

# Apostles Lutheran Church Visions

*To Know Jesus and make Jesus Known*



January 2024

Vol. 30 No. 1

Dear Friends,

Jesus said, “The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life” (John 6:63). “Faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ” (Romans 10:17). These and many other passages of Scripture make it clear that when we listen to the words of Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes into our lives. He gives us faith in the forgiveness and promises of Jesus. He gives us hope and encouragement as we face the challenges of life in this world. To start 2024 right, we as a congregation are going to listen to and dwell on the words of Jesus.

You may have heard about the Red Letter Challenge by now. Our Board of Elders and Church Council have been talking about it and it has been in our announcements on Sunday mornings. We plan to begin the year by taking the Red Letter Challenge. The name comes from the practice of some Bibles to print the words of Jesus in

red. The Red Letter Challenge is a challenge to focus on those words of Jesus from the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The Challenge takes 40 days. The idea is that all of us as a congregation listen to the words of Jesus together for 40 days. With as many people as possible taking part in this Challenge, we will have a common direction to move forward into the New Year. And we will be blessed with the Holy Spirit to guide and direct us.

The Challenge consists of being a hearer and a doer of God’s word. Each day there is a passage of scripture to be read, a devotion and a simple task to live out the words of Jesus. These are grouped into five principles: Being, Forgiving, Serving, Giving, and Going. The first 5 days are introduction to the five

principles and then each week after that dwells on one of the principles, what Jesus says about it and suggestions on how to live it out.

All of these materials are contained in a workbook developed by Pastor Zach Zender from King of Kings Lutheran Church in Omaha, Nebraska. More details about the program and Pastor Zender can be found at [www.redletterchallenge.com](http://www.redletterchallenge.com). The Church Council has authorized purchase of 100 workbooks (most in English, and some especially for youth)> We are asking for a donation of \$10 for each workbook when

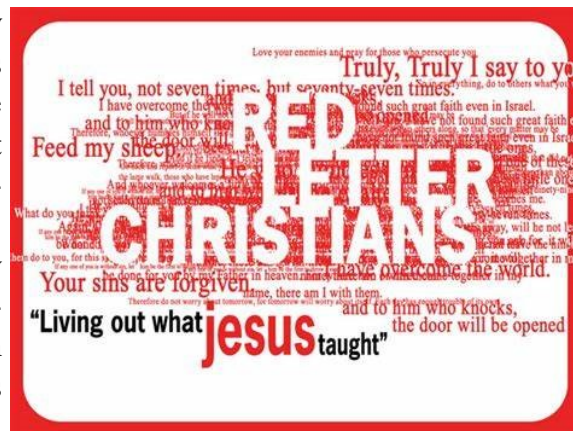
you pick yours up (the actual cost of the book is \$25). If you want to donate more to help offset the costs, that would also be very welcome.

We would like everyone in the congregation to participate and have a workbook. Don’t let cost stand in the way. If you need help with the cost, talk to your elder or Pastor Byars. If you need to find out who your elder is, look on the bulletin board in the Human Care Corner of

the church lobby. We plan to have a kick off Sunday on January 7<sup>th</sup>! By starting then we should finish just after Ash Wednesday (Feb 14<sup>th</sup> this year). Workbooks will be available for pick up the next two Sundays, Dec 31 and January 7 or anytime you are at church. We have been blessed by God with a wonderful gospel message, with His living voice in the scriptures, a wonderful (not perfect!) congregation, and a wonderful new year ahead of us. Let’s enjoy all of them and give thanks to God while we listen to Him.

Blessings,

Pastor Andrew



## I-HELP INTRODUCTION

Emergency Services traces its roots to the 1960s, when a group of Lutheran congregations in Phoenix gathered to meet the unmet needs, they saw in their community. People in their neighborhoods were hungry. Some were homeless. There was brokenness and they remembered their faith called them to serve "the least of these." So, their work began.

Today, LSS-SW Emergency Services, in partnership with faith partners and hard-working volunteers, relieves hunger and homelessness for neighbors facing extreme poverty through food pantries, rent & utility assistance, emergency shelter, and disaster preparedness.

