

# New Era Lutheran Church



## June 2023 Newsletter

**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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bulletin - Items due by Wednesday night  
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/  
NewEraLutheranChurch](https://www.facebook.com/NewEraLutheranChurch)

## To Live as One

Greetings, friends in Christ!

Recently, over at Shepherd of the Cross, we've noticed a theme: though there are some endeavors Shepherd is hosting for just Shepherd folk, there are so, so many joint endeavors goin' on.

- We've just wrapped up our Family Faith Night year – working alongside Grace and Zion Lutheran to offer opportunities for children, youth, and adults on Wednesday evenings.
- We're inviting congregations to participate in a summer monthly event – Generations of Living Faith (GOLF), intended to build relationships between people and grow in faith...even across generations.
- We're an active participant in the formation and participation of Christian Day Camp and a Mini VBS for preschoolers.
- And based on an invitation from the Muscatine Chamber of Commerce, Shepherd is coordinating congregations who are interested in selling pie as RAGBRAI riders come through Muscatine (be on the lookout for more information!).

Point being: there's been a lot of collaboration goin' on recently...and even this list isn't exhaustive. Because just recently, our Shepherd folk were graciously invited to meet with some of your folk from New Era to pursue two joint worship services this summer on June 11 (at SOTC at 9:00 am) and July 16 (at New Era at 9:00 am).

But why do all this collaborative work? And, why worship together? Can't we just "do our own thing" in our own respective congregations?

It's a valid question. Because for decades, churches have historically worked independently and focused on their own flock. Which, there's merit to that. But in the past few years, several congregations have recognized the joy of living and serving alongside one another in a way that uplifts the spiritual gifts we all have to share in the body of Christ. And, we've recognized the joy of what can be done when we work together.

But the thing is, the reason we work together isn't only because it lessens the workload. And we don't do this work together only because it's the "good" thing to do, or only because it stewards the resources we have. Rather, we do this work together, because in doing so, we live our Christ's prayer for his disciples. And in doing so, we become a witness so that the world might come to believe in the truth of Jesus Christ.

How do we know this? Well, on the eve of Christ's death, we find Jesus praying for his disciples (John 17). Get that: in Jesus' last minutes before Jesus goes out to the Kidron valley where Judas would betray him and every other event of his passion would ensue, Jesus prays for his disciples. And, even beyond those original 12 guys, Jesus also prays for all those who would believe in him through the word of his disciples, and the disciples after them, and the disciples after them. Implying, that Jesus wasn't just praying for 12 people. He was praying for the whole body of Christ. To make it personal, Jesus was praying for you. And, Jesus was praying for the people who will come after you.

That Jesus prayed for us is quite the thing to consider. But when we consider what he was praying for...it ups the ante even more. Because when you boil down John 17, what Jesus's desire for his disciples – and us – was all about was for his disciples to live as one with God (as Jesus lived as one with his Father) and for his disciples to live as one with each other. Not only because it's the "nice" thing to do. But so that through their living

witness, the world would know the Father's love, and the world would come to believe in Jesus Christ.

Which that, dear friends, is the reason we live as one with each other. Because even when it takes more time to plan something, and even when it creates more headaches, and even when we might come at something from different perspectives creating friction, we trust Christ's prayer for his disciples. And, we trust that just as Christ prayed for his disciples to be one, so too are we called to be one with each other and one with Christ...all so that we, and all the world, might come to know the love of God.

So, in the coming days, I challenge you to two things: First, consider how you're doing at living as one with those around you. What's causing that to be challenging? And, how might you be called to extend a hand and live as one with someone/a group near you?

And two, consider joining us for worship on June 11 (at Shepherd) and July 16 (at New Era). As we gather together, some things will likely be a bit different than what we might expect. But as we worship, we will be creating a space to practice living as one – together – so that all the world might know the Father's love, and so that all the world would come to believe in Jesus Christ.

