



The Rincon Mountain MESSENGER

Summer 2014

Volume 2, Issue 3

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Celebrating a Successful Safari

by Victoria Wates

We had another great VBS this summer! During the first week in June, sixty-six children gathered to embark on our Jungle Safari and explore the nature of God. The week focused on different aspects of our sovereign God as the children learned that God is our creator, protector, provider, savior, and king. Throughout the week, the children learned praise songs, made fun crafts, played games, experienced Bible stories, and enjoyed the adventures of Jake Jordan and Doc. The kids were also challenged to share their new knowledge of God with their families, friends, and neighbors.



Mrs. Egan holds preschoolers' attention at story time.

We can celebrate that over forty of the children who attended this year are not affiliated with our congregation and that we started some great relationships. We can also be proud that our entire congregation faithfully supported the week through donations, supply preparation, and logistical help. We would like to extend a special thanks to the forty-eight youth and adults who served the kids directly throughout the week. We have and will continue to follow up with new friends that we made at VBS though emails and personal phone calls. Thanks again to everyone who helped make VBS a great success. You were a blessing to our congregation and to the kids!



Making stained glass crosses at craft time.



Having fun at craft time.



Acting out the story of Daniel in the lions' den.



Pastor Phil Kruis

Kruis Korner

Boxed In

My brother posted some photos on Facebook the other day of his three youngest kids. They were out on his back porch poking their heads out of makeshift homes they had fashioned out of large appliance boxes. His caption read something like, "Great fun. Free!"

We've all been there or seen our kids do the same thing. But it's one thing to climb in the box yourself, and something altogether different to have someone else put you in the box. But that is exactly what we do. Whether it is in our marriages, in our friendships, in our neighborhoods or in the Christian community, we box others in through the use of labels.

When we apply a label to someone that sets them apart from us or their peers, we box them in. Here's what I mean. When we label a child as "the quiet one" or "the mischievous one" we have categorized them by a behavior, and we leave little room for them to change. We expect someone who bears a label to fulfill what the label describes.

We also box others in by labeling with universal qualifiers. One spouse "never" helps around the house. Your friend is "always" so critical. That neighbor "never" cleans his yard. You know how they do things at that church—"everyone" is so shallow.

But the use of these universal qualifiers is rarely accurate and only serves to box the other person into a corner from which he cannot escape. Open up the box. If you feel strongly about another person's behavior or attitudes,

leaving them a little wriggle room allows for change—for your perspective and for their behavior. Leave wriggle room by using words like 'rarely' or 'often' or 'sometimes' or 'most'. Absolutes box others in and leave them little or no room to change. Qualifiers can be helpful as long as they aren't universal.

All this business with labels came up in a conversation recently because someone wanted to know more about what Calvinists believe. Well, depending on who you ask, that question could have quite a large range of answers. Labels like Calvinist or reformed or Presbyterian should be used carefully and only by those inside the box they represent. When used by those inside the box of 'Calvinists,' the label becomes shorthand, and everyone knows what is meant by it. If used to talk with someone who is outside the Calvinist box, the Calvinist label will most likely turn out to be a mislabel or simply be misunderstood.

Here's the general rule regarding labels: Use them for inclusion not exclusion. If you know you are in the same box with someone else, then you can use that label to describe both them and you. Don't label someone as "lazy" unless you're lazy too. If you're willing to consider yourself crazy, you can call someone else crazy. Our identity matters to us, and we don't want to unjustly mislabel anyone.

All this to say, here are the primary labels I willingly accept: Christian, husband, father, (other familial relationships), friend, pastor. These are all defined by the first label of Christian. I am, secondarily, reformed, Calvinistic, Presbyterian, and religious.

Let's not box each other in, but instead let's let each other define ourselves as children of God and start from there.

Summer Movie Nights

Hey all! The summer movie nights have been a big success so far, with many people coming out to see *The Jungle Book* on June 13th and Disney's *Robin Hood* on July 11th. Free hot dogs and popcorn were consumed, and an enjoyable evening was had by all. However, the most encouraging thing to happen was that several families with no connection to Rincon came to watch the movie as well! We're planning on having another movie night this summer: *The Great Mouse Detective* on August 8th at 5:30 pm. This is an excellent opportunity to invite your unchurched neighbors and friends. All are welcome!



Escape the Summer Heat and Enjoy a Free Movie

Missions Update

Jerry and Karen Knight, missionaries we support in Uganda, Africa, visited in June. Jerry and Karen provided an overview during our Sunday school hour of their mission work at African Bible College. They gifted the church with an African drum as a thank you, and Jerry preached the morning sermon.

Since the Chile trip has been canceled, a reading glasses drive will be organized to support the mission work in Chile. The Missions Committee continues to look for other types of missions work that our church community can be involved with.



