

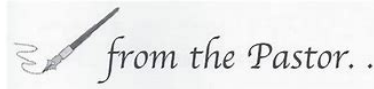
# New Era Lutheran Church



## September 2022 Newsletter

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**Pastor Kirsten Lee**  
405-248-0586



**New Era Lutheran Church**  
3455 New Era Road  
Muscatine, IA 52761  
**Sunday School: 9:30 am (Sept-May)**  
**Worship Services: 10:30 am**

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each week  
Newsletter Items due by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the  
month

**Check us out at** [www.neweralutheran.com](http://www.neweralutheran.com)  
or [https://www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/NewEraLutheranChurch)  
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On Saturday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, I drove to Bethesda Lutheran Church in Ames with New Era on my mind. I drove to Bethesda to join several congregations in our Southeast Iowa Synod as we celebrated our Companion Synod relationship with the Mwanga and Pare Diocese. These two dioceses are part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. I didn't know what to expect as I drove to Bethesda, but I came from that experience inspired and encouraged.

Even before attending this event and even more so after the event, I could feel the Holy Spirit nudging New Era Lutheran to learn more about this Companion Synod relationship. For this newsletter article, I would like to share what I learned about this relationship. I would invite the council and the congregation to discuss if there is interest in learning more about a partnership with a congregation in Tanzania.

Did you know that there are many ELCA churches in our synod who partner and support congregations in Tanzania? Congregations in Iowa City, Cedar Rapids, Davenport, Ames, Pella, and beyond have long established relationships with schools, orphanages, and churches in Tanzania. I had no idea that such relationships existed. As our new Bishop, Bishop Current is dedicated to strengthening these existing relationships and growing new relationships.

These relationships are built on the foundation of accompaniment. This means that we walk alongside the churches, orphanages, and schools as they teach us what they need. Intentional and prayerful listening is at the root of the relationship. The congregations in our ELCA synod have learned to not assume they know the needs of the Tanzanians.

Through accompaniment and intentional listening, many important projects have been completed in Tanzania. These projects include building churches, building homes, supplying churches, orphanages, and schools with necessary supplies, and assisting with medical and dental care. Most importantly, relationships built on trust in God and one another have grown and flourished through this partnership.

As you might imagine, the congregations at this celebration also reported setbacks that have occurred over the years. As we experience in our own congregations, when pastors and key leaders leave a church, it can be difficult to continue a relationship in that leader's absence. Our synod's congregations have learned that the most effective relationships are established between lay people instead of pastors. When partnerships exist between lay people in the United States and Tanzania, communication tends to be more consistent and lasting.

As I learned and listened during this celebration, the congregations named many benefits in partnering with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. These benefits include learning about the culture, practices, and faith of Tanzanians. Many people in our state have travelled to Tanzania several times and many people have welcomed guests from Tanzania into their congregations and homes in Iowa. As we struggle with declining church attendance, the ELCT is growing quickly with many young families attending and leading. The congregations who partner with the Mwanga and Pare Diocese shared how their faith has been inspired in this relationship.

As I said, I was inspired and encouraged from this celebration event. I was inspired to learn how Iowa churches continued the hard and holy work of partnering with the Tanzanians even as our own synod office was not involved. These partnerships exist today because of faithful Iowans who believe in Christ's call to love our neighbors across the world. I was encouraged to see that at this celebration event, the majority of participants were lay members and not pastors. From what I learned, pastors provide support and some direction, but the effort comes from the congregation as they discerned their interests and abilities.

I share this with you with the hope that the Spirit may plant a seed of curiosity and wonder. New Era has supported missionaries in the past and I wonder if the Holy Spirit is leading us to learn more about partnering with the Mwanga and Pare Diocese. There are many possibilities as to what this partnership may look like and the congregation gets to decide what is best for New Era. This could look like supporting a church as they continue to work directly with the Tanzanians. This could look like beginning a relationship with a school or congregation or orphanage in Tanzania.

The first step is for the congregation to prayerfully decide if we want to learn more. If the timing is not right to continue to learn more, I invite you to pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ who live in Tanzania and for the churches who engage in faithful ministry with the Pare and Mwanga Diocese.

