



Central Lutheran Church

Come Share the Spirit!

Central News - August 2019

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Augustus Caesar

As Rome's first emperor, Octavian (Augustus Caesar, 63 B.C.-A.D. 14) is best known for initiating the Pax Romana, a largely peaceful period of two centuries in which Rome imposed order on a world long convulsed by conflict.

Octavian was 18 years old when his great-uncle Julius Caesar named him heir. After Caesar was assassinated, Octavian forged an alliance with Mark Antony and Marcus Aemilius Lepidus. Together they eliminated political opponents.

But Octavian and Antony turned from allies to adversaries. Antony entered into a scandalous relationship with Queen Cleopatra of Egypt. He then defied Octavian by challenging his claim as true heir. Octavian waged war on the couple and defeated their forces in 31 B.C. This resulted in the suicide of Antony and Cleopatra.

Returning to Rome in triumph, Octavian added the title Augustus (meaning "sacred" or "exalted") to his adopted surname, Caesar.

Augustus was an organizational genius, his administrative accomplishments surpassed his military feats. The ultimate source of his power was the army. He



halved the number of legions and settled veterans in colonies, which helped Romanize distant provinces and consolidate the empire. The Pax Romana held for generations, until A.D. 180, and instead of conflict Rome imposed order.

Early Christianity

Jesus was born during the "Peace of Rome." God chose this time for Jesus. God's careful planning uses this setting to introduce and to spread the gospel.

The gospel spread through the witness of ordinary people. The Pax Romana provided an environment that allowed safe travel throughout the empire. A road system connecting towns facilitated easier travel. Roman discipline cut down of crime along the roads and piracy on the Mediterranean Sea. Paul and other disciples could travel with relative ease, increasing the spread of the gospel.

The Pax Romana also had an impact on language, as Greek became the common language used within the empire. Within the early church people used Greek to spread the gospel from person to person. The New Testament, written in Koine Greek, was easily accessible to people in every part of the empire. Paul's letters could make their rounds to the churches and be understood by all.

Furthermore, Rome was generally tolerant toward religious matters. As long as Christians were not suspected of "disturbing the peace," they were allowed to worship and evangelize.

Jesus taught of a non-violent revolution that would initiate the beginning of God's kingdom. He emphasized time after time to refrain from violence. In the years of the Pax Romana, Christian citizens and residents of the empire, as long as they were not considered a threat, were allowed the freedom of spreading the good news.

