



GRACE NOTES ~ FEBRUARY 2024



Worship Schedule

Saturday, 5:00 and Sunday, 8:00 & 10:00

Mission Statement

Proclaiming God's Love, God's Promises, and the Abundant Life



Follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/SpiritOfGraceSCG/

Spirit of Grace Lutheran Church

15820 W Clearview Blvd

623-977-6000

In the  of The Grand

www.spiritofgrace.com

Worship Times

Saturday 5:00

Sunday 8:00 & 10:00

Staff

Pastor Scott Hackler

pastorscott@spiritofgrace.com

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glenn@spiritofgrace.com

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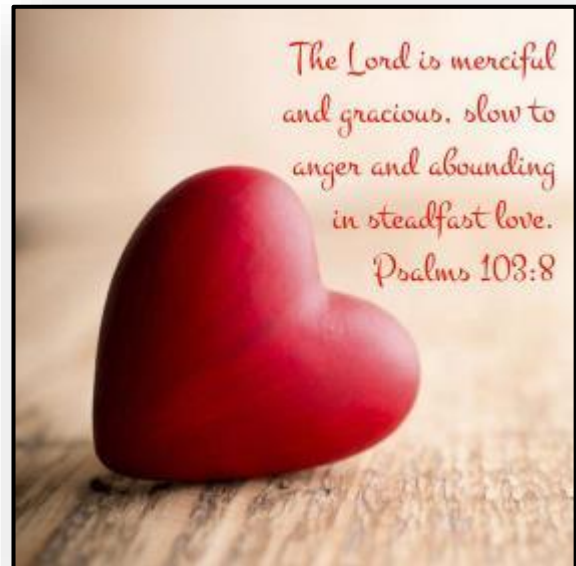
Staff - Continued

Ken Carnes

Choir Director

Sandy Hobbs

Choir Accompanist





“A Future with Hope!” Stewardship Appeal

Over the past month the Stewardship Team has sent out an appeal kick-off letter, provided weekly Ministry Minutes and bulletin inserts. This past week you should have received another letter through the mail with a brochure and a **“Statement of Intent.”**

It has all been an effort to let you know the focus of our Stewardship appeal and to encourage you to pray about how you will respond.

As I’m sure you are aware by now, **“A Future with Hope!”** is the theme and fits well with our 25th Anniversary celebration. What a great commemoration it was, reminding us of over 25 years of faithful ministry. While we reminisced about the past, we were also pointing to a future that can be just as rich. When Spirit of Grace began there was clearly a great sense of hope and promise that led the way. Year after year all those who were involved generously gave of themselves and provided the financial means to support the mission.

Now it is time to get really focused on the future... **“A Future with Hope!”** Our Strategic Planning team and the council have identified our vision for the future.

Here it is: ➔

- **A church where lives are changed by GRACE:**
- **Giving generously to Christ’s mission**
- **Revealing God’s grace**
- **Attracting new friends**
- **Celebrating Christ**

- **Outreach and Invitation**
- **A Welcoming and Accessible Property**
- **Dynamic Worship Experiences**
- **Ministry Excellence**

And now we are on the cusp of receiving your **“Statement of Intent.”** We’ve identified the areas of focus for the next year so that you can consider growing in giving to support the plan.

➔ **Here it is!**

I hope that you have been thinking and praying about this. Miriam and I will be increasing our giving to meet the challenge. **Our “A Future with Hope!” response will be received during worship on Saturday, February 3 and Sunday, February 4. If you are unable to be present you are welcomed to mail your Statement of Intent to the church.**

Together we are on a mission we can fulfill as we come together as a community and give generously. Thank you for being a part of this great congregation. Let’s lean into **“A Future with Hope!”**



Scott Hackler, Senior Pastor



FINANCIAL REPORT AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023...

	December	Bdgt	YTD	Bdgt	2022
Income	114,866	111,764	782,257	819,540	802,709
Expenses	58,194	68,793	848,164	845,483	814,133
Fixed Asset Purchases	-0-				
Mortgage Balance	472,733				
Households:	446		-0-		446
Members:	732		-11		743

The numbers above do not include an extraordinary item in either income or expenses. In August, Spirit of Grace received an Employee Retention Credit of \$144,832, from which was paid a professional fee of \$28,966 for preparation of the applications which generated the credit. The funds were used to open CD's pending the Council's decision on the use of these funds.

Glenn Schultz,
Director of Finance & Administration

FOOD INGATHERING via Cash Donations

Our contributions are much appreciated by the Valley View Community Food Bank!

If you have not given to this effort and want to be a part of it, you may send a check by mail or drop it off at the office.



Contribution Total For JANUARY — \$1,305

The Food Bank uses our monetary donations to purchase items they are in most need of, at a generous discount allowing them to purchase even more!

