

Love of Christ Lutheran Church

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Welcome to LOC's Weekly E-News

E-News for the 9th Sunday after Pentecost, July 26th, 2026



"The Smallest of All the Seeds"

There are some parables that cause us to keep wondering. There are other parables that just plain baffle us and we think that perhaps it was meant for the first-century audience. But well, this parable we often think we have it all figured out!

When telling this parable to the preschoolers in our Godly Play lessons it often baffles them for a while why the overlay is yellow. Even though I tell them that we are talking about the parable of the mustard seed.

When I ask them what color the mustard is they put on their hot dog then they know the answer! But the part that continues to baffle me is the size of the mustard seed in relation to the plant!

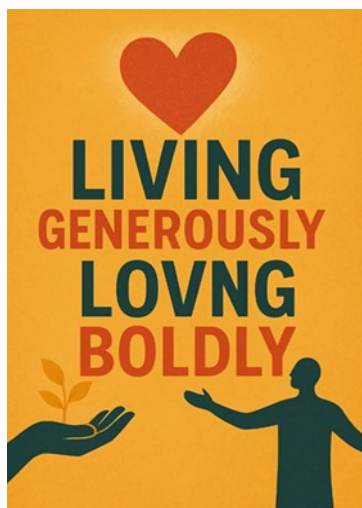


Our Hospitality Team returns next **Sunday, August 2, 2026**. Thank you to the members of this servant-leading team for practicing extravagant welcome to all!

Participating in a Donor-Advised Fund?

By 2024, more than \$328 billion languished in DAF accounts.

Donor Advised Funds allow individuals or families to place funds in an account intended to be used for future charitable donations, while allowing the household to take a charitable deduction in the year money has been placed in the fund. A current concern is too many of these funds are just accumulating and not moving to the charities in a timely manner.

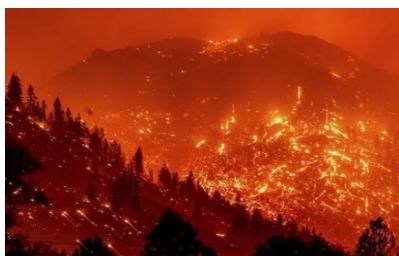


These funds should be put to work. Currently, far more money is flowing into DAFs than is flowing out. That needs to change. Every dollar sitting in a donor-advised fund has already generated a charitable tax deduction. Legally, the gift has been completed. **Yet the ministry, food bank, rescue mission, pregnancy center, or Christian school that needs those resources may not receive them for years. Or decades.**

Boston College law professor Ray Madoff (no relation to infamous Bernie) is one of the nation's leading critics of DAF policy. Madoff says the problem is not donor-advised funds themselves. It is **the unlimited amount of time donors can leave money in them after receiving an immediate tax deduction.**

Christians should be particularly concerned about this issue. Scripture never presents stewardship as merely the accumulation of resources for future generosity. Jesus had harsh words for the rich man who built a bigger storehouse to hold his wealth. God tells the man "You fool. This very night your life is demanded of you" (Luke 12:20). James warned believers against postponing obedience until tomorrow (James 4:13-17). Biblical stewardship emphasizes faithful deployment, not perpetual planning.

Christian donors should treat donor-advised funds as conduits rather than warehouses. Donor-advised funds remain a valuable tool. But tools exist to accomplish work. They are not ends in themselves. The measure of Christian stewardship has never been how much we reserve for charity. It has always been how faithfully we put those resources to work.



Lutheran Disaster Response is a trusted partner in U.S Communities impacted by Wildfires and Flooding. Learn more or donate at :

<https://www.elca.org/giving/lutheran-disaster-response>

Music Notes....



Please contact Jung Lee at jungmusic@locic.org for how you can be involved with the music program.

With gratitude and excitement,
Jung Lee



Calling All Bakers

Cookie Ministry is looking for people who like to bake. The Cookie Ministry is part of the Faith in Action programs at Love of Christ. This ministry makes cookies for our various events that are held here on our campus and beyond our campus. If you are interested in baking cookies for this ministry, please contact Eunice Ketterling at ketts4az@gmail.com

Community Garden News



Think about trying out a garden in the fall. We are all learning new things and getting to know new people in the fresh air. Contact Nancy. Dntoll74@gmail.com



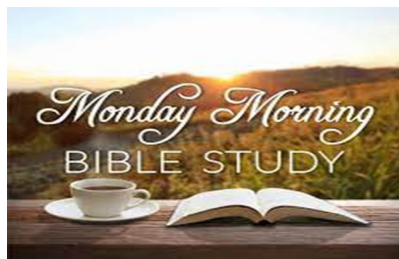
Naomi Circle will meet on August 10th, at 1PM in the Fellowship Hall. All women are welcome—invite your friends!



