

January 2026

Splash!

*"Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst."
John 4:14*



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Happy
New
Year
2026!



9201 E Happy Valley Road / Scottsdale, AZ 85255

We Remember in Our Prayers

- Amanda (Daughter of Cherrie Heidemann-Oglesby)—Health Concerns
- Jeff & Eric Bembry (Friends of Diane vanMaanen)—Health Concerns
- Barbara Brooks—Health Concerns
- Lizzy Caddow (Friend of Diane Salinas)—Cancer
- Christi (Daughter of Charlie and Sue Boyd)—Health Concerns
- Debbie Connor (Friend of Frances DeBruyn)—Terminal Melanoma
- Adrian Corr (Brother-in-law of Brian Goebel, living in Turks)—Cancer
- Larry Coutts—Recurring Health Issues
- Katie Dawson (Daughter of Tod and Bonnie Dawson)—Health Concerns
- Angelika Dumpf (Wife of Brett Stone)—Health Concerns
- Jenna Fjeld—Health Concerns
- Dave and Joy Gallimore—Health Concerns
- Frank Gasparino—Health Concerns
- Mike Handley—Health Concerns
- Kyle and Tyler Hornacek (Grandsons of John and Sue Hornacek)—Life Concerns
- John (Friend of Diane vanMaanen)
- Tom Kelland—Health Concerns
- Owen Lucas (Grandson of Jay & Lois Lucas)—Health Concerns
- Matt (Jim and Alison Swanson)—Health Concerns
- Barbara Nelson (Sister of Pat and Janet Guthrie)
- Heidi Patten (Cousin of Pat Gruthrie)—In Hospice
- Gene and Shirley Perry—Health Concerns
- Tony Rasmussen (Brother of Karen Syversen)—Recovering From Surgery
- Jana Richter (Family Member of Henri & Lynda Breault)—Health Concerns
- Kathie Roenigk—Health Concerns
- Del Rogge—Heart Concerns
- Regan Shea (Friend of Pastor Mark)—Health Concerns
- Geri Skogen (Friend of Myrna Ulland)—Post-operative Treatment
- Kristen Stenehjøm (Niece of Sue and Lee Stenehjøm)—Health Concerns
- Janet L. Swim (Sister of Brian Goebel)—Cancer
- Bob Ulland—Health Concerns
- Michael Umland (Son of Steve & Sue Umland)—Health Concerns
- Peter Vasiliades (Nephew of Rick Sherrin)—Health Concerns
- Kelly White (Neice of Sharon Westergreen)—Health Concerns
- Pr. Brian Weinberger (Bethlehem Lutheran in Mesa)—Recovering from auto accident
- Family and Friends of Pat Klein (Friends of Donna and Darnell Pettengill)
- Family and Friends of Yvonne Weber

Send your prayer requests to prayer@lwlcaz.org or fill out a card in the Narthex.

**If it is time to remove someone from the prayer list, please contact the front office.*

A Message from Pastor Shari

A January Invitation: Stepping Outside into God's Creation

January often carries a reputation for gray skies, icy roads, and the kind of cold that makes you want to stay indoors with a blanket and a warm, cozy drink. But here in Arizona, we are blessed with something different—mild days, crisp mornings, and sunshine that feels like a gentle gift from God. While much of the country is shoveling snow, we have the opportunity to step outside and breathe in the fresh air without bundling up in layers.

This is more than just a seasonal perk—it's an invitation.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."
(Psalm 19:1)

When we step outside, we are stepping into God's handiwork. The rustle of desert leaves, the warmth of the sun on our skin, the sight of mountains standing steadfast in the distance—all of these are reminders of His presence and His creativity.

Here are a few ways to make the most of this January gift:

1. Take a prayer walk. Whether it's around your neighborhood or on a desert trail, let your steps become a rhythm of gratitude.
2. Gather with friends outdoors. Share a picnic or a cup of coffee on your patio or in a park nearby.
3. Notice the details. The colors of the sunset, the shape of a cactus, the sound of birds—each is a small sermon in itself.

In a world that often keeps us busy and indoors, January in Arizona is a gentle reminder to slow down, look up, and let creation draw us closer to the Creator.

