



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 2605 S. Signal Butte Rd., Mesa, AZ 85209
 December 2009

LETTER OF HOPE



From Pastor Glen

I love to tell the story...

I will always remember the excitement that filled my heart when I heard Uncle Lawrence was coming to stay. For me, it meant that my whole life would change. He was my tutor. He was my friend. He was the closest person to me outside of my immediate family. When Lawrence came, our home changed.

He would generally stay 4-5

weeks and it would never be long enough. Lawrence was not my real uncle, but one of my father's childhood friends. Lawrence went off to fight in the Korean War and shortly after returning to the states he came down with polio and had been restricted to a wheel chair. His legs were lifeless and I remember pulling him across a highly polished board sliding his bottom from the bed into his chair. Laughter would fill the room as the board would shift and slide... causing undue stress to Lawrence, but never in my memory do I remember him ever falling... just zillions of close calls. We played checkers. He read books. We went for walks. But my warmest memories were of those evenings when my parents would be gone and it was just Lawrence and us kids. He would tell stories, stories about growing up in the north woods, stories about where he and my dad would skate for miles on ice covered rivers into town. I think my favorite stories were about the surreal world of surviving the life as a soldier. It was in those stories that we created a bond that couldn't be broken.

It is my hope that you too, will become a story teller, and if not a story teller, a story reader. This Advent season, Pastor Sondra and I will be preaching out of a children's Bible Story book. Each lesson will be based upon a particular story in the book. The idea is that you would purchase this Bible Storybook (*The Jesus Storybook Bible* sold at our bookstore) and continue to tell the Christmas story to your children and grandchildren. I cannot think of a more wonderful gift than to tell your story with God's story.

“...take time
 to *be still*,
 to *listen*, to *tell*,
 to *read*, and
 to *remember*
 the story of
 Christmas...”

I'm guessing that each of us will struggle to remember the reason for the season as our culture pulls our hearts and heads into an empty materialism that promises more than it can deliver. It is my prayer that you will take time to *be still*, to *listen*, to *tell*, to *read*, and to *remember* the story of Christmas. It is a story where God came to stay, to reveal a connection, and to create a bond that can never be broken.

*Merry Christmas,
 Pastor Glen*

Spirit of Hope Lutheran Church

Office Hours are: Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Our phone number is (480) 396-8300, and our fax number is (480) 830-6911. Our website: www.spiritofhopelutheran.com

Email: spiritofhope@spiritofhopelutheran.com
 Glen J. Stadler, Pastor; Sondra R. Krogstad, Pastor

Spirit of Hope Core Values:

- We welcome and love all people
- We value the diversity in the body of Christ
- We strive to grow in Christ through worship, study and action
- We hunger to serve and respond to those in need

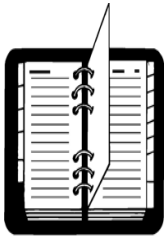


Christmas Eve Worship Times

Thursday, December 24th

- 4:30 p.m. Family-friendly service
- 7 p.m. Traditional Christmas Candlelight Service
- 9 p.m. Traditional Christmas Candlelight Service

Saturday Worship, 5 p.m.; Sunday Worship: 8:45 & 11 a.m. at 2605 S. Signal Butte Road



Weekly Schedule

Sunday Choir Practice, 7 a.m.

Worship times, Saturdays, 5 p.m.

Sundays, 8:45 & 11 a.m.

Sunday School, 10:00 a.m.

Adult Forum, 10:00 a.m.

Women's Bible Study,
every Thursday, 1 p.m.

Christmas Cantata - "Child of Wonder"



The choir will be presenting their annual musical cantata on December 13th at the 8:45 worship service. The music will be a new collection called *Child of Wonder, a celebration of Christmas* by Lari Goss and Rob Howard. This year the cantata will be joined by SOH's newly formed Children's Choir directed by Nancy Smith, and Nick Scavo, who will accompany on the cello. Robert Mills is the pianist and director for this presentation. Come and invite your friends.

Blood Drive Coming in February

Spirit of Hope is hosting its **2nd Blood Drive** on Wednesday, February 3rd. The Bloodmobile will be in our parking lot from 3:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. on that day. Further details to follow in our January newsletter.

