



The Rincon Mountain MESSENGER

Winter 2014

Volume 2, Issue 1

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Serving at Gospel Rescue Mission



Mary Hancock stirs up a hearty meal.

The Women and Children's Center is a ministry of Gospel Rescue Mission. Women and their children, who are in need of short term and long term residential care, are provided for there. Various church and community groups supply evening meals to center residents over the course of a month. Rincon Mountain serves a taco dinner to residents on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. Many of the women and children have expressed thanks for this important outreach.

Each month, in Rincon's narthex, there is a sign up sheet for those ingredients needed

to serve the taco dinner, which are brought to the church kitchen. Those wishing to serve the meal that month can also sign up. This outreach is coordinated by Linda Anibal, Mary Hancock and Mikala Jansen. If you can help in providing ingredients or in serving the meal, please contact one of these ladies for more information.



Kathy Matte and Carolie Sherard prepare tacos for residents at the Women and Children's Center.

Mission Trip to San Antonio

Rincon has a wonderful opportunity to bless Pastor Luke Evans and Christ Church San Antonio. The Youth and Family Group will be traveling to San Antonio to spread the word about the church plant to the surrounding community by running an outward-oriented



VBS and by placing door hangers in the target neighborhoods. The dates for the mission trip will be June 21-29, so mark your calendar! This trip is open to the whole church family.

There will be an informational meeting about the 2014 San Antonio mission trip in the sanctuary after the morning worship service on January 26th for all who are interested. If you miss the meeting, you can still be involved. Contact Ben Castaneda to let him know you are interested.



*Church planters to San Antonio, Texas, Luke & Marianne Evans.
photo by Amber Lea Photography*



Pastor Phil Kruis

Kruis Korner

What does it mean to be a church planting church?

Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church is a church planting church. Ultimately, this means that we want to be instrumental in helping start new churches in and around Tucson. We want to see new churches start in Tucson because that is one of the best means of bringing unbelievers into the kingdom of God. Statistics demonstrate that churches that are 10 years old or less experience more growth through conversions than churches that are older. If we really love Tucson then we will want to plant more churches here.

This implies an inherent 'love of place'. 'Love of place' means that you take an active interest in your city and that you invest in the city. Learn what makes Tucson unique and support our community through your participation, attendance, and finances. Be a part of those events and activities that interest you and your family. Get to know local leaders, artists and businessmen. Take more of an active and personal interest in local politics than in national politics.

Our first church plant, Christ Church San Antonio, is being planted outside of Tucson because that is where our former Associate Pastor, Luke Evans, felt called to plant a church. We had approved a plan he submitted to plant a church in downtown Tucson, but God led him back to his native Texas to start Christ Church. Our vision is that our next church plant be located right here in Tucson, and we are eager to see this vision unfold.

But planting a church doesn't start with sending out a pastor to plant a church. There is much that is needed prior to that. In order to be a church planting church you must pray and talk about planting churches—a lot. Praying about planting churches means praying for the

success of the city or community in which you hope to plant. You pray that God would reveal the exact location or part of the city where a church is needed. You pray for an openness to gospel-centered conversations in that community. You pray that these conversations will eventually lead to conversions. You pray that Christians at RMPC and other churches in Tucson gain a greater sensitivity to the needs of this part of town. You pray that God will raise up a core group of individuals and families that will invest in the new church plant. You pray that God will provide the right man to plant the new church. And you pray a lot more. But those who are a part of a church planting church like

Rincon Mountain pray a lot about church planting in Tucson.

And you talk a lot about church planting. You talk about it at budget meetings because planting

churches requires resources. You talk about church planting at deacons meetings and Session meetings and Bible studies and LIFE group meetings. You talk about church planting at staff meetings and mom's play group and in sermons. You talk about church planting with people from other churches so you can hear what God is doing through their church to reach the city of Tucson.

The ultimate goal of church planting is to reach more people with the transforming grace of God as expressed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. As Rincon Mountain continues to love the city of Tucson, we will naturally pray for and talk about planting churches here more and more. Some might say, "Didn't we just send Luke out to plant Christ Church? Isn't too early to think of planting another church?" It is never too early to start thinking, talking about, and praying about the next church plant. That is what church planting churches do. And Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church is a church planting church.

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Greeters Offer Glimpse of Rincon's Friendliness

The Greeters ministry is an important part of Rincon Mountain. According to Mary Hancock who facilitates the ministry with her husband Lee, "It's the best job ever, because you get to say hi to the new people and to the people you may not see very often, because they usually sit on the other side of the church from you." Greeters meet people as they enter the narthex and are also responsible for guiding



Mary & Lee Hancock, greeter ministry

visitors to various Sunday school classes, the nursery and even the bathroom. Mary says that, "Greeters are usually the first glimpse of the church and the congregation, so sincere smiles and friendliness are really important."

