



Central Lutheran Church

Come Share the Spirit!

Central News: January 2021

- **Outside service will continue until further notice - we have postponed going in the church**
- **Services: 9am in Arizona City, 10:30am in Casa Grande**
- **FM available at both services to stay in your vehicle**
- **Prayer Request - starting fresh - [click to add yours](#)**
- **Annual Meeting, January 31st after Casa Grande Worship Service**
- **Check out the worship services on [Central Lutheran Church's YouTube Channel](#)**

A Note from Pastor Bob

We are in very trying times as I take over as transitional pastor. Many people are suffering from the Covid virus and the restrictions on socialization have caused some psychological challenges for most of us. It is my hope that 2021 will be the year when we can recover from this pandemic.



The important thing that we all must remember through all the struggles we face is that God has promised in Jesus Christ to be wherever we go and whatever we encounter, God in Jesus Christ has given us the assurance that we are not alone, for he is always with us.

When I speak to parents about baptism, I tell them that when a child is baptized it is as if God has promised that child that no matter where she goes or no matter how far from God she attempt to be, when she turns around God will still be there.

For those of us who are baptized children of God the same is true. No matter where we go and no matter what we encounter, God has promised to always be there with us.

So as we begin a new and hopefully better year, let us rely on God to get

us through all the challenges we face. And let us remember that we are never alone, for God has promised to always be with us.

Blessings,
Pastor Bob Kleinke

***Message to Central Lutheran Congregation
from President John Pieschl***

December 22, 2020

First of all, your Church Council thanks Pastor Annemarie for her service to Central Lutheran over the last seven very trying months. We wish her the very best with her call to become the permanent pastor at Esperanza Lutheran Church in Phoenix, Arizona. Her last service at Central will be Christmas Eve.

Secondly, we welcome Pastor Bob Kleinke as our interim pastor, effective January 1, during this transitional time as we appoint a Call Committee to begin the search for our permanent Pastor. I believe you already know pastor Bob as he filled in many times for Pastor Thom and lead several Bible Studies.

Your Council appointed 5 congregation members to a Mission & Ministry Task Force (MMTF) in early November. This was the first step in the Call process. The MMTF completed their portion of the process and presented their report to the council on December 15. The next step in the process is to form the Call Committee. We already have 5 members (3 from Arizona City and 2 from Casa Grande) who have come forward to be on the Call Committee and we are looking for an additional 1 or 2 members who normally worship in Casa Grande. **If you have an interest in serving on the Call Committee please contact Pastor Bob or me.**

Finally, consider this the official notice of our Annual Meeting, which will be held on January 31 in Casa Grande immediately following our worship service. Several very important items will be covered at this meeting so please plan to attend. We have Council and Endowment Committee seats to fill as well as approving our 2021 Annual Budget. Please contact Pastor Bob or any Council member if you have an interest in serving your congregation.

Blessings to you,

John Pieschl, Council President

[Church Council Contacts](#)



Reminder
Annual CLC Meeting
January 31
after church service

Worship Schedule:

Among all the things this past year has taught us, it has also been a year of needing to be flexible and adapt to current circumstances.

January 3, 2021 - outside worship and FM car

* 9:00 a.m. at Arizona City

* 10:30 a.m. at Casa Grande

January 10, 2021 - outside worship and FM car

* 9:00am at Arizona City

* 10:30am at Casa Grande

January 17, 2021 - outside worship and FM car

* 8:30am at Arizona City

* 10:00am at Casa Grande

Our FM transmitter allows people to drive to worship and remain in their vehicle instead of sitting outside in chairs.

Thank you for your continued patience and understanding as we continue seeking the best way forward.

About Worship

FM Transmitter for Drive-In Worship

The station is 97.3 FM

At this time we are worshipping in-person OUTDOORS at both locations:

9:00 at Arizona City and 10:30 at Casa Grande.

Worship Reminders:

1. Masks must be worn at all times if you are outside your vehicle.

Disposable masks will be available for those who arrive without one.

