The History of Desert Hope Lutheran Church

2010 **A New Church is Born**

Desert Hope Lutheran Church (DHLC) began when a group of Tanque Verde Lutheran Church (TVLC) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) members met with Pastor Dave Drum to discuss their concerns about the ELCA theological positions. They decided to leave TVLC to form a new church in the new association of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC).

April 2010 **Calling Our First Lead Pastor**

The newly formed congregation called Pastor Jim Cords to be the lead pastor.

May 2010 **Our First Worship Service**

DHLC held the first worship service at Desert Christian High School.

October 31, 2010 **Becoming an Official Congregation**

The Charter and Constitution were signed by the members of DHLC.

DHLC leased and renovated office space for staff and meetings. Worship services were held in the gym at Desert Christian High School and then moved to the multipurpose room at Gridley Middle School. DHLC renovated the school's multipurpose room for our use as well as for the school's use. A church-school ministry to assist students, families and staff at Gridley was initiated.

February 2013 **Dreaming of a Permanent Home**

A capital fund campaign for a permanent facility was authorized and generated nearly $1M.

Late 2014 **A New Home for Desert Hope**

DHLC purchased a building that had been the Arizona Polish Club and began renovations on January 20, 2015. This was a wonderful bonding experience as the DHLC congregants were intensely involved in the day-to-day demolition of the old and construction of the new facility.

July 2015 **The Mission Center is Dedicated**

The new facility, which is called the Mission Center, was dedicated and worship services commenced in the renovated building.

April 2016 **Expanding Our Welcome**

The patio and tower were completed. The patio provides a wonderful fellowship space, and the tower helps visibility to the public from the street.

April 2018 **A Place for Remembrance & Reflection**

The cross from Emmanuel Lutheran church in Douglas and surrounding memorial garden were dedicated. These serve as a place for peaceful meditation to all who choose to stop and is visible from the city-wide bike path that runs adjacent to the church property.

May 2019 **Expanding the Hope Center**

The Hope Center modular facility was added to further enhance the ability to hold Bible Studies, Sunday School and added space for ministries.

September 2020 **Entering a New Season of Leadership**

DHLC's lead pastor accepted a call to another church and the process of calling a new lead pastor began.

October 2020 **Interim Leadership Begins**

Steve Bergeson was hired as interim pastor.

November 2020 **Beginning the Call Process**

A Call Committee was formed, and they hired Church Doctor Ministries to help identify what DHLC desired in the next Lead Pastor.

February 2021 **Seeking New Leadership**

The position was posted.

April 2021 **A New Pastor Is Called**

A pastoral call was made to Brian McGee and accepted to be Lead Pastor.

June 2021 **Welcoming a New Lead Pastor**

Brian McGee started as Lead Pastor.

December 2021	**Another Leadership Transition**
	Brian McGee resigned as Lead Pastor.
January 2022	**Seeking International Interim Pastor**
	Dave Drum began serving as Interim Pastor and the Leadership Council began the process of looking for an Intentional Interim Pastor.
August 2022	**Welcoming an International Interim Pastor**
	Hired Kent Groethe as an Intentional Interim Pastor.
June 2023	**A New Season of Leadership**
	Kent Groethe was hired as a contracted Lead Pastor with a seventy-seven-month contract term.
February 2025	**Preparing for the Next Chapter**
	Leadership Council began discussing the need for a Call Committee to begin work in early 2026 to plan and prepare for an orderly pastoral succession.
April 2026	**A New Call Committee Is Formed**
	A Call Committee was approved by the congregation and installed.
May 2026 - Present	**A Season of Pastoral Transition**
	Pastor Groethe stepped away from active ministry for medical reasons.

The Strengths Behind Our Journey

Major factors that contribute to DHLC's success in achieving its strategic objectives to date have been:

1. Clear acceptance of the authority of Scripture.
2. Deep and wide commitment of the membership to give generously of their time, talents, and treasure to achieve the church's mission objectives.
3. Talented staff, starting with the first pastor, who are passionately committed to getting DHLC to where it is today.

Since inception the congregants have been involved in a myriad of outreach ministries both in the community and worldwide.

DHLC strives to be a place that continues to build a legacy of faith for future generations.

The missional outreach of DHLC into the community far surpasses its relatively small size!