Glenn Schultz,
Director of Finance and Administration



CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL UPDATE:

This is the last Grace Notes that I will be presenting as the President of the Spirit of Grace Congregation Council. After the Annual Meeting I will be stepping down as President. At the Annual Meeting we will be electing three new members to three-year terms, one person to a two-year term and one person to a one-year term. **The members that have completed a three-year term on Council are Ellie Brooks, Julie Townsend and Terry Pierce. They have done a great job and we thank them for their dedication and service!**

The 25th Anniversary Celebration on January 14th was well attended. Over 400 people attended the church service with Bishop Reverend Deborah Hutterer delivering the message. The breakfast was served by Chef Peter and Café Grace was filled to capacity. The Program after that featured two of our current and former Pastors addressing the session. Pastor Scott and Pastor Vern Anderson spoke about their experiences and memories of Spirit of Grace. Because of health issues Pastor Joe Carruci and Pastor Gary Hess were unable to attend. Also in attendance was former Associate Pastor, Ellis "Bud" Eskritt, Pastoral Assistants, Reverend Susan Ramsay-McCormick and Bruce Belanger – Synodically Authorized Minister. The celebration ended with an excellent musical presentation by "*Dan Reed Music-Keeping it Fun!*", featuring Dan Reed and Nicole Pesce. Paul Reichenbach did an excellent job as the Master of Ceremonies. **A special thank you to Council members, Ellie Brooks, Julie Townsend and Treedah Magee, as well as Dorothy Carnes and the Fellowship Committee for the work they did in putting the celebration together!**

Date to Remember:

**February 4, 2024 – Annual Congregation Meeting
Between Sunday Services**

Blessings in Christ,

Bruce Belanger,
Congregation President

Bruce Belanger
President

Betsy Gusea-Gerringer
Vice President

Julie Townsend
Secretary

Treedah Magee

Terry Pierce

Paul Reichenbach

Sue Barbour

Sue Kopcha

Ellie Brooks

Our Vision: To Bring the Spirit of Grace to All

Mission Statement: Proclaiming God's Love, God's Promises, and the Abundant Life

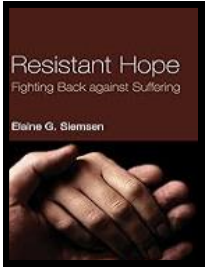


**Christmas Eve
CANDLELIGHT
SERVICE**



SPIRIT OF GRACE ~ 2023





Wednesday Classes and Discussion:

Resistant Hope: Fighting Back Against Suffering*

February 21, 28 and March 6th: Rev. Elaine Siemsen

Foundation: When suffering occurs in our own experience or that of another, the first question is often, ***"Where is God? Or Why did God let this happen?"*** The question of suffering is called Theodicy or ***"Where is God in times of Suffering."*** I learned that there have been four traditional answers which cause us to choose between an all powerful/all knowing God or a compassionate one or lead to the logical conclusion that God has no power in our world or in our lives.

You are invited to join in discussion for three Wednesdays:

February 21, we will talk about a definition of suffering and the question of where is God in times of suffering.

February 28, We will think about the different possible answers.

March 6, we will talk about a proposal for responding to suffering that allows God's compassion and love to shine through all of us even in the most painful situations.



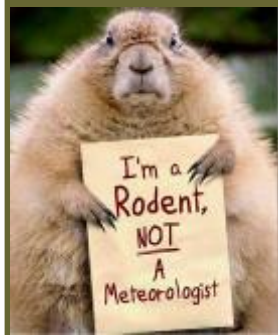
The Conversation is drawn from a book that Elaine wrote several years ago. You can find digital copies on Amazon.*



Our Stewardship emphasis for this year is a ***Future with Hope.*** There are four initiatives that will help lead us into that future. On recent Sundays you have heard about these initiatives and have been reading bulletin articles that discuss the initiatives in detail. ***On February 4,*** we will be asked to consider our response by completing a ***Statement of Intent*** concerning our stewardship of money for the coming year.

Stewardship has been defined as the care and management of that which belongs to another. God has entrusted us with countless gifts and blessings. He asks us to be faithful stewards. Stewardship begins with a grateful heart and a life of thankful living and giving as we share our resources for ministry to others. Our lives will always be blessed by the hand of the creator. And our call to be God's people will always include the admonition that we faithfully share what we have been given.

Phil Nelson
Stewardship



???



OR... ???



HAPPY GROUNDHOG DAY!!

FEBRUARY 2

**FEBRUARY 4 — ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING
FOLLOWING THE 8:00 SERVICE!!**

FAT TUESDAY/MARDI GRAS — FEBRUARY 13

The excess of Carnival may not seem to have much in common with the austerity of **Lent**, but the two seasons are inseparable. The day after Fat Tuesday is **Ash Wednesday**; therefore, the end of Carnival is followed immediately by the beginning of Lent.

Lent is a time of fasting and penance in preparation for Easter. Carnival, then, can rightly be seen as the indulgence before the fast. It is one last *binge* before having to give something up for 40 days.



