

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.

June 2021

GROWING SEASON UPDATE

We are so grateful to be able to be together in person again, and we expect renewed energy to come from that. But our Growing Season work is already underway.



Here's what's happening with the Growing Season plan adopted by the congregation at New Spirit's annual meeting in January:

Evangelism: The Evangelism Team is meeting regularly, working to develop a good understanding of the people around us who we want to reach with the gospel and with an invitation to grow in faith at New Spirit. Contact Pastor Fred if you'd like to participate in the Evangelism Team or if you have questions or comments.

In addition, we are offering a One-Minute Faith Stories workshop in July to help us get more comfortable sharing our faith with others. (See article on p. 4)

First Impressions Team: The First Impressions Team has met and is considering small projects that could improve the impression we make on first-time visitors. If you're interested in being part of the First Impressions Team, contact Jenny Kwapich at jennykwapich@gmail.com.

Growing Deeper: Along with small groups that meet weekly for Bible study, we're also offering Spiritual Growth Coaching to anyone and everyone. At this point, nine New Spirit members are getting coached, and there's plenty of room for more. See the article on p. 3 for more on Spiritual Growth Coaching.

Worship: We are actively advertising for a worship leader and an organist/pianist for worship. If you know someone who has a strong singing voice and an engaging personality, plays guitar or keyboard, and is a follower of Jesus Christ, please ask them if they would be open to talking about our worship leader position. Ditto if you know a pianist or organist.

COVID AND WORSHIP

The first thing to say about COVID-19 and worship is: Praise the Lord that, in our part of the world, we seem to have turned the corner on this pandemic. The second thing to say would be a fervent prayer that world leaders will find a way to get a vaccine into lots of arms around the world in the next weeks and months.

Meanwhile, at New Spirit, we celebrate the new guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) that says that fully vaccinated people can be indoors and outdoors, in groups large and small, without wearing masks.

Our Church Council has determined that we will change our policy beginning Sunday, June 13, to allow for those who are fully vaccinated to come to worship mask less. The delay is to give the more hesitant among us some time to adjust to this new reality.

Just FYI: We will *not* be asking to see proof of vaccination. We *will* be honoring the vaccination status or simply the preference of anyone wearing a mask by maintaining distance from them and continuing some worship practices in a COVID-safe manner for however long that is appropriate.



For questions or comments, please get in touch with Pastor Carol: 520-296-2461 or carol@newspiritlutherantucson.org.

TAXES DONE — A GIFT TO OUR COMMUNITY

New Spirit has a history of working with the VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program through United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona to provide cost-free tax preparation for our members and neighbors.

When COVID shut down our on-site operations this year, that didn't stop our volunteers. Among them, John Lukecart, Terry Mysak, and Madelyn Arriaga processed 495 tax returns. This was such a blessing to those on the receiving end, and a great act of love and perseverance from the preparers.

Thanks are due as well to Nancy DiFebbo, New Spirit's administrative assistant, for her patience in answering an untold number of phone calls and responding to many, many knocks on the door by people seeking information about having their taxes done.

Good work, all! Your self-sacrifice is a real-world witness to God's love for everyone.



COACHING FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Most of us feel stuck in some part of our lives at some points in our lives. And one place where that can easily happen is in our spiritual lives. We can find ourselves in the spiritual doldrums or simply notice that it's been a while since we felt the joy of growing closer to God.

How to shake free from stuckness and begin to see growth and forward momentum? You have one good tool at your disposal: Spiritual Growth Coaching.

Spiritual Growth Coaching takes the coaching model and applies it to your life of faith. Your coach meets you where you are and helps you think through where you want to be and how best to start to move in that direction.

A coach will ordinarily meet with you about once a month to help you plan and to help you hold yourself accountable to your plan. Of course, if something isn't working, then you'll talk it through together and you can make adjustments or just start fresh. The point is to grow deeper in faith and closer to Christ, so that your life is more and more fulfilling and joyful.



Interested in learning more? Pastor Carol and Pastor Fred are our two current coaches, although we hope to train a few more in the coming months. Get in touch with either of them to set a time to have an initial conversation.

