

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.

January 2024

Beloved of God,

We have made it to 2024! I pray that this year has started off on a positive foot for all of you. I must admit that I am excited for the coming months. My family and I don't set New Year's Resolutions, but we do take some time to reflect on the previous year as well as set some S.M.A.R.T. Goals. What are S.M.A.R.T. Goals? They are goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound.

For example, instead of setting a resolution of "I want to be more physically active", the smart goal could be by the end of the year I will record 10,000 steps 5 out of 7 days a week. This is one of my goals for the coming year. At one point in time, I would hit 10,000 steps before lunch most days of the week.

We can also set smart goals for the congregation, recognizing that sometimes God laughs at our plans and goals. One smart goal that individual members of the congregation could take on is, inviting one new person a month to attend worship or an event at the church. We averaged a Sunday attendance of 68 last year. If each of those 68 people invited 1 new person a month for 12 months, that would equal 816 new people being invited to "come and see". Even if only 10% said "yes" that is almost 100 people attending and experiencing what God is doing here. If 10% of those 100 people became regular attenders during the year, we would once again see 10% growth for the year. And to think it all is built on each of you inviting 1 new person per month, imagine if everyone invited 2, 3, or even 4 person per month.

So is there a S.M.A.R.T. goal you can set to help grow New Spirit and extend the message of the gospel?

You will see that this month's newsletter is a little shorter than normal. This is because Nancy and others are hard at work finalizing materials for the Annual Meeting. February will see a return to the typical length of our monthly newsletter. A huge thanks goes out to all those who are hard at work preparing for the annual meeting.



If you are looking for the monthly prayer, it is included in the materials for the annual meeting.

Pastor Hartman

January 2024 Prayer

God of Beginnings,

Be with us as we begin this new year. We give you thanks for the year that has passed. Send your Holy Spirit to be with us, to guide us, to inspire us, to lead us where you are calling us as individuals and as a congregation. We ask that you continue to help us grow and proclaim your love for all people. Amen



ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING!!! Important Date: Be sure to save it to your calendar! We will hold our 2023 annual congregation meeting on Sunday, January 21, 2024, at 11:15 immediately following our worship service. Voting will be held for the 2024 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!



Creating a Culture of Compassion in 2024

Thank you, again, New Spirit, for your generosity and faith! We ended our Stewardship Appeal just \$5,000 short of our \$35,000 increased giving goal. That's a great success, New Spirit!

If you recall, this year our focus is on Creating a Culture of Compassion. We will deepen our capacity to love one another and our neighbors through Bible study, conversation, worship and prayer. Through Pastor's monthly book study, we will learn more about the many facets of poverty and their impact on our community. Through conversation and prayer, we'll find ways to respond compassionately and powerfully to the needs of our siblings who live in poverty.

We are planning many events to reach out to and get to know our neighbors. The first big event will be Mardi Gras, on Friday, February 9. Please plan to attend, help out and bring a friend.

We will actively stand in support of our siblings who face injustice, prejudice and persecution by getting involved in events and gatherings held on their behalf, writing letters to legislators, and speaking out.

We will maintain and grow our food insecurity ministries and look for other ways we can serve the less fortunate around us.

There are so many ways you can get involved at New Spirit, so please get involved. We need all of you to help us create a culture of compassion. God calls us to hope, faith and action. Together, we can make a difference for one another and for our community.



See, Feel, Act



Fellowship Dinner

The MONTHLY Tuesday night dinners will resume in January. Sharon Dobbs and Edna Walton have volunteered to coordinate the event. It will be held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month thru May and resume in September. This month's theme is chili. The sign up sheet is posted in the Narthex if you would like to participate. The theme for February will be soup



YOU ARE INVITED!!!

JOIN US FOR A MARDI GRAS CELEBRATION!

Friday, February 9, 2024, 5:00 - 8:00,

Music By: Robert Encila & Friends

There will be: Traditional Cajun Food and Pancakes,
Activities for Kids and Adults, and a closing Blessing for this Lenten Season

All festivities are FREE

Bring your family and friends! Come in costume or Mardi Gras colors (green, gold and purple)!

Sign up to help: Sign up sheets are in the Narthex - you can sign up to help decorate, help clean up, help in the kitchen, help with kids' activities, and/or bring food. Recipes will be provided, or you can make your own favorite creole/cajun dish.

**GET READY TO KICK UP YOUR HEELS, AND
LAISSEZ LE BON TEMPS ROULER!**

2024 Pastor's Book Study

It is hard to believe that we have reached the end of the 2023 Pastor's Book Study reading list. We spent this year reading works done by contemporary Lutheran voices. In 2024 we will be spending our time reading about 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. If you are unable to join us for the monthly discussion groups, you are still encouraged to read the books.

