

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.*

December 2024

Holiday Greetings,

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given" is the message Isaiah gives us and is one that is often heard during this time of year. We are looking forward to celebrating the coming of the baby in the manger. Advent also reminds us that as followers of Christ we are eagerly looking forward to the second coming of Jesus. Sometimes these two thoughts can seem in conflict. We are both looking back in celebration, while also looking forward to what is to come. Then we mix in all the emotions that come with the holiday season.



Here at New Spirit, we have much to look forward to during the month of December. We have the children's program coming up. We have the Jazz Nativity coming. We have Christmas Eve service, which I believe is one of the best, but I just may be a little bias. We also will once again have our Christmas Pajama/Ugly Christmas Sweater Service of Lessons and Carols the Sunday after Christmas Eve. It really is a very busy time for the church. Through all these events we pray that we have new people join us. While we are certainly going to be doing additional advertising and promotion, it is your personal invitations to these events that often bring the most people. If we want to fill New Spirit Lutheran Church during these events it will take us all inviting people.

The First Sunday of Advent is also the beginning of the new liturgical year. So much like New Year's Eve, I have been thinking about what this coming year will look like for us. There are still many questions for what 2025 will bring. I have been spending a lot of time in prayer and pondering as I think about the coming year. While I still have many questions, there are a few things that the Spirit has confirmed. We will continue to do what we have been doing. We will continue to feed those that need to be fed. We will continue to love those that need to be loved. We will continue to be part of making God's love known here and now. God will most certainly continue to guide us in this work.

I pray that each and every one of you has a joy filled holiday season. I look forward to celebrating the baby in the manger with all of you. I am excited about what is to come!

Pastor Hartman

December Prayer



God with us, we pray that you remind us of your presence in all things and all people. Remind us to take moments to be still during the busyness of this season. Remind us that when things do not go perfectly that the Christ Child will still be born. Send your spirit to continue to guide us and inspire us this season and through the coming year. Amen

ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING!!! Important Date: Be sure to save it to your calendar! We will hold our 2024 annual congregation meeting on Sunday, January 26, 2025, at 11:15 immediately following our worship service. Voting will be held for the 2025 operating budget, open council and committee positions, and provide an opportunity for everyone to hear updates on what's going on at New Spirit and plans for the new year. You don't want to miss this! The success and vitality of our congregation requires all of us coming together for God's work!



What To Do About Poverty

On February 16, 2025, we will be hosting a special guest as the fulfillment of one of the 2024 stewardship initiatives. This will be the capstone to this year's study of poverty. Our guest will be Shane Claiborne. Below is Shane's bio from Shaneclaiborne.com.

"Shane Claiborne is a prominent speaker, activist, and best-selling author. Shane worked with Mother Teresa in Calcutta, and founded The Simple Way in Philadelphia. He heads up Red Letter Christians, a movement of folks who are committed to living "as if Jesus meant the things he said." Shane is a champion for grace which has led him to jail advocating for the homeless, and to places like Iraq and Afghanistan to stand against war. Now grace fuels his passion to end the death penalty and help stop gun violence.



Shane's books include *Jesus for President*, *Red Letter Revolution*, *Common Prayer*, *Follow Me to Freedom*, *Jesus, Bombs and Ice Cream*, *Becoming the Answer to Our Prayers*, *Executing Grace*, his classic *The Irresistible Revolution*, *Beating Guns*, and his newest book, *Rethinking Life*. He has been featured in a number of films including "Another World Is Possible" and "Ordinary Radicals." His books have been translated into more than a dozen languages. His work has appeared in *Esquire*, *SPIN*, *Christianity Today*, *TIME*, and *The Wall Street Journal*, and he has been on everything from Fox News and Al Jazeera to CNN and NPR. He's given academic lectures at Harvard, Princeton, Liberty, Duke, and Notre Dame. In 2023, Shane received the prestigious The King Center's Beloved Community Award for Social Justice from Dr. Bernice King (daughter of Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King).

Shane speaks regularly at denominational gatherings, festivals, and conferences around the globe."

Stewardship Update

Thank you, thank you, for all who have returned their Statements of Intent. Thank you for your generosity, your faithfulness, and for your commitment to the ministry of New Spirit!

As of November 23, we have received 43 of the 67 statements of intent that were mailed, for a total of \$148,938.00 which is 68% of our requested goal. **We need your statements of Intent!!**

If you haven't had the opportunity to turn in your Statement of Intent, **IT'S NOT TOO LATE!** Please bring it to church, mail it or drop it off at the office. And if, after prayerful consideration, you realize you have the ability to give more, then we invite you to complete a new Statement. We appreciate everything you give! Thank you for being integral to the ministry and vision of New Spirit. We look forward to doing God's work together this coming year.



