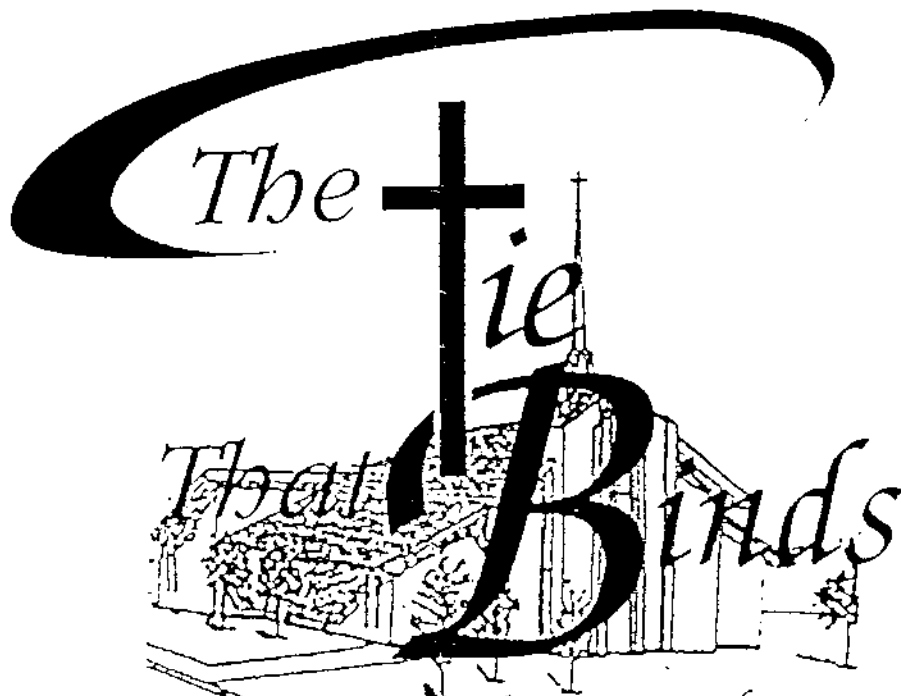


Congregational Church of the Valley

your community Congregational Church

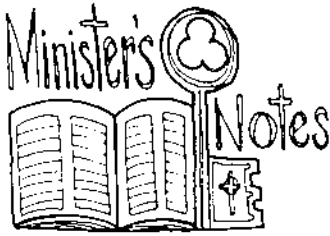


*"And above all these put on love,
which binds everything together
in perfect harmony."*

APRIL NEWSLETTER

Our Covenant

We covenant with the Lord and one with another and do acknowledge our faith in Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior and take for our rule of life His own words: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind and with all thy strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."



ECONOMIC RECESSION - TERRORISTS - WAR - and EASTER!

How do I make sense out of the whole dilemma? How can I know that God is? That He cares? Does the world of creation make sense? Is there purpose in living? Where do I look for answers?

Look at the vastness of things! See the stars blossoming like the unfolding petals of a rose and you sense the moving order that rules the deeps of space. Look at a blade of grass -- out of sunlight and water and air, it makes new life. And you sense the inconceivable Intelligence that works in the least of things.

And more than Intelligence! If we could get at the heart of things, a Heart is what we'd find. Something much more like a heart than a mind, and much more like Love than law, much more like beauty than reason.

Take a rainbow for instance. The Bible says that a rainbow is a token of God's covenant with man. There is a reason for rain, but not for a rainbow. The universe would operate as efficiently without one, only not so beautifully, that is all. And the same thing with our Arizona sunsets!! Now, the same Spirit that conceived rainbows and sunsets, made butterflies (those flowers with wings). The Spirit of God is not just Intelligence, not just life. It is sheer exuberance, the love of joy in living. It never makes two blades of grass alike ... nor two snowflakes. It crowds every crack with growing things and space with universes.

Clouds form and dissolve, birds sing, insects rise, leaves tremble, flowers unfold ... all is change, activity, livingness. You may be a part of this livingness. There is no need for anyone to be little and alone, isolated and meaningless. For YOU are a part of LIFE!

