

MARCH

**First Lutheran Church,
Newton IA**

2017

First Epistle

From the Pastor...

From Death to Life: Our Story

We are followers of Christ. We are not perfect. We make mistakes. We hurt others—sometimes intentionally, sometimes not. We struggle to understand what we are supposed to do, and too often find ourselves floundering in waters too deep and too tumultuous to stay afloat. The currents and riptides of our lives drag us under water and we feel the deathly pressure of water upon our chests, we feel the desperate desire to inhale a lungful of air knowing that if we give in to that desire only water will fill our lungs. Thrashing, we look for anything or anyone we can grab hold of for our very survival. In our panic we don't even realize that our thrashing threatens the life of the one who has come to help.

This is our death swallowing us. But our story is not about our death. At least, it's not only about our death. It is also about our life. We tend to see death as the end of the story. We struggle through life, having good days and bad days, good years and bad years, and at the end we hope for a quiet and peaceful passing into death, thereby ending the story of our lives. But as followers of Christ, we are shown that we have our poles reversed, we have our wires crossed, we have the order of life and death backwards. Death is not the end. Death is where we begin and from there and with Christ we move into life.

The drowning victim is as certainly dead as can be until the lifeguard wraps her arms around him and draws him to her. His struggles threaten her life, but with strength and skill she calms him down and swims to the safety of land. Together new life has begun. This is as true with our physical deaths as with this metaphorical death story. We believe in the resurrection of the dead. We confess this every Sunday as we collectively proclaim the Apostles' Creed. We worship a God who when enfleshed and was killed actually came back to life! Death does not stop the power of God to enact transformation. This transformation is new life. And this is our story as followers of Christ.

Understandably death is a frightful concept. Death brings out fear and anxiety, it brings out the thrashing that so often does more harm than good. In this year's Midweek Lenten Study we will spend time dwelling in our story as we look at how we move from a focus on death to a focus on life. We will begin by recognizing that we tend to begin our self-examination with a sense of fear and uncertainty. That fear drives us to find an authority—anything that appears stable and trustworthy. This authority is either the Spirit of God or it is an idol. As followers of Christ, we pray that we find our authority in the Spirit and not created things. The Spirit will prove trustworthy even in the midst of unpredictability and chaos, and in the Spirit we find hope. This hope will lead us to discipleship as we strive to live out the calling we have received from God. Along the way there are pitfalls and trouble spots. There are dangers that draw back toward death. But the story of our lives is a story about being drawn from death and into new life following Christ. Join us on Wednesdays at 6:45 as we explore *From Death to Life: Our Story: Recognizing the peace that surpasses all understanding*.

Peace,
Pastor Zach

Sunday Worship
9:30 a.m.

Sunday Fellowship
10:30 a.m.

First Evangelical Lutheran Church

309 E. 3rd St. N.,
Newton, IA 50208
Phone: 641-792-3934
Fax: 641-792-3937

Email:
office@newtonfirstlutheran.org
www.newtonfirstlutheran.org

Pastor Zach Bey

zach@newtonfirstlutheran.org
641-791-7796

President

Terri Hayden
terrihayden63@gmail.com
641-831-5555

Vice President

Judy Monroe
mmonroe@pcpartner.net
641-792-4950

Secretary

Deb Rose
deborah.rose65@gmail.com
641-521-6415

Treasurer

David Goos
goos2104@iowatelecom.net
641-792-8818

Administrative Assistant

Kellie Kramer
office@newtonfirstlutheran.org
641-792-3934

Pastor's Office Hours

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

First Sunday Potluck in March Is on the 5th!

We are back to our regular First Sunday potluck schedule. So please come and join us for warm food and fellowship during the cool weather. Hope to see you there!

Bad Weather Policy

First Lutheran follows the lead of the Newton School District during the week. If school is closed or closes early, then church is closed and activities cancelled.

On Sunday, if there is significant snow, ice or wind chill, cancellations will be reported on KCCI-TV, WHO-TV or KCOB-radio. We will also try to have a note on the Facebook page.

Stay safe and keep warm!

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 March, jello, pudding and canned fruit have been requested.** There is a basket in the narthex for all food pantry items.

Thank you for being so generous.

