

Central Lutheran Church Come Share the Spirit!

Mailing Address PO Box 677 Arizona City, AZ 85123-0677 www.CentralLutheranAZ.org www.facebook.com/

CentralLutheranAZ www.twitter.com/@CLC AZ

December 2022





Sign up for electronic giving on our website or though our app. Download app: <u>https://faithlife.com/clc-az/app</u> You can text to give at: 520.605.0516 Text dollar amount.

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Our Locations & Phone

12921 Sunland Gin Road Arizona City, AZ 85123 520.466.5024 324 N Sacaton Street Casa Grande, AZ 85122 520.316.9659

Email at: office@CentralLutheranAZ.org

Mission Statement

We are a Spirit-filled community of loving and caring, light-hearted people who joy-fully invite all to share, through the Gospel, the love of Christ.

The deadline for the January's Newsletter is December 15TH.

Church Directory

Church Office		
Arizona City	520-466-5024	
Casa Grande	520-316-9659	
Douglas Dill Pastor	402-235-6969	
	pastordoug@CentralLutheranAZ.org	
Office	Office@CentralLutheranAZ.org	
Church Council (* Executive Council)		
*Gary Erickson, President	520.509.7219 gerickson@CentralLutheranAZ.org	
*Steve Gal, Vice President	520.709.5414 sgal@CentralLutheranAZ.org	
*Rick Hagen, Treasurer	rhagen@CentralLutheranAZ.org	
*Karen Debold, Secretary	kdebold@CentralLutheranAZ.org	
Vacant	Vacant	
Richard Jones	rjones@CentralLutheranAZ.org	
Gary Linafelter	glinafelter@CentralLutheranAZ.org	
Skip Simes	ssimes@CentralLutheranAZ.org	
Jessica Aasheim,	jaashiem@CentralLutheranAZ.org	
Recording Secretary		

Mission Endowment Team

-Jerry Edwardson -Pastor John Donovan -Dell Hoff -Mary Pietrini

DECEMBER BIBLE READINGS:

December 4 - Esther Second Sunday of Advent Esther 4:1-17 Matthew 5:13-16

December 11 - Light to the Nations

Third Sunday of Advent Isaiah 42:1-9 Matthew 12:15-21

December 18 - Jesus as Immanuel

Fourth Sunday of Advent Matthew 1:18-25 Psalm 23:1-4

December 24 - Birth of Jesus

Christmas Eve Luke 2:1-14 Psalm 96:10-13

December 25 - Shepherds Visit

Christmas Day Luke 2:8-20

Psalm 95:6-7

January 1 - Genealogy of Jesus

First Sunday of Christmas Matthew 1:1-17 Psalm 132:11-12





SUPPORT

By Pastor Doug Dill

Exodus 17:8-13

All things can be done in God.

⁸While the Israelites were camped at Rephidim, soldiers of Amalek came and

attacked them. ⁹Moses called for a young leader named Joshua.

Moses (to Joshua): Select some of our best men, and go fight against the soldiers of Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand at the crest of that hill overlooking the battlefield with God's staff in my hand.

¹⁰Joshua did exactly as Moses had instructed him to do. He gathered the strongest men he could find and fought against the soldiers of Amalek. Meanwhile, Moses, Aaron, and Hur climbed to the top of the hill.

¹¹It happened that whenever Moses raised his

hand, the battle went well for Israel; but whenever he lowered his hand to rest. Amalek began to win. ¹²When Moses became too tired to hold his hands up any longer, Aaron and Hur took a stone and sat him down on it. Then both men stood beside Moses, one on each side, holding his hands up and keeping them steady until sunset. ¹³In the end, Joshua and the men of Israel defeated Amalek and his soldiers with the sword.

God was with Moses and Moses with God. God gave Moses all sorts of strengths. Even in his strength, he could not do it alone. The Israelites needed God and God choose Moses to help them. The Israelites looked to Moses to defeat their enemy. The Israelites fought and would win, as Moses kept his hands up. The enemy was kept at bay. The enemy could not win as long as the Israelites and Moses worked together, through the power of God.

