



## THE GLORY OF EASTER

There was always something fun about Easter when I was growing up... dying eggs, getting a big basket of jellybeans and marshmallow peeps, and, of course, a visit from the Easter Bunny.

That came to a screeching halt one Saturday morning when my father took me to a community Easter egg hunt. As I recall, there were twice as many kids that showed up than they expected. The unhappiness of the parents resulted in a fist-fight with the giant pink Easter Bunny master of ceremonies.

As a five-year old I didn't particularly understand what was happening. All I remember was watching the pink Easter Bunny rolling around on the ground with some guy and being disappointed that Dad whisked me away before I could get any candy.

On the way home I could tell that my father was fairly horrified. Looking at me, he said something like, "That has nothing to do with Easter anyway!"

I couldn't believe my ears. How could my father speak such heresy? Of course Easter was about bunnies and peeps and chocolate eggs!

It was confusing when Dad started talking about crosses, thorns and nails. What I knew about Jesus

involved sheep, giving sight to the blind, and walking on water. My little heart loved that Jesus. But the very idea of Jesus suffering and dying on a cross was ghastly to my young ears.

As I grew in faith, I began to realize that it was necessary for Christ to suffer and die for my sins. His cross represents the only way for me to be in a relationship with a holy and righteous God.

In fact, there was a very important moment when I realized that Jesus was my personal substitute on the cross. As 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, "*God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.*" Some people refer to this as "the great exchange."

In other words, a perfectly righteous Jesus took upon Himself our perfectly unrighteous sins by taking our place on the cross. He didn't deserve to stand in the judgement which we deserved. Even so, this is the grace by which any of us may be saved.

Jesus put it this way in John 14:6, "*I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*" When we respond to His gracious gift of

*Article continued on next page →*



*Continued from front page*

forgiveness by surrendering our lives to Him in faith, everything changes.

The first thing that happens is that we are born again as we are adopted into God's family. That means that we are a "new creation" as we're told in 2 Corinthians 5:17.

The third thing that we begin to realize is that we will one day rise from the dead. Easter is the day we celebrate the resurrection of Christ from the dead. After His suffering, crucifixion and burial Christ conquered our greatest enemy... death. And for forty days He appeared to hundreds of witnesses throughout the Holy Land.

Having been made right with God, we now share in His resurrection power. We believe that just as Christ rose from the dead, so we shall one day rise with Him in glory!

And so, the incomprehensibly great power of God, which was on full display at the Garden Tomb where Christ lay, is now the power at work in those of us who believe and place our faith in Jesus. Christ is truly our King and Victor, seated "far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked" (Ephesians 1:21).

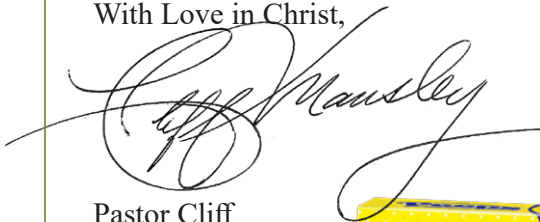
Easter means that love is stronger than death. Love "burns like a blazing fire, like a mighty flame. Many

waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot sweep it away" (Song of Solomon 8:6-7). It was for love that God gave His only Son (John 3:16); it was for love that Christ died on the cross (John 15:13). It is for love that the risen Lord intercedes for His children (Romans 8:34). Easter is fraught with love.

Easter means there is hope for us, after all. As Jesus said in John 14:19, "Because I live, you also will live".

Friends, Holy Week reminds us of Christ's great sacrifice... and the new life that we have in Him. I want to invite you to join us this Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday (combined w/Good Friday) and Resurrection Sunday to remember, revere and celebrate the undeserved goodness, kindness and love of our Lord who gloriously made our salvation possible.

With Love in Christ,



Pastor Cliff

*P.S. I still like  
jelly beans &  
marshmallow  
Peeps!*



Please Bring in  
**FRESH FLOWERS**  
on  
**EASTER SUNDAY**  
for our  
**FLOWERING  
CROSS**





# Easter 2023

## PALM SUNDAY

APRIL 2<sup>nd</sup>

*Worship Service*

*10:00 a.m.*

## LAST SUPPER & SERVICE OF THE SHADOWS

APRIL 6<sup>TH</sup>

*Worship Service*

*6:00 p.m.*

## EASTER SUNDAY

APRIL 9<sup>TH</sup>

*Worship Service*

*10:00 a.m.*



## WHY READ THE BIBLE?

(Installment 1 of 14)

*It's How God Reveals His Character...*

And He passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.” (Exodus 34:6-7, NIV)

God is full of patience, love, kindness, justice and wisdom. He is all-knowing and the Creator of all. The books of the Bible describe the different characteristics of God in a way that humans can understand. The Bible is primarily a story about God's goodness, and when you read it with this in mind, it makes the rest of the text come alive. As you are reading, you can unconsciously make yourself the main character of the Bible, but the main character is and always has been God.