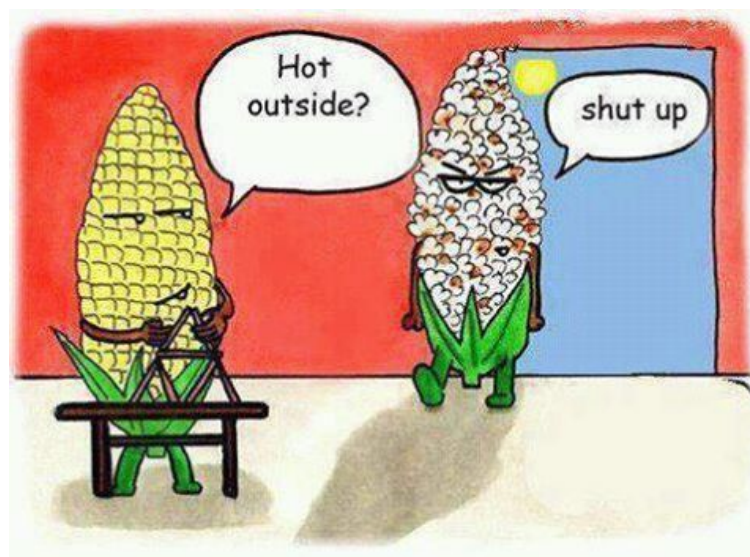
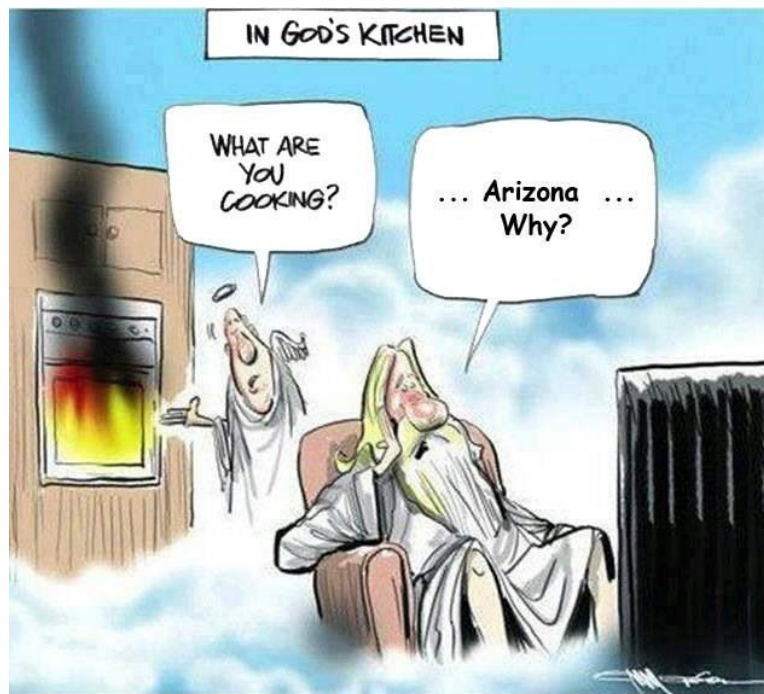
The Month of August

During his reign, Julius Caesar directed that the Roman calendar be reformed. The Julian calendar was implemented as of January 1, 45 B.C. In the new calendar the month, Quintilis (quin - five) was renamed July in his honor (in the old Roman calendar the year began with March).

After Octavian defeated Mark Antony, the Roman senate declared the month of Sextillis (sex - six, the month of the victory) would be renamed August, commemorating the newly crowned Augustus Caesar.

The months of July and August were each given 31 days in order to honor both emperors equally.

Summer, You Have to Laugh



[Upcoming Events](#)

[Study and Discussion](#)

Friendship Center Ministry

Robson Ranch

Sunday Inter-Denominational Worship
8:30 a.m. Vacation Bible Church



Laredo Room

Central Lutheran Church is sponsoring and assisting the development of the Friendship Center ministry for the Robson Ranch community under the direction of Pastor Ron Hunt. The ministry will focus on being a welcoming and supportive spiritual environment for the residents of the community. It will be offering the opportunity to hear the good news of Jesus and make a difference in the lives of others through personal callings.

Our congregation can share in prayer, study, outreach, administrative needs and financial support. Specific opportunities will be shared in the coming weeks.

Youth Night Class

Our youth group meets on Wednesday evenings from 6-7:30 p.m. at our Casa Grande campus. Our program includes our elementary, middle school and high school students. Classes for the different age groups are led by Kara Cooper and Pastor Thom.



Good Grief

*"Grief never ends, but it changes.
It's a passage, not a place to stay.
Grief is not a sign of weakness,
nor a lack of faith.
It is the price of love."*

(Author Unknown)

Because of all the people and things in life we love, life is full of sorrow, sadness, distress, pain, suffering, and, adversity. Life is full of loss in many different forms. Unique in many ways. Common in many ways.

These gatherings are intended to provide opportunities to share grief. To be comforted, to comfort. To be helped, to help. To be supported, to support others. Meetings will continue later this summer.

Please contact Pastor Thom or Judy Smith for any questions or needs.