Help a Child Have a Better Christmas Holiday

The Christmas Season is upon us and the *Social Concerns committee at Spirit of Hope* is once again asking for your help with gifts and food for needy families. We have a tree in the Narthex. Please choose a bear with a name and gift suggestion for a child, so that children who would otherwise have "nothing" under the tree can enjoy a nice Christmas. After choosing a bear, please sign the register beside the tree. The bear will indicate if you are choosing a boy or girl, their age and the items the child wants or needs. Please wrap the item, attach original bear and return the item to the church by noon Dec 18th.

Food items needed are the same as collected for our Thanksgiving baskets. We will need the food items at the church by Dec 18th also.

Food List:

- 2 boxes or 1 bag of stuffing mix
- 5-lb bag of potatoes
- 2 jars of gravy
- 2 cans green beans
- 2 cans of corn
- 2 small or 1 large can of sweet potatoes
- 1 bag marshmallows
- 1 package of pie shells (the ones with pie pans)
- 1 can pie filling
- 1 aluminum foil
- 1 package tortillas
- 1 one lb bag of beans
- 1 one lb bag of rice
- 1 turkey pan
- 1 turkey



Thanks once again for your help!



Children Present "Photo Album"

Spirit of Hope's Children will present "Photo Album" - their Christmas Program on Sunday December 20th at 10 a.m.

Practices are as follows:

- Dec. 6th Rehearse during Sunday School time
- Dec. 13th Rehearse during Sunday School time
- Dec. 19th Dress Rehearsal at SOH at 9:00 a.m.
- Dec. 20th "Photo Album" Christmas Story 10:00 a.m. at SOH

This special program is directed by *Zach Bell* and *Debbie Zimmerman*. Special refreshments will follow the program.

Come and see what the youth have done to get you ready for a *Merry Christmas*.

Fellowship Committee News

The *Spirit of Hope Fellowship Committee* would like to thank all those who donated and bid on items at their *Silent Auction* in October. They made \$644 towards a new coffee system.

Starting in December, car decals with "*Spirit of Hope Lutheran Church*" imprinted on them, will be for sale. *Be proud of your church and let people know that you are proud of it.*

A reminder: If you are missing a dish or kitchen item of any kind, please check in the cabinet to the left of the refrigerators.

"Faith Chest" building

Howard Dicks has faithfully built our *Faith Chests* and is now open to having another pair of hands help. Howard has the pattern for the chests and is willing to offer guidance. If you are skilled in wood-working and would like to share in this ministry, please talk with Pastor Sondra.

Youth Joins Our Savior's at Skateland

All youth grades 7-12 are invited to go to *Skateland* in Chandler on Friday evening, December 4th. We will meet at *Spirit of Hope* at 7:00 p.m. We will skate from 8:00-11:00 p.m. The cost is \$7.50 which includes admission, regular skate rental, 1 slice of pizza and a soda. This will be our first joint Youth Event with our neighbor church *Our Savior's Lutheran Church*. We need the youth to sign-up by emailing prglen@spiritofhopelutheran.com or contact the church office. We also need parents who can drive and provide skating lessons/supervision that evening.



Share Your Goodness Through Gift Cards

Your generosity has been a blessing to others! Several of you have purchased *Gift Cards* to be shared with others. We continue to offer you the opportunity to pick up Gift Cards, at grocery stores, Wal-Mart, Target, gas stations etc. in amounts not to exceed \$25 for any one gift card. These will be shared, confidentially, first with members of our church family. Pastor Sondra will be coordinating this new Ministry. Please give your *Gift Cards* to her. *We thank you in advance for your generosity.*

Thursday Women's Bible Study introduces December "Change"



Thursday Women's Bible Study continues our study of Romans. Our December theme will be, "*Change... Moved to a New Address*". We are enjoying our journey through Romans and invite you to come join us. At 1 p.m. we gather (in the large classroom) to share prayer concerns, have a cup of coffee and see what God has in store for us. December is a frantic month with long to-do lists. I encourage you to spend time with your sisters in Christ as we find comfort and challenge in God's word. Bring your Bible and join us! You won't be disappointed! Talk to Pastor Sondra or Carol Petersen (480-357-4359) if you have questions.

Please Park Considerately

Those of you who are able: please park in our back parking lot and leave spaces toward the front of our parking lot for those who have a challenge walking any distance. Thank you for your consideration.



Sowing Seeds in January

W.O.W. (*Women of Wisdom Bible Study*) is inviting all men and women to join them in January for a 12-consecutive-week study of "*The different ways Jesus Sowed Seeds*" led by Pam Rowedder. Bring your Bibles and explore this concept. WOW meets the 1st and 4th Tuesday of the month, at *Spirit of Hope*, 7 - 8:15 p.m. More details about this special study will follow. For more information, contact Debbie Zimmerman: email - debbyzim@cox.net or call 480-636-7487.

