

FIRST
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN
CHURCH



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Tuesday & Thursday

1:00—5:00 p.m.

or by appointment

From Pastor Mark Holmes

2020 is upon us. Each time a new year arrives, people are always trying to envision what lies ahead. Unfortunately, we don't know what the future holds for us, so we approach this new year with a lot of mixed emotions. We are excited about the possibilities, but we are also concerned about the difficulties that will undoubtedly come our way.

It is surely a time when we, as a people of faith, need to give some careful attention to what we truly believe. Do we stand on the firm foundation of the Word of God, or are they just empty words?

This past year was a tough one for many people. But in spite of that, I continue to be amazed at the faith, hope, and love of this congregation as we continue to serve the ONE TRUE GOD!

My own faith has been strengthened because your faith is so strong! You truly believe that we can do ALL things through HIM who strengthens us. And so, we enter this new year with the faith that we will NEVER walk alone; and that God will give us the strength and courage to meet the challenges of this new year.

I can hardly wait to see and experience the many exciting things that God has planned for First Lutheran Church in 2020! Prepare yourselves for a bold, new future! May God continue to guide and direct us in all that we do; and may His richest blessings be with each of you in the new year!

Living in God's Amazing Grace!

Pastor Mark Holmes

Special thanks to:

Pat Foote and Candy Thompson for their beautiful colorful garden by parking lot entrance
Romana Cooper for her taking care of the area south and west of the Church with the many Knockout roses.

We get many positive comments about our outside grounds.

Both areas take a lot of time and efforts.

Thanks,
Property Committee

PRAYERS
OF Thanks



Potluck

January 6th!

We will be joining together on January 6th for our First Sunday Potluck of the year.

We hope that everyone had a Merry Christmas and an amazing New Year.

So come join us and let's have fellowship and share our stories of the holiday season.

Food Pantry Donations for December!

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 January, **Extra Wide Egg Noodles, Canned Veggies, & Stove Top Stuffing** have been requested. There is a basket in the narthex for all food pantry items.

Thank you for being so generous.

Donating to Charity Using Money From an IRA

By AMY FONTINELLE
as found on Investopedia

Updated Dec 11, 2019

Money from an individual retirement account can be donated to charity. What's more, if you've reached the age where you need to make required minimum distributions (RMDs) from your traditional IRAs, you can avoid paying taxes on them by donating that money to charity. That tax break was made permanent in 2015. You just have to be sure to follow the rules carefully. Here's what you need to know.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Funds from an IRA can be used for charitable donations if done correctly.

Tax breaks on the charitable donation cannot be combined with the tax break on retirement savings. The IRS has established rules to make sure qualified charitable distributions are made properly.

How a Qualified Charitable Distribution Works

Normally, a distribution from a traditional IRA incurs taxes since the account holder didn't pay taxes on the money when they put it into the IRA. But account holders 70½ or older who make a contribution directly from a traditional IRA to a qualified charity can donate up to \$100,000 without it being considered a taxable distribution. The deduction effectively lowers the donor's adjusted gross income (AGI).

To avoid paying taxes on the donation, the donor must follow the IRS rules for qualified charitable distributions (QCDs), aka charitable IRA rollovers. Most churches, non-profit charities, educational organizations, nonprofit hospitals, and medical research organizations are qualified 501(c)(3) organizations. The charity will also not pay taxes on the donation.

This tax break does mean that the donor cannot also claim the donation as a deduction on Schedule A of their tax return. Other donations to charity that don't use IRA funds, however,

can still be claimed as an itemized deduction. Since the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act increased the base standard deduction, for 2019, to \$12,200 for individuals, \$18,350 for heads of household, and \$24,400 for married couples filing jointly, many fewer taxpayers will itemize on Schedule A, making the upfront deduction potentially even more important. Taxpayers whose annual income affects their Medicare premiums might also find that this provision helps control the premium cost.

QCDs and Required Minimum Distributions

The donation can also help meet all or part of the IRA's required minimum distribution (RMD) for the year. (Owners of traditional IRAs must start taking RMDs at age 70½ or face tax penalties; Roth IRAs do not require distributions while the account holder is alive so this provision doesn't work for them.) The charity must re-

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



ceive the donation by Dec. 31 for the amount to be applied to that year's tax return.

