



New Era Lutheran Church

April 2020 Newsletter

Pastor John Grebner
Interim Pastor
563-210-7197

New Era Lutheran Church
3455 New Era Road
Muscatine, IA 52761

Sunday School: Sept.-May - 9:30 am
Worship Services: 10:30 am

Contacts:

Joan Dietrich, Office Admin
Office: 563-263-5356
Office Hours: Wed – 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.
Fri – 10 a.m. - Noon
Email: neweralutheran@gmail.com

Organist: Mary Maxson
Choir Director: Lavonne Schrum

Building Rental –
Gloria Batteau

Church, Fellowship Hall, Gym
Home: 563-263-2969
Email: gfbatteau@gmail.com

Bulletin & Newsletter– Joan Dietrich

Cell: 563-299-4710
Email: neweralutheran@gmail.com
Bulletin - Items due by Thursday night
Each week
Newsletter Items due by the 20th of the
Month

Check us out at www.neweralutheran.com
or <https://www.facebook.com/NewEraLutheran>



How quickly things change. A month ago none of us would have dreamed of mass self isolation. The Covid-19 virus and our reaction to it have turned our

world upside down. In some ways it feels unreal. Especially in this modern world. With all of our technology and medical advances, our financial and intellectual resources, we have easily been lulled into a sense of near invulnerability. But this little virus is a reality slap waking us to the reality that we are not as great as we may think we are. We limited and vulnerable human beings are not in control.

It brings to mind for me Psalm 33:13-22:

The LORD looks down from heaven; he sees all humankind. From where he sits enthroned he watches all the inhabitants of the earth—he who fashions the hearts of them all, and observes all their deeds.

A king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength. The war horse is a vain hope for victory, and by its great might it cannot save. Truly the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for the LORD; he is our help and shield. Our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in you.

Whatever your circumstances I pray that you know you are upheld by the great deliverer, the God enfleshed in Jesus

Christ. God will see us through this time. That doesn't mean that we don't have a whole lot of work ahead of us as we adapt and seek answers, but we do not go it alone. God who brought Jesus from death itself will bring us through these times as well.

We need to keep reminding one another of this great truth of God's love and mercy. After all the truth of this moment and its consequences for our lives can be overwhelming. We can forget or lose sight of God's care for us. For this reason we are trying multiple ways to bring a reminder to you. We keep trying to adapt and do these better so if you have constructive suggestions please let us know. Each Sunday at 9:00 a "worship service" will be uploaded to Gloria Dei's Facebook page. In addition each day a daily reading and prayer will also be placed on Facebook.

I invite you to also bring a reminder to one another. Call your friends and family. Remind one another of your love and concern as well as God's love and concern. And above all example patience and peace. Be kind to one another and to yourself. Take a moment to center yourself. Breathe. Now is a time to practice Sabbath rest, even or especially if we are working remotely or otherwise.

Easter is coming. I don't know if we will be able to celebrate it together in one space. If not we will celebrate it remotely and when we are able to gather in one place again we will celebrate it fully together. No virus, sickness or circumstance stands in the way of our God and the new life we are given in Jesus Christ. Remember this. And remind one another. Remind me. Thanks be to God!

Your partner in ministry,
Pastor John



APRIL Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

1 – Linda Schneider
1 – Gavin Markham
3 – Jerry Lichtenwald
3 – Justin Wulf
4 – Bev Hull
8 – Lynn Bendt
11 – Sarah Batteau
17 – Grady Wulf
19 – Eric Leacox
23 – Dan Petersen
30 – Mike Hermann

Anniversaries

20 – Chuck & Candace Harland

As you celebrate your day with pride, think about the God and his choicest blessings on you. Have a wonderful birthday and anniversary!



Emogene Sorgenfrey -
c/o Leland Smith Assisted Living
309 Ovesen Dr., Room 104,
Wilton IA 52778

Marlin Allchin - was in Trinity/Rock Island,
but now at home

Mark Neal (Phyllis Beck's son-in-law),
Chad Morgan, Butch Batteau,
Jared & Kelly Stalkfleet, Leroy Stalkfleet,
Emogene Sorgenfrey, Kellijayne Rudbeck,
Chris McCleary, Ayla McCleary,
The Sturgeon Family, and all others who are in
need of prayer support.

Please let Joan Dietrich know if you have anyone that needs to be added to our prayers for the newsletters.

Special dates

- Holy Week, *April 5-12, 2020*
 - Palm/Passion Sunday, *April 5, 2020*
 - Maundy Thursday, *April 9, 2020*
 - Good Friday, *April 10, 2020*
 - Easter Sunday, *April 12, 2020*
 - Administrative Professionals Day, *April 22, 2020*
-

New Era Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes – March 18, 2020

New Era Church Council met at 5:30 p.m. on March 18, 2020, with Pastor John Grebner, Ann, Dick, Gloria, Eric and Shirley present. Dick gave devotions and Shirley will have them next time.

