



# Central Lutheran Church

*Come Share the Spirit!*

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### "Living Water"

Water was of great importance to the people of the Bible. They lived in a dry country, dependent on the seasonal rains. Fresh water was not available everywhere, and the task of digging wells and cisterns was difficult. Dependable spring water provided fresh water year round. This constant source of fresh water was called "living water" because of its life-giving qualities.

Such an important resource as fresh water would naturally be a symbolic message for Jesus. It was at the Feast of Sukkot in Jerusalem that Jesus shared the image of living water.



The most joyous of festivals was the Feast of Sukkot ("booths"). For the week long feast the people built booths out of tree branches in the streets, where they would live, eat and sleep. There were sukkot everywhere. It was a time to praise God for the past gifts of freedom, land, and bountiful harvests.

The Pharisees adopted a custom of the people carrying the branches (lulavim) and joyously waving them as they danced, sang, and chanted the Hallel (Psalm 113-118). A procession of priests, accompanied by thousands of celebrants, marched to

the Pool of Siloam, which was fed by the Spring of Gihon, filled a golden pitcher, and returned to the Temple. At the altar the water was poured into two silver funnels used for the daily drink offerings. The people jammed in the Temple courts joining in a deafening chant of the Hosanna from the Hallel, "O Lord, save us." The offering of living water acknowledged how God brought the life-giving rains.

On such a great day, Jesus cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" (John 7:37-38) The importance of the Jewish background of Jesus' work cannot be exaggerated. Within the traditional meaning of the festival Jesus shouted a promise with stunning impact, "Come to me for life-giving water."

## **Holy Week Worship**

### **Palm Sunday**

**Sat, March 24th at 5 p.m. in Casa Grande**

**Sun, March 25th**

**8:30 a.m. in Arizona City**

**10 a.m. in Casa Grande**

### **Maundy Thursday**

**March 29th at 6 p.m. in Arizona City**

### **Good Friday**

**March 30th at 6 a.m. in Casa Grande**

### **Easter Sunday**

**April 1st**

**Sunrise 6 a.m. in Casa Grande**

**8:30 a.m. in Arizona City**

**10 a.m. in Casa Grande**

## **Upcoming Events**

### **Spring Games and Barbeque**

**Sunday, March 11th at**

**11:15 a.m.**

## Casa Grande

The youth program will be hosting an outdoor barbeque following worship in Casa Grande.

The event will include a number of competitions: closet to the pin golf, wiffle ball long distance hit, bean bag and bowling pin tosses, birdie accuracy game, and more.

Grilled food items will be provided with bottled water, bring a side dish or dessert to share. Everyone is invited!



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## "Good Gifts" Ministry

ELCA Good Gifts provides more than 50 different gift-giving options that fight disease and hunger, and transform lives around the world.

Our congregational campaign has raised funds that will provide a new fresh water well (\$2,500) and very much more. These gifts will support communities and strengthen standards of living.

You can make a contribution to our program through March 11th, and make individual

donations to Good Gifts throughout the year. These gifts, starting at \$10, provide direct support for the worldwide ministries of the ELCA.

## "Spiritual Friendship"

Pastor Ron Hunt (psychologist and spiritual director) will be hosting a weekly gathering on Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m.

"Spiritual Friendship" is for anyone who wishes to share their spirituality with other Christians in a confidential setting. The time is designed to help with devotional life and living out the Spirit's call for our lives.

This month's meetings are at Robson Ranch, call Pastor Ron (218-330-5306) for information.

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## Study and Discussion

### Women's Book Club

Monday, March 12th

9 a.m. in Casa Grande

All women are encouraged to join in the discussion of "A Shepherd's Looks at the Good Shepherd" by W. Phillip Keller. As a shepherd, Keller shares his insights into the life and character of sheep and into the role of the Good Shepherd who loves and cares for the sheep.



### Men's Fellowship

Get together on Monday, March 5th and 19th at 9 a.m. in Casa Grande for fellowship, Bible study, and discussion of current topics.

### 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, March 13th and 27th 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

## **Homeless Ministry**

All individuals with an interest in this ministry are invited to bring questions and ideas to the next meeting in March. Watch for the date and time for this Casa Grande gathering.

You can sign-up now if you have any interest in any of our proposed ministry opportunities. Forms are available to indicate how you would like to participate.

