



**FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
142 North Date Street Mesa, Arizona 85201

Mission Moments

March 2024

Volume 19 Issue 3

***Celebrating Seventy-six Years of God's Amazing Grace***

**In Response to the Good News of Jesus Christ:**

**Our Purpose...**

Gathered to worship!  
Sent to witness and serve!

**Our Vision...**

To become more diverse, creative, nurturing, and welcoming within our congregation and in the wider community.

**Our Guiding Principles...**

We will follow Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

We will read, teach, and preach God's Word faithfully.

We commit to prayer and worship as a way of life.

We invite people to know Jesus Christ.

**Reconciling in Christ Welcoming Statement**



"First Evangelical Lutheran Church/La Primera is committed

to being a radically loving and welcoming community of faith, centered in the Good News of Jesus Christ. Therefore, in faithfulness to the Gospel and our Lutheran heritage, and to the best of our ability, we promise to provide programs, ministries, and pastoral care to all who seek God in this place. All are welcome here, including persons of every race, ethnicity, creed, class, age, gender, marital status, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression."

The Messenger is a monthly publication of First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mesa, Arizona. Please submit information by email to [felc@firstevlutheran.com](mailto:felc@firstevlutheran.com) or in written form to the church office by the 15th of the month prior to publication.

Greetings to you, Friends of First Evangelical Lutheran Church,

As we continue into this Lenten season, we prepare ourselves to follow the One who chose the path of the Cross. Lent is a heavy season because it reminds us of the sacrifice Jesus made for all humanity.

In this season at times we forget that Lent is more than what we *give up*. This might be giving up TV, video games, soda, phone apps, etc... Whatever it may be, the truth is that we might fully commit to the forty days, but are we really changed?

So instead, maybe it's about *giving* more in the weeks to come during our Lenten journey. Doing things like sending a card to someone, praying more, meditating, spending more time with your family, maybe it's even giving yourself more time just to be free from all the chaos around us.

As individuals and as a congregation, we also need to take time to appreciate the path Jesus walked, the way he has prepared for us, and the sacrifice he made. Here at First the opportunities to worship, serve others and give generously are testaments not only to the church family community that we are, but also an example of what God is calling us to be. That's called **Discipleship**. Whatever the case may be in our Lenten Journey, allow the Holy Spirit to work in us; that is what this season is all about!

*"There are three elements that are almost always part of Lent: prayer, giving something up and giving something back."*

***-Elizabeth Hyndman***

Associate Pastor Luis Ochoa



**First Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
*Serving our neighbors is our FIRST priority!*

**OFFICE HOURS**

Mondays through Wednesdays:  
8:30AM-2:30PM

**Staff**

Christine Stoxen, Pastor  
Luis Ochoa, Pastor  
Joy Petroff, Admin. Secretary  
Jose Salazar, Pianist

**Congregational Officers**

Sarah Shaw, President  
Ellen Riske, Vice President  
Kathleen Rogers, Treasurer  
Traci Laasch, Secretary

**Congregational Council**

Corinne Cursi	Rhonda Schmidt
Diane Johnson	Sarah Shaw
Traci Laasch	Sharon Shields
Ellen Riske	Sara Velasco
Kathleen Rogers	

