

THE EVANGEL
Gloria de Cristo Lutheran Church
11273 E. 40th Street
Yuma, Az.

January 2026
Volume 34, Issue 1



MISSION STATEMENT

Walking with Jesus to bring new life and hope to every person

CHRIST WITH US IN JANUARY

Resolute

"I know the plans I have for you says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." Jeremiah 29:11

Blessed New Year! We turn the calendar to a whole set of blank pages and, although we may mark birthdates and anniversaries for the future, and although we may make note of what days holidays will be celebrated in the new year, so much is unknown. God asks us to "walk by faith, not by sight", (2 Corinthians 5:7) which can be really difficult when things feel disorganized, distressing, distracting, disturbing and even devastating. But because we are assured, because our faith embraces the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1) we can walk into the New year with confidence and with hope.

The Passage from Jeremiah is a letter of encouragement to the people who had been defeated by the Babylonians, led by Nebuchadnezzar, and carried off to Babylon. The defeated people were not kept in prisons, however. They were to lend their talents and intellectual gifts to enhance their place of bondage. Although the people were strangers in a strange land (and would be for the next 70 years), Jeremiah encourages them to build houses, plant vineyards, get married and even to pray for the Shalom (complete peace and wellbeing of body, mind and spirit) of their new city. This was a letter of assurance that God had not forgotten them, that He still held them in the palm of His hand and that they would be blessed and would once again return to their beloved native land.

Are you feeling "out of place and in the wrong time"? Resolve to remember that God has a plan and a purpose for your life. Resolve to spend more time in scripture, in prayer and in worship. Resolve to find ways to be of service to your neighbor. "Build houses, plant vineyards, celebrate weddings" and remember to resolve to be hopeful, to find joy, to lift up your voice in praise and thanksgiving. Resolve to remember the promise that "the suffering of this present time is not worthy to be compared to the glory that will be revealed in us". (Romans 8:18) Step into the

(con't.)

CHRIST WITH US (Con't.)

New Year with thanks that God has given you a future filled with hope, with His love surrounding you, with opportunities to share the good news! You can fill in those blank spaces in your calendar with days of love, of joy, of hope, of service, of faith and of Shalom! Resolve to embrace God's promise of secured salvation...step into the power of God dwelling in you and resolve that you will walk with Jesus, bringing new life and hope to all people! Blessed New Year!

Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of time and the gift of life. Pour out your Holy Spirit so that others might see Christ in me. Amen

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JACK



Friends in Christ,

What a wonderful season! Christmas touched my heart and provided inspiration for the coming year. All the lights brightened my day. The Christmas season reminds me of John 8:12.

12 *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

As we begin the Epiphany season, may the Spirit open your hearts and minds to God's presence in this world. We hear the bad news and the results of sin. Please spend the Epiphany season with eyes wide open to Jesus as the light of life shining in the darkness. Pray that the Spirit opens your eyes to Jesus walking in our midst. With eyes wide open may you see that the darkness cannot overcome the Light of the life.

Follow Jesus as he opens new doors where the essence of life really is!

*Alive in Christ,
Pastor Jack*



Happy New Year!! The Vicar's are taking a look back at 2025 as we close out our first months pastoring and serving the congregation. We are all getting more comfortable with preaching (not complacent, but certainly more peaceful) and we remain

driven by delving into God's word and by speaking the Good News every Saturday and Sunday. We are all so blessed to be a part of the blended worship team that greets, ushers, provides beautiful music, prepares the altar for communion, sends out the service across the miles via livestream and Youtube, all the readers and those who set up the kitchen for fellowship and those who count the offerings, break down the elements on the altar and clean up after we all leave the sanctuary. Thank you all for your grace as we have learned and grown over the last eight months.

And we are looking forward to the New Year before us. As part of the Vision Committee's work, we are helping to plan the future for Gloria de Cristo. We hope to be working with all of you to grow the church, plan for a new building that will accommodate growth and community activities, putting together an evangelism plan for the Foothills, and putting together a program for a Sunday School and a youth program. In addition, we will continue to hone our gifts and talents as we faithfully pastor God's people.