Pastor Aleese Kenitzer  
Shepherd of the Cross Lutheran Church

**Sunday, June 25, 2023**  
**Following Worship,**  
**Potluck to follow meeting**



**Annual reports are due Sunday, June 11, 2023. Please submit to Carolyn Leach**  
**[\(\[neweralutheran@gmail.com\]\(mailto:neweralutheran@gmail.com\)\)](mailto:neweralutheran@gmail.com)**

**Upcoming New Era Lutheran Church  
Sunday Worship**

- **June 4 @ New Era, 9 am -  
Pastor John Meyer**
- **June 11 @ Shepherd of the Cross,  
9 am, Joint Service - Pastor Aleese  
Kenitzer**
- **June 18 & 25 – Worship Services at  
New Era Lutheran Church – 10:30 am**

Sun, June 11 & July 16 – Shepherd of the Cross has offered to help us out with supply pastors by having joint services with New Era. Their pastor, Aleese Kenitzer, will conduct the services. Two services will be held jointly - June 11 at Shepherd of the Cross and July 16 at New Era, both services at 9:00 am. The rest of the summer New Era will have regular services at 10:30 am as usual.

We would like to have a joint choir perform on July 16 at New Era. If you would like to be part of the choir, please let Becki know by June 11.

If you give your offering weekly and would like it collected when we are at Shepherd of the Cross on June 11, be sure to put it in New Era's offering envelope and the treasurers will sort it out. Loose offering (cash or checks) will be given to the ELCA World Hunger appeal or you can add extra to your regular offering. Be sure to indicate the amount on your offering envelope.

We are happy to report that Shepherd of the Cross also has treats after church. They will host us on June 11, and we will host them on July 16. If you have any questions please contact Eric Leacox or Becki Petersen.



**Remember in Prayer**

*Nolan Stevenson, Kimberly Miller, Beverly Heden, Stuart Schmitt, Wayne Everhart, Dana Devey, Kim Dierickx, Jack Hull, Jerry Lichtenwald, Janet & Tom Kindler, Ryan Gladwell and Alexandria Brush and Emory Ann Gladwell, Emogene Sorgenfrey, and all who are in need of prayer support.*

*Asking for prayers for the Sudan area uprising, mainly in the capital city of Khartoum and the Darfur region,. Cash and Olivia Sturgeon were in that area and have friends there.*



Tentative week of June 18 – Floors will be waxed in the Fellowship Hall (hall, rest rooms, kitchen, dining room) starting Mon, June 19. This will take 3-5 days and will require no one utilizing the Fellowship Hall during this time. Need volunteers in moving all furniture before June 19.



**Worship Attendants**

*Ushers – Dan & Shirley Petersen*

*Alter Guild – Shirley Petersen*

*Communion Asst. – Dan & Shirley Petersen*

**Readers**

**Flowers**

6/4  
6/11  
6/18  
6/25

Dan Petersen  
Worship at Shepherd of the Cross  
Shirley Petersen

**Fellowship Hostesses**

6/4  
6/11  
6/18  
6/25

Gloria Batteau, Viola Hubbs-Shankle  
Worship at Shepherd of the Cross  
Jan Lichtenwald

## *June Birthdays & Anniversaries*

### Birthdays

1 – Travis Wulf  
3 – Joyce Rudbeck  
5 – Adam Turner  
6 – Erika Wulf  
7 – Ada Kurz  
10 – Chris Cole  
15 – Shirley Petersen  
20 – Lindsey Squires  
22 – Viola Hubbs-Shankle  
26 – Josiah Anderson  
26 – Maureen Ruser  
28 – Tonya Plowman

### Anniversaries

12 – Jerry & Janice Lichtenwald  
15 – Jack & Bev Hull  
27 – Dick & Carolyn Leach

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### **New Era Lutheran Church Council Meeting – Tues., May 9, 2023**

Present: Dick, Eric, Joan, Becki, Adam, and Vicki from Council and Mary Maxson and Lynne Leacox from Call Committee

Joan led devotions; Eric will have devotions in June.

Minutes of the last meeting: Eric made motion to accept the April minutes, Adam seconded motion.

Treasurer's report was reviewed. Eric created a Vanco document (giving on line). May put document in email along with next newsletter. Adam made motion to approve treasurer's report; Joan seconded motion.

Care & Concern: Group discussed things on how to carry on the meetings and visitations, giving out small gifts (knick knacks and Hy-Vee gift cards) to families dealing with loss, etc. They did not visit last month. Easter baskets were made and distributed. Committee consist of Janet Kindler, Gloria Batteau, Nancy Henke, and Vicki Hampton. Dick Leach has been taking Kenny McDaniel to the Muscatine Y.