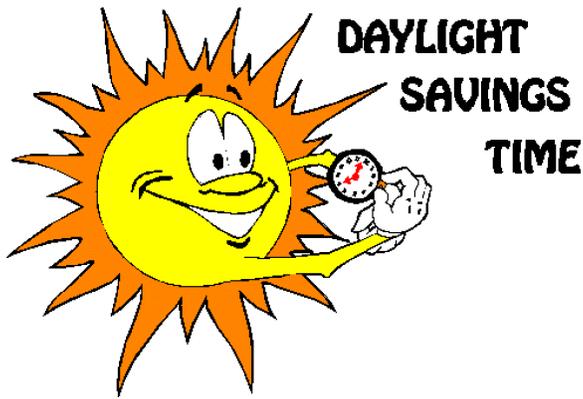
Chancel Flowers

March 5—
March 12—
March 19—
March 26—

Fellowship

March 5— Potluck
March 12—
March 19—
March 26—

Please sign up to provide flowers and fellowship.



**Don't forget—
Daylight Savings Time begins
March 12th!**

Spring forward an hour
on Saturday night,
so you will not be late
for church on Sunday!



- | | | | |
|-----|----------------|------|-----------------|
| 3/1 | Ron Grunig | 3/9 | Arlene byers |
| 3/4 | Doug Wilken | | Pat Foote |
| 3/5 | Dawn Lucas | 3/18 | Robyn Freidman |
| | Denise McVey | 3/19 | Sharon Petersma |
| | Barbara Orsund | 3/27 | Michael Hodnett |
| 3/7 | Andy Breuer | 3/31 | Meagan Frehse |
| 3/8 | Pam Comer | | |

Thank you for all of the wonderful help with the Community Dinner on Wednesday. We had enough people for two shifts and the work went wonderfully smooth. Thank you! - Marlys Amundsen



Special thanks to Duane Quanbeck for spending over a day changing lights and screens and installing a timer switch for the carport lighting.
- Property Committee



Wednesday Night Community Dinners:
THANK YOU to the people that helped with our Wednesday Night Community Dinner this past month! Our next Wednesday Night Community Dinners will be on March 22nd and 29th at the Methodist Church. The menu for the month is posted in the narthex on the main bulletin board. Come help Jesus feed the hungry!

Zinga News!

Paula and Denny are still in the States sharing the news about the Children's Hospital at Zinga, and raising money to keep construction going. Meanwhile, at Zinga, the birthing center roof is being raised. The start was delayed when Sele, who visited First Lutheran in 2011, had to return to the Central Province for his brother's funeral. Still needed for this large building: windows and doors.

Tanzanian government regulations require hospital floors to be terrazzo. In the past, IHP has hired this work done, but the decision has been made to invest in a terrazzo machine so Sele and his crew can do the work, saving time and money.

Meanwhile, the doctors and nurses at Zinga continue to make a difference in the lives of children and adults. Check the bulletin board in the basement for new photos! And if you are not already on the mailing list for Paula's monthly newsletter, you can sign up at www.ihptz.org.

Look for more details next month! Thank you for keeping this life-giving project in your prayers.

For the Zinga mission group,
Marie Quanbeck
641-521-4410

March Choices in Mission—Women's Crisis Center and Shelter

A Choices in Mission effort will run through the end of March. This is in response to the urgent need of a family in Jasper county for housing. The funds will go to Women's Crisis Center and Shelter, based out of Ottumwa, and serving Jasper County. The agency works with women in crisis situations, and their families.

We will collect offerings in our usual way. The Women's crisis center is aware we are raising funds, and if they can use them for a deposit for this specific family soon, they will contact me and we will forward the money we have. Otherwise, the funds will be sent at the end of the month.

Service Committee, Judy Monroe, chair

Congregational Meeting—March 26th

There will be a brief Congregational meeting following service on March 26 to allow the council to make small updates to the Church Constitution and By-laws to properly reflect how church business is currently handled in the ELCA. Please plan to attend for a few minutes before going down to fellowship.



