



First Lutheran Church, Newton IA

2015 First Epistle

From the Pastor...

Living the Body of Christ — Knowing our Why*

Why do we do what we do around this place? Why do we gather for worship? Why do we join together for social events? Why do we serve our greater community? Why do we spend time studying the Word? Why do we care about this 100 year old building sitting on the corner of 3rd and 3rd?

These questions and others on this theme are always spinning around our heads. These questions became more focused as First Lutheran looked for a pastor in 2012. These questions have been bouncing around my head since I began my ministry as pastor of First Lutheran two and a half years ago. These questions have been the driving force behind the visioning process the council has done over the past two years as well as the focus groups we had in May. And these questions are at the heart of the endeavor we are beginning to examine who we are, how we live, and where we go from here moving into the next 150 years of our congregational life.

As Christians, we are people called to follow Christ. We are people called to live and act in specific ways toward our neighbors and with one another. In Christ we are indeed a resurrection people—a people defined in the end not by our own standards (successes and failures), but by the new kingdom God brings to this world through Jesus' life, death, and (yes) resurrection. And so, as a resurrection people and as a people defined by a new kingdom of God, as we examine why we do what we do, we realize that it is Jesus the Christ upon whom that 'why' rests. We gather, we worship, we support one another, we care about our collective house all because these things point us once again to who Christ is and how Christ is constantly transforming us into the people God has called us to be.

With Christ as our head, we are becoming his hands, feet, arms, and legs—we are becoming the means through which Christ works in this world. There is a metaphor richly used throughout the Bible to talk about this—the Body of Christ. As Christians we are the Body of Christ. In the Eucharist, Christ's body physically enters our own bodies, in the bread and wine, and nourishes us. As we sacrifice ourselves—through our actions and resources—for the sake of the entire community (both inside the church and outside it) we reflect Christ's sacrifice on the cross, suffering for the sake of others.

As Christians, we are a people who are called out to live the Body of Christ in the world. We worship, we socialize together, we serve, we study and learn, we care about this place we call First Lutheran all because through these things (and many more) we live the Body of Christ. Living the Body of Christ has become our 'why'. Living the Body of Christ is what motivates us to be the people of God in this place. Living the Body of Christ is the mantra that brings focus to our purpose as a congregation.

I invite you all to continue to ponder this why. I invite you all to think and to pray about ways you specifically live the Body of Christ in your everyday life. I invite you to join with your sisters and brothers of First Lutheran as we work together to more fully embody the presence of Christ in all we do. In the coming months, we will continue to explore how we live the Body of Christ in the various aspects of our life together. Join the conversation. Join the process. Live the Body of Christ.

Peace, Pastor Zach

*The topic of exploring why we do what we do was inspired by the book "Start with Why" by Simon Sinek.

Saturday Worship
5:30 p.m.

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



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|------|-----------------|------|--------------------|
| 7/4 | Steve Hodnett | 7/22 | Ben Caldwell |
| | Carson Sumpter | | Emily Forsyth |
| 7/5 | Jordan Leckband | | Anna Van Dam |
| 7/6 | Leo Friedman | 7/23 | Madeline Allen |
| 7/7 | Steven Benskin | 7/24 | Juli Bey |
| 7/8 | Talia Friedman | 7/26 | Pat Penney |
| | Victoria Jordan | 7/27 | Todd Lucas |
| | Lonnie Portner | 7/29 | Ken Odland |
| 7/9 | Ron Brown | 7/30 | Verlan Birkenholtz |
| 7/13 | Barb Anderson | | Joey Lammey |
| 7/16 | Teri Allen | 7/31 | Jeremy Sumpter |
| 7/19 | Kristi Cummins | | |



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 July, instant potatoes and powdered milk; have been requested.** There is a basket in the narthex for all food pantry items.

Thank you for being so generous.

Chancel Flowers

July 5—

July 12— Goos

July 19— Sharp

July 26—

Fellowship

July 5—

July 12—

July 19—

July 26—

Please sign up to provide flowers and fellowship.

RISE UP TOGETHER

2015 ELCA Youth Gathering

Detroit, Michigan

July 15-19



Our group of seven youth and two leaders will leave on July 14 and return late on July 19. Please pray for us on this amazing journey!

Anna Coyle, Lizzy Coyle, Anna Forsyth, Chris Forsyth*, Isaac Friedman, Robyn Friedman*, Devon Hobbs, Victoria Jordan, and Andrew Weiland.



Thanks to everyone who donated or came out to the stadium to walk or cheer on the walkers on June 5th for our annual Jasper County Relay for Life. As usual we had a great time and offered wonderful support for all those who are diagnosed with cancer and those who walk along side them on their journey. Thank you for your continued support.

Wednesday Night Community Dinners:

THANK YOU to the people that helped with our June Wednesday Night Community Dinner! Our next dinners are scheduled on July 22nd and 29th at the McCann Center. Please watch for the sign up sheets in the narthex and join us to continue this very important community service.



Will You Help Usher at Church?

