

**FIRST
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

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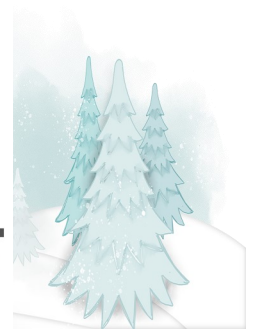
Office Hours
Monday—Friday
8:30 am—12:30 pm

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



2022

JANUARY



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Final Newsletter Entry From Pastor Mark Holmes

CHANGE. You can fight it if you like, but it's going to happen. And often times, we don't like it... at least, not at first.

Another change is coming soon, my friends. I will be entering into retirement and must leave to focus on the next chapter of my life. That might seem scary at first; both to you and to me.

I was a little nervous about retirement, at first. How would I fill my days? When my kids were younger, I gave up a lot of hobbies and activities to chase after them. When they left the nest, I filled the void by working longer hours. And why not? There was always more work that needed to be done! But as the day of retirement draws near, I am excited about the possibility to spend time with the grandkids, do some traveling and volunteering, and focus on my health.

Please know that leaving this wonderful family at

First Lutheran will be a difficult thing for me to do. When I first arrived here, I cautioned myself to be friendly, but not to bond with people. I was convinced that I'd be here only a year or two, and I didn't want to be overwhelmed with emotion when I left.

Of course, one year turned into two, which turned into four plus. And in the midst of those wonderful four+ years, I bonded with you. Your family became my family. And now, I'm going to be an emotional mess when I leave.

But my bigger concern is for those of you that I leave behind. I want to make sure that you are cared for. My comfort can be found in the promises of Jesus Christ. Yes, change is difficult, but Hebrews 13:8 reminds us: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

The one constant that we have in this life is our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Jesus STILL sits on the throne and is in control; and He will continue to walk with you in these days ahead. I invite each and everyone of you to keep the faith and step up in service as you await your next pastor. Even now, God is preparing the heart and mind of your next pastor for mission and ministry at First Lutheran. You'll want to be ready!

The people of First Lutheran will always hold a special place in my heart. Even as I enter into the next chapter of my life, you will continue to be in my thoughts and prayers. It was a wonderful ministry that we shared and I will miss it.

May God's richest blessings continue to be with you in the days ahead!

Living in God's Amazing Grace!

Pastor Mark

Pastor Mark has been our interim Pastor over the past 4+ years. He will be retiring in the next few weeks. His last worship service as our interim is January 30th, 2022. Pastor Mark, please know you are loved and will be missed by everyone here at 1st Lutheran!

Bible Quiz ???

After Sarah died, Abraham re-married. What was his second wife's name?

- A. Miriam
- B. Keturah
- C. Bathsheba
- D. Tamar



Answer on Pg. 6

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 January.

Canned Soup & Crackers, Spaghetti Oh's , & Raviolis

have been requested. Please take all donations directly to the Salvation army Mon-Fri 8 am—4 pm
Thank you for being so generous.

Bury the alter

Please don't forget January 9th starts Bury the Alter. Please bring your non-perishable food items to the church during church services and leave them in the Narthex or feel free to drop them off Monday—Friday mornings at the church office. Contact the church office with any questions you may have.

Thank you for everyone who gave to the Giving Thanks Calendar

First Lutheran members responded generously to the Giving Thanks Calendar. The 28 days of giving resulted in enough food, toiletries, and paper products to totally fill the back of Craig Peterson's SUV. In addition, Thrivent Financial donated a \$250 Community Impact gift card which we used to purchase 80 one pound packages of frozen ground beef. All items were given to Newton's Salvation Army Food Pantry.



Steve Putz, Betty Peterson, Eric Jordan, and Craig Peterson after loading donations for the Salvation Army Food Pantry.



Craig Peterson and Duane Quanbeck delivered donated items to the Salvation Army Food Pantry on December 13.



Our youth did an amazing job in the Christmas program

What a wonderful job our youth did in the Christmas program December 19th. Thank you to Landon Karsten, Morgan Frehse, Lexi Frehse, Talia Friedman, Garrett Cantu, Leo Friedman, Ben Breuer, Alex Breuer, Emily Cantu, Ashlyn Karsten, Ava Sumpter, Hailey Sumpter, Claire Bruere, and to everyone who helped put "Room With a View" together.



