



### Our Prayer

**You promise to guide us continually, Lord, and to meet all our needs. May we be your garden, our thirst quenched by your living water. God, you call us to choose life and goodness every day.**

**With your Spirit's help, we will do so.**

**“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10).**

**Amen**

## *First* LUTHERAN

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



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

### **Greetings from your new Church Council. :**

You can expect a synopsis of the council meetings each month.

Council met on January 19 at 6:30.

The slate of officers for the coming year is as follows:

President: Judy Monroe

Vice-president: Allison Bartholmey

Secretary: Kay Hesse. Allison Bartholmey agreed to serve as acting secretary when needed.

Treasurer: Corrine Coyle

Ash Wednesday is February 22. Pastor Rachel Mithelman will preside.

Kay Hesse will lead the council in serving pancake breakfast following the February 19 worship service.

Options for mid-week Lenten services were discussed, no firm decisions were made.

**\*\*Please note that we are in need of offering counters for the first Sunday of each month. Counting occurs immediately following the church service.**

### **Zinga News!**

Look for more on what's new in Tanzania in next month's newsletter: Marie Quanbeck traveled to Tanzania in January, and is back with more from our mission field, Tanzania!



### Trivia question.

*Marv and Connie Zimmermann were married at and became members of First Lutheran Church. They recently celebrated their \_\_\_\_\_ wedding anniversary?*

- A. 25th,
- B. 30th,
- C. 35th

Answer on pg. 2.

Or please feel free to ask Connie or Marv.

## A message from Pastor Kari Lee.

Psalm 51 one states

“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you.”

These lines were some of the first lines of liturgy I memorized as a kid. They remain to this day as some of my favorite lines of scripture. And they are words that sum up the beauty of Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. Words like ‘create’, ‘pure’, ‘steadfast’, ‘restore’, ‘joy’, ‘salvation’, ‘willing’, and ‘sustain’.

To borrow and rephrase a line from the beginning of another famous song (remember psalms are songs). “I just don’t see how words that hold such wonderful things could be bad! Look at these words.

Aren’t they neat? Wouldn’t you think my collection’s complete?”

Well, just like a fork cannot reveal to Ariel from Disney’s The Little Mermaid the full image of the world it comes from, the term “repentance” can only show us one small aspect of what “Ash Wednesday” is about. Repentance isn’t a form of punishment. Repentance is an invitation to come back to who you are as a child of God.

We use Ash Wednesday as a time to reflect on our sinfulness. But it is imperative to recall that while God opposes our sin, God doesn’t not oppose us. God redeems us. And though we are mortal dust and dust we shall return... We are beautiful dust. Stardust from a cosmic power that forms us into

beautiful images of a God who redeems us and resurrects us.

If you have already found the flaw in my metaphor of using the Little Mermaid to reflect on Ash Wednesday... 1. Bravo, theologian points for you... 2. Let’s remember that I am a mother of two girls and I fully side with King Triton that humans and mermaids alike fall into dangerous territory when we cannot see that being ‘obsessed’ with things of our mortal world make it impossible for us to live within

the reality God is calling us to live into.

We live in this world that holds the beauty of the creator and the lamentation that our sin in the same hand. We are in this world, but we are not of it. We see the beauty in all that we know, but we are also to be honest about the ways in which we have failed to live into God’s call for us to love as we

should.

And so, we turn to Lent and to words that we find in psalm 51.

Words like ‘create’, ‘pure’, ‘steadfast’, ‘restore’, ‘joy’, ‘salvation’, ‘willing’, and ‘sustain’. These are not words of a punishing God.

These are words of a loving God. A God who is about to do new

things and take us along with it.

Do not deceive yourself into thinking that Lent is a 40 day season of beating yourself up for the ways you have not been the Child of God you were created to be this past year. It’s an invitation to be made new. To stand upon that same holy ground Moses stood upon when the great “I AM” burned brightly from a burning bush that did not wither to ash or perish. You are invited to examine in holy wonder how we can enter God’s reality by seeing through the things of this world into the things of the Kingdom of Heaven that surround you. You are invited to prepare yourself to hear the words of promise that will sustain you as you become a new crea-

tion.