LAST SUPPER  
&  
SERVICE OF THE  
SHADOWS

6:00 PM  
THURSDAY  
APRIL 6TH

**MEN'S  
BREAKFAST**  
*Richi's Diner*

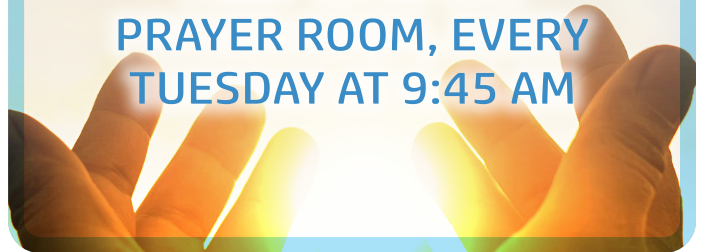


APRIL 3<sup>RD</sup> - 8 AM

**TUESDAY  
MORNING**

— PRAYER GROUP —

MEET US IN THE  
PRAYER ROOM, EVERY  
TUESDAY AT 9:45 AM



**THE GOSPEL IN GENESIS**

FINDING **FAITH & HOPE**  
IN A FALLEN WORLD

Pastor's Bible Study  
Tuesdays at 11:00 a.m.



# JOASH CHEST

## UPDATE



What is the Joash Chest Fund???

Approximately 800 years B.C. the Temple in Jerusalem fell into great disrepair.


Under the direction of the godly priest Jehoiada, King Joash set out a large chest in front of the Temple to receive offerings for its restoration. By God's grace, the people were so generous that the chest was filled to overflowing, many times over and the Temple was magnificently restored.

In a similar way, we've placed a "Joash Chest" outside of the sanctuary as our church building is showing signs of wear and tear. It's been twenty years since we built this marvelous facility and since then we've held countless worship services, Bible studies, prayer meetings, concerts, fellowship dinners, and now, Trail Life for boys.

You may have noticed our worn carpeting, but you may not have noticed that our roof is needing repairs and our sanctuary sound and lighting systems need replacing. This kind of stuff is expensive!

Although the Joash Chest Fund has been established as a permanent fund, our first two projects will focus on our roofing and sanctuary needs.

So far, many of you have done an amazing job raising \$67,515 toward a \$150,000 goal. If you haven't yet contributed to the Joash Chest over-and-above offering, the Elders of Grace Community would like to encourage you to prayerfully consider adding your generous gift to the fund. And, by God's grace we'll make that goal in short order!



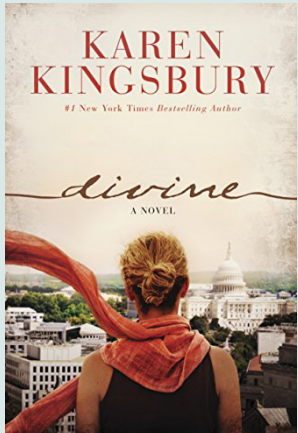
# Women's

## BOOK CLUB

The next Women's Book Club meeting will be held Thursday, April 13, at 10:30 a.m. They will be discussing *Divine* by Karen Kingsbury.

Best-selling author Karen Kingsbury weaves another dramatic story of tragedy and redemption!

Mary Madison was a child of unspeakable horrors, a young woman society wanted to forget. Now a divine power has set Mary free to bring life-changing hope and love to battered and abused women living in the shadow of the nation's capital.



The image features a stack of books on the left side. The main text is centered, with 'Women's' in a large, elegant script font and 'BOOK CLUB' in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font below it. To the right is the cover of the book 'Divine' by Karen Kingsbury, which shows a woman with a red scarf looking out over a cityscape with a large white building in the background.



*A Matter of* **LIFE AND DEATH**

## SUNDAY MORNING SMALL GROUP

The Sunday Morning group  
will continue the series  
by Louie Giglio,  
*A Matter of Life & Death*,  
through Sunday, April 16th.

This study answers questions  
with biblical truth, and makes us  
acutely aware of the beauty of  
heaven and the reality of hell.

**SUNDAYS AT 8:30 A.M.**

It is with great sadness that  
we announce the passing of  
long-time church member  
Harvey Johnson on  
March 23, 2023.

*Please keep his family  
in your prayers.*



SAVE THE DATE  
**APRIL 22ND**



# Pancake **BREAKFAST**

TRAIL LIFE FUNDRAISER  
**8 AM - 11 AM**

Join us for a pancake breakfast fundraiser  
to support Trail Life Troop AZ-0001.  
Pancakes, sausage, coffee, juice and  
water will be served. The meals will  
be served by the Trailmen.

