

That's The Spirit!

New Spirit Lutheran Church

Our faith is in Jesus.

Our hope is in grace.

Our strength is in love.

Rev. Alan Field

December 2019

Dear Partners in the Gospel,

We sing a song at the 9:00 service, whose lyrics has become an “ear-worm” for me: “I’ve been here before, and here I am again....standing at your door, hoping you’ll let me back in....” (“Undo” by Rush of Fools). There are a lot of familiar signs in the world again this year.

It is Advent. We now begin, again, our annual preparation to consider the promised return of the Messiah into a world that seems all torn apart. The power of political intrigue has shadowed nearly everything we do. That image, the shadowed, strife-filled, tug-o-war for righteous power flavors the season for us. The fact of that “contrasting flavor” sweet and salty is exactly the taste of Advent writers in the Bible. For many of us, the commercial encouragement of “It’s Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas” is just an emotional tease to draw our sights from the reality of Advent and its preparation to the “Most Wonderful Time of the Year.” These will be interesting days.

Our Mid-week Advent Services will focus on this year’s theme: “The Gift of Presence.” Each Wednesday we will consider a number of ways through which you and your family will be able to better prepare and be present in your Advent and Christmas preparations. There will be three Wednesday services: December 4, 11, 18. Christmas is on Wednesday this year. We will put up the tree and decorate the Sanctuary on December 4th. Services will be at 6:30 p.m.

It is my hope that each of you will commit to step into the Spiritual preparations for the coming of the Lord’s Messiah. Prayer will be emphasized. Words of care, compassion, and even confession will be encouraged. Gentleness in self-care, and other-care, will be recommended.

We are preparing to step into a brief, but historically rich season. It is not so unlike those days prior to Jesus’ birth. For the people of that land it seemed that the struggle was cosmic, or universal. It was into that very world God’s plan was carried out. One light will stand against a very true darkness. But, and there’s always a but, God would come unexpected, unadorned, and quiet as the wiggles and wonder of a baby-child.

May your Advent be spent with us each Sunday and each Wednesday to help prepare a way within each of you to receive the Christ, the wonderful Counselor, mighty Lord, everlasting, the Prince of Peace.

Prayerfully,

Pastor Alan



Congregational Annual Meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m., Sunday, December 8th. The agenda will include a vote on the approval of the 2020 Mission Plan (budget), election of Church Council members, and a Vice President (Vice President assumes President's seat after 1st year. The third year they serve as ex officio President of the Council.) Endowment Board will appoint/elect 2 members. Memorial Garden/Columbarium Board will elect one member to a three-year term. Audit team will be appointed for one-year term.

Members-in-Good-Standing are eligible to participate. A member "in good-standing" must have a record of one communion and a recorded gift of record (tithe). Cash gifts must be given using assigned number giving envelopes. Undesignated cash offerings cannot be considered as gift-of-record. A sign-in sheet will be used to check you into the Annual Meeting. If your name does not appear on the list, according to our records you have not received communion nor given a gift of record.




Following the Congregational Meeting the **Youth will serve a Chili & Cornbread dinner** as a fundraiser as they prepare for the **2021 ELCA National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis.**

BOUNDLESS is the theme of the **2021 ELCA National Youth Gathering** in Minneapolis. **BOUNDLESS** could reflect the energy of 40,000 teenagers gathered for five days of Jesus, the Holy Spirit, choirs of angels, and a vast crowd of witnesses. **BOUNDLESS** could reflect the excitement of nightly gatherings in the Minnesota Vikings' new Stadium where music, faith-stories, challenges and prayer come together. **BOUNDLESS** could reflect the work that 12,000 youth adorned in bright orange t-shirts will do in and around Minneapolis doing projects, building, painting, rehabbing, sharing stories, learning of issues faced by the poor, outcast, homeless, and more.

BOUNDLESS does reflect the nature of God's love for our fractured and broken world. **BOUNDLESS** does reflect the power of joy that fills one's life when the Holy Spirit shows up. **BOUNDLESS** does reflect what can be done when 40,000 come together for five days of Christ-centered, worship-filled, and learning-focused experience.

