



Central Lutheran Church

Come Share the Spirit!

Central News – September 2020

"How Long, O Lord?"

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:4-7



In worship for the four Sundays of September 20 through October 11, we will hear from each of the four chapters of Paul's Letter to the Philippians.

Paul is writing to the Philippians from prison. Knowing that, we might expect his letter to be full of sorrow and weighted with despair but that couldn't be farther from the case! The letter is full of hope and encouragement and rejoicing and thanksgiving to God. Paul recognizes that God is bringing good even in the circumstance of his terrible imprisonment (can you imagine what first century prison conditions must have been like?), spreading the gospel to the imperial guard and everyone else, and using Paul to encourage the church through his words. Even in the midst of the worst situations, God can and does create new life.

We have been living with this pandemic for six months now. Back in March we all hoped it would be over with quickly but that has turned out not to be the case. We find ourselves echoing the voices of the psalm writers, "How long, O Lord? How long?" because we ourselves do not know the answer. So we persevere with kindness and patience and love

for one another and neighbor (this is a good time to review those fruits of the Holy Spirit in Galatians 5:22–25). For we know that, even in the midst of this extremely difficult time, God is bringing about new life, continually making of us a new creation and using each one of us to be Light and Love for our neighbors wherever we are.

I invite you to join me in reading the whole of Philippians, this letter of encouragement and hope, between now and October 11, in whatever version of the Bible you like best. Even better, you might try reading it in a variety of translations and discover what insights you may receive from noticing the differences between them. If you don't have a Bible in a translation that works for you, don't hesitate to reach out to me. I'm always happy to work with you in finding a Bible that does!

Let us allow Paul's words encourage us today, encouraging us to be of Christ's mind together:

"If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.

"Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Philippians 2:1–11

God's peace and grace to you.

Pastor Annemarie

Pastor Annemarie Burke began serving as Interim Pastor of Central Lutheran on May 18, 2020. Originally from Tucson, Pastor Annemarie is a graduate of the University of Arizona and Luther



Seminary and has served congregations in Utah, Colorado, California, and now Arizona. She loves music in most any form, prefers spending her time outside rather than inside, is a dog-person but owns a cat, and can wax poetic about Star Trek. Pastor Annemarie lives in Chandler and enjoys the desert drive between there and Casa Grande and Arizona City.

Virtual Tutoring Breaks Out of the Gates!

*"And they're off!" That was the traditional Kentucky Derby announcer's proclamation when the annual horse race began this weekend. Virtual spectators' excitement and anticipation at that moment was much like how the **Community Education** team feels now as they begin virtual ESL and GED tutoring. Three more volunteers "broke out of the gates" and are beginning their virtual tutoring experience with their assigned learners. Read about Lynda Wyss's first session a few days ago...*



Lynda Wyss

"Prior to the call, I felt well-prepared," Lynda said. She had completed the virtual tutoring orientation and was comfortable with Zoom and the online curriculum she would be using. "But I knew I might have to change my plans during the call — you know, have other options and be willing to let the call move along naturally." Lynda recalled flexibility was important even during the face-to-face language tutoring sessions. "I also knew I would need to dedicate time to establish rapport during this first call. You never know how long that can take."

Lynda contemplated her first experience thoughtfully. In fact, everything didn't go as smoothly as she would have liked. "I forgot about the time zone difference," she shared. "So, I joined our Zoom call session an hour early and no one showed up. That kind of threw me off. I sent a message to Eva, (Program Tutoring Coordinator), and we realized 10:00 a.m. hadn't yet arrived in Arizona. Eva and I had a good laugh about that one!"

Continuing with the call recap, Lynda said that when Eva, she and her participant, Gema [pronounced "He-mah"] eventually joined the Zoom call, Eva kicked it off by introducing everyone. They tested their microphones and cameras to make sure Zoom call audio and video were functioning as expected, and they began to get acquainted. Lynda learned that Gema, 35, is from Nicaragua and she has lived in Arizona for about a year. Gema's career background is in business administration. She shared her dream to go to college and pursue that career interest. Right now she cares for her 8-year-old son and works nights. Gema explained her work shift changes every couple of months, which means she may need some scheduling flexibility in the future. They talked about what is easy and difficult for Gema when it comes to conversing in English. Like many second language learners, Gema shared that she wants to be more comfortable speaking and understanding English during doctor visits. As they chatted, Lynda listened carefully to get a feel for Gema's speaking abilities.

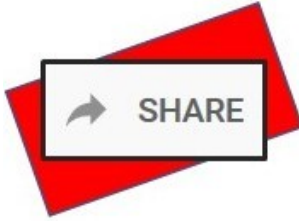
As the call progressed, Lynda introduced Gema to the online ESL curriculum and showed her how to sign up as Lynda's student. They discussed plans to begin meeting once a week and set the date and time for the next Zoom call. To get the ball rolling, Gema accepted her first homework assignment—to send Lynda an email with a few simple sentences in English. Then, they wrapped up the call, Gema expressing excitement for what's ahead. Lynda reflected, "It was a joyous finish, really. I think we are all excited."