Monday Men's Bible Study on 1st Corinthians at 6:30-7:30AM in the Leadership Room. Men of all ages are welcome to participate.



Online Video introductions provided by our pastors of Sunday Lectionary readings are offered each week. They may be found on Facebook, YouTube or loveofchristchurch.net



**Monday Morning Bible Study in the Leadership Room
Coffee Fellowship at 10:30AM, Bible Study at 11AM**



Prayer Share Care Women's Bible Study

All women are invited to a weekly Bible study group called Prayer Share Care. ***This group meets on Thursday afternoons at 1:00 PM in the Leadership Room.*** Please contact Ruth Leonard or Margrit Aeschbach at the following emails for more information. (Margrit: mswiss43@gmail.com and Ruth: ruthleonard@icloud.com)



Youth meets on Wednesdays at 6:00 pm in Youth room.
Contact Mason Weatherly for more info at masonw@loclc.org



Confirmation

Confirmation will resume in September. Any questions, please contact Pastor Nanette at nanette@loclc.org

Faith Food and Fun



Grades 4,5, and 6 will meet again on Sunday, August 9th 3:30-5:00 pm. Please contact Laura Ontiveros (laurakuegemann@gmail.com) for more information.



COOLING CENTER

SUNDAYS IN JULY ONLY



2PM – 5PM



Love of Christ Lutheran Church

1525 North Power Road,
Mesa Arizona 85205



AIR CONDITIONING

Cool indoor space
to relax.



WATER

Stay hydrated
with free water.



SNACKS

Light snacks
available.



SERVICE ANIMALS

Service animals
are welcome.



FAMILIES WELCOMED

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME.
STAY COOL. STAY SAFE.**



Sunday School will begin in August! Children age 4 to grade 2 come to church with their parents and are dismissed for Sunday School after the Children's Message. They return to worship during Communion. For grades 3-6, Sunday school begins at 9:50AM and they are done at 10:20AM. Sunday School takes place in the Godly Play room. For any questions, please contact Pastor Nanette at nanette@locic.org.

Summer Overview for 2026 Save the Dates:

Blessing of the Backpacks Sunday, July 26, 9:00 am Kids bring your backpack and you will receive a special something to put in it!

Family Promise August 2-9.

Donation Opportunities

Donations needed for sack lunches to be given to Christ's Church respite center and for our own cooling center. Items needed:

Tuna or Chicken packs, Vienna Sausage small cans, soft chewy granola bars, boxes of a variety or chips or crackers, boxes of Capri-Sun. These items for sack lunches will be collected throughout the summer. (July-September)

Living Water Cooling Center and meals at Christ's Church Respite Center

This July, Love of Christ Lutheran Church will open its doors on Sunday afternoons from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. as a designated Cooling Center, providing a place of welcome, rest, and relief from Arizona's summer heat.

As temperatures continue to rise, many in our community face dangerous conditions, especially those who are unhoused or living in mobile homes and other residences that can become extremely hot during the day. Our Cooling Center will offer a safe, air-conditioned space where neighbors can come to cool down, enjoy a cold drink, and experience hospitality and care.

We are grateful for the overwhelming response from our congregation. At this time, we have all the volunteers needed to staff the Cooling Center throughout July. Thank you to everyone who has stepped forward to serve and to all who have supported this ministry through your prayers, encouragement, and generosity. If you have questions about this ministry please contact Charles Martiny at cmartiny@cox.net.



Water Donation: Last year we donated water to the City of Mesa and to Grace in the City Lutheran Church. The money that is donated will be sent to these two organizations. If you would like to donate water, please place money labeled "Water Donation" in the offering plate, or go online and specify water donation, or bring a gift card.

Love of Christ is also partnering with Christ Church Respite Center, which serves members of the Mesa community who need a safe place of rest and support. In addition to our Cooling Center ministry, we will be helping provide meals on Fridays at the Respite Center. If you are interested in volunteering with this ministry, please contact Cindy Wallin (cgeorgen3199@gmail.com) or Melissa Weiss-Riner (melissa@azfls.com) for more information.