2017
LENTEN
SCHEDULE

March 1	Ash Wednesday
March 8	Our Story—Fear
March 15	Our Story—Authority
March 22	Our Story—Spirit
March 29	Our Story—Hope
April 5	Our Story—Discipleship
April 9	Palm/Passion Sunday
April 13	Maundy Thursday
April 14	Good Friday
April 16	Easter

From
DEATH to **Life**: *Our Story*

Recognizing the peace that surpasses all understanding

Please join us on our Lenten journey as we study From Death to Life: Our Story—Recognizing the peace that surpasses all understanding. **All regular Lenten services will be held at 6:45 in the fellowship hall here at First Lutheran.**

Prayer
Corner

We pray for our families, friends and church family. Thank you Lord for giving us the wavering and uncertain month of March that is full of changes. This year the first of March also starts us on our Lenten journey, where you lead us through 40 days of changes that we take on with your help and guidance. We may add something to our lives or we may remove something from our lives. Through this intentional change you will be with us. Lent, and March, are also reminders that you are still with us through all the unintentional changes in our lives, and for this we are grateful. Thank you Lord. Remind us to follow in your ways and walk with others through their changes too. We continue to pray for our congregation, our leaders, our community and our world. Amen.

March is National Professional Social Work Month

March is National Professional Social Workers Month, a time to recognize social workers and thank them for all they do. At Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI), we're grateful for our many social workers who have dedicated their lives to serving their communities!

Maybe you've never had a social worker involved in your life. Yet, whether you realize it or not, you've had the benefit of their behind-the-scenes work in your community. Social workers help people help themselves in overcoming life's most difficult circumstances or managing challenges of everyday living: poverty, abuse, mental illness, depression, addiction, disability and many other situations.

Thank you to all of Iowa's social workers, especially those at LSI. We're proud of you.

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.

Finding Calm

Nine-year-old JD lost track of how many days he was removed from school. He would throw things in the classroom, or rip up his papers. Almost every day, he was separated from his classmates and taken to the "Intervention Room," an empty classroom where children have the opportunity to calm down and refocus. But nothing worked.

That's when JD's dad, Jerry, turned to LSI. With his team of LSI therapists and caseworkers, JD has found an interesting way to control his anger: his rock collection. He's always had a love of gathering "cool, unique-looking" rocks, and AriAnna, his LSI therapist, has incorporated that into their sessions together.

"Rocks can be used as great relaxation tools, and he spent a lot of time pouring over the rocks I had in my office," AriAnna said.

JD started his rock collection with AriAnna and began bringing it to school with him. He carries his favorites in his "positive choice pouch."

"When I hold them in my hand and breathe, it calms me down," says JD.

Jerry says LSI's help has been life-changing for his son. "He's making better choices now. I'm really proud of him," he says.

This year, JD has been removed from class only once, and for only 15 minutes. "He has a different identity at school now," AriAnna says. "He's creative and insightful. Now, he knows what he sees in himself, and he wants to share that with others."



March 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 5:30-6:30 Pancake supper 6:45 Ash Wednesday service	2	3	4
5 9:30 Worship 11:00 Potluck	6 5:00 Bible Study	7	8 6:45 Lenten service	9 Good Cheer 6:00 Council	10	11
12 Daylight Savings begins 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship	13 5:00 Bible Study 7:00 Hannah	14	15 9:00 Lois 1:00 Martha 6:45 Lenten service	16 7:00 Eunice	17	18
19 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship	20 5:00 Bible Study Newsletter articles due	21	22 5:30 Community Dinner 6:45 Lenten service	23	24	25
26 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship	27 5:00 Bible Study	28 9:00 Dorcas	29 5:30 Community Dinner 6:45 Lenten service	30	31	

March Serving Schedule

Sunday 9:30am	Acolyte	Council on Duty	Greeters	Lector	Ushers	PA
March 5th	Brock Jordan	Julie Laube	Pat & Steve Putz	Aaron Bartholmey	Dirk Amundsen, Alex Anderson	Duane Quanbeck
March 12th	Lane Rose	Deb Rose		Jayne Goos	Lee Swenson, Aaron Bartholmey, Dennis Porter	Matt Coyle
March 19th	Blake Baumgartner	Art Cooper		Jane Odland	Bob Floss, Stan Kirchhoff	David Goos
March 26th	Anna VanDam, Mae VanDam	Terri Hayden		Marie Quanbeck	Gary Johnson, Jim Lammey,	

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