Property: Clean-up day was held. Dick brought in a total of 25 bags of mulch. Ash tree needs to be taken down at parsonage and removed.

Received two quotes on floor waxing. Going with RHS – R Home Services. Need to clarify what rooms and if we are to move everything out of rooms. Joan will call RHS to set up date/time.

Stewardship/Fellowship/Outreach: Breakfast was held on Easter Sunday. Suggestions for future gathers are golf outing and ice cream Sunday sometime this summer.

Sewing group has tied two quilts for LWR.

Worship & Music: We are set for supply pastors for the month of May and first week in June. Becki indicated a meeting will be held on May 22 regarding worship for the summer.

Eric & Lynne will be attending Synod Assembly.

Youth: May 14 is the last day of Sunday School. VBS is set for July 8 from 9-Noon.

Old Business: The parsonage is being leased thru June. Vicki will contact County Treasurer's office to start property tax procedure on parsonage.

New Business: Met with Call Committee and went over the Ministry Site Profile. Adam made motion to make an adjustment in the financial package. Eric second motion.

Annual meeting will be held Sunday, June 25, 2023. Reports need to be in by Sunday, June 11.

Adam made motion to adjourn meeting; Eric seconded motion.

Respectfully

Joan Dietrich  
Secretary



## God remembers

It is not difficult for me to remember that the little ones need breakfast in the morning, dinner at midday and something before they go to bed at night. Indeed, I could not forget it. And I find it impossible to suppose that our heavenly Father is less tender or mindful than I. ... I do not believe that our heavenly Father will ever forget his children. I am a very poor father, but it is not my habit to forget my children. God is a very, very good Father. It is not his habit to forget his children.—J. Hudson Taylor

## Divine dance

Using the fancy word *perichoresis* (from Greek for “around” and “contain”) may win you admiring — or strange! — looks. But since the 7<sup>th</sup> century, people have used it as a beautiful image of the Persons of the Holy Trinity containing and permeating one another. A more familiar word, *choreography*, has led to recent understandings of perichoresis as the divine and eternal dance of love.

Picture three dancers’ synchronized yet independent movements. Weaving gracefully in and out, each seems to know what the others will do next. They may touch lightly but don’t constrain or impede one another. Though distinct individuals, they move so fluidly together that they are, in a sense, one entity.

Even more profound: Jesus invites us into the dance! “If you love me,” he says, “you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth. ... I will come to you. ... I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you” (John 14:15-20, ESV). As the actions of Jesus, the Father and the Spirit

interweave in Scripture and in the world, may our lives too be drawn into the loving dance.

“Rest is not idle, is not wasteful.  
Sometimes rest is the most productive  
thing you can do for body and soul.”—

Erica Layne

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“The beginning of love is the will to let  
those we love be perfectly themselves, the  
resolution not to twist them to fit our own  
image.”

—Thomas Merton

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“Earn your success based on service to  
others, not at the expense of others.”

—H. Jackson Brown Jr.

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“The [person] who moves a mountain  
begins by carrying away small stones.”—  
Confucius



## Summer solace

The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quite alone with the heavens, nature and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be and that God wishes to see people happy, amidst the simple beauty of nature. As long as this exists, and it certainly always will, I know that then there will always be comfort for every sorrow, whatever the circumstances may be. And I firmly believe that nature brings solace in all troubles.—Anne Frank, *Diary of a Young Girl*

## Come glorify God together

Don't use summer as an excuse to skip church! By gathering in corporate worship, we obey God's command, become equipped for Christian living, and minister to our fellow pilgrims. Consider these tips for engaging in corporate worship.

First, show up — in person if you can. Examine your heart and your motivation for attending church. Lift up your eyes from earthly matters to focus on God.

Come prepared. Do you need to confess anything or remove any hindrance? As you worship, consider how each part of the service displays the gospel: greeting, singing, confessing, reading Scripture, hearing Bible-based teaching, praying, giving and communing.

