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*Our next
 property council
 meeting will be
 Wednesday,
 February, 4th, at
 6:30pm.*



Born of Water and Spirit: What does this mean?

Jesus used the phrases “Born from above, Born of water and Spirit” in His invitation to Nicodemus. It seems it went right over the religious leader’s head. Perhaps ours too? Especially in the season of Lent we benefit from parsing the righteous jargon heard in church. So that we may be able to inform family and friends, be refreshed in faith. It may be that John’s report of Jesus back and forth with Nicodemus also serves as a instruction to Baptism. There is a symmetry in Jesus being humbly born in human flesh and calling for Nicodemus, and all who desire to know Jesus, to be born again from above, by the Spirit. Truly as transforming as being embraced by the light rather than hiding in the darkness, we learn as we read on.

^{John 3:19} And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.

²⁰ For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹ But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

²² After this Jesus and his disciples went into the region of Judea, and he spent some time there with them and baptized. ²³ John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim because water was abundant there, and people kept coming and were being baptized. ²⁴ (John, of course, had not yet been thrown into prison.)

Yes, Jesus also Baptized. John, recognizing Jesus as the Messiah and welcomed it. ³⁰ “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

Baptized in water indicates both a cleansing and drowning of the sinful person and the redeemed and forgiven person emerging from the water, rebirth. In the context of birth Nicodemus related to water is an earthbound element recognized to surround and protect the child in the womb. It is essential for our birth in the flesh.

To these concepts of water’s role in Baptism Jesus wants us to additionally experience the Holy Spirit coming to abide alongside our own spirit to comfort and protect us; “the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I have said to you.” John 14:26

We teach “it is not water alone that makes Baptism effective, but the world of God, which is with and alongside the water, and faith which trusts this world of God in the water. With the word of God it is a Baptism, that is, grace-filled water of life and a bath of new birth in the Holy Spirit.” (Small Catechism)

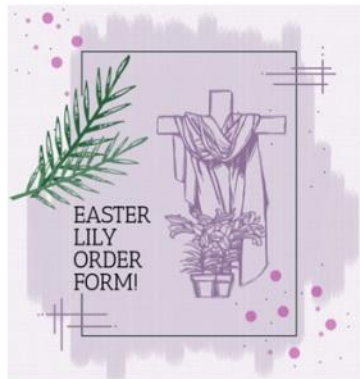
The description found in Romans 6 correlates with our Lenten journey to the Cross, on the way to Easter's empty tomb – life beyond the grave! ³ Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, so we might no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For whoever has died is freed from sin. ⁸ But if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin once for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Easter Art

Prayer for March

Gracious God, help our minds to be receptive to Your word, Lord. Help us to hear it, to spiritually digest it, and to live by it. As we spring forward into a new season, awaken our hearts to Your presence. Even when our bodies feel weary, renew our spirits with Your joy. Help us to use every moment You give us for Your glory, trusting that your light shines brighter than any lost hour of sleep. Prepare us to always worship You in spirit, in truth, and in everything that we do. Hosanna in the highest! Lord Jesus, as we remember Your triumphal entry, prepare our hearts to welcome you with joy and humility. Clear away our distractions so we may follow you in both triumph and trial. May our prayers and actions always honor You, our gracious King. Amen.



We plan to decorate the Sanctuary with Easter Lilies and invite your help in providing lily plants. If you would like to order a lily, please complete the form below, attach your check, fold together, and place it in the offering plate. You may also mail or bring your check and order form to the church office.

You may pay with cash or a check payable to **First Lutheran** in the amount of **\$12.00** for each lily ordered. The deadline for turning in order and payment is **Monday, March 23rd.**

Lilies may be taken home after the Easter Service.

Name _____

Phone _____

Number of Lily(s) ____ **\$12.00/each** (Check payable to First Lutheran)

Given in honor of _____

Given in memory of _____

Chihoni Calling!

The great good news is that patients are now being seen at Chihoni Medical Center! We had expected this to happen on February 3rd, but true to form, bureaucracy caused one final delay.



Chihoni Medical Center opens its doors to patients!