New Spirit, we ask you to begin to pray today for the youth of New Spirit who will be planning to attend the Minneapolis Gathering. Today, our group could be 12 youth (one dozen) and the adult(s) who will accompany them in June, 2021. Pray, everyday, for the BOUNDLESS joy that awaits in Minneapolis.



 **Thank you!** Thank you to those who pledge to the ministry of New Spirit through your personal tithes and offerings. The Church Council shared our financial picture in plenty of time before the Annual Meeting for the congregation to be able to vote on the proposed 2020 Mission Plan (budget.) The Council and the Budget & Finance Team have worked hard to create a budget that is realistic for our operation. The presented budget is a sparse one, and contains little to no money for programs, outreach, or salary increases. Thank you, to each of you who increased your commitment to give in 2020.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Services 4:00 & 8:00

Our Traditional Candlelight Communion Service will be held at 4:00 pm.

We will sing traditional carols, hear the Good News, celebrate God's promise in the baby born in Bethlehem, and receive the Lord's blessing of grace and mercy in the Holy Communion.



Our Neo-classical Candlelight Communion Service will be held at 8:00 pm. We will sing both traditional and contemporary carols, hear the Good New, celebrate God's promise in the baby born in Bethlehem, and receive the Lord's blessing of grace and mercy in the Holy Communion.

Both services end the Candlelight service with Silent Night and prayer.



Carol Communion Service, December 29th at 10:00 am

Worship the Sunday after Christmas will be at 10:00 am. It will be a simple, traditional Carol and Communion service.

We will return to our two-service schedule on **Sunday, January 5th**.

“Conversations about the Refugee Crisis” lends itself so well to the present dilemma for Refugees in the world. The Lutheran Church has been a key-hub for the resettling of refugees for over 100 years. In the present form of dialogue sides have been taken, and there is little room for conversation or debate. **“Conversations about the Refugee Crisis”** is a five-session video discussion about the history, the law, and the process for refugees to be received legally into the U.S. This curriculum was put together by Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) one of only five agencies which resettle refugees in the U.S. It has been distributed through “Sparkhouse” a subsidiary of Augsburg-Fortress press.

Renee Geiger will lead the discussion of this series beginning January 15th at 4:00 p.m. (Alternate time/date will be discussed if interest calls for it.)



The Puppet Ministry will have its first meeting during Fellowship hour on Dec. 8th in room 105. All are welcome!

Hello everyone. Terry Mysak and I are getting ready for yet another tax season. Every year for the past 13 years our volunteers have helped people save quite a bit of money getting their taxes done for free. Last year we did over 1000+ tax returns and it grows every year. The first year we did this we only did 70 returns! If you would like to be part of this ministry either as a tax preparer or a greeter we would love to have you. Our immediate need is for greeters. Classes for the tax preparers begin in January and we will open the first week of February. Our hours will be Thursdays and Fridays from 2:00PM – 6:00 PM and on Saturdays from 9:00AM-1:00PM. Please let me know if you are interested and I'll get you signed up. John Lukeart



In Memory.....



Joe Vohnoutka died on November 1st, All Saints Day, after a long struggle with congestive heart failure. He was at home, in the presence of Flo's family. We will celebrate Joe's life on **Tuesday, December 17th at 10:30 a.m. at New Spirit**. Joe was interred in New York state in his family's plot.

Darlene Paape died November 9th here in Tucson. Darlene had struggled with a rapid moving dementia. She had been admitted to a memory care facility here in Tucson, where she died peacefully just before noon on that Saturday. The Celebration of Darlene's life will be held at New Spirit on **Tuesday, December 10th, at 10:30 a.m.** Darlene will be inurned in her family's plot in Wisconsin.

Memorial gifts for either Joe or Darlene can be made to New Spirit Lutheran Church – Joe Vohnoutka Memorial Fund, or New Spirit Lutheran Church – Darlene Paape Memorial Fund.