The enemy takes on many forms but behind the enemy is the one true enemy, the devil himself. The devil seeks for us to turn from God and sin and this we are divided.

... FROWIQXHG#Q#J#B



As some of you may recall, Jarrod Iversen announced at service, that he is applying to attend seminary. Central Lutheran, in support of not only Jarrod but of any member who gets the call to attend seminary for service, has created a Seminary Fund.

If you would like to support future Deacons and Pastors, please donate to this fund. It is in our

SEMINARY FUND

Congregations and the pastor, are called by the ELCA to identify those individuals that God may be calling into ordained ministry. Additionally we are called to support and help nurture their calls. electronic giving, or you can indicate on your check or envelope, Seminary Fund. This is different than the Leaders Fund, which is sent to the ELCA for seminarians throughout the ELCA. Give here:

https://faithlife.com/clc-az/give?funds=51638

THE LIGHT IN DARKNESS

Advent is here, so is our wait for the Light to come into the world. Actually, the Light has come but we take this time to sit, wait, look for the light to come. Even more so, we know the rest of the story. The Light will come back again. Because we know the reset of the story, how our lives are lived, our outlook on life, is shaped in Jesus' birth, death, resurrection and coming again. That is why I know we can overcome financial obstacles together.

The mission of the church has been and will continue to be to take care of the widows, orphans, and the poor. All we must do is look back to the church in Acts, to see the mission then. It still applies today. For those that the mission applies to, it may seem so dark, they cannot see the light that has come.

Today, it may seem dark as well to many of us at Central Lutheran. It may seem like it will never be "like it was". Nothing will ever be the same and maybe some are thinking, we might close. See the light that has come, live your life knowing the story. Because of the light we will still be here doing mission. Mark 9:23, " 'If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes."

How we do that, does change. God's people need the church, and the church needs people to carry out mission. The light has called us together to care for the people. That was clear when Jesus said, Love one another, as I first loved you. John 13-34. When we love, as Jesus loves, we do the mission of the church, for the sake of the people, not ourselves.

Over the last thirty years, many faces have come and gone. No one is more prominent than another. All are valued and loved. The faces we do not see, are the faces that need to be seen. That is not those of who are no longer in our midst but the ones that have never been in our midst. Being church differently is what we must do, to carry out the mission of being church. Can we do it? Do we have time? Are we willing? Will it look different? So many questions, but one answer for them all comes from Jesus. Mark 9:23, " 'If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes."

Because Jesus has come and will come again, all is possible.

It may seem silly, but do you believe? Then take action alongside your brothers and sisters with the light of Jesus shinning the way.

Peace be with you all, Pastor Doug

God did not send God's only

Son into the world for no reason. Central Lutheran was not put here for no reason. Ultimately, we are here to do be the hands and feet of Jesus in the world today, taking care of the Least, Last and the Lost. In other words, the Widows, Orphans and poor. The mission of the church has not changed.

We are part of the church and as such, our mission together stays the same.

Happiness

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SENIOR CENTER



Every Tuesday in Arizona City, the center will be open from 9 am - 3:30 pm. We are actively seeking individuals who would like to help.. Gary Linafelter expressed a desire to re-engage this ministry and is seeking your help. Contact Gary at: (520) 466-6530 or via email at <u>glinafelter@yahoo.com</u>

https://centrallutheranaz.org/senior-center

CASA GRANDE LIVE STREAM

We have no one to stream from Casa Grande. Please reach out to Pastor Doug, if you are willing to do this and learn how. There is a printed manual for reference. It is as easy as changing channels on your TV. Without your help, there will be no streaming for the Casa Grande Site. Pastor Doug, 402-235-6969 Email: pastordoug@centrallutheranaz.org

SUPPORT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3...