## INTERFAITH HOMELESS EMERGENCY LODGING PROGRAM (I-HELP)

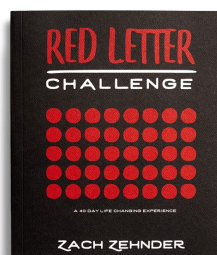
I-HELP is a unique, cost-effective program that uses what churches have in abundance (space, volunteers, the desire to help the stranger) to provide overnight emergency shelter and meals to those experiencing homelessness and are ready to move out of homelessness. The individuals are case managed to help them move from crisis to stability by providing employment support and housing resources. These individuals are case manager screened for appropriate placement and are required to be Covid tested. I-HELP currently operates in Mesa, Surprise, and Avondale. We are starting up the program in Peoria, Glendale, and the City of Phoenix.

Apostles Lutheran Church has been participating in the I-HELP program by providing a dinner meal once a month. If you would like to be part of this, contact the chair of our Human Care Board, Izzy Scott 480-326-4876 or Mary Otte 623-377-6029

## Human Care Ministry

### Food Pantry

Our food pantry is funded, in part, thanks to a grant from the West Valley Lutheran Thrift Shop. Our sincere thanks goes out to them. If you, or someone you know, need a food box, please fill out the Food Box Request form on the Human Care Ministry table in the Narthex. Place your request in the box on the table. Food boxes are available for pick-up on Tuesdays from 9 to 11.



Get ready for

### Red Letter Challenge

Coming in January

This will be a special congregational time in the Bible

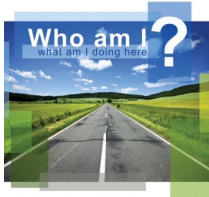
Following Jesus should be practical and straight forward.

There are hundreds of books and bible studies on following Jesus, but few are practical and proven. Jesus modeled a whole life and even told us how to follow Him in HIS OWN WORDS (the red letters found in many Bibles). The best way to follow Jesus is simply to follow the words of Jesus. Red Letter Challenge eliminates the fluff and has helped thousands of people grow closer to God in only 40 days.

The Red Letter Challenge is available in both English and Spanish, so our entire congregation will be able to participate. There is a small cost for a workbook. Please contact Pastor Byars to sign up.



01	Artsege Yohannes	24	John Markoski
03	Violet Veal	28	Donald Miller
04	Aaron Peserik	30	Brian Markosian
06	Michael Ferraro		
07	Isreal Bergamini		
09	Blanch Weymuth		
15	Jo Nicol		
16	Carole Ellis		
20	De Wayne Klockow		



### Men's Bible Study Who Am I, what am I doing here?

2nd and 4th Saturdays  
of the month

9:00 am Administration Building  
We will resume on January 13



Apostles Women's Bible Study will resume on January 10, 2024 at 6pm in the library. The first session will provide an introduction to the study. If you are thinking about a new Spiritual direction in 2024 join us and find out what we will be doing. Bring your Bible. Bring a friend. We always have a chair for you.



If you or a loved one is hospitalized, please contact the church office so that we can pray for you and so that one of the Pastors or Elders can visit.

**Prayer requests** can be made through the church office either by sending an email to secretary.apostles@phxcoxmail.com or calling 623-979-3497. These requests will then be forwarded on to all our members to include in their daily prayers.

stay connected  
church directory

Are we missing your picture? Putting names and faces together is much easier if you provide a picture for the directory. You can bring a picture to the secretary to be scanned, email a picture, or ask Pastor to take one on Sunday morning. It's easy and helps everyone. Getting updates for your church directory is as easy as requesting that service to be provided to you. Drop your directory off in the church office (labeled with your name) and it will be updated for you. We make every attempt to print address changes and additions in the monthly newsletter so you can update your own directory. If you do not currently have a directory and would like one, we can print one for you. (The cost to print a directory in color is approx. \$8. Any donation to help defray this cost is appreciated)

## Upcoming Fellowship Events

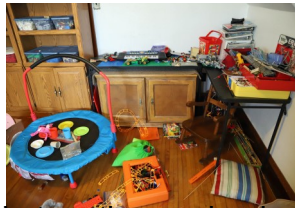


Annual Dinner Theater  
February 17  
5pm  
Family Life Center



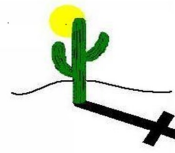
March 17, 2024  
5pm  
Family Life Center

### Toy Room Clean Up Wednesday Jan. 24, 9AM



We will join together and enjoy  
a lunch out when we are finished  
with the cleaning

Questions? Call  
Gayle Andrejack 602-549-2088  
Or  
Jean Morriss 623-340-0035



West Valley Lutheran  
Thrift Shop, 10615 W.  
Peoria in Sun City Also  
follow us on Facebook at

