

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.*

January 2021

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING: The postponed 2020 Annual Congregational Meeting of New Spirit Lutheran Church will consist of two parts: an informational meeting via Zoom at 10:00am, Sunday, January 31, followed by mail-in voting. See p. 2 for details.

WALKING INTO THE FUTURE

It may not be easy for all of us to believe that we will have forward momentum as a congregation anytime soon. With the pandemic once again intensifying, our political climate dangerously stormy, and loss upon loss (loneliness, sickness, even death) afflicting our church family, it's hard to envision a bright future, much less summon a lot of enthusiasm for taking steps in that direction.

And yet, in just a couple of weeks, we'll be holding our Annual Congregational Meeting (see article on p. 2) and looking toward this new year and beyond. We'll be looking at the financial resources God's blessed us with and the people he's calling to serve in leadership roles. And we'll consider the Growing Season proposal as a possible roadmap for the near-term future.

For some of us, this process will appeal to our optimistic, forward-looking nature. Others of us will likely find some skepticism creeping into our thoughts. But, while none of us can predict the specifics of the future ahead of us, we do know one thing: we don't go alone. God is always there in the future with unknown blessings. And we have each other—a congregation of people gathered by the Holy Spirit and bound to one another by faith and friendships.

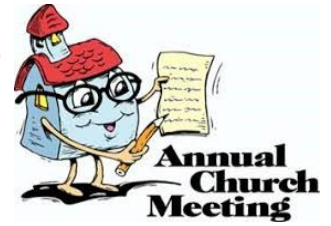
Last Sunday morning, Shelley Colwell shared this passage of Scripture with us at the start of our online communion service: "Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint" (Isaiah 40:31). What an encouraging message! God gives new strength when we need it most. And, even if we don't soar, even if we can't run, we can still put one foot in front of the other and keep moving forward...together.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Carol



A VERY DIFFERENT ANNUAL MEETING

Because of COVID, New Spirit's 2020 Annual Congregational meeting is going to be different in a number of ways. One way is obvious: We've postponed the meeting from December to January. But now we also have to carry out our Annual Meeting without being together in person.



The Grand Canyon Synod held an online session with lawyers who had researched the law for this kind of meeting in the three states where the synod has churches. Based on the advice for Arizona congregations, our meeting will have two parts. Here's a summary followed by a more detailed explanation.

Quick Summary

Based on legal advice shared by the Grand Canyon Synod with Arizona congregations, our 2020 Annual Meeting will have two components:

(1) On Sunday, January 31, at 10:00, we will have an online meeting via Zoom that will begin with a brief communion service and be followed by the agenda we would ordinarily cover at an annual meeting. However, this will *not* be the official meeting. It will be considered an informational meeting. It *will* include: discussion of things that are up for vote, opening the floor for nominations, discussion of proposed amendments, etc., but it will *not* include voting.

(2) The official Annual Meeting will consist of the marking and mailing in of ballots. You will receive an addressed and stamped envelope along with your ballots (see below). After the January 31 informational meeting has happened, you will mail in your marked ballots.

Note: This seems as strange to us as it probably does to you, but we're in a strange time, and this is what the legal experts say is the best way to proceed.

Detailed Explanation

Here is a step-by-step explanation of how this will work:

First, a note on who is a voting member of New Spirit. To be a voting member, you need to (a) be a member of New Spirit, who (b) has communed at New Spirit in the current or previous calendar year, and who (c) has made a financial contribution of record in the current or previous calendar year. Because this will officially be the 2020 Annual Meeting (postponed into 2021 because of circumstances), the calendar years in question are 2019-2020. If you are unsure of your status, please contact Nancy in the office at 520-296-2461 or nancy@newspiritlutherantucson.org.

Approximately ten days before the January 31 online informational meeting, we will mail out a packet to every voting member. The packet will include, among other things, the proposed budget, information on nominees for leadership roles, ballots, and a stamped and addressed envelope for mailing ballots to church.

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When you receive your packet, please read through the materials ahead of the meeting and raise any questions you have with a council member or pastor. This will help us know what needs correction or further explanation when we gather. This is especially important for anyone who is unable to get online. We want to strongly encourage those folks to get in touch with a council member or one of the pastors with any thoughts or questions.

On January 31, we'll meet online (see Zoom link below) and proceed as we would with any congregational meeting, with the exception that we won't cast votes. Amendments to the budget or the Growing Season proposal will be considered but will have to be decided by a voice vote or show of hands. Nominations from the floor will be received. (Please note: If you intend to nominate someone for a position, be sure to check beforehand to make sure that person is willing to serve.)

On Monday, February 1, we will let everyone know by email (or by phone for those who don't use email) whether there were any additional nominations and/or changes to the budget and/or the Growing Season proposal.

If there are changes, you'll get instructions on how to proceed with voting.

If there are no changes, you can go ahead and vote with the ballots as you received them.

Mail your ballots using the SASE enclosed in your packet. We will count votes as they are received, completing the count on Thursday, February 11.

Again, we realize that this is a far-less-than-optimal approach to what should be a wonderful chance to gather, review what's gone before, and look to the future *together*. God willing, we will be back to that next year. In the meantime, we ask for your patience and that you would put the best construction on the work and the decisions of your elected leaders and your pastors as we do our best to help the congregation adapt to current pandemic circumstances.

-New Spirit Church Council and the Pastors

ZOOM LINK FOR INFORMATIONAL MEETING:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87980438406>

Password: 8701

GROWING SEASON PROPOSAL: 2 MORE FORUMS

We will vote on the Growing Season proposal as part of our Annual Congregational Meeting, coming at the end of this month. If you were unable to participate in any of the December online forums to discuss the proposal, you'll have two more opportunities: Sunday, January 17, at 11:00am or Tuesday, January 19, at 1:00pm.