**Contact Us**

Phone: (480) 969-7221

Fax: (480) 969-7222

Email: felc@firstevlutheran.com

Web: www.firstevlutheran.com



**Change for Change Offering**

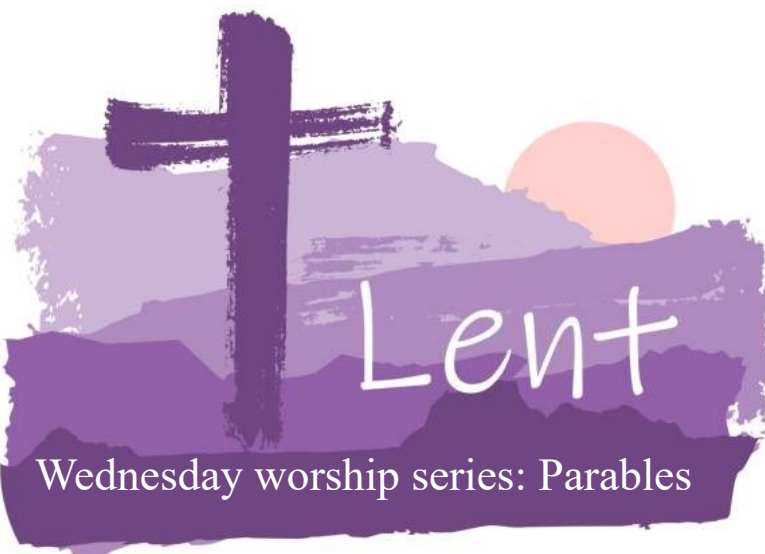
in March will benefit  
Helen's Hope Chest

Sundays at 9:30 AM



Livestream link:

<https://www.youtube.com/@felutheran/streams>



Wednesday worship series: Parables

**Prayer Around the Cross at 5 PM**

- March 6 "The Prodigal Son"  
Pastor Adele Resmer
- March 13 "The Good Samaritan"  
Patrick Blanchard
- March 20 "Weed and Wheat"  
Pastor Melinda Gapin

**Soup Supper in the Great Room following worship.**



First Place

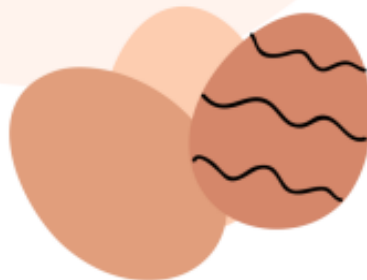
*Easter*  
**EGG  
HUNT**

**AND CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**

**MARCH 23, 2024 AT 10 AM**

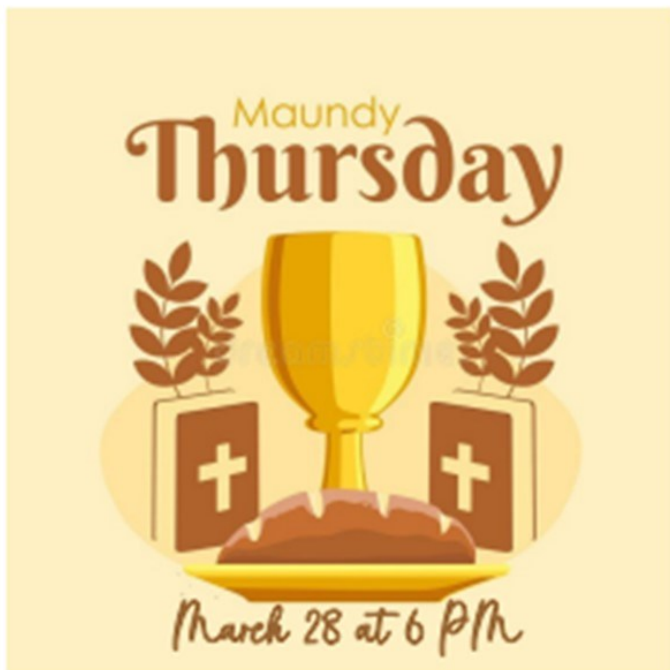
**142 N. DATE**

**MESA, AZ 85201**





*March 24*  
*9:30 AM*



*March 28 at 6 PM*

**March 29** **6 PM**



**Good Friday**



**March 31 9:30 AM Worship**



# EASTER FLOWERS ORDER FORM

(All orders **must** be into the church office no later than **Sunday, March 24**)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please purchase \_\_\_\_\_ **Spring Flowers** for me at \$10 each. My check or cash is **attached**.

I will bring \_\_\_\_\_ **Spring Flowers** by 10 AM Saturday, March 30.

Please use my **Money Gift** for flowers for the **Children's Flower Cross**.

**In honor of:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**In memory of:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Total Amount Attached \$** \_\_\_\_\_.