Fellowship Dinner

The MONTHLY dinners will resume in January. This coming year it will be held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month through May and resumes in September. Watch for information to be posted regarding themes and sign up.

News from the Grand Canyon Synod -- LAMA's 2025 Policy Priorities

The Lutheran Advocacy Ministry Arizona (LAMA) Policy Council convened for its annual retreat, a lively and prayerful gathering, on November 17–18. In just 24 hours, council members discerned a vision for 2025, guided by faith, social teachings, and the pressing needs of Arizona's communities. Rooted in the ELCA's commitment to be a publicly engaged church, LAMA has outlined six key areas for the year ahead:

Food Insecurity: Tackling hunger and its root causes by continuing initiatives like the Hunger Leaders Network and partnering with organizations such as Arizona Faith Network and Bread for the World.

Civic Engagement: Encouraging faithful, nonpartisan voter participation while addressing the intersections of justice, voting, and elections.

Support for Public Schools: Advocating for public education as a cornerstone of community welfare, from academic excellence to essential services like school meal programs.



Informed Christian Engagement: Promoting education and dialogue on what it means to live and serve as faithful citizens in a complex society.

Immigration: Partnering with Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest to advocate for compassionate immigration reform and the dignity of all individuals.

Housing and Homelessness: Joining efforts with Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest to address affordable housing shortages and homelessness in Arizona.

To learn more about LAMA and how to get involved, check out their website at lamaz.org.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

Come celebrate Christmas at New Spirit, and please invite your friends, too. We will worship on Christmas Eve at 4:00 pm. The Children's program will be held on December 15 during worship service. Then, on Sunday, Dec. 29, come for a service of Christmas PJs, Ugly Christmas Sweater, Lessons and Carols at our usual worship time, 10:00 am.



The Shelter has the name in English of "The House of Mercy of the Nations." In Spanish, "La Casa de Misericordia y de Todas las Naciones", often called "La Casa" as a nickname.

On November 9th, New Spirit Lutheran Church delivered a coffee grinder and 60 pounds of coffee beans, along with cereal, rice, and pinto beans to San Juan Bautista Lutheran Church, to be sent to the shelter in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico. Pastor Mateo travels to the shelter once a month to give Mass in the cafeteria.

Sister Lika, Angelica Macias, first opened the shelter with a group of women to give sandwiches to children of the factory workers. She is also an artist, and her artwork is in the form of murals on the walls at La Casa.

A lawyer from Tucson works with the residents of La Casa, around 120 of them, to help them form their 'declaration of credible fear' to request asylum, which is submitted electronically to the United States border authorities. The main building has a health office, a workspace, and a play space for infants. There is also a school with teachers that serve the primary and secondary level students. The residents also receive medical care both physical and psychological.

ARIZONA PREMIERE
BENDING TOWARDS THE LIGHT...
A JAZZ NATIVITY




DEC **SUNDAY** 22ND 5PM DEC **MONDAY** 23RD 7PM

DOORS OPEN 30 MIN BEFORE SHOWTIME

HOSTED BY NEW SPIRIT LC
 8701 E OLD SPANISH TRAIL
 TUCSON, AZ 85710

Don't miss this Arizona Premiere!!! A show that has enthralled audiences since 1985 across cities, including New York City!!!

The Jazz Nativity is the Christmas Story told through the medium of jazz, featuring jazz greats Dave Brubeck, Lionel Hampton and Tito Puente.

Composed, arranged and produced by Anne Phillips, this production is sure to love!

Hosted by New Spirit Lutheran Church. Go to www.newspiritlutherantucson.org under events to purchase your tickets.

December & January Birthday & Anniversary Celebrations

12/01 Zinnia-Grace Thatcher

12/12 Joyce Dow

12/15 Amber Uidenich

12/19 Carol Morales
Gary Grochowski

12/20 Marilyn Carter

12/22 Paul Koster

12/26 Linda Lamb

12/27 Laurie Bernard

12/30 Eva Kwapich
Sarah Elmquist
Ethan Rettig



01/01 Edward Glanz

01/05 Edward & Kathleen Glanz
(Anniversary)

01/07 Jeremy & Jenny Kwapich
(Anniversary)

01/09 Nicholas Hartman

01/15 Phyllis Wagner

01/17 Brigitte Stuetze

01/18 Kathleen Glanz

01/20 Karen Colwell

PASTORS' BOOK STUDY

It is hard to believe that we have reached the end of the 2024 Pastor's Book Study reading list. We spent this year reading works focused on poverty and related issues. Jennifer Brown created the Ally Continuum, the four "stages" of being an ally are Apathetic, Aware, Active, and Advocate. The first three stages rely heavily on education. As a church that serves those that are homeless and food insecure, we must continue to learn about the struggles of those that we serve as well as about the systems at play. This year's readings were challenging, insightful, and hopefully inspiring for all those that took the time to read them.