Dr. Bon explaining prenatal DHA to Halima and her husband

On the day of the soft opening, before signs were even up in the village, the first patients arrived. Dr. Bon saw a woman named Hamila who has had four miscarriages due to Rhesus incompatibility. Hamila has blood type B-, while her husband has a positive blood type. If the baby turns out to have Rhesus positive blood, he or she could be in danger. Dr. Bon will be monitoring Hamila and her unborn baby. Hamila was given prenatal DHA, critical for fetal development. She and her baby are in good hands.

Two small children were diagnosed with pneumonia and were treated with antibiotics.



Little Insrati, 20 months old, was diagnosed with pneumonia

Now, the immediate challenge is equipping the first floor of the hostel, where teams of volunteers will be staying. The first group arrives in April! In order to provide basic accommodations, the building must be furnished with beds, mattresses, sinks, toilets, showers, and mosquito screens for the wraparound porch. Paula's Update has a list of items and prices! Find it at <https://www.ihptz.org/post/february-2026-update-from-ihp>.

The team at Chihoni is grateful to God and shows up every day to do the work! God's Work, our Hands!



Please join us in the Fellowship Hall every Wednesday throughout the Lenten season

at 6:00 Pm.

Our weekly Lenten service will be followed by a soup supper and fellowship.



MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE

It's time to tune up your Bible brain!
 Decode the notes to discover a verse that sings with joy.

Using the musical note code, write the words of Psalm 100:2 (NIV) in the correct order below.

CODE: before come gladness him joyful LORD songs the with Worship



_____ the _____ ;



_____ .



Answer: Worship the LORD with gladness, come before him with joyful songs.

Online worship service are always available!

At any time if you would like to watch our online service that is streamed live every Sunday, please use the link below

[https://
www.facebook.com/1stlutherannewton](https://www.facebook.com/1stlutherannewton)

Also, follow us on facebook at
 First Lutheran Church-Newton

Daylight Saving Time Begins March 8th.

Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour on March 7th before bed!

As we “spring forward,” let’s also renew our hearts in faith and gratitude for God’s steadfast light that never fades.



Happy St. Patrick's Day!

We remember the missionary heart of St. Patrick, who shared Christ's light with courage and compassion.

“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” —Matthew 5:16 (NIV)

Wherever you go today, let your faith shine bright!

Bible Quiz

In Bible times, shepherds spent most of their days with their sheep—guiding them to food and water and guarding them from danger. When a sheep was injured, the shepherd treated the wound with a special liquid.

What was it?

- A. Water
- B. Honey
- C. A salt solution
- D. Olive oil



Answer on pg. 2

Happy Birthday

Ron Grunig 03/01

Arlene Byers 03/09

Pat Foote 03/09

Robyn Friedman 03/18

Dennis Bauer 03/29



Thrivent Choice Dollar annual giving period ends soon:

The March 31 deadline is just around the corner for eligible Thrivent members to direct their Thrivent charitable grant funds, Choice Dollars, to enrolled nonprofit organizations, including First Lutheran Church. So if you have Thrivent products, time is of the essence. Eligibility is determined monthly and reevaluated on an annual basis, so it is a good idea to log in to your account and see if you have Choice Dollars available.

First Lutheran received \$1,269 Choice Dollars last year. The church has received a total of \$28,869 from Thrivent members direction since program inception in 2010! That's pretty good (and it doesn't include the funding Thrivent has provided through the Action Teams). Thrivent is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to providing benefits for its members, and part of the benefits members receive is the ability for a member to direct a designated portion of the corporation's profits to a favorite charity (Thrivent Choice), or for a member to get seed money to support a cause that will benefit the community (Action Teams). Basically these programs, Choice and Action Teams, were developed to put Thrivent members in the driver's seat to designate a portion of Thrivent's charitable giving.

Action Teams can make a difference:

Action Teams are another way that Thrivent members can use Thrivent charitable funds to help support activities we do throughout the year in our church and community. With Thrivent Action Teams we can make a meaningful impact in our community. It has been suggested that one way to measure the effectiveness of a congregation is to look at its impact on the community. First Lutheran Church is and has always been very active in efforts to meet both local and international unmet needs. Many members of the First Lutheran Church are considered "Thrivent Members" by virtue of owning "Thrivent products". Because of this, they are able to apply for and complete two Action Team projects each year; Thrivent provides up to \$250 for each approved project in the form of a Debit card. During 2025 there were a total of five Action Teams that were implemented to supplement and support the church's projects locally and internationally. The Action Team application and approval processes have been streamlined and more action teams could be used to support our church efforts locally and world wide.