**Cash**     **Check** (Check payable to First Lutheran Church)

Take plant/s home



## Easter Sunday *Light Breakfast*

Following 9:30 worship,  
in the Great Room,  
sponsored by the Young Adults

# "God's work. Our hands." Sunday



March 10

9:30 Worship followed by service opportunities  
There will be a picnic lunch at Holy Trinity following the service work.



Pastor Bernie leads  
Zoom Bible studies

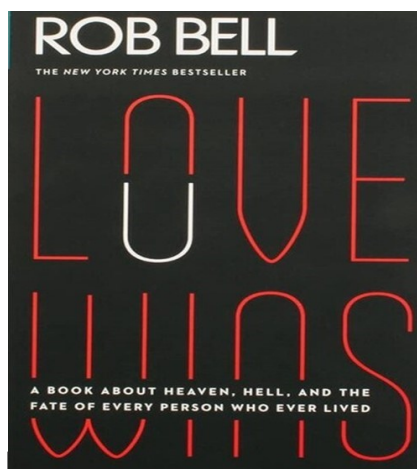
Wednesdays at 6:30 & 9 AM

Call (480) 963-4127

for Zoom link.

Or join in person at

Holy Trinity



Monday Morning Book Club

"Love Wins"

Beginning January 8, 2024

8 AM on Zoom

Meeting ID: 838 1436 2438

Passcode: 132468



Join us!

1989 W Elliot Rd, Chandler 85224

on Mondays at 6:30 PM for a  
beverage and rousing discussion of  
current social issues.

## Spanish Bible Study followed by fellowship

Spanish Bible Study will meet Wednesdays at 6 PM  
in the Conference Room.



Variety is the **spice of life**, that gives it all its flavor!



Have you ever forgotten to add a spice to a recipe and realized it later when you tasted it? We've all been there. Imagine cooking without any spices at all; yes, it would be very dull.

In honor of the day of service on March 10, council thought it would be both loving and tasteful to begin collecting spices to share through the food pantry. We all think to share canned and boxed foods but let's include donating spices beginning March 10 and culminating on Easter. You can drop them off at church; there will be boxes marked to place them in.

We are a loving congregation so let's add some spice to the lives of others!

**Join in the fun at the next**

**Tuesday Luncheon**

Tuesday, March 12, 11:30



1989 West Eliot Road #19, Chandler.

## Council Meeting Minutes - February 18, 2024

**Present:** Pastor Luis, Corinne Cursi, Diane Johnson, Traci Laasch, Ellen Riske, Kathleen Rogers, Rhonda Schmidt, Sarah Shaw, Sharon Shields, Sara Velasco

**Absent:** None

**A. Opening Devotions/Prayer:** Pastor Luis opened the meeting with prayer at 10:46 AM. Sarah provided new council member orientation.

**B. Review and Approval of Council Minutes:** Kathleen moved that the January minutes be accepted as recorded, Corinne seconded. Council unanimously approved the minutes.

### C. Reports

1. Treasurer's Report: See report.
2. Pastor Luis's Report: See report.
3. President's Report: No report.
4. Approval of Reports: Ellen moved that all reports are accepted as given; Corrine seconded. Council unanimously approved the reports.

### D. Old Business

1. Grants: The grant writing committee will check on dates for any upcoming grants  
GC Synod Program grant for youth (\$2000) was approved. Closed.  
Holy Trinity Endowment grant (\$1500) to update electronics/online presence was approved.  
Closed.
2. Property Repair List: Continuing.
3. AC Issues: On hold.
4. Other Old Business: None

### E. New Business

1. Upcoming meetings: Contact Pastor Luis if interested in attending  
Synod Assembly - June 13-15 at Love of Christ  
Spring Gathering - March 17 at St. Andrew
2. New Members: The Topete family and Gail Drake are interested in becoming members. Rhonda moved to accept the new member candidates, Traci seconded. Council unanimously approved the motion.
3. Termite Treatment: Kathleen continues to receive bids.
4. Santa Trinidad: Pastor Luis discussed plans for Santa Trinidad.
5. Council Positions: Rhonda motioned to accept the following council executive positions and Traci seconded. Council unanimously approved the motion.  
President - Sarah Shaw  
Vice President - Ellen Riske  
Treasurer - Kathleen Rogers  
Secretary - Traci Laasch
6. Holy Trinity Day of Service: HT is holding a day of service on March 10. Pastor Luis reports that Concordia has a service project. Concordia would like help with clean up and gardening. FELC members are invited to participate. This will take place after service on March 10. Sharon Shields will start a spice drive for the food bank. Details will follow.
7. Other New Business: None.

