

FIRST  
EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

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8:30 am—12:30 pm

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Tuesday & Thursday  
1:00—5:00 p.m.  
or by appointment



# March

## 2021

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#### From Pastor Mark Holmes

As we continue on our journey through Lent, I have found myself asking, “Why is it so difficult to trust in the promises of God?” Too often, we choose the path of least resistance. We follow the crowd. We do what feels good. We do what society says is right.

So, what does faith look like in the 21st century? Faith is the family who deny themselves some expensive new toy, so they can commit even more to the work of God. They believe in a promise that is not always clear.

Faith is the businessperson who leaves the office at a reasonable hour to make time for his or her family because they believe that “Godly children” are a greater legacy than some plaque on the wall.

Faith is the employee

who does NOT pad the expense account or steal clients or take home ‘office supplies’ just because everyone else is doing it.

Let’s face it folks. We are missing out on the adventure of a lifetime when we don’t make ‘faithfulness to God’ a top priority! Look and see how Abraham was blessed by his faithfulness.

In 24 years of waiting, Abraham had plenty of time for doubt. He had hundreds, even thousands of opportunities to turn his back on God and go his own way. But he didn’t. Scripture tells us that he didn’t waver in the faith, but that his faith actually grew stronger as time went on.

And it was that kind of faith that saved Abraham and his descendants. The faith, that made him the ‘Father of many Nations’, is the

same kind of faith that saves us today. Trusting in the promises of God. Being fully convinced that God is able to do what God has promised to do. That is what it’s all about!

Can we trust that God will keep His promises? I’m betting my life that we can trust Him. And I pray that you can trust him, too!

Living in God’s Amazing Grace!

*Pastor Mark Holmes*

#### Bible Quiz

As the Israelites wandered in the wilderness, they longingly remembered some of the foods they’d had in Egypt. Which foods were not mentioned?



- A. carrots and potatoes
- B. onions and garlic
- C. fish and leeks
- D. melons and cucumbers

## Special dates

- World Day of Prayer,  
March 5, 2021
- Daylight-Saving Time begins,  
March 14, 2021
- First day of spring,  
March 20, 2021
- Holy Week,  
March 28 – April 4, 2021
- Palm/Passion Sunday,  
March 28, 2021

## Congratulations

**Elizabeth McVey**  
was named to the Dean's list at  
University of Iowa Fall 2020

**Audrey Lucas**  
was named to the Dean's list at  
Allen College Fall 2020

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 months of March.

**Spaghetti Noodles,**  
**Spaghetti Sauce,**  
**(Canned) Green Beans**

have been requested.  
Please take all  
donations directly to the Salvation army  
Mon-Fri 8 am—4 pm

Thank you for being so generous.

## Thank you

.Special thanks to Duane Quanbeck for keeping our sidewalks clean. The snow keeps coming and coming. This is a big item that is a great benefit for our budget. Thanks, Duane. The Parking lot is cleared by Doug Smith for a fee.

Steve Putz and Duane have repainted some of the partitions in the Men's restroom off Fellowship hall. Several odd jobs have also been completed.

The next Property Committee March 3rd we will take a good look at everything that was damaged and will be organized when they return later this spring. The tile have been manufactured and will soon be delivered. The last shrink wrap job has lasted very well to protect our interior.

Stan Kirchhoff. Property Chairman

## Emily's Girl Scout cookies

Emily Cantu is once again selling Girl Scout cookies, working toward her goal of some badges, incentive prizes, and money to pay for horse camp this summer. We've had several church friends reach out to her already, and if you would like to order cookies through Emily, please contact us at [cantu@iowatelecom.net](mailto:cantu@iowatelecom.net) or go to Emily's personal cookie link. This is a low-contact way for you to order and pay online, and she'll deliver them to your door! She can also take payment upon delivery. Thanks for your support!

Emily's cookie link:

<https://app.abcsmartcookies.com/#!/social-link-landing/7f137e47-de98-4577-8d39-cff6b8f5cf3f>

thanks,

Katie Cantu





## Zinga News! Where is Dodoma?

Lots has happened since last month! The bus we helped buy has now arrived at St. John's University at Dodoma, complete with luggage carrier and the name painted on the side.