That's why God sent the Christchild at Christmas and the Cross at Easter! It was to make the way clear, understandable and to put purpose into life! It was to let us know how much He cares and Loves! Christmas set the stage ... Easter is the culmination to teach and show us the way of Love and Truth and Beauty and Gratitude and ... NEW LIFE ... New Commitment! When this becomes real to us as individuals and we share it with others ... then, and then only, will PEACE and GOOD WILL become real. Remember always, "A better world begins with me" (each of us). Easter is a Great Time for a New Beginning! -LJS

WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP EASTER SUNDAY

10 A.M.



News Flash

BEGINNING PRONTO!

That means "right soon"! So, don't delay on this unless you mean to. We are developing something new for us -- as a church. You may call it "small group fellowship", "cell groups", "outreach", or whatever tickles your palate. Or you may say, "I think I'll wait and see." Truth is -- it's under way.

We will make up small groups (of up to 10 persons in a group) who will gather for fellowship, eats, conversation about most anything, or do some interesting things together. It is not like a TV dinner in which you take what you get ... no, it is a matter of developing what is meaningful, helpful and pleasant to the palate!

At this point, a number of people have expressed an interest in sharing in such a venture. If you want to be included (invited) in such a group, you will have to express that desire by placing your name on the sheet provided in the foyer. Nothing arbitrary about this ... but I'll tell you right now ... it's gonna be a fun and meaningful thing to do. It's a bit like raspberry tea ... you won't know if you like it if you don't try it!

Interested? Put your name on that list (on the bulletin board in the foyer -- you can't miss it) and a person helping to put it all together will call you.

Let me assure you of a coupla' things 1) a group will have meaningful good times together but they will not become a clique 2) no group will strong arm you into anything 3) it is not something, when started, closes its doors to anyone not in on the ground floor 4) questions? call me, 802-4036.

What is the Real purpose of such a "thing", someone asked. It isn't sponsored by Rotary, Lion's Club or a Social Net ... it is sponsored by Y-our Church. It is a Christian Fellowship ... well ... it's born out of Exodus 18:14-27; Ecclesiastes 4:9-10; Ephesians 4:11-16; Galatians 6:1-6; James 5:13-20; Hebrews 10:23-25; St. Matthew 25:31-45 and the real one, St. Matthew 28:18-20.

CHRISTIANITY LIVE
IS THE GREATEST JOY AND THE MOST FUN THAT ANYONE COULD EVER HAVE! - LJS

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Somebody said one time, "What kind of a church would my church be, if all of its members were just like me?!"

TRUTH IS our church - your church - every church IS just what each of its members is!!

News Flash

YEP! ANOTHER ONE!!

And here's one you won't want to miss. It's good for all of us to Know What We Believe! When

the "sailing" is smooth -- we don't worry too much about it. But when the storms come (and they do - for all of us at some time - and Jesus talked about that) ... then it is that we need that "anchor". So, there will be a "Five Week Course". Not pressured but a genuine look at the Basic Tenets of Christianity. Objective! In Capsule form. A chance to just listen and/or a chance to ask questions.

LED BY THE FOUNDING PASTOR OF OUR CHURCH - Carl Henning! All of you know Carl ... he is a regular part of our worship service each Sunday.

Five Wednesday evenings - 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the church.

April 30, 7 to 8:30 p.m. "The Bible" (We begin and end on time!

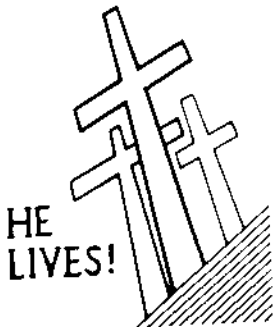
May 7, 7 to 8:30 p.m. "God".

May 14, 7 to 8:30 p.m. "Jesus Christ"

May 21, 7 to 8:30 p.m. "Man and Sin"

May 28, 7 to 8:30 p.m. "Salvation"

Not all of us believe or express ourselves in exactly the same way! That's good and that's "Congregationalism" ... room for us each to be ourselves with that "common thread" of faith that unites us. See how it works? Then each of us together make up the church, and, as beautiful as Joseph's coat of many colors ... or a full blown rainbow ... or a garden with flowers of every kind and color! The Church is all of us together! Come share in this five week study-discussion. Don't need reservations - just come join us! We'll save a seat for YOU!