Those who do not wear a mask may worship from inside their vehicle by tuning to 97.3 FM.

2. Bring your own lawn chair for outdoor worship

If you need help getting your chair out of your car or setting it up, let us know. If you do not have one, someone will be standing by to bring out a chair for you.

- When you arrive, please place your chair a minimum of six feet from those of another household.
 - If your health requires the caution of further physical distancing, you may place your chairs in the back or to the side at a greater distance. You may also remain in your vehicle and tune your radio to 97.3 FM.
 - Offering and attendance cards will be received via a box at the entryway as you arrive or depart.
 - When you come to worship, you may bring your own bread and wine/grape juice from home, or you may take one of the individually wrapped communion kits as you arrive.
 - The service will be video recorded on a weekly basis for those unable to attend in-person. (Only the worship leaders will be in the video, the congregation will not be seen.)
 - Whether you attend in-person or participate through the recorded service at home, let us all join together through the Holy Spirit who makes us one. Let us pray for one another, support one another, love one another, in the name of Jesus. See you in worship!
-



Thank you

Angel Tree gifts were delivered on December 20th! A big thank you to everyone who donated \$\$ and gifts for these children. Central Lutheran Church volunteers bought 46 gifts for Angel Tree and also adopted one family of six. Lots of goodwill and sharing of Christ's love to families.

Incarceration can strain family ties to the breaking point. Angel Tree shares the love of Christ in a tangible way and strengthens family bonds, delivering personalized gifts and the Gospel to children on behalf of their incarcerated parents at Christmas. Every Angel Tree family is also given access to a free, easy-to-read copy of the Bible in English or Spanish.

CLC Angel Tree Team

Pat Jones

BJ/Jerry Edwardson

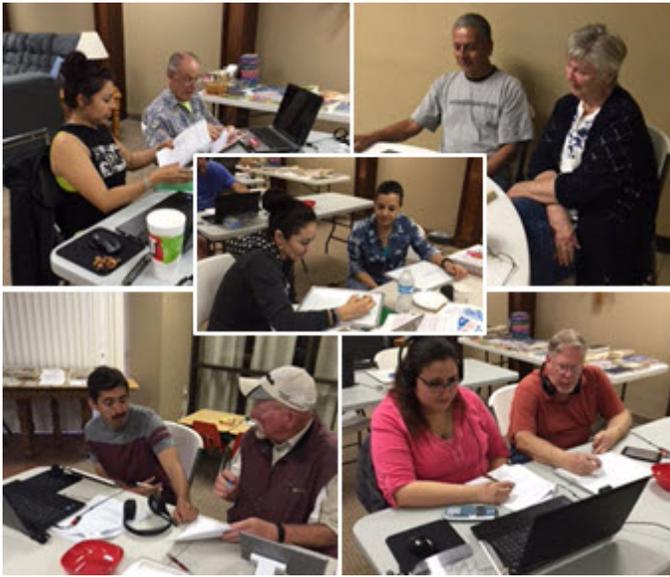
Barb/Ron Morger

Linda Gal

Karen/Larry Nelson

Community Education Update

The end of the year is a natural time to take stock, to acknowledge what has been done



and what has been left undone. For the Community Education program, the end of 2020 marks the completion of six years of ministry. Since a team of volunteers began offering ESL and GED test prep tutoring, they have helped almost 100 participants achieve their personal

development goals. ESL teachers have provided an average of 28 hours per week of language coaching. A dozen adults have earned their GED certificates. There is a lot to celebrate in these accomplishments. However, there is more to the ministry than those expected adult education outcomes. Behind the scenes and in between the many language learning sessions and GED tutoring appointments, there have been several unexpected opportunities to serve that have emerged as volunteers built rapport and created a bond of trust with their students. *Here are just a few blessings that have touched both tutors and students.*