You are also called to serve (remember the "if you're not dead, you're not done" admonition?) and with the upcoming and ambitious year we have coming up, make a resolution to say "YES!" SEND ME!" We will all need to bring the good news to our neighbors. We will all need to support the committee members who will be researching what building a new facility will mean in terms of laws, requirements and monetary commitment. We will need to assist and support the team that will work towards putting together a Sunday School plan and lay out a plan for attracting young families with a youth program. And listen to the Holy Spirit if you get a call to be a Vicar. We will need more pastoring, more energy, more variety, more blessings for all of us. This is going to be a **GREAT YEAR!** Pray for the Church, pray for your Vicars, pray for growth, for Shalom, and for the continued blessings of God's mercy and grace.

Heavenly Father, lead us, hold us in your loving hands and bless us as we share the good news. Let us walk in your love and grant us your peace that passes all understanding. Amen.

From the desk of Dr. Shirley . . .



Happy New Year! How quickly the years seem to go by!

One of my favorite activities during December is attending the Nutcracker Ballet. I've seen many versions of that classic. All of them hinge on the girl, Clara, throwing her shoe at the Rat King to break the evil spell, restore the Nutcracker to being a prince, and taking a tour of his magical kingdom.

Good versus evil is not a magic event. Praise God for Jesus, who came to earth from Heaven, endured a human birth, lived in poverty under the rule of a foreign government, taught the principles of the Heavenly Kingdom to 12 men who recognized the foretold Messiah.

However, the first advent, which we celebrate as Christmas, is a prelude to his second advent when He will establish Kingdom righteousness on the earth. What if it were today? There is a hymn by that title which you will get to help the choir sing soon.

Think about it! Not earthly magic, but Kingdom Glory! Forever!

Shirley C. Ehler
DWS Ethnomusicology
Minister of Worship
Organist & Choir Director
Gloria de Cristo Lutheran Church (ELCA)
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FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT



As I celebrate another New Year, I wonder what happened to last year's "new year". Did it become just another year? Where did the NEW go? To me when you say "new" it should be different than what is now "old". I am confused, am I responsible for doing something different or is it in the universe? I wonder if I want to do the work of celebrating something "new". Maybe I am too content to create change in my life, even though there are things I recognize as needing some adjustment. I have a feeling that this falls in the category of too much information.

When I read the weekly bulletin or The Evangel I see that we are always moving forward, which to me means NEW. Now I feel better, I am on a team that believes in moving forward, we pray for those changes every Sunday. We prepare for them as we participate in weekly services, Bible Studies, support groups, service committees and social service projects.

January 25, 2026, following the 10:15 service we will have our **Annual Meeting**, starting at 11:30. in Fellowship Hall. **This is your congregation so take time to attend.** Come and thank the members that serve in many ways. We have 4 council positions to vote on as well as selecting delegates to attend the Synod .Assembly session.

Again, we have a member that is providing lunch from Jersey Mikes. It is important we have an exact number of those coming, there will be a signup sheet in the bulletin on the 11th and 18th to determine how many lunches are needed. The order must be turned in on Monday the 19th.

Happy New Year!



FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship is the perfect opportunity for you to get to know your fellow church members. A time for sharing of family stories and other events in your life. Fellowship is offered following both the 8:30 and the 10:15 worship services on Sunday's.

It is especially important this time of year after all the hype of the Christmas gatherings of family or lack of family. The first Sunday of each month is our potluck following the 10:15 service. Plan to make your favorite dish to share with others, bring it to the kitchen prior to worship and the volunteers there will get it put in place.

Speaking of volunteers...this is another opportunity to use your talents the Lord has given you. The church thrives on volunteers, so consider signing up to host a Sunday morning fellowship hour. It doesn't take much. Basically put out some of the treats from the freezer (or prepare your own) and then do a bit of cleanup after everyone has had the opportunity to enjoy them. There is a gentleman that prepares the coffee for you. It is also an opportunity to meet some of the people you see in worship but don't know anything about. Give it a try!!

