



**First Lutheran Church,  
Newton IA**

**2019**

## **First Epistle**

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From the Pastor...

### WHAT KIND OF CROSS DO YOU CARRY?

Jesus commanded His followers, “Pick up your cross and follow me! (Mark 8:34). This can be a difficult command to follow because we don’t always want to make the sacrifices that are necessary. Life is filled with enough burdens. Do we really want one more?

And so, too many of us might want to go looking for just the “right cross” rather than take up the cross of self-denial that Jesus is talking about. We’re willing to follow Jesus, but certainly there has to be an easier way to do that... right?

Think about it. If we need to carry a cross, how about a soft, vinyl-padded cross that’s not too heavy. Or maybe a small, flat cross that we can put out of sight when we don’t want to attract attention to our faith. I’m sure some folks would be thrilled to carry a jeweled cross that would make a fashion-statement to all the “right people”. And the list could go on. The types of crosses are only limited to our imaginations.

But the cross of a true disciple of Jesus Christ is a plain, rough, wooden cross that is often too heavy, and takes a lot of effort to carry. And the one important difference between this cross and all the rest, is that Jesus himself has promised to stand with us and help us to carry the load.

The same One who commands us to “Pick up our cross” also reminds us, “My yoke is easy, and my burden is light!” (Matthew 11:30).

Living in God’s Amazing Grace!

**Pastor Mark**

<b>Sunday Worship</b> <b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Sunday Fellowship</b> <b>10:30 a.m.</b>
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# First Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Newton, IA 50208

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## Pastor Mark Holmes

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## President

Judy Monroe

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## Vice President

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## Secretary

Lynette Birkenholz

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## Treasurer

David Goos

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## Administrative Assistant

Nicole Vitales

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832-580-7451

## Pastor's Office Hours

Tuesday & Thursday

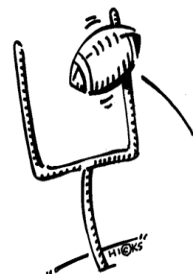
1:00—5:00 p.m.

or by appointment

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **This Weekend Souper Bowl Sunday**

What is Invite Your One? It is a special day at First Lutheran Church where members and active participants invite others to join them for worship. The event will be held this Sunday, February 3rd ( Super bowl Sunday). Following worship services at 9:30 a.m. members and their guest will enjoy a soup potluck beginning at 11:00 a.m. ***Do not forget to wear your sweatshirts or jerseys supporting their favorite team.*** Please fill out a invitation card found in the churches narthex and send it to a neighbor, friend, or someone from your place of work. See you February 3rd !!



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



## **Bury the Alter**

Our Bury the Altar Food Drive Has begun and will go through Sunday, February 10. Currently the Jasper County Food Pantry is currently seeking the following items, non-sugary cereal, canned soups, canned spaghetti products, Ramen noodles, Quaker oats, macaroni and cheese, canned fruit, canned beans, canned vegetables, pasta, spaghetti sauce, canned tuna, tuna helper, peanut butter, and instant brown rice. We want to have even more than last year!

### **Chancel Flowers**

Feb. 3— David & Jayne Goos

Feb. 10—

Feb. 17—

Feb. 24—

### **Fellowship**

Feb. 3—Souper Bowl Potluck!!

Feb. 10—

Feb. 17—

Feb. 24—Thrivent

**Please sign up to provide flowers and fellowship.**



2/4 Marlys Amundsen  
2/5 Arthur Greve III  
2/10 Jane Johnson  
Cole Smith  
2/11 Beverly Russell  
2/12 Ing Benskin  
Katie Cantu  
Sarah Grunig  
2/14 Andrew Lammey  
2/15 Jayne Goos  
Terry VeVerka  
Julie Leckband

2/16 Elaine Elliott  
2/17 Ryan Birkenholz  
2/19 Julie Brown  
2/23 Bryan Friedman  
2/24 Bryan Goos  
2/26 Isaac Anderson  
2/27 Alex Anderson  
Bethany Baumgartner  
Evelyn George  
Ashlyn Karsten  
Matthew Peterson

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### **Special Guest Pastor for Invite Your One Sunday**

First Lutheran Church is pleased to announce Pastor Andy Hermanson will be leading worship on Invite Your One Sunday, February 3rd. Pastor Andy is a Teaching Pastor at Lutheran Church of Hope in West Des Moines.