The nursing students are grateful!



Here are some of them taking notes during a lecture.



Construction continues at Zinga, though at a slower pace these days. In the January update, you can read about a toddler being treated for sickle-cell disease. The little girl got relief for her pain, and the parents were briefed on the disease and the importance of monthly checkups. All of Paula's updates are available on the IHP-TZ website, [www.ihptz.org](http://www.ihptz.org). Click on IHP monthly update and enjoy!



Community Meal

**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 March 24th. Please come and help as many hands make for light work. Come help Jesus feed the hungry.**



Dawn Lucas 03/05  
 Denise McVey 03/05  
 Barbara Orsund 03/05  
 Pam Comer 03/08  
 Arlene Byers 03/09  
 Pat Foote 03/09  
 Kyle Johnson 03/14  
 Robyn Friedman 03/18  
 Sharon Petersma 03/19  
 Michael Hodnett 03/27  
 Meagan Frehse 03/31

## Attention Thrivent Members: You may have Choice Dollars you can direct Thrivent to send to First Lutheran Church!

Thrivent Choice Dollars from last year (2020) must be directed by March 31! If you have them, you can use them; it is "use it or lose it" time. It doesn't cost you a thing to have Thrivent give money to First Lutheran Church, or for that matter another qualifying organization of your choice. Here is a link to a brief description of the program: [Thrivent Choice Fun Facts Flyer PDF](#) If you have a Thrivent product and wonder if you are eligible to direct Choice Dollars, you can call 800-847-4836 and, when prompted, say **Thrivent Choice**. They can help you find out.

If you want to check this out on-line, here is the **Directing Choice Dollars® and Personal Giving: A How-To Guide**

If you have questions, Betty and I would be able to help you find the answers.

Craig and Betty Peterson

### Direct Choice Dollars Online

1. Visit [thrivent.com/thriventchoice](https://thrivent.com/thriventchoice)
2. Click **Direct Choice Dollars**.
3. Log in by entering your User ID and password. (If you haven't yet registered on [thrivent.com](https://thrivent.com), click **Register for account access**.)
4. Choose the organization to which you want to direct Choice Dollars:
  - a. To direct to a previous organization:
    - Click **Direct Now** next to the organization's name, or
    - Click on the **View activity history** link, scroll down and click on the name of the desired organization.
    - b. To direct to a new organization, **enter keyword(s)** like organization name, ZIP code, cause, etc. Click **Search**.
  - **5. Choose Direct All or enter a specific number and click Direct Now.** Follow the prompts on the confirmation page to direct Choice Dollars.

### **Direct Choice Dollars by Phone**

1. Call 800-847-4836 and when prompted, say Thrivent Choice.
2. Press 1 to direct Choice Dollars or 2 to hear Thrivent Choice Dollars program Terms and Conditions. (If prompted, say or enter your phone number and date of birth.)
3. A representative will work with you to direct **Choice Dollars**.





## March 2021, LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article and Story

### March is National Professional Social Work Month

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

Maybe you have never had a social worker involved in your life. Yet, whether you realize it or not, you have had the benefit of their behind-the-scenes work in your community. Social workers help people help themselves by overcoming life's most difficult circumstances or managing challenges of everyday living: poverty, abuse, mental illness, depression, addiction, disability, and many other situations. Iowa wouldn't be the same without the patience, guidance, and empowerment that social workers provide. Happy National Professional Social Work Month!

For 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 [LSIowa.org](http://LSIowa.org) and [facebook.com/LSI.iowa](https://facebook.com/LSI.iowa).

