



# The Rincon Mountain MESSENGER

Spring 2016

Volume 4, Issue 2

## Celebrating the Resurrection!

Celebrating Easter is a joyous occasion at Rincon Mountain. Our sunrise service was held at a local residence, followed by a brunch at the church and then the main service. Performances by both the adult choir and the recently formed children's choir were a highlight this year.

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*A good turnout for the Easter Sunrise Service.*



*Pastor Ben preaching God's Word at the Sunrise Service.*



*The Rincon Mountain choir, led by Pastor Luke Smith.*



*The new Rincon Mountain children's choir, led by Cora Enfield.*



*Pastor Phil bringing the Easter message.*



*Enjoying a delicious brunch before morning worship.*



Pastor Phil Kruis

## Kruis Korner

### Welcome One Another

On a recent trip to Southern California to visit our children, we visited a church that they had recently begun attending. The usual questions like, "What will the worship be like?" or "How sound will the preaching be?" were put at ease because I trust my

children's evaluation of these things. The questions that I found to be more at the front of my mind were, "How are we going to be received? Is anyone going to greet us? Will they be friendly?" I'm sure you have had the same thought as you have visited other churches or even as you visited Rincon Mountain for the first time.

How we receive others and welcome them into our church and into our lives is critical for the church today. There are so many other places people can go where they are welcomed. Walk into the Coffee Exchange at Tanque Verde and Camino Principal and one or more of the staff will shout out a greeting to you. But we wonder if they want more than just our business. We're usually not looking for more than a caffeine fix at this point so we're okay with life at the surface level.

But Jesus says his disciples are different. We go deeper. On the night he was betrayed, Jesus gave his disciples the strategic plan for how to go beyond the kind platitudes and to welcome people into relationship, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35). We invite others into our lives and to know Jesus by loving one another!

But how do we do this? Jesus said "...just as I have loved you, you are to love one another." Earlier in this same chapter John says "...having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end." Jesus loved us to the very end of his life and in the end of his life. He gave everything to love us. He made the ultimate sacrifice—his very life.

We are called to do the same. There are many places in the New Testament that describe how we are to love one another to the end. The apostle Paul gave us one of these ways toward the close of his letter to followers of Jesus in

Rome when he said, "Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God" (Romans 15:7). How did Christ welcome us? He welcomed us by not letting anything about us get in the way of his love. And there was a lot about us that he could have pointed to and said, "She is not worthy." Or "There's no way I could love him." He loved the unlovable! No barriers, no obstacles. He loved us unconditionally and welcomed us to a deep and abiding love. He welcomed us into community. We could even say that he loved us into community.

Welcoming others into our church, our LIFE groups, our book groups, our Fourth Friday events, our Bible studies means giving up our filters to decide who belongs. We all start at the same place of vulnerability; we all need Jesus. We welcome people by loving them to the end of ourselves. We are open to allowing others to see our weaknesses and failures and blind spots. Together we learn how to find restoration, strength, confirmation, and a firm foundation in Jesus. That's love! That is welcoming into community! Welcome one another.

## Deacon Ordination

In January Jesse Enfield and Frank Walker were ordained as deacons after going through extensive training and being vetted by Rincon's Session. Please support these men as they faithfully serve the church.





Pastor Luke Smith

## Hey Y'all!

### *Emotional Hospitality*

We all want to be affirmed, but we can only be affirmed as much as we understand about who we really are. This understanding often comes by way of environments available for us to process our stories—stories that are mixed with both joy and tragedy. It's the tragedy, the pains of life that burden us with feeling the inherent weakness of the human condition. But that is not what should define who we are. We find our identity in and are affirmed by the love of God in Christ! It's our place in that redemptive story that transforms the weaknesses we feel into strengths and incites us to offer our hearts to others. When we do, we offer healing for those who get lost in the depths of their own often misunderstood pain. And so I believe what we all need and long for are environments where we can practice emotional hospitality.

When we think of hospitality we might picture time spent cleaning up the house making things nice and tidy, serving a thoughtful meal to guests, engaging in light-hearted conversation, and everyone leaving having had a fantastic time. But hospitality across the ages as a key tradition in the Church looks more like inviting people burdened with suffering and hunger into the messiness of your private world and only being able to offer them a little leftover spaghetti—it's an environment of vulnerability, authenticity, and dignity. That's what emotional hospitality is: inviting people into the mess, mourning with them, and relieving their burden. But this doesn't mean that emotionally hospitable environments are places where only mourning takes place. No, both celebrating and mourning take vulnerability with those with whom you feel a great sense of safety and trust. Think about who you would invite to your birthday party. You don't invite people who don't know you, who would just come for the cake. You invite those with whom you already share or want to share an intimate connection—those you can plop down on the couch with, kick off your shoes, and not be offended or surprised at each other's stinky feet.