In Christ,  
†Pastor Kirstent†



**Remember in Prayer**

*Kari Thoren, Jereme Surratt, Bill Bendt, Edward Carstensen, Terry Hampton, Mary Dickinson, Alice Hermann, June Weber, Troy Davis, Linda Meador, Catherine Dittmer, Emogene Sorgenfrey, loved ones of Lisa Twiss, loved ones of Billie Baker (Gloria's cousin), and loved ones who are in need of prayer support.*

## SEPTEMBER

Ushers – Lynne & Eric Leacox

Alter Guild – Lynne Leacox

Communion Asst. – Gloria Batteau &

Viola Hubbs-Shankle

### Readers

### Flowers

Sept 4 Lynne Leacox

Sept 11

Sept 18 Eric Leacox

Sept 25 Gloria Batteau

### Fellowship Hostesses

Sept 4 Becki Petersen, Janet Kindler

Sept 11 Vicki Hampton, Betty McMahon

Sept 18 Janice Lichtenwald, Shirley McDaniel

Sept 25 Gloria Batteau, Viola Hubbs-Shankle



### Birthdays

### Anniversaries

9/1 – Janet Kindler

Sept 17 – Chris & Angie Markham

9/5 – Matt Kurz

Sept 30 – Gary & Maureen Ruser

9/5 – Tom Kindler

9/9 – Mila Probasco

9/13 – Becki Petersen

9/13 – Paul Mayes

9/15 – Dennis Weih

9/16 – Ann Mayes

9/16 – Dianna Burger

22 Ken McDaniel

*"Prayer is thinking deeply about something  
in the presence of God."—Wayne Cordeiro*

\* \* \*

*"The beautiful thing about learning is nobody  
can take it away from you."*

*—B.B. King*

\* \* \*

*"God is a busy worker, but he loves help."—  
Basque proverb*

\* \* \*

*"Faith walking in the dark with God only  
prays him to clasp its hand more closely,  
does not even ask him for the lifting of the  
darkness."—Phillips Brooks*

### **New Era Lutheran Church**

### **Council Meeting Minutes – June 14, 2022**

The Council meeting was called to order at 6 pm. Attending were Pastor Kirsten, Josiah, Adam, Dick, Gloria, Eric, and Vicki.

Pastor gave a devotion, Romans 10:17, Discipleship.

Minutes from April 5, 2022, meeting was read. A motion from Josiah to approve minutes with Adam seconded motion passed.

Treasurer's Report – Eric presented the treasurer's reports for the months ending April and May. The Annual Meeting reports were reviewed for the presentation at the June 26, 2022, meeting. Council discussed and voted to pass the treasurer's reports.

Care & Concern – Gloria reported on the Care & Concern group that meets the second Wednesday of each month. The group visits homebound members when convenient to them, made phone calls to check on members, and give support and encouragement. Recently Janet Hull was visited and Tom and Janet Kindler.

Property – Dick gave a report on church buildings and grounds. Fixed a leak in the ladies' restroom of the fellowship hall. Called to get the propane tank

## **New Era Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes – Aug 9, 2022**

filled. Cost has increased. Large amounts of ant hills were noticed outside to the west parking area and Bosch was called. An outside clean-up day is scheduled for June 21 at 9 am; all able are welcome to come help clean up.

The insurance carrier notified the office on inspection of building; they will come on Friday, June 17 to inspect. Josiah will meet them there.

Sharing the Peace will continue as we currently are from our seats.

Youth – Two or three youth will attend camp. Church pays all but \$100 each from parents.

Music & Worship – Mary will be absent a couple Sundays and the members of the church will fill in with bringing music to service sharing their gift of music and song.

Voices of Peace will be joining us on August 28, 2022. Council discussed returning to lighted candles at the alter and front of church replacing the battery-operated ones that are currently there.

Dinner theater will be October 6, 7, and 8 – *“Church Basement Ladies.”*

Parsonage will be empty on June 30, 2022. Council and/or members will check the house for repairs and fixing anything necessary.

A discussion with MCSA was suggested to be of service in locating someone in need of housing. All comments from members are encouraged.

Annual Meeting copies will be available at church on June 19, 2022.

Respectfully,  
Vicki Hampton

New Era Lutheran Church Council was called to order by Pastor Kirsten.

