

First LUTHERAN



2025
Newsletter

Pastor Kurt Hoover
pastorkurt@yahoo.com
(641) 792-3934

President

Judy Monroe
professorjudy1@gmail.com
641-275-0142

Treasurer

Corinne Coyle
luthtreasurer@gmail.com
515-669-2983

Administrative
Assistant

Nicole Vitales
office@newtonfirstlutheran.org
641-792-3934

Your Lenten journey to the Cross is especially important this year, for the current season of your life!

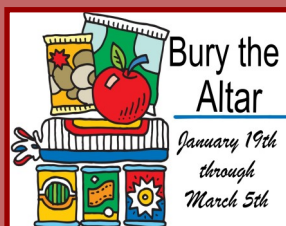
I recall reading a bumper sticker which read, "Hire an 18 year old, before they forget they know everything". It is an ironic acknowledgment of that season of life: graduating high school, when the majority of young people have confidence beyond their actual knowledge and life experience. And we do not want them to lose that enthusiasm.

I believe this is why the early church leaders established the practice of Lent, so that the powerful significance and renewal of Easter might be rekindled in the hearts of believers, year after year. It is like the proverb, "you cannot dip your toe in the same river twice." It is true because rivers are always moving, it's character established by the volume of water moving through the point of our interaction in a moment of time.

More so, we are not the same as we were when we interacted with that river before. Our perspective and expectations, or in the case of Easter, our need for the experience has changed. We have matured and prepare for Easter's celebration with humility. That is the function and benefit of Lenten practices.

Giving up a favorite food or activity for lent reminds us: through God's provision we have all we need and we don't need all we have. This could inspire 'alms giving' so that those who do not have all they need material receive out of our abundance. (One Great Hour of Sharing will be March 23rd) Additional or alternately another Lenten practice is taking up a spiritual practice you have neglected. An intentional time for prayer is an example as well as making time to call or write to people who have cared for you and yours with exceptional (perhaps Christian) love. Or/and journaling to yourself with gratitude for the ways and places God has shown up for you in your life's journey, or difficult times you have endured believing you were alone. In this season bring your pain and lament to our Lord as we follow His journey to the Cross to bring healing and salvation for sinners.

It is reasonable to question, has my life's journey diverted me away from the gifts and provisions that are ours through faith in God's love and mercy for you personally, and your loved ones?



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

Continued on pg. 2

Has the event of Easter lost its transformational power, what does it mean 'for me' in the present circumstances of my life, as I am a year older and closer to the end of life? Are those who are influenced by the priorities and hope I keep for my life observing in me the strength and joy I receive knowing Jesus has won the victory over sin and death for me?

We live in a skeptical world where faith in God's mercy is considered "Irrelevant" on the evidence of our sinful nature, and failure to care for one another as Jesus taught. But God knew and knows we cannot do this as perfectly as the Sinless Son of Man, Jesus. Nor on our own, rather as God's love uplifts our spirits. That is why Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection by the Father's love matters. "For our sake God made the one who knew no sin to be sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:21 Jesus, our friend and God, became sin for us, that in His death and resurrection we may be joined with Him in His victory over sin and death.

I pray you and yours will journey this Lenten season with the fellowship of believers to which you belong. Gather to hear in the present context of your life, and uncertain times we live, the witness of God's faithfulness to love and redeem sinful humanity. Hear the gracious words of eternal truth we and the world can rely on, because God's love overcomes the world's worst.

Pastor Ault

2025 Wednesday Lenten Schedule



(Ash Wednesday) March 5th

*Holy Trinity (Newton)

March 12th

First Lutheran(Newton)

March 19th

St. Andrew's (Sully)

March 26th

Holy Trinity (Newton)

April 2nd

First Lutheran(Newton)

April 9th

St. Andrew's (Sully)

As in the years past we have held joint Lenten service with Holy Trinity (Newton), First Lutheran (Newton), & St. Andrew's (Sully) Lutheran Churches. We will once again be holding joint services with our sisters & brothers in Christ.

Please join us at 6:00pm. each Wednesday for the Lenten Services listed above.

There will be a soup supper following each Lenten service.

Holy Week Services will be held in our own home church buildings.

Chihoni News!!

All good things come to those who wait, we are often reminded, and certainly, we have waited for a long time to finally break ground on the Chihoni Medical Center. But the day has arrived! Monday, February 24, saw representatives of IHP, local dignitaries, and guests gathered at the building site to celebrate the start of construction.



IHP representatives and honored guests are seated in the shade of a tent!

There is great excitement in the area over the prospect of a hospital in their midst. The event was attended by local leaders from the larger community (the Ward), by the Chihoni Village Chairman, and by Bishop Emmanuel Makala, a long-time supporter of IHP. Also in attendance was the pastor of the local church, the pastor of Sele's church in Dodoma, two Catholic nuns from the village, the village Imam, and of course the IHP staff.