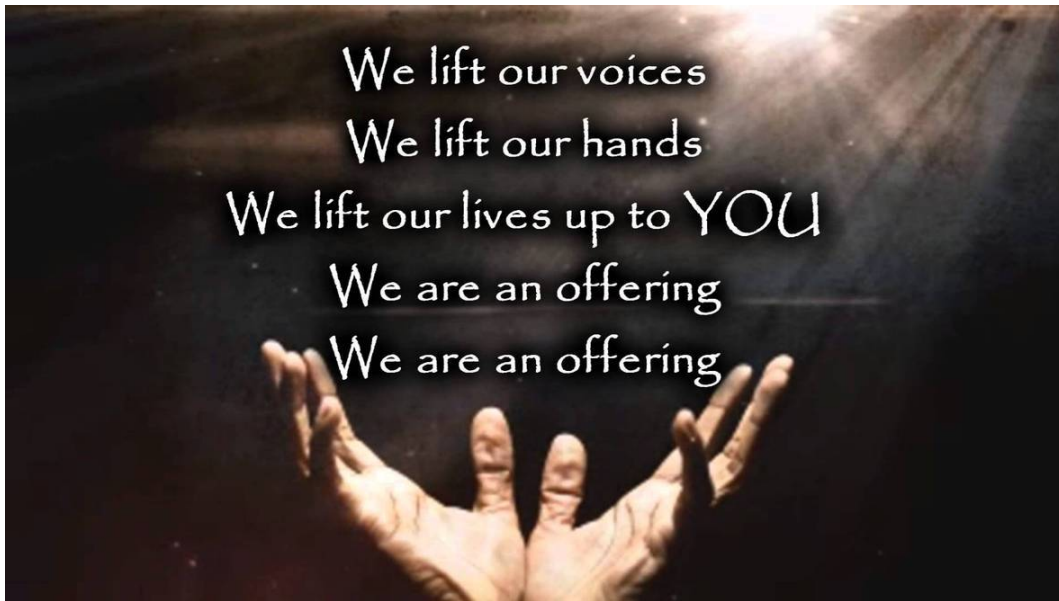
Summer Softball Season

Your "Saints" finished the season in 6th place with a record of 8 and 6.

The season ending tournament will be held on Monday, August 5th with the first game at 7:15 p.m.

Games are played on Monday nights at the Paul Mason Sportsplex on Pinal Ave. in Casa Grande.

Special thanks to the fans who come out to support our team.



Our Stewardship

We continue to celebrate our growth reflected in a greater number of worshipers, worshipers who have met their monthly offering goal (even when missing a worship service), and, those who have doubled their offering on the second Sunday of each month.

We have held the belief that many of us have had the ability to grow in our giving. Continuing to ask ourselves, "how come I don't give more?"

Your contributions have made it possible for us to extend our benevolence to many areas of need. This year the council will designate contributions to:

All Hands and Hearts -- assisting the recovery effort of the people of Puerto Rico;

City of Joy Rwanda -- sponsoring a student in Rwanda for an entire school year;

Lutheran Disaster Relief -- the ELCA provides extensive support for the relief and recovery efforts of the impacted regions;

Refugee Program -- Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest supports the resettlement of families from around the world in Arizona;

Florence Immigration and Refugee Rights Project -- providing educational materials, sports equipment, school supplies, pregnancy and new parent support;

Maricopa Lutheran Church -- assisting the congregation's efforts to establish a permanent location in their community;

Friendship Center -- sponsoring the start-up ministry for the Robson Ranch community.

Thank you for your contributions to our growing ministry, helping us to grow our ministry within our congregation, to the Grand Canyon synod and the national church, and to those in need around the world.

A Fragrance Free Environment

We are now encouraging that everyone please avoid wearing scented products, such as perfumes, colognes and aftershaves, during worship and other congregational events held at our two sites.

Many people have sensitivities and respiratory difficulties that are triggered when exposed to personal fragrances.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Council Members for 2019

Members for this year are:

Gary Erickson (Vice President), Paul Garrison, Gary Isaacson, Ina Johnson, Dick Jones, Gary Linafelter, Leticia Luse, John Pieschl (President), Mary Pietrini, Skip Simes (Secretary), and Carolyn Torr (Treasurer).

