



Central Lutheran Church

Come Share the Spirit!

Mailing Address

PO Box 677

Arizona City, AZ 85123-0677

www.clcaz.net

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March 2023



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INSIDE THIS EDITION:

- Church Directory
- March Bible Readings
- Words from the Pastor
- Food Bank Update
- Peace & Prayer
- The Spiritual Corner
- Shield A Badge Needs You!
- Casa Grande Move
- Anchor Church
- Responding to God
- 2023 Theme Verse
- Weekly Happenings
- Laundry Love

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 April Newsletter is March 16TH.

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)

*Janice Dearth, (719) 510-4301
President jdearth@CentralLutheranAZ.org

*Mary La Paglia, (520) 313-7652
Vice President mlapaglia@centralLutheranAZ.org

*Leda Townsend, (520) 788-0019
Treasurer ltownsend@CentralLutheranAZ.org

*Karen Debold, (520) 560-1332
Secretary kdebold@CentralLutheranAZ.org

Scott Aasheim (612) 272-1490
Member at Large saasheim@CentralLutheranAZ.org

Jessica Aasheim (763) 203-1050
Recording Secretary jaashiem@CentralLutheranAZ.org

Leigh Riese 520-705 6698
lrise@CentralLutheranAZ.org

Vacant

Vacant

Mission Endowment Team

Dell Hoff

Mary Pietrini

The steadfast love of the Lord
never ceases, his mercies never
come to an end; they
are new every
morning; great is your
faithfulness. **Lam. 3:22**
-23

The kingdom of God
ought to reshape our vision of
what matters. **Russell D. Moore**



Patience is the companion of
wisdom. **St. Augustine**

When you pray, go to your
inner room, close the door
and pray to your Father in
secret. And your Father who
sees in secret will repay you.

Mt. 6:6

MARCH'S BIBLE READINGS:

March 5 - Laborers in Vineyard

Second Sunday of Lent

Matthew 20:1-16

Psalms 16:5-8

March 12 - Wedding Banquet:

Third Sunday of Lent

Matthew 22:1-14

Psalms 45:6-7

March 19 - Parable of the Talents:

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Matthew 25:1-30

Psalms 43:3-4

March 26 - Parable of Last Judgement:

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Matthew 25:31-46

Psalms 98:7-9

April 2 - Triumphal Entry

Palm Sunday

Matthew 26:17-30

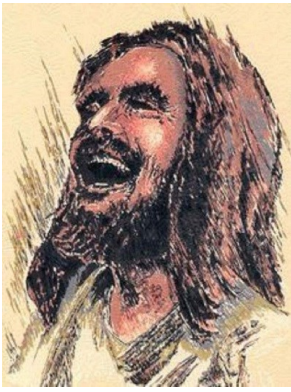
Psalms 116:12-15

April 6 - Words of Institution

Maundy Thursday

Matthew 26:17-30

Psalms 116:12-15



A Time for Reconciliation

By Pastor Doug Dill

Lent has just started, well actually February 22nd and we are headed to our first Lenten Wednesdays of Prayers Around the Cross. The time of Lent is a time to be reminded of our mortality and the life that God offers us in God's Love for us in Jesus. Without that Life-Giving Love, we would have nothing.

That is a good start, but keep in mind that the Life-Giving Love, came at a price, that God was willing to take on. God reconciled the world (each of you and me included) through God's death on the Cross as Jesus, so that God's forgiveness of our transgressions/sins/debts our wrong doings, would no longer break our relationship with God.

It is good there is love. It is good that there is for-

giveness. Love and forgiveness go a long way, but it is not enough. From the Oxford Language online dictionary, it defines forgiveness as a noun. It is further defined the as, the action or process of forgiving or being forgiven.

God's Life-Giving Love is grounded in something that is needed to make that love Life-Giving. That is reconciliation. Also from the Oxford Languages online dictionary, reconcile is defined as a verb. Furthermore, it is defined as to restore friendly relations between; cause to coexist in harmony; make or show to be compatible.

Our theme for our Prayers Around the Cross Wednesday Lenten services will be Reconciliation. God has reconciled us to God, but have we reconciled ourselves to each other? Have you reconciled to a family member, a co-worker, your neighbor and yes, to another member or guest in Central Lutheran? Lastly, have you reconciled to your own self?