- A student dropped by his tutor's home to do yard work when he was struggling to do it himself.
- A tutor helped her student with marital problems.
- A tutor donated a band instrument so her student's child could participate in the school music program.
- A volunteer received a delicious gift of homemade tortillas.
- A tutor drove her student to a women's shelter when she had no place to go.
- A volunteer gave a student a much needed job.
- A student threw a surprise birthday party for her teacher.
- Volunteers donated bags of clothing to students.
- A tutor gave a toy to a delighted child who had to sit quietly during her mom's tutoring sessions.
- A tutor provided a bed and a crib for a student with a growing family.
- A volunteer accompanied a student to his first visit to a drug addiction treatment center.
- A student gifted to her teacher a beautiful cross-stitched table cloth.
- A volunteer rounded up an entire apartment of donated furniture to help a student set up her new home.
- Teachers sent manna bags home with students.

These opportunities are but a few examples of how the Community Education team and their students serve and bless one another as they open the door to each other's lives.

So what has been left undone? While the program services are free to participants, donations from the congregation and community fund the average annual budget of \$18,000. This includes the online curriculum subscription license (\$750/year), learning lab laptop purchases, replacement and repair, and exam testing fees (approximately \$1,000/year). Funding also supports a part-time tutor coordinator who manages volunteer training, participant enrollment and orientation, daily tutoring schedules and learning resource development.

In the coming year, all of these needs will exist along with the need for dedicated volunteers to do the important work of helping others. The volunteer team's work continues even during the pandemic, using video call technology to ensure everyone's safety. Much appreciation goes to the congregation for supporting this ministry for the past six years. Continued support will be essential to maintain and grow this outreach to the community.

To make a donation to the program, designate a special offering to the "Community Education Program" or call the Central Lutheran Church office.

Red Cross Virtual Family Assistance Center (VFAC)



American Red Cross

*In order to provide support to families and communities who have suffered loss as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the American Red Cross has developed a **Virtual Family Assistance Center (VFAC)**.*

Virtual Care for Families Who Have Lost Loved Ones to COVID-19

People can visit www.redcross.org/VFAC to access this resource with special virtual programs, information, referrals and services to support

families in need. The VFAC will also connect people to other community resources that may be provided when available. **People without internet access can call toll-free 833-492-0094 for help.**

This is an incredibly difficult time for everyone, but especially for those who have lost a loved one due to COVID-19. The Red Cross, in collaboration with our partners, is here to provide compassion and support as they grieve. Many families have experienced a disrupted bereavement and grief process due to restrictions related to COVID-19. To help, the Red Cross has set up a virtual team of specially trained mental health, spiritual care and health services volunteers who are:

- * Connecting with families over the phone to offer condolences, emotional and spiritual support, and access to available resources
- * Providing support for virtual memorial services for families, including connecting with local faith-based community partners
- * Hosting online classes to foster resilience and facilitate coping skills
- * Assisting families with access to national, state or local resources such as grief counseling, legal resources, funeral information, financial information services or veterans' assistance
- * Additional state and locally specific resources may be available in some areas.

Virtual Support for Frontline Workers: Free Individual and Group Sessions

Frontline and essential workers are experiencing extreme stress as they perform their routine duties helping others in the midst of the COVID-19 environment. A combination of stressful working conditions, long hours, insufficient resources, logistical challenges, multiple losses of clients, patients and co-workers, plus the serious risk to personal or family health and safety, have created hardships for people on the front lines of this crisis.

Individual and group emotional support for frontline workers is a free service to help frontline workers cope with the stress of working with families affected by COVID 19.

- Individuals – call tollfree 833-492-0094 or click the Request A Call link on the Virtual Family Assistance Center (VFAC) (www.redcross.org/vfac) site.
- Groups may schedule a support session using the Training Request Form link on the VFAC (www.redcross.org/vfac) site.

