



Central Lutheran Church

Come Share the Spirit!

Mailing Address

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November 2022

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Sign up for electronic giving on our website or through our app.

Download app:

<https://faithlife.com/clc-az/app>

You can text to give at:
520.605.0516 Text dollar amount.

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 December's Newsletter is November 17TH.

Church Directory

Church Office

Arizona City 520-466-5024

Casa Grande 520-316-9659

Douglas Dill 402-235-6969

Pastor

pastordoug@CentralLutheranAZ.org

Office Office@CentralLutheranAZ.org

Church Council (* Executive Council)

*Gary Erickson, 520.509.7219
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Recording Secretary

Mission Endowment Team

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

Food Bank Update

October's noisy offering collected \$62.68. We take this offering on the 4th Sunday of every month. Bring your loose change & even dollar bills.

Every Cent Counts!



NOVEMBER BIBLE

READINGS:

November 6 - Elisha Heals Naaman

2 Kings 5:1-15a

Matthew 8:2-3

November 13 - Micah

Micah 5:2-5a; 6:6-8

Matthew 9:13

November 20 - Swords into Plowshares

Isaiah 36:1-3, 13-20; 37:1-7; 2:1-4

Matthew 5:14

November 27 - Faith as a Way of Life

First Sunday of Advent

Habakkuk 1:1-7; 2:1-4; 3:17-19

Matthew 26:36-38

December 4 - Esther

Second Sunday of Advent

Esther 4:1-17

Matthew 5:13-16

IN CONCERT

Chuck Crain

FROM PRESLEYS' BRANSON & RFD TV

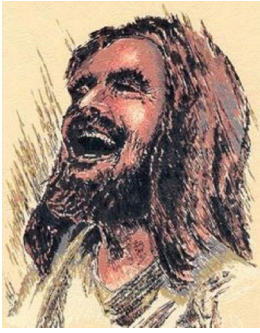
**Two *FREE* Gospel
Concert Opportunities
Central Lutheran Church**

January 20, 2023

4pm in AZ City

7pm in Casa Grande

**Free Will offering CD's Available
Snacks available for purchase**



Paralyzed

By Pastor Doug Dill

Have you ever thought about being paralyzed? Have you known someone who is paralyzed?

I recently attended the Bishop 's Fall Gathering of ordained leaders in the Grand Canyon Synod, which encompasses Arizona, Nevada, and part of Utah. As we gathered, the theme was centered around the scripture of Mark 2:1-12. Jesus heals the paralytic man. In this healing story, Jesus says to the man, "Son, your sins are forgiven". After the teachers of the law began to grumble, Jesus says; "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." The man then gets up and leaves.

Was the man paralyzed? How long had he been paralyzed? So many questions, but this is only the beginning of many more questions.

I have been paralyzed and even feel that way sometimes now. Paralyzation comes in many forms. Jesus tells the man his sins are forgiven, that is all that Jesus knew, needed to be done. I have been paralyzed by my own actions and inactions. I have also been paralyzed by other's actions and inactions. My sins of action and sins of omission. Other peoples sins in action and omission.

What we think and do can prevent our movement in where God wants us to be, what God wants us to do, and how God wants us to act or not act. As the Bishop 's Fall Gathering continued along, we were asked to consider other questions about the paralytic man, ourselves and our congregations.

Jesus is healing in a house and so many were gathered around, that the paralytic was unable to get near Jesus. Four men carry the paralytic to Jesus. Who are these men? Are they friends of the paralytic?

Who has carried you when you were paralyzed? Did you seek them out? Did they seek you out? Just how far did they go, or would they go to help you in your affliction? The four men carried the paralytic to the roof top. Tearing open the roof, they lower him down to Jesus.

Have you sought out help when you have been paralyzed? I have several groups that support me, such as my clergy life coach, my text study group of pastors and the pastors in the synod office. I have used a Spiritual Director and close friends to reach out to. Some of these have reached me and I have reached out to them.

Have you ever seen a congregation become paralyzed? I have seen many, especially during the COVID 19 pandemic. Fears and anxiety can become crippling. Fears of change, anxiety built around what tomorrow brings or does not, can all lead to being crippled. Congregations, like people need to seek out help. First and it is always first, prayer gets us centered.

The teachers of the law began thinking to themselves. Jesus being God incarnate, knew what they were thinking, His spirit showed what was in their hearts. Just as the Sprit knows what we are thinking, what is in our hearts.