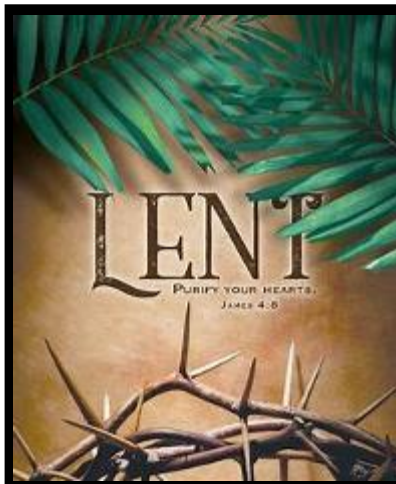
ASH WEDNESDAY — FEBRUARY 14

There will be two services: 12:00 & 5:00

LENT BEGINS — FEBRUARY 14

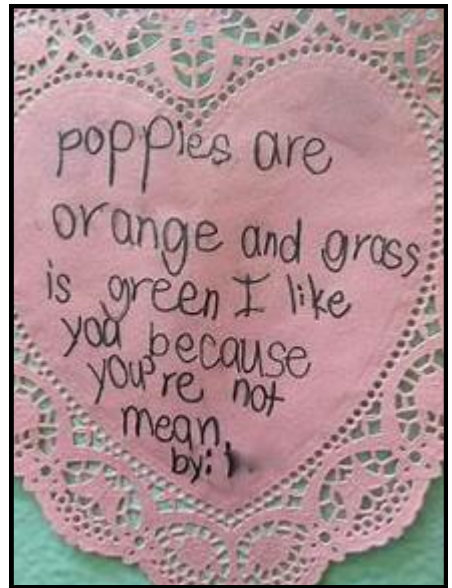
Lent begins each year on Ash Wednesday. ***This year, Lent will begin on Wednesday, February 14th and will end on Holy Saturday, March 30th.***

The Lent season is a time of somber reflection and remembrance. Lent is traditionally a time of fasting and abstaining from something to repent and focus our hearts and minds on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.





HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!
FEBRUARY 14



PRESIDENT'S DAY
FEBRUARY 19



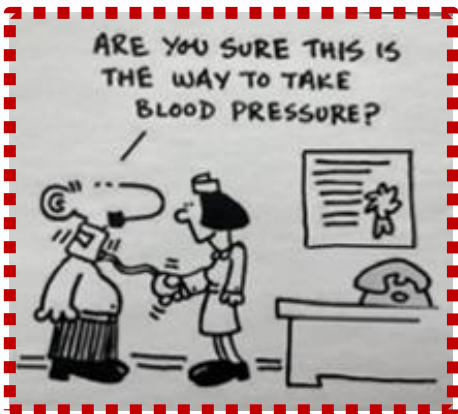
The only president to be unanimously elected was George Washington (1732-1799). He also refused to accept his presidential salary, which was \$25,000 a year.

President Dwight David Eisenhower (1890-1969) was the only president to serve in both WWI and WWII.

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS

Regular blood pressure checks are an important part of a healthy lifestyle. Hypertension is often at the root of heart disease, and if left untreated can cause organ damage.

Have your blood pressure checked *February 18.*
—Immediately following each Service in the Conference Room.



FEBRUARY/MARCH FELLOWSHIP ~ Don't Miss Any of it !!

ATTENTION PLEASE!!

****Due to the online cost from the website server, we are *NO LONGER OFFERING ONLINE REGISTRATION* for fellowship events.**

Tickets will be available before & after services and will also be available in the church office but **ONLY ON TUESDAYS**. Payment may be made by cash or a **check made out to Spirit of Grace**. If you have questions, call the Fellowship phone number @ **480-438-1115**



ALL THAT JAZZ—February 4th @ 2:30 Cost: \$5 - Jazz with a Mardi Gras and New Orleans flavor to get your toes tapping. The ***music is provided by The All Stars Band***, under the direction of Duane Moore. Following the concert you are invited into our own Mardi Gras Café for a traditional dessert, coffee and fellowship. ***Tickets will be available at the door, if space allows.***

*****SPRING BASEBALL-tickets are SOLD OUT for the March 7 game between the Texas Rangers and the AZ Diamondbacks.***

We'll gather in the special reserved Legion's Section at 1:05 for food, fellowship and of course baseball to cheer on your favorite team.

LIBERTY QUARTET—March 10 @ 6:00 - Cost: FREE, however a ticket will be required for admittance to the concert.

Back by popular demand, this Gospel group from Idaho will uplift you with their music ministry that impacts their culture for Christ. A very inspirational concert of worship. They have performed with groups like the Gather Vocal Band and the Legacy Five as well as many others.



******A Free Will Offering will be taken during the concert to help pay for their expenses.*** Tickets will be available starting February 17 & 18 and each weekend thereafter until the concert.