## **Winter/Spring Softball Season**

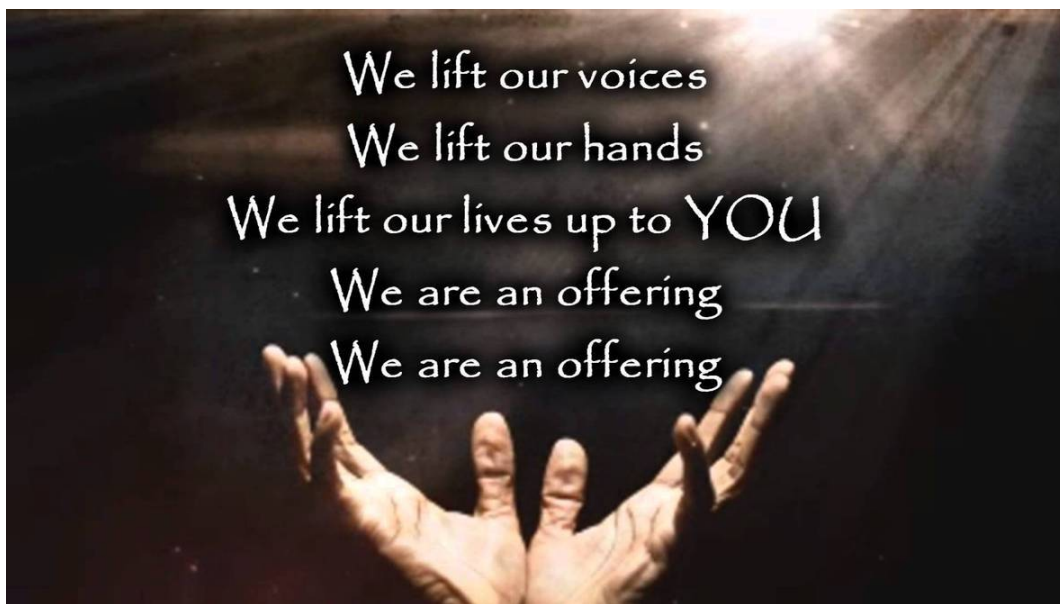
Your "Saints are once again in action every Monday, March 5th through April 9th. All games will be played at 6:15 and 7:15 p.m. The season ending tournament will be played on April 16th. Games are played at the Paul Mason Sportsplex on Pinal Ave. in Casa Grande. Special thanks to the many fans who have come out to support our team.



## 9 Hole Golf Scramble

**Sunday, March 25th at 2 p.m.**

Golfers of all abilities are encouraged to sign-up for friendly competition at the Arizona City Golf Course. Foursomes of women and men make up our teams. Invite your friends to participate. The cost for each player is \$25+tax. Fellowship with refreshments and snacks follows play.



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## Our Stewardship

As we begin 2018, 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

You can take part in our program by donating the following items:  
16.9 oz water bottles, packaged tuna, sausage, and crackers (plain, with cheese or peanut butter), energy bars, PayDay candy bars, fruit cups, hand wipes, plastic forks and knives, gallon plastic bags. Bring items to either worship site.

Once the bags are compiled everyone can help by carrying one in your car to be shared with someone in need that you may meet in the course of your day.



| 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 takes place every first and third Wednesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in Arizona City. Everyone is invited to assist with the program. Bring your lunch for the midday break.

Many women have continued to contribute to this effort and help with this contribution to our community. Their message is one of care and comfort through the gift 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://cityofjoyrwanda.org>



## 1st Grade Picture

"Since some of you have been asking BigT (my grandpa) about me, I told him to show you this picture taken at my school. I am having fun in first grade learning math, spelling, reading, and writing."

Teya, Basha Elementary School

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## Remember in Prayer

Harry Brink, Willie Bergren, Harold Bonde, Marlita Buchholz, Trent Blessing, Anne Decker, Ellva and Gene Erickson, Rachel Grack, Gerre Graves, Peggy Hall, Lisa Johanson, Tammy Kempke, Gertie Kenyon, Ruth Kramer, Norma Kringen, Gary Linafelter, Dick Mueser, Walt Neulieb, Red and Dede Parrish, Marcus Ramirez, Denise Shepard, Joshua Ward, Ski Wrybkowski.

Bereavement -- Family and friends of Jean Kalish.

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 \$26,000 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 \$11,076 for the purchase of a permanent Casa Grande site. Discussion of future possibilities is ongoing.

## **February Finances**

Account information:

Offering Income for the Month: \$30,447

Balance General Fund: \$83,413

Average Monthly Expenses: \$17,000

Capital Fund: \$38,329

Internship Fund: \$26,848

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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**

Saturday -- 5 p.m.

Final Saturday service is March 24th

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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