

## Easter 2017



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He is risen! The celebration of Easter started with a sunrise service at the Matte home. This was followed by a brunch at the church and then an Easter service with Pastor Phil preaching and special music provided by the choir.





Pastor Phil Kruis

# Kruis Korner

## **make. mature. multiply.**

When we think about the vision of Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church, these three words come to mind. They are not original with me. They are a model for discipleship and growth in the historic church that many have incorporated into the life of their individual churches. Google the three words and you'll find books and articles with this title and church websites with this vision statement.

The truth is that I'm not so concerned with being original when it comes to what we ought to be doing as a church. These three things—make, mature, multiply—are what the church has been doing for millennia. It is what RMPC has been doing since we began 16 years ago. As you read what I mean by make, mature, and multiply, you'll easily recognize these three old friends of ours.

### **make.**

The first thing Jesus said as he began his public ministry was, "Follow me." The last thing Jesus said as he passed the baton off to those who had followed him for three years was to gather more followers. He commanded them to go and make disciples (Matthew 28:19 -20). The truth about who we are as rebels and what God has done to reconcile us to himself is at the heart of making disciples. It is the best news that any person could ever hear and we long to engage others through our proclamation of Jesus as the only Savior. God is the only one who saves, but He uses us as vessels who are equipped to preach the gospel. He commands us to make disciples who begin new life through the gospel and who continue this new life through a deep, abiding love for God and a rich understanding of His word.

At RMPC we know that God uses us to make disciples through the ordinary means of grace: the faithful preaching of the word, the right administration of the sacraments and prayer. We also know that he uses our personal relationships as channels of sharing his life-changing love with those he calls to be his disciples.

### **mature.**

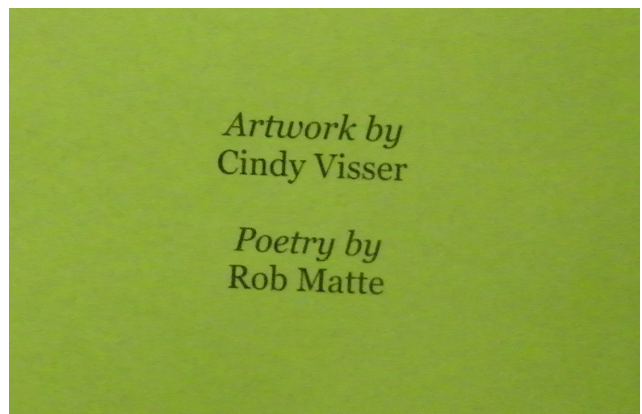
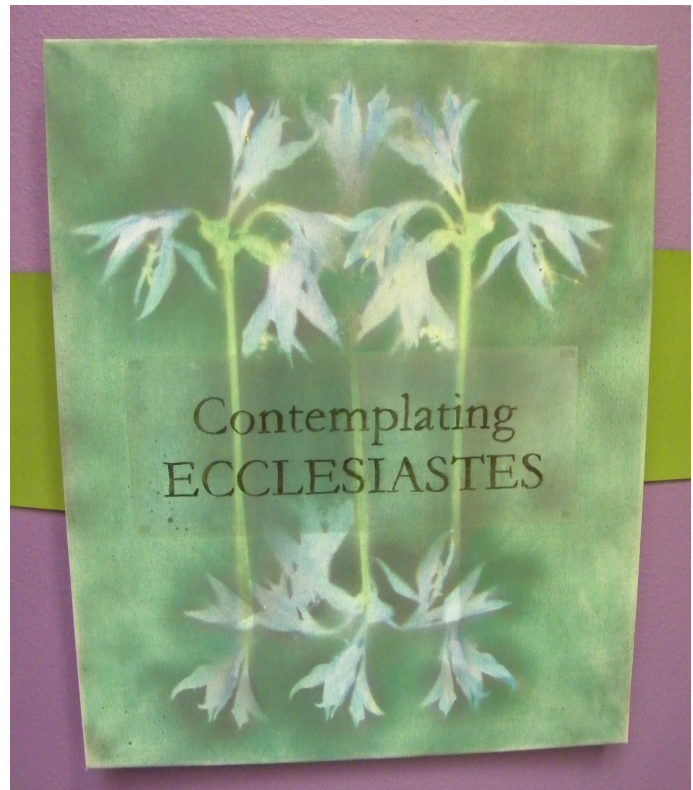
Contrary to what many believe, salvation isn't the end, it is the beginning. The goal is not to just 'get people saved'. The goal is growth in grace. Jesus saves us to a life of obedience and transformation through the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:11-16). The Holy Spirit uses the Bible as the authoritative Word of God to bring about this transformation. Through it we learn about the character of God as well as what He desires for our lives as individuals and as the corporate body of worshippers.