Dorothy Carnes

Fellowship Ministry

THE FOOTSTEPS OF PAUL: TRAVEL TO GREECE AND TURKEY

On Wednesday, March 6th at 11:00 there will be a meeting to look at the trip together and see who else might share this amazing journey.

Next fall, join Pastor Scott and visit the footsteps of the Apostle Paul in Greece and Turkey. The 10-day trip will take you from Thessaloniki in northern Greece to Athens and Corinth south. A four-day cruise will explore Greek islands and have you setting foot in Ephesus, Turkey. The details are too many to share here.

Follow this link to the website created for this trip:

<https://www.eliastours.com/tours/footsteps-of-paul-tour-with-rev-scott-hackler-spirit-of-grace-lutheran-church>

Pastor Scott



"Experiencing Revelation"

Wednesdays — March 13 and 20, 10:00 -11:15



The Revelation of John, the last book of the Bible, has visions of heaven and a lake that burns with fire and sulfur, saints gathered around God's throne and a whore who sits on a scarlet beast. What does it all mean? What are we supposed to do with it today? ***Come discuss the experience of the book of Revelation with Rev. Dr. Peter S. Perry on March 13 and 20 here at Spirit of Grace!***



Dr. Perry was born and raised in Phoenix and serves St. John's Lutheran Church in Glendale. He received his PhD from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago in 2009. He specialized in the book of Revelation and ancient communication practices. You can prepare for the session by reading the book of Revelation through.

If you'd like, you can experience a recording of Dr. Perry's performance of Revelation at:

Part 1: <https://vimeo.com/789543625>,

Part 2: <https://vimeo.com/789879868>

ADVENT GIVING TREE—CHRISTMAS PROJECT



Once again, the Advent Giving Tree project was a HUGE success thanks to your generosity and prayers. Since 1999 we have been helping the needy in our community through this project. This year gift cards were distributed to Military Families at Luke Air Force Base.

What a wonderful outpouring of love and support with ***\$11,000 in gift cards being donated!!***

These gift cards helped parents purchase Christmas gifts for their children and provide other support for their family. Your generosity helps to show our military families how much their service and sacrifice mean to us.

The First Sergeants Group accepted our gifts and were grateful for your generosity.

Thank you for your donations and continued prayers!

Deborah Frusciano

GIFTS OF HOPE...

*“Rejoice in the Lord always:
and again I say, Rejoice.” Philipians*



Once again, our caring Spirit of Grace congregation and community have given generously to Gifts of Hope. ***This year's campaign raised \$28,830*** to help in the areas of education, healthcare and nutrition. In Gifts of Hope's 21-year history, ***our church has now raised \$701,994 to help our brothers and sisters in Africa!*** Gifts of Hope not only binds us together with those abroad, it also shows how connected our church family is here.

If you are interested in volunteering for Gifts of Hope please join us! The campaign runs each year from mid-November to the first week in January. Planning usually begins late September. You do not need to be here the whole time. Even if you have limited time, there are ways to help! *If you are interested, please contact Winnie Fritz at 520-349-1091.*

To each and every one who donated and volunteered, THANK YOU all so very much!
Kerstin Smith and Winnie Fritz Co-Chairs



If you have lost a spouse, child, family member or friend, this is a place where you can find people who understand the deep hurt you feel. GriefShare is for people grieving the death of a loved one.

GriefShare is a Christ-centered small group. Each GriefShare session includes a video seminar featuring top experts on grief recovery, plus real people sharing their real stories. After each video presentation, we spend time in small groups discussing what was presented and how it applies to what is going on in our lives. **Even if you have attended GriefShare sessions in the past, join us for this new 4th edition. It contains updated information and relevant content for today's issues.**

Each session is independent. The 13-week series is free to attend, however a donation of \$20 is suggested to cover the cost of your workbook. Call the church office to register. 623-977-6000. *Call Deborah if you have any questions. 602-909-8369.*

**We meet every Thursday,
January 25 to April 18, 2024,
10-11:30 in the Fellowship Hall.**

GriefShare Leaders:

**Deborah Frusciano
Miriam Hackler
Carol Starnes**

SPIRIT OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

JANUARY 14, 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!



SENIOR PASTOR'S SCOTT HACKLER AND PASTOR VERN ANDERSON – ASSOCIATE PASTOR BUD ESKRITT WITH REV. SUSAN RAMSEY MCCORMICK REPRESENTING HER LATE HUSBAND, SENIOR PASTOR FRED RAMSEY



BISHOP DEBORAH HUTTERER



PASTOR'S SCOTT & VERN WERE TWO OF THE FOUR SENIOR PASTORS ATTENDING. PASTOR'S JOE CARUCCI & GARY HESS WERE UNABLE TO ATTEND DUE TO HEALTH ISSUES.