Attending were Pastor Kirsten, Adam Turner, Dick Leach, Eric Leacox, Vicki Hampton, Becki Petersen, and Joan Dietrich. Pastor Kirsten gave devotion.

The minutes from June 14, 2022, were read. The dates of the dinner theater were corrected to October 7, 8, and 9, 2022. Adam Turner moved to accept the amended minutes. Joan Dietrich seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Treasurer’s report – Eric reviewed the June and July reports that were emailed out to council members earlier in the day. Monthly statements were discussed. Eric noted the Blue Flame prefill contract was paid. Church camp for two was paid for Gianna and Ada Kurz. Sunday School literature will be purchased.

Eric also reported the benevolence fund has been utilized resulting in a low balance. This fund can be added to by making a notation on the giving envelopes/checks.

Joan Dietrich moved to accept the treasurer’s report. Becki Petersen seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Property report – Dick Leach reported on the property care and maintenance. Air conditioners for church and parsonage were serviced and are now in good running order after service call was made. Wasp nests have been taken care of by Bosch along with their monthly service. The storm door on the front entry at the parsonage will need to be replaced.

Dick reported contacting a contractor to cover the bell tower with siding materials. The bell tower is currently painted and showing chipping and weather-related signs. Other areas of our steel siding are showing chipping and weathering.

Several local painters have been contacted by Vicki Hampton on bids.

Dick and Eric reported trees need to be trimmed on the property as temperature and time allow.

Parsonage update - The parsonage was vacant as of June 30, 2022. Council members did a walk thru at that time. Deep cleaning, painting, new carpet, new bath tub with surround with floor repaired, new front storm door needed, back deck repair needed, landscape clean up needed.

Lynne and Eric Leacox with council members have new materials on order and currently working on this project. Any help will be greatly appreciated.

Music – During Sunday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, service music will be provided by Leah Bettis, Dick and Carolyn's granddaughter.

Pastor Kirsten announced more music will be added into our services. Pastor commented on a new hymnal titled *"All Creation Sings."* Beth Young will be playing for Christmas Day services.

Stewardship – *"Voices of Peace"* will be with us on August 28. Potluck after worship. There is a sign-up sheet to bring your favorite side. Sandwiches will be provided.

Council discussed alter candles after a member inquiry of going back to open flame candles. For several years, battery candles have been used. Members voted unanimously in favor to return to using the previous candles and would order.

Council discussed whether to return to giving the "Signs of Peace" during church service could be resumed as previously shared. With current activity of Covid and for the health safety of our members, family and friends, the "Signs of Peace" will be shared from our seats.

Youth – Summer church camp was enjoyed by two – Gianna and Ada Kurz during July.

Vacation Bible School on July 30 was attended by 10 with lead teacher Lynne Leacox and helpers. There were Bible stories, crafts, and games all about water. Sunday School will start up in September. A Bible study will be starting in September with dates to be announced.

#### New Business

Election of Officers – President – Becki Petersen, Vice President – Adam Turner, Secretary - Joan Dietrich, Treasurer – Eric Leacox with Joyce Rudbeck, Vicki Hampton, and Dick Leach bench warmers. We welcome our new officers with installation soon.

Property Insurance – Hastings Mutual, our property insurance carrier, inquired in June to have an inspector come out to tour the property as they do on occasion. This is a preventive measure to do an inspection. A letter was sent to the church with three issues to address for compliance: #1 and #2 issues to remove items from near the furnace and #3 was trim tree limbs in close proximity of buildings. The necessary forms were completed and returned.

Basement project has been ongoing. This job has been downsized from original job the committee requested on September 7, 2021 of the gym basement and church basement. Many trees have been removed on the north side of the property, all damaged/dead. Other cleanup will continue as temperature and time allows.

Dinner Theater – October 7, 8, and 9, 2022 – "Church Basement Ladies" is sure to be a hit! Advertisement, tickets, and food to serve at dinner have committees working hard and discussions continue for parking and setting up. If able, please volunteer! We need casserole dishes, empty ones from your cupboards, the older the better, for table decorations. Mark with name so they can be returned.

August 21 – we welcome Bishop Amy Current who will be officiating.



August 14 – Dr Ann Fritschel, a retired Wartburg Seminary Professor, will preside.