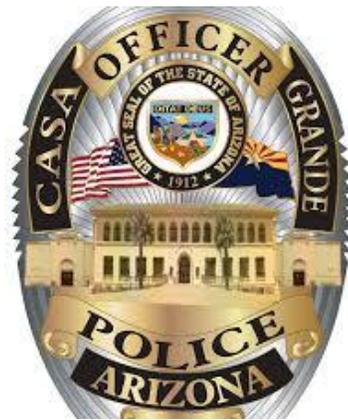
Red Cross volunteers who are professional healthcare providers, mental health providers and spiritual care providers will work with the individual directly or can schedule a group support session. All services are free and confidential.

People can visit [redcross.org/VFAC](https://www.redcross.org/VFAC) to find virtual programs, information, referrals and services to support at-risk and under-served survivors of COVID-19 fatalities, both at the national level and local level. The hub offers ways to connect with trained Red Cross volunteers available to help. **People without internet access can call 833-492-0094 for help.** Red Cross services are always free and confidential.

You are not alone!

Shield A Badge Support Ministry

Central Lutheran Church, along with other churches and organizations in the area are being invited to renew their participation in the “Shield a Badge” support ministry. Volunteers sign up to pray daily for a member of the Casa Grande Police Department praying for their safety and well-being.



The coordinator for Central Lutheran Church is Sandy Carpenter and she can be reached via phone or text at (703) 509-5651 or e-mail: carpesm56@gmail.com. In-the-past, approximately 20 members of CLC have signed up to pray for an officer, but she would like to double that listing. If you would like to volunteer to pray for an officer please contact Sandy and she will assign you an officer’s badge number.

The commitment is to pray daily for the safety and well-being of the officer for one year. Only the officer’s badge number is provided to the volunteer (no names or personal information is provided). Please feel free to contact Sandy with any additional questions you may have about the ministry.

Quilting

Do you enjoy sewing? Are you a quilter? Help make quilts that will bless people in need, far and wide. Masks are required to be worn. Thank you.

We received a wonderful donation of many quilt squares that are ready to be sewn. If you would like to pick some up to sew at home, contact Dell Hoff or Kathy Richards.

Financial Report

JANUARY FINANCIAL REPORT

God's Blessing to you all as we start the New Year. Hopefully you and your families had a wonderful Christmas and a great New Year's. I would like to start off the New Year by taking a moment and thanking the congregation for their generosity in 2020 in support of Central Lutheran Church. I look forward to 2021 and the new challenges we face as a congregation.



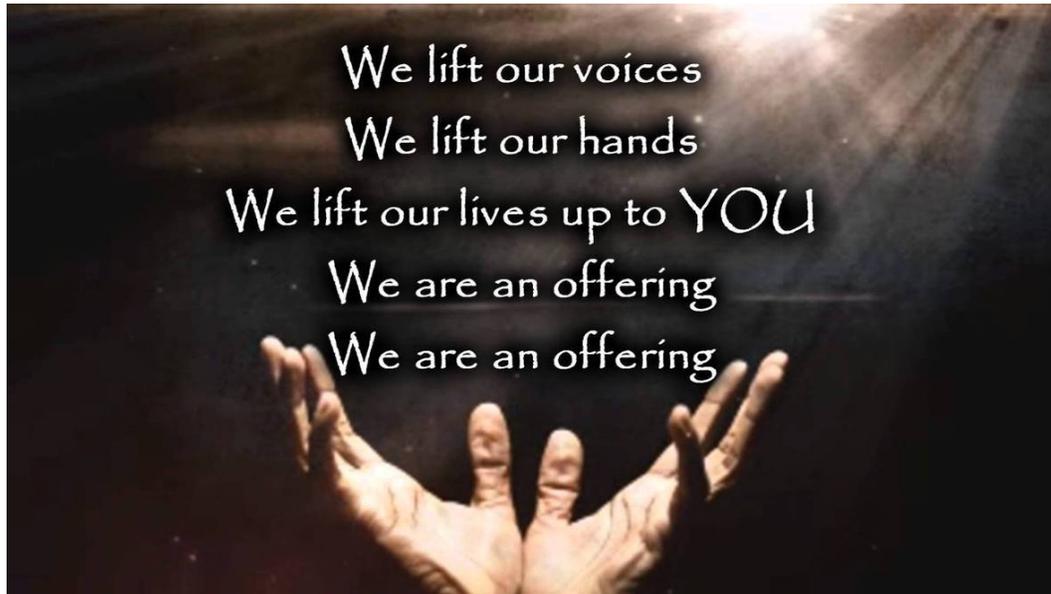
At the end of January, we will be having our Annual Meeting where I will be discussing the budget for 2021. I will explain where we were at the end of 2019 compared to 2020 and hopefully where we will be in 2021. The budget for the coming year is based on actual expenses. In trying to get our financial affairs in order, we have slashed our 2021 budget by \$53,000.00 from the 2020 budget.

