

That's The Spirit!

Rev. Carol Breimeier
Rev. Fred Nelson

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

December 2021

ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR JANUARY 9

The Annual Congregational Meeting of New Spirit Lutheran Church will be Sunday, January 9, at about 11:15am, after worship. As of now, we expect to meet in person this year, in the sanctuary. Masks will be required. While the agenda isn't fully set, we will vote on a budget for 2022 and for Church Council members and other positions.

We will hold a budget preview meeting the prior Sunday, January 2, where we'll talk through the proposed budget and try to answer any questions that arise.

Please be sure to be there for the Annual Meeting. All are welcome to attend. Voting members are strongly encouraged to come. Let your voice be heard!



TRANSITION PROCESS—SEEKING NEW PASTOR

Our official transition coach, Deacon Janice Zimbelman, visited New Spirit on November 14 to share an encouraging message during worship and to talk through the pastoral transition process at a congregational forum afterward.

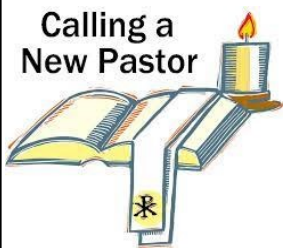
Highlights of her presentation:

Prior to the pastoral search itself, the congregation will engage in a careful and thorough self-study to get an honest read on where we are and to arrive at a solid consensus on where we see ourselves going (our vision for the future). This part of the process is led by a Transition Team that is appointed by the Church Council.

The findings from the self-study go into a written Ministry Site Profile (MSP), the document that describes our congregation to the Bishop and other synod staff, to help them identify potential candidates who would be a good fit for us. The MSP also goes to the potential candidates themselves, to help them determine whether they want to interview with us.

As the MSP is being completed, a Call Committee is appointed to conduct the next part of the process: interviewing candidates and—with the guidance of the Holy Spirit—identifying someone to recommend to the congregation.

Calling a New Pastor



Prayer is essential. Deacon Janice noted that's the key role of the Holy Spirit as we seek to follow God's guidance. The whole transition process, she said, should be "bathed in prayer."

You'll be hearing a lot more in coming months. Your voice and your participation are essential. Please feel free to bring any questions, thoughts, or concerns to a member of Church Council or one of the pastors. This process involves *everyone!*

NEW VISITORS AT NEW SPIRIT

We've been glad to welcome quite a few visitors these past several months, despite the challenges of COVID-19. Our greeters have been really effective in warmly greeting "first-time-comers" on Sunday mornings at our new Welcome Station. In total we have made connections with over 30 individuals or families (including those who expressed an interest in getting more information about New Spirit's activities at the very well-attended "Trunk or Treat" event). For Sunday morning visitors who provide contact information, a packet is delivered to them within 1-2 days which includes: our current newsletter, a devotional booklet, a personalized greeting card, and—of course!—the wonderful brownies that members of the congregation have provided. Usually, a friendly conversation occurs as the packet is given to the visitors at their home, and an invitation is again extended to attend worship at New Spirit. There are new faces now at New Spirit because of these connections!



Offering hospitality to visitors is a highly important part of our ministry at New Spirit. Thanks to all of you who participate in many wonderful ways to make our church a great place not only to visit but also to consider becoming a member of our community.



CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

Come celebrate Christmas at New Spirit, and please invite your friends, too. We will worship on Christmas Eve at 4:00pm and 8:00pm. The services will be, for all intents and purposes, identical. Then, on Sunday, Dec. 26, come for a service of Lessons and Carols at our usual worship time, 10:00am, for a chance to meditate on God's word and sing more Christmas hymns and songs.

IS YOUR LIFE DRIVEN BY PURPOSE?

The beginning of a new year is always a good time to examine or re-examine our lives. Am I living in alignment with God's purposes for me? Should I be adjusting my trajectory or reconsidering my focus?