Minutes from the January 14 meeting were read and approved. Eric's online treasurer's report was also approved.

Gloria reported on visits the Care and Concern committee was able to do before the coronavirus shutdown.

Dick's property report was as follows:

- Snow was cleared three times.
- 3500 gallons of LP gas was contracted.
- The church well pump and water tank was replaced.
- Replaced broken glass in church basement door and in gym basement door.

The Usage fee booklet is a work in progress and there is a rough draft of the Marriage booklet.

Basement cleaning is put on hold.

Joan D. is working on a new church directory.

Church yard cleanup day is set for Friday, May 1.

The Call committee consisting of Lynne Leacox, Mary Maxson and Dan Petersen recommended as our Pastor Candidate, Pastor

Kirsten Lee. After discussion, Eric moved and Dick seconded and all agreed to offer her the call to be our pastor along with Gloria Dei Church. Both church councils will need to work out a way to decide on her benefits package.

Pastor John moved to not have church services for the foreseeable future until things calm down. He plans on making video sermons available and will let the congregation know when these are ready to view.

No date has been set for our next meeting due to the coronavirus social distancing protocol.

Respectfully submitted,
Shirley Petersen, Secretary



New Era Lutheran Church Directory - Not able to schedule picture taking right now, but if you have a picture you would like to have printed in the church

directory with members of your family that are listed in the directory, send them to New Era Lutheran Church, 3455 New Era Road, Muscatine IA 52761. The pictures will be scanned into the computer and inserted into the directory. Photos will not be destroyed, but will be given back to you. If you do not have pictures you would like to submit, photos will be taken at a later date.

Daily Prayer and Meditation

Daily prayer and meditation is now available on our church website www.neweralutheran.com. Just go to the website, and then click on Daily Prayer and Meditation. Sunday Sermons will also be available at this site. If you belong to Facebook, you can view by visiting New Era Lutheran Church or Gloria Dei Lutheran Durant. If questions, please contact Joan at 563-299-4710 or Pastor John Grebner at 563-210-7197.

Easter around the world

Easter traditions are important, but they vary widely. While Americans dye hardboiled eggs, Kenyans carve soapstone eggs and present them as gifts in banana-fiber boxes. In Bermuda, locals fly homemade kites on Good Friday – a tradition that began when a teacher illustrated Christ’s ascension to heaven using a cross-shaped kite.

Ethiopian Christians observe a 56-day fast from meat and all animal products. On Easter, they dress in white to worship in churches decorated with handmade fabric. Then they feast with non-Christians on roast chicken, goat and rice. In France, church bells are silent between Holy Thursday and Easter to observe Jesus’ Passion. According to legend, the bells grow wings and fly to Rome to be blessed, returning on Easter with chocolate and presents. In one town’s main square, chefs make a giant omelet with 4,500 eggs to feed 1,000 people!

Loosed from death



Almost 100 years ago, one-time U.K. poet laureate John Masefield wrote a play called *The Trial of Jesus*. In it, the centurion who oversaw Jesus’ execution returns to give Pontius Pilate an official report. When Pilate’s wife requests and receives details about the crucifixion, she asks, “Do you think he is dead?” Despite what he had witnessed, the centurion answers, “No, lady, I don’t.”

Confused, Pilate’s wife inquires, “Then where is he?” The man’s response: “Let loose in the world, where none can stop his truth.”

Indeed, as 2 Timothy 2:9 (ESV) attests, “The word of God is not bound!”

Remembering Dietrich Bonhoeffer

The Christian church commemorates Dietrich Bonhoeffer – pastor, theologian, anti-Nazi spy – on April 9, the anniversary of his 1945 martyrdom. Among his much-loved writings are nuggets of wisdom such as these:

“Judging others makes us blind, whereas love is illuminating. By judging others we blind ourselves to our own evil and to the grace which others are just as entitled to as we are.” (*The Cost of Discipleship*)

“In normal life we hardly realize how much more we receive than we give, and life cannot be rich without such gratitude. It is so easy to overestimate the importance of our own achievements compared with what we owe to the help of others.” (*Letters and Papers from Prison*)

“The table fellowship of Christians implies obligation. It is our daily bread that we eat, not my own. We share our bread. Thus we are firmly bound to one another not only in the Spirit but in our whole physical being. The one bread that is given to our fellowship links us together in a firm covenant.” (*Life Together*)

All things in common

Just as the bread is made out of many grains ground and mixed together, and out of the bodies of many grains there comes the body of one bread, in which each grain loses its form and body and takes upon itself the common body of the bread; and just as the drops of wine, in losing their own form, become the body of one common wine and drink – so it is and should be with us. ...