He was raised on a dairy farm just outside of Story City, Iowa, and he is the last person who thought he'd ever be a pastor. God had different plans. Leaving the farm for the adventure of ministry Andy has found himself serving camps and churches in the states of Iowa, Montana, Washington, and California, including serving as our own Pastor Mark's Youth Director at St. Peter Lutheran Church in Grimes. Andy is a graduate of Bethel seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota and serves as a Teaching Pastor across several of Hope's campuses. He is deeply committed to seeing men and women live the story God has for their lives through a growing and vibrant relationship with Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Andy is married to his incredible wife Heather and has four kids, Gwenyth, Callan, Violet, and Gabe. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with the people he loves, doing pretty much anything active outdoors, and continuing his search for the worlds best cup of coffee.



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### **Wednesday Night Community Dinners:**

**THANK YOU** to the people that help with our Wednesday Night Community Dinners! Wednesday Night Community Dinners are at the Newton First United Methodist Church, southwest across the street from us, and our next meal is on the 27th. **Please come and help as many hands make for light work. Come help Jesus feed the hungry.**

## **News about First Lutheran and Thrivent:**

you have likely heard about things that some First Lutheran members have been doing with Thrivent funding. Thrivent currently has two ways that members can and have been supporting our church; one is through directing "Thrivent Choice Dollars " that are available to them and the other is through Thrivent Action Teams.

**Choice Dollars:** In 2018 twelve First Lutheran Thrivent members had Thrivent direct over \$1,600 Choice Dollars to First Lutheran. Many thanks go to those Thrivent members who chose to have their Choice Dollars be given to First!

If you have a Thrivent product, you might be one of those eligible members who can have Thrivent distribute a portion of its charitable funds ( Choice Dollars ) to First Lutheran. Members become eligible for Choice Dollars direction based on annuities, insurance premiums paid, contract values and Thrivent volunteer leadership. Choice Dollars are complex and hard to explain in a short article, but these dollars can provide a method of financial support to our church, as well as other non-profit organizations. Here is the website that explains the Choice Dollar Program: <https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/living-generously/thrivent-choice/>

Records indicate that there is a potential total of over 40 individual First Lutheran Church members who have available Thrivent Choice Dollars they could allocate to First. That means that while 12 members have ( 1/3 of the eligible folks ), many who could, have not. *On March 30th 2019 the 2018 Choice Dollars that are available will expire and cannot be designated any longer.* If you are a Thrivent member, time is of the essence to allocate now the funds that may be available from last year. To find out if you have Choice Dollars available to designate, you can either check on-line or call Thrivent ( 800-847-4836 ) and say "Choice Dollars ".

**Thrivent Action Teams:** If you are a Thrivent member, you could easily initiate an Action team. All Thrivent Benefit members are eligible to lead two Action Teams per year, and there are many eligible Thrivent benefit members at First. In the past few months there have been several Action Teams formed at First Lutheran including the recent Neighbors Helping Neighbors clothing drive, First ' s sesquicentennial dinner, and the Bury the Altar food drive for the Salvation Army food pantry.

There are many church needs and projects that could be organized and receive support from Thrivent through an Action Team. Think of how \$250 that Thrivent will provide could be used to support a project at church or in our local community. If you want to learn how, you can do this yourself by checking it out at: <https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/files/27584A.pdf>