Each program and ministry that we offer centers on God and his word and is meant to grow our faith into maturity. Our Discipleship Hour (Sunday school), women's and men's Bible studies, children, youth and family ministries, LIFE groups, Fourth Fridays, and informal gatherings in each other's homes all serve to help ground our faith in the word of God and grow us in the knowledge of his grace. (continued on page 8)



## Contemplating Ecclesiastes

The latest exhibit in the Hallway Art Gallery asks the viewer to consider the message of Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament, that we must be humble before God. Cindy Visser says about her artworks, "These artworks are remembrances of past plants...they remind people that God has put a 'remembrance' in man's heart to remember his creator." Rob Matte's says of his sixteen haiku poems, "The verses on 'A Time for Everything' in Ecclesiastes 3:2-8 lend themselves well to personal reflection in this poetic format." Combining artwork and poetry is one way to praise God for his abiding grace.





Pastor Luke Smith

# Hey Y'all!

## Who are we?

Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church is in its teenage years and, like most teens, we are asking the simple yet introspective question “Who are we?” This is a question about our identity as a church and one that should be answered ultimately by reflecting on what the LORD has called us to be according to His Word. So who has God called RMPC to be?

### **We are to be a worshipping community.**

We are, first and foremost, a people who are grateful to God for our redemption through Christ and who stand amazed at the wonders of his love. As a result, we worship God with our songs of praise, confessions sin and faith, messages of the hope of the gospel, and celebrations of God’s work in the body through the sacraments. And we believe intimate fellowship with each other is also an extended act of worship.

### **We are to be an accepting community.**

The message of the gospel is that we have been accepted at our worst. We are to extend a similar acceptance to one another without demanding that they change before we offer it to them. We need neither frown upon nor be shocked by other people’s sin and weaknesses. We are to extend grace rather than judgment.

### **We are to be a holy community.**

Though we are to accept people as they are, we are not to be content with leaving others where they are. The gospel tells us that we are destined to become like Jesus and that God has already begun the process of changing us from glory unto glory. We are to urge one another to fight sin and live in the reality of being a new creation in Christ.

### **We are to be a truth-telling community.**

We are to be marked by gentle but honest truth telling which will lead others to want to change. We won’t be harsh because we know our own weaknesses and flaws. But neither will we shrink back out of a fear that we will be rejected for we have the only acceptance which ultimately matters. We can also hear the truth from others. Because we are accepted in Christ, we are free to admit our flaws.

### **We are to be an encouraging community.**

The work of Christ in the church is one of building up: “God is the one who can build you up” (Acts 20:32) and “In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord” (Eph. 2:21). The church grows by uniting human lives filled with the Spirit of God. Therefore, we are to encourage one another to build them up and speak the truth in love (I Thess. 5:11).

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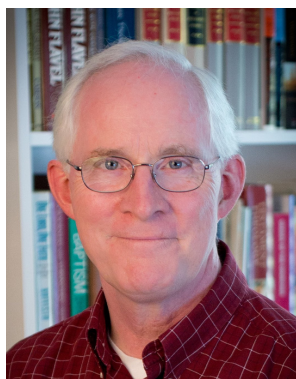
## 4th Annual Trivia Night

There was eager anticipation as Rincon Mountain hosted its annual Trivia Night. Seven tables vied for the chance to be champions in knowing the most obscure and unimportant facts. The evening also featured a great spaghetti dinner to raise funds for the youth summer mission trip. The big winners for the night were the Colt 45s. The runners up were Bruce's Buddies and The Know Nothings II.



## Men's Workday

The focus of the men's workday was clearing brush on the west side of the sanctuary. This will give those in the children's wing a clear exit path in case of an emergency situation. Regular upkeep was also done throughout the complex, and a great breakfast was also provided.



Pastor Mark Lauterbach

## Mark's Musings

### Healthy Christians Want to Reproduce

When I was a boy, a new restaurant opened down the street. It had golden arches and served great hamburgers. Occasionally, my Dad took me there for a treat. I thought it was a local restaurant for our township of Mt Lebanon, in the suburbs of Pittsburgh.

You can imagine my surprise when, from the backseat, I spied another pair of golden arches . . . then another. I asked, “Why is there more than one McDonalds?” Dad’s answer (the salesman) was something like, “It’s called a franchise. One is not enough for the whole city. Every area needs one.” I think they thought this made sense to me. (It didn’t really. But when I asked if we can stop at every one to see if all their burgers and fries were equally good, there was silence.)

