

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
229 11TH AVE W
GRINNELL IA 50112-8217

February Newsletter

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH LC-MS
229 11TH AVENUE WEST
GRINNELL, IA 50112
OFFICE- 641-236-6691
OFFICE EMAIL- lcms.immanuelgrinnell@gmail.com
WEBSITE- www.immanuelgrinnell.org

ALL SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS ARE ON OUR WEBSITE
SERVICES ARE LIVE STREAMED ON OUR FACEBOOK

LET US KNOW...

If you have a change in address, phone or email, have a loved one who is or hospitalized, have a new baby, would like a pastoral visit, or if you would like a special prayer during the prayers of the church on Sunday, please contact Pastor Koepp or the church office.

DO YOU...

have an announcement for the bulletin or newsletter?

Have a prayer request? Birth/Anniversary/Graduation announcements?

If so, please submit the information as you want it to appear in the bulletin or newsletter by the deadlines listed below to the church secretary at lcms.immanuelgrinnell@gmail.com

Deadline for submitting in the weekly bulletin is Thursdays by noon.

Deadline for the monthly newsletter is the 15th of each month.

For those of you without email access, please call or submit your written request to the church secretary.



HELLO FEBRUARY

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Pastor's Message

Jesus says, ***“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*** So where is your treasure, or a better question, perhaps, what is your treasure. In the month of February, the world sets its focus on love. Do we love what we treasure, or do we treasure what we love?

The world takes its focus from St. Valentine, but have forgotten the history. St. Valentine is an early Christian martyr, whose identity remains somewhat a mystery. There were numerous Christian martyrs named Valentine, and any number of them could have been the one whose name we remember every year. Regardless of his identity, he most likely would not recognize the current customs of Valentine's Day as being associated with him. There is one thing we can be confident about concerning this mysterious Valentine figure: he was killed for confessing his faith in Christ. And while we might view martyrdom as a very sad outcome for any Christian, many of the early Christian martyrs do not seem to have shared that sentiment.

Early in the Church's life, Valentine's Day was simply a day for Christians to commemorate a man who, like many before him, died with his hope founded in Christ Jesus as his Savior. Clearly today's holiday, with its exclusive focus on romantic love and the sinful culture that is often conflated with romantic love, represents a drastic departure from the original intent. There is a lot of talk about feelings, and hearts plastered all over the place. The treasure for many today is chocolates, flowers, and a whole host of things that soon will fade into nothing but memories. The candy may take a while to eat, and the flowers may live for a time, but many will move on with barely a thought of love for one another until another holiday rolls around.

Love is good. The world misses the point a bit, as it focuses on the self. For the world, love is about me; how I feel, my needs, my emotions, my wants, my desires. For the world, love centers on great you can make me feel. Due to our sinful nature, we fall into this trap at times as well, don't we? Feelings are not bad. Feelings are good, and they are important. We have to be careful to not let feelings be our god. We don't stake our understanding of God on how we feel. He loves us whether we feel happy, or sad, or angry, or confused. My emotions do not change the way God loves me.

The Bible has much to say on Love, specifically God's Love. It should, the whole point of the book is Jesus. The Bible is about Jesus, not about you. You are not the center of God's Holy Word. It is not about you, but it is for you! The work of God is done for you; for your sake and your salvation.

In His Holy Word, God's makes it very clear that love is not a feeling. Love is action. God is love. He does not just sit around and feel. He acts. He does something, and you know the actions God takes for you. He created you. He sustains you. He so-loved you, that He gave His only-begotten Son, so that whoever believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life. God's Holy Word teaches us, "This is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:10)

As Children of God, you have a treasure that is laid up in heaven. Jesus Christ, bore the wrath of God against sin, and through His Word, through His work of baptism and His Holy Supper, you are given those gifts that cannot be taken away. You are given forgiveness of sins. You are given rescue from death and the devil. You are given life eternal.

