

Love of Christ Lutheran Church

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Welcome to LOC's Weekly E-News

ENews for the 18th Sunday after Pentecost, September 27, 2026



Battling the Authorities

Jesus had caused quite a stir by driving out the money changers from the Temple. After taking a day outside Jerusalem, he returns only to be confronted with the very authorities whose religious-economic enterprise has been so rudely disrupted by Jesus' previous actions.

They have questions about his authority challenging their authority. Remember these religious leaders exist in their privileged status, by permission granted by the Roman authorities which required the leaders to maintain peace at all costs.

Jesus is ready for this encounter and uses the common technique of rabbis. He answers a question with another question.

His question raises the potential of a higher authority, then these leaders' position, education, and influence. Jesus' questions about John the Baptist dares to raise the idea that God is free to operate above and beyond the limits, the controls, the entitlements, or the presumptions we dare to claim as coming from God but have little to do with God.

Emotion + Isolation = Manipulative Control

Our aging population is both a vulnerable and lucrative target. Always suspect phone calls, texts, emails, or letters which are promising something you have not necessarily sought, making a request to contact or purchase something which seems out of the blue; always hit pause before responding, so you can verify with family members, friends or even the church before acting. Don't share personal or sensitive information on social media. Use privacy settings on your social media accounts.



Gallery

Worship is God's art gallery.

She sets out a few beautiful things
to watch us come in our glory.

We look at the beautiful things
but God gazes at us.

We cover ourselves under the veil
of "I'm not good enough,"
or the shroud of "I'm not as bad as some,"
but God lifts them both alike from us,
and gazes at us as we truly are,
God's works of art,
and delights.

Steve Garnaas-Holmes
Unfolding Light
www.unfoldinglight.net



**Lutheran Disaster Response provides partnership support to recent
communities flooded in Nepal**

<https://www.elca.org/how-we-serve/relief-and-development/lutheran-disaster-response>

Communities in Nepal are facing catastrophic loss after deadly, devastating floods. On Aug. 26, powerful floodwaters carrying glacial ice and mud swept down the Himalayas through a mountain valley. Hundreds of people have died, and hundreds more remain missing as families are waiting for news of loved ones. Homes have been destroyed, roads and bridges are gone, and entire communities are struggling to access basic necessities.

Our hearts break for all those affected.

Even with limited communication from the affected area, we are already hearing tragic stories of loss, and we know the needs will be significant.

Lutheran Disaster Response has long-standing relationships with trusted partners throughout Nepal. With your help, we will support emergency relief and long-term recovery through these established partners who know their communities best.



**Our 40th Anniversary \$40,000 Mission Challenge Appeal to support Crossroads Lutheran Church in San Tan Valley and First Evangelical Lutheran in Mesa stands at \$29,850. Can we reach our goal by the end year?
Thank you for considering a gift to support mission partners.**