Dignity
in Aging

Every life is important and deserving of dignity. Plan in advance for the challenges that may come with aging, serious illness, disability or loneliness. The organization "Aging with Dignity" has a wonderful tool called "Five Wishes". This document is the most widely used advance directive or living will in America. It is simple to read and understand. It covers personal, spiritual, medical and legal wishes all in one document.

Everyone in our congregation should consider completing the Five Wishes as a way for you to document your care and comfort choices with regard to advance care planning. You can find more detailed information on the following website: www.agingwithdignity.org.

Carol Brennan is currently housed in the Memory Care Unit of the Beehive, 6180 W. Mamie Kai Drive (crossroads – Silverbell/Cortaro), Marana. Tel. 579-6788. If anyone would like to volunteer their time and/or funds for Carol's issues, please contact her great niece, Cassie Dennis at 954-4711. Cassie is currently responsible for Carol and appreciates any assistance for her great aunt.



Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest Christmas Project

LSS-SW is collecting "brand new shoes" for children and youth involved in their foster-care ministry and for refugee adults, youth and children. The goal for this project is 800 pairs of shoes for the entire state of Arizona.



Shoes can be any style, color, size for toddlers, children, teens up to adult sizes. Please bring unwrapped shoes to New Spirit prior to December 6th. We already have a number of pairs of new shoes, but we'd love to be able to raise **50 pairs of new shoes** for adults, kids and youth!

Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest will celebrate their 50th Anniversary on Saturday, January 11th, 10:00-12:00 at Our Savior's Lutheran Church. Come and See all that LSS-SW is doing in Southern Arizona.



The event begins with a brief worship with words by Bishop Deborah Hutterer, former Chief Development Officer for LSS-SW. Please plan on attending this once in a lifetime event.

Lutheran Disaster Response Consultation 2019

I have been a proponent, supporter and enthusiast for the ministry of the ELCA Lutheran Disaster Response teams. We have often asked for donations when floods, fires, or tornadoes have struck in this country. LDR uses 100% of our donated funds for direct aid to those in need. There is no other aid-service that can match that. And beyond that, LDR commits long-term to get communities back on their feet. Again, no other agency can claim that.

This year's consultation dealt with Climate Change and the Mitigating the damage assessments which will increase due to global warming. It was a fascinating conference.

I will give one illustration, and three steps for New Spirit. On our first morning, Chief Albert, of the Houma-Choctaw tribe shared that his tribal land, Isle de Jean Charles, has been reduced in size by 80% due to rising tides. This bayou island is at its highest 10 feet above sea level. In the past decade tides have risen 3-4 feet. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and FEMA know of the Houma's dilemma, but claim there is "nothing they can do." Indeed. The first victims of climate change in America will be/have been Native Americans. Chief Albert's story can be viewed on YouTube: "Can't Stop the Waters."

Climate Change affects everyone. Each congregation creates a carbon-footprint by its practices and uses. LDR issued a call to congregations to work to lessen its wasteful use of electricity, water, natural gas, paper, plastic and foam products all of which add to carbon-footprints.

I issued the following three points for New Spirit to address in the near future to do our part lessen climate change.

Create a "Green Team" to complete an inventory of light sources, and costs to replace them with LED bulbs and fixtures, to closely monitor HVAC usage with programmable thermostats that cannot be accessed by just anybody. Install electric charging stations in the parking lot for electric cars.

Set a date to end "single use paper, plastic, and foam items (paper plates, plastic utensils, foam cups)".

Consider how and where to plant trees on our campus. (We had talked about planting trees on the edges of the parking lot. Is it time to consider an orchard in the front three acres? We will be contacting the U of A School of Landscape architecture to give us some ideas.)

Installing "solar panels" topped the list of what could be done. We did not act fast enough 5 years ago when solar was made available to non-profits. We do know an array of solar panels will cost over \$100,000. That array would be installed on the patio area to create a shaded area for congregation activities.

At the Annual Meeting we would like to begin this 3-step process by identifying a Green Team (3 persons). The Church Council at its November meeting voted to cease purchasing foam cups, paper plates, and plastic utensils.



You can help. Together we can do our part to combat climate changes.