January

BIRTHDAYS

Julie Trusler 01/03

Jorgen Rose 01/07

Mark Monroe 01/08

Francis Togba 01/10

Richard Klopping 01/16

Lauryn Grabe 01/21

Garrett Cantu 01/25

Ruth Sharp 01/28

Lee Swenson 01/31

Happy New Year



Zinga News!

Even though Covid has made it impossible to safely travel to Zinga, Paula Lofstrom stays in touch by daily phone calls. In the November Update, Paula said: "We pray for rain at Zinga as there is a terrible drought there now and rain may not come until April. Cattle are dying. Children are starving." This situation has not changed, so please pray for rain in Tanzania!

Meanwhile, children continue to be seen at the Children's Hospital. Recently, a tiny premature baby was brought in. Baby Amina is one month old and was born at 36 weeks gestation. Most likely, her mother had an intrauterine infection. The baby had a fever, microcephaly (a small head), and poor reflexes. Dr. Jesse Kitundu diagnosed sepsis of prematurity and put her on a 10-day regimen of broad-spectrum antibiotics. At five days, the baby was noticeably better.



Baby Amina

If the mother had been seen earlier in her pregnancy and had been given prenatal vitamins and an antibiotic, the baby would have been carried full-term. That is why the Maternal and Child Health Center (MHC) will be so beneficial to the mothers and children of Zinga.

And speaking of the MHC, raising the money to complete construction of this facility was our Choices in Mission focus in October. Not only did the church match our contributions dollar for dollar up to \$5,000 for a total gift of \$13,385, we also participated in the \$25,000 matching funds challenge active at the time. The funds raised to unlock those \$25,000 exceeded \$36,000, so the total raised was in excess of \$61,000. Soon, the MCH will be a reality, and we will have been a part of that. Thank you!

Christian symbol



HAND OF GOD —

This symbolizes God the Father, as well as his ownership and care of all creation. During the Christian church's first 800 years, the hand was about the only symbol used for God. Many Bible verses speak of God's loving, protective hand (Psalm 138:7; Ecclesiastes 2:24; 1 Peter 5:6). In heaven, Jesus sits at God's right hand (Mark 16:19).



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA **DONORS 2021**



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

- *Barbara Birkenholtz & family In memory of Dean Birkenholtz
- *Darrell & Linda Boettcher In honor of Leona Boettcher, who is 104 years old. (Darrell's mother)
- *Darrell & Linda Boettcher In memory of Juanita & Orvis Eckhart. (Parents of Linda)
- *The Breuer family In honor of ???
- *The Breuer family In honor of ???
- *Cantu Family In Memory of Grandparents & Great Grandparents
- *Bruce & Corinne Coyle In memory of our parents, Kenneth & Mildred Stover and Bob & Sharon Coyle
- *Bruce & Corrine Coyle In honor of our children and grandchildren
- *Dennis & Arlene Dobesh In memory of Arlene's parents Emil & Christena Neuharth &
brother Leroy Neuharth
- *Dennis & Arlene Dobesh In memory of Dennis' parents Elmer and Florence Dobesh
- *Bob Floss In memory of Judy Floss
- *Pat Foote In honor of Richard Foote, husband, father and grandfather.
- *Evelyn & Andy George In memory of Alma Roth
- *Evelyn & Andy George In memory of Don and Iva Lou George
- *James & Gloria Grant In honor of our children, grandchildren & great-grandchildren
- *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 All men & women who have gone out of their way to keep the America we love and keep
us safe.
- *Carolyn & Stan Kirchhoff In honor of Pastor Mark's return from surgery
- *Dotty Mittelstadt In memory of Robert Mittelstadt
- *Janice Olson In hour of Bryan, Robyn, Isaac, Leo and Talia Friedman
- *Craig & Betty Peterson In memory of Harold & Marion Peterson, Dillon & Dorothy Finney
- *Bob & Sarah Sandquist In honor of our children, grandchildren & great-grandchildren
- *Jeremy & Jennifer Sumpter In memory of Norman, Charlotte and Jean Halverson, Francis and
Marlys Moore, and Marvin Allspach.
- *Judy & Lee Swenson In memory of our families.
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- *Candy Thompson In memory of Margaret, Paul, and Debra Thompson
- *Marv & Connie Zimmermann In honor of Family
- *Marv & Connie Zimmermann In honor of Family



