



# Central Lutheran Church

*Come Share the Spirit!*

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## Memories on Mother's Day

When we stress the importance of remembering God, we remember who God is, what God has done for us, and who we are living in relationship with God. On Mother's Day, remembering mothers call to mind all they have done for us, all that they mean, and who we are because of them.

Perhaps, the love of a mother for her child is the closest thing to the love of God for his children. There is a oneness between mother and child. When a woman becomes a mother and experiences her love for her child, a deeper understanding of love blooms.

How we remember our mothers will influence our thoughts, words, and actions and may direct the relationships in our lives. There is no perfect mother and there is no perfect child. Sadly, not all mother and child relationships weather the storms of life, and many are broken.

The glass half-full or half-empty can illustrate how we choose to live. Do we choose to remember what we can forget? Do we forget what we should remember?

All relationships need good forgivers, ready to give grace to each other. As we remember the love of God, we know through grace our sins are cast into the sea of forgotten memory. When we live with the satisfaction in what God has done, and what he is doing in our lives, we can strive to exhibit the same grace in our relationships.

Mothers Day is a special day to remember her, keep memories alive, and with a grace filled heart let memories go. Honor God by honoring your mother, in your

mind and actions, as the love of God pours forth in your love for others.



## Upcoming Events



### "Good Gifts" Ministry

This year our congregational campaign raised \$8,783, which has been increased to \$10,000 by the church council. These funds will support communities and strengthen standards of living in many impoverished areas.

Though we cannot designate a specific community for our funds, we are able 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.



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## Study and Discussion

### 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.

The next gatherings will be held on Tue, April 10th and 24th at 2 p.m. at our Arizona City site.



## **Youth Night Class**

Our weeknight Bible study, discussion and activities offered to our elementary, middle school and high school students are held on Wednesdays from 6-7:30 p.m. at our Casa Grande campus. Current study topics include our review of Jesus in the gospel accounts, the Small Catechism, present day social issues, and what it means to be a Christian.

Classes for the different age groups are led by Kara Cooper and Pastor Thom.

## **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 Gessnes, Lisa Hunt, Dan Kirk, Gary Linafelter, Sue Rhoades.

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

## Summer Softball Season

Your "Saints finished the past season with 5 wins and 9 loses. The team lost an exciting first round extra inning tournament game 23-22.

Watch for the arrival of the upcoming summer season. Games are played at the Paul Mason Sportsplex on Pinal Ave. in Casa Grande.

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



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## 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. The council has designated \$1,000 contributions to:

Habitat for Humanity -- this fall/winter is to be the first of several planned home constructions in Arizona City, watch for how you can make a donation and participate;

City of Joy Rwanda -- we will be 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 -- with the destruction of the recent hurricanes the ELCA provides extensive support to the relief and recovery efforts of the impacted regions;

Refugee Program -- Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest continues to support 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.

## Community Ministries

### 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.



Number of passed GED tests	Previous Progress	Current Progress
Math	5	6
Language Arts	3	4
Science	3	5
Social Studies	4	7
Civics tests	5	8
GEDs earned	2	3

## Community Education Ministry

Progress continues to be made as our adult students succeed in their ongoing study programs. We have had 6 students pass the math test, 4 language arts, 5 science, 7 social studies, and, 8 civics. Three

participants have completed their GED tests and another is on track to earn a GED by the end of the year.

Our ESL language class has increased from 12 to 16 hours a week. Presently, there are 12 active participants (an increase from 10).

We currently have a Spanish speaking part time tutor, who has proven 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!

### New 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](mailto:alysonstephens@q.com).

## 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 has created 80 quilts that will be distributed throughout our community later this year.

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.

Todd Ellingson, President and Founder of City of Joy

[todd.d.ellingson@gmail.com](mailto:todd.d.ellingson@gmail.com)

<http://cityofjoyrwnda.org>



## Remember in Prayer

Harry Brink, Willie Bergren, Harold Bonde, Marlita Buchholz, Trent Blessing, Anne Decker, TJ Esco, Ellva and Gene Erickson, Rachel Fuller, Pam Gardner, Rachel Grack, Gerre Graves, Peggy Hall, Lisa Johanson, Tammy Kempke, Gertie Kenyon, Ruth Kramer, Norma Kringen, Gary Linafelter, Ken 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.

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## 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 \$13,779 for the purchase of a permanent Casa Grande site. Discussion of future possibilities is ongoing.

## April Finances

Account information:

Offering Income for the Month: \$32,407

Balance General Fund: \$54,000 (includes \$10,000 for "Good Gifts")

Average Monthly Expenses: \$17,000

Capital Fund: \$77,036 (includes \$40,000 savings from General Fund)

Internship Fund: \$26,848

Next Council meeting is scheduled for Tue, May 22nd at 6:30 p.m. in Casa Grande.

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## Worship Schedule

### Arizona City

Sunday - 8:30 a.m.

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

### 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.

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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

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## Church Family Photo Directory

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

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## Contact Us

**Church Office:** [churchoffice@centrallutheranaz.org](mailto:churchoffice@centrallutheranaz.org)

**Pastor Thom Stephens:** [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  
(520) 466-5024

### Casa Grande Campus

324 N Sacaton Street Casa Grande, AZ 85122 (520) 316-9659

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