Account holders 70½ or older can donate to a qualified charity directly from a traditional IRA, effectively lowering their adjusted gross income.

QCDs are a good choice for individuals who otherwise could not deduct all or part of their charitable donations because of the IRS rule prohibiting a deduction for donation amounts that exceed 60% of a taxpayer's AGI. This rule might appear to affect only wealthy taxpayers who give generously, but it also affects anyone retired with little to no income who still wants to make a deductible donation.

Another way to donate IRA assets is through an estate after the donor's death by naming the charity as the designated beneficiary—or one of them—of the IRA. The charity will receive

whatever percentage of the assets the account owner provides for on the beneficiary form. Distributions from SIMPLE IRAs are ineligible to be QCDs.

Filing Requirements

An IRA trustee uses IRS form 1099-R to report the QCD on an account owner's annual tax return. Owners should also keep records of the donation date, the account from which the donation came, the amount given, and the charity that received the donation.

Validating the deduction also requires a receipt from the charity stating that the donor received no goods or services in exchange for the contribution. The amount of your donation is reduced by the value of any goods or services received in exchange, and that part of the donation will be taxable.

The Bottom Line

Using an IRA to make a charitable donation can help lower a tax bill and help a worthy cause. Distributions must be made directly to the charity, not to the owner or beneficiary. All distribution checks need to be made payable to the charity or they will be counted as taxable distributions. Talk to your IRA custodian about how to make this happen and be sure to leave sufficient time for the funds to reach the charity.

- the reprint of this article is not intended to be tax or financial advice but is provided for informational purposes only. Please consult a professional before taking action on any of these ideas.

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

I am overwhelmed by the gift from the congregation and the many individual gifts I have received this holiday season. But more than that, thank you for the love and support you have given me during my ministry at First Lutheran! It continues to be a privilege to share this ministry with you. I look forward to see what God has planned for us in 2020!

Living in God's Amazing Grace!
Pastor Mark

Wednesday Night Community Dinners:

THANK YOU to the people that help with our Wednesday Night Community Dinners! Wednesday Night Community Dinners are at the Methodist Church and our next meal is on the December 18th. Please come and help as many hands make for light work. Come help Jesus feed the hungry.



Chancel Flowers

Jan. 5— Poinsettias
Jan 12— Poinsettias
Jan. 19— Poinsettias
Jan. 26— Poinsettias

Fellowship

Jan 5— Potluck
Jan.12 —
Jan. 19—
Jan 26—

Choices in Mission -



The December Choices in Mission project is the ELCA disaster response. This continues until the Christmas season is over, January 5. The ELCA disaster response work goes anywhere in the world where they are needed.

Response teams are currently working in the US, the Sudan, Indonesia, and Europe. Response teams are working with refugees all over the world, including at the US/Mexico border. The ELCA disaster response team does not leave when the

next disaster strikes- they stay until the need is gone. This is how the ELCA teams differ, they stay. Please consider a donation of any amount that fits your budget.

Bury The Altar:
Beginning January 12 and continuing through February 16, the Sunday after Valentine's Day, we will be working to bury the altar with nourishing foods for the food pantry. The food pantries receive donations during the holiday season, but

these are quickly depleted, making our bury the altar efforts very appreciated! If you are a Thrivent member who would like to apply for an Action Team for this event, please talk to Craig Peterson or Duane Quanbeck, who can assist you with the process. The Service Committee will assist with the grocery shopping!

"STEP" INTO THE NEW YEAR

Make this craft to remember God's many blessings.

What you need:

- Small stones
- Permanent markers
- Foil pan and cooking spray
- Drop cloth
- Gloves
- Quick-set concrete (and adult help)
- Bucket and paint stirrer

What you do:

1. After reflecting on the past year, use markers to decorate stones with memorable words, dates and drawings.
2. Spray pan with cooking spray. Set pan outside on a drop cloth.
3. Wearing gloves, mix concrete in a bucket, according to instructions.
4. Pour concrete into pan. Smooth top with paint stirrer.
5. Press in stones, handprints and other decorations.
6. Let dry completely. Remove from pan.
7. Place the stepping-stone outside as a reminder of God's continued goodness.