Pastor Luke Smith

Hey Y'all! A Father's Love

My first child was born on June 1. However, it wasn't the day I became a father—that day happened 38 weeks prior. I love him so much, and I didn't start loving him the day he was born but, rather, long before—long before his crying kept me up at night, long before he spit up on me, long before I had to deal with his dirty diapers, long before he would do something that would endanger himself and cause me to worry, and long before he would even be grown enough to do something to disappoint or dishonor me. You know, this is like the love of God our Father, isn't it?

Have you ever talked negatively about yourself? Of course you have—we all have. We have said things to ourselves like “I was so naïve to trust that person and now I feel stupid.” or “I've let myself go and now my body isn't attractive to anyone.” or “If anyone ever knew I struggled with this they wouldn't accept me.” Sounds familiar, doesn't it? What's something you are currently questioning about your self-worth? You see, speaking negatively about ourselves typically stems from two places: (1) misjudgments, mistakes, and sins that Satan likes to throw back in our face, and (2) someone of influence from our lives whom

we can vividly see in our minds shaking their heads at what we do or who we are. What are those things from your life that keep haunting you and make you feel irrevocably broken? Who are those people, even those you haven't had contact with in a long time, that you hear voicing their condemnation?

The Lord wants us to clearly see the brokenness in our lives. However, our God is one who does not condemn his children—he is faithful in his love for us despite our faults. As Paul tells us in Ephesians 1:3–14, the love of God is one that supersedes the boundaries of time itself as he set his love upon us before the foundations of the world and will continue to lavish his love upon us for eternity—he didn't start loving us the day we were born. So this begs the question: if God loved you long before he had to deal with your dirty sins, long before you did something that endangered your soul, long before you disappointed or dishonored him, and long before even time began, then why do you tear yourself down? You were fearfully and wonderfully made, and the Lord cares for you as a loving Father! If there is any doubt in your mind, look no further than the cross of Jesus, for it is there that God the Father gave up his Son so that you and I might be called sons and daughters of the King.

A Word...or Two

"Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be broken."

No, you won't find this beatitude in your Bible; I'm borrowing the phrase from a former mentor. However, before you throw me out on my ear for introducing new Scripture, the theological truth behind this fictitious beatitude is thoroughly biblical. We serve a sovereign God, one who made everything and causes everything to work according to his plan (Ps 115:3; Ps 135:6; Prov 21:1; Rom 8:28; Eph 1:11). There never has been and never will be a time when God's plans are forced to change.

We, however, aren't so blessed. We don't know what's going to happen five minutes from now, let alone tomorrow. Unless we hold our plans with an open hand, we're going to get some serious wrist damage when God takes our plans and gives us something unexpected.

This truth was beaten into our brains over and over on the San Antonio mission trip. It ended up drizzling/pouring four days out of five during the VBS, and on Wednesday, we had to cancel VBS because of the rain and lightning. The door hangers we were supposed to distribute to the local

The Ninth Beatitude

community on Monday and Tuesday after lunch didn't arrive until late on Tuesday. We had been planning on doing outreach in the afternoon Wednesday–Friday in the parking lots of several local shopping centers, but when Luke asked permission, we were denied everywhere.



Ben Castaneda

It was a test. For his own good reasons, God cut and pasted and rearranged what we'd been planning. How would we respond? We could have been frustrated and disappointed; our agenda was wrecked. But God helped us realize that his agenda is what's important — not our own. James gets at this in James 4:15, "Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.'"

How do you respond when your well-laid plans suddenly turn topsy-turvy? God is more interested in making you humble and flexible than in checking off your to-do list. "Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be broken."

Hollers to Indonesia

Seth Holler and his family are going to Indonesia! Seth just completed a PhD in English at the University of Arizona with a concentration in 19th and 20th century literature. In Indonesia, Seth will be an Assistant Professor of English at the International Teachers College (ITC) at Universitas Pelita Harapan (UPH) just outside of



The Holler family: Noelle and Seth, Daisy, June, Andy and Eli.

Jakarta. The Teachers College is in partnership with Covenant College in the United States.

The mission of the college is to equip future educators with a biblically-based theological framework so they can take that training back to their home country in a way that will glorify Christ. The student body is drawn from a variety of countries in southeast Asia.

Seth will teach literature and composition classes, and he and Noelle will open their house to students for various literary activities. In discussing this great opportunity, Seth says, "Noelle and I are excited and a bit scared. The kids have learned that Indonesia has chocolate, baseball, and piano lessons, so they're not really worried." While not going to Indonesia as formal missionaries, the nature of the work will give Seth, Noelle and their children Andy, Daisy, Eli, and June an opportunity to share their Christian walk with many others. The Hollers covet your prayers as they embark on this new adventure. While in Indonesia they can be contacted via email: scholler@gmail.com and noelleholler@gmail.com.

San Antonio Mission Trip Highlights



Mrs. Craig leads story time at Christ Church San Antonio VBS.

by Ben Castaneda

The mission team left for San Antonio bright and early the morning of June 21 and returned safely to Tucson the evening of June 29. In between were eight crazy, amazing, and humid days. Our goal was to support the community outreach of Luke Evans and Christ Church San Antonio by taking Rincon's Jungle Safari VBS, adapting it, and transplanting it 860 miles to Pickrell Park in the northeast corner of San Antonio.