Before the groundbreaking, everyone joined in prayer. There was music and speeches, a great celebration in Tanzanian style.

In the words of Miriam Mugo, director of nursing and educational services: "The atmosphere during the ceremony was filled with excitement and optimism as we celebrated this important step forward. ...

I am confident that this development will have a positive impact on our community's health and well-being. Thank you all for your hard work and dedication that has brought us to this moment."

The goal is to have both the Outpatient Department and the guest hostel completed by August of this year, just in time for the team of dentists from Des Moines to arrive as the first group of volunteers in Chihoni!

The groundbreaking has been a long time coming, and is indeed an answer to prayer. Thank you for your faithfulness in keeping IHP in your prayers. It is time for praise!



Some of the IHP representatives and dignitaries attending.

For more on this event, including several photos, go to <https://www.ihptz.org/>, click on IHP Monthly Update, and select February 2025 Update.

Annual reports:

If you are one of the persons responsible for an annual report to the congregation, now is the time to work on it! Nicole will need to compile the annual report in early April, when she is also juggling the Lent events. The earlier you complete this report the better!

Thank you. Church Council

Bishop Current and Iowa Bishops Respond to False Allegations

Bishop Amy Current, along with Bishop Kevin Jones, Northeastern Iowa Synod, ELCA and Bishop Lorna Halaas, Western Iowa Synod, ELCA rejected false claims and defended Lutheran organizations' ethical use of federal grants for vital services like refugee resettlement and mental health care. They affirmed their mission to serve vulnerable communities and urge supporters to share the truth and stand against misinformation. Bishop Current also responded to these allegations in an interview.

Statement published in the SEIA Synod eNews letter.

Lutheran Services in Iowa president and CEO is happy Gov. Reynolds clarified it does not launder money.

Harman said "I am really happy that our governor did go on record as of last week to denounce the claim, that we are NOT a money –laundering organization."

Statement published in the Des Moines Register.

March Monthly Mission

In February, Church Council discussed President Trump's decision to withhold approved funding from agencies assisting legal migrants to adjust to their new lives in the US. This has affected Lutheran Services of Iowa who are currently working with 191 new immigrants, 108 of whom are children. If you have not seen these articles in the Des Moines Register we encourage you to read them for more information.

<https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/2025/01/29/iowa-resettlement-agencies-vow-to-help-refugees-despite-donald-trump-stop-order/77996535007/>

<https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/politics/2025/02/21/federal-government-owes-1-5-million-to-lutheran-services-in-iowa/79215690007/>

While we consider, with the congregation's input, what actions First Lutheran, Newton should consider to support migrants (a person who has moved from one place to another, this is not a legal or illegal designation), the month of March will be a Choices in Mission event for Lutheran Services of Iowa.

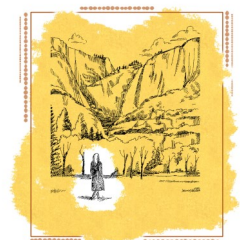
The articles are attached separately for those who do not have a subscription to the Des Moines Register.

Bible Quiz

Complete this sentence which introduces a well-known Bible story: "The hand of the LORD was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of ____."

- | | |
|------------|----------|
| A. flowers | C. rocks |
| B. sheep | D. bones |

Answer on pg. 2



Congregational meeting on Sunday, March 23, 2025,

There will be a congregational meeting on Sunday, March 23, following the worship service, for the purposes of presenting the updated constitution. This is not a meeting to approve the constitution, just to move the process forward.

The constitution has been submitted to the synod and has been approved. The next step is for the congregation to review and ask questions. This starts with the meeting and a motion to read and consider the updated constitution.

Following this meeting Council members will be available during Fellowship time for several weeks to discuss any questions you have. Members may also contact Council members at other times to ask questions as needed.

The vote to approve the updated constitution will be at a regularly scheduled meeting, not a special meeting.



Our Fifth Sunday Joined in Worship

UCC will be hosting our joined worship service
Sunday, March 30, 2025 at 11:00AM.

Plan to stay for a joint potluck in our downstairs dining room following the worship service
Contributions of salads, casseroles, and desserts are requested

We will need volunteers for the following:

Greeters for folks arriving with food, Kitchen staff to organize dishes, and make drinks
Volunteer cleanup.