### **PRESALE TICKETS:**

**\$5 each - Kids (10 & under)**

**\$10 each - Adults**

**Tickets can be purchased  
online at [GCC-EPC.com](http://GCC-EPC.com)**

*(Click on the red button for  
upcoming events on the home page.)*



*Chelsea Love*

## CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

*with Guest Speaker*

APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup> AT 10 A.M.

### Overcoming Challenges with Faith, Clarity & Hope

Chelsea Love will share personal stories, strategies and tools to enhance our abilities to bounce back and thrive in an unsettled world!



**SIGN UP IN THE LOBBY**

## WATCH OUT FOR SCAMS

There is a scam going around that has affected many churches and charities, including ours.

**PLEASE KNOW THIS...**

1. Your pastor will never ask you to purchase gift cards for any reason. The church will never contact you and request gift cards (or other purchases) of any kind, especially not through email or text messages.
2. If you have any doubts about an email or text message you receive please contact Pastor Cliff or the church office (623-975-9038). Never call a phone number provided in a potentially phony email or text message.



## FINANCE UPDATE

**Joash Chest  
Funds Raised  
Through 3/30/23:**

**\$67,515**

*Sincerely, Patti French, Treasurer*

# A MAN OF DESTINY

## OBITUARY OF PAUL VALENTINE BATTISTE JR. (Paulo, Valentino, Antonio, Giuseppe, David, Battisti Jr.)

OCTOBER 7, 1940 – JANUARY 29, 2023

Paul passed away on January 29th, 2023, at the age of 82 surrounded by his wife of 59 years Kathy Battiste, daughter Michelle Smith and son Brad Battiste. Paul was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in January 2023, and it had also spread to other organs. He remained in a state of gratitude as he finished out the final weeks of his life in his home at 23806 NE 126th Pl Redmond, WA 98053.

Paul was born October 7th, 1940, in Carlsbad, NM to the proud parents Paul Valentine Battiste and Vena Vivian Battiste. Paul Sr. was the son of Camillo and Ida Battisti. Vivian was the daughter of Charles and Vivian Dewald.

Paul Battiste was a man destined for greatness as a son, brother, friend, husband, dad, uncle, Papa; greatness in Music, any chosen career and overall greatness in how to be a man. His love for people, passion to experience, excitement for adventure and deeply spiritual values inspired all those who knew him. There's never been someone more gifted

to lift a spirit, bring a smile to one's face and warm your heart with his soulful ways. You will forever make all our hearts happy.

Paul was a man of adventure, always seeking out new experiences and challenges. His passion for people, music and travel brought him great success. As the master planner, he enjoyed

amazing travels with his wife Kathy across the world in their annual global expeditions, driving with his family across the country or being in the great outdoors enjoying the purity of what nature offers most notably in Alaska and Montana.

His passion for music was evident from a young age. He enjoyed enormous success playing the French horn with great zeal as a music major, earning awards and national



accolades along the way. He was also a man of great spiritual depth, finding inspiration and meaning in his Christian faith and love for Christ.

Beyond his musical and spiritual pursuits, Paul was a devoted to all who knew him. He was the ultimate family man, cherishing the time spent with his family as he had a and a deep dedication to his family and loved ones.

Paul was an amazing creative storyteller and prankster, and he had a talent for making people feel at ease and bringing a smile to their faces. His laugh filled up the room and his smile always contagious. The sharing of Strega and his passionate story was an amazingly romantic experience for all to enjoy. Soulmates, Paul and Kathy shared Strega many times, binding their souls for all time.

As a successful salesman, Paul made a lasting impact on his profession and those around him. His sales meetings were legendary as was his 33 years at the HON Company where he brought HON to the Northwest and Alaska. However, beyond his outstanding sales achievements, he will be remembered for his kind heart, loving spirit, and the many ways he made the world a brighter, better place.

Paul is survived by his wife of 59 years Kathy Battiste, daughter Michelle Smith, her husband Jon, their children Hannah and Elliot and son Brad Battiste, his wife Elyse and son Bond.



Paul Battiste was a true man of immense character and integrity, a model of strength and compassion, and an inspiration to all who knew him. Everything he did was with the intention to bring people together through laughter and love. His passionate ways made all who knew him, love him. May his memory continue to inspire and guide us forever!

Fond memories and expressions of sympathy may be shared at [www.sunsethillsfuneralhome.com](http://www.sunsethillsfuneralhome.com) for the Battiste Jr. family.