So far 24 people have signed up to be greeters in 2014. Some are married, but some are just two members who have offered to help. Presently greeters commit to one month out of the year, greeting for Sunday School and Worship. More greeters are always needed, especially for the nursery door. So if you want to be a part of this great ministry, contact Mary Hancock at azmari@aol.com or call the church office.



Dave and Val Crain greet Lori Jorg on a Sunday morning



Pastor Luke Smith

Hey Y'all! Faithfulness in the Coming Year

Faithfulness to God's mission implies that we take what might seem abstract in our theology and make it practical. We do this when we take what we say we believe and turn it into deeds of faith. Some would say they can only grasp truth once experienced—there is something to affirm here. We do not simply know that God is merciful because he's said he is but because we've also experienced that mercy. The faithfulness we see in Acts is centered on flesh and blood realities—until we have lived out the gospel, then our faith is merely head knowledge. Living out our faith can cost us greatly, but a faith that is simply intellectual doesn't advance the gospel and is of little comfort to desperate people when trials mount. Maybe that seems oxymoronic, but if we learn anything from the faithful in Acts, it's that it's safer to be suffering in the shadow of the cross than anywhere else (Acts 5:1-11). The church in Acts displays faithfulness by communicating the gospel through a tangible experience of it before the presence of all people.

So how can we be faithful to God's mission in 2014? Our world is just as hostile to the gospel

as it was then, so we need the same prayer for boldness that we see in Acts 4:29—participation in God's mission takes more than just guts, and it's an act of faith that causes us to grow in maturity. We may face a different flavor of opposition in our day, but standing against injustice or unethical practices in our communities can be scary stuff. God's mission calls for bold acts of faith (Acts 23:12-22), and we should consider our sufferings for the sake of the gospel worth the loss of status or position we might face (Acts 5:41-42). Will we be bold to carry on God's mission as early Christians did despite hardship? Will we be silenced when facing those that want to devalue us for living out a "hocus pocus" religion or continue to share the gospel through acts of radically loving our neighbors even when we sense the stones being hurled at us as they were at Stephen in Acts 7? The same Spirit strengthens and encourages us—this is how we can face hard ministry that sometimes seems like sheer impossibility. When we actively participate in Kingdom work in the places God has uniquely designed us for, even the trials we face cannot hinder the advance of his mission (Acts 28:31).



Victoria Wates

Be My Neighbor

How many of you can sing at least part of Mr. Roger's theme song, "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" As I think about this song, my mind is filled with images of cardigans, magical trolleys, and the concept of being a neighbor. Doing a quick online search, I found that the word "neighbor" has 150 references in scripture (ESV) and we all recall that Jesus declared that the second greatest commandment is to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31). However in the isolated busyness of our lives, I believe we may be in danger of losing sight of this great commandment and following it in the most literal way.

In churches, we often teach and talk about the word "neighbor" rather generically as any human that we encounter. This is true, but what impact and blessings might a smaller and more intentional view of "Love your neighbor" produce? As I drive down my street, I am personally convicted that I have lived at my new address for over a year, and yet I don't really know any of my neighbors. Sure, I might know some names, but I don't have a real relationship with any of them. This is especially troubling

to me when I think of the young couple with two young children who live next door. What relational and ministry opportunities have I neglected or even squandered because of my own personal commitments and fear of awkward rejection? I firmly believe that God deliberately places us in our homes to be servants and witnesses right where we live. I am also confident that we live surrounded by families and individuals who knowingly or not have hearts that are asking "Won't you be my neighbor?"

In this season of new beginnings, I am challenging myself and each of you to take an active and literal look at word "neighbor." As I seek God's leading in this endeavor, the following questions cross my mind:

- What neighbor(s) should I start with?
- How can I naturally initiate a relationship with one of my neighbors?
- What needs or struggles do my neighbors have?
- How might I be a blessing in the life of one neighbor?

I am sure that there are many more questions ahead, but I plan to start with prayer and an invitation to the family next door. In 2014, may God empower us to love our neighbors so that we can share His great love with them!

Christianity
EXPLORED
 For the **Skeptic, Seeker & Christian**
ask any questions you like

An informal 7 week class
 Based on the Gospel of Mark,
 Examining Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

Beginning Thursday, February 27th from 7 to 9 pm
 Discussion Format with Video
 Dessert Provided

Led by Pastor Phil Kruis
 Register at rinconpres.org or 327-2390

Suppers for Six

FACT: We experience deep, authentic community when we are known. **ALSO FACT:** We love to eat.

Get connected with the next round of Suppers for Six!

