

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.*

July 2023

Saints of New Spirit,

This month my heart has been heavy for several reasons. Today I want to share one of those reasons, two congregations that I know well are closing. My internship site has made the difficult choice to close after almost 200 years, and a congregation near to my first call celebrated their 150-year anniversary and final Sunday on the same day.

These two congregations and the people that called them home, have been in my prayers. There are some important lessons that can be learned from these two congregations and their journey toward holy closure.

One lesson is that one change or effort toward redeveloping will not save any congregation that is attempting to grow and meet the ministry demands of the current age. I can tell you that at least one of these congregations thought that a single action would be the magic pill that saved the congregation. This magic pill could have been a new sign, a new pastor, a new endorsement from our church body, a strong enough social media presence, or other things. It is easy to put our faith in one single item hoping that it will be the magic pill that changes everything. Sadly, time and time again those that study church growth and redevelopment see that it is not a single item that leads to growth, but multiple changes combined with the work of the Holy Spirit.

Another lesson to be learned is that it is easy to turn inward as a congregation, and only try to change when it is easy or doesn't lead to too much discomfort. I have changed in my brief time serving as your pastor in relation to the music I like to hear in worship. I still do not listen to contemporary Christian music in my car, but I have found that at least a few kinds of "traditional" worship music don't speak to me as much as they once did. Change is part of being part of a community together, and it is vital to responding to the current times we are in. These two congregations in many ways found themselves in a situation that called for drastic change, and it ended up being too much, so they turned inward trying to maintain it as long as possible.

My heart is heavy for these two congregations, and it is a reminder of the work before us. We know that there are churches here in Tucson that are having to make this difficult choice. I would imagine that 10 years ago, this reality was far from their minds. When studying how long it takes churches to redevelop and transform it can often take 5-10 years.

At New Spirit, we know there is work that we must undertake if New Spirit is going to reach its 100- or 150-year anniversary. I get excited about that work but also recognize it will be difficult. Now is the time that we are undertaking efforts that will hopefully lead to a bright and long-term future for New Spirit. We pray that God is guiding us through this process so that in 15 years those that call New Spirit home do not have to have the difficult conversation of when and how to close well.

Pastor Hartman



Noisy Offering

We have held 2 noisy offerings thus far this year. The first noisy offering provided funds of worship enhancement items that have since become part of the pray ground. The second noisy offering was collected for ELCA Good Gifts for the purchase of bees. Honeybees provide several benefits for low-income individuals and communities as well as serving a key part of God's creation. Fifteen "sets of bees" were purchased through the noisy offering that last took place! Our next noisy offering will be July 30th. For that noisy offering the children will be given an opportunity to decide where they would like the collection to go. Youth are invited to submit recommendations for what nonprofit they would like to nominate to receive the collection. Nominations should be emailed to Pastor Hartman by July 9th including name of organization, why the organization is nominated, and a website. If no nominations are received Pastor will present 2 organizations for the youth to pick from.



Our next Tuesday night dinner will be held July 18th at 6:00 pm. If you would like to be part of the team for our barbeque/cookout, please sign up on the sheet that is posted in the Narthex on the bulletin board. The potluck dinner in June was enjoyed by all who attended!

July Birthday & Anniversary Celebrations

07/01 Dominic West	07/09 Bruce Drath Ron & Shereen O'Connor (Anniversary)	07/12 Ron & Cathy Cermak (Anniversary)
07/02 Deloris Hanneman		07/15 Sarah Hartman
07/03 Zachary Buglewicz		07/16 Marilyn Stoeckig
07/04 Rick Firth		07/20 Judy McFarland (Anniversary)
07/05 Eugene Linderkamp		07/31 Nancy Daliege
07/07 Michael Ansbro Naomi Hartman		



What's all the buzz about?

This past month we have heard more about vacations people are planning, or places and people they have already visited. There's also been some buzz about updates on our new sign and shade structure installation, not to mention about how the temperature in Tucson is now hitting 100 degrees or more, with more on the way.



MUST BE SUMMER IS HERE!!

June 21st was the Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year if you happen to live above the Equator. It's the day when the sun is highest in the sky, shining down on us all. It is also the season for growing.



And at the June Council meeting, things were buzzing as well. We discussed the return of the potluck dinner, sharing of our New Spirit bells, and a focus on growth in members, generosity, prayer, and more community involvement. Like the temperature outside, activities are heating up here at New Spirit, and we look forward to you actively participating in these activities to keep the buzz going.

For New Spirit, it is also the season when we notice that more people are away traveling and fewer of us are in church each Sunday. As you may be traveling or taking a break from the heat here, we are thankful for your continued faithfulness in supporting the ongoing activities here at church. We pray for your safe travels along the way, and look forward to seeing you upon your return, hearing about your adventures along the way, and participating in upcoming church activities.



Church Council

PLASTICS, PLASTICS, PLASTICS!

What at one time was a wonderful invention is now a curse! And we're stuck with destroying the planet our loving God put in place and US in charge to take care of it. As we're all well aware we haven't done a good job with that, but here is an opportunity for us to help turn things around.