Although I am not going to cover this book, I think it is an important book

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Food Bank Update

February noisy offering collected \$247.12

We take this offering on the 4th Sunday of every month.
Bring your loose change & even dollar bills.

Every Cent Counts!



Kris Dill, Spiritual Director

Ephesians 6:12-13

The Voice Translation:

12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

At the time of this writing, we had not met for our annual meeting, and I have no idea of the outcome. Like everyone else, I hope I am agreeable with the results. People will have many opinions, ideas, and will agree and disagree. What's important to understand here, is that Spiritual Warfare is real.

Evil will try it's hand every chance it gets to destroy what God is building. The stronger the hold of God, the harder Evil will fight. So, we must become strong in our faith, and know that God is with us! Through every trial and tribulation put before us, through all the ups and downs, God is there.

Evil attacks our thoughts and beliefs and allows doubt to take over. Evil will scare us into believing that we cannot succeed. Evil takes away hope.

I am, here to remind you; do not fear, for God says: with faith the size of a mustard seed we can move mountains!

I believe the Holy Spirit is moving through Central Lutheran and is preparing us for bigger and better things! Please pray with me and keep this prayer handy for whenever you lack peace.

Prayer of Peace

eyes to this world, may your presence nudge me awake.

When I am weary and ready to quit, may your passion for this world energize me.

When I am hopeless, may your gaze raise me up.

When I am afraid, may your love enfold me.

When I am angry and want to blame, may your kindness sweep me off my feet.

When I am bitter and ready to fight, may your forgiveness quiet me.

When I find myself in a land of sorrow, may your presence accompany me.

When I am broken and in despair, may your delight make me whole.

God of grace, as you send me into this world, may your hope, your love, and your joy live in me.

Amen.

By Steve Garnaas-Holmes

Which line of this prayer particularly resonates with you today?

Consider taking it out into your day as a kind of breath prayer – to keep leaning into

peace, to keep leaning toward God when your experience is anything – but.



Reconciliation

...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

that can help you through the time of Lent. I read this book or listen to it, just about every year. I invite you to read the “A Word Before” from the author.

...This book is not for the superspiritual. It is not for muscular Christians who have made John Wayne, and not Jesus, their hero. It is not for academics who would imprison Jesus in the ivory tower of exegesis. It is not for noisy, feel-good folks who manipulate Christianity into a naked appeal to emotion. It is not for hooded mystics who want magic in their religion. It is not for Alleluia Christians who live only on the mountaintop and have never visited the valley of desolation. It is not for the fearless and tearless. It is not for red-hot zealots who boast with the rich young ruler of the Gospels, “All these commandments I have kept from my youth.” It is not for the complacent who hoist over their shoulders a tote bag of honors, diplomas, and good works, actually believing they have it made.

It is not for legalists who would rather surrender control of their souls to rules than run the risk of living in union with Jesus. If anyone is still reading along, The Ragamuffin Gospel was written for the bedraggled, beat-up, and burnt-out. It is for the sorely burdened who are still shifting the heavy suitcase from one hand to the other. It is for the wobbly and weak-kneed who know they don't have it all together and are too proud to accept the handout of amazing grace. It is for inconsistent, unsteady disciples whose cheese is falling off their

cracker. It is for poor, weak, sinful men and women with hereditary faults and limited talents. It is for earthen vessels who shuffle along on feet of clay. It is for the bent and the bruised who feel that their lives are a grave disappointment to God. It is for smart people who know they are stupid and honest disciples who admit they are scalawags. The Ragamuffin Gospel is a book I wrote for myself and anyone who has grown weary and discouraged along the Way.

Manning, Brennan. The Ragamuffin Gospel (pp. 13-15). The Crown Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

Brennan was ordained a Franciscan priest but later left the priesthood. He, like so many of us, needed to learn to reconcile to himself to receive the reconciliation of God, so he too could be reconciled to others.

God reconciled to us first, so we can to others. Without reconciliation, how do we truly have friendly relations between each other or coexist in harmony?

Join prayers around the cross, receive God's loving reconciliation and be reconciled to yourself and all of those in your life. Wednesday's of Lent, 6 pm in Arizona City.

The Spiritual Corner

Kris Dill Spiritual Director

If I'm honest, with myself, I was struggling with this month's devotional. So much has happened within the church in the last year, along with everyday life's ups and downs.