Emotional hospitality requires you to understand yourself in such a way that you feel comfortable in your own skin to create a liberating environment for

others to be free from their own emotional burdens. This requires paying attention to others, which is difficult for us in any setting because we are often so preoccupied with our own particular fears, anxieties, and needs. The Christian writer Henri Nouwen remarked that the source for emotional hospitality is a faith anchored in the liberating new life we have realized in Christ alone. Only then, Nouwen wrote, "can we be free to let others enter into the space created for them, and allow them to dance their own dance, sing their own song, and speak their own language without fear. Then our presence is no longer threatening and demanding, but inviting and liberating."

We all at some point have or will experience in our lives what seems like an imprisoning apocalypse. And so for those who care for the individual, who see the urgent needs of the sufferer, the movement toward them is an opportunity to reveal their freedom in Christ. This level of care, as Nouwen later wrote, "is not merely a skillful use of conversational techniques to manipulate people into the Kingdom of God, but a deep human encounter in which people are willing to put their own faith and doubt, their own hope and despair, their own light and darkness at the disposal of others who want to find a way through their confusion and to the solid core of life."

Now we have to be very honest—such hospitality, especially in the sense of employing vulnerability, can be difficult for many of us. There are things that we want to keep private because they are deeply personal issues. However, these are actually the things that resonate most with people! The burdens we ourselves bear that we are afraid to talk about are the very concerns that, when shared with others, profoundly speak to them because they too share in those burdens and desperately want liberation. They need freedom that can only be found in Christ. It is our prayer that they find that freedom as we open up our homes and our hearts to them.

## A Word...or Two

### “No Hunting!”: Thoughts on Safe Spaces in the Church

“NO HUNTING!” If you enter through one of the doors to the youth room, a sign bearing those words is placed so that it's the first thing you see. At first, the sign is confusing. After all, no one would confuse a youth for a wild animal...at least, not usually. So why is it there?

“No hunting” is a characteristic I have tried to instill in the DNA of Youth & Family Group. I want each teen that walks in through our doors to know that every Wednesday evening there is a safe place where we refuse to attack, demean, or gossip about each other. Instead, Youth & Family Group is a “no hunting zone” where we accept, love, and build each other up. Why do we do this? Because each individual, regardless of their religion, race, class, family background, or manner of dress, is a person made in the image of God and therefore has been invested with worth and dignity. In this “no hunting zone,” teens can gather, unwind from the stresses of school and home, find a listening ear, and be refreshed by the truths of Scripture.

This need for safe spaces goes beyond just youth. Deep

## Car Wash Fundraiser

On March 5<sup>th</sup> a car wash was held to raise funds for two mission trips. The church youth will be going to Baja, Mexico, this summer, and another team will be going to Honduras to work with a ministry to orphans. Fourteen hundred dollars was raised! Thanks to all of you who brought dirty cars.



Pastor Ben Castaneda

down, everyone longs for a safe place where façades aren't needed – where our self-protective barriers can be lowered and deep relationships can develop. This yearning goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden. Before the Fall, there was unhindered openness and deep, intimate relationships, but when sin entered the world, Adam and Eve erected barriers toward each other and God. The fig leaves they collected to cover their bodies symbolized the walls they built around their hearts. However, that echo of Eden has not been totally lost; there still remains within each person a desire for openness and acceptance.

This is why the creation of “safe spaces” is a vital part of the evangelistic task of the church. The environment in which the gospel is proclaimed should reflect the nature of that message. As we seek to create spaces which are physically, emotionally, and relationally “safe” – in other words, spaces that reflect the character of the gospel – we create environments where the gospel can be most meaningfully heard. Both church events and the worship service itself should be safe places where the life-giving grace of the gospel is offered to both Christians and non-Christians. I believe it was James Boice, the late pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, who famously said:

To all who are spiritually weary and seek rest;  
to all who mourn and long for comfort;  
to all who struggle and desire victory;  
to all who sin and need a Savior;  
to all who are strangers and want fellowship;  
to all who hunger and thirst after righteousness;  
and to whoever will come –  
this church opens wide her doors  
and offers welcome in the name  
of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The church is a hospital for sinners, not a museum for saints. It's a place for recovery and healing. If the church is a hospital, we should expect it to be occupied by the ill and infirm – those whose spiritual lives are broken and bleeding.