Blessings be upon you as you prepare for Ash Wednesday and

Lent. .

### Special dates

*African-American History  
Month*

*Valentine’s Day,  
February 14, 2023*

*Transfiguration Sunday,  
February 19, 2023*

*Presidents Day,  
February 20, 2023*

*Ash Wednesday,  
February 22, 2023*

### Looking for a Valentine's date night idea?

Ever wanted to try painting but didn't want to learn or pay for supplies? Faith formations will be holding a painting "class" on Tuesday, February 7 from 6-8. It will be one event for all ages,

everyone is welcome, and there will be two options: paint the piece on one canvas yourself or come with a friend or loved one and split the painting over two canvases.

Picture will be Valentines themed so you can choose to paint it for someone or with someone.

Rachel Monroe will be leading the class so all you have to do is follow along to make your own personal work of art.

Please email or call the office to let us know you are coming, and how many, so we can have canvases for everyone. Or email Rachel at [ramonroe12@gmail.com](mailto:ramonroe12@gmail.com).

Please register by February 1.

Also, if you have any worn out aprons you could donate to the church (they will be converted to art aprons for events like this painting class) please donate them by Feb 7.

Thank you, Rachel Monroe



### It is time to bury the altar!

In conversations with Kelly at the Salvation Army the following items are most needed/requested in late winter:

- Spaghetti Noodles
- Tuna Helper
- Soups
- Hamburger helper
- Cereal
- Macaroni pasta
- toilet paper
- paper towels
- body wash
- bleach
- Ajax, or any dollar store cleaner will do fine
- feminine hygiene products
- roll on deodorant

any non-perishable food items are always in need. You don't need to limit yourself to what is on the list above. Remember that people who are food insecure also have reasons to celebrate and cake and cookie mixes are OK.

When selecting your items keep in mind that food high in sodium and sugar should be avoided where possible, think no added salt canned vegetables, packed in light syrup or water fruits and low added sugar cereals.

Thank you for your support of this project.  
Service Committee

## **155 Group Celebration—History Committee Interviews for January**

First Lutheran prides itself in the sense of community among its' members. As part of the 155 Group Celebration History committee, we would like to focus on building that community by interviewing our legacy members

Marv and I had the pleasure of sitting down to breakfast with Tom Sharp. He grew up in rural Iowa farming community as a member of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church. He and Ruth met in junior high school. Tom was in FFA and Ruth was voted their annual Queen. He offered to pick her up and take her to the dance.



Ruth & Tom Sharp

They dated on and off for years. Theirs was not the typical romance. Ruth worked as a telephone operator and later as secretary of the Methodist Church. Ruth was committed to caring for her aging parents. Ruth and Tom were married at First Lutheran Church in 1986 and began their life journey together.

Ruth was no stranger to First Lutheran. Her mother, Dena Jackson, was church organist for many years. At that time, Tom said the organ was down front. Dena would bring Ruth to all her rehearsals and services in a bassinet and place her by the organ. Ruth grew to love music and did her first solo at First Lutheran at age seven. Many more solos would follow for she was a gifted vocal musician. (I had the privilege of singing alongside Ruth in the adult choir for many years. If ever I felt unsure of my part, I would lend an ear in her direction for guidance.)

One of Tom's memories about First Lutheran were our outside, heated steps to the church. They were used until the Krum family funded the inside stairwell and elevator addition. He said it was also around that time in the late 1980's when they hoisted the organ from the front of the church to the loft using an inside crane borrowed from Maytag Company. It was quite a sight to see!

We are keeping you in our hearts and prayers legacy members Tom and Ruth Sharp.

Submitted by Connie Zimmermann

### **Say hello to Ruth Kelly!**

Ruth has been at Prairie Village for The Last 5 Years, so we haven't been able to see her on Sunday mornings, but she has been a member of First Lutheran since she moved to Newton in the late 1960s.

Ruth was born in Grinnell's St Francis Hospital and baptized at St John's Lutheran Church where her family was active and where she still has family.