Who are You Missing?

Let's admit it, we are creatures of habit. And that doesn't stop when we enter our church building. If you've noticed the person(s) sitting in front of you or in your vicinity who haven't been in church for a while, give them a call and let them know you have missed them. Your phone call will be appreciated and who doesn't want to know they've been missed.

Labels Help Navajo Mission School



Spirit of Hope has sent 1,300 Campbell's Soup labels to the *Navajo Mission* on the Navajo Indian Reservation in Rockpoint, Arizona.

This program has enabled the Mission (since 1999) to "buy" 4 vans at 1,500,000 labels each. Also collected were 2,000 Education Box Tops which earned points for buying school supplies at the Mission.

Continue to bring in your labels from products including *Campbell's Condensed Soups*, *Soup At Hand*, *Chunky Soups*, *Supper Bakes Meal Kits* and *Select Soups*, *V8 Splash Juices*, *Pepperidge Farm Goldfish Crackers* and *Franco-American Spaghetti's*. Bring them to the Narthex at *Spirit of Hope* and don't forget to include the bar code. If you need information about this program, call Ethel Bloedorn, 480-268-9157.

Food Bank for the Holidays

Especially during this holiday season, remember to support the *Lutheran Food Bank* by bringing your donation to the designated wooden bin in the Narthex at *SOH*. Most needed right now are tuna, crackers, soup, cereal, spaghetti, spaghetti sauce, canned vegetables and canned beans. *Thanks for your help!*

A "Scentsible" Request

Asthma and allergies affect many and stem from a variety of causes, but neither is helped by strong scents we put on unknowingly before we leave home. Please be mindful of others who are sensitive to these scents and go lightly when applying perfumes, scented lotions and aftershave. *Thanks in advance for your consideration.*



2605 S. Signal Butte Rd.
Mesa, Arizona 85209

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MESA, AZ
PERMIT NO. 778

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED EIN: 41-1568278

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Dates to Remember

Friday, Dec. 4th	Angel Tree in Narthex
Friday, Dec. 4th	Youth to Skateland in Chandler
Sunday, Dec. 13th	Christmas Cantata 8:45 a.m.
Sunday, Dec. 20th	Children's Christmas Program 10 a.m.

Christmas Eve	Worship times are 4:30 p.m. (Family Service) 7 p.m. (Candlelight Service) and 9 p.m. (Candlelight Service)
Jan. 10th & 17th	New Member Orientation
Jan. 30th/31st	New Members Join

Our mission:

*“As a diverse family of God’s children,
Spirit of Hope Lutheran Church
provides a safe refuge for all by teaching,
sharing and celebrating the Love of Christ.”*

*Glen J. Stadler, Pastor
Sondra R. Krogstad, Pastor*



Ministry Vacancies

Wanted: A Team Captain for the SOH Facility Committee

We are looking for an energetic “can do” kind of person who can say “yes” to the call to chair *Spirit of Hope’s Facility Committee*. Jerry Hansen will be stepping down from that position effective January 1st. As you have heard Jerry say many times, “This is one of the largest ministry groups in our church, because everyone is a member!” But, we do need someone to coordinate the variety of both routine and unexpected facility needs. Jerry will be happy to describe the responsibilities of this very important calling if you are interested. He will also be available to assist in the transition as you step up to this call for facility-related leadership. Please call Jerry Hansen (480-292-9033) if you are interested.

Help Our Education Ministry Team

Do you love children? Is one of your skills organization? We are looking for assistance with our Education Ministry Team. *Angela Omtvedt* has faithfully and remarkably served in this position for several years and is ready to let someone else have a turn. We are looking for many hands to make this ministry a lighter load and to fill Angela’s shoes. Interested or just curious, talk to Pastor Sondra.



SOH Volunteer Receptionist

We are looking for volunteers to sit at the desk in our Narthex to answer the phone and welcome guests as they arrive.

Hours are from 9 a.m. to noon and noon to 3 p.m. Right now we have Tuesday mornings, Thursday afternoons and all day Friday open.

If you are available any of those times, or could fill in on occasion, please talk with Pastor Sondra. All the ways you serve at *Spirit of Hope* are appreciated.

Communion Helpers Requested

Communion Servers serve the Elements (bread, wine, along with the blessing) and hold the basket for the empty glasses.