Through the interchange of [Christ's] blessings and our misfortunes, we become one loaf, one bread, one body, one drink, and have all things in common.

—Martin Luther, *Treatise on the Blessed Sacrament*

From death to life

My life is like a faded leaf,
My harvest dwindled to a husk:
Truly my life is void and brief
And tedious in the barren dusk;
My life is like a frozen thing,
No bud nor greenness can I see:
Yet rise it shall — the sap of Spring;
O Jesus, rise in me.

—Christina Rossetti

Life everlasting

Fellowship with Christ is participation in the divine life which finds its fullest expression in triumph over death. Life is a larger word than resurrection; but resurrection is, so to speak, the crucial quality of life.—William Temple

A modern-day parable

In Luke 15, Jesus tells three parables about the precious being lost and, at great lengths, found again. The kingdom of heaven, he says, is like that. But most of us don't shepherd sheep and wouldn't fret over one lost coin. A child, on the other hand ...

In fall 2019, as night fell in northern Minnesota, 6-year-old Ethan and his dog wandered off. Family and police grew frantic because the area consisted of fields, woods and swamps. Authorities requested assistance.

The kingdom of heaven, Jesus might say, is like *600 volunteers* searching diligently in the dark for a child they didn't know. It's like Steve

Fines who, though also a stranger to the boy, grabbed his company's pricy heat-seeking drone and worked the camera for hours, until it detected Ethan huddling with his dog, safe but cold. Yes, the kingdom of heaven — indeed God — is like people giving their all and refusing to quit until the lost one is found.

“Beneath the Cross of Jesus”

I take, O cross, thy shadow for my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of his face;

Content to let the world go by, to know no gain
nor loss,

My sinful self my only shame, my glory all the
cross.—Elizabeth C. Clephane

Bible Quiz

Three of the Gospels tell that when Jesus was crucified, darkness covered the earth from noon until three in the afternoon. Which Gospel does not mention this event?



- A. Matthew
- B. Mark
- C. Luke
- D. John

Answer: D (See Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, and John 19.)

A reason to laugh

The week after Easter, some churches observe Holy Humor Sunday — a tradition dating back to the fourth century. Early Christian theologians coined the term “*risus paschalis*,” or “the Easter laugh,” saying God played the supreme joke on death. Some believers celebrated Bright Monday, gathering the day after Easter to mock Satan's defeat.

On the first day of April, remember that “we are fools for Christ” (1 Corinthians 4:10, NIV). Then later in the month, take time to smile and laugh, knowing that victory is yours, thanks to Jesus.



Recipe Corner

See(k) first

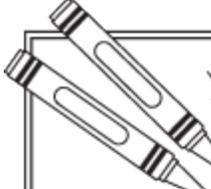
On Facebook, I can “follow” as many people as I want, viewing their messages, photos and activities. But I can choose only 30 to “see first” – that is, to prioritize in my news feed. As of this writing (Facebook changes often), if my “see first” list is full and I want to add someone new, I must “unprioritize” someone else.

That leads me to ponder bigger matters: I often claim to follow Jesus, but what might I need to “unprioritize” to make him not just a priority but *the* priority in my life? To what do I devote time and attention but ought to let go to follow Christ more closely? What activities, behaviors and values do I need to not just bump from my “see first” list but “unfollow” or “block” entirely? Perhaps they are antithetical to discipleship or simply take too much time away from prayer, Scripture and service.

This dilemma isn’t unique to the digital age. Facebook parlance is about what we “see first,” but in Matthew 6:33 Jesus says, “*Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness*” (ESV, italics added).—Heidi Mann

We need your home cooked recipes!!

Please submit your recipes to
neweralutheran@gmail.com



PUZZLE

Picturing the Lord's Supper

Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples as a symbol of the new covenant.



Directions: Use the picture clues to fill in key words from Luke 22:19-20, NIV.





And he took _____, gave _____ and _____ it, and gave

it to them, saying, “This is my _____ given for you; do this in _____ of me.” In the same way, after the supper he





took the cup, saying, “This _____ is the new _____ in my



blood, which is _____ out for you.”

LUKE 22:19-20, NIV

Answer: bread, thanks, broke, body, remembrance, cup, covenant, poured



+Christian Symbol+

Nails

Nails symbolize Jesus’ passion and suffering because they were used at his Crucifixion. They are often depicted in groups of three because two nails were used to secure Jesus’ hands, and a third was used to secure his feet. Three nails are also used to identify Jesus as a member of the Holy Trinity.

Puzzle!

Hands play a key role in the biblical accounts of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Use this sign-language alphabet to retell what happened.

