

That's The Spirit!

Rev. Greg Hartman,
Pastor

New Spirit Lutheran Church
*Our faith is in Jesus.
Our hope is in grace.
Our strength is in love.*

August 2025

Dear Church,

It's hard to believe that it is August. The end of the year is quickly approaching. There are a lot of great things coming up for the final months of the year and a lot of great things that have happened over the summer months.

Let's talk about the summer months. Often people think the summer is a slower time for the church, this seems to be especially true out here in AZ. Maybe it is because so many leave the state, or because the natural pace out here seems to slow down a little because of the heat, or maybe it is a little bit of both. Nancy and I have found ourselves during Advent or Lent saying "well, at least after this, things will slow down", or "Thankfully, come summertime things will be a little slower" and yet during the summer we find ourselves saying "I thought things were supposed to slow down". One of the more visible things that has launched this summer is our sewing ministry. On Thursday nights and Mondays during the day people come to learn to sew, build relationships, and work on projects that will serve our neighbors. It has been amazing to see the steady flow of people to and from the Fellowship Hall on Mondays. The Monday group has astonished us with the amount of work that is getting done, at least partially fueled by the wonderful lunches shared! There are both members and nonmembers participating. On Thursday nights, the skill of sewing is being passed along to others, from hand sewing to using a sewing machine. The Spirit is at work and of course like everything we do at NSLC this is not your typical quilting group!

There has also been building projects happening around the campus. We have repaired the stucco on one of the outside walls. Quotes are being collected for work on the K-Hall roof. Planning is happening to increase the size of the "nursery" bathroom to make it more accommodating for those with physical challenges. Then there have been the unexpected repairs that have happen like the glass door in the sanctuary. There has been cleaning and decluttering happening around campus, with more to come. We are looking at how to better utilize the spaces that we have so that we can carry out the ministries we are called to do.

Unlike some of our other ministries, our Second Saturday Homeless Blessings has continued to happen throughout the summer months. We continue to see an increase in those that are attending in need of a hot meal, toiletries, basic supplies, clothing, and more. Recently, we have expanded our feeding ministry to include crisis food boxes. These boxes will provide everything that is needed for at least 1 meal as well as some additional food items. These boxes are intended to address the immediate need for a meal, so that those that receive them can have a little more time to make the connections to food pantries or other sources.

Over the course of the summer, we often see a dip in worship attendance, due to people going on vacation and more. Looking at the Sunday before Labor Day to the next to last Sunday of July from 2022 to 2025 we continue to see an increase in the Average Sunday Attendance from year to year. For those 9 weeks in 2022 the average attendance was 58.



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In 2023 we increased to 59. In 2024 we saw another increase to 65. In 2025 we are looking at an average of 67. We ended 2024 with an Average Sunday Attendance of 71 and so far for the year to date we are averaging 74. We are currently looking at the possibility of a 4th consecutive year of growth. This is something that has taken effort from all of us. We will continue to work together to ensure that NSLC continues to grow for years to come. During the month of August, we will have our next New Member Sunday, where we will have people either become members or reestablish their membership! The first full calendar year I was here as pastor, we held 2 New Member Sundays. This year, we have 4 scheduled and so far, each one has brought in new members. After August, our final New Member Sunday for the year will be held in December.

All of this is only possible by us all working together while following the call of the Holy Spirit.

Looking to the Fall, we have a full schedule ahead of us. On September 6th, we will have God's Work, Our Hands. That same weekend on the 7th, we will have our Fall Ministry Kick-off, which is the official start to our fall programing. During fellowship there will be opportunities to sign up for committees and other opportunities to serve the church and community. We will also host a time of fellowship revolving around coming together to play games on the 7th. Ministries like Sunday School, and Beyond the Book will resume in September. Then comes October and our annual Trunk or Treat event. Outside organizations have already been contacted to make this year's Trunk or Treat an even bigger success! This year we will hold our Trunk or Treat event on Oct. 25th. The next day on the 26th, we will wear red and commemorate the Reformation. November 2nd will be All Saints Sunday, when we gather to remember the faithfully departed. November 22nd, we will once again participate in Tucson Pride to proclaim that God's love is fully inclusive. Sunday, November 30th marks the beginning of a new liturgical year and the beginning of Advent. We will use a liturgy from A Sanctified Art during the season of Advent. During December we will once again host the AZ exclusive production of Bending Towards the Light: A Jazz Nativity. Two weeks later we will celebrate the birth of Jesus and before we know it 2026 will be here. Along with all of this we will continue to feed kids at local elementary schools. We will provide meals and more to our unhoused and food insecure neighbors. We will continue to grow in our faith. We will continue to respond to needs of the community the best we can trusting God to help and guide us. We will continue to be God's loving presence in our corner of Tucson.