This month, while the world frets about seeking for love that is fleeting, you are blessed by God's Love, a love that is everlasting. Through this love you are true testaments to these words of 2 Corinthians, "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1)

Hymn 'Love Divine, All Loves Excelling'

LSB 700



1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of
2 Breathe, O breathe Thy lov - ing Spir - it In - to
3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; Let us
4 Fin - ish then Thy new cre - a - tion, Pure and



heav'n, to earth come down! Fix in us Thy
ev - 'ry trou - bled breast; Let us all in
all Thy life re - ceive; Sud - den - ly re -
spot - less let us be; Let us see Thy



hum - ble dwell - ing, All Thy faith - ful mer - cies crown.
Thee in - her - it; Let us find Thy prom - ised rest.
turn, and nev - er, Nev - er - more Thy tem - ples leave.
great sal - va - tion Per - fect - ly re - stored in Thee,



Je - sus, Thou art all com - pas - sion, Pure, un -
Take a - way the love of sin - ning; Al - pha
Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing, Serve Thee
Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry, Till in



bound - ed love Thou art; Vis - it us with
and O - me - ga be; End of faith, as
as Thy hosts a - bove, Pray and praise Thee
heav'n we take our place, Till we cast our



Thy sal - va - tion, En - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.
its be - gin - ning, Set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
with - out ceas - ing, Glo - ry in Thy per - fect love.
crowns be - fore Thee, Lost in won - der, love, and praise!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–88. Tune: Rowland H. Prichard, 1811–87. Text and tune: Public domain

+ Soli Deo Gloria +

Rev. Dr. Joel G. Koepp

President's Piece for Peace

The beginning of February 2025 finds our beloved nation with new members of The House of Representatives, the Senate, and the Presidency. We do well to lift each of these offices to the Throne of Grace on a daily basis asking for wisdom, courage, and compassion. This is also a good time to review what the Lutheran Confessions have to say about the separation of powers between the Kingdom of the State and the Kingdom of the Church.

In the Augsburg Confession, article XXVIII, the Lutheran Fathers addressed this issue because of the Church of Rome's assumed authority over all things, including the laws of the state. I quote for you from paragraphs 8-12, 21.

"This power of keys or of bishops is used and exercised only by teaching and preaching the Word of God and by administering the sacraments (to many persons or to individuals, depending on one's calling). In this way are imparted not bodily but eternal things and gifts, namely, eternal righteousness, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life. These gifts cannot be obtained except through the office of preaching and administering the holy sacraments, for St. Paul says, 'The gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith.' In as much as the power of the church or of bishops bestows eternal gifts and is used and exercised only through the office of preaching, it does not interfere at all with government or temporal authority. Temporal authority is concerned with matters altogether different from the Gospel. Temporal power does not protect the soul, but with the sword and physical penalties it protects body and goods from the power of others. Therefore, the two authorities, the spiritual and the temporal, are not to be mingled or confused, for the spiritual power has its commission to preach the Gospel and administer the sacraments."

"According to divine right, therefore it is the office of the bishop to preach the Gospel, forgive sins, judge doctrine and condemn doctrine that is contrary to the Gospel, and exclude from the Christian community the ungodly whose wicked conduct is manifest. All this is to be done not by human power but by God's Word alone."

It is the scope of the Church to feed and protect our souls.

As is quite clear from the Lutheran Confessions, the government has a very important, God given responsibility. That is to protect our bodies and our goods. Yet it is limited in its scope to physical elements. It is the scope of the Church to feed and protect our souls. The prior has temporary benefits, the latter has eternal benefits. Both are given their authority from God Himself. God has keen interest in our bodies, as we should as well, just as He does our souls. The reason? While the body will one day cease in death and the soul will continue on into eternity, both body and soul will be reunited in the resurrection to be with the angels, archangels, and all the company of heaven.

The Church is to pray for the government leaders and even be willing to serve in political offices if elected. We pray for our president, our senators, and our representatives. We pray for the natural Law of God to reign in their hearts such that they recognize its value. We pray for their health and protection so they may serve the communities that have elected them. We also pray for our pastors and the church leaders that they remain faithful to the Word of God as espoused in the Lutheran Confessions. As the two kingdoms fulfill their God given roles, we are blessed now and forever.