We often say "from sunrise to sunset" -- Easter is a festival of "the dawn". Christ has turned our sunsets into a sunrise! In the historical narrative of the resurrection the record says "They came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun" -- and I say to you, "Life has never been the same again." Now, it has meaning and promise! If you can catch the spirit, the power and the significance of this day, it WILL turn your sunsets into sunrises! It really was the day that changed the world--

even set in motion B.C. and A.D. And the Easter Dawn can turn your questions into renewed certainty of life's Invisibles!

LOOK What's Going On!

RUMMAGE



APRIL 26 from 7 to 1 (7 a.m. to 1 p.m.)

This is always a "good fellowship" time and with bargains galore! And YOU may have some yet to share?! Bring them to the church ... the ladies will get them marked and ready to sell! Items? YOU NAME IT! You know how that goes. One person's junk is another person's treasure! And, ain't it the truth? Then, All leftovers go to St. Jude's!

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BIBLE STUDY FELLOWSHIP meets each Thursday morning from 9:30 to 11 a.m. For the next several weeks we will be studying the Book of Acts (the Acts of the Apostles). Read it carefully -- right from it's beginning!



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MEN'S GROUP



SATURDAY, MAY 3 at 7:30 a.m.

Hey Guys! We been slippin'!

We do need reservations for this delicious surprise breakfast ... you may call the church office and leave your name (899-4704) or sign up on the sheet in the foyer!

(Program will be special too ... (not all firmed up yet) ... we'll announce it in the Sunday bulletin and generally call the info around)

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KNOW HOW MANY CHILDREN ARE IN NEED IN THE PHOENIX area? No, not a dozen or dozens -- but hundreds!! Our next meeting (Plymouth Guild, May 10, 9:30 am.) will include a continental breakfast, devotions etc. AND a "BABY SHOWER". for the Child Crisis Center - East Valley Inc. Bring an item or several items that babies and small children need ... baby food, baby wipes, diapers sizes 4 and 5, baby shampoo, paper towels, all sizes clothing, etc. Let's let God rain lots of good stuff on them!! Call it, "LADIES HELPING BABIES"!



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SUNDAY SCHOOL meets each Sunday at 10 a.m. We got a' need for a teacher for "upper elementary" age-grade. Call Nancy Miller 480-706-5074

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NOT REALLY - IT'S A CHILI COOK-OFF!

Know what that means? YOU bring a "pot" "bowl" or "crock pot" of YOUR home-made chili for the Pot Luck luncheon after church service on Sunday, May 20 ... sponsored by the Board of Deacons-Deaconesses. And, if you will bring the recipe with you, we'll make copies so others may know the secret of your special "concoction" (which means 'special ingredients'). The salad, beverage, dessert and table service is furnished.

There just might even be a way that you have a taste of all of them -- and then cast a vote! This'll be fun. Mark it on your calendar right now! Sunday, May 20, after worship service

NEVER GIVE THE DEVIL A RIDE! HE WILL ALWAYS WANT TO DRIVE!

FOOD - There is a basket in the foyer of the church where you are invited to share non-perishable items for the Chandler Food Bank - the need seems just never to go away! Help!

BLOOD - Did you know that you can "give blood" every eight weeks? And it's as good for you as changing the oil in your car! Really! United Blood Services tells us that there is always a shortage in the Phoenix area - and all over - including the military. Some of us DO give every eight weeks - how about you?

A GOOD ONE from Carl's Quote of the Day (you can get one each day from <http://www.carl.henning.com/quotes.htm>)

WE ARE NOT HUMAN BEINGS HAVING A SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE
WE ARE SPIRITUAL BEINGS HAVING A HUMAN EXPERIENCE

-Wayne Dyer



YOU'RE COMING, AREN'T YOU? Maundy-Thursday (when you get this newsletter - that will be tonight!) April 17 at 7 pm
A service of meditation - Holy Communion around the communion table - and the draping of the cross in black -- to remain until Easter morning at the first note of our opening hymn "CHRIST THE LORD IS RISEN TODAY"!