Pastor Hartman



August Prayer

Mighty and merciful God, lover of justice and equity, you call us to support the weak, to help those who suffer, and to honor all people. By the power of your Holy Spirit, make us advocates for your justice and instruments of your peace, so that all may be reconciled in your beloved community, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen. (a prayer from All Creation Sings)

Fellowship Dinner

In order to continue the 3rd Wednesday night dinners beginning in September, we need to have a few volunteers to coordinate them. If you are interested in helping out, we will be posting a sign up sheet on the bulletin board in the Narthex soon.



what's happening

PROJECT UPDATES:

Stucco repair on east wall of the building has been completed.

Repair of the flashing on the new AC unit between the kitchen and Fellowship Hall has been completed.

Nursery Bathroom: We received bids on the work to be done to enlarge the bathroom wall and have accepted one of those bids. There have been some electrical components that have and are being addressed. As soon as that portion of the work is completed, we will move on to having the wall moved out. It is a work in progress.

K-Hall - we are currently receiving bids for the roof work that needs to be done along with work on the porch overhang.

Jazz Nativity 2.0

New Spirit Lutheran Church will once again host the exclusive Arizona production of **Bending Towards the Light - a Jazz Nativity** by Anne Phillips on December 13th and 14th. Sponsorships for this production are available as follows:

Fan - \$100 includes name in Playbill, Name on digital screens for each performance and Social Media shout out.

Chorus - \$250 includes Social Media shout out, Half page ad in Playbill, Name on digital screens for each performance and 2 tickets to performance of choice.

Leading Role - \$500 includes Social Media shout out, Full page ad in Playbill, Name on digital screens for each performance and 4 tickets to performance of choice.

You can make a payment by cash or check directly to New Spirit Lutheran church or you can purchase online at www.newspiritluthertucson.org and click on the donate button. Choose Jazz Nativity.



**MARK
DATE** IN YOUR CALENDAR

COMING EVENTS: September 6 & 7 are "God's Work, Our Hands" and Fall Ministry Kickoff. Please watch for more details.

From the Music Corner: A New Season, A Renewed Spirit

By Robert Encila, Worship Leader

This past year has been nothing short of transformational. I retired from a 30-year career in public school education, an ending that felt both momentous and hopeful. But just two weeks later, I suffered a heart attack that quickly reminded me how fragile and sacred life truly is.

By God's grace and the care of my loved ones, I've spent the past seven weeks in renewed health—feeling stronger in body, lighter in spirit, and more focused than ever on nurturing my relationships and devoting myself to the music ministry at New Spirit. I often say that music is a form of prayer that travels where words cannot, and lately that has felt truer than ever.

Recently, a small group of us gathered for a half-day retreat, not only to reflect but also to plan the music for the rest of the liturgical year. This kind of preparation gives us room to grow in our sound, structure our rehearsals with care, and approach each Sunday with both joy and intention. Our team has been smaller this summer (as has the congregation), but I take heart knowing that this is part of the rhythm of community life.

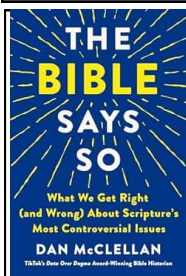
As autumn approaches and folks return to Tucson, I'm excited to share familiar faces and voices in our worship, and maybe even some new songs along the way. I'm especially looking forward to our second annual Jazz Nativity. The success of last year's event fills us with anticipation for an even more powerful offering this December. Our sponsorship campaign is kicking off, and we welcome your support and prayers as we prepare to share the message of Christ's birth through the liberating and joyful lens of jazz.

As I enter my *fifth year* at New Spirit (can you believe it?), I marvel at the steady growth of this church—not just in numbers, but in heart, service, and faith. At the same time, I am aware that there is still deep and humbling work to be done. There are neighbors to serve, voices to uplift, and burdens to share.

And yet, we are not alone in this work.

As Matt Maher so beautifully reminds us in his song *Hold Us Together*:

"And love will hold us together
Make us a shelter to weather the storm
And I'll be my brother's keeper
So the whole world will know that we're not alone."



PASTOR'S BOOK STUDY RETURNS:

Starting in September we are reading "The Bible Says So" by Dan McClellan. Our next meeting for the book discussion will be Sept. 8th at 10:30 am to 12:00 pm and again at 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm. Both sessions will meet at Beyond Bread.

THRIVENT MEMBERS: Don't forget about Action Team funds and receive a \$250.00 Community Impact card. They can be used to support Homeless Blessings, Blessings in a Box or Trunk or Treat event. If you have questions, see Pastor Hartman.



August & September Birthday & Anniversary Celebrations

08/03 Mike Aldrich

08/04 Naida Granmo

08/05 David & Laura Lloyd
(Anniversary)

08/14 Max Uidenich

08/16 Lis Schafer

08/17 Sheryl Felde
Paul Hedstrom

08/19 Paul & Brigitte Stuetze
(Anniversary)

08/21 Colin Uidenich

08/22 Paul Stuetze

08/24 Becky Schreiber-Schmidt

08/26 Nancy Cunningham

08/29 Katharina (Rina) Morales



09/03 Bruce & Sarah Drath
(Anniversary)

09/05 John Lukehart
Lynda Grochowski

09/11 Archie Burke
Fran Gale

09/21 Rose Thatcher

09/26 Barbara Wadler

09/27 Barbara Verthein

09/30 Carol Lukehart
Wayne Stephens

TRUNK OR TREAT:

New Spirit will be hosting Trunk or Treat this year on Saturday, Oct 25, from 5-7 pm and we will be making hotdogs for the families that come. There will be signup sheets soon for participating and for helping with the cooking and games. We will soon be collecting candy and give away items. Our wish is to collect 100,000 pieces. You can make your donation by dropping it off on Sunday or taking it to the office Monday through Thursday between 8 and 3. Any questions contact me via email or in person. Karen Colwell at klcolwell76@gmail.com.