You will be paired with other individuals, couples, or families at the church to meet at least three times from February to April for food and fellowship, either at one another's homes or out to eat.

Sign up now at the Connect Cart!



Christmas in Review



Janie and Bill Craig enjoy dancing to the music of The Just Intervals

Candlelight Dinner & Dance

On December 15th, Rincon Mountain hosted its annual Christmas party at the church. Over one hundred guests joined in the revelry which included a wonderful dinner catered by Rincon Market and music provided by The Just Intervals, our own Sal Lopez's jazz combo. Individuals in the congregation brought the colorful table decorations. The evening ended on a high note with dancing to the syncopated rhythms of the combo. Who says Presbyterians can't shake a leg?



Guests enjoy a delicious candlelight dinner catered by Rincon Market.



Lynn Marien, Shelley Kruis, Amy Willer and Lee Ellen Willer enjoy fellowship at the Ladies Cookie Exchange.

Carolers Bring Joy

Rincon Mountain has been blessed with some good carolers. About 35 people of all ages participated in visiting three local care facilities: Emeritus at Tanque Verde, Indian Ridge Residence, and the Cascades of Tucson. The carolers sang a selection of classic Christmas carols and were able to have good conversations with residents, some who are members of Rincon Mountain. The caroling brought a smile to Jackie Baker's face and encouraged Alex Churchill, Ron Henningfield, and Bruce Peacock. The group then returned to church for some delicious hot cider, cocoa and cookies. God blessed the entire event as it was an opportunity to share the good news of our Savior's birth, both in song and conversation.



Youth and their families caroled joyfully at Emeritus on Tanque Verde.



Ben Castaneda

A Word...or Two

With the beginning of a new calendar year, there's an almost irresistible notion of a fresh start. It's as if the slate has been wiped clean. This sensation often leads to (sometimes dramatic!) New Year's resolutions: losing weight, taking up an extreme sport, or being a little more patient. In this vein, I would encourage

families here at Rincon Mountain to consider starting (or re-starting) family devotions in this new year.

To many people, family devotions seem odd and hopelessly outdated – a relic of a bygone age when families actually had time to gather round the table to read the Bible, sing, and pray together. In today's world, especially if you're the parent of a teenager, you count yourself lucky if you can even talk with them for fifteen minutes before they have to do homework or be at sports practice.

But amid the craziness of modern life, we need to remember that, as parents, we have a responsibility to train up our children in the way they should go (Proverbs 22:6). We know we should be doing *something*, but often we don't know what! As a result, it can be tempting to "let the professionals handle it," and sign over the spiritual formation of your children to others. But God speaks to parents, not professionals, in Deuteronomy 6:6-7, "And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children...." Family devotions are a practical, time-tested way to do this. (For help in structuring family devotions, *A Neglected Grace* by Jason Helopoulos is an excellent resource.) It might seem awkward or frightening at first, and perhaps failed past attempts weigh heavily on your mind, but God's grace meets our need as we labor in our calling as parents. The result is something only God could do: "One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts" (Psalm 145:4).

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Published quarterly by:
 Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church
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 Tucson, AZ 85749
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Find us online! www.rinconpres.org

Calendar

WEEKLY

Mondays:

·Men's Study, 7 pm. *Grant Brown*

Tuesdays:

·Women's Study, 9:15 am. *Janie Craig*

Wednesdays:

·Staff Prayer, 3 pm. *Phil Kruis*

·Study Hall, 4 pm. *Ben Castaneda*

·Youth & Family Group, 6 pm. *Ben Castaneda*

·Choir Rehearsal, 7 pm. *Luke Smith*

Thursdays: Women's Study, 7 pm. *Joelle Smith*

Fridays: Mountain Men Study, 6:30 am. *Phil Kruis*

2nd & 4th Fridays: College & Career Dinner & Devotion,
 6:30 pm. *Ben Castaneda*

JANUARY

Tues. 14th: Taco Dinner at Women's Center. *Linda Anibal*

Sun. 19th: Visitor's Luncheon, 12 pm. *Shelley Kruis*

Sun. 19th: FREE Jeremy Casella concert, 7 pm. *Shelley Kruis*

FEBRUARY

Sun. 2nd: Fellowship Potluck, 12 pm. *Dave & Val Crain*

Tues. 11th: Taco Dinner at Women's Center. *Linda Anibal*

MARCH

Sun. 2nd: Fellowship Potluck, 12 pm. *Dave & Val Crain*

Tues. 11th: Taco Dinner at Women's Center. *Linda Anibal*

Sun. 16th: Visitor's Luncheon, 12 pm. *Shelley Kruis*

Sun. 30th: Spring Connect Event, 5:30 pm.