January – Poverty, by America by Matthew Desmond

February - \$2.00 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America by H. Luke Shaefer and Kathryn Edin

March – The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together by Heather McGhee

April – The Other America by Michael Harrington

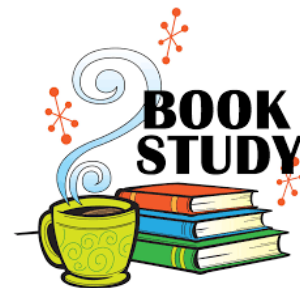
May – Hand to Mouth: Living in Bootstrap America by Linda Tirado

June – August – Reading on your own, see Pastor Hartman for recommendations.

September – Poorly Understood by Mark Robert Rank, Lawrence M. Eppard, et al.

October – Evicted by Matthew Desmond

November – Dignity: Seeking Respect in Back Row America by Chris Arnade, Donte Bonner, et al.



As of October 2023 the total cost for all the books listed above is \$120. If you are interested in participating but the cost of purchasing the books above causes a hardship please let Pastor Hartman know.

A Word from Worship & Music

I'm looking forward to what Pastor has in store for us during the month of January. This is year B of the Lectionary, for those of you who follow that kind of stuff. The Gospel readings will be primarily from Mark, with a bit of John sprinkled in during the year. January 14 begins Epiphany, the season during which Jesus is revealed as the Light of the World to all. It's also during this time that Jesus calls the disciples to follow him. While we try to follow this theme in music for the month, who knows what Pastor's inspiration might hold for us?

You may have noticed that we have sung the same sending song for a month or so during the past few months. There are several reasons for this. One, we may be introducing a new song to you, and repetition helps everyone learn it. Two, the sending songs have usually been thematic to what else is happening during worship. For instance, during the Stewardship Appeal, we sang Matthew West's "Do Something," to encourage everyone to action. We did "You Don't Knock," an old spiritual, to remind us all of God's abundant grace. And during Advent when our theme was waiting for Jesus in a hurting and troubled world, we sang "One Day," by Cochran and Company, to provide hope.

During Epiphany we will introduce a new song, "Change on the Rise," by Avi Kaplan. You got a glimpse of this song from the video we played a couple of weeks ago. This song is sort of a secular crossover song, that certainly fits our hope for a better world as we enter a new year, as well as New Spirit's theme of Creating a Culture of Compassion.

The Worship and Music Committee hopes that worship will be sacred and impactful for you. Please do not hesitate to let us know if you have any questions, suggestions, or new songs (whether hymns or contemporary tunes) that you would like to hear. Robert Encila, our Worship Leader, heads the committee. Other members include Cathy Cermak, Joyce Dow, Renee Geiger, Paul Stuetze and Pastor Hartman.

We look forward to seeing all of you during worship this month!

Cathy Cermak



January Birthday & Anniversary Celebrations

01/07 Jeremy & Jenny Kwapich
(Anniversary)

01/09 Nicholas Hartman

01/15 Phyllis Wagner



01/17 Brigitte Stuetze

01/20 Karen Colwell

WOMEN'S MINISTRY GROUP MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 2023

Women's Ministry Group (WELCA Bible Study Group) met at 12:30 on December 12, 2023, at the church.

We gathered for a salad lunch to celebrate the Christmas season. We were pleased to have guests celebrating with us.

Joyce Dow's daughter, Marriette Kershner, graciously played the piano for us while we sang carols in order of the occurrences of the nativity story; from the time the angel appeared to Mary through to the birth of Jesus.

We each shared our favorite Christmas season memories with the group. It was interesting and uplifting to hear about all the different traditions that were/are celebrated.

Date to Remember:
Kino Conference, March 2, 2024 at Mt. Zion Lutheran Church,
Tucson, AZ.

Our regular Bible Study and meeting will resume at our next gathering on January 10, 2024, at 1:30 p.m. at the church. All New Spirit women are invited and encouraged to attend these meetings. Come and see what we are all about.

Linda Lamb – Secretary



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: We are always looking for volunteers for various positions. If anyone is interested in participating in any of the following please contact Nancy in the office:

Tech for Pro Presenter set up (our program that we use for the images and words on the screens).
Greeters and ushers for services.
Readers for services.

As always, thank you for your service.

Shout-Outs

SHOUT OUT - To all of New Spirit's members, contributors, volunteers who helped make 2023 successful and help the church grow in faith and spirit.

SHOUT OUT - To Pastor Hartman for making Sundays memorable.





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



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 January 13th. In addition to our monthly Saturday events, we hand out bags to clients on the street that include food, socks, and hygiene products. THANK YOU TO THE FINISTERRA HOA SOCIAL COMMITTEE FOR DONATING 50 BAGS FOR OUR MEMBERS TO SHARE FROM THEIR CARS!

New Spirit is reaching at least 100 people every month with our events and hand out bags. Thanks to the City of Tucson's new mobile unit, we can provide showers! We are looking for a few stylists who can give haircuts to our clients. Do you know anyone willing to volunteer for a few hours just once a month?

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

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!

<p>Sundays:</p> <p>10:00 am Worship</p> <p>You can currently watch each week's message 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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