To get started this is what you should do: 1) when you learn about or think about unmet needs in our church or community, ask yourself if this might be a possible opportunity for an Action Team. 2 ) If this is something you support and want to help with, talk to others at First who are familiar with the process. Duane Quanbeck and Craig and Betty Peterson are Thrivent Advocates and Judy Monroe, who leads the Service Committee, can help you determine if your project would be a possible option. 3 ) To get a project approved you need to complete a simple application to lead your volunteer team in a service activity, educational event, or one-time fundraiser, that can be completed within 90 days. Once your project is approved, you'll receive a Thrivent Action Kit, including a \$250 Community Impact Card that can be used as seed money to get your project off the ground and make a bigger impact; Thrivent Action Team T-shirts; thank-you cards and a promotional pennants if you would like. When the Action Team activity is completed you will need to submit a short summary. You can find out more at <https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/living-generously/thrivent-action-teams/> or call 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Action Teams". One other reminder, if you are not a "Thrivent member " and know of an unmet need, tell someone and they could enlist the assistance of another Thrivent member who could initiate the project and set up the Thrivent Action Team including you as a member of the team.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or need additional information.

Craig & Betty Peterson  
craig@partnercom.net  
641-227-3209

**Prayer  
Corner**

We pray for our families, friends and church family. Thank you Lord for the love you have shown us in the gift of your son Jesus. We love because you first loved us and gave us the example of your love. Help us to show your love in our love, to show it in how we interact with the world. Help us to show our love tangibly in what we do for and in the world. Help us to love not just where it is expected, with our family and friends, but especially where it is unexpected, to strangers and in ways where we may not feel confident but we rely on the strength you give us to act through our discomfort. Lord, lead us to love, cherish and serve your world. We continue to pray for our congregation, our leaders, our community and our world. Amen.



A HUGE thank you to all who continue to support the medical mission in Zinga both with your prayers and your financial support. This year the congregation gave \$6416 to the mission. \$2500 was matched, bringing our total gift to \$8916 toward the purchase of a bus to transport medical teams and staff. This will allow medical care to continue without interruption through the rainy season.

In addition to all the construction work to create a facility to take care of patients the facility has received accreditation to work with the National Health Insurance Funds- thus allowing more mothers and children to receive care!! This would be similar to a hospital here receiving accreditation to be paid by one of our national health care funds. This is due to the incredible planning and work done by our missionary friends Paula and Denny and their team!! Not just anyone can envision a hospital- and make it happen.

Sometimes the care needed is teaching- thanks to nurses. Junior arrived at their doors, days before they were to accept their first patient. At 19 months old he was "thin" (mom's words ) and could not walk. He had severe malnutrition. All bodies need the correct nutrition to grow and function- and the nurses were able to teach his mother how to properly feed him. He is now 4 years old- happy, healthy and growing normally. The medical mission we help support brings health to the mothers and children in Tanzania in many ways!

Thank you all!!

The IHP group- Marie and Duane Quanbeck, Bob and Sarah Sandquist, Mark and Judy Monroe



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

Flier courtesy of  
First United Methodist Church

# February 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 <i>*Invite your 1*</i>  9:30 Worship 10:30 Souper Bowl Potluck	4	5	6  <i>*No Confirmation*</i> 6:30 Property	7	8	9
10 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship Last day of Bury the Alter	11  7:00 Hannah	12	13  6:30 Confirmation	14	15	16
17 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship	18  <b>Newsletter articles due this week</b>	19	20 9:30 Lois 1:00 Martha 7:00 Eunice 6:30 Confirmation	21  6:30 Council	22	23
24 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship 11:00 Council Re- treat	25	26 9:00 Dorcas	27 5:30 Community Dinner	28		

## Flowers and fellowship

We are needing our Congregation to Remember to sign up and volunteer to provide Chancel Flowers. The flower chart is on the sign-up board in the Narthex. Also we are needing volunteers to sign up for Fellowship. The sign up sheet is on the bulletin board in the Fellowship hall outside of the kitchen.



I just wanted to take a moment and introduce myself. I am Nicole Vitales I am First Lutheran 's new Administrative Assistant. My family, and I moved here from Texas last August , and now call Newton our home. My husband, Julio and I have 4 children Alexa, Daniel, Joseph, and Nastassia. I have been welcomed here with open arms and I am so very excited to meet each one of you .

First Lutheran Church  
309 E 3rd St N  
Newton, IA 50208

**For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.**

**John 3:16**