So this month, I encourage you: step outside. Let the sunshine warm your heart as much as it warms your skin. Let the beauty around you lead you into worship. And let's remember that every good day—especially these bright winter ones—is a gift to be received with joy.

God's peace,

Pastor Shari

Personal reflections on the **OPEN THE DOORS, DO MORE** campaign

Thanks to the generosity of the people of Living Water, the OPEN THE DOORS, DO MORE campaign is a financial success. The campaign also has impacted members in various ways. As Living Water moves forward, begins to eliminate mortgage payments and discusses numerous ministry and outreach ideas our congregation has suggested, it is also important to take time to reflect how the Holy Spirit's presence touched us as we prayerfully considered our individual commitments to OPEN THE DOORS, DO MORE. The following stories serve as examples of the campaign's lasting impact. Just as we celebrated Living Water's 25th anniversary last April -- and expressed our gratitude for a young congregation's foresight -- the elimination of our mortgage will also never be forgotten.

My spouse and I worked hard to pay off the mortgage for the home we lived in for 38 years. What a difference it made to our family finances. It's wonderful that enough money is being raised to pay off the church's mortgage -- so much more money can go to help other people and the community. That is a wonderful accomplishment.

When Living Water reached our goal, I was so very proud of our church. Seeing the members stretch their faith to make this vision a reality, inspired me to also stretch. This was a true Christmas gift to the community and to ourselves.

The success of the Do More campaign should not be a surprise to the community of Living Water. The planning and execution by our church leaders was most impressive. Equally impressive was the response of the congregation. I am proud to be a part of this family of generous and faithful believers. It will be a privilege to be a part of "doing more!"

With God's help, the people of Living Water will always join together to answer the call to serve. There will be a chance to celebrate our community and the new opportunities for expanded outreach and ministries. Please plan to attend this joyful event on January 25th after worship when we will figuratively burn one-half of our mortgage.

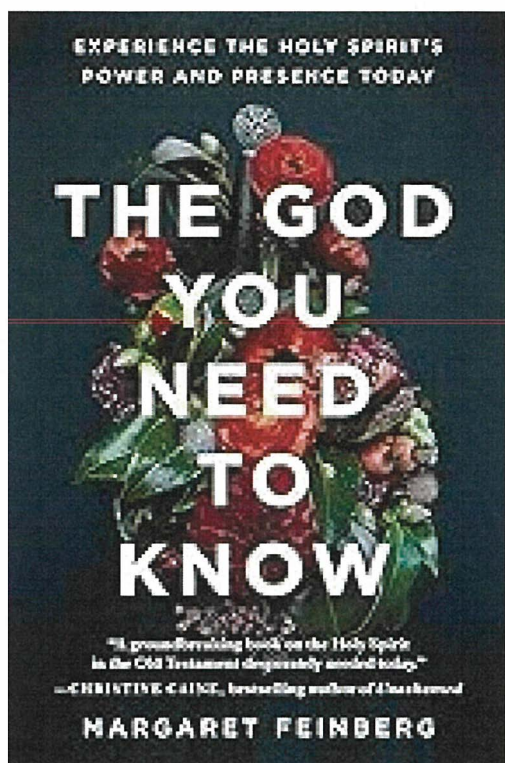


**COME AS YOU ARE
& JOIN OVER A
THOUSAND LUTHERAN
WOMEN IN DES
MOINES, IOWA,
JULY 16-19, 2026 FOR
WORSHIP, ADVOCACY,
INSPIRATION,
SISTERHOOD & MORE!**

VISIT: [WELCATG.ORG](https://welcatg.org)



Women of the **ELCA** ✦



TUESDAY WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY FOR JANUARY

The Tuesday Women's Bible study group is taking a holiday break on 12/23 and 12/31. We will resume on Tuesday, January 6 to begin a six-week video study using material from Margaret Feinberg titled "The God You Need to Know." She has written a book to accompany the study that is suggested but not required. The book is also available by Kindle. There is also an accompanying study guide but again, is not required. This study will focus on the work of the Holy Spirit throughout the Old

Testament. Just bring yourself and your favorite Bible translation. All women are welcome!

We meet on Tuesday mornings at 10 am in the Fellowship Hall and also by Zoom for approximately 90 minutes each week. If you aren't on our email communication list, please contact myrna.ulland@gmail.com to be added.