To join in, please look back over the Growing Season proposal so you can be prepared with any questions or comments. Then use this link to join either of the meetings:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87980438406> **Password: 8701**

If you are unable to join an online meeting but have questions or comments to share, please don't hesitate to get in touch with a council member or one of the pastors. For contact information for any council member or either of the pastors, please call or email Nancy in the office at 520-296-2461 or nancy@newspiritlutherantucson.org.

Your input is very important! Please share your thoughts!



JOIN IN PRAYER ON INAUGURATION DAY



Join others in prayer for our nation on Inauguration Day, January 20. Spirit in the Desert Retreat Center is offering three online prayer opportunities, at 8:00am, 11:00am, and 5:00pm. Each 30-minute segment will include a litany and prayer along with time for silent prayer. This event is free, but you need to register to get the sign-in information. Register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/inauguration-day-prayer-vigil-on-the-hours-registration-135920316325>

JANUARY RESTART?

New Year
New Beginnings
New Intentions
New Thoughts
New Focus
New Results

New Year, fresh start! January is a great time to make a change.

If you haven't yet joined in our Sunday morning **Zoom communion**, why not try it out next Sunday? Have a little wine or grape juice and a piece of some kind of bread handy, then sign in to the Zoom gathering at 10:00am at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87980438406>. If you're asked for a password, enter 8701 (New Spirit's street address).

We start with a brief communion service, then move into breakout groups for easier conversation. We do two groups, 10 minutes each time, mixing people up the second session.

January is also a great time to start getting more out of reading *The Story* by joining an online discussion group. We're only halfway through *The Story*, so there's lots of time left. Four groups are meeting, so there is probably one that will work for you. Get in touch with Nancy in the office to learn more and sign up (520-296-2461 or nancy@newspiritlutherantucson.org).

TAX SITE INFORMATION



Although the tax site will not open this year to the general public, Terry Mysak, Carol, and I are going to be doing taxes for friends and family, **starting in February**. This includes members of New Spirit. As always, this is a free service. Here's what the taxpayer needs to do to get their taxes done:

1. Call me, John (850-5999) or Terry (784-1341) to make an appointment. **Do not call the church office.**
2. There will be a box set up outside of the church office door for these steps. Stop by the church and pick up a form (intake sheet) to take home and fill out.
3. Return the intake sheet along with all tax docs, including a copy of last year's (2019) tax return, to the church office. Call one of us to let us know it's there. One of us will pick it up.
4. If you want your refund directly deposited or your payment taken out of your checking include a voided check with the documents.
5. Be sure you have a valid phone number on the intake sheet. It would be helpful to include an email address if you have one.
6. We will call you when we are done with your return and let you know the results. We will meet you at the church to sign for it.

Please be patient. Remember we are volunteers and there are only three of us doing returns. As always your return will be double-checked before it is e-filed.

John Lukecart



Welcome New Member

Monica Fuller has been attending New Spirit services for sometime now and became a member of New Spirit on December 13. Welcome, Monica!

"In Memory"

Paul Blomquist passed away on September 22, 2020. Rest eternal grant him, O Lord.

Marilyn Roberts passed away on December 20, 2020. Rest eternal grant her, O Lord.

Terry Wolfe passed away on January 6, 2021. Rest eternal grant him, O Lord.



A GENEROUS GIFT



New Spirit gratefully acknowledges a generous gift of \$20,000 from the estate of Paul Blomquist, a testimony to Paul's commitment to the mission and ministry of New Spirit. May God guide us to be good stewards of the gifts entrusted to us.

YOUR FINANCIAL COMMITMENT TO OUR SHARED MISSION

It's not too late to return your financial commitment form for 2021. Your pledge helps with our planning for the year, and that's important. But even more important is that we all take this yearly opportunity to focus prayerfully on the financial resources God has given us and consider prayerfully what we will return to him for the mission and ministry of his church.

Of course, a commitment made in such uncertain times may need to be revised—up or down—as your circumstances change. That's understood. Please don't let that get in the way of your taking this step in faith.

If you have already returned your commitment sheet, thank you! If not, please mail it to the office: 8701 E. Old Spanish Trail, Tucson, AZ 85710.



January Birthday & Anniversary Celebrations

1/7 Maxine Nibbe
Jeremy & Jenny Kwapich
(Anniversary)

1/13 Kelly Greenler
Fred Nelson (Pastor)

1/15 Phyllis Wagner



1/17 Brigitte Stuetze

1/20 Karen Colwell

1/29 Marcia Kidder

New Spirit Lutheran Church

8701 E. Old Spanish Trail
Tucson, AZ 85710

Shout-Outs

SPECIAL NOTE: Due to the uncertainty of dates that the church will re-open, we have not included a calendar with this newsletter. Please check the calendar posted on the website. Stay Safe and Stay Healthy!

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!

<p>Sundays: (in usual times)</p> <p>9:00 am Arise to Praise (Spirited Contemporary Worship)</p> <p>10:15 – 11:00 am Sunday School for all ages</p> <p>11:00 am Traditions (Classic Hymns & Liturgies)</p> <p>You can currently watch services Sundays on YouTube.</p>	<p><i>How to contact us:</i></p> <p>New Spirit Lutheran Church 8701 E. Old Spanish Trail Tucson, AZ 85710</p> <p>Phone: (520) 296-2461</p> <p>E-Mail: NewSpiritLutheranTucson@yahoo.com</p> <p>Website: newspiritlutherantucson.org</p>
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