We're going to look at our lives and God's purposes for us during "40 Days of Purpose," starting January 16. Each week, the Sunday message will kick off that week's reading as we work our way through Rick Warren's classic book *The Purpose Driven Life*, reading a short chapter each day to complete a section of the book each week. Then we'll talk things through in small-group discussions offered Sunday morning and at other times during the week.

Copies of the book will be available at church ahead of time and are free to everyone. (If you'd like to contribute, you can give \$5 per book.)

This is also going to be an outreach effort, something to invite our neighbors to join in on. We'll be mailing postcards to households in our area, inviting people to come for worship to hear the messages or just to participate in reading and discussion with a small group. We want this to be a blessing for as many people as possible. Please consider handing copies of the book to your own friends and neighbors and inviting them to join in.

May God bless us all as we look to recommit ourselves to his purposes.

RICK
WARREN
#1 NEW YORK TIMES
BESTSELLING AUTHOR



THE PURPOSE
DRIVEN LIFE
revised edition

WHAT ON
EARTH
AM I
HERE FOR?

OVER 35 MILLION SOLD

NEW YEAR, NEW GROWTH?

Has your spiritual life hit a rough patch? Or maybe you're just in the doldrums and it's been a while since you felt the joy of growing closer to God.

Would you like to see growth in your spiritual life in the new year, some forward momentum? You have a good tool at your disposal: Spiritual Growth Coaching.

Spiritual Growth Coaching takes the coaching model and applies it to your life of faith. Your coach meets you where you are and helps you think through where you want to be and how best to start to move in that direction.

A coach will ordinarily meet with you about once a month to help you plan and to help you hold yourself accountable to your plan. Of course, if something isn't working, then you'll talk it through together and make adjustments or just start fresh. The point is to grow deeper in faith and closer to Christ, so that your life is more and more fulfilling and joyful.



Interested in learning more? Get in touch with Pastor Carol or Pastor Fred to set a time to have an initial, exploratory conversation. Pastor Carol: carol@newspiritlutherantucson.org; Pastor Fred: fred@insideoutnetwork.net. We look forward to hearing from you!

SOMETHING NEW: CENTERING PRAYER

What does it feel like to just be in God's presence—not doing anything, not saying anything, ideally not even thinking anything, just being? Centering prayer is that experience, and, through generations of Christians, people have found it nourishing for their spiritual and emotional well-being.



Centering Prayer Group

For eight weeks beginning Wednesday, January 12, at 11:00am, you'll have the opportunity to sit with others for 20 minutes of centering prayer in the sanctuary at New Spirit. We'll begin each session with info and instructions for anyone who hasn't done centering prayer before. And, after eight weeks, we'll assess how much interest there is in continuing, whether a different day and time would be better, etc.

You can read an article about centering prayer (on Wikipedia) click [here](#), but pre-reading is by no means required. Just come. If you have any questions, or if you're interested but this schedule doesn't work for you, please get in touch with Pastor Carol (224-422-9552 or carol@newspiritlutherantucson.org).

NEW SPIRIT TO HOST TAX ASSISTANCE SITE

New Spirit will return to hosting an AARP Tax Preparation Assistance Site this year after using a one-on-one approach last year. The site will be open from 1:00pm to 5:00pm on Tuesdays and from 9:00am to 1:00pm on Saturdays, beginning February 1 and ending on April 9.

Because of COVID, we will limit the number of people in the Fellowship Hall at any given time, so appointments will be required. In addition, we will ask for proof of vaccination and require everyone to wear a mask while in the building.

This is a wonderful gift to our community, in keeping with New Spirit's tradition of service to our neighbors. Watch for more information as tax season gets closer.



SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROJECT

Each year the Sunday School department sponsors a project at Christmas to give back and share the blessings of Christ with others. This year we are helping two different groups. One group is San Juan Baptista Lutheran Church on Bilby Road. Due to COVID-19 they have not opened, but they are working actively with a children's shelter in Nogales, Arizona. They serve children up to age 12. We are collecting coloring books, crayons, picture books, socks, shoes (used are fine), toothbrushes, toothpaste, and simple food items (dried black beans and pinto beans, white rice, flour, and sugar). These simple foods go a long way to provide basic nourishment.

