

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.

November 2023

Beloved Church,

We have made it to the final two months of the year. I have been listening to Christmas music primarily for an entire month. At the Hartman House we don't celebrate a traditional Thanksgiving Day. We don't cook the typical foods one thinks of for that day. During our first two years of marriage Pastor Naomi and I shared a more traditional Thanksgiving Meal, but since then our third Thursday of November has taken on a different tone. We often will have those joining us pick one of their favorite dishes and those dishes are what make up our Thanksgiving dinner. The Hartman family gives thanks for each other, our blessings, and the ways we have been able to help others.

We have started this year's stewardship program, and I can't help but be thankful. You all have risen to many of the challenges that have been put in front of you this year. The challenge of getting to know a new pastor and his family. The challenge of doubling the amount of peanut butter collected for ICS. The challenge of collecting shoes for the elementary schools we support through BIB. The challenge of collecting the most candy thus far for Trunk or Treat. Not to mention the many offerings that have grown each time we have collected them. The challenge of saying goodbye to two beloved congregation members as they completed their baptismal journeys here on earth. I give thanks for your efforts.

Now we are facing the challenge of changing our stewardship practices. We are talking about the challenge of supporting our ministries and growth in a way that means we don't use funds from our endowment for our day-to-day expenses. We are talking about continuing to create a community of compassion. You all have already received the first letter as well as the first bulletin insert, and so far, I have only heard positive things. I have also heard from a few that they have decided to increase their connection to our community of compassion. I give thanks for all of you that have been taking the time to pray regarding how you will support this effort.

FACING
challenges
WELL

New Spirit, I believe that The Spirit is here among us and is leading us to ministries of compassion that we can only dream about. As we enter the season of Advent at the end of this month let us remember the parable of the 10 virgins and their lamps at the beginning of Matthew 25. We must keep our lamps trimmed so that we are ready. Let us respond to this year's stewardship efforts in a way that will allow us to be as ready as possible for the way Jesus is calling us to show compassion to all the world. We must continue to grow our ministry of excellence and community of compassion so that we can meet the needs of the world highlighted by Jesus at the end of Matthew 25.

LET OUR LIVES BE FULL
OF BOTH
Thanks
&
Giving

³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink, I was a stranger and you took Me in, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed Me, I was sick and you looked after Me, I was in prison and you visited Me."

Let us be part of showing the love and compassion this world so desperately needs.

Pastor Hartman

A Different Approach to Stewardship

You might notice that our Stewardship Appeal looks a little different this year. This is the first year of our church's participation in a program called Stewardship for All Seasons (SAS), under a generous scholarship from the Grand Canyon Synod. Lorrie Firth, Cathy Cermak and Pastor Hartman are participating in this program, which includes seven "cohort" meetings/trainings, individual conversations with our leader and valuable guidance.

The Basic Outline

This is not a "stewardship in a box" program. This program focuses on a holistic, all-year, *integrated ministry emphasis*, and not a once a year drive. Our goal is not only to increase our congregation's gift income, but to also create joyful, generous and energetic stewards. Because New Spirit is a generous congregation with a heart for the world, our theme this year is "Creating a Culture of Compassion."

You will hear us identify actual dollars needed to do the ministry of New Spirit Lutheran Church, rather than percentages or other types of giving (not that volunteerism is not important). There will be letters, temple talks, newsletter articles, "statements of intent" vs. "pledges," updates and celebrations of success, and thank you's. On Sunday, November 19, we will bring our Statements of Intent for giving in 2024 to the altar. We are asking that everyone complete a Statement of Intent, regardless of their giving plan. The Stewardship Team will make follow-up calls to those who do not turn in a Statement of Intent.

Focus on Abundance vs. Scarcity

In Martin Luther's explanation of the first article of the Apostles' Creed ("I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,") he declares, "I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them." This not only establishes God as part of the Triune Godhead, it also identifies a mindset of abundance vs. scarcity. God made *all* of us and takes care of *all of us, all of the time*. God is a magnanimous God who delights in giving us all that we need.

This change of mindset *changes everything!* We are free to be as generous as possible. The opportunities for ministry and loving God and our neighbors are exponential! What if we lived as we profess to believe, that Jesus is alive? What if we believed that we could do all things through Christ? What if we believed the world needs the freedom and healing of the Gospel? What if we believed that we truly could make a difference – that this hurting world needs us? How would these beliefs and passions be reflected in our giving to the ministry work of New Spirit?

New Spirit is a lean church that depends on lots of people participating. We are convinced that the ministry we are doing is guided by the Holy Spirit and critical to our community. The potential for doing even more ministry is huge. Potential becomes reality when people step forward and participate. Your gifts make a difference. Your participation matters. So please, do not dismiss this stewardship appeal with thoughts or excuses of: "I can't afford to give," or "someone else will pick up the slack," or "I can't (won't) make a commitment – I'll give when I can." Please prayerfully and whole-heartedly consider your giving this year. Take a step, even a small step to begin to give consistently or to increase your giving. In the Body of Christ, every part is important, and New Spirit needs YOU and your participation to the fullest of your ability. We have been charged with critical work – to spread the love and healing of Christ in tangible ways. The world needs us!