[www.facebook.com/  
westvalleylutheranthriftshop/](http://www.facebook.com/westvalleylutheranthriftshop/)

Make a New Year's Resolution you can actually keep! Think back on all the resolutions you've made over the years . . . lose weight, start exercising, call your mother more often - those things are hard - no wonder we failed! But, volunteering at the Lutheran Thrift Shop is easy! And the good we do, makes you feel like a winner. Most volunteers work 3 hours a week - who doesn't have 3 hours? Processing donated items like clothing, books, housewares, linens, appliances, crafts, art-work and holiday things keep volunteers busy in a clean, friendly environment. We also have people who accept donations at our drive-up door and those who go out on our truck to pick up donations. As you can see, it's volunteers and donations that make this place successful. This is your chance to be a part of something awesome and actually keep a New Year's resolution. WIN/WIN. Call us today 623-815-7061

## Apostles Lutheran Church Preschool

### On-going Enrollment Contact us today!



Monday—Friday 7:30 am—5:30 pm      School Hours 8:30 am—Noon  
Need Based Scholarships Available      Apostles Church Member Discounts

For details contact Beckie Ellis at 623-312-4831



## *Those Serving Us This Month*

8:00 am

11:00 am

January 7 Video operator: 8am– Tom Schleier 11am - Abel Abraha Counters - Joyce Heil & Steve Sears Pew Maintenance -	Skip Kamps, elder Rick Grulke, usher DeWayne Klockow, usher Pat Bilovesky, reader Leah Peserik, altar guild Connor Edmondson, acolyte	Russ Hodgden, elder Amaris Baldwin, reader Lynn Hodgden, altar guild Henry Baldwin, acolyte
January 14 Video operator: 8am– Tom Schleier 11am - Abel Abraha Counters - Martha Danner & Karen Nicol Pew Maintenance -	Joel Helsper, elder Stephen Waltz, usher Mike Scheerer, usher Jean Morriss, reader Sawyer Edmondson, acolyte	Don Miller, elder Joyce Heil, reader As God Provides, acolyte
January 21 Video operator: 8am - Tom Schleier 11am - Fred Polak Counters - Ron Bissey Pew Maintenance -	Duane Bargmann, elder Lyle Schlenz, usher John Nicol, usher Tom Schleier, reader Pat Bilovesky, altar guild Connor Edmondson, acolyte	Don Miller, elder Amaris Baldwin, reader Joyce Heil, altar guild Henry Baldwin, acolyte
January 28 Video operator: 8am - Tom Schleier 11am - Fred Polak Counters - Brenda Smith & Katherine Markoski Pew Maintenance -	Skip Kamps, elder Barry Yohnka, usher Joel Helsper, usher Tom Nass, reader Sawyer Edmondson, acolyte	Joel Helsper, elder Nikki Key, reader As God Provides, acolyte

## *Altar Flowers December*

If you wish to donate flowers for a special occasion, the cost is \$25. Please sign the flower chart located in the Fellowship Hall. If you sign up for flowers after the newsletter has been sent for that month, please call the church office. We have space for **2** arrangements per Sunday with a cost of \$25 per arrangement. You can place your payment in the offering box clearly marked FLOWERS. Our florist is Four Seasons located at 67th Ave. and Cactus 623-878-2740.

Jan. 7      Eva Ellis in memory of Bill's 3rd heavenly birthday

Jan. 14

Jan. 21

Jan. 28



### **Friends of Orphan Grain Train, Arizona Branch,**

Giving Tuesday was Amazing! Orphan Grain Train partnered with Thrivent to raise funds to help families that have lost everything in Maui. Our donors and supporters ARE THE BEST! You generously gave \$109,043.00! This amount did not seem possible but with God it was possible. With Thrivent's Generous Match of \$1 for every \$2, up to \$20,000.00, we added an additional \$20,000 for a total of \$129,043.00. The monies raised will help purchase requested food and supplies along with costs for cargo shipments to Maui to help families devastated from one of the worst US fires in years.

*Thank you everyone for a fun and exciting Giving Tuesday!*

We desperately need your gently used clothing donations. Please put your donations in the barrel in the Narthex. Better yet, bring your donations to the warehouse on January 13 and 27 and help us sort and pack them. You can drop them off OR you could join us for an hour or two and help us sort and pack them. If you need a donation slip for tax purposes, please let Susan know and she will get you one.

If you pay **Arizona Income Tax** and are looking for a way to get the State to reduce your tax liability by as much as **\$800**, talk to Susan and she can show you how. We need to replace our roof and any donations you give will be greatly appreciated.

