

“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 now have 100 commitments “One Hundred \$100’s” program.

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 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: Tue, October 20th at 6:30 p.m. in Arizona City – submit all agenda items to Sandy Christopher.

Financial News

Account balances through September: Offering Income in September: \$9,834
(Month’s income was supplemented with \$10,000 from our capital fund)

Balance General Fund: \$5,150 Average Monthly Expenses: \$17,000

Capital Fund: \$64,236 – includes the Internship Fund: \$26,098

Casa Grande Land Fund: \$6,676

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

Central News

October 2015

Righteousness of God

Martin Luther’s great contribution centers in the recovery of the Biblical meaning of the *righteousness of God*. Generally, the medieval church defined *righteousness of God* as the demanding justice of God. By contrast, for Luther, the *righteousness of God* was fundamentally the mercy of God.

Luther identifies the *righteousness of God* through God’s grace. Grace alone is decisive. God’s grace is shown in his treating a person as virtuous whatever the state of the individual’s life.

For Luther, an individual stands before God in the light of his grace alone.

The righteousness of one’s life and activity, so important in other contexts, are irrelevant here. Gone was any idea that a person’s relation to a righteous God depended on good works.

It cannot be overemphasized the freedom this discovery brought to Luther. His discovery ended his religious attempt to justify himself before God in terms of the church’s prescribed sacraments and works. Luther declared that even if the path of works were possible, he would not want to have to depend upon his works before God. It is important to note the radical character of Luther’s central concept. This concept rules out every attempt to acquit oneself before God.

The central meaning of the Reformation is usually expressed in the phrase “*justification by grace through faith*.” (Ephesians 2:8) The verse shows that the *righteousness of God* is seen most clearly in the grace by which we are accounted right and justified before God. Faith, then, is the living out of the understanding of grace made known and recognized. It is the grace of God that is known and trusted.

The phrase “*through faith*” is not to be understood as a means for earning grace, but as the manner of living by and in the power of God graciousness.

In his Small Catechism, Luther writes in the explanation of the Apostles’ Creed, “*I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to him; but, the Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts.*”

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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 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."

Spaghetti Dinner

Fri, Oct. 16th at 5 p.m. AZ City

Everyone is invited to this gathering for fellowship and activities.

Mark the date on your calendar.

Men's Saturday Coffee

Saturday, October 24th

8 a.m. Casa Grande campus

Come join in the opportunity for study, discussion and fellowship.

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 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 October through December are available.

Fall Softball Season

The new season is underway. Pick up a game schedule and plan to see the action. Games are played on Monday nights at the Paul Mason Sportsplex on Pinal Ave. in Casa Grande.

Reformation Sunday

Confirmation Celebration

October 25th

On this special day, several of our students will be participating in the affirmation of their baptism.

Remember in Prayer

Ada Biese, Harry Brink, Maxine Cadman, Ruby Craun, Rev. Bekah Davis, 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.

Looking Ahead

9-Hole Golf Scramble

Fellowship for the "golfers" in the congregation and invited friends.

Sunday Leadership

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

Saturday Evening Worship

Upcoming services will be held at our Casa Grande site.

Ladies Quilting Ministry

Weekly gathering at AZ City site. You can help this ministry by the donation of materials.