Altar Assistants fill the Communion cups and set the Elements out for the service, as well as monitor supplies during the service to make sure the Servers have what they need.

If you are interested in either position, contact Marion Bergstrom, 480-354-0566 or Ethel Bloedorn, 480-386-6141, or indicate on the back of the Communication Card. Training will be provided.



Spirit of Hope

Church Council & Office Staff

President	Paul Christoffers pchristoffers@cox.net	480-358-1792
Vice President	Dorothy Hansen jerrydorothy@cox.net	480-292-9033
Secretary	Kevalleen DeBolt kevalleen@gmail.com	480-986-2268
Financial Secretary	Peg Goetz gopeg_soh@cox.net	480-242-1903
Treasurer	Ralph Smith RRSJ05@yahoo.com	480-629-8053
Member	Chad Barta cbarta@cox.net	480-357-3598
Member	Jonn Bergstrom jmberg86@cox.net	480-354-0566
Member	Sean Eichelis Veichelis2@msn.com	480-633-6304
Member	Barbara Mykleseth bsm116@cox.net	480-924-3987

Pastor Glen Stadler
prglen@spiritofhopelutheran.com

Pastor Sondra Krogstad
pastorsondra@spiritofhopelutheran.com

Administrative Asst. Cheryl Gibson
newsletter submissions:
cheryl@spiritofhopelutheran.com
or cgibson99@cox.net

Prayer Concern Volunteer Joyce Massey
masseyfj5@msn.com



Pastor Miguel Gomez-Acosta

Miguel's Rincón

It is hard to believe that another year has come and gone. Another Easter, another busy summer, another holiday season, and here I am writing the final article for 2009. This was a difficult year; it was not hard to notice how the economic crisis affected many of us, from retirees who lost almost half of their pensions to hard-working families who struggled financially no matter what they did. Helping at the food bank at *First Evangelical Lutheran* (the home to our second site, *La Primera*), I could not help but notice how the number of people coming for food boxes seemed to double, from maybe 80 families a week (Tuesdays and Thursdays), to more than 100 families on Thursdays alone. I also noticed the amount of financial assistance for utilities and rent provided by LSSSW got smaller and smaller as the year progressed due to more requests for assistance. The applications for holiday assistance seemed to go fast as most places that provided it were at full capacity in early November. Things seemed hopeless.

How fitting that we are now heading into the advent season. The time during which we, as a church, wait and prepare to receive the ultimate gift of all, the Christ child, God incarnate. This is a season of *hope*. It is the season in which people once again regain hope in humanity as all of us go out of our way to be nice to one another. It is the season when we lament the past, but are hopeful for the future as the New Year rolls around. It is the season when we celebrate giving, as families and churches go out of their way to serve those less fortunate. How fitting that we once again have hope as this dismal year comes to an end. As we move into our Advent season let us remain hopeful, trusting that the same God who gave us Jesus in the manger will not abandon us now, but will sustain us even in these difficult times.

Feliz Navidad y Prospero Año Nuevo.

- Pastor Miguel

December Adult Forums

Join us at 10 a.m. on Sundays in the Sanctuary for a stimulating discussion on topics selected to strengthen our faith. We are continuing the series: "*Faith Lessons on the Early Church*", where we travel to the Holy Land and experience the sites and sounds of the lesson presented.

December 6th – *The Mark of the Beast...* "Imagine living in New York City, where during the past week, you committed your life to Jesus. The only other Christians within this vast city are a few friends who are also recent converts... Your situation would be similar to that of the early believers who went to Ephesus, Asia Minor's New York City."

December 13th – *Hot or Cold...* "Change the world! Make a difference! Impact your culture for Jesus! How do you respond to those three challenges?"