God exceeded all our expectations. We prayed that God would bring 35 children to the VBS. We ended up having a total of 38 children attend, over half of whom do not attend Christ Church! Some of them were foster children, while others were from broken and hurting families. God opened doors through the

VBS for Christ Church to start relationships with those families and offer the transforming grace of the Gospel. In the afternoons, the mission team hung over 500 door hangers throughout the local community, providing information about Christ Church and the VBS. In our free time, we visited the Alamo, the Riverwalk, and parts of the scenic hill country just north of San Antonio.

On Friday evening we organized a family-oriented BBQ in the park as an end-of-VBS celebration. It was wildly successful, with over 90 adults and children attending, many of whom again were unconnected to Christ Church. In fact, so many people showed up, we thought we were going to run out of food; it all came down to a single hot dog! One unconnected family had been planning to see the new Transformers movie at the theater on Friday evening, but when the parents asked their child, he said he would rather go to VBS! God is truly at work!



Music time with Pastor Ben and Mr. Jorg.



A great turn out for VBS at Pickrell Park in San Antonio.

Other things were encouraging too. We were impressed by the quality of the core group that Luke has assembled. They are a committed bunch of men and women who love the Gospel and are eager to see it change the northeast side of San Antonio.

Lots of behind-the-scenes work went into making this mission trip a success. Thank you to everyone who donated and packed supplies, cut paper, organized check-lists, and bought or brought food. It was a tremendous blessing to be a part of this trip and watch God pull so many different people together for a common purpose. Thank you all!

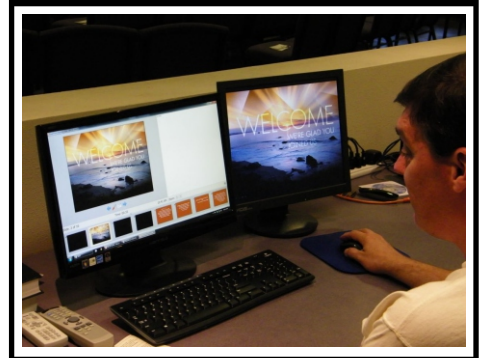
Audio Visual Department Is All In



Kendrick Wiersma and Mark Barnard at the sound board.

The audio visual team at Rincon Mountain takes care of all the technical details that make the worship experience flow smoothly. From adjusting microphone levels to creating effective PowerPoint slides for church information, scripture passages, and song lyrics, the AV team works diligently to prepare for any church function requiring their services.

Kendrick Wiersma heads the team and is assisted by several dedicated volunteers. The team recently laid new wire for stage inputs to improve the sound experience in the sanctuary. In the future two choir mics will be acquired as well as upgrading the existing wireless mics. The wall screens in the sanctuary were created with wood molding and a specialized white paint that saved several thousand dollars from the cost of commercial projection screens. The AV team has been able to do wonders with a limited budget.



James Misciagna preparing Sunday morning PowerPoint slides.

Next time you encounter Kendrick or one of the other team members, thank them for the many hours they devote to this important ministry function.

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Managing Editor Rob Matte
Production Editor Becca Blunk

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 8445 E Tanque Verde Road
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 (520) 327-2390



Find us online! www.rinconpres.org

Calendar

WEEKLY

Mondays:

·Women's Study, 1:30 pm. *Janie Craig*

Wednesdays:

- Staff Prayer, 3 pm. *Phil Kruis*
- Study Hall, 4 pm, resumes Aug. 13th. *Ben Castaneda*
- Youth & Family Group, 6 pm. *Ben Castaneda*
- Choir Rehearsal, 7 pm, resumes Aug. 6th. *Luke Smith*

Thursdays: Women's Study, 7 pm. *Becca Blunk*

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

1st & 3rd Sundays: College & Career Dinner & Devotion, 6 pm. *Ben Castaneda*

JULY

Fri. 25th: Fourth Fridays, 6:30 pm. *Betsy Dunlap*

AUGUST

Sun. 3rd: Guest & Fellowship Lunch at Matte home, 12 pm.

Fri. 8th: Family Movie Night, 5:30 pm. *Victoria Wates*

Tues. 12th: Taco Dinner at Women's Center. *Linda Anibal*

Fri. 15th: "In Focus" Film & Discussion, 6 pm. *Joelle Smith*

Fri. 22nd: Fourth Fridays, 6:30 pm. *Joelle Smith*

Sun. 31st: Family Carnival, 5:30 pm. *Luke Smith*

SEPTEMBER

Sun. 7th: Guest & Fellowship Lunch, 12 pm. *Dave & Val Crain*

Tues. 9th: Taco Dinner at Women's Center. *Linda Anibal*

Fri. 19th: "In Focus" Film & Discussion, 6 pm. *Joelle Smith*

Fri. 26th: Fourth Fridays, 6:30 pm. *Joelle Smith*

Sat. 27th: Family BBQ, 4:30 pm. *Luke Smith*