Zinga:

The work to transition from an outpatient clinic to a hospital is moving forward. Experts from the US have volunteered to assist with plans for proper water usage and disposal. Work has started on how to be connected to the internet and have electronic medical records, just like in the US. In the meantime, the clinic's

doctor has just had his house wired for electricity. He and his wife have been living in their house for 5 years- using just batteries for power.

The work on the road, completed in the past 12 months - which First Lutheran contributed to- has provided a stable way for patients to arrive at the clinic, and a way to transport them from the main road into the clinic.

The project at Zinga continues- with our prayers, our financial support, and volunteers from all over the US who do what they are able to do, whether that is medical services, organizing shelves, planning for water use, painting, or planting vegetation- all forms of support are needed and used! Thank you for your support.

The IHP team here at First Lutheran



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA DONORS 2019



Dirk & Marlys Amundson In honor of our parents
Jim & Marjie Baker In memory of our parents:
Bill & Marion Baker, Vic & Margaret Noon
Barbara Birkenholtz & family In memory of Dean Birkenholtz
Larry & Lynette Birkenholtz In memory of our parents: Henry Birkenholtz, Carroll & De Talbot
Darrell & Linda Boettcher In honor of Leona Boettcher
Darrell & Linda Boettcher In memory of Juanita & Orvis Eckhart
The Breuers In honor of Jesus our Savior
The Breuers In honor of our First Lutheran Family
Cantu Family To the glory of God
Steve & Pam Comer In memory of our parents
Ramona Cooper In memory of Art Cooper
Bruce & Corinne Coyle In memory of Ken & Mildred Stover and Bob & Sharon Coyle
Bruce & Corrine Coyle In honor of our children
Dennis & Arlene Dobesh In memory of Elmer & Florence Dobesh
Dennis & Arlene Dobesh In memory of Emil & Christena Neuharth
Bob Floss In memory of Judy Floss
Pat Foote In honor of my granddaughter Falcon's baptism
The Friedman Family In memory of Mojie Friedman
The Friedman Family In memory of Robyn's dad, Ken Olson
Marilyn Gelinas In honor of my family and in memory of my parents
Evelyn & Andy George In memory of Alma Roth
Evelyn & Andy George In memory of Don and Iva Lou George
Jayne & David Goos In memory of our heavenly angels - George, Orin, Eunice, aunts, uncles and grandparents
Jayne & David Goos In honor of cherished family, both near and far
Jim & Gloria Grant In honor of our children, grandchildren & greats
Jim & Gloria Grant In memory of our daughter Darla
Tom & Terri Hayden In memory of Tom Hayden, Tom's father
Tom & Terri Hayden In memory of Robert Bullers, Terri's father
Hal Herbold In memory of my parents, Howard & Alice Herbold
Hal Herbold In memory of my aunt and uncle, Glenn and Tudy Herbold
Kay Hesse In memory of our parents, Mr. & Mrs. Homer Lamberson and Mr. and Mrs. William Hesse
Jane & Gary Johnson In honor of the great singers who have come together to bring joy to the season
Jordan family In memory of Larry & Mary Jordan
Carolyn & Stan Kirchhoff In honor of all the Property Committee members
Dotty Mittelstadt In memory of Robert Mittelstadt
Craig & Betty Peterson In memory of Harold & Marion Peterson, Dillon & Dorothy Finney
Duane & Marie Quanbeck In memory of Gerda Sersland who would have been 100 this year
Beverly Russell In memory of Wayne Russell, Chester & Louise Greene
Bob & Sarah Sandquist In honor of our children and grandchildren
Jeremy & Jennifer Sumpter In memory of our grandparents Dorothy Moffitt, Jean Halverson,
Charlotte Halverson, Francis & Marlys Moore, and parent Henry Allspach
Judy & Lee Swenson In memory of family members
Judy & Lee Swenson In memory of loved ones
Candy Thompson In memory of Margaret, Paul and Debra Thompson
Terry & Carol VeVerka In honor of Ruth Filson
Maureen (Mo) Wilkins In memory of Irene & Henry Wilkins
Marv & Connie Zimmermann In memory of our parents

Thank you to all who have brought this beauty to our sanctuary in recognition of Jesus' birth.