### F. Adjournment

Rhonda moved that meeting be adjourned; Ellen seconded. Council unanimously approved. Meeting was adjourned at 11:48 AM.



## Upcoming Events:

Lent: Wednesday, February 21, 2024 through March 20, 2024

Council Meeting: Sunday, March 17, 2024

Held on the 3rd Sunday of the month EXCEPT June 23, 2024, and no meeting in July

Palm Sunday March 24, 2024

Easter: March 31, 2024

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- HT Grant in progress. Account to link YouTube to Facebook created and sound board ordered. Receipts to be turned in.
- Attending a "Together in Service" quarterly meeting by City of Mesa; the topic was food insecurity. Next meeting May 1.
- Attended First Place movie night event, great turn out from the community

As always, it is a pleasure to serve.

Best,

Sarah Shaw



## MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

As of 1/31/24	Actual 2024	Budget 2024	Actual 2023	Budget 2023
Offerings	\$6,912	\$9,417	\$14,512	\$9,417.
Other Income	\$8,208	\$8,208	\$6,333	\$6,333
Total Income	\$15,120	\$17,625	\$20,845	\$15,750
Expenses	\$17,624	\$17,675	\$7,325	\$14,854
Inc. Less Exp.	\$-2,504	\$-50	\$13,520	\$895

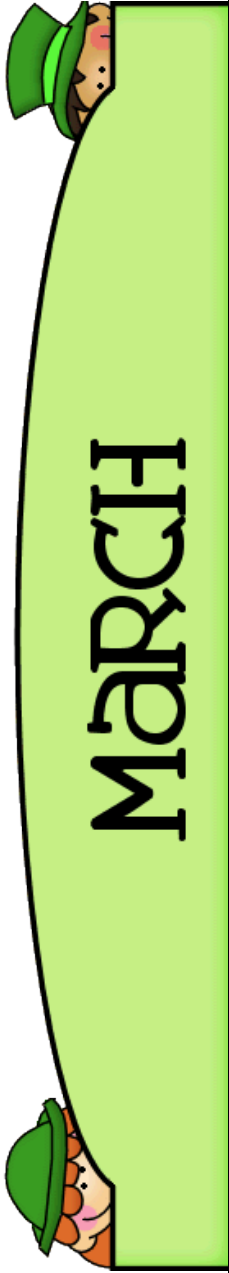
## Remembering Howard Pankratz

There will be two opportunities to celebrate Howard and remember his time among us.

On Wednesday, March 6 at 6 PM, there will be a service at the Masonic Lodge, 726 N. Center Street, Mesa.

On Sunday, March 10, following the 9:30 AM worship service, a remembrance will be held in the sanctuary to share memories of Howard from his many years among us.