**Interested in Joining Love of Christ?
Our next New Member Orientation will be:**

**Sunday, September 27 from 11:45AM-2:00PM
in the Fellowship Hall.**

**Contact: Dianne Oien (dianneoien@loclc.org)
for more information.**

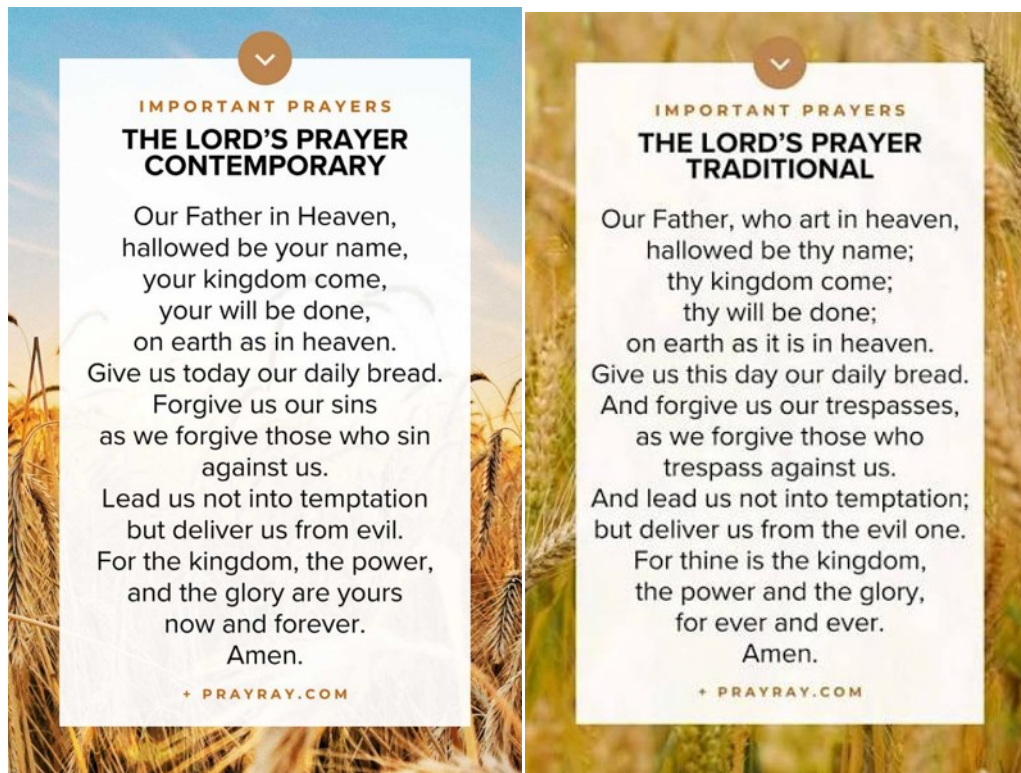


This fall, the Let ABC15 Know team will celebrate 10 years of bringing free consumer help to the community through its annual "On the Road" event at Tempe Marketplace. This runs from 5 to 7 p.m. at the District Stage, located in the middle of the main shopping center next to Dave & Buster's.

**Free CONSUMER HELP EVENT
Tempe Town Lake on Oct. 20th 5PM-7PM**

For more information:

<https://www.abc15.com/news/let-abc15-know/on-the-road-with-let-abc15-know-celebrates-10-years-of-free-consumer-help-at-tempe-marketplace>



Why Different Versions of the Lord's Prayer?

Lutherans officially incorporated the use of ICET (International Consultation on English Texts) in 1978 with the publication of the milestone Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW). The introduction of these modern texts played out across the major North American Lutheran bodies with varying degrees of adoption: The Breakthrough (1978): The LBW (affectionately known as the "Green Book") was a joint liturgical project.

It widely introduced the 1975 ICET modern translations—including the Lord's Prayer ("Our Father in heaven... save us from the time of trial")—to the churches that would later form the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)** and the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC)**. The "Dual Text" Compromise: Much like other denominations during the 1970s, the LBW did not completely abandon historic language. To ease the transition for congregations, the hymnal printed both the Traditional version (debts/trespases) and the Contemporary ICET version side by side.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS): While the LCMS participated in the early development of the LBW, they ultimately withdrew from its publication and chose to retain the traditional English formatting for the Lord's Prayer. In their subsequent hymnals, such as the Lutheran Service Book (2006), the LCMS stuck strictly to the traditional wording. When the ELCA and ELCIC released their current primary hymnal, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW)* in 2006, they updated the contemporary option to the 1988 ELLC text (the direct successor to ICET).



Members of the Love of Christ Church Board and the Faith in Action Committee, along with interested volunteers, recently toured the Phoenix offices of Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest (LSS-SW). Called by God's love, LSS-SW focuses on serving our neighbors, a purpose the organization has been fulfilling in southern Arizona for more than 50 years. Through their offices in Phoenix and Tucson and satellite centers in Douglas and Sierra Vista, LSS-SW provides services to about 70,000 people annually. Love of Christ has worked in partnership with LSS-SW since the church's founding. In fact, early in our church's history, we provided office space to some LSS-SW employees.

During our visit, we learned about several of the programs administered by LSS-SW. We met some of the women who participate in the "Women's Empowerment Program." Approximately sixteen women at a time spend three months learning to sew and/or create products that they can make at home and sell. The women also learn English as well as some of the basic skills needed to be entrepreneurs.