Rev. Dr. Brian S. Saunders
District President



**The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
LCMS Stewardship Ministry – lcms.org/stewardship
Newsletter Article – February 2025**

“Christ’s Life, and Love, and Light”

Open our eyes Lord to see Your love’s intent,
To know with minds and hearts its depth and height
May thankfulness be days in service spent
Reflection of Christ’s life, and love, and light. (LSB 788)

As stewards enter the month of February, it is fitting that we look at the last stanza of the stewardship hymn, “Forgive Us, Lord, for Shallow Thankfulness” (LSB 788). It is in these words that we see that the heart of stewardship is indeed love. Love has flowed from our Lord to us in the person and work of Jesus Christ. This love is then to flow from us to others. Being a conduit of love is really the central task of what it means to be a steward. The Lord entrusts us with His love that reconciles us to Himself, so that we might be stewards of the Gospel reconciliation that is freely given through us to those around us.

If we don’t see this love from God to us, then through us, to others, our eyes will be closed not just to the needs of those around us. They will also be closed to the very heart of the Gospel itself. This is why the hymnist prays that the Lord would “Open our eyes, Lord, to see Your love’s intent, To know with minds and hearts its depth and height.”

Only when we are immersed in God's Holy Word, washed in Holy Baptism's life-giving water and fed on the holy, precious, body and blood of Jesus in the Holy Supper, will the Spirit be able to open our eyes to see the Lord's loving intent for us, and those we know and love. Sin blinds us. It makes us think that we are the center of our world, and our pleasure is the key.

In the Word, the Lord shows us the depth and height of His love. The depth of that love is what moved Him from His throne in heaven into our world. There He would don our human flesh, walk the dusty roads of Palestine, and set His face toward Jerusalem. Once there we get to see the height of His love, as He is elevated on a Roman cross to die a death that we deserve. But that would not be the end. He would be lowered into a tomb for three days. On that third day we then see the heights of love ascended to in His resurrection. This resurrection is already ours too!

The depth and height of this love poured out on us by the Holy Spirit then is distributed through us to others. Christ's servant love is shown in our servant love. The hymn utters the prayer of every Christian steward:

May thankfulness be days in service spent
Reflection of Christ's life, and love, and light.

This is the task for which stewards were originally created. Bearing the image of creation and redemption, we reflect Christ's love to those around us. The light of Christ shining through us to others is the true stewardship to which we are called. It takes place in our homes. It is lived out in our workplaces and classrooms. As we bear the life, love and light received in Word and Sacrament, we carry it out in service to our neighbor and for the glory of God!

Forgive us, Lord, when our stewardship of thankfulness is shallow or lacking! Fill us with Your life, love and light! Not just for us, but through us to those we know and love, that they may know Your life, love and light for them!



HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE VILLAGE CLOSET?

IT IS A NEW PROGRAM STARTED IN DECEMBER OF 2024 BY THE GRINNELL PUBLIC HEALTH (UNITY POINT) HERE IN GRINNELL. IT PROVIDES ESSENTIAL BABY ITEMS TO SUPPORT EXPECTANT MOTHERS AND CHILD CAREGIVERS THROUGHOUT PREGNANCY AND THE FIRST YEAR OF A CHILD'S LIFE.

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN WILL START COLLECTING ITEMS FOR THIS NEW VENTURE. ITEMS BELOW MAY BE PUT IN THE PLASTIC BIN LOCATED IN THE CHURCH HALLWAY UNDER THE INFORMATION TABLE.

BABY ITEMS NEEDED

NEWBORN - 12 MONTHS

*3 - 6 MONTHS MOST NEEDED

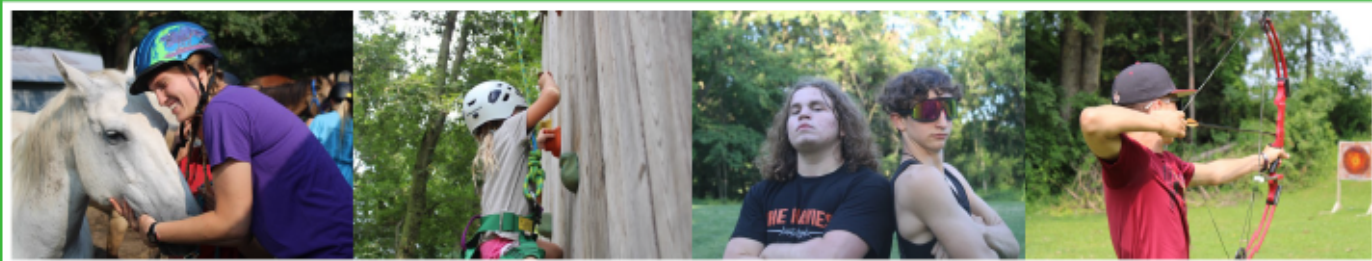
DIAPERS
WIPES
BOTTLES
HOODED BATH TOWELS
WASH CLOTHS
BURP CLOTHS
BREAST FEEDING ITEMS
TOYS

