

Partners in Ministry

Serving God and others through
the Evangelical Lutheran Churches of
America

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

1409 South Eighth Avenue, East
Newton, Iowa 50208
Church Phone: (641) 792-1683
www.HTLchurch.com

St. Andrew's Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 242, 8290 Hwy. F-62, East
Sully, IA 50251
Church Phone: (641)-798-4651
www.standluth.com

Words from Pastor Kari's Pen.

Office Hours for

Holy Trinity :

Tuesday-Thursday

1:00 - 4:00 PM.

By appointment

only.

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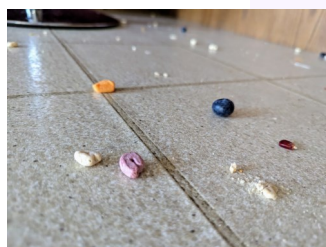
Pastor Kari Lee

Pastor's Phone:

(541)525-1618

pastorkari18

@gmail.com



Matthew 15:26-28

New Century Version (NCV)

Jesus answered, "It is not right to take the children's bread and give it to the dogs." The woman said, "Yes, Lord, but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered, "Woman, you have great faith!

Some days it feels like we are surviving on crumbs. Approaching Lent, it can feel threatening to hear your pastor begin to tell you that we are called to engage in a season of simple living.

It can seem as if we are asking you to maintain your same level of doing on fewer resources, fewer coping mechanisms, fewer things to sustain us. But we are asking more... and less... at the same time. Let me explain.

As we approach the beginning of Lent we prepare ourselves to say no to more things so we can say yes to faith. We say no to foods and drinks that harm us so our bodies can function the way they were meant to and we can encounter life more fully. We say no to activities and relationships that tear us down or distract us from being people of peace who seek mercy and justice. We say no to patterns of life that wear us out and make us curse at the inconveniences rather than be able to approach them as God's body in the world.

The world is desperate for the crumbs off the table that we are already seated at. We are at the banquet feast... and yet all we can see are crumbs. God is filling us with good things. And yet we don't receive them because our hands are too full of earthly things and our attention is too distracted on what others are doing. We often leave the table hungry and dying of thirst. These words from Jesus can seem so very offensive. But what parents haven't lost their minds after making a meal and their children refuse to eat only for them to come back again and ask for food? We are desperate and willing for any sort of crumb because we deny ourselves the opportunity to be filled when it is offered.

Lent is not a time when pastors try to bully or manipulate you into giving up all the things you enjoy. It reminds you of a deeper call to set aside the harmful or the entertaining things that distract us from being filled by God's good things at the table.

Crumbs of faith will sustain you. But being present in this season and receiving God's good things will allow you to be filled. So come. Taste and see that God is good and mercy is abundant.

Pastor Kari Lee



7

REASONS TO CONSIDER BECOMING A STEPHEN MINISTER

Is God calling you to become a Stephen Minister?

In Stephen Ministry, members of our congregation are trained and equipped to meet once a week, one to one, with someone going through a difficult time. Stephen Ministers provide a caring presence, a listening ear, and comforting words—supporting care receivers throughout their journey.

There are many reasons people become Stephen Ministers. Here are a few to think about as you prayerfully consider whether Stephen Ministry is the right place for you to serve.

As a Stephen Minister, you will . . .

1 Make a real difference in the lives of people who are hurting.

Stephen Ministers walk alongside people going through life challenges like grief, divorce, a medical crisis, job loss, and more. They offer care, support, and encouragement, *connecting hurting people with Christ's healing love* during some of the hardest times in their lives.

2 Help our congregation ensure that no one suffers alone.

Caring for one another is a hallmark of the Christian faith. As a Stephen Minister, you will play a crucial role in *helping our congregation carry out that mission* so that, even if we can't take away their pain, those who are suffering know our church truly cares.

3 Learn what to say and do—and what not to say and do—to care effectively for people who are suffering.

Stephen Minister training teaches highly practical caregiving and relational skills that equip and empower you with *everything you need to effectively care for others*. In addition to preparing you for caring ministry, these skills can help you deepen and enhance relationships in all facets of your life—with family, friends, coworkers, and others.

4 Be involved in meaningful ministry that uses your spiritual gifts.

Serving as a Stephen Minister gives people an opportunity to put their spiritual gifts into action—gifts such as faith, mercy, compassion, and encouragement. Ministry that draws on your gifts is *personally fulfilling and touches people's lives in powerful ways*.

5 Deepen your faith as you see God at work through your ministry.

Providing care while trusting in God is at the core of Stephen Ministry. *Stephen Ministers regularly say how their faith deepens* as they experience training, learn to use distinctively Christian caring tools, and witness God at work in the lives of their care receivers.