We talked with some of the refugee resettlement case workers who welcome refugees, assist them with finding housing, connecting with local services, enrolling their children in school, and finding jobs. At present, LSS-SW is accepting Afrikaner families from South Africa as the result of a presidential executive order.

A team from Love of Christ has been working for the past year with the Ali family who were resettled from Syria through LSS-SW.

Our tour included short visits with the new executive team, the head of accounting services, and the director of Family & Community Services. Family & Community Services works with foster families, administers food pantries (like the ones at Victory and First Evangelical Lutheran Churches that we support), and runs several Family Resource Centers (FRCs) which provide services to preschool children and their parents.

Out of the Tucson office, LSS-SW provides care-giver services to about 500 elderly and disabled clients who need the support in order to stay in their own homes. The organization is talking about expanding that program to the Phoenix-metro area.

As a church, we make financial gifts to LSS-SW through funds administered by the Faith in Action Committee and the Church Board. Individuals regularly provide gifts of food for the two East Valley food pantries. Our Reverse Advent food boxes also go to the families helped by these pantries. Our back-to-school clothing drive provides new clothes to children in the refugee, foster care, and FRC programs.

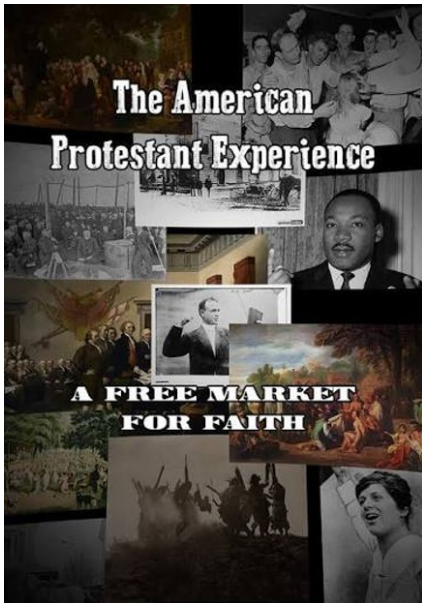
We learned that the refugee families that LSS-SW supports and are holders of green cards are losing Medicaid and SNAP (food stamp) benefits due to provisions of the "Big Beautiful Bill" passed earlier this year by Congress. LSS-SW is accepting grocery store gift cards to help these families. If you would like to make a donation, we suggest gift cards in denominations of \$25 or \$50 from Fry's, Bashas', Walmart, or Safeway as these are the grocery stores with a presence in central and west Phoenix where many of these families live.

For their Christmas drive this year, LSS-SW is asking for two things: (1) new colored towel sets (no white please) which include a bath towel, hand towel, and washcloth for individuals in the elderly and disabled program and (2) new toys, games, sporting equipment, arts and crafts, or gift cards for children and families across programs. If you wish to make a personal donation, you may do so through the LSS-SW Amazon gift registry. Gifts purchased this way are delivered directly to the LSS-SW office building. Here is the link:

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/35E007E1LVV8M?ref=wl_share

Elizabeth Danielson is the designated Love of Christ "Congregational Connector" with LSS-SW. Feel free to contact her with questions at ekdanielson@gmail.com or 480-710-5032.





New Adult Study, Wednesday, at 6:00PM in the Fellowship Hall

It's no accident that America is home to a wide range of religious expressions. Immigrants brought their faith with them from around the globe and established churches and denominations. But the most unique quality of American religious life is the innovation and experimentation that takes place here. This makes this country a free marketplace for faith.

This series documents the eternal argument about the relationship between the church and civil authority. The country's founders, seeing the intolerance of the early immigrants, wisely sought to create a republic where faith could be practiced freely but where a theocracy would be avoided.



Church Potluck—sponsored by Hospitality Team

Friday, September 25th

5 pm to 7 pm

Rooms 48 thru 50 in Center of Compassion

The Hospitality Team is bringing back an LOC favorite social event - the church potluck. Please join us in the COC rooms 48-49-50 for fellowship and good food.