IN GOOD CONDITION

BABY SWINGS
CAR SEATS
BATH TUBS
OTHER BABY EQUIPMENT
MATERNITY CLOTHES

***THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!
BOARD OF EVANGELISM***





February 2025

Summer Camp Registration Now Open!

2025 Theme: With Open Arms

"Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today..." - Exodus 14:13a

What do you think of when you think of "open arms?" Songs by Journey or Creed? What about welcoming people or even strength or salvation? This year's camp theme *With Open Arms* aims to construct a clear and resolute image for us Christians. We will focus on how God has been at work in this creation to gather a people, with open arms, to be His own treasured possession. Sometimes that work of God is displayed in strength and wonder, as with Samson or Israel's crossing of the Red Sea. Sometimes God's work has been a great display of compassion and forgiveness, as Jesus taught his disciples in the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Ultimately, we look to Jesus' death on the Cross as the primary place where God works to gather a people, just as Jesus tells us in John 3:15. This great work of God to gather a people with open arms continues to this very day in the proclamation of the Gospel and the calling of all to faith in Christ alone.

Summer camp registration opened on January 20th, and registrations have been coming in hot! We're excited for the great start we've had and for more registrations to come! Be sure to get signed up for camp today by heading over to our website at <https://campiodiseca.org/summer-camp-3/registration/> or scanning the QR Code! We look forward to seeing you on camp this summer!



As we gear up for summer, we're looking for all of the components that make a great camp experience, and that starts with summer staff! We need college-aged young adults to serve as Christian role models, teachers, activity leaders, and friends to the children that pass through our gates. Head to our website at <https://campiodiseca.org/summer-camp-3/staff/> for more information and to get started on completing an application.



Pastors' Wives' Winter Retreat

For the first time, Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca will be hosting a winter retreat for wives of pastors serving in the Iowa District East. This weekend presents a wonderful opportunity for rest, refreshment, and fellowship. The Pastors' Wives' Winter Retreat will take place on March 7-8, 2025. The registration cost for the retreat is \$45/ person and includes the overnight fee, bedding, and meals from Friday supper through Saturday lunch. Stay tuned to Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca's social media pages for more information, including how to get registered.

3271 Sandy Beach Road NE, Solon, IA 52333

phone 319.848.4187

web www.campiodiseca.org

email office@iodiseca.org



St. Silas Lutheran Church

To receive forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.

January 2025

Hello from North Liberty!

St. Silas Lutheran Church is one of the Mission Projects of the Iowa East District of the LCMS. As a mission church, our budget is partially subsidized through the Offerings for Missions from all the IED churches. In October, the pastors of Iowa East met at Camp IoDisECa for their Fall Conference. St. Silas was given the privilege of sharing a brief update on what is happening in our congregation. I want to take this opportunity to expand on that update and make the following information available to your congregation.

