

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.*

September 2024

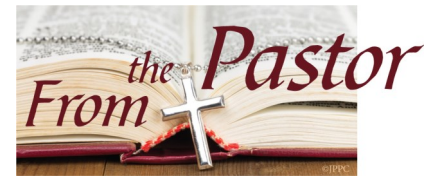
Saints of New Spirit,

I cannot believe that September is here! September brings with it two important anniversaries for me. The first is that Pastor Naomi and I will celebrate our wedding anniversary on the 5th. This year marks fifteen years of wedded bliss! The other anniversary is on September 4th. September 4th marks 2 full years of us doing ministry together. I have given thanks for our ministry often during the last 2 years. There have been times of success and frustration, through it all God has been guiding us. I do believe that we have come a long way together and I look forward to many more years of ministry together.

Over the course of this summer, I have been spending time in prayer and pondering what the coming season of ministry will look like. As part of this time of pondering and dreaming I attended the Global Leadership Summit with Jenny and Laurie. There were a lot of great thoughts shared at that event. One of those thoughts was the thought of a "to don't" list. Often, we end up with things on our "to do" list that are not necessary or distract from the vital things. I often find myself with those type of items on both my personal and pastoral "to do" list. Unfortunately, those items can become the things that get the most attention and time. For us to continue our path of growth and being a vital thriving congregation, I must get better about having a "to don't" list.

The other personal reflection I came away with this summer is continuing to embrace who we are fully and unapologetically. We have many great ministries and over the last 2 years we have been figuring out who we are together. In addition to scripture, our denominational resources, and our Lutheran theology, our Welcome Statement is a guiding document for this community of faith. Over the coming months, there will be work that starts to explore our key values and guiding principles. These will help guide us as we look at new ministries and activities. Often congregations that undertake this process identify 3 to 4 specific and intentional key values. These key values and guiding principles will define who we are as a community in a specific way. In many ways these items will help focus our efforts on specific community needs and ministries. This will allow us to embrace who we are as a community in new and exciting ways!

I am excited about the work that lays ahead of us! I am excited about the return of ministries! I am excited about being refocused and reenergized!



Join me in praying our prayer for September.

Holy God, we pray that you continue to guide us. Empower us to follow the calling you have for this congregation. Give us courage to do the work that is ahead of us. Give us the peace that comes only from you when we encounter difficult times. Let this congregation be a place for all people. Send your Spirit to be among us. Amen

Pastor Hartman

Super Youth

After a few years of hiatus, the congregations of the Kino Conference are bringing back Super Youth! If you're unfamiliar with what it is, it's a series of combined church senior high youth group events with all the Kino ELCA churches. Many congregations have smaller youth groups, or not enough kids to have a stand-alone youth group. This is an opportunity for youth from all the Kino Conference ELCA congregations to get to know their peers from other churches and get to experience some of the fun youth group things we can't offer as individual churches.



The next Super Youth event will be hosted at Lord of Grace Lutheran Church on October 20th. Further details will be provided after a planning meeting in September. If you are interested in helping coordinate NSLC's involvement in Super Youth, please let Pastor Hartman know.

God's Work Our Hands

Over the previous years we have done several events here at NSLC and around our community. This year we will be working with Lutheran Church of the Foothills and San Juan Bautista Lutheran Church! Through our connection with the City of Tucson's Housing First Program, we will be packing kits that they will use to reach out to our homeless siblings. On Saturday, September 7th, at 9:00 am we will gather at El Pueblo Center 195 W Irvington Rd Bldg. 15. After we spend time working on these kits, we will journey down to San Juan Bautista for a time of fellowship and food. Members of New Spirit Lutheran Church are asked to bring side dishes for the potluck. LCF and NSLC will be splitting the cost of providing the main dish which will be chicken tenders from Raising Canes. Please wear your yellow God's Work Our Hands shirt, if you have one. Be sure to mark your calendars to join us for this time of service and fellowship!



