



# Central Lutheran Church

*Come Share the Spirit!*

## Central News – June 2020

### IT'S TIME TO BE CHURCH

*“And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting....”*  
*Acts 2:2*

Welcome to the Time of the Church. We have celebrated the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit formed us as the Church, the Body of Christ in the world. The holy breath of God blew through the disciples and equipped them to bring the Good News to all, breaking down the barriers of language, culture, and race. The Holy Spirit changed their lives and stirred their lives not to stay in their familiar places but to blow them out into the world around them.

And now we go forward into the Time of the Church, the season after Pentecost, knowing that God continues to breathe in us and through us God's new life. God still equips us today to bring the Good News of God's Love to all. What happens when the Holy Spirit moves *us* and opens *our* ears to hear and understand the people around us?

This newsletter comes at the beginning of June when our nation is crying out in pain. Our streets resound with the language of the cry for justice. Can you hear them? Will you, through the grace and power of Holy Spirit, seek humbly to understand them?

As Christians we believe unconditionally in the promise of God's love for all people and that all of us in this world are neighbors one to another, neighbors who stop to help when someone is dying in the ditch (Luke 10:30–37). Let us seek to love each other irrespective of our differences, as Christ first loved us. Let us seek to understand each other in our differences and learn to appreciate one another, that we may become ever more fully the Body of Christ—who came to serve humbly and love widely.

God grant that each one of us be a person of compassion during these times. God widen our willingness to understand those we disagree with or differ from. God give us the humility to see Christ in everyone we see. God empower us to work that all people may breathe deeply the Holy Spirit of God.

This newsletter also comes at a time when we grow weary of the coronavirus pandemic even though it is still with us. But take heart: Central Lutheran Church is alive and well during this pandemic!

We are worshiping online: join in worship from your homes on Sunday mornings. You'll find it at our website [www.centrallutheranaz.org](http://www.centrallutheranaz.org) and in your email inboxes on Sunday mornings. We continue to give our offerings: you can mail them in, or use Pay Pal, or directly through your financial institution. Because of your offerings, prayers, and efforts, we continue to minister through our important work of Adult Education GED/ESL classes: see this newsletter for the encouraging updates we have there. We participate in serving our congregation: see in this newsletter the article "Share Your Gifts." We serve our community through the Eloy Hot Lunch Program, Community Food Pantry, and much more: see this newsletter for details on all those important ministries as well.

We continue to be church together. And in the coming weeks, I want to grow in connecting with each other from our own homes in midweek devotions, congregational Bible reading, and prayer. Let's use this time growing in our faith and knowing God's presence and call. We can discover creative and effective ways to do these things from home during this time.

It is the time for the Church to live ever more deeply and widely in *being* the Church. And through the Holy Spirit, we can!

I commend to you the following letter from the Rev. Deborah Hutterer, Bishop of the Grand Canyon Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the synod's recommendations, encouragement and counsel during this time.

God's peace and grace to you.  
Pastor Annemarie

**Protecting Our  
Vulnerable by Waiting to**



**Bishop's Letter: May 28,  
2020**

I have been encouraged to respond to what I believe is an ill-advised statement to “open houses of worship,” given all the evidence that the coronavirus is still spreading. This week, the COVID-19 death toll across our country reached 100,000 souls. To date, infections number over 17,000 in Arizona and over 8,000 in both Nevada and Utah. Over 1,300 people have died in the three states.

Such statistics testify this is not the time to gather in-person.

As I read resources about in-person worship, I would sum up the guidance to churches in one, simple phrase: “Just because you can gather for worship, doesn't mean you should.”

I agree with this sentiment. This is not the time to put aside our concerns for the well-being of the most vulnerable in our communities: people who live in poverty, seniors, Native, Black, and Latinx persons. Each of these communities is disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

There are many things we do not know about this virus. Public health officials and the medical community continue to share what they know, which is that this airborne virus spreads most effectively where people gather in enclosed spaces for extended amounts of time. We don't know why some places seem to be spared and some devastated, but we do know this virus has a gravity of contagion, and won't stop spreading until our communities reach herd immunity of 60-80% through infection or vaccine. We know we may go through rolling waves of in-person gathering levels as infections affect different local communities in our geographically vast synod. The Navajo Nation is a current hot-spot, and any of our communities could be next.

The Grand Canyon Synod is one of the five synods in Region 2. Three synods—Sierra Pacific, Pacifica, and Southwest California—encourage congregations to refrain from in-person gathering through the end of July. The Rocky Mountain Synod is encouraging online worship—what has proven to be a very effective tool for evangelism—until the end of August. I have encouraged that there be no in-person gathering until the deaths or cases of newly infected decrease for a minimum of 14 days. At that point, small groups under ten could begin to gather. After 28 days of decrease, groups of less than 50 could begin to gather.