January

BIRTHDAYS

Julie Trusler 01/03

Jorgen Rose 01/07

Mark Monroe 01/08

Francis Togba 01/10

Richard Klopping 01/16

Ronald Klopping 01/16

Ramona Cooper 01/19

Lauryn Grabe 01/21

Garrett Cantu 01/25

Ruth Sharp 01/28

Lee Swenson 01/31

***“Happy
Birthday from
your church
family!”***

The power of listening

Jesus repeatedly urged his followers to not simply hear but listen to his teachings. Others also have championed sincere listening to show compassion and respect.

“Part of doing something is listening.”

—Madeleine L'Engle, *A Swiftly Tilting Planet*

“One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say.”

—Bryant H. McGill

“And so he listened. And in his listening, his heart opened wide and then wider still.”

—Kate DiCamillo, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*

“Too often we underestimate the power of ... a listening ear ... to turn a life around.”

—Leo Buscaglia

Taking a stand

Cowardice asks the question: Is it safe? Expediency asks the question: Is it politic? Vanity asks the question: Is it popular? But conscience asks the question: Is it right? And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular — but one must take it simply because it is right.

—Martin Luther King Jr.

+Christian Symbol+



Cross on the Rock

The rock is often used as a symbol of the Lord, our strength and firm foundation. A cross rising from the rock echoes many Bible verses that proclaim Christ as the rock of salvation; for example, “He alone is my rock and my salvation ...” (Psalm 62:2, ESV).





January 2020, LSI Newsletter Article and Story

Raising our Voice for Iowa Children and Families – Lutheran Day on the Hill

Families struggling without access to mental healthcare. Human services providers overworked and underpaid. Former refugees striving to build new lives.

These are all issues faced by Iowans. Join us to make sure they are heard at the Iowa State Capitol.

Please consider joining Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) and the three Iowa synods of the ELCA for Lutheran Day on the Hill, an annual day of advocacy in Des Moines to uplift the needs of our neighbors. The event will be held on Tuesday, February 25. Visit www.LSIowa.org/ advocacy next month for event details, online registration, and an online toolkit for your congregation.

If you are new to advocacy, come learn more about the legislative process and your role as a citizen. If you've attended before, join us again. If you would like more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI's director of philanthropy and church relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

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 Her Community

Originally from Eritrea, Kiros, her husband, and her young son were forced to flee their country and live in an Ethiopian refugee camp for almost two years.

When the opportunity came to resettle in Iowa, Kiros and her husband were excited to put down roots and call Iowa home. They settled in the Des Moines community and knew this was it; this was where they wanted to create a new life in the U.S.

Since then, they have raised four more children and set their sights on receiving citizenship in the country that

helped them heal and rebuild.

Kiros enrolled in LSI's English and citizenship classes and worked hard to study for her U.S. Citizenship Exam. Every week, she met with instructors from LSI's Refugee and Immigrant Services to prepare for her interview with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

When the time came, she passed her exam with flying colors. She recently attended her U.S. citizenship ceremony, then went home to prepare for her daughter's fifth birthday party.

Kiros has poured her time and energy into building a life where her family has the same opportunities as every other family in their community. someone to call when I need help."





This little light

According to Matthew, who was present at Jesus' baptism? (Choose as many as apply.)

- A. John the Baptist
- B. The Spirit of God
- C. Jesus' mother, Mary
- D. His first disciples

Answer found on pg. 4

Worldwide, more than 1 billion people lack access to electricity; another 1.5 billion have irregular access. One new tool that's literally brightening lives is an inflatable, waterproof, solar-powered lantern. With 10 tiny LED lights, "Luci" can shine about 15 square feet of light for up to 24 hours on a full charge. Yet the lantern weighs just 4 ounces, so it's easy to transport.

Though this versatile lantern has many uses, inventor Jason Alan Snyder is especially excited about its potential to help people living in darkness. For each \$10 donation at mpowerd.com, one Luci lantern is sent for disaster relief and humanitarian aid.

Little lights — whether solar-powered or Jesus-powered — make a big impact in our dark world.