And so....they're off!



	Number of passed GED tests	Previous Progress	Current Progress
Math		13	13
Language Arts		10	12
Science		11	13
Social Studies		11	12
Civics tests		13	15
GEDs earned		11	12

Join Us In Worship!



We are currently worshipping online! New worship videos are posted to [our YouTube channel](#) every Sunday morning. Join in worship from wherever you are!

Under every worship video there's a button to click on that says "**Share.**" Who do you know that you could share worship with? Someone who might not come with you to worship when we meet in person, but who might click on a link in the familiarity of their own home? Maybe a friend, a coworker, a relative. Email or text them the link to Sunday worship! More and more people are attending worship than ever before--from their homes. Now is the time for evangelism!

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.

Help Us Connect!

Click this image to update your contact information.

Even if you've had no recent changes, you can fill out the form with all your current information to make sure what we have is complete and correct.



Click image to update. Even if no changes, please complete.

Thank you!

Financial Update

Good day and God's blessings to all. During the month of August we have taken several steps to help improve the financial situation of our congregation. However, I would like to take a minute by thanking each and every one of you for your continued support of the church by your offerings.

The past month the following steps have been taken to help our church in the short term in hopes our individual offerings will improve and our in person worship service will hopefully start soon.

We did get approved for an extension on paying the interest only on our mortgage till November of this year. The interest on the mortgage is \$511.63 versus \$3,767.00 for the mortgage. This saves us \$3255.37 per month till the December payment. Gary Erickson was instrumental in getting this accomplished. I must also state, on the first of October we will start paying rent at the Casa Grande Church site for \$1,000.00 per month.

We submitted an application for the Cares Program, which was for small businesses, and 501C3's (Non-Profit Organization's), which have lost money or staff due to the corona virus. Due to being a church and a

community outreach program we were able to apply based on our GED Program and our 501C3 status. A reimbursement of up to \$10,000.00 is possible by the city of Casa Grande. Applications will still be accepted up till September 11th.

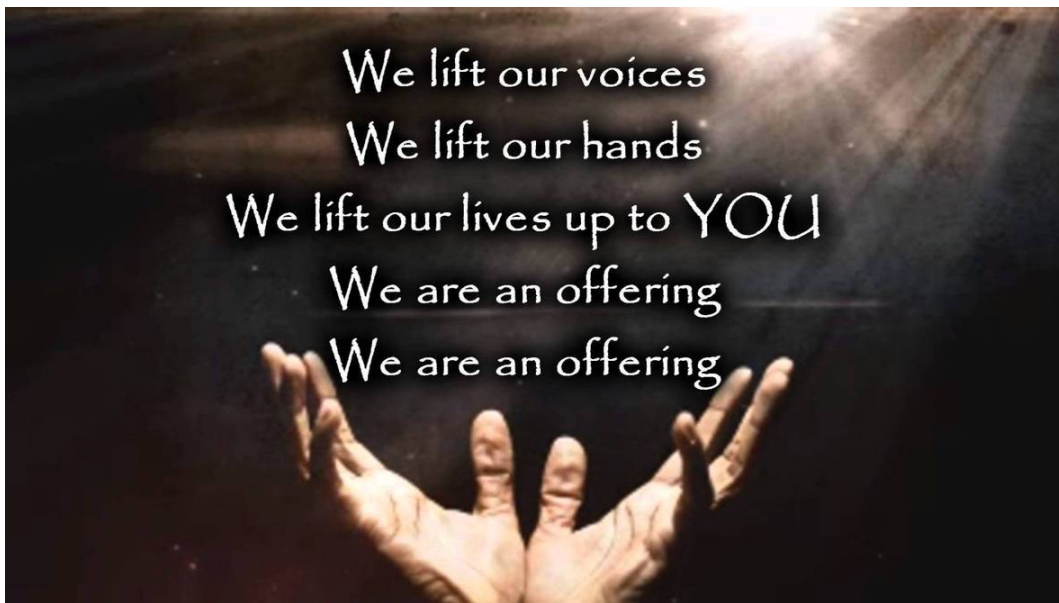
A new internet service is now installed in the Arizona City Site in both the church and Fellowship Hall. The new service is free to churches and schools. The savings per month will be around \$100.00.

The offerings for the month of August increased substantially over July. July's total giving was \$7060.00 and August total giving was \$12,800.00. We thank you again for your generosity. However, we failed to meet our expenses again for the month. In essence, our expenses for the church exceeded the offerings we received from the congregation.

I will continue to update the congregation concerning the financial status of our church on a need to know. May God bless you and keep you all well.

Steve Gal,

Church 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.

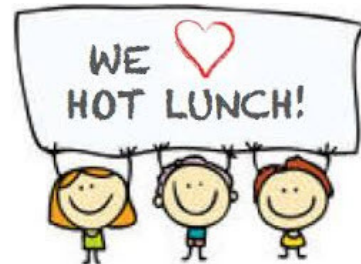
During this time of worshiping online, please continue to support CLC.