As we did last year we will also be providing sack lunches to Christ's Church Respite Center and for our Cooling Center as well. If you have any questions about this please contact Patti Delaney at pattidelaney03@gmail.com. Items needed for donation are listed under donations opportunities on previous page.

These ministries reflect our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul reminds us, "Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). Through simple acts of compassion, hospitality, and service, we have the opportunity to care for our neighbors and share the love of Christ in tangible ways.

Please continue to keep these ministries, our volunteers, and all who seek refuge from the heat, hunger, or hardship in your prayers. May God use these efforts to provide comfort, safety, and a reminder that every person is valued, welcomed, and loved.

Company is Coming! Family Promise will be here Aug. 2-9

In Operation since 2000, Family Promise – Greater Phoenix has provided more than just shelter for families. For the past 19 years, the programs at Family Promise have helped more than 500 families. These programs have enabled families to move from homelessness to self-sufficiency.

The Family Promise Mission is providing emergency shelter and social services to help families move toward independent housing and self-sufficiency.

Vision: The Vision of Family Promise is a community of whole and healthy families.

At Family Promise, we give families the tools and training to care for their children, find employment and housing, and become independent and successful. We strive to provide a safety net for children and their families before they drop into a cycle of endless shelters, loss of school attendance, unemployment, family instability and foster care.

Family Promise provides basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter, but we also provide a safe, encouraging, and constructive environment for families that feel lost and scared. Family Promise's long-term goal is to break the cycle of homelessness and create a sense of community for the families that participate in the program, and the thousands of volunteers that have contributed to this program over the years.

(cont'd on next page)

Family Promise..cont'd

Congregations

Congregations are at the heart of our work. More than two dozen congregations provide temporary shelter, meals, activities and compassion to our families. Up to four families are housed on the campus of each congregation for a week at a time, providing a safe, accepting environment. Each morning, a Family Promise van brings family members to the Family Center, where the children may depart for school, some adults may head to work and others continue their job search. Each evening, the families return to the congregation for dinner, activities and an overnight stay in their own room or area.

Here are some opportunities in which we can serve our guests:

Join the behind the scenes set up and tear down crew.

Family Promise starts August 2nd and we are in need of volunteers for setting up on August 1st at 9:30 a.m., taking down on Sunday August 9th at 10:30 a.m., and laundry angels to wash the sheet sets and towels. Laundry is picked up at 10:45am on August 9th and returned to church during the week after Family Promise or the following Sunday, August 16th. We appreciate anyone that can help. If you can, please email Rhonda Vaglio at rvaglio128@gmail.com. Thank you to this congregation that is so willing to help both by volunteering and financial help. Blessings to all.

Be a host and welcome our guests. Hosts stay for about 2 hours (5:30-7:30) and eat a meal with the families. Elizabeth Danielson is in charge of scheduling our hosts, please contact her at ekdanielson@gmail.com.

Prepare a dinner, or split dinner responsibilities with another friend/member. Patti Delaney is in charge of scheduling our cooks! Please contact her at pattidelaney03@gmail.com

Overnighters: There are not many times when a volunteer can serve the Lord in their sleep! We need people to spend the night as part of the requirement of Family Promise. The overnighiter usually arrives around 7:00PM and leaves with the families at 5:30 am! Weekend times are 7:30 am. For more information on becoming an overnighiter please contact Rebecca and Jake Solomon at azsunnysolomons@gmail.com or Melissa Weiss Riner at melissa@azfls.com

**Thank
You**

Thank you for everyone who helped with Vacation Bible School.

A special thank you to Laura Ontiveros for leading our VBS! We are so fortunate to have had 100 kids who learned about Jesus. Who knows what the Holy Spirit will be doing in their lives! Also, thank you for the many donations for the backpacks, sack lunches, and water bottles! This congregation is "blessed to be a blessing".



Women's Wednesday Afternoon Bible Study will resume on Wednesday, September 2nd at 4:30PM in the Fellowship Hall with a study on Ephesians.



Watch enews for next Young Adult meeting!

