

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.*

May 2023

Saints of New Spirit,

As we enter May, there are some exciting things on the horizon. I would like to offer an observation before talking about some of the exciting things we have coming up. That observation is that for some, things are not moving quick enough related to changes, growth, and new, while for others, we are already going at a pace that feels too quick. Change is hard for all of us; some of us are just equipped to handle change quicker. Others of us need more time to process and accept change. The leadership of New Spirit, including myself, try to maintain a balanced approach. Personally, I want you to know that I happened to fall into the same camp of Admiral David Glasgow Farragut. When his ship came up against mines (at the time referred to as torpedoes) in the water during the battle of Mobile Bay in August 1864 he gave the command "Damn the torpedoes, Full speed ahead!" I have that mindset especially after a decision has been made. It is an urge that I am constantly trying to rein in, while also following that tendency when appropriate. I pray every day that we all can accept a balanced approach while it may still make us uncomfortable because it is either too fast or too slow. I believe that we can do something very special here at New Spirit. We have a strong foundation to build upon, if all of us take on certain tasks, and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we can truly change the world through spreading the love and gospel of Jesus.

We have some exciting updates and plans coming through the remainder of the year. On May 7, our Church Council will provide some updates to projects including the sign, as well as the goals they established at the council retreat. Some of these goals are aggressive and will certainly require all our efforts to achieve. Some of these plans will be different than what we have done before, and others may be similar, but all have deep thought and prayer behind them. There will be a renewed focus on prayer starting May 28, that you will hear more about in the coming weeks. We will step out of our church and begin attending more community events. We will be increasing the number of events held at our church but outside of the sanctuary. We will continue to embrace technology to enhance our ministries. We will be focusing on building relationships and community here that goes beyond Sunday morning.

In the gospel of John, we hear a lot about abiding in Jesus. John 15:5 has Jesus stating that he is the vine, and we are the branches. If we abide in Jesus, we will bear much fruit. To abide in Jesus means that there should not be the ability to see where Jesus ends and where we begin. We continue Jesus' ministry in this time and place. As a congregation, we are starting to see some fruit and I believe we will see more if we continue to abide in Jesus. There is a reason we have been called together by the Holy Spirit to do ministry in this place and at this time. I am excited about our future. I pray that you have that same excitement and commitment to follow where we are being led.

In closing I ask you to pray this prayer throughout the month of May.

"Jesus, we know that you are with us. We ask that you continue to guide New Spirit Lutheran Church. We ask you to continue to send the Holy Spirit so that we may know where we are being called. Help us to continue to abide in you in all that we do. Amen"

Pastor Hartman



Church
Council



Your Church Council has been actively working for New Spirit!

The Church Council had a retreat on Saturday, April 15, 2023, and spent a majority of the afternoon focused on establishing goals and strategic plans to achieve them! We primarily looked at the remainder of 2023 and 2024 as our targeted time frame for these goals.

As we begin to roll out the plans, we will be looking for volunteers to join discussion groups, working and planning groups, prayer groups and more! Please continue to pray for our congregation during this season as well as our council leadership. We have exciting ideas and things coming..... working together is better!

Other Council Updates:

Phil Pierce was elected in our annual meeting, however, at this time, he is unable to fulfill his duties due to school commitments. A mutual decision was made for Phil to step back for 2023 and he hopes to join council in the future. At our February meeting, the Council voted to appoint Cathy Cermak to his Member-At-Large position for the remainder of 2023 while she also continues to be co-treasurer.

John Lukecart has also made the decision to resign. At our April meeting, the Council voted to appoint Joy Wolfe to his Member-At-Large position for the remainder of 2023.

Sunday, May 7, 2023 after service, the Church Council will hold a congregational forum. Please plan to attend!



May Birthday & Anniversary Celebrations

05/02 Stephen Lamb

05/20 Jamie Buglewicz
Gloria Burke

05/03 Colleen Busboom-Green

05/25 Robert Daliege

05/06 Carol Massie

05/30 Ramona Ihrke

05/11 Becky Hedstrom

05/31 Diane Schreiner



Expecting God

Something's in the air at New Spirit! I can feel it in my gut and my heart. Now, maybe it's just me. Maybe it's because we're still in Easter season and I haven't quite come down from the excitement of Jesus' resurrection. Maybe it's because it's Spring in the desert, or maybe it's because I'm excited about the great ideas we tossed around at the Council retreat. But I can definitely feel the Spirit moving at New Spirit.