Reminder that our Monthly Mission is the Lutheran Disaster Relief Fund

We are all aware of the tragic consequences of wind storms, and now Kentucky and other states are reeling following tornados. The Service Committee has decided to start a Choices in Mission for Lutheran Disaster Relief. This will give you the opportunity to respond knowing that your gift will be doubled. envelopes in the pews just check the box that says Monthly Mission, or you can mail or drop it off in the church office.

Church Council Meeting Review :

The church council met on December 16 at 6:30. All council members and Pastor Mark were in attendance as well as Allison Bartholmey. Bryan provided devotions, and the minutes were reviewed and approved. Aaron Barthomey and Mark Monroe gave a report from the call committee. They have met twice with the committee from CUCC and worked out the details in the packets provided from the Synod and the CUCC organization. The committee is seeking guidance from the council on the pay package our church can provide. Corinne will assist them with that part of the task. Council agreed that our church would take care of the financial part of the new minister and CUCC would reimburse us for their part of that package. The call committees will reduce the number of people working to finalize the profile after the first of the year. Pastor's report included visits

with two families dealing with illnesses. He has also been in contact with the Synod about a possible gap between his retirement and a new minister. We will not have another Interim, instead will be served with pulpit supply ministers. They will send a list of folks to call. It should not be too many weeks. Council approved action to purchase a new check printer. Corinne will take care of that in the new year. Council approved up to \$2500 match for the ELCA Disaster Relief project from Mission Support Funds. The council voted to keep Pastor's insurance reimbursement at \$600/month per his request. The bylaws are being revised. Council looked at the revisions and will make final decisions in January. They will then be sent to the congregation and final approval per congregational vote will be done at the meeting on January 30th.

The treasurer's report was presented and reviewed. Committee reports were made. Property reported that all painting from storm damage is complete and the bill for painting will be paid. Service committee has shifted projects to accommodate the ELCA project for Dec/Jan. Fellowship continues to hold coffee hour (none planned for Dec. 26 unless someone wants to make coffee) and have a prayer chain/visiting angel group. Meeting adjourned.

Special dates

- New Year's Day, January 1, 2022
- Epiphany, January 6, 2022
- Baptism of the Lord, January 9, 2022
- Religious Freedom Day, January 16, 2022
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day, January 17, 2022
- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18-25, 2022

Prayer

God, you are always doing "a new thing" (Isaiah 43:19) in the world and in my life. On the cusp of this new year, open my heart to your good plans. May everyone reading this today know that, as siblings of Jesus, they too are God's beloved, and on cold winter mornings, The Holy Spirit, enfolds them in the warmth of your love.

I praise you, O Lord, that even before you formed me in the womb, you knew me and had plans for my life! (Jeremiah 1:5)

As the shepherds and magi worshiped the Word-made-flesh, we too worship you Lord.

AMEN



"It's a 12-step group for church members who like to write angry letters but not sign their name."



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 New Years Day
2 Kids church camp	3	4	5 Property Meeting	6 Dorcas 9:00 AM	7	8
9 Worship Service 9:30am	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 Worship Service 9:30am	17	18	18 Lois Cr. 9:30 AM	20 Council Meeting 6:30 pm	21	22
23 Worship Service 9:30am	24	25	26 Community Meal	27	28	29
30 Annual Meeting Pastor Mark's Last Worship Service as interim of 1st. Lutheran 9:30am	31					



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
by appointment

Our Annual Meeting is January 30th. Please try to be attendance for this meeting. As a member of First Lutheran it is our duty and right to be informed and educated on what is going on within our congregation.

309 EAST THIRD STREET NORTH
NEWTON, IOWA
50208

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**Watch Past and Live
services !**

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