



# Central Lutheran Church

*Come Share the Spirit!*

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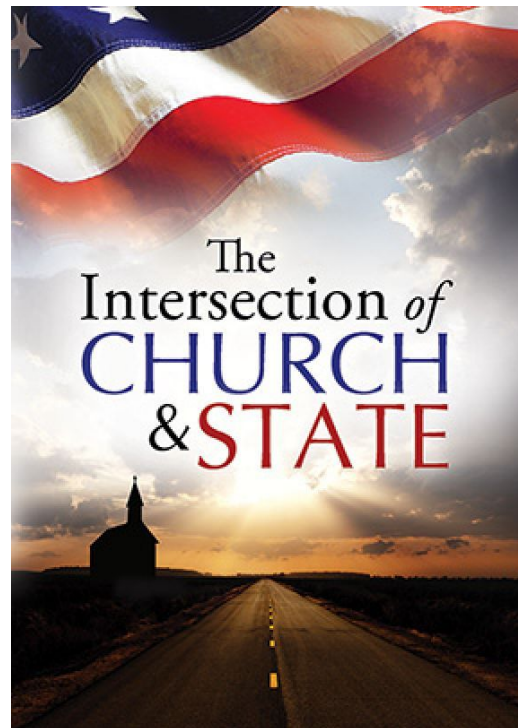
## Kingdom and Country

As we celebrate our nation in the month of July it is a good time to reflect on our government and the role governing leaders play.

Christians recognize that government is an essential part of all human society that should protect persons from oppression and manipulation by others. Government has an important role in preserving justice and human rights. Although government cannot fully establish God's kingdom, God intends for it to be an instrument of justice in the world.

Christians have lived under many different forms of government. Because the proper function of the state is the preservation of life, Christians should normally obey those in authority. Yet the authority of the state is not absolute. When government attempts to force persons to disobey God, Christians must disobey the government.

Peter and the apostles were accused of proclaiming the gospel after being strictly charged to desist. Peter told the Jerusalem council, "We must obey God rather than any human authority." (Acts 5:29)



Scripture recognizes that the state can assume excessive power and be an instrument of destruction. The book of Revelation presents a dramatic picture of the church suffering under such a government.

Ultimate authority and power belongs to God alone. Christians recognize the need for order in society and so respect the function of government when promoting the welfare of all persons. Christians have a critical perspective that excludes glorification of the state and yet respects the benefits government can bring.

The functional interaction between the government and religious bodies takes place in areas of mutual endeavor, where such interaction assists in the maintenance of good order, the protection and extension of civil rights, the establishment of social justice and equality of opportunity, the promotion of the general welfare, and the advancement of the dignity of all persons. This underscores that God rules the civil and spiritual dimensions of life, thus the government and the church are to relate creatively and responsibly to each other.

### **Martin Luther Addresses the Leadership of the Princes**

(The princes) issue public proclamations, and say that this is the emperor's command and that they want to be obedient Christian princes, just as if they really meant it and no one noticed the scoundrel behind the mask. If the emperor were to take a castle or a city from them or command some other injustices, we should then see how quickly they would find themselves obliged to resist the emperor and disobey him. But when it comes to fleecing the poor or venting their spite on the word of God, it becomes a matter of "obedience to the imperial command." Such people were formerly called scoundrels; now they have to be called obedient Christian princes.

(Luther's Works, vol. 45, II)

**Movie -- "The Shack"**

**Saturday, July 29**

**Arizona City**

**6-8:30 p.m.**

Mackenzie "Mack" Phillips suffered physical and emotional abuse as a child at the hands of his drunken father. He witnessed similar abuse of his mother as well. After many traumatic experiences in his younger years, he now has a bountiful life with his wife, Nan, and their three children: Kate, Josh and Missy.

Mack's life is shattered, however, when their youngest child Missy disappears during a



camping trip while he is saving Kate and Josh during a canoeing accident. The tragedy derails Mack's faith and life until the onset of winter when he receives an unstamped, typewritten note in his mailbox.

As the story unfolds its message stresses how much God cares. God loves deeply and unconditionally and wants to heal our woundedness.

Invite your friends and neighbors. Beverages and snacks will be served.

## Manna Bag Ministry

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.



## Upcoming Events

### "MY COMMUNITY"

July 17 - 21  
Arizona City

Central Lutheran  
Church joyfully invites  
children of Casa

Grande, Arizona City, and the surrounding area to a week of Vacation Bible School this summer. Our study theme -- "MY COMMUNITY" -- will focus on members of our community and how we serve one another.