And if the church is a hospital, there should be no hunting.

# Food Truck Roundup

On the fourth Sunday in March, Rincon hosted its second Food Truck Roundup. Nine food trucks represented a wide variety of fare; there was something for every food taste. Musical entertainment was provided by the LoBros band led by Salvador Lopez. Their brand of "Caliente Classical Crossover" really spiced things up. Fliers were also handed out to encourage folks to come to our Easter services.



Enjoying good food and great fellowship at the Food Truck Roundup.



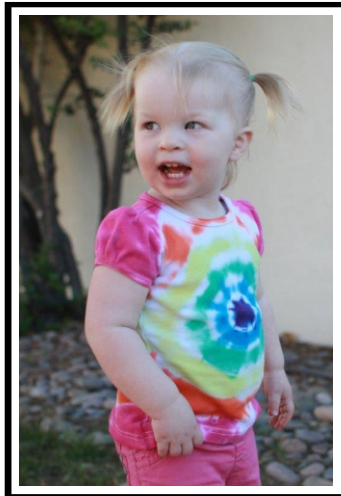
The LoBros provided caliente music at the recent Food Truck Roundup.

# Back to the Sixties!

About 15 women attended a tie-dye event on Friday, February 26. They met in the kitchen and learned about various techniques from Kirsten Walker and Carol Potter. Everyone brought their own t-shirt and had the opportunity to make a scarf as well. It was a fun chance to explore color, spend time with each other, and make a one-of-a-kind item.



RMPC ladies enjoy tie-dyeing at Fourth Friday.



Naomi models a tie-dye creation.



The Strege and Potter families come up with another right answer.

# Trivia Night

The second annual Trivia Night saw nine teams compete for the honor of being the best at remembering "useless" knowledge.

A sample question: *Because Earth is an oblate ellipsoid, this location on land is closest to the center of the Earth.*

Answer: *The South Pole.*

The three top teams were: Dutch-Germans-Italians, Infinity, and The Know Nothings. Start boning up for next year's event!

# The Lent Project

The Lent Project is the latest addition to the Narthex Art Gallery. The goal is "to show people reflecting about Jesus through the small communities within the church." Thanks to Cindy Visser for this timely presentation.



The Lent Project is on display in the Narthex Gallery.



RMPC men clean up the property before Easter Sunday.

# Spring Cleaning

A fruitful Saturday was spent getting the church ready for Easter. Our church family was well represented as both the inside and outside of our building were spruced up. To keep up the energy level, a great fellowship breakfast was also provided.

# Youth Retreat 2016

The youth had a wild and white retreat on Mt. Lemmon this past January! If you remember, Mt. Lemmon got about two feet of snow, meaning that we spent our retreat in a winter wonderland. It even snowed on our way up the mountain—a rare sight in southern Arizona! However, it wasn't all fun and games. The snow had buried the lever to turn on the water to the cabin, resulting in about four hours of searching for the precise spot.

Over the course of the long MLK weekend, we got in plenty of sledding down Suicide Hill, played capture the flag in the snow, and, of course, had a snowball fight! When we weren't outside in the snow, we were inside learning about The Gospel for Me and for You, which was the theme for our retreat. We dove into Scripture to discuss what the gospel means for us individually, as well as how it changes us in community with other people.

We were joined on this retreat by 8 youth from our sister PCA church in Flagstaff, Church of the Resurrection. Even though Flagstaff gets quite a bit more snow than we do, one of their youth hadn't packed her boots. The reason? Her parents had said, "It's Tucson. How much snow could they get?"



RMPC youth braved snow and cold at this year's retreat on Mt. Lemmon.



The youth enjoyed sledding..

# 2016 Desert Shoot-Out

The Wild West is alive and well at RMPC! Thirty-five men and men-in-training joined us for our annual retreat as we journeyed into the great outdoors to enjoy the spectacular beauty of the desert, the fellowship of other men, the mouth-watering taste of barbecued ribs, quiet conversations around the flickering flames of the campfire, and the smell of gunpowder—lots of gunpowder.