In closing, this has been a difficult time for ALL CONGREGATIONS. We have suffered thru the Corona Virus. It is our hope the worst times are behind us. I would like to thank Pastor Annemarie for her service to our congregation for the past eight months and wish her the very best in her new call and congregation. I also look forward to working with Pastor Bob Kleinke as our Interim Pastor until which time a permanent Pastor will be called. Pastor Bob has been serving on the Church Council and has been

a valuable member of our congregation. Again, thank you Pastor Bob for helping us out one more time!

God's Blessings,

Steve Gal, Council Treasurer



"What You Have First Given Us"

Merciful Father, we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love.

Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

On the **second weekend of each month** we continue to prayerfully consider the challenge to double our offering. The reason for this proposal is the need to increase offerings and the belief many people have the ability to fulfill such a request. As we consider this challenge, we can ask ourselves, "how come I don't give more?" Thank you for your contributions to our growing ministry.

During this pandemic, please continue to support CLC.

**MAIL your offerings (Casa Grande or AZ City) to:
Central Lutheran Church, PO Box 677 Arizona City, AZ 85123
Also consider setting up REGULAR, AUTOMATIC GIVING through
your financial institution or PayPal.**

Casa Grande Food Bank

You can help alleviate hunger in our community. You may bring your donations of food directly to the Casa Grande Food Bank at:

235 E 4th St
Casa Grande, AZ, 85122
(Cross Streets: Marshall St & 4th St)



All non-perishable, non-expired, food items are welcome. They are open to receive donations of food from Noon to 4:00 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. For questions, you may call them at 520-560-0525.

Thank you for helping to feed our neighbors!



Share your gifts

Your worship participation is needed! Contact Pastor Bob or a Council Member if you can help in any of these areas:

- Read the scriptures
- Musical interlude/singing or instrumental
- Do you know WordPress? Can you help update information on the website?
- Help set up worship services
- Usher
- Bring desserts for [hot lunch program](#)

[Email](#) or talk to Pastor Bob if you can help in any way.

Keep your eyes, ears and hearts open to how you can help with this transition. Prayerfully remember everyone in our congregation during this time of change.

Click on images below to find out more about the program! You can help in so many areas of CLC outreach!



Senior Center



Grief support



Community Food Pantry



Eloy Free Hot Lunch Program



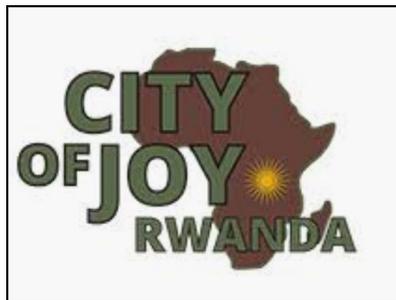
Manna Bags



Travel samples



Good Gifts Ministry



City of Joy



Youth Night



Shield a Badge



Prayer Requests



Volunteer - ESL



GED training/volunteer opportunities



Church Photo Directory

Remember in Prayer

Dick Christopher, Patricia Linnes, John Pieschl, Ruth (Donna Erickson's sister), Ina and Roger Johnson, Joanne Johnson, Sandy Carpenter, Susie Klopp, Ray Johnston, Ruth Kramer, Bill, Azure Sullivan Gal.

