



The Rincon Mountain MESSENGER

Winter 2016

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A Concert of the Arts

The Rincon Mountain choir, led by Luke Smith, presented its holiday offering in early December. The Joy of Christmas: A Concert of the Arts featured a variety of sacred and popular music pieces along with other "treats." Artistic director Cindy Visser created visual introductions to each song, and there were original poetry and prose readings by Lois Radtke and Rob Matte. Arie and Kylie Vande Geest performed piano solos, and the concert ended with a moving choral rendition of Silent Night.



Arie Vande Geest playing a piano solo.



The Rincon Mountain choir, led by Pastor Luke Smith.

2015 Christmas Caroling

On a warm, sunny afternoon in mid-December, a small group of adults and children from Rincon Mountain visited Brookdale, a local memory-care facility, to sing Christmas carols and celebrate the birth of the Savior. As we sang the familiar lines, the residents joined in as well, even though many of them had trouble remembering basic information about themselves. Yet they hadn't forgotten those well-worn words, so together we filled the room with praises to Jesus. The sight caused one visitor (probably a family member of one of the residents) to cry quietly in the corner as she watched and whispered along. In between songs, we were able to give a short explanation of why Christ's birth is such amazing news for us today. We hope you join us next year!



RMPC carolers singing at Brookdale.



Candy Egan accompanies the carolers.



Pastor Phil Kruis

Kruis Korner

Out of the Corner and into the Community

Did you know that Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church could legitimately go by the name Corner Mountain Presbyterian Church? Did you know that 'rincon' means 'corner' in Spanish? However, rincón is not the most common name for corner and not the way we usually think of corners.

The kind of corner to which rincón refers is more like a nook or an inside corner.

Our church takes its name from the mountain range that borders Tucson to the east. There really is no Rincon Mountain. There is a Rincon Peak which is the southernmost peak of the three mountains and is actually the shortest of the peaks in height. The three mountains form a corner out of which emerges the Rincon Valley.

Rincon

n: 1. an interior corner, a nook.

There's an advantage to being a church that is, figuratively, tucked away in a corner. Being in a corner provides greater protection from outside influence and allows growth in internal intimacy. We have known these kinds of advantages at RMPC and we have grown in health and size because of it.

But there's also a disadvantage to being a church that is tucked away in a corner. Jesus says that we are to let our lights so shine that they (the world around us) may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven. In this sense, our lives are to be lived out front, out on the outward facing corners, as it were, rather than hidden away in the dark corners or recesses of our own protected private world.

We must take care, however, how our church lives in an outward facing manner. There are varying pictures given in the Bible of those who live on the street corners. King Solomon writes in Proverbs of the adulteress who lurks on the street corner and lies in wait for "young men lacking sense." Jesus himself warns us to not be like the hypocrites

who "love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others."

But then we hear that it is from the street corners that the king gathers guests, the good and the bad, for the wedding feast in Matthew 22. When Paul addresses the governor Festus and King Agrippa in Acts 26 he declares that the king knew all of the events of Christ's death and resurrection because "this had not been done in a corner." The events of the gospel had been accomplished in plain view for everyone to see.

We enter 2016 as a healthy and vital church. We proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ from our pulpit and in our classrooms. We love and care for each other well. We build each other up in love and good deeds. If there is a sin that our body is guilty of I believe it is a weariness in doing good.

The Apostle Paul exhorts us in Galatians 6:9 to not grow weary in doing good. To everyone. To those who are of the household of God first and then to the world around us.

Let's work together as a body through the difficult tension of living out the balance of life in the *rincón* and life out on *las esquinas del caminos* (street corners). In the *rincón* we challenge and encourage each other. On the street corners we live life motivated out of the reality of the gospel. May we love our community in such tangible ways that the gospel is real to them.

What does this mean for us on a daily basis? It means that we love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. It means loving your neighbor as yourself, giving him or her of your time and attention. It means engaging our culture from a Christian world and life view. It means building friendships with non-Christians so they can see your light shining. It means getting involved with local mission outreaches or going overseas on a short-term mission trip so your light can shine into eyes that you know need Jesus.

Let's get strengthened and empowered in the corner and let's get out of the corner into the community.