Please remember, worship is not the only reason we come together as congregations. Throughout our synod, we hear the encouraging news of how people are gathering and connecting in new ways for Bible Study, service opportunities, prayer, and other acts of compassion and care. We are witness to great conversations of discussing hopes for ministry now and on the other side of this pandemic.

Such conversations form an idea we wish to share for further discussion: before we move into trying to navigate all of the restrictions that are currently in place for in-person worship, perhaps our best time and energies are spent gathering for Bible Study, services of contemplative prayer, and providing food for people in our communities who are in need. We could do this while gathering in-person as minimally as possible. Imagine what might come out of such times of study, prayer and service that would inform how we will worship when we are able to safely gather again!

I am weary of sheltering in place. I miss hugging my parents. I miss gathering around the Table for Holy Communion. I miss being on the road to visit the congregations and ministries of our Grand Canyon Synod. I miss having the chance to connect with you in ways other than Zoom.

And yet I am hopeful. Hopeful that the infection and death rates for COVID-19 will begin to decline, and grateful our choices are contributing to that. Hopeful that we, as followers of Jesus, will act with concern for the well-being of all. Hopeful because of the weekend worship I experience when I have drop by our congregations as they are online. Hopeful because I see Christ's presence in the care and concern that is being offered by our congregations and ministries to the many who are in need.

God works through you in your witness of hope in midst of uncertainty. God works through you as you are patient, wise and discern how this time deepens our trust and places where we listen for God's leading and guiding.

The Holy Spirit is active and alive, is blowing away the old, and blowing in the new.

The Rev. Deborah K. Hutterer  
Bishop  
Grand Canyon Synod of the ELCA

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## 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.

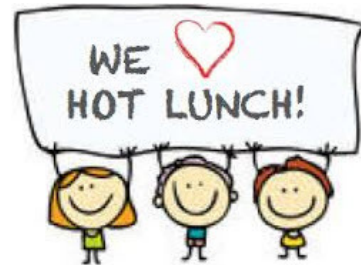


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## Can you supply cookies or dessert to help out?

### 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.



## Share your gifts

At this time we do not know when services on-site will re-open. Contact Pastor or a Council Member if you can help in any of these areas.

During this period your help may be needed:

- 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](mailto: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](mailto:webmaster@centrallutheranaz.org)

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## News

As we head into the summer months, we as a congregation must be cognizant of not only our financial obligations but also our spiritual obligations. As a congregation in transition we must strive to meet them equally. I for one have often failed. I have often looked to others to fulfill the role I should be fulfilling myself. I would ask each and every member of our congregation to do the same. Ask yourself, am I expecting another member to fulfill a role I should be doing myself? If the answer is yes, step forward and fulfill a role that will benefit the church.

For the month of May, our expenses exceeded our gifts by approximately \$4000,00. The summer months are always a difficult time for our church for giving. I challenge each and every member of

our congregation to look in the mirror and see if we individually are meeting the “CHALLENGE”

God Bless,  
Steve Gal, Council, Treasurer

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*Click for Prayer Request option on website*

### “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 suspended worship service, please continue to support CLC.

**All offerings (Casa Grande or AZ City) should be mailed to: Central Lutheran Church, PO Box 677 Arizona City, AZ 85123**