You are important in the functioning of the church!!!



Happy New Year. I can't believe another year has come down so quickly. Let me introduce myself. My name is Sandra Arceneaux, and I'm replacing Donna Brown as Convener/President of the Gloria de Cristo Branch of WELCA. (Women of the ELCA). I look forward to doing my best to serve in that capacity.

Days for Girls will continue on the 2nd & 4th Saturdays of each month. Please refer to your bulletin for the upcoming season.

WELCA will be hosting a 'Gather Potluck' on Tuesday, January 20th, 2026 at 5:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. All are invited. WELCA will be providing the main dishes. Please bring your favorite side dish or dessert to share and join us for good food, good music and of course fellowship.

Your sister in Christ
Sandra Arceneaux



First Saturday of every month, 8:00 am, Izzy's on Foothills Blvd.

The next date is: February 7, 2026
food, conversation, and fellowship!

Please come join us for great



PROPERTY



I'm happy to report that many of the ongoing problems that seem to re-occur with the property around the church have dropped off dramatically, mainly because we have upgraded everything that was old and worn out. One of the bigger projects that was accomplished this past month was the annual trimming of the palm trees in front of the church. Thank you to BRYAN URREY for assisting me with that. It is so appreciated!!

Hope you noticed the shiny sparkling window glass when you entered the Sanctuary. Thanks to BRIAN SUESS for handling that project for us. They look so nice.

In the very near future, we will be replacing the light bulbs in the parking lot with LED bulbs. This is another cost-saving project. Those big old Halogen bulbs suck up a lot of current.

LED bulbs use very little and provide better light.

Wishing all of you a very Blessed Christmas and New Year
David Donaldson, Property committee member

EDUCATION



All the Bible Classes are going well.

New Testament is down until the December 29 at 1pm. We are in John
Coffee with Jesus is still going strong. We meet at 9am on Tuesday.

Old Testament is meeting on Thursdays at 4pm. We are in Samuel 2.

All are invited to come. The more the merrier.

*God Bless,
Lynette, Education*



SOCIAL CONCERNS

Happy 2026! Hope the New Year brings you joy, peace and health. Hope the meaning of Christmas fills your heart throughout the year.

It's hard to write a year-end Evangel in December since the Evangel doesn't come out until after final totals for some projects are completed. But If totals change I can update you in the next Evangel.

A huge thanks to everyone who made the foster children's Christmas present drive a resounding success!

Food bank deliveries for 2025 are:

Jan. 218 lbs.	Feb. 200 lbs.	March 100 lbs.	April 230 lbs.	May 250 lbs.	June
218 lbs.	July (scale broke)	Aug. 150 lbs.	Sept. 78 lbs.	Oct. 118 lbs.	Nov. 212
lbs.	Dec. 250 lbs.				

Thanks to our committee members and members who deliver the monthly food offering to the Food Bank.

"Chicken for Dinner" project : We will take a special donation of canned chicken the weekend of 1/17/26 & 1/18/26. The government has cut subsidies to the food bank and they no longer have enough money to purchase protein and meat products. Please add an extra can of chicken - or chicken of the sea - to your basket. This is a one-time special offering. This does not replace the first Sunday food collection.

January **"Go See tour"** will be to the Food Bank on Wednesday, January 21, 2026 at 1:00 PM (after client hours to reduce noise and activity of normal operations). A confirmation slip will be placed in the bulletin in January to get a count of who is interested. We plan to carpool and meet in the church parking lot the day of the tour. The Yuma Community Food Bank is located at 2404 E. 24th St. The tour should take about 1 hour. More information will be provided closer to the date.

Good Gifts offering for ELCA missions is complete and the total as of this writing is \$477.00. Thanks for you generous contributions and to our intrepid volunteers, Carol Schock and Lynette Layton for manning the collection table.

Care Home Ministry continues with birthday visits to Rose Garden Care Home. We celebrated one birthday in November and one in December.