To fight against the devil, we

must be united. Now is the time to be united. We must stand together, holding each other up in continual prayer. We must support each other, no matter what.

Remember the words of Jesus

⁹ "When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately." ¹⁰ Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; ¹¹ there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven.

¹² "But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. ¹³ This will give you an opportunity to testify. ¹⁴ So make up your minds not to prepare your defense in advance; ¹⁵ for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. ¹⁶ You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. ¹⁷ You will be hated by all because of my name. ¹⁸ But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹ By

Sometimes it's actually more comfortable to allow parts of ourselves to die than to feel them have new life, because then we have to face the pain of the whole truth. your endurance you will gain your souls. Lk21:9-19

Standing up in the name of Jesus, does not promise no pain but it does promise that not a hair of your head will perish. We will each be given the words we need, when we need. All we need to do is stand up and listen and the words will come.

Nadia Bolz–Weber the words will come. Jesus comes into the

world, Emmuael (God with Us) but also God for us. We are called to be witnesses to the Word, Jesus. In our witness, we are called to support all of God's people. We are called to stand up for the sake of the gospel and Jesus will be with us the end of the ages.

Let us stand up for the gospel.

Let us support each other.

Let us love one another.

Let us say,

Peace, Pastor Doug



ANGEL TREE

Central Lutheran Church supports the Angel Tree/Prison Fellowship Program! During the season of Advent you are invited participate with the Angel Tree by donation or buying a gift this Christmas for a child on behalf of a parent in prison?

2022– Tags can be picked up at a church service on November 20th and/or November 27th! Wrapped presents with the tag are due back by December 11th. You can also financially support the Angel Tree. Do so at:

https://faithlife.com/clc-az/give?funds=51952

More details on our website under ministries

MUTUAL MINISTRY TEAM

The Mutual Ministry Team's main purpose is to improve the communication between the congregation members of Central Lutheran Church, the pastor and the lay leadership. The primary purpose of the team will be to address any concerns, issues, conflicts that have been communicated by the congregation. In addressing these concerns, the team would review any and all issues being expressed for accuracy versus one person's opinion. Once the issues have been reviewed by the team and considered appropriate, they would then be presented to the Church Council for resolution and corrective action. The Mutual Ministry Team will seek ways for the pastor, lay leaders and the congregation to work together for the good of Central Lutheran Church.

The following are the members of the Mutual Ministry Team and their email addresses:

Jerry Edwardson – <u>geraldedward-</u> son61@gmail.com

Dell Hoff - paulndell@gmail.com

Myrna Horner – <u>dnmhorner@arvig.net</u>

If you have any questions, feel free to contact any of the team members.

DATABASE UPDATE

We are missing many names from our database, as compared to the previous one we had. Please help us be able to reach out to you. **We need this info so you can be a voting member.**

Here is the link to the database form, the member directory and the update portal. <u>https://</u> <u>centrallutheranaz.org/member-directory</u>

Which can be found on the website under connect on the menu. Printouts can be found at each location as well.

LAUNDRY LOVE

We have a new ministry that Connie Cameron, of the Casa Grande Site, has graciously decided to be the team lead. You can donate online here: <u>https://faithlife.com/clc-az/give?funds=51909</u>

Laundry Love started about 5 years ago. Its purpose is to provide soap and money to the needy of our community so they can do their laundry. We do the laundry twice a month (the 2nd and last Wednesday of the month). Currently there are 6 local churches working together to provide this service.

We provide this service at the Quick Clean Laundromat on Florence Blvd. We are able to provide this service through Church outreach services and individual donations. Over the last few years, we have seen the need increase, so we are serv-

ing the homeless, senior citizens on fixed incomes, and families. This service is a true community effort.

We pay for vouchers,

one Wednesday every three months. That anticipated cost today is around \$600 We assist onsite laundry service from 3:00-7:00pm, often in two hour shifts

Would you like to be part of this ministry? See Connie Cameron in Casa Grande.