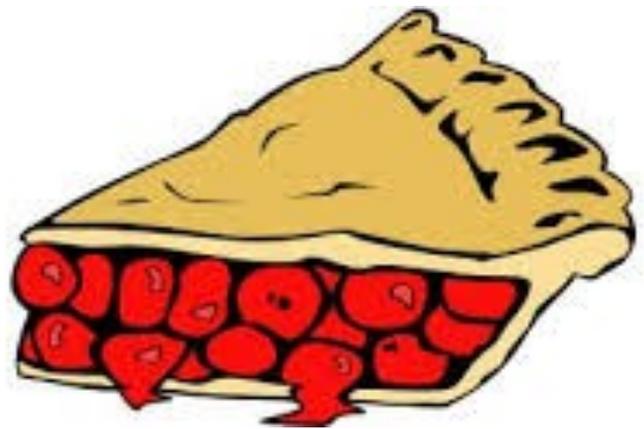
Ushers help the church service run smoothly and on time, so having a full staff of ushers on a regular basis is a quietly important aspect of our service. Would you be able to help one Sunday a month? Please contact the office. If you can help occasionally, please talk with one of the ushers when you come in to church to offer your assistance.

Or Run the Slideshow?

If you would like to help run the slideshows for announcements and service by advancing the screens in time with the service, please contact the church office.

Pie and Ice Cream Social July 12th from 6:30-8:00!!

Come to celebrate and send off our 7 youth and 2 leaders heading to Detroit for the National Lutheran Youth Gathering the next week! Please eat and fellowship with our high schoolers and wish them well as they get ready to embark on this powerful experience! We would LOVE help with a variety of pies for the evening, so please feel free to exercise your baking skills and donate a pie or two or three for the evening! We know our church is blessed with many talented bakers! Please contact Robyn Friedman or Chris Forsyth if you plan to bake pie for the event. Thank you for your support and encouragement of our youth. This is our thank you back to you! We promise no pies will end up on anyone's faces this time either!

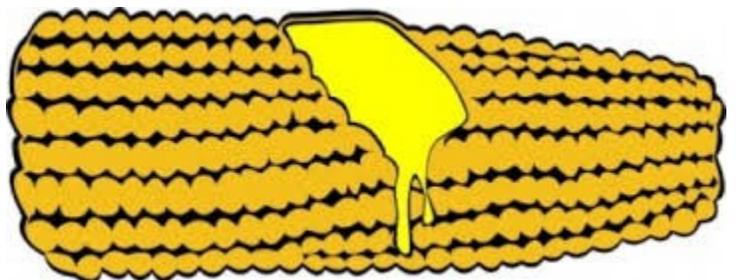
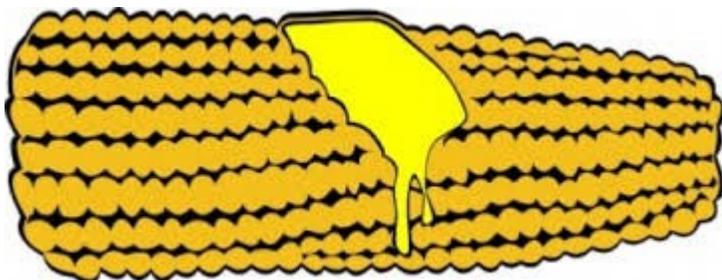


The Corn Boil is coming, the Corn Boil is coming!

Tuesday, July 21st 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Sign-up sheets are in the narthex to see how you can help make this year's corn boil a great success!

Many hands make for light work!
Be sure to join us for great food and fellowship!



Look Around You

Checkout the grounds around the front of the church and the parking lot! The tuckpointing project was completed this spring and since then the Property Committee has replaced 13 rose bushes and some other plantings that didn't make it a year ago. The area has a new covering of brown mulch and river rock has been expanded in some areas on the east side. Special thanks to: Al Orsund, Duane Quanbeck, Dennis Porter and Stan Kirchhoff. Also look at the parking lot flower garden that Pat Foote and Carolyn Kirchhoff take care of.



We have a beautiful church setting! If you would like to help contact:
Stan Kirchhoff Property Chairman



Several downtown area churches have been meeting monthly with the intention of forming a combined downtown youth group. Initially the group is planned to meet at the Friendship House run by First Presbyterian, it is located directly across 3rd Ave from First Lutheran. The initial gathering is planned for Sunday, August 9th with an evening of worship, music, food and other fun activities. Keep watching for updates and more information to be coming soon!

Prayer Corner

Please pray for all of our families, friends and church family. Pray for our country as we celebrate part of our history and work our way through our current struggles. Pray for all those attending the National Youth Gathering in Detroit, Michigan. Pray for all affected by inclement weather and other natural disasters. Give thanks for the abundance of summer, seen in the growth of gardens, and activities that add richness and memories of shared experience to our lives. Please continue to pray for our congregation, our leaders, our community and our world.



Summer Services

Saturday service will be added at 5:30pm for June, July and August starting June 6th and running until August 29th. This shorter service will be held in the Fellowship hall. Please join us as your schedule allows.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.