**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.**

Can you supply cookies or dessert to help out?

FREE Hot Lunch Program (for all ages)

You can help support this outreach program in our community! Baked or bought – supply some finger-food dessert goodies!



Did you know that veterans, elderly, parents, children can get a good meal at the Eloy Hot Lunch program? No questions asked. This is a community outreach program for CLC where you can help! St. Vincent de Paul serves a hot meal to 60+ people who need a meal three days a week! We provide dessert for the Eloy Hot lunch program on Wednesdays. Can you bake or buy treats for the hot lunch? Treats do not need to be individually wrapped, but they do need to be “finger food”. Once we are back at church in Casa Grande or AZ City you can stick your treats with a “hot lunch” tag in the church fridge or freezer (plate, bags or boxed) for the ladies to deliver to the program site (just let them know they are there). Ideally we would like to stock our freezer with treats for the program! You do not deliver directly to lunch – all donations go to Sandy Christopher or Judy Smith. Questions? Contact Sandy Christopher (520-483-1442) . During our suspended

service time contact Sandy directly to figure out pickup/delivery options.

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

During this time of worshiping from home, your participation is needed! Contact Pastor Annemarie or a Council Member if you can help in any of these areas:

- Video recording and editing
- Read the lesson from home
- Musical interlude/singing or instrumental from home or at church
- Preparing paraments, banners, decorations and flowers for worship
- Providing office assistance in creating newsletter, taking phone calls and messages (a couple hours a week)
- Do you know WordPress? Can you help update information on the website? (email webmaster@centrallutheranaz.org)

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.

Send your newsletter or website information to webmaster@centrallutheranaz.org

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



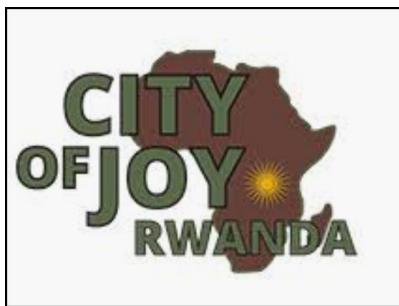
Manna Bags



Travel samples



Good Gifts Ministry



City of Joy



Friendship Center Ministry



Youth Night



Shield of Badge



Prayer Requests



Volunteer - ESL



GED training/volunteer opportunities



Church Photo Directory

Remember in Prayer

Harry Brink, Willie Bergren, Trent Blessing, Judy Burrue, Butch Burke, Sandy Carpenter, Carole Crain, Anne Decker, Wayne Eliason, Ellva Erickson, TJ Esco, Azure Sullivan Gal, Pam Gardner, Tom Gearhart, Ken Going, Rachel Grack, Gerre Graves, Naomi and David Grobe, Harold Hall, Darcy Hunter, Penny Jacobson, Marty Jones, Dwight Jorgensen, Ron Jung, Tammy Kempke, Ruth Kramer, Gary and Bev Linafelter, Ken and Lois Morgan, Ric Moser, Dick Mueser, Maria de Nazare, Walt Neulieb, Red and Dede Parrish, Ruthann Raitter, Marcus Ramirez, Jacquelynn Decker Regan, Sue Resch, Ragen Shein, Denise Shepard, Coby Snow, Michele Rios & Marcus de Souza Lima, Julie Sternhagen, Iranice Tavares, Linda Ward, Ski Wrybkowski.



Bereavement:

The Family and Friends of Sandy Burkhart

The Family and Friends of Peggy Hall

The Family and Friends of Gertie Kenyon

The Family and Friends of Janet Leary

The Family and Friends of Sue Rhoades

Military Service:

Caleb Ball, Grant Davis, Ryan Harrison, Sean Harrison, CJ Squires.



Click for Prayer Request option on website

LOVING 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, 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.

While we continue to suspend in-person gatherings in our church buildings, we are worshipping online. As the medical and scientific communities learn more 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. We are taking great care in making decisions about when, and in what ways, we will be able gather in-person. 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.

In the meantime, let us join together in worship every Sunday online singing and praying to God 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.gcsyond.org.

From the Arizona Department of Health Services (updated 9/1/20):

There are effective ways to practice physical distancing and reduce the risk to yourself others: _

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. It is especially important to clean hands after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. _
- *Stay at home when you are sick.*
- *Avoid close contact (within 6 feet) with others.* _
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) and immediately throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Consider wearing cloth face coverings, if it can be safely managed, in public settings where other physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
- If you are at higher risk for severe illness, you should avoid attending

places of worship. People at higher risk for severe illness include adults 65 or older and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions._

Worship at Central

Under normal circumstances, Worship Services are held at:

Arizona City ----- Sunday – 8:30 a.m.

Casa Grande ----- Sunday -- 10 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
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Contact Us

Church Office: churchoffice@centrallutheranaz.org
Pastor Annemarie Burke: pastor@centrallutheranaz.org
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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