Wondering what to bring to share? We are using the traditional “alphabet-what to bring” code—last name beginning with:

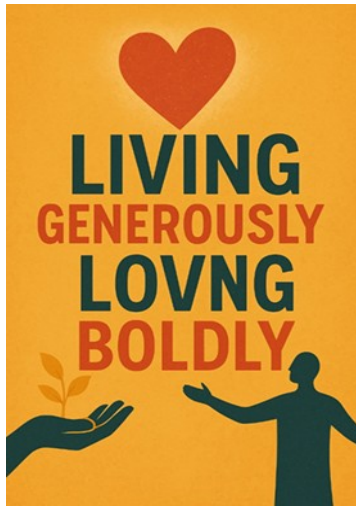
A-H: appetizer

I-P: main dish

Q-Z: dessert

Hospitality will have our coffee bar.

Ask us questions at pattidelaney03@gmail.com, or at Hospitality Hour on Sundays in the Outreach Room. We look forward to sharing time together and hope to see you there!



Love of Christ is a community of people living generously and loving boldly.

Recently households received the LoC Board ENews Update for September. Board meetings are open to the public every second Tuesday of the month at 6PM in the Leadership Room.

What many Board members share from past experience in previous congregations is how little time is spent on the monthly Treasurer's report, and most financial decisions or actions are driven by supporting recommendations from our Faith in Action Team to support our partnerships locally and globally in loving our neighbor as needs are brought to our attention and relationships are developed.

There are not hand-wringing or long-winded debates on where we are going to find the funds to do what God wants us to do. The Board and this congregation are increasingly learning you can't out-give God if you are doing God's work of loving one's neighbor as Christ loves us.

Every year our households are encouraged to pray about using the financial resources entrusted to their management or stewardship by God and offer a portion of those to spread the good news, to address real needs of our neighbors, and to support the daily work of this congregation in equipping disciples of Christ. Saints of this congregation have died, others have made moves to position themselves closer to family, and the numbers of new disciples joining this congregation is not huge. But despite the obvious, what is clear if you look at our monthly update and annual report-God provides!

Your generosity and acts of love are not limited by demographics that might cause us to think otherwise. Thank you!



Emotional Triggers: The Tactics that Scammers use to manipulate You

1. Craving love and companionship
2. Desire for financial security on a big win
3. Concern for family members or pets
4. Fear of legal trouble or financial loss
5. Need for purpose and excitement



Continuing the Love of Christ Endowment News

Legacy gifts to the Love of Christ Endowment Fund provide long-term support for Love of Christ Lutheran's mission. Because we are a part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America our members have access to **FREE** Legacy Gift Planners.

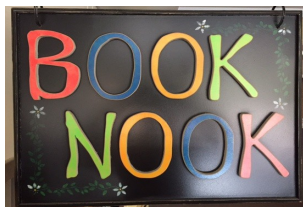
Planning Your Legacy

ELCA regional gift planners are available to meet with individuals and congregations to steward their assets. Gift planners will discuss with donors any charitable donation they want to make, including those connected to Lutheran ministries, and consider end-of-life planning and gifts to family and other loved ones.

Visit the website of the foundation. [ELCA.org/contact](https://elca.org/contact) to find your gift planner and schedule a meeting today.

We are deeply grateful for every person helping carry the love of Christ forward. As of August 31, 2026, our LoC Endowment Fund balance is **\$157,044.36**. To learn more about this Fund go to <https://loveofchristchurch.net/endowment>

Book Nook News



The **Book Nook** is looking for donations of new or used books that you no longer need or want to save. Our book supply has not been replenished for a while, and we are looking for books that would be of interest to people shopping in the Book Nook on Sunday mornings. We are especially looking for novels, nonfiction books, and books of a religious/spiritual nature published within the last 10 years which would be from 2016-2026. If you have any to donate, please drop them off at the Book Nook on Sunday morning or they can be dropped off in the church office during weekdays. Barb and I thank you in advance.

Penny Day

Please join us in upcoming Sleep in Heavenly Peace bed deliveries....

Kids without beds....This is a need in many communities that I was not even aware existed—it is something most of us have not experienced and were not even aware of the need.

But Sleep in Heavenly Peace here in Phoenix has been hard at work to make sure that “No Kid Sleeps on the Floor in Our Town!” and has delivered over 11,000 beds in the valley in the last 7 years.