Pastor Alan

Women's Ministry Group Minutes for November 2019

Women's Ministry Group (WELCA Bible Study Group) met on 13 November 2019 at 1:30 at the church.

Our bible study was Session three of "No Hard Feelings" stewarding the gift of joy, by studying passages from Psalm 30, Psalm 150 and Song of Solomon; how does joy fit into the full range of emotional experience; how do these emotional experiences inform the biblical writers' understanding of God's presence in their lives.



The meeting opened by singing the hymn "Joy to the World". To bring the most happiness in one's heart is to sing a religious song.

Joyce Dow led devotions: Our joy comes from God's love for us; it is up to us to extend our joy to others. Being joyful in life is our way of showing thankfulness to God for all we have.

October 2019 minutes were approved as read.

Treasurer's Report was approved as presented.

Thank Offering: Envelopes were distributed to the women of New Spirit on November 10, 2019 and will be collected on November 17, 2019.

Sunshine Report: Birthday, sympathy and thinking of you cards are being sent.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Sunday School open house was attended by 18 people. When the music room is painted the white boards will be installed.

The library project is being completed; a last check will be done to ensure everything is in order.

The WELCA bulletin board is continuously being updated. We encourage the congregation to check out this board and find out what your Women's Ministry Group is doing.

We were encouraged to read 1st Corinthians 13:13 and think about how we can present the devotions for the Sunrise Santa Cruz Conference.

The church's kitchens cleaning and organizing is on hold pending instruction from the church council.

NEW BUSINESS:

Our group decided to use some of our project money to participate in the Meals from the Heart Program to furnish a meal for Barbara Kotlaba.

We will be meeting on November 20, 2019 at 1:30 in the church to assemble Christmas cards.

We were encouraged to use advent hymns for our daily meditation/devotion during the Christmas Season and share what this has meant to us at our January meeting.

Next meeting will be held on December 11, 2019 time, place and agenda will be determined at our get-together on November 20, 2019.

Linda Lamb – Secretary



Feed My Starving Children Million Meal Packing Event

On **Saturday, February 8th**, we will be gathering **60 New Spirit members** to drive to **Resurrection Lutheran Church in Oro Valley** for the **10:45 a.m.** packing session.

For those who live on the eastside, we will meet at new Spirit at **9:30 a.m. and carpool** to Resurrection. For those who live west of New Spirit you can meet us at church at 9:30, or head to Resurrection and meet us there at **10:30.**

Please Sign the list on the magnet board so we can see how many will be joining us for one great FUN SESSION of packing food for malnourished children.

SOS (Share Our Spirit) Fund at New Spirit is a fund that we use to help our own members when they find themselves in unexpected difficult financial situations.

THIS IS SHORT TERM HELP ! Money has been used for things such as car payments, rent, utility bills, medical bills, home repairs and prescriptions. These are not just regular scheduled items but times when difficult situations come up that don't allow for bill payment on time.

THIS FUND IS NOT IN THE BUDGET AND IS SUPPORTED BY DONATIONS FROM MEMBERS IN THE CONGREGATION.

CONGREGATION MEMBERS CAN DONATE ANYTIME AND /OR GIVE GIFTS FOR MEMORIALS!!

We have not had a fund raiser for several years and so donations are welcome. You can use your regular church envelope and write SOS on the side that says Other Gifts. If you have an urgent need you can speak with SOS TEAM LEADER, GLORIA BURKE, 520-296-7834 OR PASTOR ALAN.



GRACE NOTES HAND BELL AND CHIME CHOIR IS READY TO RING AGAIN!

Do you love music but have never played an instrument? Hand bells are for you! We use a color coded system so if you can tell pink from blue, you can find your notes. Then comes the counting and you are ready to enjoy a talent God has given you and you never knew you had!!!!

GRACE NOTES choir has been ringing since 1989. It is called Grace Notes because we are saved by GRACE!!