# MARCH

# 2024

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
<p><b>3</b> 3rd Sunday in Lent 9:30 FELC Worship—S 10:30 Fellowship—GR</p>	<p>FRC = Family Resource Center GR = Great Room S = Sanctuary OCR = Olsen Conference Room</p>	<p>CCS = Concordia Charter School HT = Holy Trinity * Off-campus</p>				
<p><b>4</b> DEADLINE: BULLETIN 8 AM Book Club - Zoom</p>	<p><b>5</b> 9 AM LSS-SW Food Pantry- Courtyard 10 AM LSS Messy Play—GR 11 AM LSS Flourishing Families - GR 5:30-8:30 PM ACA (Adult Children of Alcoholics/Dysfunctional Families) - OCR</p>	<p><b>6</b> 3 PM LSS Raising a Reader - GR 4 PM LSS Kids in the Kitchen - GR 5 PM Lent Worship Service—S 5:30 PM Lent Soup Supper—GR</p>		<p><b>7</b> OFFICE CLOSED 9 AM LSS-SW Food Pantry- Courtyard</p>	<p><b>8</b> OFFICE CLOSED 10:30 AM LSS Parent Café - GR 3 PM LSS Financial Literacy - GR</p>	<p><b>9</b> 10 AM LSS Zumbini - GR 11 AM LSS PlaySPOT - GR</p>
<p><b>10</b> 4th Sunday in Lent 9:30 FELC Worship—S 10:30 Fellowship—GR Day of Service @ HT</p>	<p><b>11</b> DEADLINE: BULLETIN 8 AM Book Club - Zoom</p>	<p><b>12</b> NO LSS-SW Food Pantry 10 AM LSS Messy Play—GR 11 AM LSS Flourishing Families - GR 11:30 Dining @ Fibber McGee's 5:30-8:30 PM ACA - OCR</p>	<p><b>13</b> DEADLINE: NEWSLETTER 11:30 AM 1st PI Coordinating Comm - OCR 3 PM LSS Raising a Reader - GR 4 PM LSS Kids in the Kitchen - GR 5 PM Lent Worship Service—S 5:30 PM Lent Soup Supper—GR 5-7 PM LSS-SW Food Pantry - Courtyard</p>	<p><b>14</b> OFFICE CLOSED 9 AM LSS-SW Food Pantry- Courtyard 9:30-11:30 AM Mesa Migrant</p>	<p><b>15</b> OFFICE CLOSED 10:30 AM LSS Parent Café - GR</p>	<p><b>16</b> 10 AM LSS Zumbini - GR 11 AM LSS PlaySPOT - GR I-HELP - Great Room</p>
<p><b>17</b> 5th Sunday in Lent 9:30 FELC Worship—S 10:30 Fellowship—GR Church Council - OCR</p>	<p><b>18</b> DEADLINE: BULLETIN 8 AM Book Club - Zoom</p>	<p><b>19</b> 9 AM LSS-SW Food Pantry- Courtyard 10 AM LSS Messy Play—GR 11 AM LSS Flourishing Families - GR 5:30-8:30 PM ACA - OCR</p>	<p><b>20</b> 3 PM LSS Raising a Reader - GR 4 PM LSS Kids in the Kitchen - GR 5 PM Lent Worship Service—S 5:30 PM Lent Soup Supper—GR</p>	<p><b>21</b> OFFICE CLOSED 9 AM LSS-SW Food Pantry- Courtyard</p>	<p><b>22</b> OFFICE CLOSED 10:30 AM LSS Parent Café - GR</p>	<p><b>23</b> 10 AM 1st Place Breakfast/ Egg Hunt - GR/Garden 11 AM LSS PlaySPOT - GR 12 PM LSS Birthday Celebration - GR</p>
<p><b>24</b> Palm Sunday 9:30 FELC Worship—S 10:30 Fellowship—GR</p>	<p><b>25</b> DEADLINE: BULLETIN 8 AM Book Club - Zoom</p>	<p><b>26</b> 9 AM LSS-SW Food Pantry- Courtyard 10 AM LSS Messy Play—GR 11 AM LSS Flourishing Families - GR 5:30-8:30 PM ACA - OCR</p>	<p><b>27</b> 3 PM LSS Raising a Reader - GR 4 PM LSS Kids in the Kitchen - GR</p>	<p><b>28</b> Maundy Thursday OFFICE CLOSED 8:30-11 AM Car seat event - parking lot 9 AM LSS-SW Food Pantry- Courtyard 6 PM Worship</p>	<p><b>29</b> Good Friday OFFICE CLOSED 6 PM Worship</p>	<p><b>30</b> I-HELP - Great Room</p>
<p><b>31</b> Easter 9:30 FELC Worship—S Breakfast - GR</p>	<p>7:30 AM (instructors) 8 AM - 5 PM Car-seat certification training class - Great Room</p>					