Pastor Luke Smith

Hey Y'all! "How are you doing?"

"Dear Friends, I want to write about caring for people. I do so with trepidation since my busy life precludes caring for people as I ought and they need. Nonetheless, even to my own condemnation I must air the subject because of the challenge it presents, especially to readers who are intent on becoming caring Christians." These were the heartfelt words Pastor William Still wrote to his congregation on the dawn of the New Year in 1972, his twenty-eighth shepherding his flock in Aberdeen, Scotland. Now, I am sure that many of us have made resolutions as we enter further into the year before us: get healthier, save more money, read through the Bible, pray more—the list goes on and on with a lot of great things, some of which we might even see through to completion. But what about caring for others well? We all understand our lives are busy and, yes, there are things—even good things—that we should probably let go of to not miss the opportunities that the Lord has placed before us. But I think the quantity of our connecting with others, dare I say, is secondary to the quality of those connections. Many times we might use our busyness to excuse ourselves from feeling any guilt for missed connections. However, might it be more often that we would simply rather not involve ourselves with others in those moments for either something that has preoccupied our minds of seemingly (not usually) greater importance or because

involving ourselves might task us in those moments with more than we are willing to take on at the time (or ever).

In that pastoral letter, William Still went on to write that "We can often help others by parting the curtains of mystery that hide ourselves and letting them see that we too are frail creatures subject to common temptations." This makes me wonder what the Lord might do in the midst of our church and in our communities and other spheres of influence if we reserved questions asking how others are doing for only those moments when we really wanted to know the truth and, likewise, tell the truth. Whether there was much silence or much conversation in such an exercise, we would surely know one another more intimately and be ready, or at least willing, to learn how to care for each other better than we already do. With all of the Bible studies, Life Groups, Connect events, and worship services planned in 2016—not to mention all of our casual, unplanned encounters—we all will have ample opportunity to take advantage of those providentially-timed moments to figure out how to care for each other well. Your pastors and your elders are not exempt from this either—we have much to learn in caring for each other, for you, and for our neighbors. So as we enter into this season of life together, let me ask us all the question "How are we doing?"

Fire & Meat

On Friday, November 20th, several men and boys joined together for a "bonding" event. Fire and Meat was an opportunity to bring meat to cook on the grill between the portable buildings. While some of the meat was either undercooked or very well done, it was a great evening of fellowship.



A Word...or Two Plans for 2016

The Youth & Family Ministry is excited about what's coming up in this new year! If I had to choose one word to describe our plans, I'd pick connectional. We're taking steps to be more intentional about planning ministry events in cooperation with other churches that share our views and theology. We don't grow as disciples of Christ on our own, but in relationship with the rest of the body of Christ. Plus, together we're able to accomplish much more than by ourselves. In other words, we're just trying to be Presbyterian! (in the best sense of the word)

For example, our youth winter retreat will again be on Mt. Lemmon as usual, but this year we will be joined by another youth group. The Youth & Family group of Church of the Resurrection (PCA) in Flagstaff will add to our numbers as we play games, sing songs, and dig into God's Word

together. Our theme this year is "The Gospel: For me and for you." We'll be thinking about what the gospel really is and how it completely changes who we are, both personally and in our relationships with others.



Pastor Ben Castaneda

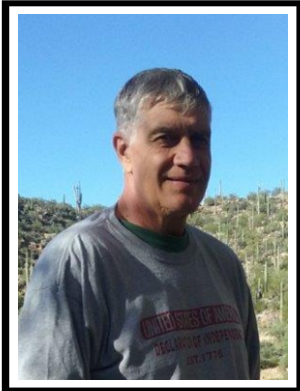
Plus, we're looking forward to a cooperative mission trip this summer with several other PCA churches to Baja California. We'll join about 50 other adults and youth as together we build structurally sound homes for families in need, put on a VBS for local children, and share the gospel with the community. This will be a transformational trip for all involved. Consider joining us!

Trunk or Treat

October's Trunk or Treat was again a great event. There were approximately 165 kids, and Gospel devotions were given out to 60 homes. We had 24 trunks, most of which were decorated very creatively. This event couldn't have happened without the time and generosity of the Rincon family. Many families expressed their gratitude and several asked for more details about our church. Please continue to pray for the families that came and that God might bless our hospitality to the community!



