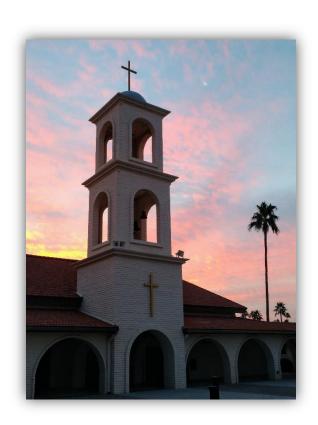
American Lutheran Church of Sun City May 2020 Outreach Newsletter



MISSION STATEMENT

To proclaim the love of Jesus Christ, invite others to participate in our faith community, and be a blessing to all in word and deed.

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A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR LOWELL NELSON

Dear American Lutheran Church family and friends,

Welcome to May 2020! It is an amazing time to be alive, isn't it?

Now before you get frustrated with me uttering such a simplistic phrase, bear with me. "Amazing" is an overused term; overused to differentiate consumer products and services from competitors. Beyond consumerism, we truly are living in amazing times. The English Language Learners Dictionary defines *amaze* as twofold:

- First, to surprise and sometimes confuse someone very much.
- Second, to fill someone with wonder. I think that is an accurate way to describe our times. Don't you feel surprised these days, often on a daily basis? Certainly, the surprises are confusing; news sources differ in their predictions and in their advice, and governmental policies change dramatically.

People of faith, like all people, prefer life when things are "normal," the accustomed way of being, of having a steady orientation to life. Yet we are now experiencing the great disruption of pandemic in all its forms: worries about life & death for ourselves and our family, concerns for safety and adequate food, struggles for meaningful work and income, mounting frustration and anger, and a variety of other experiences. This is a time of disorientation for our country and for our world. Though don't forget the other description of amazing: to be filled with wonder. How can that be?

People of faith have the Biblical story to guide us in this time; the stories of Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension are the focus of our May lectionary readings leading up to Pentecost, the last weekend in May. Jesus speaks of abundant life. How can that be? The time of disorientation challenges us to let go of self-reliance and turn to full reliance upon Christ! God is in the midst of this time, leading us back to the only secure foundation found in the love of Christ. Remember; when you are feeling anxious it is a 100% accurate indicator that it's time to pray! God is faithful and will lead us to a new orientation of living, a "new normal" to express our congregational commitment to live out our ALC's mission. We proclaim the love of God in Jesus Christ, invite people to join us in ministry and bless others in word and deed. This mission touches the lives of our own congregational members and pours through us out into the community, Synod and world. While the ways we express this may dramatically change, our mission will keep us focused.

Proclaiming the Gospel is the firm foundation of faith, creating the spiritual incentive to invite people into this faith community and amplifying the Holy Spirit's power to bless others in all we say and do. In times of disorientation we return to the basics of faith. Never forget our Lutheran faith heritage:

A sinner is justified by grace alone (sola gratia) through faith alone (sola fide) for the sake of Christ alone (solus Christus), truth revealed to us in Scripture alone (sola Scriptura).

Love,

Pastor Lowell

Pastor Dowell

P.S. So many of us enjoy the ELCA's quarterly devotional, *Christ in Our Home*. The publisher is offering a free online subscription through June 2020. This is a good fit for those unable to pick up a copy during this time or as an evangelical tool for family & friends. Here is their website:

https://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/category/286997/Christ-in-Our-Home



A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JUDITH RAINFORTH

What an interesting time these past months have been serving as your pastor at ALC. I now wonder how so much could have transpired over such a short time.

My journey started from my home in Nebraska just after my 450-mile Camino Santiago pilgrimage along the coast of Spain. I flew from Nebraska to Madrid on September 13th and returned home by flying back from Porto, Portugal on October 23rd. In a couple of days, I drove away from my home to San Diego for a Leading Age Conference. It was part of my board duties for Immanuel Communities, a Senior Housing Organization in Nebraska. I spent 5 days going to the conference and then drove to Arizona where I promptly moved into a condo in Surprise, Arizona. This was just in time to report to American Lutheran Church for orientation as I began my six-month contract to serve as a pastor alongside Pastor Lowell.