You may have noticed in the title of this article the apostrophe moved. In 2025 the format of the book studies will change. New Spirit and Lutheran Church of the Foothills will come together for a year of study of contemporary Christian writings. We will meet twice a month to discuss that month's book. This new book study will be called Beyond the Book and will focus on how the book applies to real life. Locations for the meetings are still being confirmed, but we will meet in more centralized locations. To begin with, we will also offer a morning and an evening meeting time for the two days a month that we meet. More details will come as locations are confirmed. Below is the reading list for 2025.

If you are unable to join us for the discussion groups, you are still encouraged to read the books.

January – Executing Grace: How the Death Penalty Killed Jesus and Why It's Killing Us by Shane Claiborne

February – Love Without Limits by Jacqueline A. Bussie

March – Wholehearted Faith by Rachel Held Evans

April – Is that Poop on My Arm? Parenting While Christian by Justin Lind-Ayres

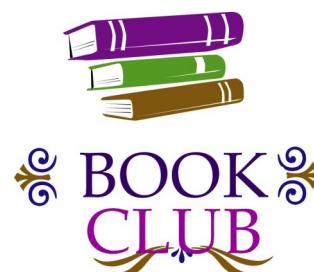
May – July – Reading on your own, see Pastor Hartman for recommendations.

August – Faith After Doubt by Brian McLaren

September – TBD

October – TBD

November – TBD



As of November 2024, the total cost for paperback copies of all the books listed above is \$65 on Amazon. If you are interested in participating but the cost of purchasing the books above causes a hardship, please let Pastor Hartman know.



Selling a car?
Need yardwork done?
Have a business we should know about?

Check out the bulletin board by the kitchen.
Leave a business card. Take a business card.
Leave a note describing what you want or are selling.



BLESSINGS IN A BACKPACK

Who will feed the kids this weekend?

NEW SPIRIT LUTHERAN CHURCH WILL!



WE ARE SERVING 360 STUDENTS EACH WEEKEND FOR THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR AT STEELE, HENRY, FORD, ERICKSON, AND SOLENG TOM ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS!

Help us alleviate hunger in our part of the world. We have volunteer positions available for grant research, food procurement, packing, and delivery.

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 the mail to BIB Lockbox, PO Box 950291, Louisville, KY 40295. **Remember to put Steele Elementary on the memo line.** You can also donate online through the New Spirit Lutheran Church website. Just click on the donate button.

. THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THIS MINISTRY

HOMELESS BLESSINGS "BECAUSE WE CARE"



JOIN US THE 2ND SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH
OCTOBER THROUGH APRIL, 1PM TO 3PM

Our next event is on December 14th from 1pm to 3pm. We will be serving a Christmas meal

Our events are not just for the unhoused, but for anyone experiencing financial/food insecurity. In addition to the supplies such as tents, tarps, umbrellas, beanies and gloves for our homeless friends, we offer a hot meal, hygiene products, pet food, clothing, shoes, blankets, some packaged food, haircuts, and a place for some social activity for everyone.

OUR ACTIVITIES ARE NOT LIMITED TO JUST 1 DAY PER MONTH

We pack 100 "homeless bags" per month, which include a flashlight, hygiene, 1st aid, food, and a clothing item. These bags are carried in the car to be given away to an unhoused friend.

In November, we delivered coffee beans, a coffee grinder, rice, beans, and cereal to San Juan Bautista Lutheran Church located at 1130 E Bilby Road. They will deliver these items to a refugee center in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico. We also donate excess clothing to Casas Altas Welcome Center in Tucson.

Several times this year, we attended volunteer events to assemble care packets for the unsheltered community with the City of Tucson's Housing First Team.

We are an active member of Tucson Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness, a coalition of Tucson area organizations, committed to the mission of ending homelessness in Tucson and Pima County.

IS YOUR ORGANIZATION LOOKING TO SUPPORT AN OUTREACH PROGRAM?

FEEL THE NEED TO SERVE OTHERS? JOIN THE TEAM!

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.

Contact NSLC Office or Laurie Bernard at lbernard2008@hotmail.com

To all the volunteers that helped make 2024 successful or helped the church grow in faith and spirit.

New Spirit Lutheran Church

8701 E. Old Spanish Trail
Tucson, AZ 85710

Shout-Outs

SHOUT OUT - To Sarah Drath for last minute fill in for fellowship coffee hour.

SHOUT OUT - To Jenny Kwapich for the design work to promote Jazz Nativity.

SHOUT OUT - to the Nominating Committee for all their work leading up to the annual meeting.

SHOUT OUT - to the Stewardship Team for preparing the campaign for this year.

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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