December 20th – *Sunday School Children Christmas Program*

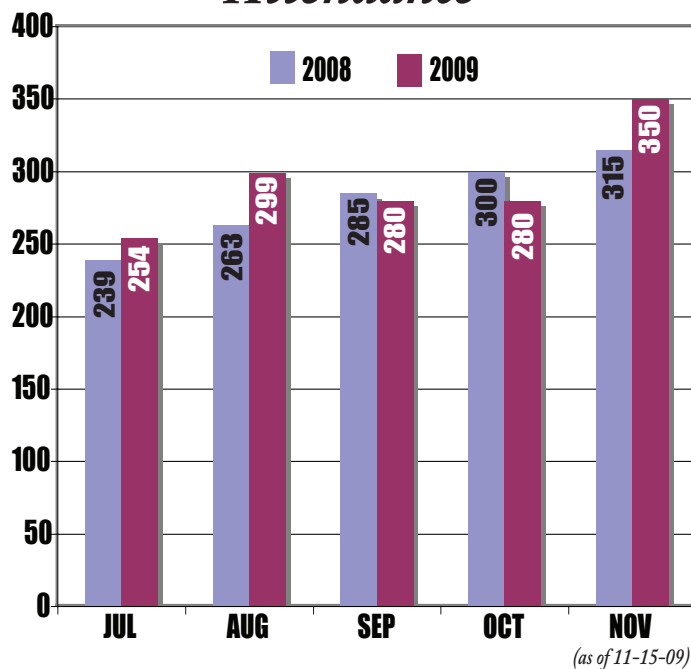
December 27th – *No Adult Forum*

We will begin a new series in January. Under consideration is a study of Genesis but some have asked for our Rob Bell series to return. What are your thoughts? Talk with Pastor Sondra.

Magnetic name tags

Members who have pacemakers should NOT wear our magnetic name tags. Please talk to Karen Scott if you have questions, or email her at Kasniche@aol.com.

Attendance



EVANGELISM



What are God's people doing around Maricopa county?

- **Mesa:** Latino Christians giving fiestas with an evangelistic outreach for immigrant Latinos, at culturally significant times.
- **Chandler:** Chinese Christians

holding regular church services for immigrant restaurant workers, late at night after the restaurants close (the only time these workers are free).

- **Phoenix** (and the reservations): Native American Christians evangelizing and discipling other Native Americans.

- **Phoenix:** Arab Christians evangelizing and discipling other Mid-Easterners.

During the month of December we have a couple of opportunities to see and hear about some of what God is doing:

Saturday night, December 5th, *Pastor Jamal* from the Arab Baptist Church of Phoenix will be our guest, along with some members of his church. They will join us at the 5:00 p.m. service and the monthly potluck dinner that follows. The gifts given in the hunger jars that weekend will go to help this small group of Christians in their ministry.

Friday evening, December 18th, we are invited to attend the *Fiesta de Las Posadas* (Festival of the Inns) at St. Peter's Lutheran Church. This festival is a re-enactment of Mary and Joseph's arrival in Bethlehem and their search for a place to stay. After watching the re-enactment and enjoying tamales, we have the opportunity to participate in a bilingual (English-Spanish) worship service.

Stitches – knit, crochet, have fun

Stitches— our knit / crochet group meets Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to noon. Laugh, share, enjoy and *stitch* with us. Beginners welcome, training can be provided. Call Linda Swanson, 480-248-7812, for more information or to donate yarn.

Order The Lutheran

The Lutheran - the official publication of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, can be ordered by you. Click on their website www.thelutheran.org to subscribe.

For Safety's Sake

We request that an adult accompany children who leave the Sanctuary during worship services. We have had no problems to date but realize we do not see all who enter our facility. Thank you for helping us assure that all God's children remain safe.

COORINER

GriefShare Continues to Offer Comfort

Our *GriefShare* groups have begun but you may join any time during the 13-week program.

GriefShare is a Christ-centered, Bible-based program designed to help people through the grieving process. The session begins with a DVD featuring experts on grief and lay people from prior *GriefShare* groups.

Spirit of Hope has two *GriefShare* sessions. Our Monday group is facilitated by Jean and Jerry Borstad (520-868-9411) and meets from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. Our Thursday evening group, meeting from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. is facilitated by Donna Gerek (480-474-2197) and Donna Weisenborn (480-983-1492).

GriefShare is open to all. There is a \$15/fee to cover the cost of the workbook.

Advanced registration is requested. You may find our Registration Form on-line at www.spiritofhopelutheran.com or call the church office.

Spirit of Hope is pleased to offer this program for you, your family and friends. Pastor Sondra is also available to answer questions.

Spirit of Hope to Welcome New Members in January

New member orientation sessions are scheduled for January 10th & 17th at 11:00 a.m. for those who would like to join *Spirit of Hope*. These classes include a meal and run from 2-3 hours in length. *Spirit of Hope* offers two different kinds of memberships. The first is called "Member," meaning that your membership is transferred from your previous congregation. Members can vote, serve on the church council, and share in all the rights and privileges of the congregation. The second form of membership is "Associate Member." Associate Members leave their membership in their home congregation, but can participate fully in the congregational life with the exception of voting privileges, and holding an office on church council. *New Member Weekend* will be January 30th/31st at all services. If you would like to join *Spirit of Hope* at that time please contact Pastor Sondra at 480-396-8300 or email pastorsondra@spiritofhopelutheran.com.