Ruth Kelly

When Ruth's husband (Jerry) who was a plumber started working for Yeager Plumbing, they moved to Newton with their two little girls Susan and Sandy. Jerry attended the Catholic Church, but Ruth continued in the Lutheran faith that she was raised in. Ruth had intended to visit First Lutheran and then to visit Holy Trinity, but First Lutheran was so welcoming that she did not make that second visit. She recalled that Bernice Johnson, Helen McKee and Pearl Austad (all names that some of us remember very well!!) we're friendly and welcoming and invited her to Bible study, Sunday school, Circle and choir. She knew that this is where she was meant to be. Pastor sewer led the service where she and Dan and Ann Crum join the church on the same Sunday.

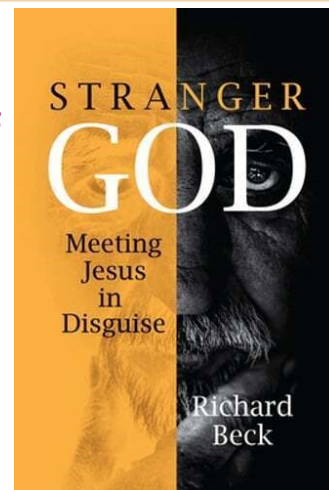
Ruth loves the stained-glass windows which add a warmth and friendliness to First Lutheran and the caring welcoming attitude of its members, and its pastors.





## Studies

*The study have I decided on is "Stranger God- Meeting Jesus in Disguise" written by Richard Beck, a professor of Psychology at Abilene Christian University. He leads a weekly bible study at Maximum-Security prison. It is there he finds glimpses of Christ. In his book he explores finding Christ in the "stranger" through those quite often on the fringes of our society. Please join me starting Feb. 19 at 8:30am. If you cannot make it every Sunday, no problem just join us when you can. Maria DeRush*

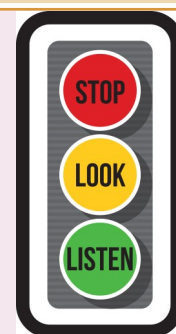


## Lenten signals

Why should we observe Lent? This 40-day season of repentance and reflection that begins on Ash Wednesday has three important purposes. Lent helps us STOP, LOOK and LISTEN.

We observe Lent because it tells us to STOP and rest awhile — and to stop sinning. Lent tells us to LOOK inward for an honest self-examination, to look upward to see the cross of Jesus with healing and love, and to look forward to the hope of the Resurrection. And we observe Lent because it tells us to

LISTEN — to the voice of God, the words of Christ and the movement of the Holy Spirit. STOP, LOOK and LISTEN! These commands that are so crucial for travel safety are also important for our journey through Lent.



HAPPY  
Birthday  
FROM YOUR  
CHURCH FAMILY

Marlys Amundsen 02/04

ArtGreve 02/05

Jane Johnson 02/10

Katie Cantu 02/12

Sarah Grunig 02/12

Andrew Lammey 02/14

Elaine Elliott 02/16

Bryan Friedman 02/23

Alex Anderson 02/27

Evelyn George 02/27

Ashlyn Karsten 02/27

## Bible Quiz

Fill in the blanks for three qualities Paul, in 1 Corinthians 13, attributes to love: "Love is \_\_\_\_\_; love is \_\_\_\_\_. ... it keeps no record of \_\_\_\_\_."

- A. challenging, important, the past
- B. childlike, innocent, injustice
- C. self-sacrificing, generous, finances
- D. patient, kind, wrongs



Answer on Pg. 6

## Christian symbol

**ECCE AGNUS DEI** — Latin for "Behold, the Lamb of God," this is the phrase John the Baptist uses twice to point out Jesus to others (John 1:29, 36). It marks Jesus' Epiphany (manifestation, revelation) as the Anointed One (Christ, Messiah).



## It is that time of year... Thrivent

### **A Timely Reminder about Thrivent Choice Dollars**

March 31st will soon arrive and that is the final day for Thrivent Members to allocate their 2022 (last years) Thrivent Choice® Dollars. First Lutheran Church benefits from this allocation and it costs Thrivent members nothing to direct Choice Dollars to First Lutheran Church. Don't leave your available money to support what you care about on the table. Allocate your available Choice Dollars!