Bereavement:

The Family and Friends of Sig Malvik and Julie Donovan

Military Service:

Please let Pastor Bob know of anyone serving in the Military.



[Click for Prayer Request option on website](#)

CONTINUING TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR

"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know

that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 13:34-35

For the good of our neighbors and ourselves, we continue to practice physical-distancing due to the COVID-19 coronavirus. It is an airborne respiratory illness that can easily spread from person to person. As Christians, it seems strange to show God’s love by keeping physical distance from each other, but this is precisely what we are called to do at this time.

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, God calls us to care for the most vulnerable among us to make God’s love for them known through our actions. So, we continue to wear cloth face coverings, keep a minimum of 6 feet between us, washing our hands frequently and for a minimum of 20 seconds, covering our mouth and nose with a tissue or our sleeve (not our hands) when coughing or sneezing, etc—all to keep our neighbors safe. Loving our neighbor as Christ has called us to do happens in context, in this age and every age.

Thank you for your faithfulness as we follow this call to love and serve. Thank you for all you have done and are continuing to do. We’ve been doing this for months now, and we’re not out of the woods yet; you may be feeling the fatigue of this constant vigilance. Many of us are. You might be experiencing the feelings of sadness, grief, fear, annoyance, anger, relief, guilt, confusion. God knows what you are feeling—talk with Him about it honestly. God will receive you in love and mercy.

Let us be united and let us not grow weary in this shared commitment to love our neighbors. The Holy Spirit is with us, and it is by the power of the Holy Spirit that we can be inspired for continued commitment.

We continue to suspend indoor gatherings in our church buildings. We are now offering in-person worship services outdoors, and those worship services will be recorded for those whose health prevents them from gathering in-person with others. As the medical and scientific communities continue to learn about COVID-19, it has been found that this airborne virus spreads most effectively where people gather in enclosed spaces for extended amounts of time. This calls us to be particularly vigilant about gathering in-person for worship or other events. Our decisions will be based on scientific and medical information, and in conversation with the Arizona Department of Health Services and the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at the churchwide and local levels.

Let us continue to hold one another in mutual love, caring for the most vulnerable among us. Let us join together in worship, whether in-person outdoors or from our homes; continue sending in our offerings by mail, PayPal, or through our financial institutions; continue reaching out to one another through phone calls, emails, a caring note in the mail; continue showing our compassion and understanding to all.

For more information go to the websites for the Centers for Disease Control at www.cdc.gov/COVID19 and the Arizona Department of Health Services www.azdhs.gov. For information from the Grand Canyon Synod of the ELCA visit www.gcsynod.org.

Worship at Central

We are at this time worshipping OUTDOORS at:

Arizona City ----- Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

Casa Grande ----- Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

Our Worship

Our focus is on the good news shared by God through Jesus Christ, and is celebrated through the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion.

Worship Assistants

You are needed to help as accompanist, greeter, usher, reader, communion server, offering counter, and nursery care. Sign-up to help.

Our Mission

“We are a Spirit-filled community of loving and caring, light-hearted people who joyfully invite all to share, through the Gospel, the love of Christ.”

Multi-Site Ministry

- Draw upon resources to meet the needs of each campus
 - Use of congregational resources based on needs
 - Programs at one or both sites
 - One governing body, one budget
 - Staff active on both campuses
 - Capital projects at both campuses
-

Contact Us

Church Office: churchoffice@centrallutheranaz.org

Pastor Bob: pastor@centrallutheranaz.org

Website: www.centrallutheranaz.org

Arizona City Campus

12921 S. Sunland Gin Road (PO Box 677), Arizona City, AZ 85123

PH: (520) 466-5024

Casa Grande Campus

324 N Sacaton Street , Casa Grande, AZ 85122

PH: (520) 316-9659

For postal service use PO Box 677 Arizona City, AZ 85123

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