Council closed with Lord's Prayer.

Respectively,

Vicki Hampton  
Secretary



## The beauty of learning

There is divine beauty in learning.  
... To learn means to accept the postulate that life did not begin at my birth. Others have been here before me, and I walk in their footsteps.

The books I have read were composed by generations of fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, teachers and disciples. I am the sum total of their experiences, their quests. And so are you. —Elie Wiesel



## It only takes a spark

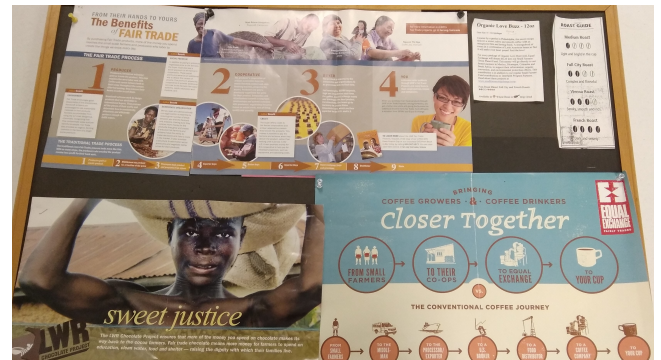
Love is the spark that kindles the fire of compassion. Compassion is the fire that flames the candle of service. Service is the candle that ignites the torch of hope. Hope is the torch that lights the beacon of faith. Faith is the beacon that reflects the power of God. God is the power that creates the miracle of love. —William Arthur Ward

## Fair Trade Coffee, Tea, & Chocolate

Did you know that New Era Lutheran sells delicious chocolates, coffee, and tea? Even better, these goods are fair trade.

What does fair trade mean? The Lutheran World Relief (LWR) Fair Trade coffee project ensures that more of the money you spend on coffee reaches the farmers who actually grow it. LWR is also committed to maintaining ethical working conditions for the farmers and sellers.

Take a look in the fellowship hall to see the products we offer



## Ways to walk

If you think walking is boring or repetitive, read 52 Ways to Walk. Author Annabel Streets shares dozens of variations on this healthy pastime. From walking in the cold or at altitude to walking along a river or barefoot (or even backward!), each technique offers different benefits and new perspectives. Other ideas

include a sensory walk, a silent walk, a foraging walk and singing while strolling. As Christians know, walking can be a great time to connect with God in prayer too.

Scripture speaks often about our spiritual walk: We are to walk “faithfully” with God (Genesis 5:24, NIV), walk “in all his ways” (Joshua 22:5, NRSV), walk “humbly” with God (Micah 6:8), walk “while you have the light” (John 12:35), walk while praising God (Acts 3:8), walk “by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7), walk “by the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16) and walk “in the same way” as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6, NRSV).

As we walk — even through dark valleys — we’re never alone. God promises, “I will walk among you and be your God” (Leviticus 26:12, NIV). —Stephanie Martin

## Labor Day laughs

Take a break and enjoy this work-related humor!

- My first job was in an orange juice factory. I got canned because I couldn’t concentrate.
- When I couldn’t hack it as a lumberjack, I got the ax.
- I wasn’t suited to being a tailor.
- Working in the muffler factory was too exhausting.
- I was a banker ... until I lost interest.
- I realized there was no future in being a historian.
- Any way I sliced it, I couldn’t cut the mustard at the deli.
- I studied to become a doctor but had no patients.
- My job at the coffee shop was always the same old grind.
- When I worked as a plumber, the tasks were too draining.

- I was hired at a gym but wasn’t fit for the job.
- Finally, I got a job at a bakery; I kneaded dough!
- 

## Keeping the Sabbath

Oh, what a blessing is Sunday, interposed between the waves of worldly business like the divine path of the Israelites through Jordan! There is nothing in which I would advise you to be more strictly conscientious than in keeping the Sabbath day holy. I can truly declare that to me the Sabbath has been invaluable.

—William Wilberforce

## Pursuing peace

The 2021 book *Love, Loss and Endurance: A 9/11 Story of Resilience and Hope in an Age of Anxiety* explores the dangers of extremism, both religious and political. Author Bill Tammeus, whose nephew died on 9/11, suggests three ways to be peacemakers. First, we can become more religiously literate, because “our human tendency is to fear what we don’t know or understand.” Second, we can deepen our knowledge of history, because “shock waves” from past events often spark modern-day unrest.