In Christ, your Stewardship Team,
Lorrie Firth
Cathy Cermak
Jeremy Kwapich
Pastor Hartman



November 2023 Prayer

God of abundance, you have blessed us in ways beyond our understanding. Guide us to use what you have blessed us with to create a community of compassion and care. We give you thanks for all that you have given us. Continue to guide our congregation to be a place of thriving ministry for all people. Amen



MARDI GRAS IS COMING!



We are planning to hold a Mardi Gras celebration on Sunday, February 11, 2024, from 4:00 – 7:00. We look forward to reviving this fun and spiritual celebration at New Spirit. We will need graphic designers and artists, decorators, social media experts, food preparers and servers and clean up help. But initially, we need creative planners to meet and develop a plan and time-table. If you are interested in helping plan this celebration, please contact Cathy Cermak at cathycermak@gmail.com or 520-780-0378.

We are deep into discussions about upcoming vacancies within the Council as 2024 quickly approaches. If you feel a desire or call to look at joining our Church Council, please let Brigitte Stuetze (Nominating Committee) know of your interest. We will have multiple vacancies to fill in the coming year.

We continue to ask each of you to look for ways to get involved.... join discussion groups, working and planning groups, prayer groups and more! It takes ALL OF US to grow and share the love of Jesus!

Please continue to pray for our New Spirit and Council leadership.



what's happening

from the Witness & Welcome Team

(Jeremy Kwapich, Jenny Kwapich, Craig Geiger, Renee Geiger

Joyce Dow, Diane Schreiner, Brigitte Stuetze, Paul Stuetze, Joy Wolfe and Pastor Hartman)

UPDATE: Tucson PRIDE was Saturday, September 30th. It was a great success! Of the 300 lanyards purchased, we gave out 250! That's INCREDIBLE!! The W&W team is already in discussions about participating next year and possibly getting our own booth!

Game Night: The first game night was postponed due to some scheduling conflicts but be on the lookout for a NEW DATE in the coming months!



MARDI GRAS!! We are BRINGING Mardi Gras BACK in 2024!! SAVE THE DATE.... Sunday, February 11, 2024 from 4-7pm. If you would like to participate with the planning, please see Cathy Cermak or anyone on the W&W team .

If you have ideas on how to continue to reach others within the surrounding Tucson community, please let us know!

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.

The Welcome Statement updates and potential revisions are well under way. Be on the lookout for our "first draft" in the services to see how it feels. We are dedicated to amending this to ensure we continue to put LOVE into action here at New Spirit!



The MONTHLY Tuesday night dinners have been suspended through the rest of the year. We will discuss resuming those in January. If you would like to be part of this ministry, please let Jenny Kwapich or Pastor Hartman know!

November Birthday & Anniversary Celebrations

11/04 Cordelia Lundquist

11/06 Doug Butler

11/07 Barbara Rebok

11/11 Edna Walton
Cathy Cermak



11/12 Craig Geiger

11/17 Monica Fuller
Pastor Hartman

11/21 Rick & Lorrie Firth
(Anniversary)

11/26 Chip & Colleen Green
(Anniversary)

Women's Ministry Group Minutes for October 2023

Women's Ministry Group (WELCA Bible Study Group) met at 1:30 on October 11, 2023, at the church.

Our Bible Study was session two of Holy Places - Sanctuary. Whether a place for worship and prayer or for safety and refuge, sanctuary is made holy by the presence of God. And because God is with us in the world, sanctuary can show up in surprising places. Through the story of the transfiguration, we discussed what leads people to build sanctuaries in places where we have encountered the holy, and what Jesus teaches us about being a sanctuary "on the move". Reflecting on the circumstances that drive people to seek refuge in new lands, we remember the example and teachings of Jesus that urge us to welcome the stranger as we would Jesus himself. We learned about the "living stones" of the Palestinian church, our biblical history of exile and estrangement, and how it shaped the ways God's people are called to become a living sanctuary for the sake of the world.

Discussion was held as to possibly having a welcome meeting for the new member women of New Spirit.

The yearly WELCA thank offering is scheduled for November 19th. We will be passing out envelopes during worship, Sunday, November 12th.

Some of our project money will again be sent to the ELCA to help fund shipping costs to provide quilts to the needy worldwide.

Dates to Remember:

Grand Canyon Synod Women of the ELCA Biennial Convention/Gathering November 10-12, 2023 at Holiday Inn and Conference Center, Mesa, AZ.

Kino Conference March 2, 2024 at Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, Tucson, AZ.

