



Central Lutheran Church

Come Share the Spirit!

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We are Given the Gift of Repairing

With the arrival of December thoughts turn to the celebration of Christmas. A seemingly infinite number of gift ideas are proposed through various media outlets. Everything worthy of attention is bright, shiny, and new. No mention is made of the day when the new has lost its luster. What about the new that becomes old? Broken?



Today, getting something that is broken fixed is often more expensive than replacing it. It is of no surprise that repair is a dying art.

But who fixes anything anymore? And how much would it cost? One may still find someone out there willing to make the necessary repairs to a broken device, but even then they will feel obliged to say it's better off to chuck the old one and buy the latest model. To insist paying more to repair something that will end up costing more than a brand new replacement makes little sense.

Modern life continues to give us many other bewildering new appliances and electronics. Every new gadget comes with its own remote control or charging

station, which often goes missing and without it is then inoperable. In some cases the stuff is literally irreparable, with no spare parts or supplies.

This dilemma opens up the rare possibility of fixing the damaged goods yourself. If something seems lost, why not take it apart and see if repairs can be made? Some repairs are certainly beyond the realm of the ordinary consumer, some are very simple, requiring a straightforward replacement. The internet is a treasure trove for sites of offering parts from all over the spectrum. Further, there are sites offering step-by-step diagnostics and repair instructions.

Repairing what is broken reminds us of the role of the Christian. As we celebrate Christmas, the birth of Jesus is about new life and new beginnings. Yet, remember the life of Jesus is about repairing the broken, reconciling the divided, restoring the worn out, healing the weak, and rebuilding the damaged.

As Christians we are instructed and empowered for the role of repairing, reconciling, restoring, healing, and rebuilding individual lives.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

Celebration of Holy Communion

5 p.m. in Casa Grande

7 p.m. in Arizona City



Angel Tree Ministry

Share a special gift this Christmas by providing a present for a child on behalf of a parent in prison, or, for children of families in our community who need help.

Each child has an information card with gift ideas. Pick up a card, purchase a gift, and return the wrapped gift with the assigned card.

For more information talk with Ruth Kramer or Linda Gal.

Christmas Tree Party

December 3rd in Casa Grande

Two Christmas trees and decorations are being given to pair of families in our area. They will also receive a dinner gift card and donated food items. Bring your donations to the fellowship event following worship. Extra food items will be given to the Casa Grande Food Bank. Refreshments will be served with sandwiches and dessert.

Upcoming Events

Saturday Evening Worship

Beginning December 2nd at 5 p.m. in Casa Grande

Our evening service provides another worship opportunity into the month of April

9 Hole Golf Scramble

Saturday, December 30th 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 \$20+tax. Fellowship with refreshments and snacks follows play.

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 gathering will be held on Tue, December 12th 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.

Men's Fellowship

Get together on Monday, December 11th at 9 a.m. in Casa Grande for fellowship, Bible study, and discussion of current topics.

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.

Feeding 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

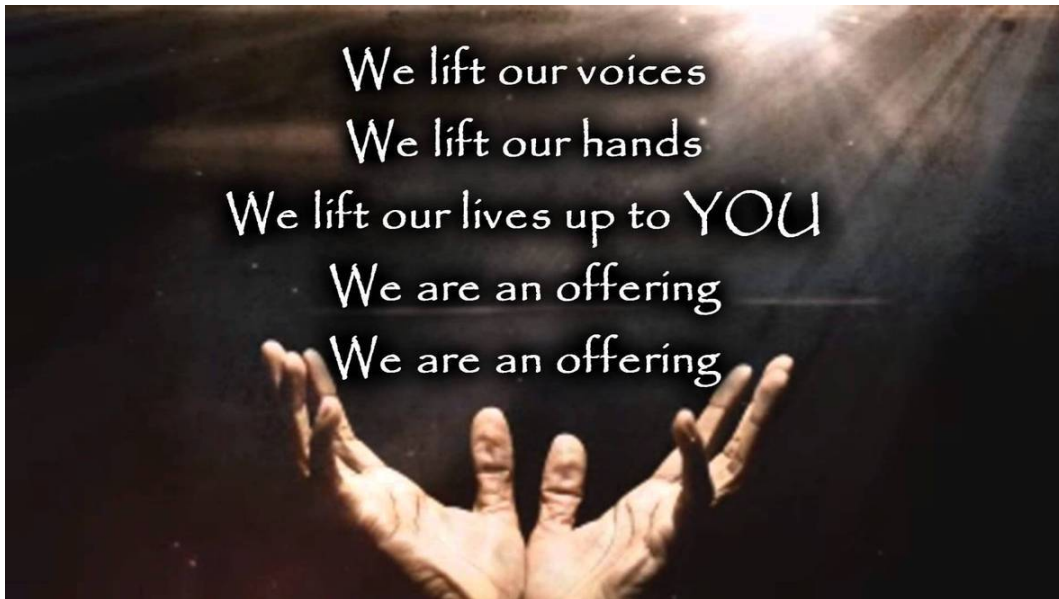
Sign-up now for any of our several proposed ministry opportunities. Forms are available to indicate how you would like to participate.

Winter Softball Season

Your "Saints" will return the entire team for the upcoming season which will start in February.

Special thanks to the many fans who have come out

to support our team.
Games are played at the Paul Mason Sportsplex on
Pinal Ave. in Casa Grande.



Our Stewardship

As we approach the end of 2017, we continue to celebrate a 10% increase above offerings from last year, which had grown from the previous year.

Our continued growth reflects 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 -- we will be sponsoring a student in Rwanda for an entire school year;
Sonlight 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.

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	5
Language Arts	3	3
Science	3	4
Social Studies	4	5
Civics tests	5	7
GEDs earned	2	2

Community Education Ministry

The latest chart shows our adult students are continuing to succeed in their ongoing study programs. We have had 5 students pass the math test, 3 language arts, 4 science, 5 social studies, and, 7

civics. Three participants are on the verge of taking their next exams. Two have

completed their GED tests and another is on track to earn his 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!

Special thanks to Ron Jung, Judy Smith, and Kara Cooper for opening and locking the building as needed.

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.

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

You can support this inspirational ministry by sponsoring a student and supporting the graduates of the sewing program by purchasing a purse or an apron.

Todd and the family will be visiting us once again to share their experiences on January 6th and 7th.

Todd Ellingson, President and Founder of City of Joy

todd.d.ellingson@gmail.com

<http://cityofjoyrwnda.org>

<https://youtu.be/oDUbpBEfokk>

Remember in Prayer

Harry Brink, Willie Bergren, Harold Bonde, Marlita Buchholz, Mickey Buchholz, Trent Blessingl, Ruby Craun, Anne Decker, Ellva and Gene Erickson, Rachel Grack, Gerre Graves, Peggy Hall, Lanny Johnston, Jean Kalish, Gertie Kenyon, Will Klukas, Ruth Kramer, Norma Kringen, Gary Linafelter, Dick Mueser, Walt Neulieb, Marcus Ramirez, Jon Schmidt, Denise Shepard, Joshua Ward, Gary Towle, Ski Wrybkowski.

Military Service -- Grant Davis, Ryan Harrison, Sean Harrison, 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 \$28,000 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 \$10,691 for the purchase of a permanent Casa Grande site. Discussion of future possibilities is ongoing.

November Finances

Account information:

Offering Income for the Month: \$20,554

Balance General Fund: \$48,444

Average Monthly Expenses: \$17,000

Capital Fund: \$39,198

Internship Fund: \$26,848

Balance of Mortgage with Thrivent: \$257,144 (12/31/16)

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.

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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