71 people have been ringers in the Grace Notes Choir! We need more ringers, especially men to ring the larger bells! Call Director-Gloria Burke 520-296-7834

December Birthday & Anniversary Celebrations

12/4 Carol Brennan R.J. Friend	12/12 Joyce Dow	12/26 Linda Lamb
12/6 Joel & Barbara Carty (Anniversary)	12/15 Amber Uidenich	12/27 Laurie Bernard
12/9 Sandra Johnsen	12/19 Carol Morales	12/30 Don Austin Eva Kwapich Sarah Elmquist Ethan Rettig
	12/20 Marilyn Carter	



This school year, we are feeding **290** children from Erickson, Ford, Steele and Henry Elementary Schools, providing snack packs to take home on the weekend. Your donation of \$100 feeds 1 child every weekend for the entire school year. **MAKE A GIFT TO AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILD THIS YEAR.**



For regular contributions, please make your tax deductible check to Blessings in a Backpack. You can drop it in the offering plate, drop it off at the church office, or drop it directly in the mail to BIB Lockbox, PO Box 950291, Louisville, KY 40295. **Remember to put Steele Elementary on the memo line.**

YOU CAN DESIGNATE OUR PROGRAM THROUGH YOUR FRY'S COMMUNITY REWARDS PROGRAM. A PERCENTAGE OF WHAT YOU SPEND ON GROCERIES CAN BE DONATED TO BLESSINGS IN A BACKPACK. SIGN UP ONLINE OR IN YOUR LOCAL FRY'S STORE. OUR ACCOUNT NUMBER IS XL431. HELP FEED THE KIDS AS YOU FEED YOURSELF!

IF YOU ARE A THRIVENT FINANCIAL MEMBER, PLEASE CONSIDER SPONSORING AN ACTION TEAM FOR BLESSINGS IN A BACKPACK. WE WILL RECEIVE \$250 TO HELP TOWARDS THIS MINISTRY.

Our team members are hard at work to keep up with the added students each week. Learn more about what we do and how you can help. **We need volunteers to help with fund raising, planning, purchasing, packing, and delivery.** Contact Laurie Bernard at lbernard2008@hotmail.com

“Like” our page on Facebook ***Blessings at New Spirit Lutheran Church***



OUR HOMELESS MINISTRY IS GROWING. WE SERVED OVER 40 DESERVING PEOPLE IN NOVEMBER WITH OUR 2ND SATURDAY EVENT.

It's tough on the streets. For some, it's tough to keep a roof over their head. Their stories are heartbreaking. Mental health, alcohol, and drug issues are just part of the problem. These are also people who have just had a perfect storm of health, employment, and financial issues and now find themselves homeless or close to it.

Our event the 2nd Saturday of each month has representatives from City of Tucson, and Office of the Independent Police Examiner to provide help for those who face adversity every day just to live. Sometimes, they come and have just had their possessions stolen. During extremely cold weather, we are able to provide emergency blankets, tarps, gloves, and hats. New Spirit's Homeless Blessings Team provides a hot meal, tarps, blankets, hats, gloves, coats and warm socks, 1-day bus passes, packaged food, protein drinks, hygiene products, first aid products, and clothing.

**PLEASE DONATE FOR THE WINTER:
MEN'S JEANS – ESPECIALLY 32-34 SIZES
BLANKETS, SLEEPING BAGS, WARM JACKETS
SHOES AND SOCKS**

IF YOU ARE A THRIVENT FINANCIAL MEMBER, PLEASE CONSIDER SPONSORING AN ACTION TEAM FOR HOMELESS BLESSINGS. WE WILL RECEIVE \$250 TO HELP TOWARDS THIS MINISTRY.

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.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THIS MISSION

Want to help? Contact NSLC Office or Laurie Bernard at lbernard2008@hotmail.com

New Spirit Lutheran Church

8701 E. Old Spanish Trail
Tucson, AZ 85710



Shout-Outs



SHOUT OUT- The November Hospitality Team.

SHOUT OUT- The November workday crew.

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

Sundays:

9:00 am Arise to Praise

(Spirited Contemporary Worship)

10:15 – 11:00 am Sunday School for all ages

11:00 am Traditions

(Classic Hymns & Liturgies)

Wednesdays: 4:00 pm Classes

How to contact us:

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