You can also email her at: <u>ccamer-</u> on@centrallutheranaz.org

COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

God's Blessing's to you all!

As we enter the holiday season on behalf of the Church Council I would like to wish our entire church family a holy and blessed season. As we look to the future with great hope, Central Lutheran Church finds itself in a challenging financial situation.

The Leadership of CLC has carefully managed finances, yet income has not kept pace with expenses.

On December 16th, A Special Appeal letter was sent out to the congregation that outlined the needs of Central Lutheran Church. In addition, and more important the letter also listed the ministries the church has developed and involved the community in. I ask that you pray and consider how you might participate in the Special Appeal Program. There will be a special day of receiving gifts on December 17th, 2022. We would like to see the pledges filled by December 25th, in order to start the process of budgeting for 2023.

This past year has been one of transition for Central Lutheran Church. I recently read this quote from Dr. Martin Luther King and I think it applies to CLC at this time.

"Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase. To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary. To one without faith, no explanation is possible".

In essence, let us join hands and make CLC stronger than ever!

God Bless, Steve Gal, Council, Vice President

ONLINE / ELECTRONIC GIVING

We will be moving our electronic giving to easy Tithe. On our giving page on our website, you will see both systems. Please login to the old one to stop any payments. We will no longer be able to process the payments on January 2.

Please login to the new site and setup your electronic payments. This is all part of the change from Faithlife as they sunset much of their services.

A TEMPLE POINT OF VIEW

By Rev. Michael W. Massa

Grace, mercy, and peace from God, our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus who is the Christ.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Today's texts are all about the end time, the Day of the Lord, Judgement Day. In the Gospel reading, Jesus says that the day will come... which it did... when the great temple in Jerusalem would be torn down and not one stone would be left standing upon on another.

The disciples were aghast. Not because Jesus said that the Day of the Lord would come. They were aghast because he said that they cooled, the Roman soldiers

the temple would be destroyed. In their minds, the Day of not one stone was left upon the the Lord was supposed to usher in a new age ... a perfect world where everything would be just like the magnificent temple in Jerusalem... only more so.

The temple was truly magnificent. The stones of the temple gleamed could see their relationship with white on the outside. And on the inside those huge stones were covered with thin sheets of gold... not golden wallpaper... not gold plating... thin sheets of hammered, solid gold. When Jerusalem fell to the Romans in 70 AD the temple was burned. The heat of that fire was so great that the gold melted back into the cracks between the huge stones. When pried and tumbled them down so that the gold between them could

be recovered. Just as Jesus said, other.

When Jesus predicted that, the disciples could not image it because they felt that the temple was only way that the one true God could be worshiped. They God only in that way. Without the temple, there could be no relationship with the God of creation.

As they envisioned paradise, they could only envision it in relation to the temple. What they had was what should be and even heaven had to reflect their view of how the world was supposed to be.

Those foolish disciples. Didn't they realize that their view of the world was not a total and complete view?

Before we scoff at them or condemn them, let's look at our view of the world. Let's start with something simple. I want everyone to point to your left. Literally ... yes... I want you to point to your left. (After they do, also do so) Which of us is correct? There are a whole lot more of you pointing over that way that there are pointing over this way. Which is correct? You can put your hands down.

It depends on your point of view doesn't it? Because we are both correct. To me, from my current point of view, that is left.... To you, from your current point of view, that is left.

We tend to not recognize our own point of view because it is what we have always had. And there is nothing wrong with having our own point of view ... as long as we recognize that there are other points of view.

There is a question which I used to ask all prospective brides and grooms in our first pre-marital counseling session. That question is, "When you have a huge family gathering, which direction do you pass the food around the table?"

Some would say, "Right," and some would say "Left" and some would say, "Every which way." Sometimes both the bride and groom would answer the same. Sometimes they would answer differently. But in either case I would lead them to realize that just because they loved each other didn't mean they had exactly the same experiences and view of the world.