Charter Members – 6 of 178



VERNON KENNY & BARBARA SCHLIE, BARRY & JOAN GOODKIN



REV. CARLYLE & SHARON SMITH

**STAY TUNED....
MORE PHOTOS AND
INFORMATION TO COME
IN THE MARCH ISSUE OF
GRACE NOTES.**



THE AFTER SERVICE BRUNCH BUNCH!



HEAD USHER RICH FRUSCIANO LEADING PROCESSION ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE



Faith Community Nurse Corner: *What's Going On...??*

Ever wonder what's going on in the community or what resources are available? I have listed just a few of what is going on for the month of February and services that are ongoing. Every month in Grace Notes, I will let you know What's Going On.... If there is something of special interest or an event with approaching date or RSVP, I will include It in the bulletin and Spirit of Grace Website.

Hospice of the Valley – Dementia Care Resource - Understanding Dementia:

A challenging journey; Workshop – Wednesday, February 21, 9:00—Noon. Join us to learn more about dementia and helpful resources. Participants will get the opportunity to better understand dementia and how it progresses from early to advanced stages; learn to develop strategies to make and maintain meaningful connections with the person with dementia; further value the caregiver role and explore ways to reduce stress.

Location: The Colonnade, 19116 N. Colonnade Way, Surprise, AZ 85374

RSVP is required. Continental breakfast and snacks will be served. Contact: Events1@hov.org or call (602) 636-5393.

West Valley Memory Resources – Sun Health Memory Care provides personal and professional guidance for those living with memory loss, family members and caregivers coping with the emotional, psychological, and physical effects of dementia. The program is offered at no charge.

Call (623) 471-9300 to schedule a free consultation.

Memory Café - Provides a social and resource place for people living with memory loss and their care partners. Caregivers participate in an educational and/or support session while people with memory loss actively participate in a cognitive engagement program. In-Person and Virtual options available. **Virtual meetings are scheduled on the 2nd Tuesday from 10:00-11:30.**

To register, contact (623) 832-6637 or BannerResearch@BannerHealth.com

Continued on following page

Faith Community Nurse continued...



Surprise Senior Services is the hub for activities and program for adults 50 and over and adults with disabilities. They offer a place for people to gather, learn, exercise, socialize, and enjoy a hot lunch. **To learn more, call (623) 222-1500 and/or visit <https://surpriseaz.gov/406/Senior-Services> is located at 15832 N. Hollyhock Street, Surprise AZ, 85378.**

Valley View Community Food Bank – Food insecurity can happen to people in all walks of life. This includes older adults who may have lost a source of income through death, divorce or have outlived their resources. Food banks serve more than families and children. Valley Food Bank does not have a zip code or income restriction. ***ID is required.***

There are three locations for your convenience. Most are open Monday-Friday 9-1. See the website **for further information, feedingaz.org/how-we-can-help/ or call (623) 933-3358.**

Deborah Frusciano RN BSN ACRN CT

Faith Community Nurse



How many times have we thought we would like to express appreciation for something or someone but never get to it? If you would like to express gratitude, please share it with me at annie@spiritofgrace.com or on a note and I will post it here.

I would like to thank ***ALL*** the people who helped our committee, Ellie, Julie, and I with our Spirit of Grace 25th Anniversary Celebration! I don't even know where to start there are so many. A special thanks to Helen Kain for helping me make all the paper cakes, the many volunteers who helped insert the goodies and the many who helped set up and clean up after. No one turned us down when our cry for help went out.

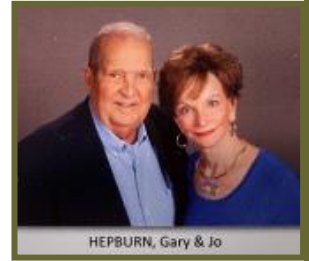
You all are amazing!! Thanks to Dorothy Carnes and her crew. Finally, to Jerry Huston, "***YOU ROCK!***" What an amazing membership this church has! We couldn't have done it without all of you!

Treedah McGee



Our Heartfelt Thoughts & Prayers for ...

The family of **Gary Hepburn, 84** who passed away on December 21. His wife, Jo, preceded him in death just a few months earlier on June 3. Gary had a long career in the bank-marketing field. After retiring, they moved to Surprise where he continued to enjoy spending time with family and friends, traveling, and his passion for the game of golf. Gary loved his family with all his heart, and his last night on earth he was blessed to be celebrating with family at the annual Hepburn Holiday Happy Hour.



<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/legacyremembers/gary-l-hepburn-obituary?id=53960859>

Terry Johnson and family of **Ken Johnson**, who went to be with our Lord January 19. Ken is the son-in-law of our member Pat Hild. *Contact: Cosette Swalheim*

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT MINISTRY — PRAYERS FOR NEW BEGINNINGS

The newly formed Civic Engagement Ministry invites you to join us in prayer at this time of new beginnings. Even if you've already broken your New Year's Resolution, remember it's never too late to begin again. Like the hymn says: ***THIS IS THE DAY!*** May this prayer help you in your daily efforts to become part of Civic Engagement!



