

### ***“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)

Grow in giving for our growing ministry by joining the “One Hundred \$100’s” program.

We now have 100 commitments of an additional \$100 to the offering!

These 100 commitments will increase our funds by \$10,000!

### **Internship Fund**

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

We have received 39 pledges, for a total of nearly \$25,000, and have received over \$25,000 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 \$6,676, for the purchase of a permanent Casa Grande site. Discussion of future possibilities is ongoing.

### ***“Get Linked”***

Remember to check the Central Lutheran Church website,

[www.centrallutheranaz.org](http://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](mailto:pastor@centrallutheranaz.org)

**Upcoming Council Meeting:** Tue, August 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. in Arizona City – submit all agenda items to Sandy Christopher.

### **Financial News**

Account balances through July: Offering Income in July: \$7,608

Balance General Fund: \$13,340 Average Monthly Expenses: \$17,000

Capital Fund: \$74,316 – includes the Internship Fund: \$26,098

Casa Grande Land Fund: \$6,676

Balance of Mortgage with Thrivent: \$323,908 (12/31/14)

# **Central News**

August 2015

## ***What a Friend We Have in Jesus***

In reading the Gospels, we discover that the personality of Jesus was such that people who were pagans, cultists, money-changers, broken, and diseased felt comfortable in his presence. Jesus was always surrounded by the poor, by the marginalized; and, he was often opposed by the powerful.

It is comforting for us to know that Jesus liked people. He accumulated friends and they wrote about him, talked about him, and testified about him. Jesus ate with people, attended parties with people, prayed with people, and traveled with people.

He did so because he actually liked people and cared about them. Jesus built a faith community entirely on relationships.

During his life, one of the criticisms of Jesus was that he was a friend of pagans. Not that he spent time with them, but that he was their friend. Jesus viewed people with a great deal of empathy, especially those people who existed on the fringes of society.

There were people Jesus did not take a liking to, but such people were arrogant, questioned his authority, and burdened people with excessive religious baggage.

Jesus wanted people to be together, to live together, to love one another. Jesus prayed that those who heard the gospel would be one. When asked which was the greatest commandment, Jesus replied, to love our Father, and added, to love our neighbor. Jesus teaches us the most important aspect of life is to have a relational commitment with God and with one another.

It must have been wonderful to spend time with Jesus, with somebody who liked you, loved you, and believed in you. It must have been comforting to feel significant in his presence. It must have been thrilling to look into the eyes of God and have him look back and communicate that each person, every individual, holds immense value and beauty, and is worthy of a dear relationship with God.

We can take great comfort that Jesus would like us were we to meet face-to-face.

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**(520) 466-5024**  
**324 N Sacaton Street Casa Grande, AZ 85122 (520) 316-9659**  
**[www.centrallutheranaz.org](http://www.centrallutheranaz.org)**

## **Worship Schedule**

### **Arizona City**

**Sunday -- 8:30 a.m.**

#### **Sunday School**

For information on Sunday School for children contact Linda Gal (705-1450).

### **Casa Grande**

**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.

## **Summer “Golf” Event**

**Friday, August 7<sup>th</sup> 5 p.m.**

### **Arizona City**

You are invited to an “indoor golf” event, which is an easy to learn card game. Scores will be kept and prizes awarded. The evening will begin with a potluck meal, dessert will be provided.

### **Youth Night Classes**

Each week Bible study, discussion and activities are offered for our elementary, middle school and high school students.

The gatherings 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, Anne-Marie York, and Pastor Thom.

### **Community Education Ministry**

New students are currently starting our adult study programs. You can help them learn English and develop basic math skills. 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 \$5,600 in donations received for this ministry!

## **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 (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.

### **“Christ in Our Home”**

Devotional booklets for July through September are available.

### **Fall Softball Season**

Your Central Lutheran “*Saints*” are preparing for the upcoming season that begins on September 14<sup>th</sup>. Games are played on Monday nights at the Paul Mason Sportsplex on Pinal Ave. in Casa Grande.

## **Remember in Prayer**

Ada Biese, Harry Brink, Maxine Cadman, Ruby Craun, Pam Gardner, Mark Gerrish, Ray Grant, Bob and Patricia Hedblum, Ken and Betty Hunter, Rolland Karlin, Elaine Keane, Gertie Kenyon, Bill Liebhart, Gary Linafelter, Gene and Paula Luft, Walt Neulieb, Neil Northey, Jon Schmidt, C.J. Squires, Sharon Syvertson, Gary Towle, Larry West, Elaine Woodall, Ski Wrybkowski, Helen Zaudtke.

**Bereavement:** Louie Cannon and family following the death of her husband, Joe.

## **Looking Ahead**

### **Men’s Saturday Coffee**

A time for Bible study and discussion related to current topics.

### **9-Hole Golf Scramble**

Fellowship for the golfers in the congregation.

### **Sunday Leadership**

Participate as a worship or song leader; or a member of a special music group.

### **Fellowship Events**

Join with members from both of our sites for special activities.

### **Ladies Quilting Ministry**

Weekly gathering at AZ City site.

**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.”