Ben and Phil were joined by Rev. Mark Roessler, formerly of Catalina Foothills Church, in leading a series of devotions that focused on what the Bible says about being a strong, humble servant leader. All in all, it was a smashing success. We can't wait for the next DSO!



*A table full of hungry men.*



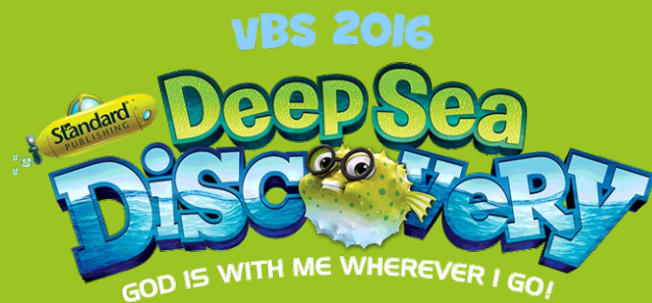
*Tim Finnegan prepares to fire.*

## Missions Update

In March Buzz and Ruthie Curtis, missionaries to Thailand, attended our Easter service and gave an update on their ministry to the Thai people.

In October Claudia Levin will be leading a missions team to Honduras to support Open Doors Ministry which operates an orphanage and school for abused children. The Missions Committee will also provide \$600 to help Open Doors buy a commercial refrigerator.

The Missions Committee will also provide scholarship support for the upcoming Youth & Family missions trip to Mexico.



Date: June 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>

Time: 9 am to noon

Age: 3 years (potty-trained) to 5<sup>th</sup> grade

How you can help:

1. Pray
2. Volunteer to serve at VBS as a workshop leader or crew leader.
3. Attend the VBS Fourth Friday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> 6:30 – 9 pm or VBS Prep Day, Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup> 1 – 4 pm
4. Collect and donate toilet paper rolls, paper grocery bags, 2 liter bottles, plastic water bottles, large coffee cans, and oatmeal containers.
5. Sign up to donate an item at the VBS table starting in April.

Child and Volunteer Registration are now open at [www.rinconpres.org](http://www.rinconpres.org).

Please contact Victoria Wates with any questions.

# 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*

·Children's Choir Rehearsal, 6 pm. *Cora Enfield*

·Choir Rehearsal, 7 pm. *Luke Smith*

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursdays:

·Women's Book Club, 7 pm. *Dana McReynolds*

### Fridays:

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

### 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays:

·Evening Communion Service, 5:30 pm



## APRIL

**Tues. 12<sup>th</sup>:** Meal for Women & Children's Center. *Linda Anibal*

**Sun. 17<sup>th</sup>:** Casserole Sale Fundraiser, 12 pm. *Ben Castaneda*

**Sun. 24<sup>th</sup>:** Blood Pressure Check, 12 pm. *Paula Harper*

**Fri. 29<sup>th</sup>:** Fourth Friday, 6:30 pm. *Victoria Wates*

## MAY

**Sun. 1<sup>st</sup>:** Guest and Fellowship Lunch, 12 pm. *Dave & Val Crain*

**Sat. 7<sup>th</sup>:** Manly Breakfast for Youth, 8 am. *Ben Castaneda*

**Tues. 10<sup>th</sup>:** Meal for Women & Children's Center. *Linda Anibal*

**Sun. 15<sup>th</sup>:** VBS Prep Day, 1 pm. *Victoria Wates*

**Sun. 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Blood Pressure Check, 12 pm. *Paula Harper*

**Fri. 27<sup>th</sup>:** Fourth Friday, 6:30 pm. *Joelle Smith*

## JUNE

**Sat. 4<sup>th</sup>:** Manly Breakfast for Youth, 8 am. *Ben Castaneda*

**Sun. 5<sup>th</sup>:** VBS Set-Up Day, 12 pm. *Victoria Wates*

**Mon. 6<sup>th</sup> – Fri. 10<sup>th</sup>:** Vacation Bible School, 9 am. *Victoria Wates*

**Sat. 11<sup>th</sup> – Sat. 18<sup>th</sup>:** Mexico Mission Trip. *Ben Castaneda*

**Tues. 14<sup>th</sup>:** Meal for Women & Children's Center. *Linda Anibal*

**Fri. 24<sup>th</sup>:** Fourth Friday, 6:30 pm. *Betsy Dunlap*

**Sun. 26<sup>th</sup>:** Blood Pressure Check, 12 pm. *Paula Harper*

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