Prayer for Setting Intentions and Goals...

"Heavenly Father, in this time of new starts, assist me in setting clear intentions and meaningful goals. Grant me the clarity to identify what truly matters and the determination to pursue my aspirations. Help me align my actions with my deepest values and guide me towards achieving my highest potential. In Your wisdom and love, may my journey be purposeful and fulfilling. Amen."



If you have prayer concerns about civic issues or questions about this ministry, contact:

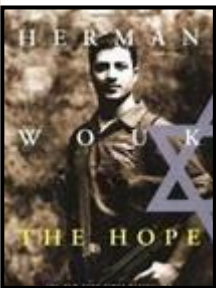
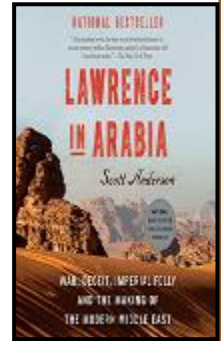
Nancy Jacob at (623) 640-6356 or Nljacob@aol.com

Thank you for your prayers!

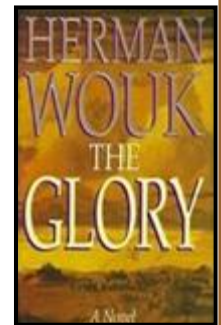
FROM THE ...



Lawrence in Arabia by Scott Anderson sets the stage at the beginning of the 20th Century when Britain and France were maneuvering to divide the Middle East between themselves. This historical non-fiction is enlivened by its four main characters: a German spy seeking to create a new Islamic caliphate that will challenge British rule; a Romanian Zionist who has established a botanical station on the coast of Palestine; an agent of Standard Oil who is enlisted as a spy on behalf of the US State Department; and, of course, T.E. Lawrence, who leads an army of independent Arabs in the British cause. ***The book's subtitle sums up what follows: War, Deceit, Imperial Folly and the Making of the Modern Middle East.***



The Hope and The Glory by Herman Wouk. In "The Hope," which opens in 1948 and culminates in the miraculous triumph of 1967's Six-Day War, Wouk plunges the reader into the story of a nation struggling for its birth and then its survival. As the tale resumes in "The Glory," Wouk portrays the young nation once again pushed to the brink of annihilation--and sets the stage for today's ongoing struggle for peace. ***One reviewer wrote, "As you follow the magnificent characters of Wouk, you learn the lessons and paradox of a nation that defies explanation and survives by the grace of its ancient God."***



Isabel Kershner, the author of The Land of Hope and Fear: Israel's Battle for Its Inner Soul, has lived and worked in Israel for thirty years. She takes us on a fascinating journey into the minds and hearts of current Israelis, Jews and Arabs, religious and secular, who are beset by political conflict and military threats, undergoing generational change and struggling to redefine what it means to be an Israeli.

Carole Parnell,
Spirit of Grace Librarian

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT MINISTRY



Carole Parnell, Sherry Motko, Marsha Gilford and Vicki Brinkman visited with elected officials with 100 other Lutherans from around the state on January 18, Lutheran Day at the Legislature.

Find Your State Legislator and Share Your Voice for Others...

Did you know that Seniors are the fastest growing population of housing insecurity? 54% of Seniors spend 30% or more of their income on housing, and Arizona is among the worst states in the U.S. for housing affordability.

Civic engagement is a tool that we may use to enact God's justice and care for others. Nearly 100 Lutherans met with representatives to discuss access to clean water, affordable housing, and hunger issues on January 18th. It's not too late to share your voice!

The Arizona Legislature is in full swing until April 20, 2024 and we encourage you to share your comments on issues or specific bills at azleg.gov. There you can search for your elected official using your address and click through to send a message. For more information on issues impacting **Arizonans visit www.LAMAZ.org**

Here is a quick contact list:

AZ District 28:

Rep. Beverly Pingerelli
Rep. David Livingston
Sen. Frank Carroll

602-926-3396
602-926-4178
602-926-3249

BPINGERELLI@azleg.gov
DLIVINGSTON@azleg.gov
FCARROLL@azleg.gov

AZ District 29:

Rep. Austin Smith
Rep. Steve Montenegro
Sen. Janae Shamp

602-926-3831
602-926-3635
602-926-3499

AUSTIN.SMITH@azleg.gov
SMONTENEGRO@azleg.gov
JSHAMP@azleg.gov



Do you have prescription glasses, hearing aids or cell phones you don't use any longer? ***Please drop them in the collection box located in the Spirit of Grace Library*** and they will be donated to the Lions Club for distribution to others who will use them.



Marsha Gilford

C.E.M. Leader



This symbol - with the cross, water and a white lily - identifies the women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as children of God: baptized, forgiven, adopted into God's family, full of grace and hope in eternal life. It is a reminder of the growth, beauty and vitality that rise out of that life-giving baptismal water. The symbol also reminds us of the mission of the Church to "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." **MATTHEW 28:19**

Women's Ministry of Spirit of Grace (Women of the ELCA)



It is time for our BIG Spring event!