I recently read an article in the ELCA newsletter by Rev. Dr. Robin Steinke, professor and president of Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN. She titled it, "The Risen Christ is Present in the Toughest Places." She described the fear that the two Marys experienced when they first encountered the angel and then Jesus at the empty tomb. The first words from the angel and Jesus were "do not be afraid." The Marys experienced great joy simultaneously with fear (perhaps wonder and uncertainty?) as they are sent to "go and tell."

Rev. Steinke goes on to talk about a layover she had in Trinidad while traveling to attend a Lutheran World Federation meeting. She wandered around the center of the city and encountered a church called the Church of Miracles. The sign said, "worship every day at 7pm, miracles Sunday morning at 9:30." And, of course, she wondered whether these faithful people really expected miracles to happen at exactly 9:30 on Sunday mornings! "Then I realized this congregation expected God to show up and expected something to happen on Sunday morning. I suspect there may have been a mixture of fear and joy on Sunday mornings."

So where am I going with all of this, you might ask. I was so struck by the statement that these people *expected God to show up* and for *something to happen*. I wonder if we sometimes just go through the motions of praying without really expecting anything to happen! Do I really expect God to show up and *for something to happen* on Sunday mornings, or any time, for that matter?

We have certainly experienced some "tough times" at New Spirit in the way of declining membership and financial giving, and the disruption caused by COVID. Many of us have experienced feelings of uncertainty and worry, if not fear, about whether New Spirit could turn it around. But do we believe, *truly believe*, that the risen Christ is present in all of these worries and uncertainties? I believe that He is! Christ is showing up in our efforts to grow (that's already happening), our spiritual development AND our becoming financially whole again! So, I'm experiencing lots of joy alongside a bit of continued anxiety and uncertainty. I expect Christ to show up and work through His Body at New Spirit – in our outreach efforts, our worship and study, our efforts to grow young, and yes, *even in our giving*. We are blessed to be a blessing through our church embracing the world. Today, may Christ "show up" through our generous hearts in our finances and in service, as we live out God's plan for New Spirit with joy and confidence.

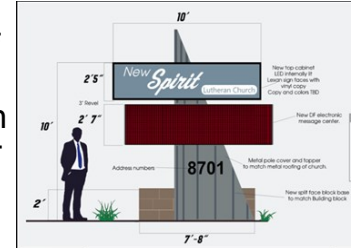
Cathy Cermak
New SPIRIT Stewardship Team



what's happening

from the Evangelism Team
(Jeremy Kwapich, Jenny Kwapich, Craig Geiger,
Joyce Dow, Diane Schreiner, Brigitte Stuetze, Paul Stuetze, and Pastor Hartman)

New Sign Update: We have the design in place which aligns with the City of Tucson's requirements to match our existing structures. We have a permit too! The plan is to obtain an updated quote from the electrician that will run the new electrical lines. We hope to have a clearer timeline available for our congregational forum in May.

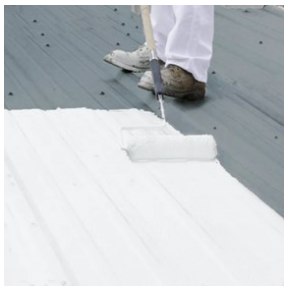


Shade Structure Update: There were multiple hiccups with the City of Tucson as they changed their permitting processes after we had begun our processes with the contractor. We FINALLY were provided a clear vision of what was necessary and now the site plan has been submitted back to the city as of 4/14/2023. Our contractor has our structure fabricated already so once the permitting comes through, we should see activity right away. So exciting!!!

Community Events: We are actively working on getting our name out in the community. Our first event that we joined was on Saturday, April 22, 2023. New Spirit purchased purple sunglasses with our name on them to be given away as FUN SWAG at the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation Take Steps walk.



If you have ideas on how to continue to reach others, please let us know!



Roofing update: The Office Building roof will be recoated very soon! The deposit has been paid and the work is set to begin the end of May, first week in June.

PASTOR'S BOOK STUDY LIST:

Here is the list of the upcoming books that we will be reading for the book study:

May: Finding Myself Again by Brad Otto
June: For All Who Hunger by Emily M.D. Scott
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

(November to be determined by the group or any new books published this year)



WOMEN'S MINISTRY GROUP APRIL 2023

Women's Ministry Group (WELCA Bible Study Group) met at 1:30 on April 12, 2023, at the church.

Our Bible Study was Reviving the Soul, reviewing Commandments five and six. These commandments involve some of the most significant and controversial subjects we deal with as human beings and as Christians. Murder and adultery are both loaded terms and may bring up painful issues and fierce opinions. It is a privilege to consider and discuss such matters within our own church community. None of us is a true expert, except in so far as we are centered in Christ's own humble and compassionate love.