1. I will begin by saying **THANK YOU** for the prayers and financial support for St. Silas and all the Missions of the church. We are so grateful for these blessings!
2. God is working for us, around us, and in us and we have a front row seat to see His grace! It is humbling and exciting at the same time! Galatians 2:20 gives us our focus.
3. We were able to move out of a leased store front 15 months ago. With a favorable loan from the Lutheran Church Extension Fund, we were able to purchase and renovate a small commercial space. Our mortgage payment is close to half of our previous lease payment.
4. Saints from sister congregations and within the membership of St. Silas have directed gifts of generous support to help pay extra on mortgage principal. To date, 45% of our mortgage has been paid off. We see God's steadfast faithfulness over and over!
5. We have been served well in vacancy status since January 1, 2024. Our prayers continue for God to send us the man he wants us to call. We want to fully support him and his ministry.
6. God is leading us on this pathway to support a pastor. That requires us to eliminate our mortgage as soon as possible. Then we hope to take the next step and be in a position to call a full-time pastor.
7. We are very encouraged that St. Silas is growing! This church has witnessed two youth confirmations, an infant Baptism, adult catechesis, and 10 new members over the past 18 months. God is growing our church family in size and in His Word!
8. North Liberty is also growing! In fact, it is the second fastest growing city in Iowa! The next-door neighbor city of Tiffin is the #1 fastest growing city in Iowa. We can see houses, apartments, two hospitals, commerce and recreation springing up before our eyes. God has a plan.

Visitors are always welcome at St. Silas. We love the opportunity to greet our guests and worship with them!

We also enjoy sharing the story of God's work through His church in North Liberty. We are grateful for any opportunity to come to you and share more of this story of God's faithfulness. I include my personal cell phone number below if you would like to hear more. Thank you for reading this.

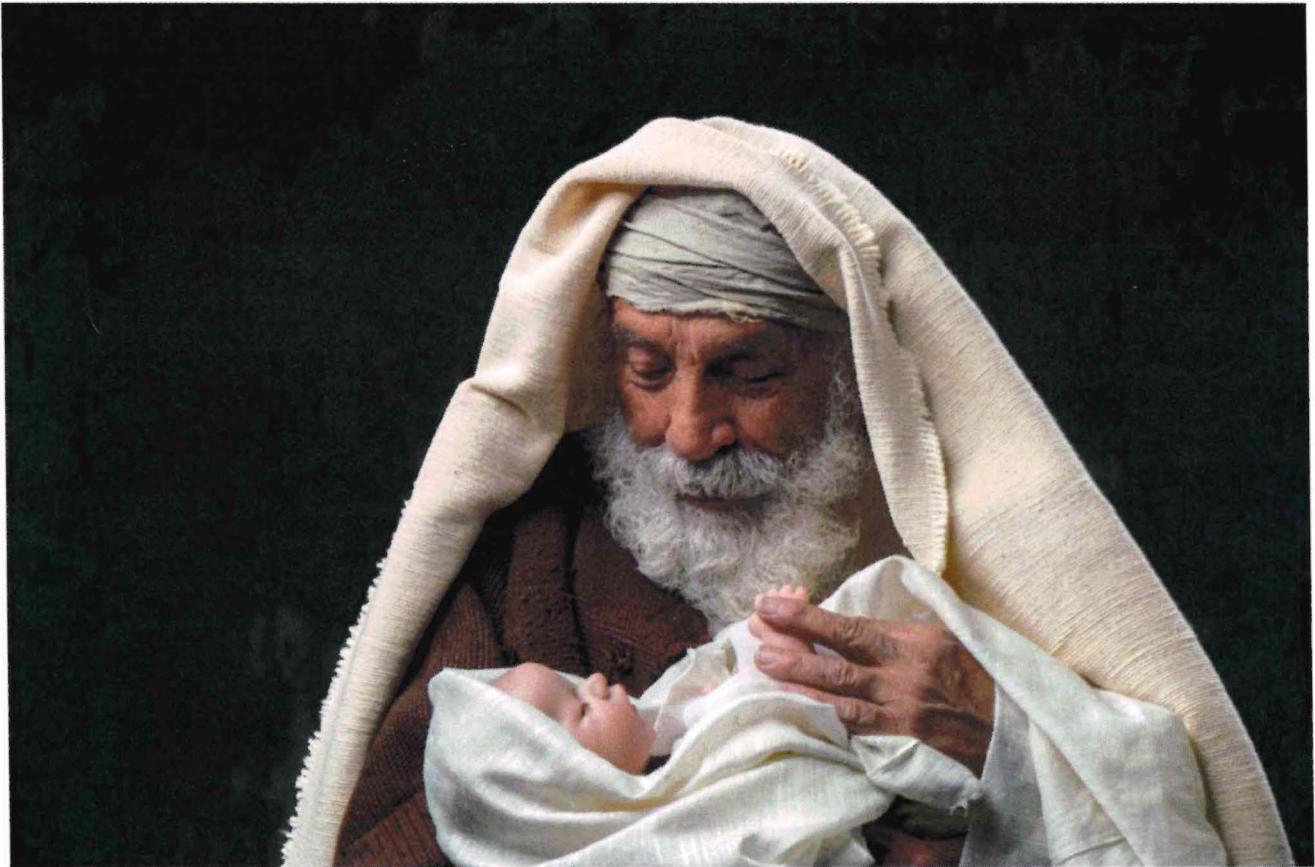
On behalf of the saints at St. Silas Lutheran Church,
Patrick Dermody, chairman