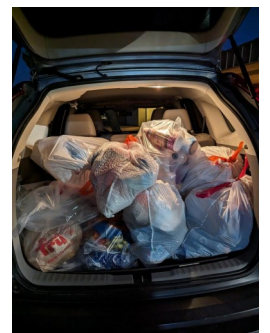
ByFusion, a company that will turn our plastic into building blocks, is coming to Tucson, and there will most likely be curbside service for these plastics.

BUT we can help out NOW! Our flyer shows you all the possibilities. It's amazing how quickly the bags fill up. Between the blue recycle and this, our landfill is less stressed.

If you can't take your bags to the site yourself, bring them to church room 105. Craig Geiger will transport them. He is also willing to pick them up from your car on Sundays or if so arranged with the church office, he'll come and pick them up from your home. Because plastic is generally pretty light weight, bags are not very heavy.

Flyers explaining what all is recyclable and where to take it can be found in the narthex.

This is just a small part we can play in turning things around. WE CAN DO THIS!



Brigitte Stuetze

Off to a Great Start!

ELCA: 2023 Farm Bill Authorization-Invitation to Action

The farm bill legislation is critical to addressing hunger in the United States and globally. It covers federal nutrition programs and impacts the lives of all citizens. To get a better understanding of what it entails, you may use the following resources which include videos and documents:

“What is the Farm Bill?” - <https://youtu.be/D5iZozUzwsc>

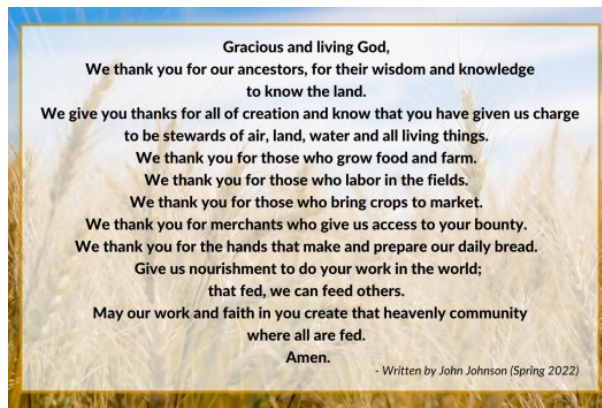
“The Farm Bill: From Seed to Plate” – <https://youtu.be/SHGad3uzVOc>

“Nutrition: Building a Healthy, Equitable, and Sustainable Food System via the Farm Bill” <https://bit.ly/BreadfortheWorldFBNutrition>

“Fact sheet: Farm Bill International” – <https://bit.ly/BreadfortheWorldFBinternational>

Now is the time to inform your senators and congressional representatives your thoughts and concerns about this bill.

Barb Verthein



Just a quick note to say thank you all so very much for the retirement party, the cake and of course the gift cards. It was my privilege to serve the church for all those years. Just so you know....I'm not going anywhere (except for some camping trips), so I will be around to serve the church in another capacity. I'm looking forward to new adventures.

In unity with Christ,

John Lukecart



Pastor's Book Study List:

July: One Coin Found by Emmy Kegler

August: Too Smart For God by Dave Simpson

September: Faraway: A Suburban Boy's Story as a Victim of Sex Trafficking by R.K. Kline and Daniel D. Maurer

October: Dear Church by Lenny Duncan

Please join us the last Monday of each month @ 6:00 pm, in the library and on zoom, to discuss the book we have read.



BLESSINGS IN A BACKPACK

Who will feed the kids this weekend?



SUMMER SHOE DRIVE DURING SUMMER BREAK!

New Spirit is proud to be a part of their education. Our count is now 325 from Erickson, Ford, Steele, and Henry Elementary Schools, providing snack packs to take home on the weekend.

Did you know that New Spirit's program also provides as needed items to the schools such as underwear, socks, and pants to each school closet? We are holding a new and/or gently used children's shoe drive July 1st to August 31st. Typical shoe sizes are 12-13 (Children's) and 1Y to 5Y (Youth). If you would rather contribute funds to help buy gift cards to give to the families for the purchase of the shoes, please make your check payable to New Spirit with a memo note "BIB SHOES".

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
MAY THRU SEPTEMBER 9AM TO 11AM

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

FOOD INSECURITY AFFECTS ALL AGES

Our next event is July 8th. In addition to our monthly Saturday events, we hand out bags to clients on the street that include food, batteries, socks, and hygiene products.

New Spirit is reaching at least 100 people every month with our events and hand out bags. Coming soon.....showers - thanks to the City of Tucson's new mobile unit!

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

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8701 E. Old Spanish Trail
Tucson, AZ 85710

Shout-Outs

SHOUT OUT - To Sharon Dobbs, Karen Colwell, Robin Hughes and Nancy Cunningham for ushering every week.

SHOUT OUT - To Ken Dobbs, Shelley Colwell and Ethan Rettig for working the Media.

SHOUT OUT - To Praise Band for singing and playing every Sunday.

SHOUT OUT - To the Colwells for Sunday School and work with the children.

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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