LET'S TALK

We can have better conversations:

Why learn to have better conversations? I am reminded of Pentecost, where people heard the good news announced in their own language. To share the good news of Jesus, we must know how to talk to younger people, older people, people of different cultures and experiences, people with differing abilities and different religious heritages. Pray that the Spirit will help you to grow in understanding others and lead you to learn new ways of speaking. Stay tuned for further conversational tips.



Who will feed the kids this weekend?



WE WILL!

Being well nourished vs. hunger can have a profound impact on a child's academic performance, school attendance, behavior and health. This is the vision of Blessings in a Backpack and New Spirit – happy, healthy children who can focus on school performance, attend regularly, and demonstrate academic success because of having full bellies. New Spirit provides snack packs to those who might not have enough to eat on the weekend.

The 363 children we currently serve are from five east side elementary schools: Steele at 700 S. Sarnoff Drive; Erickson at 6750 E. Stella Road; Henry at 650 N. Igo Way; Ford at 8001 E. Stella Road; and Soleng Tom at 10520 E. Camino Quince.

A very special thanks to the Arizona Association of School Business Officials (AASBO) for their continued support with a special packing event at Starr Pass in July - 2500 SNACK PACKS will help us feed kids for 6 weeks!

Want to volunteer to be a member of our team? Contact Laurie Bernard at lbernard2008@hotmail.com with questions. For regular contributions, please make your tax-deductible check to Blessings in a Backpack. You can drop in the offering plate, drop off at the church office, or drop directly in to the mail to BIB Lockbox, PO Box 950291, Louisville, KY 40295. You can also donate online through the New Spirit Lutheran Church website. Just click on the donate button. **Remember to put Steele Elementary on the memo line.**

HOMELESS BLESSINGS NEXT EVENT AUGUST 9th 9AM TO 11AM



We've been busy this summer. Sorting clothing, accepting donations of shirts, underwear, socks and shoes, delivering donations to San Juan Baptista for the Nogales, Mexico mission, setting up Manny and Ali with baby items and household supplies from our friends at Tanque Verde Lutheran Church, and feeding our neighbors. These are just a part of our outreach at New Spirit.

On the 2nd Saturday of each month, we share hygiene products, tarps, backpacks, blankets, socks, underwear, shade hats, umbrellas, cool cloths, clothing, shoes, and haircuts, along with hot home-cooked meals for 50 to 70 unhoused/financially insecure brothers and sisters. We partner with local care providers to offer housing, mental health support, HIV/Hepatitis C testing, and even liaison with the Office of the Police Examiner.

Church members are provided with bags of essential items to share out of their cars with people on the street reaching another 100 unhoused neighbors per month.

This vital ministry has grown to impact/serve/care for over 2,000 people annually.

Want to volunteer and make a difference in someone's life? Contact Laurie Bernard at lbernard2008@hotmail.com with questions.

If you'd like to help our ministry with a cash donation, please make your tax-deductible check to New Spirit Lutheran Church with the notation for Homeless Blessings in the memo. You can drop it in the offering plate, drop it off at the church office, or mail it to NSLC, 8701 E. Old Spanish Trail, Tucson, AZ 85710. You can also donate online through the New Spirit Lutheran Church website. Just click on the donate button.

New Spirit Lutheran Church

8701 E. Old Spanish Trail
Tucson, AZ 85710

Shout-Outs

SHOUT OUT - To several members who have stepped up to help with financial support on projects around the church, thank you to those who wish to remain anonymous.

SHOUT OUT - To Becky Schmidt for the willingness to learn ProPresenter and helping with creating Sunday presentations.

SHOUT OUT - To Carol Johnston and Kitty Glanz for relaunching our sewing ministry and offering a sewing class.

SHOUT OUT - To Ed Glanz for providing lunch every Monday for those quilting and those who happen to be at church during lunch-time.

SHOUT OUT - To Kimmi Rupp for her help on the Worship and Music committee and Praise Team.

SHOUT OUT - To Laurie Bernard and Marty Mosthaff for their tireless work regarding our homeless and food insecure siblings.

SHOUT OUT - To Cathy Cermak for her work on various grants and helping with Jazz Nativity while away in Colorado.

Please submit words of thanks and praise to Nancy at nancy@newspiritlutherantucson.org by the 15th of each month to be placed in the newsletter. Thank you!

Sundays:

10:00 am Worship

You can currently watch each week's message on YouTube.

How to contact us:

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