Pastor Carol: carol@newspiritlutherantucson.org;

Pastor Fred: fred@newspiritlutherantucson.org. We're looking forward to hearing from you!

LUTHERAN ADVOCACY MINISTRY BRIEF SURVEY

I am presenting a short survey on your interests in Lutheran Advocacy Ministry of Arizona (LAMAz). Many of you saw the presentation by Solveig Muus (the director of LAMAz) when she joined us online back in April. Solveig explained the work of LAMAz and told us that they are focused this year on two key issues: (1) Hunger and Poverty and (2) Caring for God's Creation.

Of those two, I want to find out which is of greater interest to the people of New Spirit. This will allow me to narrow the focus of my communication between LAMAz and our congregation.

Please go to the link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CNGVLL6> take a one-question survey. Or you can always contact me through my email, brbvrt@aol.com, to indicate your preference.

If you are interested in learning more about these and related topics, I encourage you to go to the website LAMAz.org for more detailed information. You may also sign up for the weekly newsletter that will keep you informed about the work of LAMAz.

Thank you,
Barbara Verthein



YOU, TOO, CAN SHARE YOUR FAITH

When you want to tell someone about your faith and what Jesus means for your life, does it seem like you forgot how to talk? Does your mind go blank and your vocabulary disappear?

If so, you're not alone. A lot of us grew up not hearing people share their faith easily and openly. So, when we try to speak that language, it isn't right there for us. But that doesn't mean we can't learn!

On Sunday, July 11, Pastor Carol will lead a workshop called "One-Minute Faith Stories." We will meet in the Fellowship Hall at about 11:30, after worship and fellowship time, and wrap up around 12:30. Lunch will be provided.

This workshop will help you prepare a response for any time someone asks you about your faith in Jesus. We'll talk about what makes for a good, but brief, faith story. Then you'll spend some time starting to put together a one-minute faith story that's true to who you are and your unique experience. You'll come away with something you can share in a minute—not too much, not too little—to start a conversation or pique someone's interest.



This workshop will be fun and low-pressure. And only God knows the difference it will make for you and for someone you get a chance to share with.

Sign up by emailing Pastor Carol at carol@newspiritlutherantucson.org or by calling or emailing Nancy in the church office (nancy@newspiritlutherantucson.org; 520-296-2461).

SUNDAY SERVERS NEEDED

Are you able to take a turn as a greeter or usher, running the computer, helping with communion set-up or distribution, reading lessons, leading prayers, and/or hosting fellowship time after worship, we need you!

Email your name and which of these service opportunities you'd like to volunteer for to Nancy in the office: nancy@newspiritlutherantucson.org. Or you can phone her at 520-296-2461. We'll assemble a pool of names and make up a schedule. Ideally, no one will have to take more weeks than they want to.



If you have questions about what's involved with any of these roles, please get in touch with Pastor Carol: carol@newspiritlutherantucson.org or 520-296-2461.

Thanks to everyone who has taken on one or more of these responsibilities in the past! Let's lighten everyone's load by sharing these tasks!

GRAND CANYON SYNOD ASSEMBLY IN JUNE

With the theme "Freed in Christ," voting members from congregations of the Grand Canyon Synod will meet online for the annual Synod Assembly, June 11-12. Members will join in Bible study, vote on a budget for the next fiscal year, elect Synod Council members and voting members for the next churchwide assembly, hear reports from various parts of our church, and more.

New Spirit will be represented at the assembly by Dave Grundstrom, Robin Hughes, and Pastors Carol and Fred.

New Spirit Lutheran Church is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the Grand Canyon Synod within the ELCA. The Grand Canyon Synod encompasses all ELCA churches in Arizona, the ELCA churches in four Nevada counties, and an ELCA congregation in St. George, Utah.

