



The Rincon Mountain MESSENGER

Summer 2016

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Deep Sea Discovery

This year's VBS Deep Sea Discovery was attended by an average of seventy children a day. The overall theme was "God is with me wherever I go!" Through Bible stories about Noah, Jonah, Jesus and his disciples, boys and girls learned a different scriptural truth each day: God knows me! God hears me! God strengthens me! God loves me! God sends me! The colorful underwater decor made the journey even more exciting. Great skits, creative crafts and awesome snacks were really appreciated by the kids in each crew. In addition, presents and money were collected throughout the week for Operation Christmas Child. We heartily thank Victoria Wates and the many volunteers who made this year's VBS a real testament to God's enduring love.





Pastor Phil Kruis

Kruis Korner

Equipped to Engage in the Church

"Hi! My name is Jasper. Are you new to RMPC?"

"No...I've been a member here for a little over three years."

That kind of interaction on a Sunday morning here at Rincon Mountain is not so

unusual. We continue to witness growth through a steady stream of visitors that God keeps bringing to our church. This means we are getting to a size where we don't know an expanding number of people we worship with on Sunday mornings. The awkward conversation mentioned above can be a more and more frequent occurrence. Let me share some thoughts with you on how I believe God has uniquely gifted the body at Rincon Mountain to engage within the church during these times of growth.

First, God keeps bringing us visitors! The fact that many introduce themselves to people they do not know is great! That is what we want to see happen. So often, as soon as the service is over we head out the door to get lunch or we head to that familiar group of people that we have known for years—or maybe only months. But they are the people we are comfortable with. At the end of the service, or between Sunday school and worship, make the effort to meet someone new. Someone made that effort when you were new to RMPC. Return the favor!

Second, visitors should become members! Did you know that most people who join a church they've visited rank "being greeted well by other members" higher than "the style of music" or "the sermon"? Think back to when you first came to Rincon Mountain. The order of worship or my preaching took some time to get used to but you came back because someone was friendly toward you. Someone here invited you into their home for dinner or lunch. Someone here asked you to come to their LIFE group or Bible study. Someone invited your children to youth and family night. The more deeply we are willing to engage the more likely those who visit our church will more deeply commit to being here.

Finally, the best way to grow numerically is to grow spiritually at the same time. We want to continue to engage

each other in ways that encourage spiritual growth: more men's and women's Bible studies and growth groups, better attendance during the Discipleship Hour (Sunday school), new and growing LIFE groups, greater attendance at youth and family night, and more exuberant worship. All of these gatherings provide more and more opportunities for spiritual growth while we grow numerically. This kind of balanced growth is healthy growth and that is what we need.

Fellowship Lunch

The July fellowship lunch was held at the Matte home. Good food, good conversation and a pool to cool kids down were the main attractions. The bimonthly lunches are always a great opportunity for the church family to get to know one another better.





Pastor Luke Smith

Hey Y'all!

Equipped to Engage in Worship

We are called to and should encourage each other to be actively present as we worship the Lord. But we cannot be fully engaged in worship if we can't remember why we do what we do. Maybe many of us at one time knew why we worship the way we do but have forgotten over the years as we enter into the weekly repetition of structured worship. Throughout Scripture, remembrance is not merely tied to recognition but it goes hand in hand with covenantal activity (e.g. worship). To remember why we worship the way we do is not just informational, it's incarnational. Our worship has a "call and response" structure to it that mimics a conversation between intimate friends, not just between the individual and the Lord but between us as a corporate body and the Lord, whereby he both renews and strengthens our covenant bond. If that is true, then what we do on Sundays shouldn't be treated as rote motions we go through—even though repetitive—but as speaking the language of love to and for our Lord for who he is and what he does. As we look to more deeply engage in our corporate worship, we must reflect on the particulars of what we do, so that we can prepare for each element we encounter as well as the trajectory of the overall arc of our worship. The following represents each movement in worship we experience on a typical Sunday:

- (1) God gathers us together and calls us before the throne, so we take the posture of worship.
- (2) We then ask God to grant us the ability to respond to him in right worship through the Spirit.
- (3) We also respond to his call by honoring him in song.
- (4) Having acknowledged who he is in all his glory and holiness, God calls us to confess our public and private sins before him with the sure promise of his mercy.
- (5) In light of this, we must turn away from sin in confession and our promised repentance as we ask for forgiveness.
- (6) And so God responds to our petition by

reminding us of the forgiveness we have been given in Christ.

(7) Assured of God's unmerited favor, we then give him thanks and praise for salvation from sin and the access we have to the throne through Christ.

(8) Renewed by the remembrance of God's grace and love, we as a corporate body along with those in the present, the past, the future, those around the world and all saints throughout the ages and in heaven confess our faith in the Lord and his mission to the world.

(9) Having publicly acknowledged what faith is and why we believe it, we offer our prayers to God for us and the world as we ask him to accomplish his will in us, and all the saints, to live out our faith in the Church and the world.

(10) Now with renewed love and commitment, we offer ourselves to God both in song and in gifts to support God's mission in the church and the world.

(11) God then speaks to us in the public reading of the Word to instruct, encourage, correct, comfort, exhort, and equip us for his mission.

(12) God instructs us in preaching to explain what his Word means and how to respond to him with honor and loving obedience in our daily lives.

(13) Showing us what loving obedience looks like in its truest form, the Lord then feeds us a meal at his table, which is a joyful victory feast celebrating his triumph over sin, Satan, and death through his death and resurrection. In the meal, God gives us the life of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit to unite us with him and with one another in peace and friendship.

