



Central Lutheran Church

Come Share the Spirit!

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"The Best Gift"

There is no shortage of gift ideas for a child. A great amount of advertising money is devoted to directing our attention to the perfect gift. We may feel guilty if we can't find something that will educate, stimulate, and build self-esteem all at once. Often price is not an object and we won't settle for anything less than the best.

Mothers know the perfect gift.

It is not easy to find, and it is terribly expensive, but is guaranteed to last a lifetime and will be a child's favorite. It's the gift of time.

A mother knows a child's greatest need is the security of knowing there is someone, or many someones, that will always care. There is no better way to convey love than to spend time with a child. Hours invested in a child will produce dividends now and in the future. The building of a relationship, moment by moment, will be the basis for a lifelong bond.

Mothers are not misled by the myth of quality time. This is an admirable goal, but it should not be used as an excuse for missing quantity time. Quality moments can't be scheduled. These moments happen spontaneously, without warning, in circumstances that cannot be anticipated. Such precious moments are more likely to occur as a result of more time spent together.

Mothers are aware that for children, all of the time spent together can be quality time, because it is then they have what's most important to children, your presence.

Mothers know this gift is not cheap, it comes with a cost. There may be a need to forgo other activities. A need to say "no" to other people, even at church. There may be a need to set aside personal goals or interests for a period of time.

Childhood years are soon gone forever, they are irretrievable. Mothers certainly know there is a limited supply, and still the best gift is the gift of time.



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.

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.

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 or Judy Smith (520-840-4038) for more information about meetings on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at 2 p.m. at the Smith home.

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

Note: Classes will not be held on May 17th and 24th.

Men's Saturday Fellowship

Saturday dates will be scheduled

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

Summer Softball Season

Your "Saints" finished the Spring season in 6th place, with a record of 9 and 7. The team lost its opening game in the season ending tournament. Game action will once again be starting on Monday nights in June at the Paul Mason Sportsplex on Pinal Ave. in Casa Grande. The schedule for the season will soon be available.



Our Stewardship

Through April 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	4
Language Arts	1	3
Science	2	2
Social Studies	0	2
Civics tests	0	3

Community Education Ministry

Our adult students continue to succeed in their study programs. As of this date, 4 students have passed the math test, with several others continuing to prepare. Three have passed

language arts, 2 in science, 2 in social studies, and, 3 in civics.

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.

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 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 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>

<https://youtu.be/oDUbpBEfokk>

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

Remember in Prayer

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

Military Service -- Grant Davis, Ryan 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

We will not be participating in the internship program in 2017. The \$28,000 of contributions received for this program have been invested in a 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.

April Finances

Account information:

Offering Income: \$34,018

Balance General Fund: \$70,189

Average Monthly Expenses: \$17,000

Capital Fund: \$40,261

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

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

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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