



Central Lutheran Church

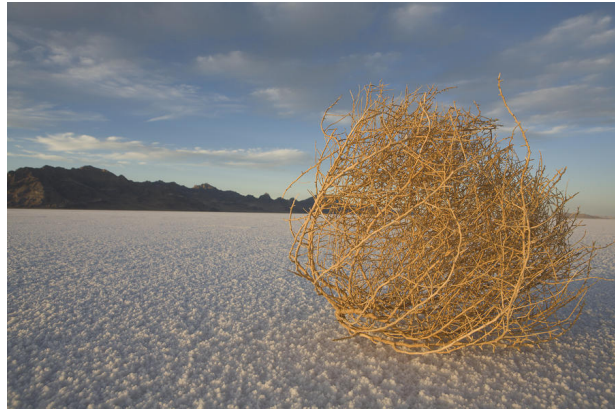
Come Share the Spirit!

Central News -November 2018

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Seeds of the Tumbleweed

During the season of Pentecost, our theme has been one of new discovery and discernment. We have reflected on how the Spirit of God can guide us in new and unexpected ways. One final new learning experience focuses on the "tumbleweed."



The most common form of tumbleweed, blowing across our desert and rolling through movie westerns, is the Russian thistle.

Usually, the stems of tumbleweed dry up and snap away from their roots in late fall, when the seeds are ripe and the leaves dying. The thistle is shaped like a globe, so it can move easily with the wind.

The Russian thistle has adapted to the arid conditions of the Great Plains and southwest deserts. One plant can contain a quarter million seeds. Tumbleweeds are constructed so that the seeds are dispersed sparingly by the natural equivalent of the time-release capsule, assuring wide dissemination.

The Russian thistle was discovered in this country in the 1870's. It became a major problem for the farmers who first encountered the seeds. The seeds are about the same size as most cereal grains. There was no easy way to separate the thistle seeds from the grains; therefore, as "grain" thistle was transported to new tumbling grounds, from the Dakotas to the Southwest.

When Jesus tells Nicodemus, "the wind (spirit) blows where it chooses" (John 3:8), we can think of the tumbleweed as it spreads its seeds wherever it is blown. We are reminded of the seed of the good news we carry and how the Spirit of God moves us to sow this seed wherever we are blown.



All Hands and Hearts -- Yabucoa, Puerto Rico, USA

From our experience as volunteers addressing immediate and long-term needs of the Yabucoa community impacted by Hurricane Maria, we encourage you to make a donation to support the All Hands and Hearts work being done in Puerto Rico.

The organization has committed to another year of recovery effort for safe and resilient homes, especially for those people with medical and health concerns.

Visit the organization's website for more information: "allhandsandhearts.org"

Confirmation Celebration

Sunday, Novemeber 4th

Samantha Coggon

Samantha, 14, is a freshman at ASU Prep Academy. She has an interest in art, drawing, tap dancing, and creative writing



Max Nieto

Max, 15, is a freshman at Casa Grande Union High School. He has his own Youtube channel on which he reviews and critiques video games. He would like to learn more about auto mechanics and movie production.



Upcoming Events



Thanksgiving Eve Worship
Wednesday, November 21st
6 p.m. in Arizona City

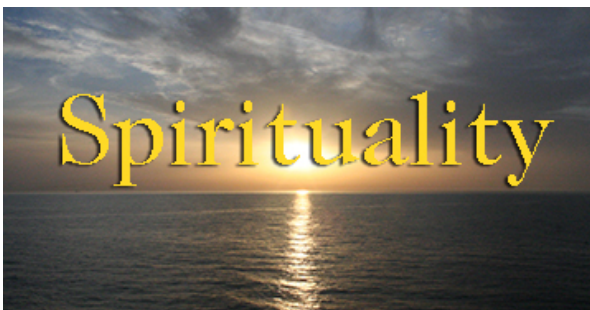
New Members

We will welcome new members on Sunday, December 9th. Please talk with Pastor Thom for more information.



New Members Are Joining

Study and Discussion



Spiritual Friendship

Pastor Ron Hunt (Psychologist and Spiritual Director) will be hosting gatherings to explore "Spiritual Friendship." This is an opportunity for anyone who wishes to share one's spirituality with other Christians in a

confidential setting to assist devotional life and living out the Spirit's call for life.
Contact Pastor Ron at 218-330-5306.

Youth Night Class

Our youth group meets for Bible study, discussion and activities on Wednesdays from 6-7:30 p.m. at our Casa Grande campus.

The program includes our elementary, middle school and high school students.

During the month we will be watching movies depicting the trials, struggles and successes of famous Bible characters, and, discussing contemporary films with a focus on the challenges of relationships. 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.

You are invited to these upcoming opportunities to share grief. To be comforted, to comfort. To be helped, to help. To be supported, to support others.

Meetings are the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month in Arizona City.

Contact Judy Smith at 520-466-6227.



Women's Book Club

Thurs, November 8th

2 p.m. in Casa Grande

All women are invited to be a part of the study and reflection of "Seamless" by Angie Smith.

Seamless covers the people, places and promises of the Bible, tying them together into the greater story of Scripture. Participants will gain an overarching understanding of the fundamental layout and meaning of God's Word.