There is nothing quite like seeing the joy of a child who is receiving a bed, complete with mattress, pillow, bedding, stuffed toy and book. Come and experience this for yourself, and help give a child a safe place to sleep and call their own.

We help deliver beds on the 3rd Saturday of the month from the East Valley hub located at St Luke Lutheran Church in Mesa. It's a half day of your time, with a fun group of folks committed to making children in our community a priority. It's easy to bring the beds and assemble them and make them up with handmade quilts, fleece blankets, sheets and stuffies - all tools are provided and there is easy hands-on instruction for beginners. We are also so grateful for the many donors of blankets, sheets, stuffies and books.

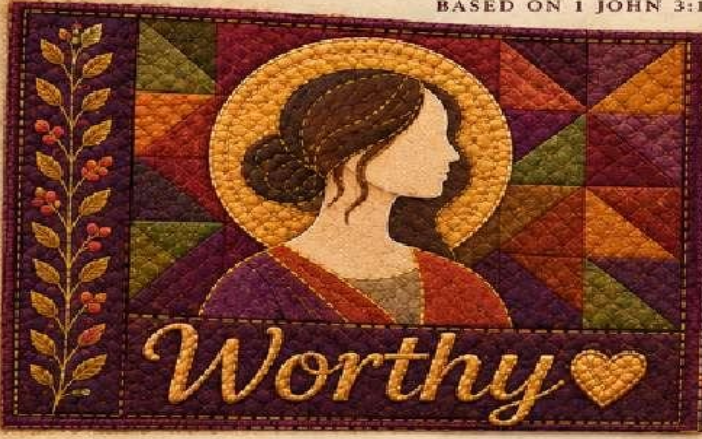
If you would like to get involved, text or call JoAnn Grant at 571-334-5028



GRAND CANYON WOMEN'S RETREAT 2026

We Are Worthy

A sacred day of connection, sisterhood,
and spiritual renewal.
BASED ON 1 JOHN 3:1-2



**SATURDAY,
NOVEMBER 14, 2026**

8:30 AM – 4:00 PM

**LOVE OF CHRIST
LUTHERAN'S
COMPASSION CENTER**
1525 N Power Rd
Mesa, AZ 85205

RETREAT HIGHLIGHTS

-  **Music with Christina Hall**
-  **Bible Study on the theme with Rev. Dr. Adele Resmer**
-  **Keynote Address: *Beloved, you belong* with Dr. Jennifer Hockenbery, Executive Director, Women of the ELCA**
-  **Hands-on Painting Activity *"Lavished in Love"***
-  **Closing Worship with Music and Communion**

SPECIAL NOTES

-  In-kind Offering: Christmas towel sets (2 towels, 2 handtowels) in colors other than white for LSS-SW Christmas gifting.
-  Complimentary registration to all rostered women in the GC Synod.
-  Complimentary scholarships available to lay women of color.

Join us

for a transformative day reminding every woman that she is chosen, loved, and *worthy*.

REGISTER TODAY!



Scan the QR code or visit grandcanyonwomen.org/events/

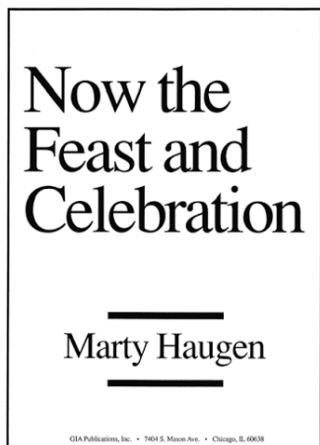
ALL WOMEN WELCOME!

All ladies are invited to join in the fun at the **Grand Canyon Women of the ELCA Retreat** on **November 14th, 2026 from 8:30 - 4:00 here at Love of Christ.**

Cost is \$40.00 and that includes breakfast treats and coffee, music with award winning soloist/pianist, Bible Study, Keynote Speaker, Hands-on painting activity, lunch, and closing worship with communion.