One Take-Away from the Study on Romans 8: “Freedom in the Holy Spirit”



by Dan Jorg

In teaching the class on Romans 8 during the fall quarter, I admit to not suggesting many practical applications. The reason is simply that the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to each of our hearts. The Holy Spirit knows our needs in areas of wisdom and growth, and He also knows God's will

for us better than I. Teaching does not relieve me of being conscious of the Spirit's work in applying the Word for my own life, and thus I write.

I admit to having a certain pretense toward being logical, mindfully seeking advantage of worldly aspects of life. Subjects connected with material things come easily to me, and so it is hard to see beyond here and now—my worldly flesh.

Over time worldly logic has often proven to be vastly unworthy of the stock I lay in it. This study in Romans has pointed out that my propensity toward logical materialism is mainly influenced by a world that ignores the creator God. This wrong thinking is planted in me which goes like this: “Until something can be reasoned and 'proven' it can't be prudently relied upon.”

But the Bible is clear, and through the Word, instinctively, I realize that there is more to life than what I see, hear, smell, taste, touch and think about. This understanding is convicting. I see that God transcends the realm of the

physical in a way that I never can. Yes, He's present in the universe as the creator of it, but He lives beyond the earth and heavens so I can never connect with Him on my own.

That type of connection requires a mediator and a transformation on my part, a process that prepares me for eternal life in a kingdom beyond the physical place where my natural flesh dwells, and it involves freedom from my old ways. I need someone to help me, all the time, to make that transformation permanent, transporting me beyond this life. “If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you” (Romans 8:11).

The Romans 8 challenge is to live out transformed lives of freedom from the natural flesh, and transcend into the eternal realm “conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.” Clearly there is a battle going on, and it is beyond us to win it. Our faith assures “that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39).

Joining together as transformed people, through our communion and through the power of the Holy Spirit, we must begin to learn to live in obedience of the law written on our hearts (Hebrews 10:15-16).

We may rest in the fact that, “In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us” (Romans 8:37).

Missions Update

Claudia Levin has agreed to lead a missions trip to Honduras to support Open Doors ministry. The ministry has three components: Gates of Hope is a residential center that cares for girls who have been sexually abused. Village of Hope cares for children that have been orphaned, abandoned and abused. The Breezes of Love is an outreach that feeds 350+ kids five days a week. Christ is at the center of this vibrant ministry. For more information on this short term missions trip contact Claudia Levin or the church office.

Rincon will continue to support Mike and Erin Pettengill as they transition from Honduras to a new mission field in Equatorial Guinea, a country in Central Africa. Mike will be teaching seminary classes to pastors and church leaders while Erin will be operating outreach medical clinics through local evangelical churches. They will continue to be sponsored through Mission to the World ministries. More information can be obtained at their website:

<http://www.pettengillmissionaries.org>

Calendar

WEEKLY

Mondays:

·Men's Study, 7 pm. *Grant Brown*

Tuesdays:

·Women's Study, 9:30 am. *Janie Craig*

·Women's Study, 7 pm. *Shelley Kruis*

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*

Fridays:

·Mountain Men Study, 6:30 am. *Stu Sherard*

2nd & 4th Sundays:

·College & Career, 12:30 pm. *Ben Castaneda*

·Evening Communion Service, 5:30 pm



JANUARY

Fri. 22nd: Fourth Friday, 6:30 pm. *Nikki Finnegan*

Sun. 24th: Blood Pressure Check, 12 pm. *Paula Harper*

Sun. 31st: Trivia Night, 5:30 pm. *Luke Smith*

FEBRUARY

Sat. 6th: Manly Breakfast for Youth, 8 am. *Ben Castaneda*

Tues. 9th: Meal for Women & Children's Center. *Linda Anibal*

Fri. 26th: Fourth Friday, 6:30 pm. *Carol Potter*

MARCH

Sat. 5th: Manly Breakfast for Youth, 8 am. *Ben Castaneda*

Sun. 6th: Guest and Fellowship Lunch, 12 pm. *Dave & Val Crain*

Tues. 8th: Meal for Women & Children's Center. *Linda Anibal*

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

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