My wife and I come from distinctly

different experiences and views of when asked if she wanted wine. the world. Perhaps what demonstrated those differences most clearly to us when we were first married was ... wine.

Shortly before we were married, I attended an eightieth birthday celebration for Kathy's grandmother. As we all sat quietly around the living room, her father asked me if want?" she said hopefully, "A I would like a glass of wine. I gladly accepted and he handed me a small glass thimble on a stem filled with a pale bitter liquid. I said thank you and sat there slowly sipping at it, trying to make it look like I liked it.

A couple months later, after our marriage, my grandmother took Kathy and I around to meet the Zias. Zia is an Italian word for aunt... or great aunt... or any woman of respect. In this case it was great aunts.

Our first stop was at Zia Arganita's and shortly after we got there Zia asked if we would like a glass of wine. Kathy and I and grandma said, "Yes," and Zia brought out ten ounce water glasses filled with cold red Italian table wine. We were going to be there for a about a half hour, so I timed my drinking so that my glass was empty when we

were ready to leave. Kathy, unfortunately, didn't know that if you set your glass back down, it meant you wanted it refilled, so she ended up having to swallow about a half a glass of wine just as we left.

Next was Uncle Clyde's, who used 8 oz water glasses. I had warned Kathy not to set the glass down and to say, "Half a glass,"

Another Zia, another 8 oz glass of wine, and then as we were on our way to our final stop at Zia Isolina's Kathy asked me, "I don't want to offend them, but is there something else I can ask for besides wine?"

When I asked, "What do you Coke?"

I told her to ask for a 7up. She said she would really rather have a Coke and I explained that for that generation of Italian-Americans 7up meant any carbonated beverage in a can or bottle. I had no idea what she was going to end up with, but it wouldn't be wine.

When Zia Isolina offered us wine, Kathy said, "May I have a 7up instead?"

Zia said sure and went back into the kitchen. When she returned, she handed Kathy a cold can of Coca Cola.

Which wine is right? A bitter white wine in a miniature tulip glass or a sweet red wine in a water glass?

It really depends on what you grew up with and what you have become used to. I can no longer drink wine. With the amount of Gabapentin I'm on for my back pain, a four ounce glass of wine would put me under the table, and that is a totally different view.

Where am I going with all of this?

Right now our church and our country is wrestling with the realities of vastly different points of view. Judging from the names, I would guess that most members of this congregation are Germanic or Scandinavian. In other words, White, or as I would prefer Eurocentric. The history of this country and of Europe as we have traditionally learned it, is from a Eurocentric point of view. We even view the Bible from a Euro-centric point of view. In the illustrations, Jesus is usually depicted as pale with long, light brown hair and blue eyes.

I used to have a large illustration from an article called Jesus of the World. It showed paintings and drawings and stained glass windows which depicted Jesus from points of view from northern European to southern African to Asian to Indios, Native American. They are all just as correct. They are just from different points of view based on a person's life context and experience.

The problem comes when one point of view says that theirs is the ONLY correct and proper point of view. There is a very charged word which has come to be applied to declaring that one point of view is the only correct and proper point of view. That word is supremacy.

If the Euro-centric point of view is dominant and people defend that as the only correct and proper point of view, then those people are often called White Supremacists.

If a history and story of a country appears to be solely from a Eurocentric point of view, then those with a different point of view often see that total history and story as supported by white supremacy. Using those terms is not helpful because when most of us think of a white supremacist, we think of some neanderthal in a white sheet... and there are still some of those around.

When the term is applied to us, we become defensive. Because from our point of view it is very difficult to understand the point of view of someone whose story and life experience runs counter to the primary story and life experience of our Euro-centric nation.

The thought that the point of view of our society could be changed to something that we do not understand is frightening to us. But the reality is that someday, the temple will be torn down.

Some day in the future this building will cease to exist. If you go far enough into the future, the town of Albia may cease to exist. All that we think of as essential to our lives and to our relationship with God someday may be but the dust of history.