We will study God's word and learn from how Jesus served his community. Our focus will be on how Jesus was a living example of how we are to live our lives.

Join us for games, study time, crafts, songs and special guests.

The program is geared for children ages 4-10, but all ages are welcome.

- 4 and under students must be accompanied by an adult.

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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. Talk with Pastor Thom for more information.

### 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. Study topics include our scriptures, 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 Saturday Fellowship

Saturday dates will be scheduled

Watch for the opportunity to join in fellowship, Bible study, and discussion of current topics.

## Shaping Our Ministry

In the coming weeks discussion will focus on several proposed ministry opportunities. These include welcoming new residents into our congregation, assisting individuals/families following the death of a loved one, assisting the homeless in our community, providing nursery care during worship, and, local Habitat for Humanity projects.

More information will be shared soon about how you can participate.

## Summer Softball Season

Your "Saints" have begun the summer co-ed season with a record of 3 and 3.

This is the upcoming schedule for the rest of the season:

July 10th -- 7:15 and 8:15 p.m.

July 17th -- 6:15 and 7:15 p.m.

July 24th -- 6:15 and 8:15 p.m.

July 31st -- 6:15 and 7:15 p.m.

August 7th -- Tournament

Game action is at the Paul Mason Sportsplex on Pinal Ave. in Casa Grande.



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## Our Stewardship

Through June 2017, we 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?”

Thank you for your contributions to our growing ministry, helping us to meet our annual requirements to our congregation, synod and national church.

## Community Ministries

Number of passed GED tests	Previous Progress	Current Progress
Math	4	5
Language Arts	3	3
Science	2	3
Social Studies	2	4
Civics tests	3	5
GEDs earned	1	2

### Community Education Ministry

Our adult students continue to succeed in their study programs. As of the end of June, 5 students have passed the math test, 3 in language arts, 3 in science, 4 in social studies, and, 5 in civics. Two

have completed their GED tests.

You can help them develop their English skills, or prepare for the GED math, science, language arts, and social studies exams. Please consider volunteering as a tutor or making a donation -- designate as “adult education.”

For information, contact Alyson Stephens: 602-721-1673 or [alysonstephens@q.com](mailto:alysonstephens@q.com).

Thank you for the donations received for this ministry!

### 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.

## 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 Sandy Christopher (520-483-1442) . 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 have completed their work for the spring and will resume later this year.

Many thanks to all the women who contributed to this effort and helped with this contribution to our community. This is a message 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, \$40 covers one-half of the monthly expenses.

Once again you can support the graduates of the sewing program by purchasing a purse or an apron.

Todd Ellingson, President and Founder of City of Joy

todd.d.ellingson@gmail.com

<http://cityofjoyrwanda.org>

## Love & all its glory IS

Wendy Landers has completed the second installment of her series "Dieting After She Died."

After setting up her recording studio, Manon started writing rock songs again. Traveling to a recording seminar, she met a film producer, Jacob. Yet the plague that harassed her continued. Can her original rock band, A Slip of the Cue, help her make it end?

Her blog is [www.wendylanders.com](http://www.wendylanders.com)

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## Remember in Prayer

Harry Brink, Willie Bergren, Donny Boeding, Harold Bonde, Marlita Buchholz, Trent Blessing, Carla Carroll, Ruby Craun, Rev. Bekah Davis, Anne Decker, Ellva and Gene Erickson, Mark Gerrish, Rachel Grack, Ray Grant, Peggy Hall, Jack and Faye Harrison, Ryan Harrison, Lanny Johnston, Ray Johnston, Jean Kalish, Gertie Kenyon, Will Klukas, Norma Kringen, Dick Laudahl, Gary Linafelter, Bob McGregor, Dick Mueser, Walt Neulieb, Neil Northey, Marcus Ramirez, Jon Schmidt, Terry Semlar, Denise Shepard, Leona Shilling, CJ Squires, Joshua Ward, Gary Towle, Colleen Wiles, Ski Wrybkowski.

Military Service -- Grant Davis, Ryan 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 \$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 future.

## **Casa Grande Land Fund**

Our property “growth fund” has a balance of \$10,011 for the purchase of a permanent Casa Grande site. Discussion of future possibilities is ongoing.

## **June Finances**

Account information:

Offering Income: \$11,766

Balance General Fund: \$69,215

Average Monthly Expenses: \$17,000

Capital Fund: \$40,261

Internship Fund: \$26,848

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

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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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