Finally, we can spend time with people who are facing profound grief. “This is the emotional equivalent of walking a mile in someone else’s shoes,” Tammeus writes. “It can open our eyes to the countless ways that death — particularly unexpected, violent death — can affect almost every aspect of the lives of survivors. ... At the very least, go to funerals of people whose families you know, even of people who died of old age or of some illness late in life. Be present. Hear their stories.”

—adapted from *The Wired Word*

## Bible Quiz

Besides being known for his proverbs about wise living, King Solomon was knowledgeable in other fields, including which of the following?

- A. zoology, including ornithology and ichthyology
- B. botany
- C. herpetology
- D. songwriting
- E. A and C
- F. B and D
- G. All of the above

Answer: G (See 1 Kings 4:29-34.)

## Always room in God's kingdom

Jesus told a parable about a man who invited his friends and neighbors to a banquet, but they declined. So he told his servants to go find anyone who was hungry or lonely or in need. Still there was room. "Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in," the host said, "so that my house will be full" (Luke 14:23, NIV).

In *Searching for Sunday*, Rachel Held Evans retells this story and writes: "This is what God's kingdom is like: a bunch of outcasts and oddballs gathered at a table, not because they are rich or worthy or good, but because they are hungry, because they said yes. And there's always room for more."

We're all "outcasts and oddballs" in one way or another! May we know that God warmly invites us to his banquet — for no reason but that we're hungry.

## One Word

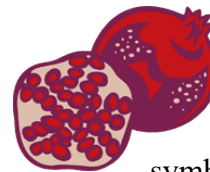
Author and lay minister Samuel Gordon told of an elderly woman whose memory began to fade.



"She had once known much of the Bible by heart. Eventually only one precious bit stayed with her [2 Timothy 1:12, KJV]: 'I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.' By and by, part of that slipped its hold, and she would quietly repeat, 'That which I have committed unto him.'

"At last, as she hovered on the borderline between this and the spirit world, her loved ones noticed her lips moving. They bent down to see if she needed anything. She was repeating over and over again to herself the one word of the text, 'Him, him, him.' She had lost the whole Bible, but one word. But she had the whole Bible in that one word."

## Christian symbol



**POMEGRANATE**—Because the pomegranate has an abundance of seeds, the fruit is used to represent hope and future life. It also symbolizes the many believers who are individual members of the universal Christian church.



## New Era Lutheran Church Vacation Bible School

The theme this year was Living Water.  
We explored four different Bible stories using water as a theme.

**\*\*The woman at the well.**

We learned that the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well is the longest recorded conversation between Jesus and another person anywhere in the Bible.

**\*\*Jesus walks on the water.**

Kids were blindfolded and walked on a board across the pool. They had to trust whoever was holding onto them that they wouldn't let them fall.

**\*\*Jesus calms the storm.**

We did role-playing with this activity. One person would be Jesus asleep in the bottom of the boat and a storm would come up and then the disciples would have to wake him up.

**\*\*The Holy Trinity-**

Represented by

God the Father- ice

God the Son - water

God the Holy Spirit- steam



# September 2022

August '22

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

October '22

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4 10:30 am - Sunday Worship	5  <b>LABOR DAY</b>	6	7  <b>Bible Study</b> 5:30 pm - Bible Study begins Dinner included	8	9	10
11 9:30 am - Sunday School Kick-Off - "God's work our hands" 10:30 am - Sunday Worship	12	13 9 am - Sewing group meet at church. Bring sack lunch. Everyone welcome.	14 9:00 am - Care & Concern- Meet @ McDonald's 5:30 pm - Bible Study begins Dinner included	15	16	17
18 9:30 - Sunday School 10:30 am - Sunday Worship	19	20	21  <b>Bible Study</b> 5:30 pm - Bible Study begins Dinner included	22 	23	24
25 9:30 - Sunday School 10:30 am - Sunday Worship	26	27	28  <b>Bible Study</b> 5:30 pm - Bible Study begins Dinner included	29	30	1
2	3	Sunday, September 11 - 