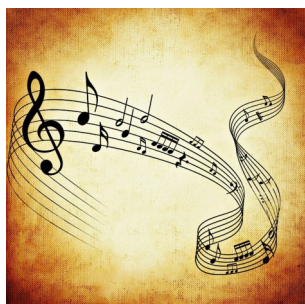
They will be accepting in-kind donations of towel sets (no whites please). They would like complete sets ~ 2 of each ~ wash cloths, hands towels, and bath towels.

Additional information and registration can be found on the Grand Canyon Women of the ELCA webpage. [Upcoming Events - Grand Canyon Women](#) Contact person: Pat Shaw @ 480 334-9123



Our Traditional 7:50 and 10:30 Liturgy in the Sanctuary moves to Marty Haugen's "Now the Feast and Celebration" for the last half of the Pentecost Season.

Music Notes....



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

Choir practice on Thursdays, 6PM to 8PM in Sanctuary.

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



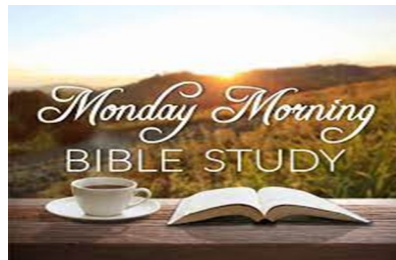
Naomi Circle will meet on: October 12th, at 1PM in the Fellowship Hall. All women are welcome—invite your friends!



**Monday Men's Bible Study on 2nd 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 will be meeting on Sundays for Sunday Morning Hangout from 10:00am to 12:00pm
Contact Mason Weatherly at: masonw@locic.org



Confirmation

Confirmation will meet on Wed. September 23rd, from 6:00-7:00 pm

Faith Food and Fun



Grades 4,5, and 6 will meet on Sunday, October 18th, 3:30-5:00 pm. Please contact:
Laura Ontiveros (laurakuegemann@gmail.com) for more information.



Sunday School has begun! Sunday School is offered for ages pre-K-6th grade. Sunday School takes place in the Godly Playroom. Children come to church with their parents and are dismissed for Sunday School after the Children's Message. They return to worship during Communion. For families that attend 10:30 church, Sunday School is offered at 10:00 -10:25 in the Godly Playroom. For any questions, please contact Pastor Nanette at: nanette@locic.org

Children and Youth Ministry Fall Overview for 2026-Save the Dates

Children's Musical Rehearsal every Wednesday at 6:00 pm Light dinner at 5:30 for anyone.

Grades 4,5,6 meet Sunday, October 18, 3:30-5:00 pm in the CoC

Sunday School Every Sunday in Godly Play Room

Youth Sunday Hangout at 10:00 in the Youth Room

Confirmation Every Wednesday (6:00-7:00)

Service Opportunities-Save the Date!

October: Fall Festival October 23 5:00-7:00 pm

November: Feed My Starving Children: Nov. 5,6, and 7 Gift cards for food banks to purchase Turkeys

December: Gifts for kids, Reverse Advent Boxes, and Family Promise

Ongoing Donations:

Shelf stable food for Victory Food Bank and First Evangelical Food Bank

Sleep In Heavenly Peace: Twin Bed Sheets



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



The Faith in Action Team would like to welcome Jim Melzer.

He is the new Love Of Christ Lutheran Advocacy Ministry (LAMA) liaison and will soon be sharing with us the group's thoughts on the 2026 Arizona Ballot Propositions.

You can reach Jim at: jmelzer@comcast.net

What does our Lutheran faith have to do with government, elections, public policy and political participation?

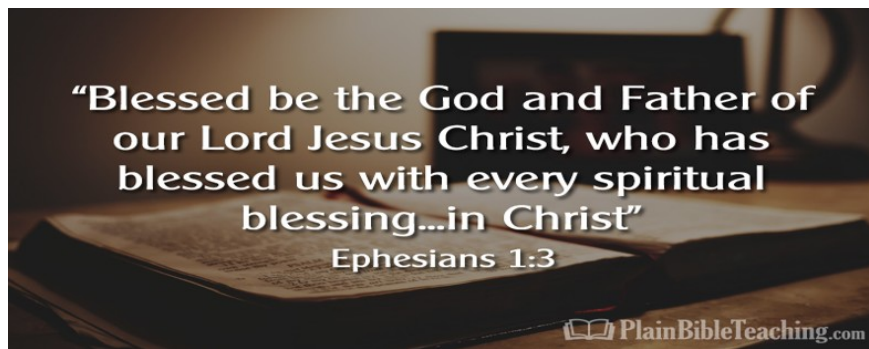
The Lutheran Advocacy Ministry of Arizona (LAMA) is a ministry of the ELCA and the Grand Canyon Synod. Love of Christ has been a faithful LAMA supporter and the group reminds us that Christians are called to take responsibility for the good of all through civic participation.