If you would like to help sort and box items, our workdays will be January 13 and 27. We would enjoy your help. We start at 8am but you can come later. We end at noon, but you don't have to stay that long. We always have fellowship at 10am. Coffee, cold water and soft drinks are free plus we usually have a sweet treat to share. If all you can do is drop off a donation, we would still be glad to see you.

**Our address is 1329 N 29<sup>th</sup> Ave, Suite E-15, Phoenix, AZ**

Our front door faces I-10

(Take McDowell Rd to 29<sup>th</sup> Ave, we are 2 blocks south of McDowell Rd. see our sign by the gate)

Secretary Susan Thomas @ 480.621.9251; [414stthomas@gmail.com](mailto:414stthomas@gmail.com).

**Our Mission:** In loving response to Christ, the Servant, the Orphan Grain Train movement encourages and enables God's people to share personal and material resources in bringing Christ's name and character to needy people both far and near. Sometimes that character expresses itself as a word well spoken, sometimes as a bandage well applied and sometimes as a child well fed.



## LWML Mission Statement

As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others.

“

*When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice” (John 10:4)*

**Mite Sunday is March 31, 2024** – a freewill offering will be taken at the 8am & 11am services. Your offering will help support missions locally, nationally, and internationally.

2023–2025 MISSION GRANT NO. 3

**SERVING GOD’S CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**  
JOURNEYS LUTHERAN SCHOOL | \$100,000



## *Transportation for Special Needs Students at Journeys Lutheran School*

Journeys Lutheran School began in 1958 when a group of concerned parents determined their special needs children needed a better alternative education. Today, centered in Christ, Journeys Lutheran School prepares students with unique learning challenges to maximize their God-given spiritual, academic, physical, emotional, and social potential.

Because children with special needs tend to get lost in the crowd in a regular school setting, parents are looking for smaller class sizes and more individualized attention for their child. Journeys creates an individualized learning plan for each student who enrolls in the school. The school is not driven by getting through grade level curriculum, but teaching each student what they need to learn in whatever amount of time they need to learn it. Therapies and time out of the classroom are available as needed.

Journeys Lutheran School's resources, experience, and expertise do not just provide academic help and educational support to its students, but also provide an opportunity for their lives to be touched and transformed by the Holy Spirit through devotions, prayer, Christian counseling, religion classes, and personal witness.

The grant funds from Lutheran Women in Mission will purchase two 15-passenger vans to enable Journeys continued growth and ability to serve its students by providing additional transportation options for taking students to events, internships, classes at Martin Lutheran High School, and similar uses, without having to use its full-size school bus.

*But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:16).*

*Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6).*

## **Apostles Lutheran Church**

7020 W. Cactus Rd. Peoria, AZ 85381-5318

Office: 623-979-3497 Fax: 623-979-5778

Email: [secretary.apostles@phxcoxmail.com](mailto:secretary.apostles@phxcoxmail.com)

[www.apostles-az.org](http://www.apostles-az.org)

### **WORSHIP**

8:00am & 11:00am Worship  
(communion on 1st & 3rd Sundays)

9:30am Bible Study

[Facebook.com/apostleslutheranchurchaz](https://www.facebook.com/apostleslutheranchurchaz)

[www.Youtube.com/ApostlesLutheranChurch Peoria AZ](https://www.youtube.com/ApostlesLutheranChurchPeoriaAZ)

### **Prayer Chain**

Church Office (Mon—Fri) Phone 623-979-3497

Email: [secretary.apostles@phxcoxmail.com](mailto:secretary.apostles@phxcoxmail.com)

February newsletter Deadline

Monday, January 15

(All information and articles must be on the secretary's desk  
by 9am on deadline day)

### **Office Hours**

Mon-Thurs 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

### **Senior Pastor**

Rev. Andrew Byars [pastorbyars@phxcoxmail.com](mailto:pastorbyars@phxcoxmail.com)

### **Associate Pastor**

Rev. Ramon Cabrales [preacherrc@hotmail.com](mailto:preacherrc@hotmail.com)

### **Deaconess**

Maria del Carmen Cabrales

### **Deacon**

Duane Danner

### **Parish Administrator**

Kris Lindsay [secretary.apostles@phxcoxmail.com](mailto:secretary.apostles@phxcoxmail.com)

### **Preschool Director**

Beckie Ellis [preschool.apostles@phxcoxmail.com](mailto:preschool.apostles@phxcoxmail.com)