You know that the purpose of WELCA is to provide spiritual growth, which we do with our Bible studies and service to others, which we do with our many projects and fellowship. Our Spring event is the ***perfect time for fellowship!***

I am looking forward to our Tea Party February 15. Wear your tea party hat and bring your favorite tea cup. You will be blessed by the message Ellie Brooks has for us.

Many Blessings to you all,

Sue Todd, WELCA President

CIRCLE GATHERINGS

Thursday, Feb. 8, 9:30 — Deborah Circle will meet in the Church Conference Room.
Circle leader is Jean Schlenvogt, jeansch101@hotmail.com

Thursday, Feb. 8, 1:00 — Elizabeth Circle will meet in the Church Conference Room.
Circle leaders are Judy Butz, jbmami25@aol.com and Carol Junge, jungecarol@juno.com

Monday, Feb. 12, 9:30 — Martha Circle will meet in the Fellowship Hall.
Circle leader is Barb Stenberg, bstenberg3@gmail.com

Monday, Feb. 12, 1:00 — Mary Circle will meet in the Church Conference Room.
Circle leader is Sue Tedell, sjtedell@gmail.com

Tuesday, Feb. 13, 9:30 — Rachel Circle will meet in the Fellowship Hall.
Circle leader is Jerry Philip, jmphilip22@yahoo.com

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Continued....

Women are invited to join one of the Women Ministry gathering groups called Circles for the February get-togethers where women **will discuss Session 2 of the Bible study called "Scripture and Nature" written by Rev. Sara Olson-Smith.**

This month the study will focus on Creatures: Our siblings in praise and trust.

The study is found in the January/February 2024 issue of the Gather Magazine. There are copies of the magazine available in the church library if you do not subscribe.

Jesus invites us to consider the birds, but we'll get to know biblical critters beyond the sparrows. We'll look at biblical animals (some adorable, some terrifying) from ravens and lions to a big fish, paired creatures on the ark, and that sneaky serpent in Eden. Stories of human and animal interactions in Scripture help to reorient our relationships with the non-human world, while pulling us into deeper trust in God.



PLEASE COME JOIN US..!!

We welcome anyone interested in quilting to join our group, no experience necessary! We meet the third Tuesday of each month from 9-1:00 thru May in the Fellowship Hall.





Women's Ministry is Having a Tea Party!! It's time to select your favorite bonnet and tea cup for the fun, elegant tea party planned by Women's Ministry/WELCA.



Date and Time: Thursday, February 15 @ 11:00 —
Place: Spirit of Grace Fellowship Hall

Menu: Tea sandwiches, salad, scrumptious dessert and of course, tea and other beverages.

WOMEN!

SAVE THE DATE: Monday, March 4 !!

The Spirit of Grace Women's Ministry Retreat is BACK, BACK, BACK!! After several years of Covid postponements, plans are being made for the 2024 retreat. It is set to take place at our church instead of the Spirit in the Desert Retreat Center because of late scheduling.



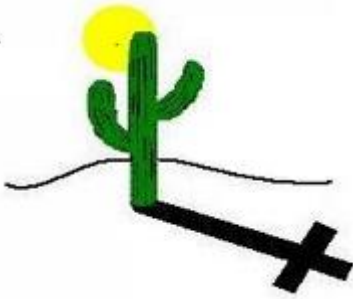
The date is Monday, March 4, a one-day gathering to start at 8:30 am lasting until 8:00 pm with an hour and half free time around 4:00, so that those who may need to return home to tend to others including husbands, pets and other dear ones, may do so.

The retreat is being offered to bring women of Spirit of Grace together to discuss **"My Be-Attitude!"**, a Bible study using large and small group sessions, singing, praying, eating, stretching, and sharing with fellow women to get to know each other better. Cyndy Warnier, who has led Spirit of Grace retreats in the past will once again be sharing with us.

In this retreat, there will be three sessions that take participants up to the Mount of Beatitudes and sit at Jesus' feet with a deep intent to grasp the blessings in this incredible *"sermon on the mount."* To accomplish this, we need to think about our daily attitudes and be open to God's changes in what he desires for our attitudes.

So, mark those brand-new calendars with the date and plan to attend! **Registration with a \$35 fee including 3 light meals and study materials will take place the weekends of Feb. 10, 17, and 24.** Why not invite a woman friend to join you? Maybe surprise someone with a birthday present paid registration for this event. Then come and have a day of fun and learning together!

Women's Ministry is alive at Spirit of Grace!



WEST VALLEY LUTHERAN THRIFT SHOP

We've come a long way, baby!

After 30 years, we've now settled in to 2024!
It's always fun to look back at some of the accomplishments of the past year and of the last thirty years!