These are the Action Teams led by First Lutheran members last year:

1. Bury the Altar project purchased \$250 worth of ground beef that was included with the other food items donated by First members and given to the Salvation Army Food Pantry.
2. Items were purchased for the Lutheran World Relief hygiene kit project.
3. School supplies were purchased as part of the Neighbors Helping Neighbors project.
4. Batting, fabric and thread were purchased for the First Lutheran Church Dorcas quilting group.
5. Purchased items (carved creche and giraffe from Africa) were included in the silent auction to raise funds for needed equipment and final construction of the Chihoni Medical Center in Tanzania.

Needs are great and Thrivent Action Teams are designed to help meet needs. Here is a link to the Action Team Hub so you can see how others are using Action Teams to meet their church and community needs: <https://thrivent.cotribute.co/community/thrivent-action-teams/events> If you identify a need you want to work on, there are Thrivent members here at First Lutheran who you could likely involve to create a Thrivent Action Team. Thrivent members can apply for support for Action Teams that are used for fundraisers, educational materials and church related supplies. If you are wondering how to get involved with an Action Team just ask either Craig or Betty Peterson or Duane Quanbeck, and we will see if we can help you find a way to use the Action Team support.



Christian symbol

ROOSTER — The rooster reminds us of Peter’s three-fold denial of Jesus on the night of his trial (Matthew 26:34, NIV). Because of this, it often symbolizes human weakness and faithlessness—especially when faith is tested. Yet, the rooster also calls to mind watchfulness. Its early-morning crowing echoes Jesus’ words about being alert for his return: “Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn” (Mark 13:35, NIV).



Special Dates

- * World Day of Prayer, March 6, 2026
- * Daylight saving time begins, March 8, 2026
- * St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 2026
- * First day of spring, March 20, 2026
- * Holy Week, March 29-April 5, 2026
- * Palm/Passion Sunday, March 29, 2026

2026 Joint Service Project between First Lutheran and UCC

The Joint Council has chosen a 2026 service project for the congregations to work on together. We will provide a Thank you to nursing home staff- nurses, care aides, laundry aides, kitchen staff, everyone who works to care for those who live in nursing homes.

Our hope is that members will work together to prepare a snack. Joint Council is working on locating appropriate funding, as the ingredients will be costly for this many persons. All nursing homes have been contacted and we know how about how many staff to prepare for for each of the 5 nursing homes.

We anticipate this project will be completed during the course of 2026, allowing for the many different schedules of our membership. We will be offering recipes as suggestions for you to get ideas, or use.

Early in March we will have financing and recipes finalized and will be ready for members to indicate their interest in participating.



Feel free to talk to members of Joint Council (Judy Monroe, Allison Bartholmey and Jim Lammey) to learn more or indicate your interest.

More information coming very soon!!



MARCH

2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Worship Service 9:30 am	2	3	4 No Property Meeting Lenten Service 6:00 Pm. Joint Council Meeting	5 Dorcas 9:30 Am.	6	7
8 Worship Service 9:30 am Daylight-Saving Time Begins	9	10	11 Lenten Service 6:00 Pm.	12	13 World Day of Prayer	14
15 Worship Service 9:30 am	16	17 	18 Lois Cr. 9:30 Am. Lenten Service 6:00 Pm.	19	20	21
22 Joint Worship Service w/UCC at 1 st Lutheran. 10:00 am (Polluck to follow)	23	24	25 Lenten Service 6:00 Pm.	26 Council Meeting 6:00 Pm.	27 Spring Begins	28
29 Worship Service 9:30 am  Palm Sunday	30	31				

FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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services !**

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

Online worship
service are
always available!



Join Us

Sunday Morning Worship 9:30 Am

Coffee Hour 10:30 Am

Wednesday Lenten Services 6:00 Pm.