As midterm elections draw near, Arizona voters are being asked to vote on ballot measures that can change state law or amend the Arizona Constitution. These measures may look short on the ballot, but their effects can be long-lasting. Some are technical. Some are controversial. Some sound simple but include details that matter deeply for our neighbors, schools, communities and public life.

That's why LAMA has prepared a 2026 Arizona Proposition Voter Guide. To be clear, this is only a guide to Arizona ballot propositions, not candidates. Click on the link below to find a simple explanation of each proposition, a LAMA voting recommendation, and a detailed statement on the LAMA position on each proposition.

<https://lamaz.org/news-blog/introducing-lamas-2026-voter-guide>

If you'd like to be more engaged in our LAMA efforts, please contact our liason person Jim Melzer at jmelzer@comcast.net.



Women's Monthly Bible Study will meet again on Wednesday, October 14th from 4:30-5:30 pm in Fellowship hall. The study will be on Ephesians.

No homework. One hour. Enjoy great discussions. All are welcome.

Barb Talmage and Pastor Nanette

Next Dates: Nov 4, Dec 2, Jan 6, Feb 3, No March (lent) and April 7th.



Young Adults will meet again on October 18 at 12:00 in the CoC. Come ready to hike! If you have questions, please contact Pastor Nanette at nanette@loccl.org.

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 edge
- 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 Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32
with Pastor Steve Talmage
(12 min)

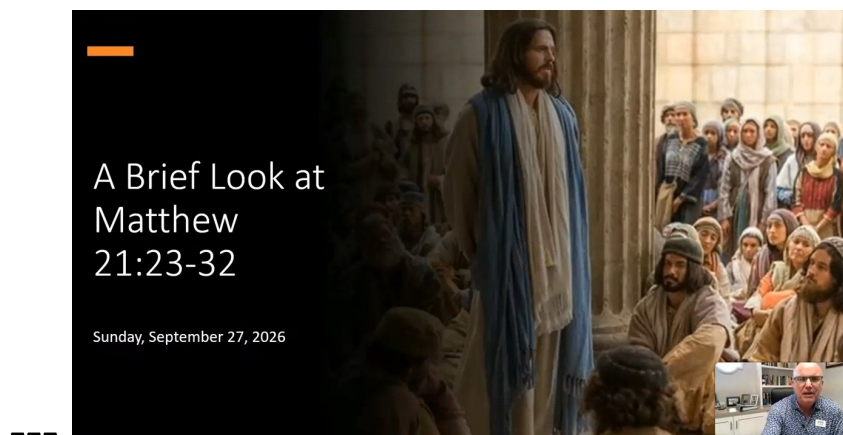


YouTube: <https://youtu.be/KvhOYmSZv4w>

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/reel/2074082246584834/>

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

Scripture Lesson
A Brief Look at Matthew 21:23-32
with Pastor Steve Talmage
(8 min)



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

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/reel/1350487397157272/>

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

Sunday, September 27th, 2026, 7:50 am, 9 and 10:30,

some on



&



Pastor Steve Talmage “Battling the Authorities”

Ezekial 18: 1-4, 25-32

The word of the Lord came to me: What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”? As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins who shall die.

Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed, they shall die. Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel?

For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

Philippians 2:1-13

If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was ^[a] in Christ Jesus,

who, though he existed in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be grasped,
but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
assuming human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a human,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

Therefore God exalted him even more highly

and gave him the name
that is above every other name,
so that at the name given to Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Matthew 21:23-32

When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why, then, did you not believe him?’ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet.” So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him.