Who could have imagined? We started with one suite in the Sun Bowl Plaza for the purpose of "extending" American Lutheran's annual yard sale to benefit more people throughout the year. Now we occupy more than 35,000 sq. ft. and are the largest shop in the plaza. We've come a long way since 1994! We're definitely not your grandma's thrift shop anymore!

This past year we welcomed more new volunteers who generously worked more than 33,000 hours. Come by and visit soon! While you're here, check out our large selection of Valentine's Day items. If you think you would like to be a part of the Lutheran Thrift Shop, ask for a tour and a volunteer application. We look forward to seeing you. **623.815.7061**

Hope to see you there!

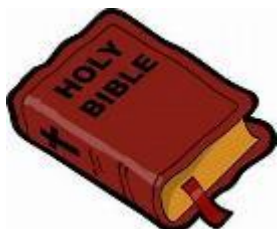
Lynn Morey

This is your chance to be a part of something awesome and actually keep a New Year's resolution!

WIN/WIN. Call us today 623-815-706

West Valley Lutheran Thrift Shop, 10615 W. Peoria in Sun City - (623) 815-7061

Also follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/



For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. ~ 1 JOHN 3:11



An invitation to attend the 'Massing of Colors/Service of Remembrance' Ceremony!

The Military Order of the World Wars
West Valley Arizona Chapter 131

P.O. Box 7938, Surprise, AZ 85374
Established 21 April 1971

Linda Howry, CPT, USA (Frm)
Commander, West Valley Chapter 131



Sprit of Grace Lutheran Church
15820 N. Clearview Blvd.
Surprise, AZ 85374
Attn: Activities Director

Our West Valley Chapter 131 extends an invitation to all your residents to attend our annual **Massing of the Colors / Service of Remembrance** ceremony to be held on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, at 11:45 A.M. The location is the Palm Ridge Recreation Center, 13800 W. Deer Valley Drive, Sun City West, AZ, 85375.

Many of you have attended our ceremony in past years and thoroughly enjoyed this moving tribute to our military. We hope that you will attend again this year. Our guest speaker will be **Wanona 'Winnie' Fritz, former CPT in the Army Nurse Corp and the topic of her talk will be "Life in the US & Jordan military – Memories, Lessons & Gifts"**. It is a topic that should be keen interest to both young and old alike in the audience.

Parking is plentiful and everything is on the first floor and wheel chair assessable.

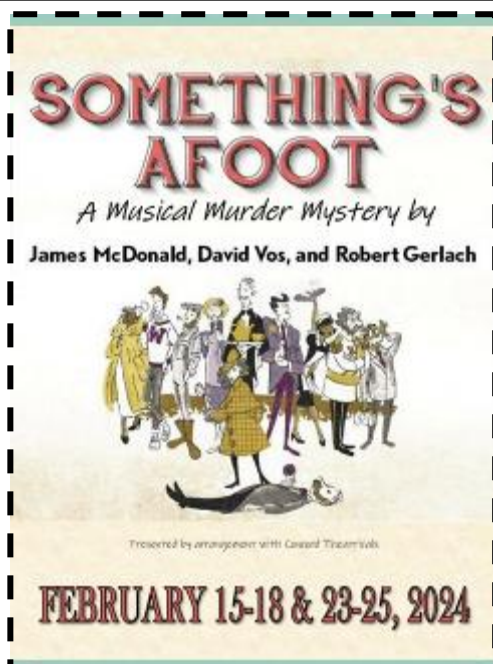
Prior to the ceremony, a musical prelude by the ever-popular Desert Brass Band will commence at 11:15. The ceremony will last approximately one hour and light refreshments will be served following the ceremony.

Please contact me by email at JP7wojtas@gmail.com or by phone at 623-544-4477 should you have any questions.

Respectfully,

Jerry Wojtas

Jerry Wojtas, COL, USA (Ret)
Chapter 131 POC



Something's Afoot-A Musical Murder Mystery

The Grand Drama and Comedy Club presents its 2024 Musical, *Something's Afoot*, a zany, entertaining musical, which is a satirical poke at Agatha Christie mysteries and musical style of the 1930's English music hall.

Synopsis: Ten people are stranded in an isolated English country house during a raging thunderstorm. One by one, they're picked off by cleverly fiendish devices. As bodies pile up in the library, the survivors frantically race to uncover the identity and motivation of the cunning culprit.

Something's Afoot is directed by Annie Banton and produced by Kathy Marker.

The ensemble cast includes Spirit of Grace members Terry and Cathy Pierce as well as, Sandy and Earle Greenberg, Katie Iverson, Mark Banton, Dave Golden, Dean Dennis, Robin Weakland, Jim Haubrich and Ron Gibala.

**Tickets are \$20 /pp with seven performances over two weekends:
Thursday, Friday (2) & Saturdays (2) @7pm and Sundays (2) at 3 pm.
Cash bar-1 hour before showtime.
Sonoran Plaza Main Stage. Tickets @granddrama.com**