### A Path to Hope and Healing

*Mike remembers feeling angry and depressed, and his family was at risk of falling apart. When he decided to start Therapy Services with LSI, he questioned the decision. Therapy wasn't easy and when he missed an appointment, he didn't want to go back.*

*But through working with his LSI therapist, Sherry, for the past several months, he has found ways to grow and heal. During each session, Sherry is there to listen*

*without judgement, and she provides a listening ear for anything Mike wants to talk about. At the end, Mike is always given a type of homework or a lesson to think about until they meet again.*

*While they originally began meeting in person, Sherry has continued to be available through virtual therapy throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The virtual sessions ensure Sherry and Mike can continue meeting regularly, on a flexible schedule and from the safety of their own homes.*

*"Thank God for working through LSI in-person and through telehealth, and especially for Sherry, who helps people like myself who have been lost for years. If I hadn't chosen LSI, I wouldn't have met my therapist who has truly helped me keep my family and stay alive," Mike says. "I look back at the progress I have made and see some light peeking through to the end."*



## Church Council Meeting Review :

The church council met on Zoom at 6:30 on February 11. Jim called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. Corinne offered devotions. Corinne moved and Bryan seconded to accept the minutes, motion passed.

Dave gave the treasurer's report and noted highlights from the month of January. Terri Hayden and Brenda Hodnett have audited the books, and Terri will be sharing a report with the council soon. Jim moved and Jane seconded that we continue to add Lenten offerings to Pastor's Discretionary Fund. Motion passed. Dave is preparing the Synod annual report, the group

decided to leave the few questions on the form pertaining to the health of the congregation the same as last year since we have not been in attendance. A discussion was had about starting in house worship. The council is revisiting that idea to possibly create a plan at the March meeting. Dave had shared some details of how that could be done, those will be considered in the planning process. Pastor Mark reported that the Wednesday Lenten services are being planned in a fireside chat format. Those will be on the internet by 6:30 each Wednesday night. He will provide Imposition of Ashes and

Holy Communion on Ash Wednesday in the sanctuary from 2:00-4:00 February 17. Holy Trinity will be offering those same sacraments later that day, and members can go to either sight. The service committee is offering a four week discussion, led by Judy Monroe, during Lent. Members should let her or the church know if they want to participate with Zoom. For those without internet access, the church is purchasing books to do a similar activity at home. Property committee reported that the elevator is repaired and working and the plastic on the roof has some loose spots, but they aren't a problem at this time. Ice keeps forming in the area by the office door. Committee members are doing their best to keep it safe and clear.

## When God giggles

Before dinner, our family was preparing to pray, which we do by holding hands. Upon discovering that one child hadn't washed his hands, my husband struck a contorted pose to avoid physical contact. The mealtime blessing

quickly dissolved into laughter as we each peeked at him. Afterward, as we passed around the food, I asked, "What do you imagine God thought about us laughing during prayer?" One child

quickly replied, "I think he was laughing right along with us." Yes! Although prayer is reverent, God invites us to converse with words, emotions — and even giggles!

—Janna Firestone

### A prayer

Here in my quiet aloneness of my time with you, search me for any selfish motives or sins I cling to that are sapping me of the life you desire. Prepare my heart for what you would have me forgo, and strengthen me to seek you instead.

Wake me, Lord, if I am blind to my patterns of self-destruction. Show me what it is that I can live more fully without. ,

Amen.



Next Meeting  
Wednesday  
March 4th



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Happy Birthday Ron Grunig	2	3 Property Meeting 6:30 pm	4 Happy Birthday Marlys Amundsen	5 Happy Birthday Dawn Lucas & Denise McVey World Day of Prayer	6
7 9:30 a.m. Online worship	8 Happy Birthday Pam Comer	9 Happy Birthday Arlene Byers & Pat Foote	10	11 Council Meeting 6:30 pm	12	13
14 Daylight-Saving Time begins 9:30 a.m. Online worship	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18 Happy Birthday Robyn Friedman	19 Happy Birthday Sharon Petersma	20 First Day of Spring
21 9:30 a.m. Online worship	22	23	24 Community Meal	25	26	27 Happy Birthday Michael Hodnett
Palm Sunday 28 9:30 a.m. Online worship	29	30	31 Happy Birthday Meagan Frelse			

Jesus answered them,  
"Destroy this temple,  
and in three days  
I will raise it up."  
*John 2:19*

### First Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Office Hours

Monday—Friday

8:30 am—12:30 pm

Pastor's Office Hours  
by appointment

Holy Week  
Begins Sunday, March 28  
ends on Saturday, April 3

309 EAST THIRD STREET NORTH  
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50208

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**Watch Past and Live  
services !**

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