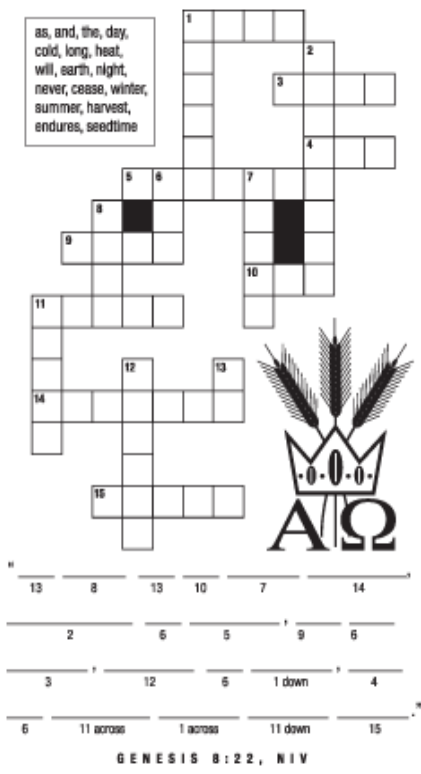
—adapted from HomeTouch

Thank you from Nicole

I wanted to this this opportunity to say thank you to everyone that contributed to my surprise Christmas gift. It was so incredibly generous and caught me completely by surprise. Also thank you for welcoming me into the First Lutheran Family over this past year. It is because of each of you I can honestly say I absolutely love my job and I am incredibly blessed to have made so many connections with so many of you.

Puzzle!

Use the word list to complete the crossword. Then fill in the numbered blanks to read God's promise to Noah — and to us.



Answer: "As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease." Genesis 8:22, NIV

Prayer Corner

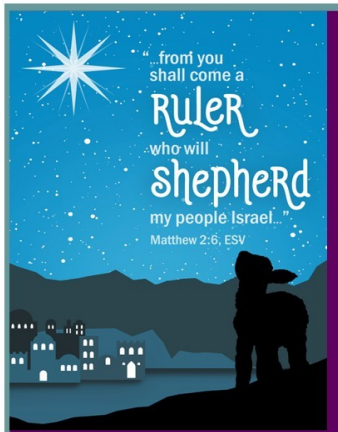


We pray for our families, friends and church family. Thank you Lord for the gift of your son, Jesus the Christ. He is Emmanuel, God with us, may we never feel alone. As we open our hearts to prepare a place for him, may we also open our hearts to others in our lives. Help us to take joy in the company 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.



Meeting
Postponed until
February 5th



First Evangelical Lutheran Church

309 East Third Street North
Newton, Iowa
50208

office@newtonfirstlutheran.org

Office Hours
Monday—Friday
8:30 am—12:30 pm

Pastor's Office Hours
Tuesday & Thursday
1:00—5:00 p.m.
or by appointment

JANUARY 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Office Closed	2 Office Closed	3	4
5 Worship/9:30am Fellowship /Sunday School POTLUCK	6	7	8	9 Council Meeting 6:30 pm	10	11
Installation of Council 12 Worship/9:30am Fellowship /Sunday School 10:30am	13 Hannah 7:00pm N.H.N 4 -8:00 pm	14 Eunice Circle 9:00 am	15 Lois Cr. 9:30 am Martha Cr. 1:00 pm	16	17	18
19 Worship 9:30am Fellowship/ Sunday School 10:30am	20	21	22 Community Meal	23	24	25
Annual Meeting 26 Worship/9:30am Fellowship /Sunday School 10:30am	27 N.H.N 4 -8:00 pm	28 Dorcas 9:00 am	29	30	31	

Serving Schedule

	Acolyte	Council on Duty	Lector	Ushers	PA	Fellowship	Child. Message	Music Leader
Jan. 5	Thomas Hodnett	Jim Lammey	Aaron Bartholmey	Dirk A. & Alex A.	Duane Quanbeck	Potluck	Robyn Friedman	Jane Johnson
Jan. 12	Hailey Sumpter	Marie Quanbeck	Evelyn George	Lee S, Aaron B, & Dennis P.	David Good		Aaron Bartholmey	Jane Johnson
Jan. 19	Leo Friedman	Lynette Birkenholz	Dirk Amundsen	Bob F., & Stan K.	Deb Rose		Allison Bartholmey	Allison Bartholmey
Jan. 26	Ben Bruer	Jane Johnson	Pat Foote	Jim L., & Gary J.	Duane Quanbeck		Deb Rose	Colette Hill

309 EAST THIRD STREET NORTH
NEWTON, IOWA
50208

FIRST
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**Watch Past and Live
services !**

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