VIEWS FROM



THE PEWS

GOT ANY?

We are always looking in ways to make your church fellowship meaningful to "you". On the table in the foyer is a little leaflet entitled "I Wish". Is there a hymn you wish we'd sing on Sunday ... a topic you'd like to suggest for a sermon ... would you

like the minister to call on you ... would you like to become a member of this church ... etc.? Remember, the church is NOT its minister ... it is fellowship of people who gather for the sacred purpose of worship of God, to learn of His precepts and to be a witness of His love as expressed in the life of Jesus Christ! YOU are the church!

You see, the sooner we learn, in this world, that we are "one family" and that we are "one world" the more effective, efficient, successful and happier we will all be. There is a little verse that really could make a big difference-

IF YOU HAVE LEARNED TO WALK A LITTLE MORE SURE-FOOTED THAN I
BE PATIENT WITH MY STUMBLING THEN
AND KNOW THAT ONLY AS I DO MY BEST AND TRY - MAY I ATTAIN THE GOAL
FOR WHICH WE BOTH ARE STRIVING
IF THROUGH EXPERIENCE, YOUR GOAL HAS GAINED HEIGHTS WHICH I AS YET IN
DIM-LIT VISION SEE, HOLD OUT YOUR HAND AND POINT THE WAY, LEST FROM
ITS STRAIGHTNESS I SHOULD STRAY. AND, WALK A MILE WITH ME!

We're really, in this together ... aren't we?!

- - -

SMILES!

- God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage!
- He who kneels before God can stand before anyone!
- "Drive carefully, my people" said the pastor to them all; "A car is not the only thing a Maker can recall!"
- He who is good at making excuses is seldom good at anything else.
- What excuse did Adam give to his children as to why they no longer lived in Eden? "Your mother ate us out of house and home."
- A baseball fan is a spectator sitting 500 feet from home plate who can see better than an umpire standing 5 feet away.
- Tommy, age 7 said: "If you really want to learn to love better, you should start with a friend you hate."

GOOD WILL ALWAYS WIN OVER EVIL - BECAUSE

GOD ALWAYS HAS A PLAN B

An English fisherman went into an inn at the end of a long day and ordered a "spot of tea." Bragging to his friends about the big catch of fish, he stretched out his arm with a sweeping motion, and, in an instant he knocked the teapot off the table and against the wall. A dark stain splashed across the wallpaper!

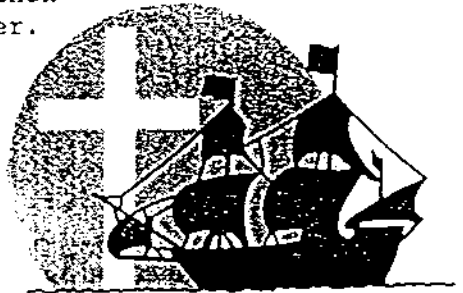
The fisherman was aghast at what he had done and apologized profusely to the innkeeper. He tried to wipe off the tea, but already it had made an ugly blotch. Shortly, a man seated at the table next to him came up and said, "Calm yourself, sir." The stranger took out a coal pencil and began to sketch around the shape of the stain. In a moment he created a picture of a magnificent stag (buck deer with a beautiful rack of antlers). That stag looked as if it had been designed for that wall.

Soon the man was recognized as Sir Edmond Lancier, England's foremost painter of wildlife.

What Sir Edmond Lanier did with an unsightly tea stain in a fine English inn, our God is doing every day! He is working with the lives of people who wonder how they will ever recover from the ugly thing that has happened to them. He is making masterpieces of our lives that then stand as testimonies to His love and power.

In your quiet moments, reflect upon that as you enter this very Holy Week in which God took the most horrid of scenes and out of it created/developed the most beautiful promise of life that anyone could ever imagine!

PRAISE BE TO GOD!



Congregational Church of the Valley

your community Congregational Church

Pastor: Lyle Schossow

Moderator: Joyce Newman

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