Seamless helps replace insecurity that holds participants back with clarity and helping them move forward with confidence in their understanding of Scripture. Each week of study features key information that ties all of scripture together into the seamless truth of the gospel message and is accompanied by maps, general Bible facts, and word studies.

For more information contact Sandy Christopher (520-483-1442) or Dell Hoff (520-252-0488) .

Fall Softball Season

Your "Saints" have struggled this season with a 3 and 7 record.

In November there will be makeup games:

5th at 6:15/7:15 p.m.

12th at 6:15/7:15 p.m.

The season will conclude with the Fall tournament on Nov. 19th.

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

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



"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.



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. Last year the council has designated \$1,000 contributions to:

Habitat for Humanity -- the first of several planned home constructions is planned for Arizona City;

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

Sonlight Christian Camp -- since 1979 students from the southwest and across the nation have participated in this Christian camp experience outside Pagosa Springs, CO;

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;

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

Shaping Our Ministry

Our ministry teams are beginning to form as many of you have shared your interests.

Welcoming New Residents

Phone call: Sandy Carpenter, Sandy Christopher, Pat and Francis Harrison, Paul and Susan Garrison, Jan Menefee, Bonnie Murphy, Keith and Arlyss Radabah, Connie Schelske, Carolyn Torr.

Visit: Paul and Susan Garrison, Dick and Pat Jones, Connie Schelske, Carolyn Torr.

Providing Transportation: Sandy, Christopher, Kathy Davis, Al and Becky Gessner, Pat and Francis Harrison, Dick and Pat Jones, Marjorie Lamkin, Carolyn Torr.

Home Assistance

Repairs: Paul Garrison, John Pieschl, Roger Smith.

Computers: Karen Debold, Francis Harrison.

Bereavement Support

Visit: Sandy Carpenter, Kara Cooper, Carolyn Torr.

Fellowship Following Service: Sandy Christopher, Karen Debold, Pat Jones, Mary LaPaglia, Bonnie Murphy, Judy Smith, Carolyn Torr.

Providing for the Homeless: Arlo Cairo, Sandy Carpenter, Karen Debold, Al and Becky Gessner, Lisa Hunt, Dan Kirk, Gary Linafelter, Sue Rhoades.

Worship Nursery Care: Louise Cannon, Karen Debold, Lisa Hunt

Community Ministries

Number of passed GED tests	Previous Progress	Current Progress
Math	6	8
Language Arts	5	7
Science	7	8
Social Studies	7	8
Civics tests	8	9
GEDs earned	4	6

Community Education Ministry

Our adult students have had great success in their ongoing study programs. We have had 8 students pass the math test, 7 language arts, 8 science, 8 social studies, and, 9 civics.

Two participants, Yazmin and Hector, have recently completed their GED tests. Four new students have recently joined the program.

Our ESL language classes now have 25 active participants with 20 coaches!

Our part time Spanish speaking tutor, Eva, has continued to be a great asset to our ministry.

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 now offering Spanish Language Workshops. Taught by Ricardo Romano, one of the dedicated volunteer tutors who serves with our ongoing Community Education Ministry, sessions are free for everyone and will focus on learning beginning/ intermediate conversational skills. Dates and times are to be determined based on 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 have joined with the Casa Grande Police Department to provide our Manna Bags for officers to distribute in our community. Twenty bags will be given away each week.

You can pick up a Manna Bag(s) to carry in your car so it can 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 call Judy Smith (520-466-6227) . 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 women's quilting ministry will begin on Wednesday, November 7th in Arizona City. The group will meet at 9:30 a.m. on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month. Bring your lunch and invite a friend.

Many women have continued to contribute to this effort and help with these gifts to our community.

Their message is one of care and comfort through the sharing of quilts.

The donation of materials and blankets are greatly appreciated.

Serving Meals

You can help serving meals at "Seeds of Hope" in Casa Grande on Thursdays from 9:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. For more information contact Jayne Schneuer (520-840-4038) .

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. The Ellingson family will be visiting with us once again January 12th and 13th.

Todd Ellingson, President and Founder of City of Joy

todd.d.ellingson@gmail.com

<http://cityofjoyrwanda.org>

<https://youtu.be/oDUbpBEfokk>

Remember in Prayer

Harry Brink, Willie Bergren, Harold Bonde, Dale Bothof, Marlita Buchholz, Trent Blessing, Anne Decker, TJ Esco, Ellva Erickson, Rachel Fuller, Pam Gardner, Rachel Grack, Gerre Graves, Peggy Hall, Lisa Johanson, 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, Linda Ward, Ski Wrybkowski.

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

Bereavement -- Jeanine Leary and daughter Elizabeth, Jackson, Mike Leary and family following the death of Robert.

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 \$26,848 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.

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.

November Finances

Account information:

Offering Income for the Month: \$15,592

Balance General Fund: \$19,256

Average Monthly Expenses: \$17,000

Capital Fund: \$65,252 (includes \$30,000 savings from General Fund)

Internship Fund: \$26,848

Worship Schedule

Arizona City

Sunday - 8:30 a.m.

For information on Sunday children activities contact Linda Gal (705-1450).

Casa Grande

Sunday -- 10:05 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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Note: for postal service use PO Box 677 Arizona City, AZ 85123

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