... CONTINUED ON PG 5

*There are two ways
of spreading light -
to be the candle or
the mirror that
reflects it.*

-Edith Wharton

Advent Wednesdays

Advent starts on November 27th. We will hold Advent Wednesday worship in Casa Grande at 6 pm. The service will be a service of centered around prayer as we wait for the birth of Jesus. For those who want to follow along with the sermons, The Purpose of Christmas, by Rick Warren, will help form the sermons through scripture. You can purchase a copy of Rick's book at multiple locations on the internet. If you want to support Central Lutheran, then choose Central Lutheran A L C at Amazon and choose to purchase at smile.amazon.com

The Spiritual Corner

- Kris Dill Spiritual Director

This month's devotional is from **"Extreme Devotion" The Voice of the Martyr's.**

This book is a collection of Daily Devotional stories from Ancient to Modern-Day Believers

After I read it, I knew God wanted it shared. Read it more than once, how do you respond?

Day 46

Russia: Hypocrites

Matthew 12:30

He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.

They were singing choruses when the two soldiers entered with rifles. The Service came to a halt as the Russian soldiers stared at the believers with wild eyes.

"What are you doing here?" they shouted. "Worshiping your imaginary God?"

The church members cowered in the pews, wondering if there were more soldiers and more guns outside.

"All those who are faithful to God, move to the right side of the church" Said one of the soldiers, his face a mask of hatred "You will be shot for your faith. You who wish to go home and keep your life, stand on the left side. You must decide to live or die. Those who are faithful to this 'God' will die. Those who deny Him can live freely."

Ten minutes earlier, everyone had sung praises equally. Now it was a question of life or death. Some stood on the left, looking sadly or waving apologetically to those on the right. Some stood on the right, their eyes closed in last-minute prayers.

*"He who is not
with me is
against me..."*

MATTHEW 12:30

"You on the left are free to go," One of the soldiers said moments later. Those people filed out, taking one last look at those who would soon be dead.

When only those on the right remained, the soldiers put down their weapons. "We, too are Christians," they said, "but we wish to worship without Hypocrites."

Defining moments come to us when they are least expected, and we cannot prepare for them. We must experience them "as is" and learn from the consequences. It maybe as complex as a church service interrupted by perpetrators who demand our allegiance to their faith. Or it may be as simple as deciding whether or not to walk out of an offensive movie. Our response to a defining moment will side us with that which is Christlike or that which is questionable. Ready or not, we meet our real character face-to-face the moment we decide to take sides.

Paralyzed

CONTINUED FROM PG 3

Are we asking for God to help us, even in our paralyzation? Are we willing to be carried into an unknown setting. Will we let others carry us up high and tear open the roof for something new. If so, then we can be put before Jesus, be cured of our paralyzation and get up and take our mat and go where God is leading us.

Jesus says in Matthew 6:34, "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." In Luke 12:7-8 Jesus says, Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. "I tell you, whoever publicly acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man will also acknowledge before the angels of God. Take heart, follow God into new life, new begging's, pick up your mat and walk in the ways of God.

Seminary

Did you know that in the ELCA each pastor and congregation is called to look for those individuals that may be called by God into ministry and specifically, ordained ministry? Many that are identified, are identified early in life. Some are identified much later in life.

As part of identifying those that God may be calling, we are also as individuals and as a congregation, called to pray for them, support them in any way we can. Future leaders need to be identified and supported.

Recently at Central Lutheran, we created a Seminary Support fund. This fund will be used to help support throughout the seminary process, those members of Central Lutheran, that are called into seminary for ordained ministry. Financial, prayer and encouragement are all ways of giving support.

Recently Jarrod Iversen, who normally attends the Arizona City site, has been leading services and preaching. Jarrod has started the process of

entrance into seminary. He and others could use your support. If you can financially support seminarians by giving, on your checks or envelope, write Seminary Support. You can give online by choosing Seminary Support fund, or directly through this link, <https://faithlife.com/clc-az/give?funds=51638>

Changes

By Donna Wittenburg

From the time we are born changes start; from a helpless baby depending on Mommy and Daddy for everything to soon we recognize their voices and faces. Then we learn to walk and talk. There was no preschool, so we went directly into kindergarten. Mine was a country school where all grades were taught. High school was a big change going to different rooms for classes. Oh yes, high school has really changed in the last 70 years. After high school some went on to college and others got a job and married their high school sweetheart. That too was a big change, having to live with another person other than your family and starting your own traditions.

The same changes have happened at church. When I grew up the men sat in the pews on the right-hand side of the church. The women sat the left-hand side with the babies, toddlers, and other children. Being a farming community, the men were tired and sometimes nodded off while the women fed the babies and tried to keep the others from squirming around. Can't remember when we started sitting together as a family. In our church baptism was always held when a baby was 2-3 weeks old. You never took communion until you were confirmed; so, there are some more changes. Pastors give the same sermons from the gospel scriptures but in a different version and one we can understand. Our hymns are different too, but have the same beautiful words, but to different rhythms.

