

“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.

(Lutheran Book of Worship Offering Prayer)

We challenge ourselves to continue to grow in giving for our growing ministry.

Internship Fund

The internship program continues to be a part of our ongoing stewardship effort.

We have 39 pledges, for a total of over \$23,400, and have received nearly \$17,000 in contributions.

You are encouraged to continue to make your donations to support a future internship. Watch for more news on how you can help with this program.

Casa Grande Land Fund

Our property “growth fund” has a balance of \$5,652, for the purchase of land to house a permanent Casa Grande site. No timetable has been set, yet the discussion of future possibilities is ongoing.

“Get Linked”

Remember to check the Central Lutheran Church website,

www.centrallutheranaz.org for the schedule of events and news.

For the monthly **newsletter** and **sermons** go to the “Get Linked” page.

Our **Photo Album** has been updated and is available online.

From an e-mailed newsletter click on this link:

<http://www.centrallutheranaz.org/images/CLC%20Photo%20Album.pdf>.

Once the photo album is displayed in the browser, you can save it to your computer and then view it in Adobe Acrobat.

Note: to download Adobe Acrobat for free click here: <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>

You can contact Pastor Thom through the website or at pastor@centrallutheranaz.org

Upcoming Council Meeting: Thur, January 22nd at 6:30 p.m. in Arizona City – submit all agenda items to Sandy Christopher.

Financial News

Account balances through December:

Balance General Fund: \$5,610 Offering Income: \$23,995

Capital Fund: \$65,089 – includes the Internship Fund: \$16,919

Casa Grande Land Fund: \$5,652

Average Monthly Expenses: \$17,000

Balance of Mortgage with Thrivent: \$353,803 (12/31/13)

Central News

January 2015

Laugh In the New Year

*“When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations, ‘The Lord has done great things for them.’”*
(Psalm 126:1-2)

Yes, laughter is the best medicine. Certainly it is beneficial to our health. Medical studies have shown laughter has a positive effect on nearly every important organ in our body. Laughter reduces tension and causes us to relax. It stirs up the blood, expands the chest, electrifies the nerves, and clears the brain. Laughter provides refreshment to the entire body.

Abraham Lincoln understood the benefits of laughter when he said, *“With the fearful strain that is on me night and day, if I did not laugh I should die.”*

Try it. If you’re having trouble finding something to laugh at, do as I do, start with yourself. Don’t be overly impressed with yourself and enjoy your humanity.

Don’t miss out on these great laughs. If you can laugh at yourself you are guaranteed to have a lifetime of amusement.

Furthermore, laughter breaks down barriers, makes us more approachable, projects warmth, and attracts people.

Make your home a place filled with laughter. Look for humor in the small stuff of life. Laughter shared among family members strengthens relationships.

It is a helpful formula for a well-adjusted personality. Enjoying laughter makes us better equipped to handle life.

Laughter is a prescription to a long and enjoyable life. People don’t stop laughing because they grow old; they grow old because they stop laughing.

It has been said, the one who laughs, lasts.

Remember: Our five senses are incomplete without the sixth – a sense of humor.

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Worship Schedule

Arizona City

Sunday -- 8:30 a.m.

Sunday School

For information on Sunday School for children contact Kathy Davis (414-8254), or Linda Gal (705-1450).

Casa Grande

Saturday Evening -- 5 p.m.

Sunday -- 10 a.m.

Youth Night in Casa Grande

Call Kara Cooper (426-9228 eve) to learn about youth weeknight program.

Fellowship is held at both sites each Sunday.

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.

Worship Assistants

You are needed to help as greeter, usher, reader, communion server, offering counter, and nursery care. Sign-up and you will be contacted regarding the date 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.

Men's Saturday Coffee

Saturday, January 3rd

8 a.m. Casa Grande campus

Come join in the opportunity for fellowship and discussion of *Lutheranism 101*.

“Gracious Dining”

Join in the discussion of

“That the World May Know”

God's people were to serve him faithfully as the world watched.

Our mission is the same, to live obediently within the world so *“that the world may know”* God.

Watch for new opportunities in January.

Youth Night Classes

Weekday Bible studies and events for elementary, middle school and high school students are held on **Wednesdays at 6 p.m.** at the Casa Grande campus.

Classes for the different age groups are led by Kara Cooper, Anne-Marie York, and Pastor Thom.

Ladies Quilting Ministry

All women of the congregation are invited to join in quilting fellowship on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Arizona City. Bring your lunch. Quilts are shared each year with the women and children at the Against Abuse Shelter in Casa Grande.

All Year Birthday Party

Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, Jan 25th at 2 p.m.

Arizona City campus

You are invited to celebrate the coming year with a pot-luck meal, followed by the annual meeting to plan the new year, and a birthday party for everyone. In the coming weeks sign-up according to your birthday month.

Adult Education

You can help adults learn English and develop their math, reading and writing skills.

-- Make a donation by placing it in the offering (designated for “adult education”) or in a special offering basket at either site near the entry;
-- Volunteer to be a teacher or tutor.
Thank you for the \$700 of donations received for this ministry.
For more information contact Alyson Stephens 602-721-1673 (alysonstephens@q.com).

Make a “Joyful Noise”

You are invited to participate in our choir music ministry.

Rehearsals begin on Thur, Jan. 8th at 7 p.m.

For more information talk to Mary LaPaglia (520-331-2000).

Offering Envelopes for 2015 are available. For those not assigned envelopes, pick them up and record your name with the number on the “offering envelopes” list.

9-Hole Golf Scramble

Sat, January 10th at 1 p.m.

Arizona City Golf Club

Golfers of all abilities are invited to play, sign-up at either campus. Fellowship after play will be hosted by Jim and Sandy Freng.

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.

Remember in Prayer

Ada Biese, Harry Brink, Maxine Cadman, Marv and Ruby Craun, Bryon Foss, Pam Gardner, Mark Gerrish, Brandon Harless, Bob and Patricia Hedblum, Bev Hoffman, Ken and Betty Hunter, Barbara Jack, Rolland Karlin, Elaine Keane, Gertie Kenyon, Bill Liebhart, Gene and Paula Luft, Don and Bonnie Murphy, Walt Neulieb, Neil Northey, Roger Raduenz, Bill Rhoades, Sharon Syvertson, Gary Towle, Larry West, Elaine Woodall, Ski Wrybkowski, Helen Zaudtke.

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.”*