Be careful not to compartmentalize corporate worship as separate from the rest of life. Instead, consider how you'll carry the experience into the coming week. Come ready to receive; then let that overflow fuel you for the days ahead. Come prepared to participate, knowing that worshiping together is a rehearsal for heaven. But most importantly? Just come.—Monica L. Wilkinson

## Just like Dad

At the beginning of his ministry career, Jerry Steen supplemented his income by mixing animal feed. When his two young boys greeted him at home, they laughed at his dusty appearance before he headed to the shower.

"I didn't think too much of this until I was washing my car and saw my older son doing something very strange," Steen recalls. "He was

picking up the gravel and stones in our drive and rubbing them into his pants." Curious, the father asked what the boy was doing. "I want to be dusty like you, Dad!" his son replied.

For Steen, that was an eye-opener. "I realized that if a child would look up to his father for being dusty and want to copy his father," he says, "a child could look up to his father and follow him for anything." What traits and qualities are you modeling and passing on — to your own kids and to anyone else who looks up to you?

## The engine of marriage

Being in love is a good thing, but it is not the best thing. Love is a deep unity, maintained by the will and deliberately strengthened by habit; reinforced by the grace which both partners ask and receive from God. On this love the engine of marriage is run; being in love was the explosion that started it.—C.S. Lewis

## Bible Quiz



What does God compare to rain "watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater"?

- A. The justice of the nations
- B. The work of God's people
- C. The message of Isaiah the prophet
- D. God's word

Answer: D (See Isaiah 55:10-11, NIV.)

## Finding freedom

Juneteenth, America's newest federal holiday, marks the official end of slavery in the nation. President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. Applying only

to the states in the Confederacy, it declared "that all persons held as slaves are, and henceforward shall be free." But news of freedom didn't reach Galveston, Texas, until June 19, 1865, when 2,000 Union troops arrived to enforce the decree. The U.S. Constitution's 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment, which bans slavery, was ratified a few months later.

Just as freedom and justice came in fits and starts to the Israelites, so it comes to our own country and around the world, where the pursuit for justice continues.—adapted from *The Wired Word*

## All God's children

On the basis of the eternal will of God, we have to think of *every human being*, even the oddest, most villainous or miserable, as one to whom Jesus Christ is Brother and God is Father; and we have to deal with him on this assumption. If the other person knows that already, then we have to strengthen him in the knowledge. If he does not know it yet or no longer knows it, our business is to transmit this knowledge to him.

On the basis of the knowledge of the humanity of God, no other attitude to any kind of fellow man is possible. It is identical with the practical acknowledgment of his human rights and his human dignity. To deny it to him would be for us to renounce having Jesus Christ as Brother and God as Father.—Karl Barth, *The Humanity of God*

## Puzzle!

Complete this crossword with names of biblical fathers. Use the references for help, if needed.

# Puzzle!

Complete this crossword with names of biblical fathers.  
Use the references for help, if needed.

1. King Solomon's father, who ruled over Israel for 40 years (2 Samuel 5:4)
4. He was asked to sacrifice his son Isaac (Genesis 22:1-2)
6. He had 12 sons (Genesis 35:22b)
7. Samuel's father (1 Samuel 1:19-20)
9. His son was Obed (Ruth 4:21)
10. David was the youngest of his 8 sons (Ruth 4:17)

2. His 3 sons helped him build an ark (Genesis 6:10)
3. His youngest son, Jacob, tricked him into giving away a birthright (Genesis 27:30)
5. The Father of our Lord (Ephesians 1:3)
7. His sons were not like Samuel; they were wicked (1 Samuel 2:12)
8. David's best friend and the father of Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 9:6)
11. Father of Cain, Abel and Seth (Genesis 4:25)
12. He was married to Mary, mother of Jesus (Matthew 1:20-21)
13. Father of Jonathan; Israel chose him as their first king (2 Samuel 9:6)

Answer: DOWN 1. David, 4. Abraham, 6. Jacob, 7. Elkanah, 8. Jonathan, 11. Adam, 12. Joseph, 13. Saul  
ACROSS 2. Noah, 3. Isaac, 5. God, 7. Eli, 9. Boaz, 10. Jesse

## My poverty, God's riches

When Jesus says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3), I've tended to think in terms of emotions: "Blessed are the sad, depressed, discouraged, regretful, lonely ..." I picture human experiences that God will fix when the kingdom of heaven

is made full, as in Revelation: "Mourning and crying and pain will be no more" (21:4). Surely that's one faithful understanding.