We can all enjoy going to church and the fellowship of church if we try and go along with the changes. We've been doing changes our whole life.

A Letter from ATTB, Pr. Jacqui Pagel

Hello Central Lutheran, this is your friendly neighborhood **Associate to the Bishop**, Pr. Jacqui Pagel. I get to hijack your newsletter and spend the next 700 or so words telling you all how amazing you are and reminding you that you that you are not alone.

I met some of you at Pr. Doug's Installation and a few more at the October council meeting. I get to work with you all because you are supporting one of your own to pursue rostered leadership into the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, our ELCA.

As the A2B for Candidacy and Faith Formation in the Grand Canyon synod I get to visit many congregations across our synod and even some churches across the country. Central Lutheran is like many of the churches in the ELCA, in the Presbytery, Methodist and some Episcopalians. Most of our Churches across the United States that are filled with good people, people that want the best for themselves and their families. People that believe in God, family, and the understanding that a little hard work goes a long way.

And here we are in 2023, post COVID, the digital age, a time when everything is different from how most of us grew up. What is the Church to do? What is your church doing about this change? There is no going back. The church is never going to be like it was when you were 6, when you got married, when you had your grandchildren baptized. The world is a different place. You do know that encyclopedias are no longer printed?

Tell me, what does that mean for you? Does that mean that you get to quit church? Does that mean you dig your heels in and only emotionally and financially support the items and ideas that reflect what the church *used* you be? Which things do you say to your spouse, child, or neighbor, about the exciting things that are happening at your church, with your faith, when you talk to Jesus? Are you signed up to attend the lecture with Pastor David Lose: *Why don't my children*

and grandchildren go to church? (And what can I do about it). Fount at: <https://www.gcsynod.org/news/pastor-david-lose-why-dont-my-children-and-grandchildren-go-to-church-and-what-can-i-do-about-it>

You all are up to great ministry. You take the scripture at Matthew 25:40 to heart, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me." You have various ministry to feed people, you help people communicate well through the English as a Second Language program. And my favorite, you build up leaders from the inside by supporting Pr. Doug, Kris Dill, and candidate for word and sacrament Jarrod Iversen.

In late November, I get to come out and share the good news with you, share more of myself with you and get to know you all better. I look forward to learning more about the ways you all are going to identify what you want the church to be and grow into that. As a pastor in the Office of the Bishop it is encouraging to see congregations like yours being the new church. I get it, we in the Bishop's office get it, the employees in our Churchwide offices get it. We get that good people that worship in our churches have never been asked, "what do you want your church to be?" During most of Christianity we just went along with whoever was in charge and did the best we could with what we had to work with. Times have changed. We NOW get to make things, life, the way we are different. Different is OK. Different is good. Jesus is different, Jesus is GOoD. We get to let GOD.

It is great to know that the ELCA is alive and well in Central Arizona. It is OK that the Lutheran church out there is struggling just like all the other churches across the country. It is even better to know that there are people that are putting Jesus first and being true disciples instead of people who just go to church. Nathaniel asked at John 1:46, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Can anything good come out of Central Lutheran? Yes, because it already has. You! Central Lutheran is making things happen. And it is good.

-Associate to the Bishop, Pr. Jacqui Pagel

God Pause

Isaiah 1:10-18 (NRSV)

Verse ¹⁰Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom! Listen to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah! Verse ¹¹What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the Lord; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats. Verse ¹²When you come to appear before me, who asked this from your hand? Trample my courts no more; Verse ¹³bringing offerings is futile; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and sabbath and calling of convocation- I cannot endure solemn assemblies with iniquity. Verse ¹⁴Your new moons and your appointed festivals my soul hates; they have become a burden to me, I am weary of bearing them. Verse ¹⁵When you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood.

Verse ¹⁶Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil, Verse ¹⁷learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow. Verse ¹⁸Come now, let us argue it out, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be like snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.

Devotion- I cherish our liturgical tradition and the rhythm of the church year, especially the festivals with their inspiring music and once-a-year traditions like Easter lilies, Christmas trees, and the vibrant red flowers of Pentecost. Praising God by offering our best hymns, anthems, and visual arts is a very pleasing worship experience for me, but is it pleasing to the Lord God? These traditions are roughly parallel to the liturgies at the temple in Jerusalem in the time of Isaiah—the very practices that Isaiah equates with the proverbial wickedness of ancient Sodom and Gomorrah. Like Isaiah's contemporaries, we can easily fall into the fallacy of thinking our worship

traditions completely fulfill God's expectations of us. Isaiah reminds us that true worship of God does not consist only of songs of praise in the sanctuary but must be accompanied by daily seeking justice in our society, especially for those who are most vulnerable.