Fall Ministry Kick-Off

Something big is coming on September 8th! What you may be asking! It is the kick-off for our fall ministry efforts. This day was once called Rally Sunday and served as the official start of educational ministries. Now this day marks the fall kick-off of most of our ministries. After taking the summer off, many ministries are making their come back. Of course, Sunday School is returning once again led by the Colwells. Our outreach efforts will ramp up and will include events like Tucson Pride and Trunk or Treat. Pastor's Book Study will resume. Blessings in a Backpack is in full swing. A confirmation class will begin in September with a parent meeting on September 15th after service. These are just a few of the ministries that will be celebrated on September 8th.

**FALL
MINISTRY
KICK
OFF**

This fall ministry kick-off is also why it is vital for you to have filled out your Stewardship of Talents form. Without active participation from all members of NSLC many of these ministries and others simply will not happen. Join us on September 8th, to see how you can be an active part of the many ministries here at NSLC!

FELLOWSHIP DINNER:

Our monthly dinners are resuming this month. Dinner will be held on September 17th. Our theme is casseroles along with salad and desserts. Please sign up to bring a dish or let Sharon Dobbs or Edna Walton know if you want to participate.



Mark Your Calendars

UPCOMING EVENTS




TUCSON PRIDE: New Spirit will be participating in the event September 28. Witness and Welcome Team is working on details to show our LGBTQIA+ brothers and sisters that they are loved, no strings attached. We are participating as part of A LOT (Affirming Lutherans of Tucson) composed of 8 different Lutheran ministries in Tucson. Contact Brigitte Stuetze if you would like to volunteer.

TRUNK OR TREAT: New Spirit will be hosting Trunk or Treat this year on Saturday, Oct 26, from 5-7 pm and we will be making hotdogs for the families that come. There will be signup sheets soon for participating and for helping with the cooking and games. We are currently collecting candy and give away items. Our wish is to collect 100,000 pieces. You can make your donation by dropping it off on Sunday or taking it to the office Monday through Thursday between 8 and 3. Any questions contact me via email or in person. Karen Colwell at klcolwell76@gmail.com.



WOMEN'S MINISTRY

A reminder that the Women in Ministry group will meet on Wednesday, September 11, at 1:30 pm in the library .

We welcome back those who attend and invite all the women at New Spirit to come and study with us.



The Bible study is titled: "Receiving Grace: a study of Ephesians by the Rev. Heidi Haverkamp.

Session one: Is grace real? We often focus on how we fall short and deserve God's judgment. What if instead, we remember God 's continual gift of grace?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SERVE?

If you have ever felt called to be involved on a deeper level at New Spirit, then this is an opportunity to serve.

The time is approaching for our annual meeting. At this meeting we will be electing new church council members and committee members. The Nominating committee would like your input on nominations for the following positions: President, Secretary, Audit Committee, and Nominating Committee. We may approach you if the spirit leads us to believe you would be a good fit. If the spirit has led you to feel that a specific person should be nominated, please let us know. We also know that the spirit may be encouraging you to take a more active role. If that is the case, please contact us in person or by email.

As always, your prayers for discernment are appreciated.

In Unity with Christ,

Your Nominating Committee

Robin Hughes: r.hughes04@comcast.net

Jeremy Kwapich: jeremy.kwapich@live.com



SPREADING GENEROSITY TO OUR COMMUNITY

The Endowment Board met in July to determine grant awards. The Board received 17 grant applications totaling more than \$140,000 and had only \$40,000 available to distribute. Needless to say, whittling down the awards was challenging because all of the organizations are doing valuable work in the community. The following eight organizations each received \$5,000:

Hope Mountain Foundation – a home in the Philippines that provides long-term residential care for children victimized by sexual abuse & exploitation; program support for 1 month.

NSLC Homeless Blessings – to provide funds for homeless bags and purchase of a canopy.

Inside Out Network – to support tech development to expand the ION platform to inmate tablets and to complete a reentry guide for congregations.

Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest – to provide hygiene and cleaning supplies for 70 refugee families.

Cloud Covered Streets – provides shower and laundry facilities for homeless individuals. Funds will support purchase of soap, detergent, and hygiene products.

Interfaith Community Services – to support their Mobile Food Bank.

Phoenix Peace Builders/Culture of Peace Alliance – to support costs for skills and advocacy training and mentorship for low-income people living in inadequate housing conditions.

Southern AZ AIDS Foundation – to fund household items and food for low-income individuals impacted by HIV.

New Spirit is so blessed to be able to share our blessings with others to help them continue their good works!



BUILDING AND GROUNDS

You may have noticed that NSLC does not currently have a Buildings and Grounds Committee. There are a number of projects that need to be done and will need attention in the coming years. Projects like possibly upgrading K-Hall, or renovating a bathroom, or making use of the former cry room cannot happen without a group to oversee those efforts.



In addition to making sure we are addressing building and property concerns in a timely manner, the Buildings and Grounds Committee would oversee various projects that would allow us to better use our largest physical resource. Currently there are a few people from the council that have overseen projects like fixing the lights, installing the automatic door openers, and more. We give thanks for these individuals, and it has highlighted our need for a Buildings and Grounds Committee.

If you are willing to serve on this important committee, please let Pastor Hartman know.

Stewardship Committee

We are so grateful for your continued generosity and support of New Spirit's ministries! We thank God for your faithfulness! The good news – to date your contributions are more than 10% above last year's at this time and are right in line with your 2024 commitments! Because of your consistent contributions New Spirit has been able to fund activities and events that support our various ministries. Your support ranges from backpack message tags to book and Bible studies, Praise Team support, to website, Facebook and YouTube messaging, and beyond to Community Outreach events such as Blessings in a Backpack, Homeless Blessings and Lutheran Campus Ministry support. New Spirit is having an impact both within and beyond our walls, reflecting our 2024 Commitment to "Grow a Culture of Compassion". It is because of God's abundance that we are able to continue to support these ministries and grow in God's love.



As we gear up to begin our 2025 Stewardship campaign, we want to take a moment to focus on the time and talents within our congregation. We already know many of the talents among us, but we suspect there are many hidden talents yet to be discovered. By now you will have been introduced to our time and talent survey. Our goal is to receive surveys from everyone. Helpers will be available at church to pick your brains about interests and talents you may not remember that you have. We will follow up on Sept. 1 and wrap up the survey on Sept. 8. We look forward to learning more about each other, so please, everyone, complete a survey!

This is my body....

I recently heard someone say, "The most important part of the worship service is the sermon". It caused me to do some thinking about what I thought the most important, or the most meaningful, part of the worship service is for me. Am I going to church to be entertained, taught, preached to, fellowship or what? Just what makes me keep coming every Sunday?



Sorry, Pastor, choir, praise band and fellow members. Although you are all an important part of my worship experience, and you all mean a lot to me, the most meaningful part of the service, for me, is communion. I think about what it must have been like in that dimly lit upstairs room that evening. I try to put myself in that room with Jesus and the disciples. Some of the disciples, or maybe all of them, were probably feeling pretty good about the big parade and the day's events when Jesus triumphantly entered Jerusalem. Some of them probably were thinking.... Now the Romans are going to get the boom lowered on them! Our King has arrived and, in a minute, He's going to tell us how He is going to defeat the Romans and rule our world forever!

But then....He did it again, the unexpected. He talked about being betrayed, drinking wine and eating bread in remembrance of Him. Some of the disciples were getting pretty scared hearing all this talk about His dying again! I think about how they must have felt. Knowing that if the Romans kill Jesus, then there will be no victory, and they will probably also be killed! Why is He giving up now! I think about the mood change in that room as the darkness crept in while the wine and bread were being passed around and Jesus in such a somber mood. The disciples, being told one of them would betray Him, and Peter (the rock) being told that he would deny Jesus three times before the cock crowed. No Way....Not Peter!