Refugee Family Co-Sponsorship with Lutheran Social Services:

Our Co-Sponsorship Team has been helping a refugee family from Syria. The help that is needed is working with the adults who are learning English. This team is making wonderful progress and forming some beautiful relationships with the family as well. We have provided back to school clothing and backpacks for each of the four children, along with teaching them English. If you are interested in learning more or think you might like to join this team, please contact Chris Norden at

norden6162@gmail.com

BLANKETS FOR KIDS!!!



Questions? Contact Jan Barnett at: barnett105@gmail.com

- 2 Methods of finishing the edges of the blankets
- Sewing around the edges
- Crocheting around the edges
- Both methods start the same

Lay Fabric on a table, trim off the Salvage edges of the fleece;

- Sewing around the edges

Fold $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 inch around the edge ;

Pin the folded edges all around the edge;

Choose a decorative stitch on sewing machine and start sewing

If your machine only does Zig Zag, that is great also.

- Optional--Baste $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of fold around the edge of the fleece with a needle and thread (Optional)

OR

- Just fold the fabric over about $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch and cut very small slits in the fold;
- Slits should be no more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch in length and around $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{5}{8}$ inch from the each other
- If you basted around the edges

Remove the basting from the fleece

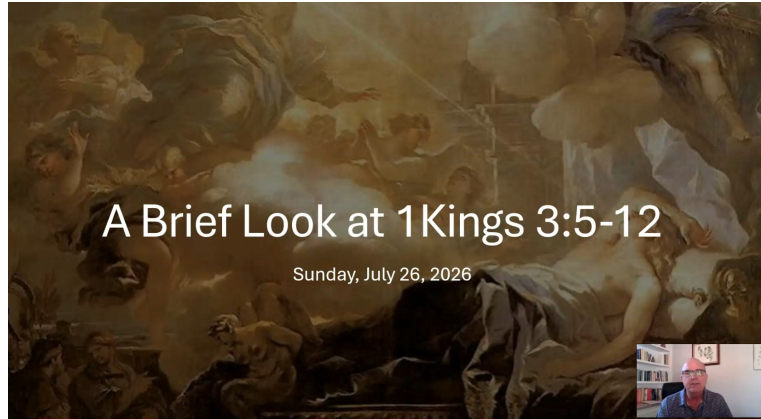
- If you have a rotary cutter, you can purchase wheels that will cut the slits in the fleece material the same distance and the slit created is large enough to slip the crochet hook through. Then follow the remaining directions.
- If you just folded and cut the slits;

Start crocheting around the edge. (I start 6 or 7 inches from the corner of the fleece to make turning the first corner easier.)

1. Start by creating a slipknot.
2. Insert the crochet hook through a slit in the fleece and pull the loop of the slip knot through;
3. Chain 3 times (create a chain by yarning over the hook and pulling it back through the initial loop.); chain only 2 times if you have used the rotary cutter;
4. Push the crochet hook through the slit next to the one just used (back to front) and pull a loop back through the slit. (You will have 2 loops on the crochet hook.)
5. With the 2 loops still on the hook, yarn over the hook and pull through both loops. Now chain 2 more times.
6. Proceed around the fleece using steps 4 and 5.
7. To turn a corner, follow steps 4 and 5, but insert the hook again in the same slit and do 1 chain and then insert the hook again and perform steps 4 and 5, Then you should be on a new side of the blanket and proceed following steps 4 and 5

There is an additional set of slides which have instructions on how to start crocheting. If you do not need those instructions, ignore.

Scripture Lesson
A Brief Look at 1 Kings 3:5-12
with Pastor Steve Talmage
(13 min)



YouTube: <https://youtu.be/gNn-U3pZwuA>

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/reel/1566517041596800/>

Website: <https://www.loveofchristchurch.net/media/series/7vjwfnk/bible-lessons>

Scripture Lesson
A Brief Look at Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52
with Pastor Steve Talmage
(12 min)



YouTube: <https://youtu.be/cUBhMkSwf20>

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/reel/1053409557140140/>

Website: <https://www.loveofchristchurch.net/media/series/7vjwfnk/bible-lessons>

Sunday, July 26, 2026, 7:50 am, 9 and 10:30,

some on



&



Pastor Steve Talmage “The Smallest of All the Seeds”

1 Kings 3:5-12

At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, “Ask what I should give you.” And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people of yours?”

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. God said to him, “Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you.

Romans 8:26-39

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”