

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.*

February 2024

Beloved of Christ,

Love and excitement are in the air, and I am not talking about just Valentine's Day. We have started the year off strong with showing love and care to our neighbors. This month on the 14th, the liturgical season of Lent will begin. Once again, I will be offering Ashes to Go the morning of Ash Wednesday from 7:00-8:00 am. This is an opportunity for individuals to "drive through" on their way to work, errands, or for whatever the day holds and receive the Imposition of Ashes. I will be in the North Parking lot that morning for any that wish to participate. That evening at 6:00 we will hold a more traditional Ash Wednesday worship service with communion and the Imposition of Ashes.

This year's theme for the season of Lent is from A Sanctified Art and is "Again and Again". Originally this theme was created in 2020, when there was much uncertainty and so much was unknown. The "Again and Again" theme reminds us "that, again and again, suffering and brokenness find us. We doubt again, we lament again, we mess up again. Again and again, the story of Jesus on the cross repeats—every time lives are taken unjustly, every time the powerful choose corruption and violence, every time individuals forget how to love. With exacerbation we exclaim, "Again?! How long, O God?" And yet, in the midst of the motion blur chaos of our lives, God offers a sacred refrain: "I choose you, I love you, I will lead you to repair." Again and again, God breaks the cycle and offers us a new way forward."

During the season of Lent, there will be online worship and reflection videos posted every Wednesday. Wednesday, March 6th, we will have an in person evening worship to help us refocus for the remaining days of Lent. March 28th is Maundy Thursday and we will once again hold a Dinner Church worship service. March 29th is Good Friday and we will have a Tenebrae service.

You are invited to be part of this year's Lenten journey of "Again and Again". Devotional, worship at home, and other materials will be made available in the days leading up to Ash Wednesday.



Pastor Hartman



February 2024 Prayer

Prayer: God of open doors, open arms, and open conversations, we know deep in our souls that you are forever inviting us in. Again and again, you invite us to take another step closer, another step deeper, another step further, in this journey of faith. So, with your invitation in our hands, we pray for strength and wisdom. Show us the next right step in this journey. We are here. You are here. May this holy Lenten journey begin once again. Gratefully we pray, Amen.

Introducing your 2024 New Spirit Council.....

Pastor Hartman
President: Jenny Kwapich
Vice – President: Shelley Colwell
Treasurer: Lorrie Firth
Secretary:
Members At Large: Cathy Cermak
Nancy Cunningham
Joy Wolfe
Laurie Bernard
Barbara Wadler



Please join us in welcoming these individuals as well as praying for them throughout the year as they volunteer their time and gifts to New Spirit and all who enter here.

Lenten worship services schedule



Ash Wednesday: 7:00 am Ashes to go - Pastor Hartman will be in the parking lot off Camino Seco to impose ashes to those that come through. 6:00 pm Traditional Ash Wednesday worship service with the Imposition of Ashes and communion.

During the weeks of Lent the sanctuary will be open during normal business hours for personal prayer and reflection. No formal service will take place but resources for prayer and reflection will be available.

Holy Week Schedule –

Holy Week is March 24 – March 31.

March 24 - Palm Sunday, Worship service at 10:00 am.

March 28 - Maundy Thursday, 6:00pm Dinner Church worship. (Congregation members are being asked to bring side dishes and desserts.)

March 29 - Good Friday, our evening service at 6:00pm, Tenebrae worship service.

March 31 - Easter Sunday, Worship service at 10:00 am.

Remember to invite someone to these services!



*Thanks for
your prayers.*

Thank you for all your love and prayers. I feel the power and love of them. Thank you again. Becky Hedstrom.

Endowment Board: Brenda Feller Cathy Cermak Philip Pierce Paul Stuetze Jenny Kwapich Pastor Hartman	Nominating Committee for 2024: John Lukecart Robin Hughes Jeremy Kwapich	Audit Committee for 2024: Laurie Bernard Philip Pierce Jeremy Kwapich
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HUGE THANKS to the following members for everything they did over the years for New Spirit while serving on council.

