connect the lives we live with the faith we proclaim. Often we are unable to grasp how the narrative found in the Bible has anything to do with the narrative of our lives. Often we have questions we just don't have answers to. And we wonder.

This leads me to ask, in what ways can we address these questions, these uncertainties, these curiosities? How might we engage the questions we have? And so, I ask, What are your questions? **What do you wonder about in terms of your faith, the role and place of the Bible, of theology, of service?** Who knows better than you what your questions are? For (at least) the next year I invite you to give me your questions. Then each month I will introduce one of those questions and engage it. I can't definitively say I'll answer it, but I will seek to wrestle with it along side you. I will give my thoughts on the topic and where appropriate lean on the guidance of other thinkers from our past and present. My hope is that through this process, we can all come to a greater understanding of our faith and our community. And in so doing, understand better what it means to be a follower of Christ.

This won't work without you. So send me your questions. Write it down on a sheet of paper and hand it to me at worship, email it to me (zach@newtonfirstlutheran.org), or call/text me and let me know via my cell (319-389-9622). We all have questions. Let us work together to engage them.

Peace,

Pastor Zach

Sunday Worship
9:30 a.m.

Sunday Fellowship & Education
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



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|----------------------|---------------------|
| 2/2 Sharry McGuire | 2/15 Jane Goos |
| 2/4 Marlys Amundsen | Julie Leckband |
| 2/5 Arthur Greve III | 2/16 Elaine Elliott |
| 2/10 Jane Johnson | 2/19 Julie Brown |
| Cole Smith | 2/23 Bryan Friedman |
| 2/11 Bev Russell | 2/27 Alex Anderson |
| 2/12 Ing Benskin | Bethany Baumgartner |
| Katie Cantu | Evelyn George |
| Sarah Grunig | Ashlyn Karsten |
| 2/14 Andrew Lammey | |



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 February, peanut butter and jelly; have been requested.** There is a basket in the narthex for all food pantry items.

Thank you for being so generous.

Chancel Flowers

Feb. 1—
Feb. 8— Jordan
Feb. 15—
Feb. 22—

Fellowship

Feb. 1— Amundsen
Feb. 8—
Feb. 15—
Feb. 22—

Please sign up to provide flowers and fellowship.

Welcome the newest member of the Cantu family
and our church family!

Garrett Matthew was born at 11:25pm on Jan. 25th.
He weighed 9 lbs 2 oz and was 22 inches long. He has lots of black hair.
Congratulations Katie, Josh, Emily, and Baby Garrett!



Wednesday Night Community Dinners:

THANK YOU to the people that helped with our January Wednesday Night Community Dinner! Our next dinner is scheduled on February 25th. Please watch for the sign up sheets in the narthex and join us to continue this very important community service.



Our thanks to all who attended and participated in Alice Garlock's funeral, prepared and served the luncheon, and have expressed condolences to us. We are most grateful to you for supporting us in our time of sorrow.

Sandra and Russell Ayers

The committee (Barb Birkenholtz, Ruth Kelly, Candy Thompson) which organizes and serves lunches for funerals needs to update its list of people willing to help. The list we are working from now is several years old and many on the list are no longer with us or able to help. If you can either supply food for a lunch and/or help on the day of the lunch we would appreciate a call or email. Just let us know what you can do and if there are certain seasons of the year when you will be unavailable let us know that too. If we can get enough names on the list, then we should only need to call on you once or twice a year. Please call Candy at 792-7386 or email at candicet@iowatelecom.net. We appreciate your willingness to help out in this way.

**We need volunteers for the Backpack Program
Saturday, February 7, 9:30-11:30, at St. Luke's Methodist Church**

These are food-filled backpacks that are handed out to school children facing hunger at home on the weekends. Sign-up in the narthex.

Here is some more information about this Feeding America program from the Iowa Food Bank website:

ONE IN FIVE IOWA CHILDREN DOES NOT HAVE ENOUGH TO EAT.

The Backpack Program™ is designed to lessen the consequence of chronic childhood hunger by providing a sack of kid-friendly, easy-to-prepare foods to low-income elementary school children on weekends when they do not have access to the federal free and reduced-price meal program. There is no cost for children, their families or schools to participate in the Backpack Program™.

The contents of the backpacks vary each week, but contain a variety of items such as pop-top meals or soup, 100% juice, single-serve cereal, fruit cups, sunbutter (made with sunflower seeds), shelf-stable 2% milk, pudding cups and snacks.

This year, we will serve more than 4,800 low income children each week at 126 sites in 26 Iowa counties.

The Backpack Program is at all four Newton Elementary schools and serves 20 children at each school.

**Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
February 17th, 5:30pm**

Bring your appetite!

We will need helpers and extra griddles!

Need help with ..

SETTING UP, starting at 3:30 - 4:00,

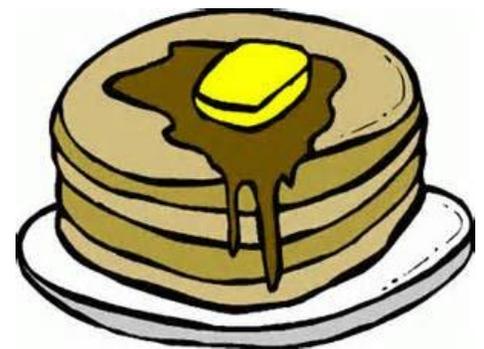
SERVERS during the meal,

and CLEANERS for after the meal.

ANY and ALL help is needed,

the more HELP we have = success for ALL.

Please sign up on the sheets provided in the narthex.



Sweets for Your

Sweet!

A gift for your Valentine!

Homemade cookies, bars,
and candy, with your choice
of handmade Valentine card!

Newton YMCA

1701 S 8th Ave E

Saturday, February 14,

9 a.m.–Noon

Sponsored by First Lutheran Church, 309 E 3rd St N
Proceeds support the pediatric hospital at Zinga, TZ



LENTEN SCHEDULE

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|-------------|----------------------------------|
| February 18 | First Lutheran (Ash Wednesday) |
| February 25 | St. Andrew's, Sully |
| March 4 | Holy Trinity |
| March 11 | First Lutheran |
| March 18 | St. Andrew's, Sully |
| March 25 | Holy Trinity |
| March 31 | Holy Trinity (Seder Meal) |
| April 2 | First Lutheran (Maundy Thursday) |
| April 3 | Holy Trinity (Good Friday) |

Once again the ELCA Lutheran churches of Jasper County will journey through the season of Lent together, toward Jesus' cross and resurrection. Evening services from February 25 thru March 25 will be preceded by a soup supper at the host congregation starting at 5:30pm with the church service starting at 6:30pm.

This year we will be using the "Evening Prayer" liturgy from the Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW, cranberry). It will be new to all three congregations.

Messages given by Pastors Ken Ahnholz, Nancy Pick and Zach Bey will be drawn from, Prayers For Worship "Thanksgiving at the Font" (Number V) also in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW, cranberry p. 71).

Please join your church family in this journey of forty days to the cross, as often as you are able.

2014 Giving Statements

Your 2014 Giving Statements are available for pick up in the narthex. Please take them home for your tax records.

Prayer Corner

Please pray for all our family, friends and church family. Pray for those who feel lonely and unloved, especially those who don't know the saving and forgiving love of our Lord Jesus Christ. Pray for families in transition; growing, healing and grieving. Please continue to pray for our congregation, our leaders, our community and our world.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.