Dennis Nelson Bible Study

Weekly, published on our YouTube Channel

Wednesdays at NOON

Bible Study Outlines available on

our website: lwlcaz.org

Men's Bible Breakfast

We meet on Thursdays at 8:00am

\$8 for breakfast

Spirit in the Desert Retreat Center

7415 East Elbow Bend Rd.

Carefree, AZ 85377

LA SAGRADA FAMILIA LUTHERAN CHURCH 2025 TAMALES SALE

Every year in late December, members of La Sagrada Familia Lutheran Church gather for a very long day to make hundreds of tamales, assembling, steaming, and packaging them. As part of an important fundraiser for La Sagrada, they offer tamales for sale to our congregation.

This year members of Living Water purchased 33½ dozen tamales. The sale proceeds, including donations from people who rounded up the cost of their purchases, amounted to \$1,164.

We're grateful for this shared Christmas tradition and for members of Living Water who support the La Sagrada congregation in this way.

December Church Council Highlights

Pastor Shari announced the results of the Ladies' Christmas Tea. The afternoon included festive tables set by generous table hostesses, delicious treats, attentive servers, fabulous jewelry and wonderful fellowship. The event raised almost \$3,000 to defray the cost of the mission trip next summer.

The focus of the meeting was the preliminary 2026 budgeting process. Treasurer Steve Umland has been working to finalize the budget. However, so far, the level of pledges and commitments for 2026 is significantly below that of 2025. It is important for Steve to have a good idea of the potential income for 2026 to finalize the numbers.

In other financial news, the offerings in October and November have been generous and have made up much of the shortfall that existed earlier in the fall.

Finally, mark your calendar for Sunday, January 25th to celebrate this wonderful community and its generous response to the OPEN THE DOORS, DO MORE campaign.

Food Donations

Food insecurity is a continuous problem. Living Water contributes food and daily essentials, such as products for oral hygiene, diapers, school supplies and more, to local organizations on a continuing basis. We have two main destinations for our donations:

La Sagrada Familia Church: The grocery cart found in the Narthex during the week and outside on Sundays is for food and daily essential products.

Foothills Food Bank: Collection tubs placed in the Narthex with the sign "food donations" are for **tuna, peanut butter, and soups.**

THANK YOU for any and all donations you make. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

**THANK YOU LWLC for supporting
the ELCA GOOD GIFTS program.**

**You made it a special day for many
unfortunate families with your
donations.**

Goodbye 2025!

Hello! 2026

Living Water Lutheran Church Grief Support Group



Have you lost a loved one recently or are you still grieving from a former loss? Everyone is welcome.

Group Facilitator: Diane Klumpp

Pastoral Support: Pastor Shari Bernau

**This is an 8-week program on Wednesdays 1:00-2:30pm
running from February 4 – March 25**

Please call or email Pastor Shari Bernau to sign up,
and note that this group is capped at 8 people.

480-473-8400 - pastorshari@lwlcaz.org



Living Water Lutheran Church
9201 E Happy Valley Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85255
*Education Building



JANUARY birthdays!



Henry	Ruff	5-Jan
Hannah	Haggard	7-Jan
On dy	Ophaug	7-Jan
Jillian	Decker	8-Jan
Susan	Johnson	9-Jan
Fynn	Shelmire	13-Jan
Judy	Tornowske	13-Jan
Erik	Laudenschlager	16-Jan
Donald	Pick	18-Jan

Kevin	Ruff	18-Jan
Tana	Harlan	20-Jan
Steve	Smith	20-Jan
Karen	Syversen	21-Jan
Cherrie	Heidemmann-Oglesby	23-Jan
Sandy	Moses	23-Jan
Rick	Sherrin	23-Jan
Tamey	Manalli	26-Jan
Susan	Quast	27-Jan
Mike	Freesh	30-Jan

Please call the office if your birthday is not listed and we will make sure to enter it into our database.

PUBLICATION SUBMISSION DEADLINES:
Connections Newsletter - Every Tuesday by NOON
SPLASH! Newsletter - The 20th of each month by NOON

The Living Water
QR code for giving:



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Living Water is a Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Grand Canyon Synod.