Deloris Hanneman
Joyce Dow
Jeremy Kwapich



Endowment Dollars Doing God’s Work:

The Endowment Board met on January 14, 2024, and awarded the following grant requests:

Organization	Amount	Category	Notes
Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$4,000	3	Provide stipends for 3-4 interns
Tree 4 Hope	\$6,000	2	Provide scholarships for 5 poor and at-risk girls in their Hope Academy (\$1200 each) in Greater Guatemala City.
NSLC Blessings in a Backpack	\$10,000	1	Support ongoing program to provide food bags to 325 food insecure children from 4 elementary schools.
NSLC Homeless Blessings	\$5,000	1	Provide monthly meal and supply distribution events to 50+ homeless individuals; provide supply and food bags to be distributed to 50-100 individuals on the street.



Two new members, Phil Pierce and Paul Stuetze, were elected at the January 21, Annual Meeting, to replace outgoing members, Craig Geiger and Carol DeBis-Harrell. Thank you for your service, Craig and Carol! The other members of the board are Jenny Kwapich, Brenda Feller, Cathy Cermak and Pastor Hartman.

ARE YOU READY to kick up your heels and have some fun? COME TO MARDI GRAS on Friday, February 9, 5:00-8:00 (dinner will start at 5:30). Bring friends and family. Come ready to eat, socialize, enjoy music, dancing and activities, and prepare your hearts for this Lenten season. Wear purple, green, and/or gold, or a costume if you have one!

Join the Fun, and Laissez le bon temps rouler
(Let the Good Times Roll) !!!



Lutherans in Action – Lutheran Day at the Legislature

I was excited to participate in Lutheran Day at the Legislature in January, along with 124 other Lutherans from around the State. I got to meet with two of the three legislators from my district, in the company of retired Pastor Barb Rapp from Green Valley and Sarah Riojas, an LSS-SW staff person from Douglas. We were able to tell them briefly about LAMA (Lutheran Advocacy Ministry of AZ) and our biggest concerns for this legislative year.



Hunger and Food Security – 751,690 Arizonans are facing hunger, and 226,080 are children. 25% of Arizona’s children grow up in food insecure homes. Because of the rising cost of living, 51% of the people facing food insecurity are over the SNAP threshold and unable to consistently access the food they need. LAMA is supporting measures like statewide opt-in for the summer EBT (electronic benefit transfer) program, permanent funding for healthy school meals, increased access to healthy food through programs like the Double Up Food Bucks AZ, House Bill 2054 to extend SNAP eligibility for formerly incarcerated individuals complying with their conditions of parole, and any policies that address the burden of poverty.

Housing and Homelessness in AZ – Seniors are the fastest growing population of housing insecure. 21% of all renters are extremely low income, despite the fact that 60% of them are retired or in the labor force. Over 30% of people experiencing homelessness are women and children. Rents have increased 40-50% in the state, while wages have only increased 4-10%. In response to this and historical policies that have left the poor without secure housing, LAMA is supporting continued funding for the AZ Housing Trust Fund, funding for the AZ Low Income Tax Credit (LITC), reasonable zoning reforms that remove unnecessary barriers for housing development, statewide zoning support for Accessory Dwelling Units, equitable eviction laws, continuing support of emergency shelter programs, and collaboration with the Inter Agency Council on Housing and Homelessness.

Civic Engagement and Voting -- Over 1/3 of Arizonans are registered Independents. In 2022, Arizona led the nation in the number of bills introduced to limit voter access. An example is HB2492, which attempted to tighten and double ID requirements. Some 40,000 homes on reservations are at risk of voter disenfranchisement because they lack standardized, physical addresses. LAMA supports the recommendations of the Bipartisan Elections Task Force that include **Voting Rights Restoration**, which would amend the law to make the voting rights restoration process automatic upon release from incarceration. LAMA also supports the Make Elections Fair Act which proposes open, non-partisan primaries and bans public money from being used to fund part elections. Approx. 80% of Arizona voters support non-partisan primaries.

Water – Arizona’s water use is 72% agricultural, 22% municipal and 6% industrial. It’s main supply, the Colorado River, has decreased by 21% due to droughts, while population growth is driving up the demand. The State is facing a 4% shortage over the next century. There is growing concern over “Forever Chemicals,” Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in our water. Capture and removal of PFAS is costly, and currently municipalities are not required to treat them. On the Navajo Reservation, 15% of houses have no running water. LAMA is looking for programs and legislation that help strengthen conservation efforts, support for HB2056 which continues funding for the Water Irrigation Efficiency Program run through the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Program, requiring municipalities to treat PFAS contaminated water systems, and collaboration with representatives from the Navajo Nation in pursuit of an equitable and just water settlement.