Freed in CHRIST

LIKE TO READ OUT LOUD? HELP OUT MT ZION

This is from Pastor Daniel Valasakos at Mount Zion Lutheran Church on Ajo Hwy:



I would like to share that Mount Zion is planning on reading the entire New Testament this summer, beginning in June. We will read about three chapters a day throughout the summer. We are planning to have it prerecorded and available on our website/Facebook with a link for access. If any in your congregations want to join in reading, please let them know. Also, if they would like to provide the recorded reading for one of the days, ask them to get in touch with me. They would just have to coordinate which three chapters, record on a computer, and send the audio file to my email address. We will then add video/visuals to the reading and post on the appropriate day.

If you're interested in recording a reading, Pastor Valasakos says the book of Acts is open. Please contact Pastor Carol ASAP to indicate your interest, and she'll coordinate at our end.

AN UPDATE ON THE GEARHART BEQUEST

At their May meeting, New Spirit's Church Council established a task force of council members to take the next step in deciding how the generous bequest we've received from Virginia Gearhart's estate can best be used in furtherance of our goals and our strategic plan as a congregation.

This task force will bring to a later council meeting some ideas for an approach to employing the funds. Council will then formulate ideas to bring to the congregation. There is no rush to use the bequest money as we are in good shape financially even without it, so we can take our time and make good decisions as a congregation.

Serving on the council's task force are Renee Geiger, Laurie Bernard, Jeremy Kwapich, and Pastor Fred.





Women's Ministry Group Minutes for May 2021

Women's Ministry Group (WELCA Bible Study Group) met at 1:30 on May 12, 2021 at the church.

Gloria Burke led us in the hymn "O God, Our Help In Ages Past."

April 2021 minutes were approved as read.

Treasurer's report was approved as presented. It was agreed that our least coin collection will be deposited in our project fund account and designated to the Navajo Mission. We will continue to maintain two extra copies of the Gather magazine.

Sandra Colwell led devotions. We can teach and learn from others in intergenerational groups. Teach what we know and listen to others and learn from them.

In lieu of Bible study, this month we focused on a devotional "The Journey of Generations" lead by Joyce Dow. Sometimes the best thing the elders can do is to be present and listen to the younger ones in our congregations and communities. Intergenerational relationships involve striving for a mutuality of respect, which includes listening to one another's stories. Across all generations, there is wisdom to be received from fresh eyes, as well as wisdom to be shared from life experiences. Intergenerational friendships are among God's greatest gifts. Are you willing to receive this gift? Are you willing to step out of your generation? There are many gifts just waiting to be unwrapped.

Old Business: We will be distributing our project funds as follows: \$100 each to New Spirit's Homeless Blessings project and Blessings in a Backpack project, \$100 to Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest and \$75 to the Navajo Mission.

New Business: Our next meeting will be held on September 8, 2021, at 1:30, at the church.

Linda Lamb – Secretary

For many years we have collected aluminum cans, turning the money into funds for the Youth. We are no longer going to be doing this. If you have cans feel free to take them to the recycling center and donate the funds or simply add to your regular contribution to Church.





FRUIT TREES PLANTED

Thanks to a grant from the Community Food Bank and the efforts of Laurie Bernard, Marty Mosthaff, and Cathy Cermak, we have six new fruit trees in the community garden behind New Spirit. These trees are intended to provide fresh fruit for our Blessings in a Backpack ministry. Photo shows Laurie admiring the first fruits of one of the apple trees.

In Memory:

Toni Nemetz passed away January 16, 2021, of natural causes. Toni started coming to New Spirit with her mom and continued as a member after her mom passed away. Although Toni stopped attending due to the long drive from her home, she will be remembered for handing out bulletins on Sundays, bringing food for Fellowship Hour and counting.



Shout-Outs



SHOUT OUT - to the person who put the "Welcome Back" on the bulletin board by the kitchen exit door.

June Birthday & Anniversary Celebrations

06/04 Ted Matthews
Jessica West

06/16 Betty Cooley

06/17 Robin Hughes

06/22 Ron Cermak

Marilyn Linderkamp



06/22 Eugene & Marilyn
Linderkamp (Anniversary)

06/24 Joy Wolfe

06/26 Jeanette Sather

06/27 Archie & Gloria Burke
(Anniversary)

06/30 Barbara Kotlaba

New Spirit Lutheran Church

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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:</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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