The beginning was quite predictable as I met staff and parishioners and settled into my office. The usual duties for ordained ministry continued to unfold and of course it continued to be a busy time in my life. This part of the pilgrimage was much different than my Camino!

It was not until February and March that my life here changed dramatically. Pastor Lowell was not serving alongside me because he was home, diagnosed with Valley Fever and pneumonia. Sadly, I faced the fact that he was suffering and had no idea when he would return or *if* he would return as Senior Pastor. I put on another hat to serve in both our roles. I thank God that with my energy level, my determination, the love of God and the people of ALC, I was able to adjust to the dual ministry, and of course weeks before Pastor Lowell could come back into his role as Senior Pastor working from home on April 1, the horrible pandemic arrived.

All in all, through prayer and God's guidance, we have been able to continue our ministry here in new and creative ways as we await the time when we can gather together inside the walls, as well as outside the walls of ALC, being the hands and feet of Jesus. I feel blessed that I have been invited back and have signed another ministry contract as full-time, year-round Pastor of Spirituality and Care.

Upon my return in June, I will participate in weekly worship and design as well as lead Advent and Lenten weekly services. I will work with Pastors and staff to enhance Wellness/Care ministry including pastoral visits, funerals/memorial services and pastoral counseling. My involvement with also be in the design and leading of faith formation and

discipleship training. There will be a focus on Women's Ministry and leadership development.

I am amazed as I look at my life and how it has unfolded, and know that we never know where God is leading us. As a called and ordained minister of the Word of God, I follow and live with a grateful heart. My prayer is for our world to be healed as God provides answers and miracles in the midst of this dark time of the coronavirus pandemic.

With Resurrection Faith we take the hand of Jesus and say, "Here I am Lord, Lead me!" Our pilgrimage continues as we embrace opportunities to listen to the voice of God, and as we serve God and God's people one day at a time! Thank each of you for your love and support.

Prayerfully,

Pastor Judith

Pastoz Judith



WELLNESS MINUTE

How long the new Coronavirus can live on surfaces:

Paper and Tissue paper- 3 hours Copper- 4 hours Cardboard- 24 hours Wood- 2 days Cloth- 2 days Stainless steel- 2-3 days Plastic-3 days Glass- 4 days Paper Money- 4 Days Outside of a surgical mask- 7 days



Seven Anxiety-Calming Scriptures:

2 Timothy 1:7

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but one of power, love, and sound judgement.

Psalm 4:8

In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.

1 Peter 5: 6-7

Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God. That He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

Philippians 4: 6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Iesus.

Isaíah 41:10

Do not fear, for I am with you. Do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you. I will hold on to you with my righteous right hand.

Isaíah 26:3

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.

John 14:1

Your heart must not be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.

Gloves Safety

Gloves are meant to avoid cross-contamination. For instance, in a hospital, workers wear gloves to touch a patient and then DISCARD gloves before moving on to next task. If you are wearing the same set of gloves all over town, you are carrying germs everywhere! Every door you touch, your steering wheel, the cart, the supplies. It would be better to not wear gloves and WASH YOUR HANDS after every store.



Lori Kellar ALC Wellness l.kellar@suncity.org

PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

"What's happening at American Lutheran Church?" might be a question that many of you might be asking, especially since we haven't been able to meet in worship and fellowship. Hopefully, you are receiving by mail, or through email, our weekly updates and our monthly <u>Outreach</u> newsletter. For those of you who have online access, we hope you are visiting us on Facebook and/or our website so you can see our devotionals and sermons.

Pastor Gary Garvey and Dianne left this week, returning to family and friends. We will see them again in our pews when they return in the fall. Pastor Judith will be leaving for Nebraska later this week. She will return again in June to begin her new contract with us as a full-time Pastor. Pastor Lowell has been "released" from his doctors to work at home, so there was no need to bring on a temporary pastor, as we originally thought. Pastor Lowell and Pastor Gary Ulrich will continue to work remotely from home. We are waiting to hear more from our Bishop as to when we might reopen.