# APRIL 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY					
						1					
2 <i>Palm Sunday</i> Small Group 8:30 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM <b>Communion</b>	3 Men's Breakfast at Richi's Diner 8:00 AM Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM	4 Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM Trail Life 6:00 PM	5 Parkinson Support Group 3:00-4:30 PM	6 <i>Maundy Thursday</i> Worship Rehearsal 9:00 -11:00 AM Sharing & Caring 10:30 AM Bell Choir 1:00 PM <b>SERVICE OF SHADOWS 6:00 PM</b>	7 <i>Good Friday</i> TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM	8					
9 <i>Easter</i> Small Group 8:30 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM	10 Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM	11 Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM Trail Life 6:00 PM	12 Missions Meeting 10:00 PM Game Day 1:00 PM	13 Worship Rehearsal 9:00 -11:00 AM Women's Book Club 10:30 AM Deacon's Meeting 2:00 PM	14 TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM <b>SALTY DAWGS CONCERT 7:00 PM</b>	15 <b>CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST 10:00 AM</b> <i>with Guest Speaker</i>					
16 Small Group 8:30 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM	17 Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM	18 Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM Trail Life 6:00 PM	19 Session Meeting 1:30 PM	20 Worship Rehearsal 9:00 -11:00 AM Sharing & Caring 10:30 AM W & M Meeting 11:00 AM Bell Choir 1:00 PM	21 TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM Finance Meeting 10:00 AM	22 <b>PANCAKE BREAKFAST 8:00-11:00 AM</b> <i>Trail Life Fundraiser</i>					
23 Small Group 8:30 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM	24 Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM	25 Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM Trail Life 6:00 PM	26 Game Day 1:00 PM	27 Worship Rehearsal 9:00 -11:00 AM Bell Choir 1:00 PM	28 TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM	29					
30 Small Group 8:30 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM	<p><b>LEGEND</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Worship &amp; Study</td> <td>Outside Groups</td> </tr> <tr> <td>GCC Rehearsals</td> <td><b>SPECIAL ACTIVITIES</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Group Meetings</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>					Worship & Study	Outside Groups	GCC Rehearsals	<b>SPECIAL ACTIVITIES</b>	Group Meetings	
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# UPCOMING CONCERTS

## THE SALTY DAWGS - FRIDAY - 7 PM - 4/14



An acoustic folk music group comprised of four vocalists/instrumental players. They play primarily folk music from the 50's and 60's – with an occasional Irish tune or original song thrown into the mix.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:** *Sign up in the Lobby!*

## WEST SIDE TREMBLE CLEFS - FRIDAY - 4 PM - 5/12

The Tremble Clefs provide music therapy for people with Parkinson's disease. This clinically beneficial program provides vocal and movement exercises and comfortable challenges in a shared supportive environment. Come and show your support.



Please make reservations online at **GCC-EPC.com**

*A \$10 donation per attendee is appreciated.*

PRAY FERVENTLY  
IN RIGHTEOUSNESS



AND AVAIL MUCH

JAMES 5:16B

## THE NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER ON THE FIRST THURSDAY OF MAY

**JOIN US ON MAY 4<sup>TH</sup> AT NOON  
FOR A SPECIAL SERVICE.**

More details coming soon.

NATIONAL  
DAY OF  
PRAYER



# Sharing & Caring

## SUPPORT GROUP

The Sharing and Caring  
support group will  
continue meeting  
on the 1st & 3rd Thursdays  
of the month at 10:30 a.m.

# GAME DAYS

Join us for fun and games on the  
**2nd & 4th Wednesdays  
of the Month @ 1PM**

Bring along your favorite  
games and snacks to share.

*The church will provide bottled water.*

We have recently had a new phone system installed at the church. When you call, please listen to all the menu options before making your selection. Please be patient with us as we learn the new system. *Thanks.*



## PRAYER CHAIN

Prayer requests can be submitted on our website at [gcc-epc.com/prayer-warriors](http://gcc-epc.com/prayer-warriors)

If you prefer, you can also directly contact Pastor Cliff ([pastorcliff@gcc-epc.com](mailto:pastorcliff@gcc-epc.com)), the church office ([grace@gcc-epc.com](mailto:grace@gcc-epc.com)), or your assigned deacon.

You can also sign up to be included in the prayer chain at the webpage listed above.



## THIS FACILITY IS EQUIPPED WITH A HEARING ASSISTANCE SYSTEM.

Please ask for a receiver at the soundbooth.

# APRIL

## BIRTHDAYS

Dorothy Gerych .....	4/3	Frances Lewis .....	4/25
Michael Gerych.....	4/3	Lennie Devine.....	4/27
Bob Baumann.....	4/9	Peter Cleveland .....	4/30
Carla Biermann .....	4/20		

## ANNIVERSARIES

Dick & Marie Rogeness.....4/16  
 Stephen & Penny Coffman.....4/24



Evangelical Presbyterian Church

**Rev. Cliff Mansley**  
 Pastor

16165 W. Mountain View Blvd.  
 Surprise, AZ 85374

Worship Service Time:  
 10:00 a.m.

Office Hours:  
 Monday - Friday  
 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Contact Information:  
 Phone: 623-975-9038  
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