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I try to imagine how Jesus was feeling. He knew the humiliation, pain and suffering He was going to endure. I think about the sadness and pain in His heart that He must have felt knowing that His most trusted followers still didn't get it! Still didn't understand who He really was! Still didn't understand why He was here!

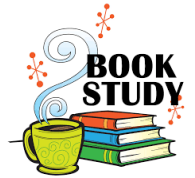
Then I think about the love that Jesus has in His heart for me. Yes me! And all of us for generations to come. Somebody I never met who, long ago, did this so that I may have the gift of salvation and eternal life! Jesus could have said, no way. I'm not doing this! You all don't deserve this and I'm leaving this world and you to the devil and I'll go and start another world somewhere else! He had a choice. He didn't have to do it. But He chose us! He chose life for us. He died so that we could live. And now He's waiting for us to join Him in paradise!

So, the next time you go to the communion rail really "Do this in remembrance" of Jesus.

John E. Lukecart

PASTOR'S BOOK STUDY

We are resuming our book study this month. As always, we will discuss the book the last Monday of the month here at the church and via zoom. We will post new information regarding the 2025 book study in the coming months. The following is the list of the remaining books for 2024.



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.

ATTENTION!!
SCHEDULE
CHANGE

NEWSLETTER PUBLICATION:

Beginning 2025 the newsletter will be published for the following months: February, March, April, September, October, November and December.

Sarah Elmquist will be competing in her first swimming competition with Special Olympics on Saturday, September 21st! GOOD LUCK Sarah!



September Birthday & Anniversary Celebrations

09/03 Bruce & Sarah Drath
(anniversary)

09/05 John Lukecart
Lynda Grochowski
Pastor Greg & Pastor Naomi
(anniversary)

09/11 Archie Burke
Fran Gale



09/19 Renee Geiger

09/21 Rose Thatcher

09/26 Barbara Wadler

09/27 Barb Verthein

09/30 Carol Lukecart
Wayne Stephens



BLESSINGS IN A BACKPACK

Who will feed the kids this weekend?

NEW SPIRIT LUTHERAN CHURCH WILL!



We are excited to announce that we are serving 30 children from another school for the 2024-2025 school year! We will be serving 360 students at Steele, Henry, Ford, Erickson, and now Soleng Tom Elementary school.

Thanks to your generous contributions, we are able to also provide pants, underwear and socks in the smaller sizes for each school to help with unforeseen "accidents".

JOIN US! During the school year, packing is done on Tuesdays from 8:00 to 9:00 AM. Deliveries are done in the mornings after packing. (If you want to help deliver, you can pick the day you are available).

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.

Contact Laurie Bernard at lbernard2008@hotmail.com with questions.

. THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THIS MINISTRY

HOMELESS BLESSINGS "BECAUSE WE CARE"



JOIN US THE 2ND SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH
MAY THRU SEPTEMBER 9AM TO 11AM

Our next event is September 14th. This will be our last morning session of the year. The next event on October 12th will be from 1pm to 3pm. Feel the need to serve others? Join us!

Our events are not just for the unhoused, but for anyone experiencing financial/food insecurity. In addition to the supplies such as tents, tarps, umbrellas, and cooling cloths and hats for our homeless friends, we offer a hot meal, hygiene products, clothing, shoes, blankets, some packaged food, haircuts, and a place for some social activity.

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 John Lukecart for coming back to fill in as custodian while we look for a new employee.

SHOUT OUT - To Lorrie Firth for researching and finding a company to address the Sanctuary lighting issue.

SHOUT OUT - To Laurie Bernard for her tireless efforts supporting the homeless.

SHOUT OUT - To Sharon Dobbs for maintaining the restricted funds accounts for the last 18 years.

SHOUT OUT - To Craig Geiger for taking over for Marty's duties for Blessings in a Backpack this past year and also Craig and Doug Butler for unpacking and organizing the food that gets packed.

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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