But a poem by Pastor Steve Garnaas-Holmes gives a different slant:

Eternal God,  
I humbly confess my riches,  
... all to which I cling.  
I repent of the wealth  
of what I think and what I fear  
and what I want.

O I am truly poor; I have nothing  
but ... my openness to you.

... sustain my blessed poverty,  
an open hand,  
reaching out in this present moment,  
to your open hand.

—"Poor in Spirit," Jan. 25, 2023, at  
<https://unfoldinglight.net>

Now I hear poverty of spirit as what I *need* to experience to be open to *God's* riches. If I cling desperately to "what I think and what I fear and what I want," my hands and heart are not open to receive God's unconditional love.

—Heidi Hyland Mann

## Being good sports

When gestures of sportsmanship go viral, they often feature young athletes. In 2022, a Little League baseball player who took a pitch to the head later hugged the distraught opposing pitcher. Evangelist Ken Weliever says pro athletes, politicians, media personalities and everyday Americans should follow that example rather than focusing on revenge.

"Sadder still is when entire churches are disrupted by petty squabbles, partisan politics and overzealous opinions," he writes.

"Relationships have been ruptured, marriages dissolved and families torn apart due to a harsh response to hurts instead of a spirit of forgiveness and an attitude of reconciliation."

Christians may sometimes feel tempted to seek payback, but Jesus calls us to live differently. "We need to be reminded that we are to be a transformed people, not conformed to the attitudes and actions of this world (Romans 12:1-2)," says Weliever. "To be light in a world of darkness. And to be the pure, preserving salt in a society that's become corrupted and impure (Matthew 5:13-16)."

## Seasonal humor

For summer weddings:

- The wedding was so beautiful, even the cake was in tiers.
- Did you hear about the two spiders who got engaged? They met on the web.
- Two cell phones got married. The reception was terrific!
- Why did the King of Hearts and the Queen of Hearts get married? They were perfectly suited.

For baseball season:

- I wondered why the baseball kept getting bigger and bigger. Then it hit me.
- What did the baseball glove say to the ball? "Catch ya later!"
- Why are frogs good baseball players? Because they're good at catching flies.
- Why did Cinderella get kicked off the baseball team? She ran away from the ball.




And for Father's Day, some dad jokes:

- My dream job is to clean mirrors because I can really see myself doing that.
- We're renovating the house. The first floor is going great, but the second floor is another story.

## Christian symbol

**EYE OF GOD** — This symbol represents our "all-seeing" God, who is present everywhere and is always watching over us. ("The eyes of the Lord are in every place," Proverbs 15:3, NRSV.) The eye is inside an equilateral triangle, which is associated with the Holy Trinity.





# PUZZLE


## JESUS' FAMILY TREE

Matthew records a timeline of Jesus' family dating back to Abraham.  
Do you know who is in Jesus' family tree?

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*Directions: Use Matthew 1:1-17 to order the genealogy. Then put the letters in order in the boxes to answer the question below.*

T. Uzziah the father of Jotham  
O. Jacob the father of Judah  
N. Jacob the father of Joseph  
E. Elihud the father of Eleazar  
U. Boaz the father of Obed  
F. Abraham the father of Isaac  
R. Solomon the father of Rehoboam  
E. Josiah the father of Jeconiah



**How many generations were there from Abraham to David, from David to the Exile, and from the Exile to Jesus, the Messiah?**

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

ANSWER: FOURTEEN

# A timeless timeline

Explore your history while compiling this family timeline.



**What you need:**

- Paper
- Clear tape
- Ruler
- Pencil








**What you do:**

1. Tape together at least 3 sheets of paper horizontally.
2. Draw a straight line across the center of the long paper. Label dates at regular intervals to keep the information organized. For example, each page you add could represent 10 years.
3. Gather information for the timeline. Start with your birth year and memorable events in your life. Interview family members to learn what year they were born and when key things in their life happened. Include notes and photos.
4. Add pages as needed. Carefully roll up the timeline to keep for generations to come.

Photos of Great Cleanup Crew  
who worked on Cleanup Day,  
Saturday, April 29.



# JUNE 2023

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