Additionally, we are collecting books for Angel Heart Pajama Project. These books are given to foster and immigrant children. Books are distributed several times a year to children and give them a sense of belonging. Any books for children in grades K-6 are welcome whether new or gently used.

We will provide a flyer in upcoming bulletins for anyone who wishes to donate. We will be collecting through the end of the year. Money or checks (payable to New Spirit) can also be dropped in the offering with the notation: Sunday School Christmas project.

We appreciate all the support we have had over the years for our annual Christmas Projects. So many people have benefited, and our Sunday School kids get to learn the joy of giving. We are looking forward to another wonderful and fulfilling project.

Many thanks again,
The Sunday School Department



CHRISTMAS COOKIE EXCHANGE!

Who doesn't love Christmas cookies? Whether you do homemade or semi-homemade, I'm looking for us to start a new tradition at New Spirit. If you would like to be a part of a cookie exchange, there will be a sign up sheet in the narthex. All that you have to do is make or decorate 3 dozen cookies and provide your recipe or directions. Please drop them off December 14-16 in the kitchen, labeled cookie exchange and I will mix and match them for pick up the last Sunday before Christmas (Dec. 19) along with some new recipes for you! I hope many of you will want to share and sample each other's recipes and spread some Christmas cheer. Wishing you a merry and blessed season.



Thanks
Shelley Colwell

MIDDLE- AND HIGH-SCHOOL GROUP TACKLES BIBLE TRIVIA

New Spirit's Youth Group is employing an interesting approach to learning *about* the Bible and learning *from* the Bible. They're using a book of Bible trivia to uncover unfamiliar nuggets of Scripture and considering how the "trivia" actually gives guidance for living.



Coming up for Youth Group is Christmas card-making and—weather permitting—a barbecue. Thanks to Sandra Colwell for providing leadership for the kids and helping them navigate the transition into adulthood with the help of God's word.

LAMAz News for November

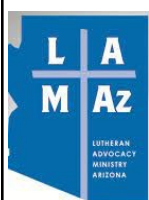
Hopefully, you have been able to access the LAMAz newsletter that is online for all to read. The website URL is LAMAz.org. Listed below are some of the activities and events that you may be interested to read about and to participate in as you wish.

On Nov. 18 @ 2:30 – 3:30 PM, a webinar on our Afghan neighbors was presented with policy updates about the resettlement of Afghan arrivals. The needs of these arrivals and actions for assistance will be discussed by leaders from the ELCA and other Lutheran communities.

On Nov. 22 @ 6:30-7:30 PM, a book study on *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson, which delves into a study of racial justice.

Other areas of interest include actions by the current administration on the needs of children, the reduction of racial disparities, and climate issues.

In the LAMAz newsletter for Nov. 16, we are encouraged to support a White House conference on food, nutrition, hunger, and health. This is a bipartisan, bicameral conference that supports programs such as SNAP, the School Breakfast Program, and the National School Lunch Program.



... activating
our faith in
love.

As you have probably noticed, some of these notifications have already occurred by the time you receive the New Spirit newsletter. This is another reason to sign up for the newsletter so that you may remain current in the events that are important for us as Lutherans as we strive for peace and justice throughout the world.

Barbara Verthein

THANKS FOR SHARING FAVORITE SONGS

We invited everyone to share the titles of three or four favorite hymns or songs by filling out a list and dropping it in the offering plate. More than 25 people responded with lists that ranged from a single title to one person who listed 8 individual hymns plus "all Christmas carols and all Easter hymns." With so much music available, there is lots of variety among people's favorites but also some overlap.

In coming weeks, we'll consult these lists as we select music for worship. We may often want to introduce a less familiar song that happens to underscore the theme of the day, and that's a way for new favorites to emerge. But we'll be including faves as well and marking them with an asterisk in the bulletin.