The Vicar's Discretionary Fund continues and envelopes are in the pews for you convenience.

Blessings,

Evelyn Trone, Chairperson

928-210-8015

STEWARDSHIP

First and foremost. I want to heartily thank and recognize those generous people of the Stewardship Committee who have given many hours to count and bank your weekly offerings. These amazing people are: Brigitte Arnio, Joanne Ausing, Barbara Blank, Kris Brown, Lisa Crayne, Niki Duffy, Dave Graham, Jim Hollandsworth*, Jan Klipfel, Tammy Martin*, Chuck O'Reilly*, Cheryl Pruel, Dyanne Radke*, Carol Schock, Linda Strand* and Wanda Wirths* (*= new in 2025) Sadly we also lost two previous members, Gary Titus and Leith Patnaude. Gary is counting in heaven and Leith has relocated to Florida. I feel confident that they would appreciate hearing your personal thanks when you see them in worship.

And equally important, thanks to all of you members and visitors for your generous dedication throughout the entire year of 2025. Your generous contributions are necessary for the church to continue to spread God's word

Our quarterly checks from the **Fry's Community Rewards Program** has increased each month since inception. The most recent check we received is in excess of \$50 for the last quarter. I'm hoping that we continue to increase each quarter. RE-FRESH: Fry's Supermarkets contribute !% of all your purchases back to Gloria de Cristo. All you need to do is obtain a Rewards Card and designate our church as Community Rewards. It does NOT affect your discounts or rewards in any way. If you need help setting up the app simply see Char or me.

We did a poll to determine interest in attending a Men's Fellowship Gathering. There is certainly enough interest to try it. You can mark the date for sure; Thursday evening (like maybe 4:30 or 5:00) **March 12**. I picked March because there are many activities in January and February and also it will stay light longer in March. Further updates and information will be provided as the date draws near. Thank all of you for your response.

(con't)

STEWARDSHIP (con't)

Please, Please, Please remember to get your appointment to have your photo in the Church Directory. This may well be the last "material" directory the church is able to produce. The majority of other companies have either gone out of business or will only assist in preparation of a digital directory. Appointments will be taken in the narthex before and after worship as follows: 4:00, **Dec 27** Linda Strand..8:30, Lynda Steinman and 10:30 I will be there....4:00, **Jan 3** Carol Schock...8:30 Jan Klipfel and 10:30 I will be there. Phone calls will be made as needed. If you need any assistance in getting to church, please let me know 717.715.4009. Remember, you are under NO obligation to purchase anything....you automatically get one free color 8 x 10. Also, you may schedule an additional appointment to have another "sitting" with family members. Nothing free except the "sitting".

The Generosity Project for Amberly's Place will be on February 21 and 22.... toilet-ries for women will be collected as well as diapers for young children ... they have a significant need for diapers for all ages. Please do not bring things to church before the prescribed dates. If you have any questions please call: 717.715.4009. I will return your call if you leave a message, no message no return call.

Thank You for your time

Stewardship, Gary Raasch.....717.715.4009



1st Saturday of the month, 8:00 am
At Izzies on Foothills Blvd. The next
one is **January 10, 2026**

All men of the congregation are in-
vited and encouraged to join in.

YARD SALE



If you're looking for a great place to meet new friends, and help out the church at the same time, come and be a part of the Yard Sale! We will set up the sale Monday, February 23 - Thursday, February 26. Sale will be Friday, February 27, 8am - 2pm, and Saturday, February 28, 8am - Noon.

Final Drop-off date is Saturday, January 10, 8am - 10am. If you have larger items to donate, and you need assistance, please contact the church office so we can coordinate a pickup time for your items.

Yard sale team meetings will be Thursday, January 15, 1pm, and Thursday February 12, 1pm, in the Fellowship Hall.