Prayer- Lord God, help me to daily remember The Great Commandment—that loving you and loving my neighbor are two sides of the same coin. Amen.

Wayne Peterson '
81 M.Div. Retired, Plymouth, MN

Karen Nelson's Open Letter

I had the opportunity while in Minnesota to watch the streaming of Central Lutheran Worship services on Sunday morning. I would like to share with all my Christian friends my experiences.

First, in April it was very difficult to hear the services, especially with my own hearing problems. Pastor Doug's voice came out loud and clear during his sermons. I was still unable to sing with the congregation at that time. Then the words were shown on the site along with the choir voices. All the improvements that have been done, especially the microphones, to be able to hear and participate in the worship service.

Thank you all for making me feel included in worship so many miles apart. I felt the presents of God being in everyone's heart as they were worshipping in the church and myself sitting in PJs. It was so heartwarming to listen to Pastor Doug explain the marks of discipleship. I did purchase the book Power Surge, so I was able to try and understand what a disciple is to do. The service is the 6th mark of of discipleship that really changed my heart. God was telling me I can do better helping people. I needed to be more accountable and willing to live a Christ like walk during my life on earth journey. Praying to the Holy Spirit to guide us all to do the work God has ordered us to do. It's an adventure. We need to show our kindness to the closest people around us and show caring and generosity of ourselves.

Continues on page 8.

Cont from page 7:

As Matthew 20:28 says, "Son of Man" who came not to be served but to serve. Remember what Pastor Doug said, "God HAS it!" God wants us to be his hands and be guided by the Holy Spirit. God will take care of it. He wants us to trust that he is in control. God puts your strength in you when you put your trust in Him. We are not to worry, feel anxious, or afraid or even become angry. When we

feel these things, we are out of control. Needing to bring it to God and trust in His provision and protection. Be more Positive and protection. Be more positive and share my home.

Prayer to close:

Dear Jesus, Thank you for always being in control of everything in our lives. Amen

I do enjoy being a disciple and do the things for God. If you see me not doing this, please remind me not to be so selfish and be positive.

November at a glance:

- Nov-05 9a Prayer Shawl/Patch Ministry
Nov-12 12p Memorial Service, for
Del Semler in Casa Grande
- Nov-13 9:15a Combined Worship service in Casa Grande
10:15a Congregational Meeting
11a Setup for Lifeline Screening in Casa Grande
- Nov-14 8:30a Lifeline Health Screening in Casa Grande
- Nov-15 9a -3p Senior Center Starts in AZ City
6p Council Meeting in Casa Grande
- Nov-16 9:30a Quilting Wednesday
- Nov-17 4p Newsletter Articles Due
- Nov-21 8:30a Men's Group in Casa Grande
- Nov-30 6p Advent Worship in Casa Grande
- Dec-03 9a Prayer Shawl/Patch

Electronic Giving: It's Easy & Secure!

Donate by phone!
Scan code or Text
"Give" with the
dollar amount to
(520) 605 0516
e.g. Give 50



Weekly Happenings:

Sundays:

Worship: 8:30 am in AZ City,
10:00 am in Casa Grande

Mondays:

AA Meeting in AZ City 5:30 pm

Tuesdays:

Senior Center (Starts Nov. 15) in AZ City 9a-3p
Bible Women in Casa Grande 6 pm

Wednesdays:

Pastor Doug's Office hours in Casa Grande 9a-2p

Thursdays:

Quilting Group in AZ City 9a-2p
Food Bank Distribution in AZ City 9a-11a
Praise Band Practice in Casa Grande 6:15p-7:30p
Walk on Water in Casa Grande 6:30p-8p

For a full & most up-to-date calendar
visit: <https://centrallutheranaz.org/events-calendar>

Hello-

I wanted to take a moment of your time to say thank you.

Our craft fair was very successful, for the first one. However, none of it was possible without your help.

Thank you to everyone who sat on the planning team, cash donations, food donations, bake good donations, craft donations, and your donation of time. Thank you for the set up and take down. Also thank you for coming out and shopping.

Words are all I have to offer, but know they come from the bottom of my heart.

When I first brought the idea up, some I think, were skeptical, while others were excited. Good news, we have vendors who asked for us to do this again next year. I think the team feels like Santa after his Christmas Deliveries. Rest we must! We will revisit the craft fair sometime next year.

Thank you again,
Kris Dill