Here are the details:

Thrivent Choice is a charitable grant program that gives eligible Thrivent clients the opportunity to influence where Thrivent distributes some of its charitable funds each year. Thrivent members are invited to direct Choice Dollars® to thousands of enrolled nonprofit organizations, including churches, camps, schools, seminaries, campus ministries and more.

### **Choice Dollars highlights**

More than \$520 million in Choice Dollars grant funds were distributed to churches and other nonprofit organizations since the program was introduced in 2010.

Nearly 45,000 churches and organizations are enrolled in Thrivent Choice. First Lutheran is enrolled to receive this money.

To Direct Choice Dollars by phone call 800-847-4836 and when prompted, say "Thrivent Choice". You can also direct Choice Dollars online by logging into your account. Here is a link to information about Choice Dollars and Action Teams:

<https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/files/29100.pdf>

### **Thrivent Action Teams**

Each year First Lutheran Church members who also are Thrivent members join in to help initiate and secure support and supplemental funding for Church and Community needs through Action Teams that do make a difference. It is simple to initiate an Action Team and this support is available to all qualified Thrivent members. If you learn of a need or hear of plans for an upcoming project, just ask and you will likely see that it can be supported by an Action Team. Things like the corn boil, community meals, drives to help provide food, clothing or school supplies, educational items that the church needs all qualify; it seems the needs that we want to help with are endless. If you have questions, just think: "maybe this could be supported by an Action Team".

Contact Craig or Betty Peterson or Duane Quanbeck, they can help you get er done!

For local support and information you can get in touch with the Iowa/Southern Minnesota Region Thrivent Member Network.

5404 NW 88th St

St. Johnston, IA 50131

515-518-5730

email: [IowaSouthernMNTMN@Thrivent.com](mailto:IowaSouthernMNTMN@Thrivent.com)

website: <https://www.thrivent.com/member-network/iowa-southern-minnesota/>

Facebook link: <https://www.facebook.com/IowaSouthernMinnesotaTMN/>

Craig and Betty Peterson



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



### First Evangelical Lutheran Church

309 East Third Street North  
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(641)792-3934

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

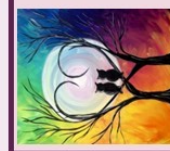
### Worship Service Every Sunday at 9:30am

#### Sunday School

Every Sunday 10:30-11:00am

#### Pulpit Supply Pastors


2/5/23— Aaron Bartholmey  
2/12/23— Pastor Mark Mattes  
2/19/23— Pastor Paul Ostrem  
2/22/23 (Ash Wednesday) -  
Pastor Rachel Mithelman  
2/26/23— Pastor Rachel Mithelman



**Faith Formations  
Painting Date Night**

February 7th  
6-8:00 Pm.



| Sun   | Mon | Tue  | Wed   | Thu                              | Fri | Sat |
|---|-----|--|---|----------------------------------|-----|-----|
|   |     |  | 1<br>Property Meeting<br>6:30 pm.   | 2<br>Dorcas<br>9:00 AM           | 3   | 4   |
| 5<br>Worship Service<br>9:30am<br>Sunday School<br>10:30-11:00  | 6   | 7<br>Faith Formations<br>Painting Night<br>6-8:00 Pm | 8   | 9                                | 10  | 11  |
| 12<br>Worship Service<br>9:30am<br>Sunday School<br>10:30-11:00 | 13  | 14   | 15<br>Lois Cr.<br>9:30 Am.  | 16<br>Council Meeting<br>6:30 Pm | 17  | 18  |
| 19<br>Worship Service<br>9:30am<br>Sunday School<br>10:30-11:00 | 20  | 21   | 22<br> | 23                               | 24  | 25  |
| 26<br>Worship Service<br>9:30am<br>Sunday School<br>10:30-11:00 | 27  | 28   |   |                                  |     |     |

**Bury the Altar Starts NOW !**

309 EAST THIRD STREET NORTH  
NEWTON, IOWA  
50208

FIRST  
EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

**Watch Past and Live  
services !**

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Newton

Phone: 641-792-3934

E-mail:

[firstoffice@newtonfirstlutheran.org](mailto:firstoffice@newtonfirstlutheran.org)



**Sunday Morning Worship starts at 9:30 AM.**

*Let us know how we can pray for you!*