The Navajo Nation is continuing to have problems with water, food, getting protective gear and the coronavirus in general. There are ways we can help. The Navajo Mission is giving out 200 boxes a day to families. They are in need of the following:

- Canned chicken (not tuna)
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Blue Bird flour (it's better for fry bread)
- Pasta/pasta sauce
- Paper products

If you are interested in donating any of these items, Judie and Larry Stage (623-337-7747) will pick them up from your home and bring them to Christ the Lord Church in Carefree, where they will be delivered to the Mission. Also, there is a call for supplies and sewers. Susan Olson will be working with others to make masks, get bandanas, etc. They are in need of the following:

- Fabric
- Elastic
- Bias binding
- Knee high nylons
- Bandanas
- Sandwich bags for packing the masks

Sue will answer phone calls at 623-215-2475 and emails at npmilw@gmail.com and coordinate distribution of fabric and supplies. She will also be at the church on Sunday, May 3rd and 10th between 10:00-10:30 for any intake of materials.

I think you will all agree that although these might be small gestures, they mean a lot! We are in this together. "God, stretch out my hands in love toward others in my community and beyond. In Jesus' name. Amen." (Christ in Our Home, April, May, June 2020).

Stay safe. Sending Prayers. Terri Polk, ALC Council President



THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

At the end of March, our regular giving income was down \$32,644 or 9% from plan. Our operational expenses were slightly greater than planned. Your Finance committee and Church Council are working diligently now (mid-April) to adjust or postpone spending to mitigate the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on our congregation's financial health. Since we are not able to conduct services and events in our buildings, our expenses are naturally dropping. Thank you to all stewards who continue to give joyfully and generously. Even though we are not able to worship, pray, and commune together we need to continue to support our congregation and programs with our regular giving. Please continue your weekly giving and consider increasing your gifts to help make up for the revenue we are losing because of the current health crisis. As we report this on April 15th, Easter week has passed. We are hoping and praying that your generous giving continues to exceed our ongoing expenses.

March 2020				YTD 2020			
	Budget	Actual	Better or (Worse)	Budget	Actual	Better or (Worse)	
Regular Giving Income	\$142,929	\$99,848	\$(43,081)	\$359,403	\$326,759	\$ (32,644)	
Operational Expense	\$110,724	\$91,221	\$19,503	\$341,675	\$341,207	\$(468)	

Notes: Income includes regular offerings and excludes debt reduction, gift, memorial, and in/out revenue. Expenses include the principal portion of the mortgage payment and exclude gift and memorial expenses which were not budgeted.

TRUST COMMITTEE

Since the church is currently closed due to the COVID-19 virus there was no Trust Committee meeting this month. However, our financial representative did have some good news. He reported that our portfolio was down very little. As I'm sure you are, we are looking forward to the day we will be able to join as a congregation and celebrate services together.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

Psalm 42 was written when the author was prevented by illness from making the accustomed pilgrimage to Jerusalem to the temple. It speaks to us today as we too are prevented from worshiping together because of illness. Psalm 42: 1-5 reads:

¹As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God.

²My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

When can I go and meet with God?

³My tears have been my food day and night,

while people say to me all day long,"Where is your God?"

⁴These things I remember as I pour out my soul:

How I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One With shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng.

⁵Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?

Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

There has been much research on the benefits of music; it increases happiness, decreases stress and depression, improves sleep, and many others. So, music can play such an important part in helping us through these difficult times. One of my favorite on-line resources is Pandora Radio (free!) where you can create your own station of Christian artists and other music genres. My personal favorite is John Rutter Radio. I encourage you to listen to music every day!

Thank you for joining us in weekly worship at www.alcsuncity.org (Click on the Worship tab, then Sermons and Devotions.) On the 4th Sunday of Easter, Jan MacDonald will sing this beautiful hymn. Let it be our prayer until we meet again in our beautiful sanctuary and lift our voices together in song.

When we face an unknown future that we can't imagine yet, When the closeness we have treasured turns from blessing into threat – As we miss our friends and loved ones, as we crave community, May we look, God, in this season, for a whole new way to be.

May we cherish those around us as we never have before. May we think much less of profit; may we learn what matters more. May we hear our neighbors' suffering; may we see our neighbors' pain. May we learn new ways of offering life and health and hope again.