c 319-330-2519

<https://stsilaslutheranchurch.360unite.com/home>

St. Silas Lutheran Church 70 Circle Dr STE C North Liberty, IA 52317

DEPARTING IN PEACE



Theological and Practical Aspects at the End of Life

When: Saturday, March 8, 2025
Where: Redeemer Lutheran Church
1600 S. Center
Marshalltown, IA 50158

12:00pm: Lunch
1-2:45pm: Rev. Dr. Jim Lamb: "Theology of Dying and Living Forever: Advanced Directives Workshop"
2:45-3pm: Coffee and Cookies
3-3:45pm: Rev. Alex Post: "Preparing to See Jesus: Working on my Funeral Plan"
3:45-4:30pm: Wrap Up and Q & A Panel

RSVP to alexpost1226@gmail.com
(641) 758-1915



Confirmation

MEMORY WORK SCHEDULE FOR FEBRUARY

5th & 6th Grade Memory Work

Feb 5 — Introduction to the Lord's Prayer

Feb 12 — 1st Petition and Meaning

Feb 19 — 2nd Petition and Meaning

Feb 26 — 3rd Petition and Meaning

8th Grade Memory Work

Feb 5 — Third Article and Meaning

Feb 12 — Lord's Prayer: Introduction and Meaning;

1st Petition and Meaning

Feb 19 — Lord's Prayer: 2nd and 3rd Petitions and Meanings

Feb 26 — Lord's Prayer: 4th and 5th Petitions and Meanings



Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc.

Poweshiek County Family Development Center

Immanuel Lutheran Church
229 11th Ave. W
Grinnell, IA 50112

January, 2025

Dear Friends at Immanuel Lutheran Church,

Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc. (MICA) Poweshiek County Emergency Food Pantry is sending you a huge **THANK YOU** for your donation of 11.0 pounds during the month of **December, 2024!** From your help, we were able to provide food and other necessities to 297 households / 973 individuals equaling 419 food boxes (15,607 pounds of food)!

From time to time, we are asked questions about the services our local MICA office offers.

- **Food Pantry** offers families who qualify the use of this emergency food pantry twice a month. On many days, we have fresh produce and baked items in the front lobby.
- **Head Start** works with children aged three and four. Free to families that qualify, these programs are recognized for their quality.
- **Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS)**, families meet one-on-one with a family development specialist. Together, specialists and families address the barriers affecting their success, connecting the family to resources, setting goals, and empowering families to create change.
- **WIC (Women, Infants and Children)** works to meet the needs of babies, children under five, pregnant and breastfeeding women and those who have had a baby in the last six months with nutrition and health programs. WIC is now being housed in the MICA building the 3rd and 4th Tuesdays of each month. Income guidelines are about \$49,025 for a family of four.
- **Family Connections** program helps families with young children improve their overall well-being.
- **Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)** helps qualifying families pay utility bills. Next year's funds for this assistance program are based on the current year's usage. The LIHEAP Moratorium ends April 1st. People can sign up for LIHEAP until April 30th, but they would not have any moratorium protection. Because of this even if there are residents of Poweshiek County who think they might not qualify, we encourage them to schedule an appointment to meet with one of our staff by calling 641-236-3923 to ask any questions or to make an appointment.

We truly appreciate your contribution because every donation helps MICA fulfill its mission: **MICA helps families experiencing poverty meet their needs, build on their strengths, and achieve their goals.**

Sincerely,

Poweshiek County Family Development Center
Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc.