



New Era Lutheran Church

January 2021 Newsletter

Pastor Kirsten Lee
405-248-0586

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

Worship Services: 10:30 am (online
until further notice on church website
& FaceBook

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Bulletin & Newsletter– Joan Dietrich

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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/](https://www.facebook.com/NewEraLutheranChurch)
[NewEraLutheranChurch](https://www.facebook.com/NewEraLutheranChurch)

Merry Christmas beloved ones!

Sing to the LORD| a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.

Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD;
proclaim God's salvation from day to day.
(Psalm 96 NRSV)

The long awaited and anticipated new year is almost here! And, more importantly, the long awaited and anticipated Savior is here on earth. Jesus Christ is born for you, dies for you, and lives eternally for you so that you will always know the deepness of God's love for you. Well, now that 2021 is right around the corner, what do you imagine for this year? As messages flood our media and social media of creating and following new year goals, this psalm comes to mind. I know many of us are indeed singing a new song this new year and many of us feel too weary and hurt to sing a new song.

Beloved, Christ is here in your life- in the ordinary moments and in the small details we overlook because we are still learning how to see Christ in our life. Christ is here, holding your hand, helping you breathe into this new year, as you grieve, worry, and anticipate stressful situations. Christ is here, coaxing you into all that is unexpected, all that we don't yet know about this year. You are not alone and will never face a moment in your life alone because of Christ's promise to always love you in the deepest way possible.

Christ's presence within you is transformational love. While the world may look the same from our front door or window, the world is transformed. While you may feel the same as you usually do this Christmas season, we are now transformed. God has come into our messy, sinful

lives to give us a new song to sing. God has come and will always be in our lives to give us a sustaining joy and hope so we can keep taking one faithful step after another and see the world as beautifully and holy. God has come to give you life that is rich with grace upon grace, full of unexpected and undeserved blessings.

The promise of salvation is given to you today and every day of your life on earth until Christ's salvation is given to you in fullness in heaven's paradise. Because Christ promises salvation, Christ gives us hope for new beginnings. We who believe in Christ's resurrection can trust that God brings new life into our being every day of our lives. The world is transformed and we as God's children are also transformed by our Savior's birth, death, and resurrection.



A year ago, I had the privilege of traveling to Hawaii. While there, we went to the Volcano National Park and saw this picture. On top of a dormant volcano, which contained lava, grew new life. Out of death grows new life because our God is always creating and re-creating.

What might your new song sound like this year? Who might need to hear your new song this new year? Your song sings your story, and your story is a beautifully unique story of joy and hope, as well as trials and pain. Through it all, is Christ's sustaining love and care.

Thanks be to God for the gift of a new song and faithfulness to keep on singing.

In Christ's love,

Pr. Kirsten

JANUARY Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

1 - Mary Maxson

5 - Stephanie Anderson

8 - Jim Wittmer

17 - Angie Markham

23 - Luke Probasco

25 - Rob Burger

Anniversaries

6 - Adam & Kimberly Turner

7 - Garrett & Beth Young

*May the good Lord continue to shower
you with happiness, good fortune,
prosperity and good health all the days
of your life.*

Happy Birthday and Anniversary!



John & Susan Hartung, Travis Schenkle, Jennifer & children, John & Susan Hartung, Bonnie Steffen, Darrian Plowman, Kara Snyder, Catherine Dittmer, Butch Batteau, Scott Miller, Jerry Shook, Mary McCleary, and The Sturgeon Family, Family & loved ones of Dennis, Jerry, Jim, Leroy, Ray, and all others who are in need of prayer support.

Deepest condolences to the family of Ed Shultz who passed away Friday, Dec. 4, 2020.

Sincere condolence to the family of Shannon Burkey, Dennis Weih's granddaughter, who passed away Nov. 23.



I would like to thank my church family for all the prayers, cards, phone calls, and special encouraging notes during my hospital stay and while I was rehabbing at home.

You are special people. God Bless all of you. Gloria Batteau

Offering & Giving Envelopes and “*The Word in Season*”

2021 Giving envelopes and the booklet “*The Word in Season*” are available in the entryway of the church. Please continue to mail in offering to the church or bring it by the church. We are ensuring the mail is regularly collected. The church address is:

New Era Lutheran Church
3455 New Era Road
Muscatine IA 52761

New Era Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes - Nov 10, 2020

The meeting was held via Zoom because of Covid-19 restrictions. Members attending were Pastor Kirsten, Josiah, Dick, Ann, Janice, and Vicki.

Officers for the current term are:

President - Josiah Anderson
Vice President - Ann Mayes
Treasure - Eric Leacox
Secretary - Vicki Hampton
Property Management, Dick Leach
Country Store - Janice Lichtenwald
Care & Concern - Gloria Batteau

Pastor Kirsten opened with prayer.

Reports were given by Dick on property: Addressing an electrical problem in the garage and replacing light bulbs in the office.

Ann reported the basement needs to be cleaned. A date and time will be set up at a later date to do this.

Janice reported because of Covid-19 we did not have the Country Store to report on and the account has been inactive.

The committee working on the marriage booklet is continuing with updates and adding information and fees.

Joan is gathering member information to update the church member directory.

Pastor Kirsten reported on the delivery and set up of a new copy machine at the church office.

New Business:

Gov. Reynolds, in her public news conference, has issued restrictions for gatherings of a certain number of persons because of Covid 19 and the increased positive cases in the community.

The Council discussed at length how to continue with service.

In-person worship services are suspended through Dec. 13. Pastor Kirsten will offer online worship on Sunday morning s on the church website and Facebook. Announcements will be sent out weekly online.

Advent boxes will be available at the church office.

Next meeting will be December 9, 2020.

This meeting was closed with all saying Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully,
Vicki Hampton, Secretary

**New Era Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes - Dec 9, 2020**

The meeting was held via Zoom because of Covid-19 restrictions. Members attending were Pastor Kirsten, Josiah, Dick, Janice, Gloria, Eric, and Vicki.

Pastor opened with a prayer. Janice gave a devotional.

Reports were given by Dick on the property.

Eric spoke about the Country Store and bringing us up to current balance.

The Council discussed the parsonage rental, bringing the members up to date on information and the contract.

Pastor discussed offering worship on Zoom and live on Facebook. This will be in place of in-person worship at the church during the restrictions of gatherings of a certain number of persons by the governor.

This will continue until as long as necessary and will be discussed at the next council.

Pastor inquired as to taking vacation time off - Dec 27 - Jan 3.

Pastor will be offering Christmas Eve online worship. To be announced.

Closed with Lord's Prayer.

Sincerely,
Vicki Hampton, Secretary

Bible Study

A daytime Bible study will take place at Gloria Dei on Tuesdays at noon. Please see Pastor Kirsten if you are interested. We will meet in person as long as the group is smaller. If there are many people interested, we can have two different groups. Participants can also join through zoom if they wish.

Special dates

- New Year's Day, January 1, 2021
- Epiphany, January 6, 2021
- Baptism of the Lord, January 10, 2021
- Religious Freedom Day, January 16, 2021
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day, January 18, 2021
- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18-25, 2021
- Inauguration Day, January 20, 2021





The Magi's story — and ours

The story of the Magi is our story. God has used his supernatural means to draw us unto himself. ... On one glorious day, when we were exhausted and wearied in our sin, God led us to gaze upon Jesus just as the Magi did. We see the glory of God manifested through Jesus Christ in the internal work of the Holy Spirit. We see our utter sinfulness and God's abounding grace offered in the Messiah. We are filled with joy as this grace sinks into our hearts.

We fall down on our knees and confess our need of this Messiah. We worship him and offer up our lives as our greatest offering to him. Then we continue on in our lives, carrying the truth about the Messiah.—
Travis Cunningham, tvcresources.net

A word for the year

Every January, some people pray and ask God to provide a word for their year ahead. Friends have shared theirs with me, but I was hesitant to embrace the practice myself. I'd love to receive a word like flourish; then again, I might be like the friend who heard health and then faced many physical challenges that year. But I tried it for 2020 and heard prepare. My first reaction was that the word wasn't very exciting, which possibly confirmed I hadn't orchestrated it. Indeed, 2020 ended up full of significant, unexpected change for our family, with careers, school, church and friends. Prepare reminded me that amid chaos, God had prepared me for each moment and continues to prepare me for what's next.

Give it a try! Regardless of the word you receive or what lies ahead, you can trust that God loves you and is ultimately in control for 2021 and beyond.—Janna Firestone

An ongoing goal



Still searching for a New Year's resolution? None is more worthy than becoming Christ-like. In fact, 19th-century evangelist Henry Drummond calls it "the only thing in the whole world worth caring for." Two modern-day authors offer more insights. Stormie Omartian points out that we're either making progress or backsliding on this goal. "There is no neutral position in the Lord," she writes. "You are either becoming more like Christ every day or you're becoming less like him." And followers of Jesus must keep the goal always in focus. Christ-likeness is our "eventual destination," writes Rick Warren, but the "journey will last a lifetime."

Rock of ages

On walks, I enjoy searching for heart-shaped rocks. One day in 2020, I spotted a broken heart, which seemed fitting as illness, racism and suffering dominated the headlines. I thought of Psalm 34:18, NIV: "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." Humans can be hard-hearted — pointing fingers, assuming the worst and failing to extend compassion. We often reject people who look, think or act differently from us. All these things break hearts, including God's. Only with his help can we rise above hatred, learn to listen more than we speak, and express kindness, empathy and a willingness to learn.

Jesus, be our rock as we face life's brokenness. Stay near and start the healing. Amen.—Julie Lee

Waiting until God is heard

We're often taught that prayer is speaking to God. And of course, that's part of it. It's good to pray for the well-being and needs of others — even Jesus prayed for his disciples. It's okay to pray for our own growth in faith and love. It's a wonderful, powerful thing, modeled especially by the Psalmists, to give God thanks and praise. And God welcomes our cries of pain and sorrow, offering the Spirit's help when words fail us (Romans 8:26). But through the ages, many deeply faithful followers of Christ have practiced contemplative prayer, centering prayer and other forms of stillness before God. Danish theologian Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) expressed it this way: "To pray does not mean to listen to oneself speaking. Prayer involves becoming silent, and being silent, and waiting until God is heard."

Truth + love

I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become reality.

I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word.

Epiphany epiphanies

Sometimes brief words of ancient wisdom can spark an "aha!" moment — a revelation of new insight about God or

faith. Here are some epiphanies for the season of Epiphany.

"If we approach with faith, we too will see Jesus ... for the Eucharistic table takes the place of the crib. Here, the Body of the Lord is present, wrapped not in swaddling clothes but in the rays of the Holy Spirit."

—St. John Chrysostom (347-407)

"So that we might also have the means to go, the one we were longing to go to came here from there. And what did he make? A wooden raft for us to cross the sea on. For no one can cross the sea of this world unless carried over it on the cross of Christ."

—St. Augustine (354-430)

"You wish to see; listen. Hearing is a step toward vision."

—St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153)

Why all life is sacred

Scripture does not know of any human life which is so commonplace that it is not valuable enough to become eternal, and this is its high optimism. Nothing is too much for Scripture. Since every person is known by God by name, and since every person exists in time in the presence of the God who is judgment and salvation, every person is a person of eternity, and not just the noble spirits of history.—Karl Rahner

Sufficient for the day

John Newton (1725-1807), author of "Amazing Grace," wrote: "We may easily manage if we will only take, each day, the burden appointed for it. But the load will ... be too heavy for us, if we carry yesterday's burden over again today, and then add tomorrow's." This maxim might be easy to dismiss unless we knew about Newton's troubled life.

Having been pressed into naval service and then slavery, Newton was finally rescued but became a slave-ship captain. He faced abuse, contemplated murder-suicide, suffered a stroke and was caught in a storm. When he cried out to God, the waves subsided, prompting a spiritual conversion for Newton, who became a priest and abolitionist.

We never know how God will transform our sinful past into future good, but we can trust he will. That adds power to Newton's advice, which echoes Jesus' words: "Sufficient for the day is its own trouble" (Matthew 6:34, ESV).

Numbering our days

To fix what they call a disorganized date-tracking system, professors Steve Hanke and Dick Henry have developed a "permanent calendar." On it, January 1 is always a Monday, so holidays and birthdays occur on the same day every year. The 364-day calendar eliminates leap years, time zones, Halloween and every Friday the 13th. Instead of leap days, "every five or six years, we'll have an extra week at the end [of December] when you can party," says Henry. Because the permanent calendar is predictable, it reportedly would save money and time. Yet despite almost two decades of work, the idea hasn't taken off.

However we track our lives, we do well to remember this prayer: "Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. ... Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom" (Psalm 90:1, 12 NIV).



Live in the light

Often we want to be able to see into the future. We say, "How will next year be for me? Where will I be five or 10 years from now?" There are no answers to these questions. Mostly we have just enough light to see the next step — what we have to do in the coming hour or the following day.

The art of living is to enjoy what we can see and not complain about what remains in the dark. When we are able to take the next step with the trust that we will have enough light for the step that follows, we can walk through life with joy and be surprised at how far we go. Let's rejoice in the little light we carry and not ask for the great beam that would take all our shadows away. —Henri Nouwen, *Bread for the Journey*

"For last year's words belong to last year's language and next year's words await another voice."—T.S. Eliot

* * *

"Forgiveness does not change the past, but it does enlarge the future."—Paul Boese

* * *

"The earth has music for those who listen."—Unknown

* * *

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."—Mahatma Gandhi

Bible Quiz

In the story of the Magi, what word is used to give a sense of Jesus' age when the wise men visited? What does it tell us?

1. "baby"; Jesus was still a newborn in a manger
2. "child"; when the wise men visited, Jesus had grown past infancy
3. "youth"; Jesus was probably between 10 and 14
4. No word is used to suggest Jesus' age at the time of the wise men's visit.

Answer: B (See Matthew 2:1-12.)



Turkey Egg Rolls

1 lb ground turkey
 1 pkg (16 oz) of Coleslaw Salad Mix
 1 T soy sauce
 ½ tsp ground ginger
 ¼ t onion salt
 ¼ t garlic powder
 1 pkg egg roll wraps – 15 in pkg
 Oil for deep-fat frying
 Sweet and Sour Sauce

In a large skillet, cook turkey over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Stir in the coleslaw mix, soy sauce, ginger, onion salt and garlic powder. Place 1/4 cup in the center of each egg roll wrapper. Fold bottom corner over filling; fold sides toward center (see directions on package). Moisten remaining corner of wrapper with water; roll up tightly to seal. Repeat.

In an electric skillet or deep-fat fryer, heat oil to 350°. Fry egg rolls, a few at a time, for 3-5 minutes or until golden brown, turning often. Drain on paper towels. Serve with sweet-and-sour sauce, soy sauce, or Chinese hot mustard.

Note: I find cooling the turkey/slaw mixture before putting in wraps is better. Seems hot mixture in wraps can cause stretching wraps and creating holes - everything falls out when frying.

PUZZLE

WORKING IN UNISON

Just as body parts work in unison, the church — the body of Christ — is to work together for God's purposes.

Directions: Fill in the letters for each body part. Add up each part's number total, and use those totals to complete the Bible passage.

Now if the _____ should say, "Because I am not a _____, I do not belong to the _____," ... And if the _____ should say, "Because I am not an _____, I do not belong to the _____," it would not for that reason stop being part of the _____. If the whole _____ were an _____, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole _____ were an _____, where would the sense of smell be? ... As it is, there are many parts, but one _____.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:15-17, 20, NIV

Answer: body - 16, eye - 11, ear - 13, hand - 17, foot - 20

A COLORFUL body

Melt crayons to show how the body of Christ works together.



What you need:

- Crayons
- Metal baking sheet
- Adult help
- Metal gingerbread man cookie cutter

What you do:

1. Remove labels and break crayons into 1-inch pieces.
2. Scatter pieces on the baking sheet, about two layers thick.
3. Bake for 10 minutes at 350 degrees until melted. Allow to cool 15 minutes.
4. When melted crayons are the consistency of playdough, press the cookie cutter through them (while still on pan).
5. Cool the pan in freezer for 15 minutes until crayons are hardened.
6. Remove from pan and break apart the shapes.

Puzzle!

Complete each saying below. Then place the words from those blanks in the correct order to complete Proverbs 23:4.

Puzzle!

Complete each saying below. Then place the words from those blanks in the correct order to complete Proverbs 23:4.








1. When the going gets tough, the tough _____ going.
2. People who live in glass houses should _____ throw stones.
3. If the shoe fits, _____ it.
4. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is _____ to enter the kingdom of God."
5. Good things come _____ those who wait.
6. When in Rome, _____ as the Romans do.
7. Don't wear _____ your welcome.
8. If you want something done right, do it _____.

Write the unscrambled proverb here:

_____ PROVERBS 23:4

Answer: Do not wear yourself out to get rich. Proverbs 23:4

January 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>No worship online Dec 27 & Jan 3 from Pastor. Synod will provide worship Dec 27. Pastor will provide alternate places to worship online for Jan 3.</p> <p>Pastor Kirsten on vacation – Dec 25-Jan 6</p>					1 	2
3 10:30 am – Worship Online (will continue Online for month of January)	4	5 12:00 PM – Bible Study @ Gloria Dei – <u>Please see</u> <u>Pastor Kirsten if</u> <u>interested.</u> Participants can also join thru Zoom	6 	7	8	9
10 	11	12	13 10 am – Care & Concern - meet at Church	14	15	16 
17 	18 	19	20 	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						