Michelle Cegon



THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU....to all those that helped set the Sanctuary for the Advent season and then showed up again to change it over for Christmas Eve and the Christmas season. You are so much appreciated. They include: Brian Suess, Ted & Niki Duffy, Sandy Corless, Joanne Ausing, Jan Klipfel, Kris Brown, Nancy Griffiths & David Donaldson.

I would also like to express appreciation to those who purchased the Poinsettia's for our Christmas season. We will leave them in place for the next two weekends of Christmas, however, if you purchased one of them, feel free to take it home at any time.

I will be preparing the list of worship assistants for the coming months, in the near future. This is a great opportunity to serve in part of our services and put a name to the face as you greet them at the door. That is if everyone wears their name badge!! For those who don't have one, make a note on your green slip and I will have one in the Narthex for you the following weekend. You need not be a member to have a name badge.

Thanks and A Blessed New Year to Each of You!

Char Schomisch, Co-Chair



2	John Gerfen	12	Max Jacobs	20	Nadine Webster
6	Dave Lester	16	Dave Steinman	21	Nancy Kisling
9	Donna Watkins	17	Annie Taylor	22	Erik Timm
10	Jim Wehrer	18	Lynette Layton	29	Lynda Steinman
11	Rita Kowalski	18	Brian Suess	31	Jim Hollandsworth



JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES



1	Jim & Sherrie Wehrer	18	Terry & Sunee Rodgers
2	Ronald & Suzanne Haggett	24	Lauren & Janice Erickson
5	Dennis & Linda Kasin	24	Chuck & Mona O'Reilly
8	Harry & Brenda Taylor	26	John & Verna Arnold



FLOWERS FOR A JANUARY



- 4 Larry Munsterman in memory of wife Loretta
- 4 Dennis & Linda Kasin in celebration of their 63rd anniversary
- 11 Brigitte Arnio in memory of brother-in-law David
- 18 Jeanie Volpe in memory of sister, Ellen Copeland
- 25



PERSONAL VISITATION ..

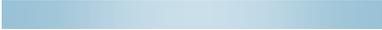
To support people at the time of illness or injury, Vicars and Stephen Ministers do make personal visits in the hospital, homes, and Care Centers. Hospitals and Care Centers do not notify us that you are there. Please call if you want us to know. Do not hesitate to call the church office at 342-6002, if you have not seen someone and would like a visit.

We also have Sacramentarians that will bring communion to shut-ins or others that cannot get to worship in person. We just need to know, so please call.

The present office hours are 8:00 am—4:00 pm.

We ask your permission before we include your name on our printed prayer list.

(Fellow members are also encouraged to let the church office know if someone is in the hospital!)



HAVE YOU INCLUDED GLORIA DE CRISTO LUTHERAN CHURCH IN YOUR WILL?

Over the years, those Gloria de Cristo Lutheran Church members who have conscientiously included Gloria de Cristo in their estate planning, have enabled some very important and powerful ministry to happen here.

Please consider including Gloria de Cristo Lutheran, which has served you over the years in your estate planning. You will enable this congregation to serve many, many more people in years and generations to come.



Learn to look for joy everywhere you go. When your many troubles are giving you a giant headache remember that the iron crown of suffering precedes the golden crown of glory — that's what we'll wear on that glorious day when we'll be in heaven jumping for joy with our heavenly Father!