When I first arrived at CLC, I was excited for what God had in store. After our annual meeting in January, well, frankly I was scared.

Like many I had to process my feelings on what I heard, felt, and perceived. I even asked God “where are you?” God answered me!

I came across this verse: Isaiah 12:2 (Voice translation)

See, God has come to rescue me;

I will trust in Him and not be afraid,

For the Eternal, indeed, the Eternal is my



strength and my song.

My very own God has rescued me.

The line that struck out to me so boldly was, **“I will trust in Him and not be afraid”.**

While meditating on this one line, another verse crossed my path:

Jeremiah 32.17 (Voice translation)

“Eternal Lord, with Your outstretched arm and Your enormous power You created the heavens and the earth. Nothing is too difficult for You.”

“Nothing is too difficult for you.”

Why do we feel we can solve all the issues and make everyone happy, including ourselves. We can't, but God can. Now more than ever we all should be in prayer, asking for God's guidance and direction; ask daily! We also should allow time for us to stop and listen to what God is saying to us. Then when we feel we have truly listened, we act on God's direction.

I am more confident now, knowing that GOD is with us, and the Holy Spirit is moving through CLC and our congregation. I'm excited again to see what God has in store for us. God says we are to love each other, and to follow HIM. Where we worship is a small part of the big picture; how we worship and the love for each other is the goal.

The only question I have left, is how will you respond? What will you do to act on God's direction?

Let's pray:

God, we get comfortable in our ways and sometimes, we need the push to step outside that comfort zone. Please help us to practice the pause, waiting on your guidance. Help us to be still, and know you are with us. AMEN

Shield A Badge Needs you!

Contact: Kris Dill

Have you ever thought about what it might be like if we had no one to enforce the law? A home is

broken into, and there is no one to call. A child is missing, there is no one to help look for them. Someone just had their car stolen. The list goes on and on. Who is there to catch the evil doers?

Police officers today are in high demand, and sadly, many police departments are short staffed. That means those who take the call to protect you are tired, burnt out and maybe even scared. How can you help them?

You can help through prayer! It so easy to do and it's free! All you need to do is sign up on the sheet's located at both the Arizona City and Casa Grande site. Write down your name and the badge number or dare I say more than one number, you have chosen. Then commit at least one year to praying for that badge number, daily. The nice thing about it, is it can be done anytime, anywhere. Add that badge number to your prayers in the morning, or at night. Pray throughout the day, or when you think of it. This is so easy but so necessary! After one year, you don't have to pray for them, but why wouldn't you?

If you are already a part of the program, Thank you! If not, can I ask why you haven't signed up yet? You don't even have to live here full time.

I am challenging this congregation to put a name by every badge and start praying for them! Prayer is powerful!

Do you accept my challenge? If not? Why not?

Gracious Lord: you asked us to pray for everyone, I ask you now to help those in this congregation, to pick and badge to pray for their safety, comfort, and strength. Thank you for those who are currently participating in the program and have joined me in prayer.

Continue to watch over all of law enforcement officers who work hard to keep us safe. AMEN

Did you pray for the badge today?

Casa Grande Site Move

Hopefully you had a chance to participate in the Casa Grande dialogs. As you would have heard, we are really left with only one viable option with

our presences in Casa Grande.

On March 19th, we will hold our final worship service at our present location in Casa Grande. The 10 a.m. service will move to Arizona City for the time being.

All of the items from the current site will be packed up and stored either in Arizona City or at Rick Hagen's store room for his grocery store in Eloy. A big thank you for doing this, otherwise there might be some costs associated with the storage.

Car pooling will be arranged to assist with making sure everyone that attended in Casa Grande, has the opportunity to attend in Arizona City. Look for more information on this.

We need your help. Please bring moving boxes to Casa Grande or Arizona City ASAP. Following the March 19th service, we will need to stack chairs for later transport. During that week, we will need help packing boxes to be transported on Saturday March 25th. Those details are still being worked out, but we hope to be able to pay some college folks to help us move.

After we move and begin both services in Arizona City, we will begin planning on how we can move back to Casa Grande. This will also be done, hopefully with the help of another congregation that will anchor with us as, an Anchor Church.