God, when illness comes to threaten, and when so much here goes wrong, May we know this thing for certain—that your love is sure and strong. You're beside us in our suffering, and when times are surely tough, We may face an unknown future, but it's filled, Lord, with your love.

Music: Beach Spring, The Sacred Harp, 1844

Text: ©2020 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette (permission for use granted to churches)

I pray for your safety and look forward to singing with you in church again! Linda Shirck

COMMITTEES

American Lutheran Church has several volunteers who sit on committees and assist with the management and operations of our congregation. A partial list was included in the April Outreach and this month I highlight two more committees. When we are able to gather again, be sure to thank them for their service and feel free to talk with them about any concerns you have; above all, please pray for them.

Thank you, Rita Van Stelle – ALC Council Secretary

2020 ALC Council and Committee Members

President Terri Polk; Vice President Sharon Grabow; Secretary Rita Van Stelle;

Treasurer Deb Hjortland

Council Members: Ron Prekker, Bob Bouldin, Wally Brambilla, Bryan Cooper-Keeble, Pete Oppedahl, Phil Miller, Ray Brodland, Chris Weldon, Don Garverick, Robert Wecker and Jan Powell

Friendship Committee

Terri Polk, Marie Amble, Anita Bobb, Carroll Egemo, Ray & Connie Brodland, Bob & Jeanne Cook, Clayton & Marlene Cook, Bryan & Drinda Cooper-Keeble, Kathleen Frondell, Dianne Garvey, Elaine Gillingham, Carole Harstad, Sandra Harvey, Tom & Sally Hickerson, Kathy House, Mary Hugen, Duane & Marian Johnson, Dick & Judy Jorgenson, James & Janet Keek, Tom & Kathryn Keller, Darlene Krenzel, Butch & Connie Kurth, Gail Laabs, Margery Lane, Pat & Barb Lehto, Arlene Levin, Lindy Lindahl, David & Marty Livingston, Nola Mellstrom, Steven & Brigette Miedzybrocki, David & Carol Moe, Sharon Myers, Janice New, Madeline Niccore, Debbie Nielsen, Alan & Susan Olson, Jerry Olson, James Becker, Jane Tschida, Jan Powell, Olga Redstrom, Char Riebe, Sharron Schueman, Glen Schultz, Ann Skidmore, Janet Strycker, Kathy Ulrich, Owen & Dorothy Viker, Jean Warren, Chris Weldon, Joyce Wikum, Joan Wolf, Caroline Woodruff, Charlene Young

Altar Guild

Cheryl Blair, Linda Cain, Connie Caul, Pam Geiger, Judy Goblirsch, Sherry Iverson, Judy Jensen Carol Jones, Marge Lane, Dee Lawrence, Marty Livingston, Gena Marks, Carol Moe, Angela Ohnesorge, Ellen Olson, Kay Peterson, Terri Polk, Karen Severson, Kathy Skelding, Elaine Thompson, Caroline Woodruff, Jane Zimmerman, Barbara Speziale, Neil Wernsing, Adele Bonde

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

The ALC Women's Ministry Board sends greetings to each of you. We are praying that you are taking care and staying safe during these uncertain times. We miss being able to be at ALC for our meetings and activities, but for the month of May we will not meet. So that means no WELCA Bible Study and no spinning bandages for Global Health.

However, we could use some help getting the last few boxes of bandages and diapers for Lutheran Global Health Ministries to Fridley, Minnesota. If you are driving north and have room for some boxes, we would appreciate your assistance. Please call Jan Powell, at 323-559-4688 to arrange for boxes needing a ride.

When ALC is again open we will continue to collect items for the Operation Christmas Child boxes. Presently we still need coloring books, crayons, and Beanie Babies.

Thank you for your continued support of our projects to serve those in need.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

These are indeed unusual times, some might say trying times, certainly times the like of which none of us has ever seen or even imagined. Because this message is written several weeks before it will be published, nothing can be time specific. We simply do not know when or under what circumstances we might once again carry on the mission of Stephen Ministry at American Lutheran Church in the manner in which it was designed and practiced in the past. What we do know is that Stephen Ministry is happening right now during this pandemic which has forced all of us to experience life differently. It's just that Stephen Ministry too is happening in a different way. What is the mission of Stephen Ministry, you might ask? Simply put, the mission of Stephen Ministry is God's people caring for God's people in a Christ-centered way. There are always people in need of caring, and one thing that is certain during these uncertain times is that the need only increases. Our Stephen Ministers are continuing to extend a caring and loving hand and ear to their care receivers now as always.