JANUARY 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs	Friday	Saturday
28 Worship 8:30 & 10:15 am 12:15 pm GriefShare 1 pm Foothills Social	29 9 am Glorious Quilters 11 am Alanon	30 7 am TOPS 9 am Coffee With Jesus 11 am Coffee Club 12 pm Budget Mtg.	31 9 am Line Dance Exercise 1 pm Chair Aerobics 4:45 pm Bells of Glory 5:45 pm Choir	1 HAPPY NEW YEAR Office Closed	2 8 am TOPS 10:30 am Spanish/English Conversation 6 pm Women's AA	3 8 am Women's Breakfast, Izzies on Foothills 9 am TOPS 4 PM Worship
4 Worship 8:30 & 10:15 am 10:15 am Monthly Potluck Food Collection for Yuma Food Pantry <i>12:15 pm GriefShare</i> 1 pm Foothills Social	5 9 am Glorious Quilters 11 am Alanon 12 pm Worship Mtg. 12 pm Social Concerns	6 7 am TOPS 9 am Coffee With Jesus 11 am Coffee Club	7 9 am Line Dance Exercise 1 pm Chair Aerobics 4:45 pm Bells of Glory 5:45 pm Choir	8 7 am TOPS 4 pm Bible Study, Old Testament	9 8 am TOPS 10:30 am Spanish/English Conversation 6 pm Women's AA	10 8 am Men's Breakfast Izzies on Foothills Blvd 9 am TOPS 9:00 am Days 4 Girls 4 PM Worship
11 Worship 8:30 & 10:15 am <i>12:15 pm GriefShare</i> 1 pm Foothills Social	12 9 am Glorious Quilters 11 am Alanon	13 7 am TOPS 9 am Coffee With Jesus 11 am Coffee Club 10 am Fellowship Mtg.	14 9 am Line Dance Exercise 1 pm Chair Aerobics 4:45 pm Bells of Glory 5:45 pm Choir	15 7 am TOPS 1 pm Yard Sale Team Meeting 4 pm Bible Study, Old Testament	16 8 am TOPS 10:30 am Spanish/English Conversation 6 pm Women's AA	17 9 am TOPS 4 PM Worship
18 Worship 8:30 & 10:15 am 12:15 pm GriefShare 1 pm Foothills Social	19 9 am Glorious Quilters 11 am Alanon	20 7 am TOPS 9 am Coffee With Jesus 11 am Coffee Club 4 pm Council Mtg	21 9 am Line Dance Exercise 1 pm Chair Aerobics 4:45 pm Bells of Glory 5:45 pm Choir	22 7 am TOPS 4 pm Bible Study, Old Testament	23 8 am TOPS 10:30 am Spanish/English Conversation 10:30 Chair Aerobics 6 pm Women's AA	24 9 am TOPS 9 am Days for Girls 4 PM Worship
25 Worship 8:30 & 10:15 am 12:15 pm GriefShare 1 pm Foothills Social	26 9 am Glorious Quilters 11 am Alanon	27 7 am TOPS 9 am Coffee With Jesus 11 am Coffee Club	28 9 am Line Dance Exercise 1 pm Chair Aerobics 4:45 pm Bells of Glory 5:45 pm Choir	29 7 am TOPS 4 pm Bible Study, Old Testament	30 8 am TOPS 10:30 am Spanish/English Conversation 6 pm Women's AA	31 9 am TOPS 4 PM Worship

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January 2026

AUTHORIZED VICARS: Dr. Shirley Ehler Paula Pegues
Judy Zeiss Char Schomisch Jerry Randby

ORGANIST: Dr. Shirley Ehler

PIANISTS: Marie Ritten, Lorie Rapp,
Pam Carter, Suzanne Haggett

VIOLIN: Ami Gudjohnsen

Guitars: Paula Pegues, Randy Zieman

BELLS OF GLORY: Lorie Rapp

CHOIR: Dr. Shirley Ehler

CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

PRESIDENT: John Arnold
VICE PRESIDENT: Sharon Merz
SECRETARY: Char Schomisch
TREASURER: Tammy Martin

Stephen Ministry Leaders

Jim & Sherrie Wehrer Niki Duffy
Michelle Cegon Sandy Corless
Robin Marlatt

GriefShare Leaders:

Ted & Nikki Duffy
Lisa Crayne
Mary Marsh

MINISTRY TEAM LEADERS:

CARE MINISTRY: Mary Marsh
EDUCATION: Lynette Layton
FELLOWSHIP: Merilee Kaiser
OUTREACH: Joe Johnson
PROPERTY: Jerry Randby
SOCIAL CONCERNS: Evelyn Trone
STEWARDSHIP: Gary Raasch
WORSHIP & MUSIC: Char Schomisch

Church Secretary: Char Schomisch