Thanks to everyone who participated! If you didn't get a chance to turn in a list, just send yours to Pastor Carol by email (carol@newspiritlutherantucson.org) or drop a list in the offering plate, marked "Favorite songs."



COFFEE HOUR HOSTS NEEDED



With cooler weather and ample sunshine, we've been able to restart fellowship time (AKA coffee hour) despite COVID by moving tables and chairs outdoors. Now we could use more volunteers both to bring goodies and to help with prep and clean-up. You can find a sign-up sheet on a clipboard on the food table every Sunday during fellowship time. Please help in any way you're able. This ministry is very important, both as a welcoming landing pad for new visitors and as a time to develop and deepen relationships.

Women's Ministry Group Minutes for November 2021

Women's Ministry Group (WELCA Bible Study Group) met at 1:30 on November 10, 2021 at the church.

October 2021 minutes were approved as read.

Treasurer's report was approved as presented.

We continued our Bible study with session three of "The gift of Spirit: A divine wild goose chase." We dove into scripture that speaks of the Spirit as the wind of God. We looked to scripture stories that speak of the ways the Spirit refines us, moving us to repentance and right action in order to live as our most authentic selves. Turning to stories of the Spirit's work in the early church, we looked at the ways the Spirit continues to reroute God's people into ever more faithful ways of being. We ended with the word of Romans 8, reminding us of the Spirit's presence swelling within us, bringing new things to birth in us.

Old Business: We finalized the letters to be mailed to each household for the November WELCA Thank Offering. We will finish assembling the Christmas cards at our December meeting.

New Business: In an effort to brighten up the day for our shut-ins; thinking of you and/or whimsical cards will be sent to them monthly. Members will take a look at the ELCA Good Gifts Catalog and make recommendations at our next meeting for ways to use some of our project money.

Dates to Remember: The week of September 18, 2023 – Triennial in Phoenix.

Our next meeting will be held on December 8, 2021 at 1:30, at the church.

Linda Lamb – Secretary



Shout-Outs

SHOUT OUT - To Mary Lou Rex, Ana MacKay, Sharon Dobbs for proof reading the newsletter every month.

SHOUT OUT - To Edna Walton and Judy McFarland for making sure the decorations in Fellowship Hall are changed out according to the seasons.

December Birthday & Anniversary Celebrations

12/9 Sandra Johnsen

12/12 Joyce Dow

12/15 Amber Uidenich

12/19 Carol Morales

12/20 Marilyn Carter



12/20 Paul Koster

12/26 Linda Lamb

12/27 Laurie Bernard

12/30 Don Austin
Eva Kwapich
Sarah Elmquist
Ethan Rettig



MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM OUR BLESSINGS IN A BACKPACK TEAM

Looking for a way to give back for Christmas? Consider a contribution in enriching the lives of school children who sometimes go hungry on the weekend. We deliver snack packs every week during the school year to Steele, Henry, Ford, and Erickson Elementary Schools.

God is working through New Spirit and making a difference in our community and the lives of **275** children and their families.

SPECIAL THANKS AND WE WILL MISS YOU TO MARY JANE BEARDMORE FOR YOUR YEARS OF SERVICE TO OUR CHILDREN!!!

Please make your tax deductible check out 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.**

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***



Thank You, LORD!

SPECIAL HOMELESS BLESSINGS SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13

Our team served an early Thanksgiving Dinner to our friends at our November event. Thanks to Robin, Kathy, and Monica for preparing the yummy meal to share.

Our next event will be on December 11, 1 pm to 3 pm.

We have blankets, gloves, hats, socks, and more to help out. Chili and fixins' will be served!

If you feel it in your heart to help those less fortunate, we would love to have you on our team.

For information, contact NSLC Office or Laurie Bernard at 886-3242 or lbernard2008@hotmail.com

New Spirit Lutheran Church

8701 E. Old Spanish Trail
Tucson, AZ 85710

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