If you are interested in learning more about Stephen Ministry at American Lutheran Church, please feel free to call or email me. This vital ministry here at ALC is always in need of new members if it is to remain a viable part of ALC's care ministry team. It's not too early to begin thinking about our next training classes in January of 2021. I extend the blessings of caring to all.

For ALC Stephen Ministry, Glen Schulz ph: 623-875-1011

email: maryglenwiaz@yahoo.com

WEDNESDAY NIGHT ALIVE

Greetings from your WNA committee!

We are extremely saddened by the unfortunate accident and death that has taken our beloved ALC and WNA committee member Gil Thoele. He is now with the Lord and we are rejoicing about that, but we will miss him terribly. He served on the WNA committee practically from its beginning and he served faithfully. His smile, willingness, generosity, positive attitude, and his non-stop efforts with everything he was involved in is to be admired. He would have celebrated his 90th birthday in April. Many people can call Gil their friend, including me and my husband, Marv. Thank you Gil for your dedication to life itself and for all the many activities you were involved in, most particularly WNA.

This has been a challenging time for all of us with the coronavirus shutting everything down, including our church and the remainder WNA programs and dinners, but the committee is still working hard to fill the program slots for next year. In the meantime, I would like to thank all the people who volunteered their time to sell dinner tickets and all the people who helped serve the dinners. They are too numerous to mention, but we are so grateful for their participation and hard work. Thanks to Lori and Dennis Kellar for organizing the dinner plans. Thanks to Jane and Rod Coughlin for their continued preparation of the delicious meals. Thanks to Dave Tiggs, Rolfe Blaess and Gary Lawrence for their help with audio/visual requirements.

This will be the last WNA Outreach article I will write, as I'm retiring from serving as Chair of WNA. It has been a privilege and my pleasure to serve on the committee. Thank you to my committee who has worked so hard and been so faithful to the purpose of WNA: Connie Brodland, Deb Hjortland, Van Judd, Vicki Merlak, Alan Olson, Carol Torgeson, Ginny Walker and Jan McDonald. Please encourage these members as they move forward planning the 2020-2021 schedule. If you feel led to join this committee, please contact Deb Hjortland.

For now, so long, stay well and we will see you soon! Maryanne Winters, Chair

HEROES AND HEROINES

This pandemic has certainly changed our daily lives and routines. Children are out of school, many taking classes online. Churches, restaurants, small businesses and large businesses have either closed, have shorter hours, are furloughing people or re-thinking their delivery options. Our television ads are not featuring as many political ads (thank goodness) but are showing appreciation for community heroes and heroines such as nurses, doctors, frontline workers, first responders, etc. We have had many heroes and heroines in the Bible. We also have our own heroes and heroines at American Lutheran Church. Their heroic efforts might not be tied to the pandemic, but they are tied to something or someone else in their lives.

Is there someone you know who you believe to be a hero or heroine? Nominate your Biblical hero and/or heroine and tell me why they meet your criteria? Nominate a person at American Lutheran Church who is your hero or heroine and tell me why. I promise I will read every submission and we might use these as a basis for future Outreach articles or in worship. Please send your nominations to tpolk127@gmail.com or mail to Terri Polk, 10863 W. Clair Dr. Sun City, AZ, 85351. I cannot wait to hear from you!

Peace and blessings, Terri Polk; ALC Council President

NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS

To be living in this world of COVID-19 is a most challenging time for each one of us. It reminds me of a similar challenge that I, my family and friends experienced in 1939-1945. As a young boy living in England 70 miles northeast of London, there was a need to stay in our homes or run to air raid shelters, whenever enemy bombers were thought to be approaching the coast of England in our area.