6 Be part of a group of caring Christians who support each other as they care for those who are hurting.

One of the blessings of being a Stephen Minister is *being part of a community of people who care*, all of whom lift one another up as they strive together to provide the best possible ministry. The strong relationships you'll form are both rewarding and a great source of support.

7 Join a worldwide tradition of caring ministry.

Congregations all over the world use Stephen Ministry—and have trained hundreds of thousands of Stephen Ministers who have gone on to care for millions of hurting people. It's this ongoing tradition of *"Christ caring for people through people"* that you'll join as a Stephen Minister.

Now that you know what the Stephen Ministry is, we have an opportunity for you.

Classes are starting in Newton within the next few weeks. The class will be 2 hours once a week. Once a few people have signed up they will be setting a day and time that will work best.

If you are interested please let Nicole (in the church office) or Pastor Kari know.
This opportunity is open for both congregations.

HAPPY
Birthday
FROM YOUR
CHURCH FAMILY

Katie Linn Bell (Feb. 3rd)

Charlie Bennett (Feb. 7th)

Ian Bennett (Feb 7th)

Chuck Osborn (Feb 8th)

Amy Collum (Feb. 9th)

Beau Simbro (Feb.27)

Kahlia Sharp (Feb 28th)

SUNDAY MORNING ASSISTANTS

LITURGIST

02/04/24 Bill Bennett, Jr.
02/11/24 Staci Arnold
02/18/24 Ange Sevenbergen
02/25/24 Devon Wolf

READER

Bill Bennett, Jr.
Staci Arnold
Ange Sevenbergen
Devon Wolf

USHERS/GREETERS

02/04/24 Bill & Linda Bennett
02/11/24 Keith & Kathy Sevenbergen
02/18/24 Wes & Sue Ranard
02/25/24 Dianne Clemon & Vicky Bennett

ACOLYTES

Runa or Eloise
Runa or Eloise
Runa or Eloise
Runa or Eloise

Any questions contact Linda Bennett
Phone 641-218-1547

Valentine's Day jokes for animal lovers

What did one sheep say to the other?
I love ewe!

And how did the other sheep respond?
You're not so baaa-d yourself.

Why do skunks love Valentine's Day?
They are very scent-imental creatures.

What did the enamored deer say?
I'm very fawn-ed of you!

What question did the penguin ask on February 14?
Waddle I do without you?

What do you call two birds in love?
Tweetharts!

What did one bee say to the other?
I love bee-ing with you, honey!

Special Dates

- ***African American History Month***
- ***Transfiguration of Our Lord, February 11,***
- ***Ash Wednesday, February 14***
- ***Valentine's Day, February 14***
- ***Presidents Day, February 19***
- ***Leap Day, February 29,***

Bible Quiz

Use one word (perhaps in different forms) for all the blanks to complete this Scripture passage: "Dear friends, let us ____ one another, for ____ comes from God. Everyone who ____ has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not ____ does not know God, because God is ____."

- A. believe
- B. help
- C. love
- D. forgive



The Answer is on pg. 4

2024 St. Andrew's Lutheran Church - Service Helper List

updated 01/08/2024

Date	Greeter	Lector	Candle Lighting	Comm. Assi.	Altar Guild
2/4/2024	Wayne & Marlene Sharp	Jessica Winegar	Hudson Winegar	Mark Bell	Mark Bell
2/11/2024	Mike & Norene Paulson	Carol Naeseth	Jacob Bell	(for the month)	
2/18/2024	John & Barb Freeborn	Doug Bell	Peyton Sharp		
2/25/2024	Nancy Wright	Nancy Wright	Payton Bowlin		
3/3/2024	Brad & Teri Bowlin	Teri Bowlin	Sophia Bell	Doug Bell	Doug & Jaci Bell
3/10/2024	Doug & Jaci Bell	Jessica Winegar	Charly Fenner		
3/17/2024	Carol Naeseth	Carol Naeseth	Hannah Neleman		
3/24/2024	Mark Bell	Doug Bell	Kahlia Sharp		
3/31/2024	Todd & Melanie Sharp	Nancy Wright	Addi Collum		



In January, our mission support to the synod was \$817. There were also a donations of \$350 to ELCA World Hunger and \$300 to Lutheran Disaster Response.

Our monthly mission for January was for the Wartburg Theological Seminary, and we received \$120 in donations last month for a total donation, along with the budgeted funds, of \$620.

Our mission emphasis for February will be for the Newton Salvation Army Food Pantry. From their website: "We give people in need access to nutritious food...Our mission is to meet human needs in Jesus' name. Food is a human need." If you'd like to contribute to this mission, please write "Salvation Army" on your check or offering envelope.

A new perspective

I have a knack for making most tasks bigger than they need to be. Whether it's my go-getting nature or overcompensating "just in case," I often complicate the simplest of activities. When asked to bring a potluck side dish, I bring two. What if someone has an allergy? Or I join two Bible studies because I don't want to offend either facilitator.