(14) During and/or after the meal, we sing to thank and praise God for all the ways that he has served us in his life, love, and in our liturgy that day.

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A Word...or Two

Equipped to Engage as Families



Pastor Ben Castaneda

In Paul's letter to the church in Ephesus, he says that the church is responsible to equip the saints for the work of ministry—the work of engaging each other with the gospel in order that we might all reach spiritual maturity (Ephesians 4:11-13). In this column, I want to help us think for a few moments about what that looks like practically for our families. What truths from Scripture do our families in the church (both those with small children and those with teenagers) need to know in order to engage each other in a healthy way?

First truth: Parents, your children are fallen.

I know I'm not breaking new ground here, but this is a foundational truth that we must fully grasp. Our children are not born with a clean moral slate. Because of Adam's original sin in the Garden of Eden, every human being (apart from Christ) is born with a sinful disposition. This means we shouldn't be surprised by our children's intuitive ability to rebel against our authority in every way possible.

The implication is that our children's greatest need is not for rules—their greatest need is for grace. Obviously I'm not saying that rules aren't important—boundaries, structure, and discipline is important for protecting and nurturing our children. But if you look at the way the Bible talks about the family, the chief goal of parents is to introduce our children to the gracious God who has saved us.

David describes the relationship between parents and children this way: "One generation shall commend Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts" (Psalm 145:4). The amazing thing is that as we engage our children by telling them about the gospel of grace, it actually changes them so that they too enter into the process of engaging others with the gospel: "They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power, to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom" (Psalm 145:11-12).

Second truth: Children, your parents are fallen.

I admit that when Paul says in Ephesians 6:1 that children should obey their parents in the Lord "for this is right," it can seem like a wimpy reason for obedience. You might be tempted to think to yourself, "Paul, you obviously don't know my parents!"

But while Paul obviously didn't know your parents, he did know about parents in general. In fact, just a few verses later

in Ephesians 6:4, Paul has to warn parents not to frustrate their sons and daughters. He realized that parents are sinners too! When the Bible says that "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23), parents are included! They make mistakes, get frustrated, and exchange the glory of God for idols just like everyone else (Romans 1:25).

Speaking as a parent, I know that often all I want is for my life to be simple and comfortable, and when my kids get in the way of my achieving that idol, it's easy for me to get frustrated. Other parents might struggle with an overweening desire to be respected by their teens, with the result that they will do whatever it takes to be feared or revered. Others might struggle with wanting the behavior of their children to reflect well on them, so that their peers will look at them and think, "Wow! So and so is such a successful parent!"

Because parents are sinners, the greatest need they have is to be given grace too. I know from experience the feeling of coming to the end of a long day and feeling like I've completely botched it as a parent. And I probably have! This is why, whether you are a teenager reading this or an adult dealing with aging parents, you need to point your parents to Jesus by displaying to them his mercy, forgiving as you have been forgiven, and loving them even when they may not deserve it.

Third truth: Comparisons between families are lethal.

Sunday morning can be a dangerous time for families. Why? Because of our instinctive (and sinful) habit of drawing comparisons. For example, it's incredibly easy to look down the row at the family next to you and wonder, "Is my family better than theirs? Are my children better behaved? Are they more attentive to the sermon? Are we more popular during the greeting time, more respected by the pastor?" It doesn't take long for us to make judgments about each other, nor (if you're honest with yourself) does it take long to become discouraged. Unless you have the fabled "Perfect Family," there are going to be ways in which your family lets you down.

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Summer Kickoff Carnival

The end of May saw Rincon again host its Summer Kickoff Carnival. The evening was kid friendly with face painting, bean bag toss, a crafts table and, of course, a jumping castle. The popcorn machine was cranked up, along with the choice of other snacks. A fun time of fellowship was had by all.



Families

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In a somewhat ironic way, this is exactly why you NEED the family next to you in the pew, and not just them, but all the families in the church. We need each other, not to provide a point of comparison, but to encourage one another in the hard and humbling task of raising a family. We need to come around each other and point each other to Jesus (Hebrews 10:24-25). This happens as we gather together in small group Bible studies, as we lift other families up in prayer, and as we serve other families by making meals, offering to babysit their kids, or helping them pack and unpack for a move. We need each other because, first and foremost, we are one family—the family of God—and this is what family is all about.

Worship

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(15) God then sends us out into the world with his blessing to serve him and the mission of his kingdom as he promises that he has gone before us but that he is also with us as we strive to glorify and enjoy him in the days ahead.

As we prepare for next Sunday, let's remember these things so that we may be equipped to be presently active in our worship. Then will we be ready to be equipped by God in our worship for missional living.

Mexico Mission Trip 2016

From June 11-18, seven members of RMPC traveled to Tijuana, Mexico, on a week-long mission trip to share the love of Jesus through our words and our deeds. In a marvelous display of unity, we joined about 100 other participants from six other PCA churches to build four homes and four outhouses for needy Mexican families. Besides helping to build the homes, a couple members of our team also assisted with a VBS for children from the surrounding neighborhood. On one of the days, we took a break from building in order to do outreach in a nearby community. We split up into groups and went door-to-door, inviting people to come to an outdoor gathering in a local park, where several members of the team shared their testimonies and the gospel was clearly presented.

It truly was a transforming week. The team devotions in the morning and evening focused on the theme of contentment, and we learned about what it looks like practically to be satisfied with


God's will for our lives. All that time in the same car caused us to grow closer as a team! We came home with tired muscles and full hearts. Thank you for your prayers and support!



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