Meetings are generally scheduled for the third Tuesday of each month in Arizona City or Casa Grande.



Community Ministries



Shield a Badge

Central Lutheran Church joins with many congregations and organizations in the area participating in the "Shield the Badge" support ministry. Volunteers agree to pray daily for a member of the Casa Grande Police Department.

Pick up an information card and contact Sandy Carpenter (carpesm56@gmail.com) and you will be assigned a badge number. For one year pray for the safety and well-

being of the officer using the badge number.

Community Education Ministry

We now have 10 students who have passed the math test, 9 language arts, 10 science, 11 social studies, and, 11 civics. Nine students have completed all of their GED requirements.

Number of passed GED tests	Previous Progress	Current Progress
Math	10	10
Language Arts	9	9
Science	9	10
Social Studies	9	11
Civics tests	11	11
GEDs earned	8	9

You can help by volunteering as a GED or English tutor or making a donation -- designate as "adult education." Thank you for the donations received for this ministry!

Education Opportunity: Learn Spanish

Central Lutheran is offering Spanish Language Workshops. Sessions are free for everyone and will focus on learning beginning/ intermediate conversational skills. Dates and times are determined based on the schedules of participants.

Donation of Home Furnishings

Sometimes the families of our participants are in need of furniture, and small and large appliances. You can help them by donating these items. Contact Alyson to help.

For information of all our programs contact Alyson Stephens: 602-721-1673 or alysonstephens@q.com.

Manna Bags

We continue to work with the Casa Grande Police Department providing

Manna Bags for officers to distribute in our community.

You can pick up Manna Bags to carry in your car to be shared with someone in need that you may meet in the course of your day.

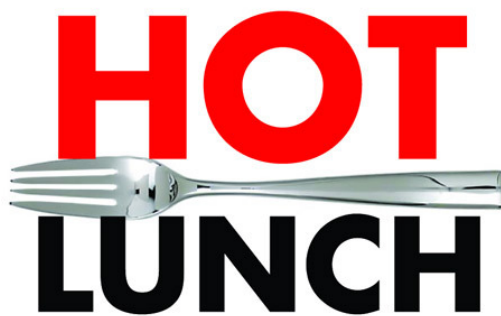
Manna Bags generally include the following items:

two 16.9 oz water bottles, packaged tuna, sausage, crackers (plain, with cheese or peanut butter), energy bars, PayDay candy bars, fruit cups, hand wipes, plastic forks and spoons, in a gallon plastic bag.



Community Food Pantry

Our congregation has donated thousands of food items to the Casa Grande Food Bank. The second Sunday of each month has been designated as a day to support those in need. You are encouraged to make it a practice to bring food items each month for the food bank. Food bins are located at both of our sites.



Hot Lunch Program

You can help the Eloy lunch program on Wednesdays by providing 25-50 homemade or purchased "treats." For information talk with Sandy Christopher. You can bring your "treats" to worship on Sunday and they will be delivered to the program site.

Request to Travelers

Contribute shampoo, conditioner, lotion, soap, toothpaste and coffee packets to Helping Hands, which assists families through mentoring, healthcare, nutrition, and emergency programs. A container is located in the entry at both sites.



Ladies Quilting Ministry

The group will be taking a break and resume meeting once again in the fall.

Thanks to all the women who have contributed to this ministry that provides a message of care and comfort to women and children of our community through the sharing of quilts.

A special thanks for the recent donation of several sets of quilt tops and bottoms, fabric and yarn. Such contributions are greatly appreciated!



City of Joy Rwanda

God's grace is on daily display and the Holy Spirit continues to build up the ministry taking place in Rwanda. You can support this inspirational ministry by sponsoring a student and supporting the graduates of the sewing program by purchasing items that have been created.

After visiting with us in January, the

Ellingson family briefly returned to Rwanda and have now settled in the Phoenix area.