These air raids were almost daily for a period of several months, but we had no idea where, when, or for how long we would experience the bombing. The wailing of air raid sirens was the signal to be diligent. We needed to carry our gas masks with us at all times – while at home, at school, shopping with mum, playing with friends, even going to church. Daily cleanliness of the gas masks was very important.

Also, most importantly we had a dearth of many household goods and foods. Rationing of food and household supplies was quite normal in England until 1951. We stayed in touch with family by mail, as home phones were almost non-existent.

In similar ways today we all need to be aware of our surroundings, wear masks and keep our distance from others who may contaminate us, search for toilet paper, paper towels and disinfectant wipes, and stay indoors as much as possible.

Fortunately, today we have cell phones and computers so we can almost instantly stay in touch with family and friends.

Our neighborhood groups are a great way to meet, greet and communicate with several members of ALC. So, even though we are all sequestered at this time in our lives, please stay in touch with members of your neighborhood group and with other church members. They are your very close friends and need to know that.

Blessings to you all, Bryan Cooper-Keeble and Drinda

Home: 623-376-6666 Cell: 602-881-4197

banddck@aol.com

WALK FOR NAVAJO WATER

A'hee'hee is the Navajo word for thank you! With great appreciation for a job well done, both the Navajo Evangelical Lutheran Mission in Rock Point, Arizona and our Benevolence Committee salutes your efforts as you prayed, pledged and walked to provide drinkable water to the church, school, community and livestock in Northern Arizona.

The amount from our congregation, \$49,649, was sent to the Rock Point Mission this week. Under our leadership others have come forward and donated the balance for a total of over \$94,000. Good news!

The actual work has understandable been delayed but we will receive progress reports which will be posted to the ALC congregation.

Benjamin Franklin said: "Everyone makes mistakes, but the biggest mistake of all is doing nothing." ALC – You can be proud of reaching high!

Bob Rogalski For the Benevolence Committee



GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

Gifts given to American Lutheran Church in memory of:

Bea Hodson

Sheila Harmell

Curtis Bummer

Wally and Wanda Pottenger, Glen Schulz, Glennis Meyer, Violet and Don Anderson, Jim Becker and Terri Polk, Charlene and James Trageser, Sandra Vinge, Joan and Martin Klock, Char Riebe, Judy and Richard Jensen

Del Jenson

Judy and Richard Jensen

Evelyn Nelson

Judy and Richard Jensen, Jim Becker and Terri Polk

Gil Thoele

Judy and Richard Jensen, Colleen Gandrud

Phyllis Seim

Ruth and Stephen Grant, Judy and Richard Jensen

Gifts were given for needy families by Denice and Chuck Louderback in honor of their 7th Anniversary and by Constance L Carey in celebration of Kellie's 10th Anniversary of cancer survival.

Directory Changes

We express our deepest sympathy to those who have lost loved ones.

REMOVED FROM ROLLS BY DEATH					
Groezinger, Nancy S. (12/29/19)	Kolstad, Judith M. (4/1/20)				
Gilbert B. Thoele (3/28/20)	Hillier, Lloyd V. (4/4/20)				
Robert E. Mayry (3/28/20)					
Maxine E. Sterrett (3/29/20)					
Griffin, Juanita (3/30/20)					
CENTENARIANS					
Mary Graybiel (105)					
Norma Carlsson (105)					
Dorothy Noren (102)					
Florence Johnson (100)					
LOCAL ADDRESS CHANGES					
Zip Code Correction from April					
Outreach:					
Philip & Jill Solberg					
9607 W Calico Dr					
Sun City, AZ 85373					
MOVED OUT OF AREA PERMANENTLY					
Gerald Hayes	Gene & Margaret Hinners				
911 E Sycamore Ave	11487 Sonewater Crossing				
Norfolk, NE 68701-0848	Huntley, IL 60142				
Richard & Fern Heitz					
10300 SE Waverly Ct., Apt. 308					
Milwaukee, OR 97222					
, or >, ===					

American Lutheran Church of Sun City 17200 N. Del Webb Blvd Sun City, AZ 85373

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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Youngtown, AZ

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Rev. Judith Rainforth

Pastor

j.rainforth@alcsuncity.org

Rev. Gary R. Garvey Visitation Pastor g.garvey@alcsuncity.org

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