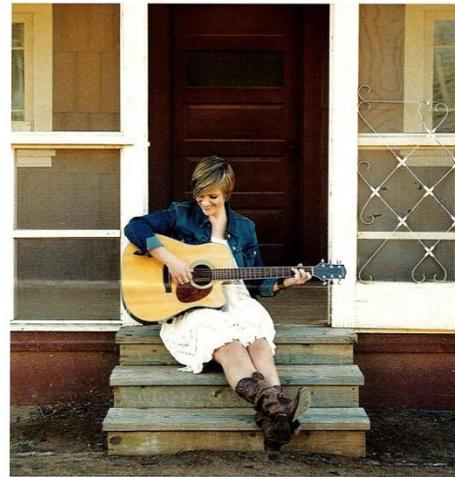
Puzzle!

Hands play a key role in the biblical accounts of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Use this sign-language alphabet to retell what happened.



Jesus' _____ were _____
to the tree. Two criminals were also crucified,
one on the _____
and the other on the _____ of Jesus. Jesus
cried out with a loud voice, " _____,
into your _____ I commit my spirit."
(Luke 23:46) Jesus' friends _____
him from the cross to the tomb. Jesus showed
_____ his _____ to prove
he was Christ. Bring your _____ together
in _____, and thank God for his
Son, Jesus!

Answer: hands, nailed, right hand, left, Father, hands, carried, Thomas, hands, hands, prayer



MARCY EACH

Marcy Each is an Iowa raised singer/songwriter and was Dove award nominated artist/writer who has a unique ability to draw you into her stories through simple melodies and a soulful silky voice. "Walk Me Home," Marcy's newest album, was recorded in Nashville, produced by Jennie Lee Riddle, and was featured and charted on iTunes. Along with being named female artist/writer of the year at GMA Immerse in 2013 and winning 1st place at the Merlefest Chris Austin songwriting contest in 2016, she has had her songs recorded by the likes of Jody Mcbrayer (former member of Avalon), Beyond the Ashes, and bluegrass artist, Lizzy Long.

Each currently lives in Cedar Rapids, Iowa with her husband and three kids.

SUNDAY, APRIL 26TH

First Presbyterian Church celebrates
EMMAUS CAFÉ
All Donors, volunteers and
community members are invited
to **JOIN US** for a **FREE CONCERT**
as a **THANK YOU** for **20 YEARS**
of serving Muscatine with US.

**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**
401 Iowa Avenue
563-263-2696

4:00 p.m. Concert with a dessert reception to follow

EMMAUS CAFÉ

First Presbyterian Church
401 Iowa Avenue
Muscatine, IA 52761

Dear Friends,

The Emmaus Café has been preparing Sunday noon meals to those in need for the past 20 years, all done with community volunteers. We could not have accomplished this without your help. We extend a special invitation to you in celebration of this 20th anniversary.

Please join us for a special concert and refreshments following, so we can thank you personally for all you have done in the past. You may have helped our Crew Chiefs to prepare and serve the Sunday meal, or you may have donated food for the Sunday meal, or you may have donated dollars to help pay for the food we prepare each week. Whatever you did, even 10 years ago or more, we appreciate you very much.

Enclosed is a poster of the concert. We hope you can attend as our way of thanking you for sharing with others.

Sincerely,

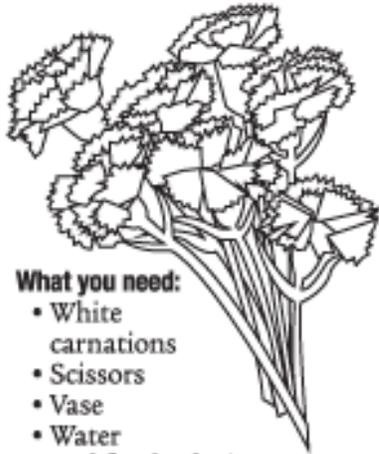
Shirley Dillon
Secretary

Enc.

Craft Idea

Scripture AND NATURE

Conduct a simple experiment to illustrate Easter's meaning.



What you need:

- White carnations
- Scissors
- Vase
- Water
- Red food coloring
- Bible

What you do:

1. Cut the carnation stems (at an angle) to about 8 inches long.
2. Fill the vase halfway with water. Add 10 drops of food coloring. (More may be needed to darken the water.)
3. Add the cut flowers and observe what happens to the petals over time.
4. Discuss how this is like Jesus' work on the cross. Read 1 Peter 2:22-24 (NIV) and reflect on what his death means for us.
5. To learn more about this experiment, research capillary action.

ALL SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES ARE CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

WHEN SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES START, AN EMAIL WILL BE SENT OUT WITH VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE USHERS, READERS, COMMUNION ASSISTANTS, AND HOSTS FOR THE FELLOWSHIP HALL.

BE SAFE!

