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VF - CHURCHES - LORD OF LIFE, LUTHERAN

# Lord of Life Lutheran has many interests

By RICHARD MOORE  
News-Sun staff

SUN CITY WEST — Lord of Life Lutheran Church is one of two Lutheran congregations in Sun City West.

"Basically, there now are two Lutheran bodies in the United States," said the Rev. Charles Ruby, parish pastor. "We are part of what is known as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America."

He said the movement is the result of the merger last spring of the Lutheran Church in America, the American Lutheran Church and the Association of Evangelical Churches.

"The other Lutheran church (in Sun City West) began a year ago and is affiliated with the Missouri Synod," Ruby said.

He said the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has about 5.3 million members in 11,000 churches.

"We are the fourth-largest Protestant denomination in North

America," Ruby said. "We have 65 synods across the United States."

The Lord of Life Lutheran parish was founded in 1981. He said the congregation first conducted services in various rooms in the R.H. Johnson Recreation Center and in R.H. Johnson Social Hall.

"Our church facility was completed last September," Ruby said. The church is at 13724 Meeker Blvd. and has about 550 parishioners.

"Worship service attendance fluctuates with the seasons," he said. "Of course, we have the highest attendance during the winter months as do most other churches in the Sun Cities."

Ruby said that in the winter, Sunday worship services are at 8:15 a.m. and 10 a.m. Bible study is 4:30 p.m. Tuesday year-round. In the summer, a single Sunday worship service starts at 10 a.m.

He said Lord of Life Lutheran Church periodically sponsors other religion classes and workshops,

and conducts various worship services.

"We also have a 45-member choir, a women's organization with six circles and a men's organization," Ruby said. "We're involved in various outreach programs in conjunction with the Pacific Lutheran Seminary in Berkeley, Calif., and the California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, Calif."

He said the parish supports the Lutheran Ministry Center in El Mirage, the Lutheran Social Services in Phoenix and Interfaith in the Sun Cities.

Lord of Life Lutheran Church facilities include the sanctuary, offices and social hall space.

Ruby has been with the parish since its inception. He said the selection and construction of the facility has been one of the biggest challenges in his ministry.

"The whole process of planning and financing the new church building was a very positive experience," he said.

"We had a building committee of six members from the congregation who spearheaded much of it."

Ruby said the most immediate parish projects involve long-range goal-setting and plans for additional construction and programming.

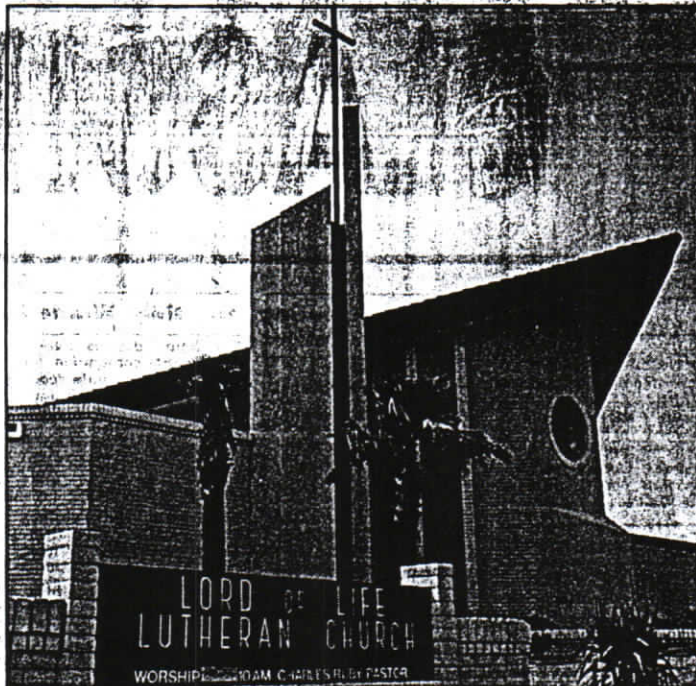
"Our future development includes more social hall facilities and additional office space, which will then allow for the expansion of our sanctuary," he said.

Before coming to Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Ruby was senior pastor at Faith Lutheran Church in Phoenix for 13 years.

He graduated from Gettysburg (Pa.) College and Gettysburg Theological Seminary and served with several parishes in central Pennsylvania before moving to Arizona.

Ruby and his wife, Sherley, live in Sun City West. She is head of the Upper School at Judson School in Scottsdale, a private boarding school.

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Lord of Life Lutheran Church is home to some 550 parishioners in Sun City West. (News-Sun photo)

# Three churches buy Sun City West land

Three Sun City West church sites were sold by the Del E. Webb Development Co. for a total of \$850,000, it was announced by the firm Thursday.

Purchasing the sites were Shepherd of the Hills United Methodist Church, the Covenant Presbyterian Church in Avenant and Lord of Life Lutheran Church.

"I believe it's a strong indication of the continued growth of Sun City West," Devco President George Reeve said in reference to the sales.

Construction work on all three churches is expected to be held off for about two years.

The eight-acre site purchased by the Methodist church, for \$457,143, is on the southwest corner of Pyracantha Drive and Meeker Boulevard.

Bill Mason, treasurer of the church's building fund and site selection committee, commented: "We purchased the site with the idea that this would be the only Methodist Church in Phase I. We wanted a lot large enough to allow

for expansion and plenty of parking space."

Mason added that no arrangements have been made by church members in regard to architectural plans.

The three-acre site purchased by the Presbyterian Church, for

\$147,726, is on the southwest corner of Aleppo and Spanish Gardens drives.

The Lutheran Church obtained a 4.6-acre site on the northwest corner of Meeker and Johnson boulevards. The purchase price was \$262,857.



Paperwork on the purchase of a site for the Shepherd of the Hills United Methodist Church in Sun City West is signed by Bill Mason, left foreground. Standing are

Devco officials Phil Brant, left, and George Reeve. Far right is James Lyles of Los Angeles, an official of the United Methodist Church. (News-Sun Photo)

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