You can help with these issues. To learn how, sign up to receive LAMA’s newsletter at: <https://lamaz.org/contact>. I would be happy to email you the fact sheets on these issues if you are interested. And definitely talk to Barb Verthein, who is New Spirit’s representative to LAMA. She’d be happy to give you information and would be thrilled to have more people at New Spirit get involved. It’s time to act NOW, New Spirit!

Cathy Cermak

WOMEN'S MINISTRY GROUP MINUTES FOR January 2024

Women's Ministry Group (WELCA Bible Study Group) met at 1:30 on January 10, 2024, at the church.

Our Bible study was part one of a four part "Scripture and Nature" series. When reading the scriptures pay attention to the environment within which they were first written. Our lives are interdependent, not only with other people, but also with creation. We must ground ourselves in the goodness and consistency of God amid the ever-changing world.

Part of our Project money was sent to Lutheran World Relief to help with the postage fees to ship quilts worldwide. We will designate more of our project funds for the Kino Conference projects.

Kino Conference, March 2nd, 2024 at Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, Tucson, AZ. Our group will be presenting the devotions.

Our next gathering is February 21, 2024, at 1:30 p.m. at the church. We will be studying session two of "Scripture and Nature".



Linda Lamb – Secretary

New Spirit Tax Site

The tax site will not be held at our location for the coming tax season. Look on the internet to find a site near you and book an appointment at one of the listed locations. Go to https://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp_taxaide//, then click on Tax-Aide locator or Get Started. Tax sites will be open February 1, 2024 - April 15, 2024.

Attention Please!

All free AARP Tax-Aide preparation is by appointment only at all sites. Appointments may be made online or in person at the site on the day(s) open. You must pick up a tax packet at Wilmot, Columbus, Himmel, Mission, Valencia or Golf Links libraries or at sites when open.

February Birthday & Anniversary Celebrations

2/02 Sam Wymer
2/10 Ken & Sharon Dobbs
(Anniversary)
2/12 Charlene Thayse
2/18 Brenda Feller



2/20 Sarah Drath
2/24 Sandra Colwell
2/25 Sandy Cooper
Jeremy Kwapich



BLESSINGS IN A BACKPACK

Who will feed the kids this weekend?



We are blessed to provide snack packs for 325 students each weekend for Steele, Henry, Ford, and Erickson Elementary schools. In addition, in 2023, we were able to provide 100 pairs of shoes, underwear, socks, Halloween candy, and Christmas food bags.

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 also donate online through the New Spirit Lutheran Church website. Just click on the donate button.

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, delivery, and gardening. If you like to shop, join our team!**

During the school year, packing is done on Tuesdays from 8:00 to 9:30 AM. Deliveries are done in the mornings after packing (if you want to help deliver, you can pick the day you are available).

Contact Laurie Bernard at lbernard2008@hotmail.com with questions.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THIS MINISTRY

"I've learned that people will forget
what you **said**,
people will forget
what you **did**, but
people will never
forget how you
made them **feel**."

Maya Angelou



HOMELESS BLESSINGS

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

SOME PETS ARE HOMELESS TOO
WE NOW COLLECT DOG/CAT FOOD, OLD TOWELS, AND BEDDING FOR OUR CLIENTS' PETS AND
FOR DONATION TO THE PIMA ANIMAL CARE CENTER

FOOD INSECURITY AFFECTS ALL AGES

Our next event is February 10th. In addition to our monthly Saturday events, we hand out bags to clients on the street that include food, socks, and hygiene products.

New Spirit is reaching at least 150 people every month with our events and hand out bags

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. You can also donate online through the New Spirit Lutheran Church website. Just click on the donate button.

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 - To Eva & Henry Kwapich for overseeing the Homeless bag packing after service on January 28th.

SHOUT OUT - To Jenny Kwapich for her leadership and running a productive annual meeting.

SHOUT OUT - To the anonymous donor who donated to the Pastor's discretionary fund.

SHOUT OUT - To Lorrie Firth for her leadership in the annual budget process.

SHOUT OUT - To the Colwell's for overseeing the literary drive that brought in over 500 books.

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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