Jesus understands people like me. "For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light," he says in Matthew 11:30 (NLT). In *The Soul's Slow Ripening*, Christine Valters Paintner explores various Bible-based and spiritual practices.

While reading it, I began adopting her insights into the rhythm of my own life. But without a filter or prayerful consideration of what God wanted me to discern, I just kept adding — creating an unnecessary burden.

"Your call may not be to change anything in your life other than your perspective," Paintner concludes. That provided newfound freedom. Of course, our good Savior — whose burden is light — will help us navigate decisions and commitments. The only takeaway may be a much-needed shift in our perspective.

—Janna Firestone

Ground rules for love

In *Let Me Be a Woman*, missionary Elisabeth Elliot writes about the "ground rules" for "how this thing called love really works — in a marriage, in the world." Her list reflects many of the principles found in 1 Corinthians 13, the Bible's love chapter.

This love of which I speak is slow to lose patience. It looks for a way of being constructive.

Love is not possessive.

Love is not anxious to impress, nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own ideas.

Love has good manners and does not pursue selfish advantage.

Love is not touchy.

Love does not keep account of evil or gloat over the wickedness of other people. On the contrary, it is glad ... when truth prevails.

Love knows no limits to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope; it can outlast anything. It is, in fact, the one thing that stands when all else has fallen.

PUZZLE

CONNECTED BY LOVE

God's Word is filled with messages about love, which connects us to God and to one another.

Directions: Draw a line from the beginning of each Bible verse (on the left side) through the heart to the rest of the verse (on the right side). Use the Scripture references for help.

<p>a. We</p> <p>b. Above all,</p> <p>c. My command is this:</p> <p>d. And over all these virtues put on</p> <p>e. Greater</p> <p>f. See what great</p> <p>g. There is no fear in</p>	<p>1. each other as I have loved you. John 15:12</p> <p>2. has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. John 15:13</p> <p>3. But perfect love drives out fear. 1 John 4:18</p> <p>4. each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. 1 Peter 4:8</p> <p>5. the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! 1 John 3:1</p> <p>6. because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19</p> <p>7. which binds them all together in perfect unity. Colossians 3:14</p>
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Answers: a. 6, b. 4, c. 1, d. 7, e. 2, f. 5, g. 3

HEART strings

Make this heartfelt craft as a decoration or gift.

What you need:

- Yarn
- Scissors
- Parchment paper
- Baking sheet
- Heart-shaped cookie cutters
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- ½ cup water
- Adult help



What you do:

1. Cut yarn into 12-inch pieces.
2. Place cookie cutters atop a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
3. Combine cornstarch and water in a saucepan. Heat mixture over medium heat, stirring until thick and smooth. Remove from heat and cool to form a "glue."
4. Dip each piece of yarn into the mixture to coat completely. Squeeze off any excess.
5. Place yarn in the cookie cutters, allowing pieces to cross and loop within the heart. Add more until the cookie cutter is filled and the yarn looks like a heart.
6. Remove cookie cutters and bake the sheet for two hours at 150°F, or until hearts are dry and hard.

Congratulations to Major Melanie Sharp! Your St. Andrew's church family could not be more proud of you! Thank you for your willingness to serve our country...



Happy 1st Birthday Finn
He is one of the youngest member of Holy Trinity!

Your church family loves you very much!

Randy & Marilyn Terlouw
(Feb. 3rd)

HAPPY Anniversary
FROM YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Christian symbol

CROSS OF ASHES — On Ash Wednesday, as Lent begins, worshipers' foreheads are often marked with ashes in the sign of the cross. The ashes traditionally come from burning palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday. In the Old Testament, ashes were a sign of mourning and repentance. Today, some worshipers wipe off the ashes before leaving church, to symbolize being cleansed from sin by Jesus' death; others wear the ashes the rest of the day, carrying the cross of Christ into the world. Reciting Genesis 3:19 often accompanies the placement of ashes: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return."





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Lenten Services

We are pleased to be holding Lenten service with Holy Trinity, St. Andrew's, and First Lutheran again this year.

All services will be at 6:00 pm with a Soup Supper fellowship to follow.

We will be rotating locations each week.

Each congregation will follow their own Holy Week service schedule.



- FEB 14TH (ASH WEDNESDAY) - 1ST LUTHERAN
- FEB. 21- ST. ANDREW'S (SULLY, IA)
- FEB. 28TH-HOLY TRINITY (NEWTON, IA)
- MARCH 6 - 1ST LUTHERAN (NEWTON, IA)
- MARCH 13TH- ST. ANDREW'S (SULLY, IA)
- MARCH 20TH-HOLY TRINITY (NEWTON, IA)