So it is with the church. God has designed the Gospel to advance through planting churches that serve communities. One church is not enough. A few big churches is not enough.

It is not by growing bigger and bigger churches that the lost are reached, but by having more and more churches. Guess what? Research has confirmed that God’s ways are best – the most significant factor in bringing the Gospel to the lost and building up believers is church planting.

That is why Rincon was started. Catalina Foothills Church planted Rincon so that people in East Tucson would have a church for their community. Holy Cross is a plant in Marana, seeded from members in other PCA churches, so that people in Marana would have a church.

Healthy churches want to reproduce. That takes sacrifice. That means sending. It means giving. Healthy Christians want to reproduce. Healthy disciples make more disciples.

Rincon aspires to be a healthy church that sends its members to plant new churches in areas of Tucson where there is no Reformed presence.

In the next few months, we, in partnership with the other Tucson PCA churches, anticipate being part of planting a new church near the University of Arizona. Soon after, we hope to start a new ministry on campus (RUF) to bring the Gospel to students. Then that church planter will mentor another planter, so that we can plant more churches.

God calls churches to multiply. God calls members of Rincon to give time, and money, and themselves to such efforts.

## 4th Annual Desert Shootout

In March, Rincon hosted the fourth annual Desert Shootout at a site about an hour south of Tucson. Those from Rincon were also joined by men and youth from Desert Springs PCA. Many folks camped overnight Friday with the actual shooting taking place on Saturday. Safety checks were strictly enforced. There were three shooting phases featuring pistols, rifles and then shotguns. The victims of this fusillade of fire were bowling pins, metal targets and clay pigeons. A real bonding experience for those in attendance.



## Mexico Trip Fundraiser

On March 18th, the youth of the church participated in a car wash that was one of several fund raisers for the summer mission's trip to Mexico. Youth and families will be returning to Tijuana to help in constructing homes for those in need. There were also fundraisers which provided great food like taco salad and spaghetti dinners.



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[*Kruis Korner* cont'd from page 2]

**multiply.**

One of the signs of a healthy church is disciples making more disciples. As a church we believe healthy, living things reproduce, therefore we not only support global missions and church planting, but seek to multiply disciples in our own community. We see this multiplication take place as new disciples are made, new LIFE groups are formed, the worship center is filled, and new churches are started.

We participate in global missions by sending short-term teams to work with missionaries we support. We partner with the four other PCA churches in Tucson, the Southwest Presbytery, and the Southwest Church Planting Network to plant new churches in and around Tucson. In fact, we have a vision for partnering with others to plant five churches in the next 15 years right here in Tucson!

We live in a world that portrays truth as a moving target—if there is such a thing as truth at all. We firmly believe that truth exists and that its source is Jesus Christ. We know that as we hold forth the truth of Jesus Christ as we faithfully preach the word of God and rightly administer the sacraments God will bring others to Rincon Mountain who are searching for truth. Some who come will already believe in Jesus and will find a home here because of the truth. While these new disciples bring many gifts to Rincon Mountain we continue to pray for a congregation that is growing as much through conversions as through transfer growth.

After Easter we will begin a new sermon series titled “make. mature. multiply.” This new series will give us greater biblical understanding of how God is calling each of us to make disciples, mature as disciples, and multiply God’s work in Tucson.

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[*Hey Y'all* cont'd from page 4]

If this is who the LORD has called us to be, then here are just three implications of what this means for us as a church:

(1) Real community requires significant face to face relations. To have the quality of community life which God expects from us requires deliberate effort. We cannot assume that merely by gathering together in large groups, even for worship, that we will be able to fully embody or carry out the functions that which God intends for us. It demands ongoing significant relationships in which we are consciously pursuing vibrant Christian community and not settling for casual social involvement with one another. It requires a concrete group of people who know each other’s faces, names and lives and who regularly spend time together. (continued on page 9)

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[*Hey Y'all* cont'd from page 8]

(2) Each person must see themselves as a minister. There can often be expectations of the pastoral staff to be the ones who attract and win new persons to Christ, but the Bible says that the body grows as each speaks the truth in love, builds up, and equips the other. The early church certainly recognized this was the essence of being the church. Paul assumes that when Christians met together everyone built up one another in all things (1 Cor. 14). If we approach our life together as a worshiping and connectional community this way then it will completely transform our community.

(3) We must work hard at developing community. Nurtured within a culture that encourages a radical individualism, our ability to participate in a robust community life has been severely diminished. And this adds to the inherent challenge of living in community with other sinners. But this can be no excuse for avoiding it. After all, it is what we were created for and it is what God expects from us. The more we work at it, the better we will become at it.

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