Anchor Church



Currently the council and pastor are in conversations with the Synod and another congregation to enter into a covenant for assistance. We are looking at an accompany process with Central Lutheran.

All of this is still in the planning process and there

is still many pieces that have to be worked out.

There are no fees to Central Lutheran. As we get more details, they will be released.

We will look for guidance from the Anchor church, its leaders and pastor. Through conversations we will look to see what might be next for Central Lutheran.

When there are enough details to do a presentation, one will be done for the entire congregation. We will only get what we put in. We all need to be part of the process. The success of Central Lutheran's future depends upon everyone pitching in.

Responding to God

God has and does everything for us. God has provided and will provide and do everything to make sure that we are in heaven, when it is our time.

When we take that all in, what do we do? Hopefully you respond to God by being the body of Christ, here on earth. You hear Apostle Paul describe the Christians, the church, as a body. "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it." 1 Cor. 12:27

As with your own physical body, every part of the body is important. When one part of the body is missing, sick or suffering, it has an impact upon the rest of the body.

When we respond, and hopefully we look for ways to respond for the sake of the rest of the body, we do so for the benefit of all. It is appreciated and needed. No single person is more valued than another. At the same time, we suffer when one does not respond for the sake of others.

How do we respond? We use our Spiritual Gifts, given to us by God, for the benefit of others. We do this, because God designed us this way. We need no thanks, no accolades, no celebrations of the work done.

Jesus tells us how we should look and act. It is not about show, but that we do it. I knew a pastor's spouse that was very good in their re-

sponse, but worried too much when others found out what they were doing? Below are scriptures from Jesus on how to act.

Mt. 6:5, "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full."

Mt. 6:17, "But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face,"

Mt. 6:3, "But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,"

Even in the Old Testament, we are given examples for how to respond and know that God sees this.

Heb.6:10 "God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as

you have helped his people and continue to help them."

Heb. 13:16, "And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."

Prov. 3:27, "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act."

You who have been good and faithful servants, will receive your reward. Know this, without your service, Central Lutheran could not provide all that we do, for the people that attend and for the community. You are valued members of the body. Thank you for your willingness to make a difference, to serve and to be part of a solution. I appreciate each and everyone that has given of their time, talents and gifts. Keep up the good work!

Pr. Doug

WEEKLY HAPPENINGS:

For a full & most up-to-date calendar visit: <https://clcaz.net/calendar/>

Sundays:

Worship: 8:30 am in AZ City,
10:00 am in AZ City, starting March 26

Mondays:

AA Meeting in AZ City 5:30 pm

Tuesdays:

Bible Women 6 pm, rotating locations

Wednesdays:

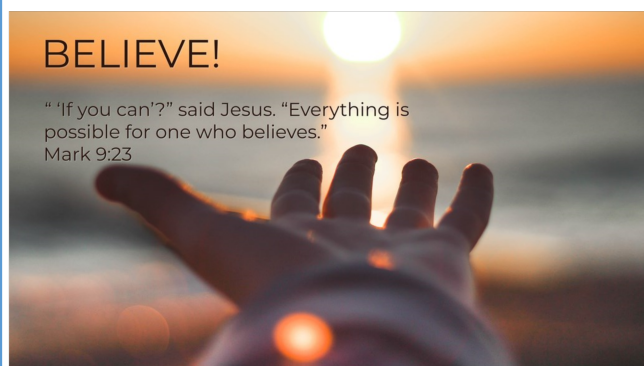
Pastor Doug's Office hours in Arizona City 9a-2p,
Wednesdays, starting March 29

Thursdays:

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

BELIEVE!

"If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes."
Mark 9:23



You all have shown that belief can change anything. It is your belief in the power of God to change and provide, that we are doing well.

Our 2023 Theme Verse will be Mark 9:23

"If you can?" Said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes."

Laundry Love

April 12th is our next Laundry Love servant opportunity. This runs from 3-7 pm. We need assistance in two hour shifts. Reach out to Connie Cameron at (812) 890-8210 to see how you can respond to God. The event is held at: Quick Clean Laundromat, 950 E Florence Blvd, Casa Grande. Financial assistance is response as well. Please consider giving financially to Laundry Love. It costs about \$600 per event. However, our last event was almost double that cost. Give on Sunday in the plate or online at: <https://give.clcaz.net>