Our next meeting will be held on November 8, 2023, at 1:30, at the church. We will be assembling Christmas Cards.

Linda Lamb – Secretary



I had the privilege to attend Glenn Schrader's ordination. It was a special occasion! I couldn't help but feel how we're all so connected in the world through our belief in Jesus Christ. What a brother/sisterhood we belong to. There was a certain amount of pageantry and knowing most anyone being ordained in the ELCA would have heard the same words. Thank you Glenn for the experience and thank you God!

Brigitte Stuetze

SHOUT OUTS

I created this column many years ago as a way for us to thank/compliment each other for some of the little as well as big things we do for each other. Others may never have noticed how much someone interacts with us on a daily basis or every once in a while or one time only. We're in this journey together to share God's word and we deserve the "that a boy/girl!" It makes that journey more joyful.

Brigitte Stuetze



ELCA Advocacy

ACTION ALERT



Ask Your Members of Congress to Provide Robust Funding for International Humanitarian Programs

Our commitment to peace as Christians affirms our support for human rights, conflict resolution and human dignity through cooperative international humanitarian support. The ELCA social statement *For Peace in God's World* names tasks voiced in "our hope that international relations can be ordered in ways that contribute to a just, free, secure, and nonviolent world. Yet we pursue this hope within the constraints and brokenness of our complex world" (p. 13). This is why it is meaningful to advocate for programs that support these values and projects in the 2024 federal budget.

Currently in discussion is the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOPS) bill, which dictates the levels of funding for U.S. international humanitarian programs and work administered by USAID and U.S. Department of State in collaboration with international organizations such as the United Nations. The current version of the House international affairs budget would not only drastically slash funding for many of these crucial, lifesaving programs, but in some instances eliminate them entirely. Currently, the House bill lists multiple countries in conflict as ineligible for U.S. assistance, such as the Central African Republic (CAR). Since independence, CAR has experienced continuing episodes of violence, with most resulting harm being inflicted on the civilian population (more in a forthcoming ELCA Advocacy Blog post). U.S. contributions to the U.N. regular budget and multiple assistance programs would be cut entirely, as well as other peacebuilding and stabilization projects such as the Atrocities Prevention program which has had significant benefits in CAR through conflict resolution training and equipping remote communities with high-frequency radios among other aspects and locations.

The ELCA's social statement on peace reads: "The Church is a disturbing presence when it refuses to be silent and instead speaks the truth in times when people shout out 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace." Our faithful advocacy can respond to cries for peace, even when we may not physically see or hear these cries from across the globe. It is imperative that we encourage our legislators to fully fund U.S. international humanitarian programs and global governing bodies, and to reject changes to the budget that would undermine projects providing aid and support to our international siblings most effected by conflict.

Ask members of Congress to fully support U.S. funding of international humanitarian programs in the 2024 international affairs budget that will provide aid to those crying out for peace.



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS: This year our Advent worship services begin November 26th. Christmas Eve services will be held Sunday, December 24th at 10am and 7pm.



Faith Stories.... Have you taken the time to share your faith story? Faith stories can be a very personal subject but they also have the ability to touch someone's life. They can encourage others in ways we don't even realize. Would you be willing to share how Jesus has changed YOUR life? If so, please let Pastor or Jenny Kwapich know!



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.

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 WILL BE SERVING THANKSGIVING DINNER ON NOVEMBER 11TH!

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 CLIENT'S ANIMALS AND FOR
DONATIONS TO THE PIMA ANIMAL CARE CENTER

FOOD INSECURITY AFFECTS ALL AGES

Our next event is November 11th. Join us for a Thanksgiving meal. In addition to our monthly Saturday events, we hand out bags to clients on the street that include food, socks, and hygiene products.

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 TOWARD 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

New Spirit Lutheran Church

8701 E. Old Spanish Trail
Tucson, AZ 85710

Shout-Outs

SHOUT OUT - To Shereen O'Connor for helping Barb Kotlaba with her mail and groceries

SHOUT OUT - To all who helped with the Trunk or Treat event. Too many to list individually, except for the Colwells for all their efforts from beginning to end.

SHOUT OUT - To Craig Geiger for embracing the Plastics recycling effort with Brigitte.

SHOUT OUT - To our Praise team for all their time they donate on a weekly basis simply to enhance our worship experience.

SHOUT OUT - To Sharon Dobbs, Nancy Cunningham, Lynda Grochowski and Ken Dobbs for counting all the coins received for the Noisy Offering.

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!

Sundays:

10:00 am Worship

You can currently watch each week's message on YouTube.

How to contact us:

New Spirit Lutheran Church
8701 E. Old Spanish Trail
Tucson, AZ 85710

Phone: (520) 296-2461

E-Mail: NewSpiritLutheranTucson@yahoo.com

Website: newspiritlutherantucson.org