



Central Lutheran Church

Come Share the Spirit!

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"The Revolution of Jesus"

The Jewish people of Jesus' day passionately desired freedom from Rome and the oppressive Herod dynasty that had ruled them for years. Revolt seethed continuously from the time Herod became king (37 B.C.) until the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the temple (A.D. 70).



This struggle is the backdrop for Jesus' ministry and the reason so many hoped he would be a conquering king. The hopefulness and adulation of the crowds during his entry into Jerusalem reduced Jesus to tears.

People saw in Jesus a Davidic king, a military conqueror, who would rescue them from the Romans, but his kingdom was not to be the result of revolution or sword. Jesus frequently commanded those he taught or healed not to tell anyone, possibly because they would misunderstand his position, given the political climate of the day. During this period of time there were many self-proclaimed messiahs proclaiming their message, helping us to understand the uniqueness of Jesus' message and the objections by his audience. Such an understanding is probably why many people rejected his message.

Jesus predicted the destruction that would result from revolt. Jesus was crucified nearly 40 years before the first of two revolts. It would seem Jesus was saddened because his fellow Jews looked for military solutions to their problems rather than spiritual ones, a political messiah rather than the Lamb of God. He warned his followers not to take part in that method of bringing in God's kingdom. The destruction that came can be seen as a natural result of humanity seeking salvation through its own political and military might.

We cannot fully understand God's reasons for how Israel's history was shaped. Yet, we are to weep with Jesus, because the destruction which came from the revolts resulted from people seeking God in the wrong places and ways. Those devoted to the message of Jesus the Messiah view him as truly God's hope of peace.

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Upcoming Events

Holy Week Worship

Palm Sunday

April 9th

8:30 a.m. Arizona City

10 a.m Casa Grande

Maundy Thursday

April 13th

6 p.m. Arizona City

The story of the upper room, Jesus' commission to serve one another and celebrate the Lord's Supper.

Good Friday

April 14th

6 p.m. Casa Grande

The Way of the Cross

Experience Jesus' journey with the telling of the passion story through the stations of the cross.

Easter Sunday

April 16th

6 a.m. "Sunrise" in Casa Grande

8:30 a.m. Arizona City

10 a.m Casa Grande

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 4 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

Ladies Book Club

Monday, April 10th at 9 a.m. Casa Grande

Share in the discussion of "Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World." (chapters 1-4) A copy can be purchased at Amazon.com or at a local book store. Coffee will be provided. For more information contact Dell Hoff (520-836-2243) or Sandy Christopher (520-316-9083) .

Men's Saturday Fellowship

Saturday, May 6th at 8 a.m. Casa Grande

Come join in the opportunity for fellowship, Bible study, and a discussion of current topics.

Spring Softball Season

Your "Saints" are in action this month at the Paul Mason Sportsplex on Pinal Ave. in Casa Grande. The schedule for the season is now available.

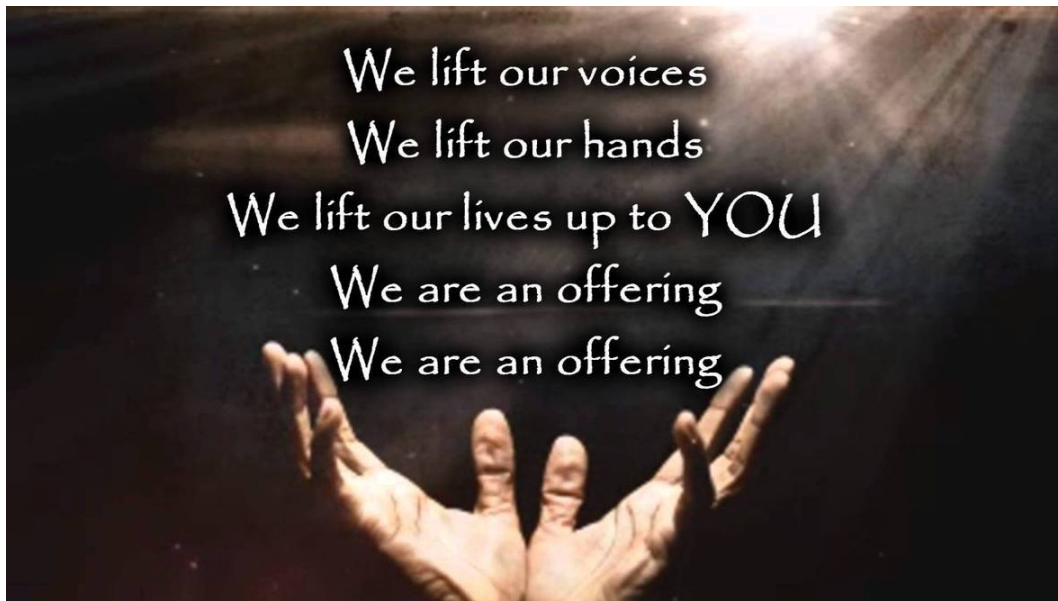
Look for the article, "Out at the Ballgame," in the Winter 2016 Pinal Ways magazine that features our "Saints."

April 3rd -- 7:15/8:15 p.m.

April 10th -- 6:15/7:15 p.m.

April 17th -- 6:15 p.m.

April 24th -- Tournament TBA



Our Stewardship

Through March of 2017 our worship offerings have increased over last year from \$89,059 to \$93,208, this shows a continued growth for more than a year.

The increase reflects a greater number of worshippers, our worshippers 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.

Paraschiv Benefit

Thank you for more than \$9,000 contributed to Yelena Paraschiv and her family, following the death of her husband, Mihai.

Also, thanks for all the items donated to the silent auction, the delicious, homemade, and unique cakes, and, all the efforts of everyone who made the event such a great success.

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.

Bereavement -- Rachel Grack and family following the death of her mother in Minnesota.

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. Over \$26,000 of contributions have been received for this program, and will be placed 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 \$9,566, for the purchase of a permanent Casa Grande site. Discussion of future possibilities is ongoing.

March Finances

Account information:

Offering Income: \$31,697

Balance General Fund: \$56,706

Average Monthly Expenses: \$17,000

Capital Fund: \$68,261 - includes the 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

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(520) 466-5024

Casa Grande Campus

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