Todd Ellingson, President and Founder of City of Joy

todd.d.ellingson@gmail.com

<http://cityofjoyrwnda.org>

<https://youtu.be/oDUbpBEfokk>

"Good Gifts" Ministry

Malawi is a landlocked country in southeast Africa that was formerly known as Nyasaland. The topography of the country is defined by highlands split by the Great Rift Valley and enormous Lake Malawi,



which takes up about one-third of Malawi's area.

The population of Malawi is estimated at a little over 18 million. This estimate takes into account a lower life expectancy, and higher infant deaths, due to AIDS.

Malawi is among the world's least-developed countries. The economy is heavily based on agriculture, with a largely rural population. The government depends on outside aid to meet development needs. There are challenges in building and

expanding the economy, improving education, healthcare, environmental protection, and becoming financially independent amidst widespread overpopulation and unemployment.

Our congregational campaign raised \$8,783, which has been increased to \$10,000 by the church council. These funds will allow us to partner with the Malawi Health and Wellness program. Through the direction of the Lutheran Church of Malawi our funds will be used to provide access to clean water, sanitation, livestock, farm equipment, fruit trees, medical supplies and medicines, school materials, and mosquito netting.

This is a specific breakdown of expenses:

- 2 simple water wells
- 4 latrines
- 1 fish farm
- 1 fruit tree nursery
- 4 women attending farming school
- 20 sets of farm tools
- 4 piglets
- 10 chicks
- 5 roosters
- 2 pair of goats
- 4 colonies of honey bees
- 1 month of medical supplies
- 1 classroom of school supplies
- 1 community of mosquito netting.

Thank you for your contributions to this ministry. You can continue to make individual donations to Good Gifts throughout the year. ELCA Good Gifts provide more than 50 different gift-giving options, starting at \$10, that fight disease and hunger, and transform lives around the world.

Remember in Prayer

Harry Brink, Willie Bergren, Harold Bonde, Marlita Buchholz, Trent Blessing, Judy Burruel, Sandy Carpenter, Carole Crain, Anne Decker, TJ Esco, Ellva Erickson, Pam Gardner, Tom Gearhart, Rachel Grack, Gerre Graves, Harold and Peggy Hall, Ron Jung, Tammy Kempke, Gertie Kenyon, Ruth Kramer, Norma Kringen, 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.



Bereavement -- The family and friends of Richard LaPaglia who died on August 2nd, from complications following surgery.

Military Service -- Grant Davis, Ryan Harrison, Sean Harrison, Timothy Ruppap, CJ Squires.

Financial News

“What You Have First Given Us”

Merciful Father, we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us - our selves, 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.

Internship Fund

The \$20,848 of contributions received for the internship program have been invested in an ELCA Mission Investment Fund account. The council will continue to evaluate the possibility of participating in the internship program in the futures or applying to other staffing needs.

Special note: At the annual meeting in January, it was approved to use \$6,000 of the fund to support the work of our tutor for our GED program this year.

Casa Grande Land Fund

Our property “growth fund” has a balance of \$14,618 for the purchase of a permanent Casa Grande site. Discussion of future possibilities is ongoing.

Air Conditioner Replaced

Funds were used from the capital fund to replace the main air conditioning unit of the activity building in Arizona City.. Total cost came to \$12,916.

Council Meeting

The next meeting will be held on September 24th at 6:30 p.m. in Casa Grande.

July Finances

Account information:

Offering Income for the Month: \$13,298

Balance General Fund: \$29,489

Average Monthly Expenses: \$19,000

Capital Fund: \$62,457 (includes \$30,000 savings from General Fund)

Internship Fund: \$20,848

Worship Schedule

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.

Name Tags

We would like to have name tags for all of our worshipers. Sign up for yours.

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
-

Church Family Photo Directory

Click here to go to the church [photo directory](#)

Contact Us

Church Office: churchoffice@centrallutheranaz.org

Pastor Thom Stephens: pastor@centrallutheranaz.org

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