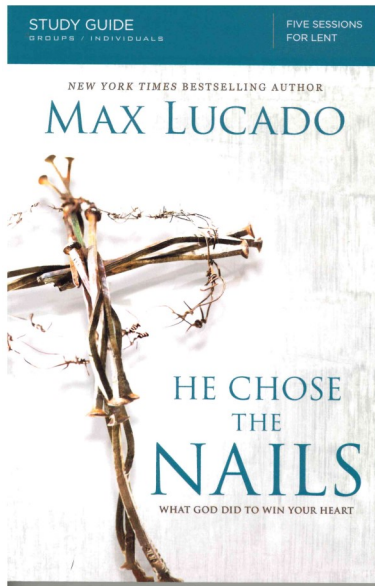
Ron Grunig 03/01
Dawn Lucas 03/05
Denise McVey 03/05
Arlene Byers 03/09
Pat Foote 03/09
Robyn Friedman 03/18
Rocky DeRush 03/27
Michael Hodnett 03/27
Dennis Bauer 03/29
Meagan Frehse 03/31

Thank you to everyone who helped to bury the Altar so far.



Approximately 50lbs of hamburger meat has already been delivered.

HE CHOSE THE NAILS STUDY



As Lutherans we participate in the season of Lent. Lent season starts with Ash Wednesday, a service where we are reminded of our mortality, with Ashes being placed on our foreheads. Lent starts 40 days before Easter, a time of reflection and focus on Christ's sacrifice.

As a part of the Lent season I will be leading a study based on Max Lucado's book "He Chose the Nails". We watch a video for about 15 minutes introducing the study topic we will do together. I will have to admit that I did not attend very many of the services for Lent (other than Ash Wed.) until my

children were no longer living with me. Since then I have usually gone to almost all of the Lenten services. It has helped me focus on

the sacrifices Christ did for me, the center of our faith.

Max guides us into a weekly focus looking at what Christ did for us. Each week focusing on what Christ did for us and our response. There are 5 lessons that go along with the video theme. We reflect

and go through guided questions we answer as a group.

The class will start Sunday Mar. 9 (daylight savings) downstairs at 8:30am. For added depth you can do the Lenten Practice guided study and reflections during the week. We do have books you may use and keep for that. I am hoping to do some of those reflections.

It is however not necessary to do those in order to participate during the Sunday class.

See you in class,

Maria DeRush



This snack's layers mimic properties of our planet's crust.

What you need:

- 1 cup rolled oats
- ½ cup nut butter (divided)
- ½ cup chocolate chips
- Microwave-safe bowl
- Silicone mini baking cups

What you do:

1. Combine the oats and ½ cup of the nut butter. Mix until oats stick together.
2. Place 2 teaspoons of oat mixture in each baking cup. Press with a spoon. Freeze for 10 minutes.
3. Spread remaining nut butter atop the cups. Freeze for 10 more minutes.
4. Microwave the chocolate chips 30 seconds. Stir and keep heating for 30-second intervals until melted.
5. Spread melted chocolate atop the cups. Freeze until chocolate is firm.
6. Remove from the molds and enjoy! Refrigerate leftovers in an airtight container.



Christian symbol

ANKH, OR ANSATE CROSS —

Originating in Egyptian hieroglyphics, this symbol represented life and regeneration. The shape and meaning made perfect sense to ancient Christians, who appropriated it as a sign of eternal life.





Pastor Kurt Hoover
309 East Third Street North
Newton, Iowa
50208
office@newtonfirstlutheran.org
(641)792-3934



Food Donations- Bury the Altar ends 3/5
March Monthly Mission—Lutheran Services in Iowa

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
Worship Service 9:30 am Shrove Pancake Brunch Following worship. Evening Confirmation	3	4	5 @ Holy Trinity Lenten Service 6:00 pm	6 Dorcas 9:00 am		8
Easter Choir Practice 8:30 am. Worship Service 9:30 am Evening Confirmation	10	11	12 @ First Lutheran Lenten Service 6:00 pm.	13	14	15
Easter Choir Practice 8:30 am. Worship Service	17 	18	19 Lois Cr. 9:30 Am @ St. Andrew's Lenten Service 6:00 pm	20 Council Meeting 7:00 pm	21	22
Newton CSD 2025 Spring Break						
Easter Choir Practice 8:30 am. Worship Service 9:30 am Congregational Meeting Following Worship Evening Confirmation	24	25	26 @ Holy Trinity Lenten Service 6:00 pm	27	28	29
Joint Worship @ UCC 11:am Potluck to follow	31					

Office Hours
Monday—Friday

Pastor Hoover's Hours:
Monday & Tuesday
9:00Am- - 12:00 pm

Meetings with Pastor Hoover by Appointment.

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
309 EAST THIRD STREET
NORTH
NEWTON, IOWA 50208

**Watch Past and Live
services !**

newtonfirstlutheran.org
&
(on Facebook at)
First Lutheran Church-
Newton

Phone: 641-792-3934
E-mail:
firstoffice@newtonfirstlutheran.org



Join us during this
**LENTEN
SEASON**

Sunday Morning Worship
9:30am.

Coffee Hour
10:30am