That is frightening. But once we accept that, we are freed... a little... from our own personal point of view. We are freed to ask ourselves what it is that is essential to a proper life. What is it that is essential to a relationship with God? And we are free to experience the many different ways that a proper life and a proper relationship with God can be set forth.

From my point of view, I firmly believe that Yeshua Ben Yoseph, Jesus of Nazareth, presented to the world a way to be in relationship with God that is far superior to any other attempts by humanity to establish such a relationship. But at the same time, I recognize that my Jewish, and Muslim, and Hindu, and Buddhist, and whatever sisters and brothers just as firmly believe... from their point of view... that their faith is correct.

We will not win them over by demanding that they become Sven and Olie in order to become in relationship with God through Christ. We will win them over by expanding our point of view as a congregation... as a church... as a society... as a nation... so that multiple points of view can overlap. Then, hopefully, we can treat each other within the church... within our society... within our nation... within our world... as true brothers and sisters; each with their own distinct point of view; each with their own traditions and stories to share; each seen as equal in the eyes of God.

When will that occur? Can that occur? And what should each of us do in our lives today?

I have no idea when it will occur, but it will. With God all things are possible, so it can occur. And within our lives today, we can each move things just a little closer to that seemingly impossible day by recognizing that we have our own point of view... and acknowledging other people's points of view... and intentionally listening to their stories and experiences... and most of all, by trying to follow our true Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus our Lord.

In Jesus' name, Amen

May the peace of God that passes all human understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus forever.Amen.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS AND MORE	WEEKLY HAPPENINGS:		
As you know, advent worship has started. Here is some more helpful information. Advent worships will be on Wednesdays in Casa Grande at 6 pm. We will use the Hold- en Evening prayer for our order of worship and the sermons will cover, "The Purpose of Christmas" Christmas Eve Candlelight worship will be: Arizona City 4 pm Casa Grande 6 pm There will be no service on Christmas day. Please enjoy time with you families. On January 1, 2023, we will have a single service in Arizona City at 9:15 am. We will do a Christmas Sing Along and Hymn sign.	<pre>For a full & most up-to-date calendar visit: https://centrallutheranaz.org/events-calendar Vxqgd v# Z ruk b #, 63 # p # g #] # W /# 43 = 3 # p # g # dvd# udgh# P rqgd v# DD# hhwd g # g # W # 8 = 3 # p # Wxhvgd v# Vhq ruff hqwhu # g # W # 8 = 3 # p # Vhq ruff hqwhu # g # W # 8 = 6 3 # p # Vhq ruff hqwhu # g # W # 8 = 6 3 # p # Z hgqhvgd v=# Sdvxruff rx j v# ilf h # rxuv # g # dvd # J udg h # d05 s # Wkxuvgd v=# T x b d g v=# T x b d g # J # W # d05 s # Irrg# dqn# Ivvb x w r g # g # W # d04 4 d# Sul Wh# dqg # Sulf w I hg # dvd # J udg h # 48 s 0: = 63 s # vdu d g # 24 5 #</pre>		
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Cut on dotted line and return on giving <u>Sunday, December 18, 2022</u> . You are also welcome to return the pledge amount at that time. Final due date for pledges is December 25th, so the council can make preparations for the annual appeal and budgeting. If you cannot bring in person, you can send via postal mail and you are welcome to include your offering at that time.			
In response to God's grace and love in Christ Jesus and in appreciation of Central Lutheran Church's ministry, I/we intend to give to this special offering in support of the congregation's ongoing ministry. I/we understand this amount may be changed if necessary. I/we will notify the church office. Amount to be given: \$ If you would like to use the convenience of electronic banking to give this offering. You may give online at: https://faithlife.com/clc-az/give?funds=51912			
By giving directly online, this becomes your inf and God bless you.	tent statement as show below. Thank you in advance		
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Address:			
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