Visit Our Nursery

Have you stopped by to see the fun and safe furnishings we have in our Nursery? If not, please do so today. Our Nursery is staffed with two paid adult attendants who are not only qualified to care for your children, but *LOVE children*, as well. Because of limited space in our Nursery, we accept children between the ages of six weeks *through* three years old.

Spirit of Hope Spirit Groups - December 2009



We are grateful to those who were "on call" and in the November 2009 Spirit Groups.

As you may recall from previous articles in this newsletter, our church membership has been randomly organized into *Spirit Groups* to provide "on call" service. Each group serves for one month each year and has a call list of about 20 households. Some service opportunities will be appropriate for the whole family and others will require only one or two of you. There is a mix of full-year and part-year members in each group.

The group listing is a way to quickly call members to serve (as able) for special as well as routine events. Appropriate staff or church leaders will be notified if there are service needs during the month by chairpersons of committees or by church office personnel. At that time you might be called. If you are called upon, please tell the caller if this assigned month does not work for you and you can be transferred to a different group.

Here are some examples of ways your group might be called to serve:

- Setting up/Cleaning up before/after special or routine events.
- Cooking or shopping for special events.
- Providing refreshments for and/or cleaning up after fellowship on Sundays.
- Cooking and/or serving for funerals.
- Deep cleaning the kitchen at the end of the month prior to next groups service.
- Supporting a church committee's special needs for the month.

The Spirit Group for December 2009 is Group 10. Their names are listed below. Thank You in advance for any services you give to our church during December. Please call Carole Needham (480) 882-1415 if you have comments or questions about this service opportunity.

Joe & Bev Anzelmo
Curt & Gerry Davis
Paul & Pris Fieldhammer
Ralph & Joane Hanson
Duncan & Dawn Kunz
Ted & Anne Nelson
Carl & Karen Scott
Russ & Lara Shaffer
Eric & Kelli Shifley
Toni Smith
Dale & Linda Zastrow

Bob & Elaine Brynsaas
Stefani Eisele
Frank & Donna Gerek
Janice Houghland
Carl & Dee McCoy
Robert & Jessica Parsons
Kerri Sellheim
Mahlon & Fern Shell
Claude & Gail Smith
Bruce & Marge Stofferan
Debbie Zimmerman

Space Management

Most evenings, *Spirit of Hope* is "host" to a variety of ministry events and, at times, community events. It's even more important that if you, or your group, would like to have a meeting or an event at our church, please fill out a *Room Reservation Form*. We in the office will do our best to have a response to you in three days, to let you know if there is space available and which room you might be using. *Room Reservation Forms* are available in the office. *Thank you for your consideration and understanding.*

Tithing with a Purpose

The origins of tithing... The Bible provides the basic Christian teaching about tithing. The Old Testament refers to tithing as being required of all. A tenth of possessions, such as animals, grains, etc., was to be set aside and offered to God in thanks for God's blessings. In the New Testament, Jesus recognized tithing as a part of *stewardship*. *Stewardship* means using everything God has given us to serve God with love and gratitude. Jesus encouraged giving in proportion to what we have received, praising the widow for her generosity in Luke 21:1-4.

God asks us to give from our hearts. We give of ourselves, our time and our possessions not because *we have to* or because *we want to look good to God*. We give because we love Jesus. We give because we have been given so much. We are gifted and blessed by the Holy Spirit so we can gift and bless others.

- Stewardship Team

Have You Lost Something?

Lost & Found items can be found in the church office. If you've lost something, please call the church (480-396-8300) between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. Found items will only be kept for 30 days.

Spirit in the Desert Seminars

Spirit in the Desert Retreat Center is planning two seminars during the month of December.

"*Enneagram*" is a course on deepening understanding and awareness of our personalities and the experience of our inner observer. It will be presented by Carole Whittaker, PhD on Friday, December 4th, 6:30-9 p.m. and Saturday, December 5th, 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.

The second is "*Money: Our Behaviors, Biases, and Barriers*" presented by Gita Saraydarian and Katie Adelman, Thursday, December 10th, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

For additional information, visit the Spirit in the Desert website at <http://www.spiritinthedesert.org> or phone 480-488-5218.