The Sunday School along with our women's group will be passing out bookmarks to everyone at Easter Sunday service.

Thanks to Sandra Colwell for her wonderful job in keeping up with our bulletin board at the church. Sandra is also working on getting some of our women's group pictures on the church Facebook page.

Due to recent delays in receiving Gather magazine, the staff of the magazine has issued an apology and as an expression of appreciation for our loyalty will be extending all existing subscriptions by two issues.

We are planning to get together sometime in June to straighten up the library and then go out to lunch.

During the summer months, when we do not meet, we will work on keeping in touch with each other by recommending Gather magazine articles or a devotional reading that we feel was especially helpful.

The week of September 18, 2023 – Triennial in Phoenix.

Our next meeting will be held on May 10, 2023, at 1:30, at the church.

Linda Lamb – Secretary



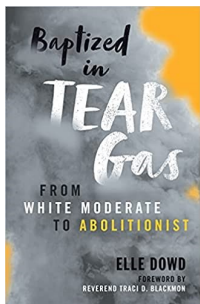
PASTOR'S BOOK STUDY (April book review by Brigitte Stuetze):

Our book study just completed reading and discussing BAPTIZED IN TEAR GAS FROM WHITE MODERATE TO ABOLITIONIST by Pastor Elle Dowd.

This book is very much a needed addition to the anti-racism conversation. She is the real deal—passionate, thoughtful and gritty.

Having grown up post war in Germany, we loved the black soldiers and followed them in our streets. Their rarity made them special to us. Imagine my shock, once in the States, when I saw the opposite.

Pastor Dowd educates US about white supremacy, racial capitalism and anti-Black racism. She helped me imagine my own journey from white moderate to abolitionist. She shows us how to be willing to confront our own complicity and challenges the lies of American racism.



All this she does through her own experiences during the Ferguson Uprising in Missouri in 2014. She holds up a mirror to us white people and shows us how anti-Blackness shows up in our thoughts, faith and behavior.

It was a most thought provoking book to me and our study group. We hope to be able to take steps toward undoing some of our very white behaviors as individuals as well as NSLC. We owe it to ourselves and each other to be truly welcoming to ALL.



BLESSINGS IN A BACKPACK

Who will feed the kids this weekend?



Our count is now 325 from Erickson, Ford, Steele, and Henry Elementary Schools, providing snack packs to take home on the weekend. This month, we were able to supply each school with reusable water bottles in addition to our snack packs.

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!**

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 OLD TOWELS AND BEDDING FOR
THE PIMA ANIMAL CARE CENTER

LIVING ON THE STREETS IS HARD WORK. Working to find shelter every night; working to find food every day; working to stay off drugs and alcohol; working to stay safe from assault; working to prevent someone stealing everything you own; working to keep you and your clothes clean; working to get identification to find a job; working to take care of health problems; working where to get services to help. The mission of this ministry is to alleviate some of these obstacles.

Our next event is May 13th. In addition to our monthly Saturday events, we hand out bags to clients on the street that include food, batteries, socks, and hygiene products. Special thanks to our youngest volunteers, Eva and Henry Kwapich, for packing these bags during our events!

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. 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

Shout-Outs

SHOUT OUT - To the Church Council for their continued work and dedication to our congregational needs.

SHOUT OUT - To Nancy Cunningham for her willingness to learn something new in her role as the secretary.

SHOUT OUT - To the Colwell' for their fun Easter festivities and continue love for the children.

SHOUT OUT - To the Church Council and Pastor for making the PRAYGROUND come to life quickly.

SHOUT OUT - To Nancy DiFebbo, Sharon Dobbs, Lorrie Firth, and Cathy Cermak for keeping our financial records solid.

SHOUT OUT - To Bob Daleige and the Altar care team for their work in making Sunday communion move smoothly.

SHOUT OUT - To all who work to make the Homeless Blessings outreach a success.

SHOUT OUT - To the BIB shoppers, packers, and everything in between to make sure kids are fed each week.

SHOUT OUT - To all who helped decorate the Easter cross in preparation for Sunday morning.

SHOUT OUT - To Joyce Dow who sends the best e-cards and follows up with our visitors.

SHOUT OUT - To all who do so much behind the scenes.

SHOUT OUT - To Jenny, Jeremy and the whole Kwapich family for the countless hours of service to New Spirit.

SHOUT OUT - To Joyce Dow for the continued reminders that this is our ministry, not just the Pastor's for the Council's.

SHOUT OUT - To Sharon and Mary Lou for the hours spent proof reading the monthly newsletters and weekly bulletins.



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 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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