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



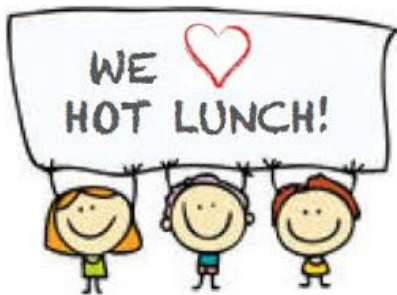
Senior Center



Grief support



Community Food Pantry



Eloy Free Hot Lunch Program



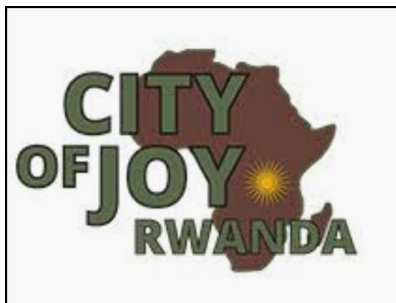
Manna Bags



Travel samples



Good Gifts Ministry



City of Joy



Friendship Center Ministry



Youth Night



Shield of Badge



Prayer Requests





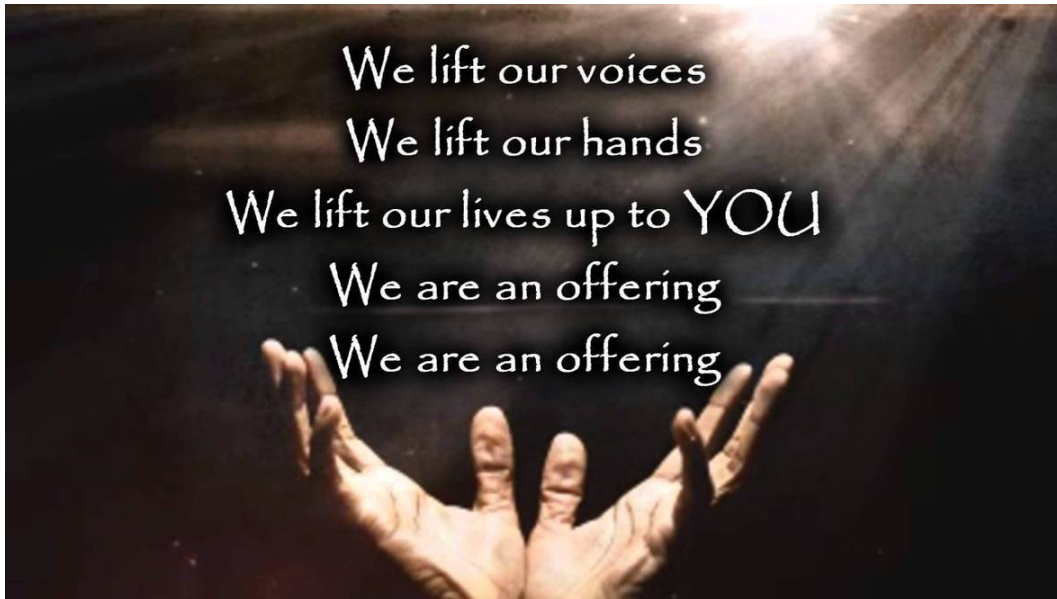
Volunteer - ESL



GED training/volunteer opportunities



Church Photo Directory



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



## Community Education Ministry Update

Good news! While the normal tutoring ministry is suspended due to the current risk level of the pandemic, there is still a lot going on.

Eva Torres, the tutoring coordinator, has maintained contact with all of the participants to stay in touch. She has let them know that, by using technology, community education ministry team members are available to support their GED test preparation or to arrange connections with tutors who can help them learn English. While most participants have declined the offer due to lack of available computers, Smart phones, Internet service or time -- the kids are not in school and it is crazy at home these days -- Eva is tutoring a few participants who are able through video calls. Similarly, Ian Denham, a new year round volunteer, is using video call technology to offer conversation practice with his assigned language learner.

Phone and email inquiries about the program continue and they are answered in a timely manner with the promise to follow up again when the program resumes. Also, two new volunteers have joined the tutoring team and are excited to get started.

Eva and Alyson are also taking advantage of the downtime to work on projects and resources for the team to prepare participants for the citizenship test and GED language arts essay writing. Periodic computer maintenance ensures the laptop operating systems are updated and virus-free. Last, but not least, they are enhancing volunteer recruiting and training so the team is ready and equipped with more ways to serve participants' learning needs.

The hope is the time to resume in-person tutoring will come soon. Eva reports that participants are anxious to resume their progress when it is safe and their family schedules once again offer time to do so. In the meantime, please join the community education team in praying for everyone's safety and health.



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

## 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 many weeks 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 worshiping 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](http://www.cdc.gov/COVID19) and the Arizona Department of Health Services [www.azdhs.gov](http://www.azdhs.gov). For information from the Grand Canyon Synod of the ELCA visit [www.gcsyond.org](http://www.gcsyond.org).

*From the Arizona Department of Health Services (updated 6/2/20):*

\_The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed. The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person between people who

are in close contact with one another (within 6 feet). This occurs through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. \_

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

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## Remember in Prayer

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



Bereavement -- the family and friends of Gertie Kenyon; and, the family and friends of Sue Rhoades.

Military Service -- Caleb Ball, Grant Davis, Ryan Harrison, Sean Harrison, CJ Squires.

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## Worship Schedule

**When in-person worship resumes, services will be held:**

**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.

Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday at all services.

Fellowship is held at both sites each Sunday.

### Worship Assistants

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

### Altar Flowers

Sign-up to provide flowers on the altar for a special remembrance or event.

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## 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](mailto:churchoffice@centrallutheranaz.org)

**Pastor Annemarie Burke:** [pastor@centrallutheranaz.org](mailto:pastor@centrallutheranaz.org)

[www.centrallutheranaz.org](http://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

**Note: for postal service use PO Box 677 Arizona City, AZ 85123**

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