

SALT, LIGHT, & POLITICS

Jesus calls His people to be different... dramatically different!

Different in what way? In Matthew 5:13 Jesus tells us, “*You are the salt of the earth...*” and then in verse 14, “*You are the light of the world...*”

That’s a pretty tall order to fill, but what does it mean to be salt and light?

On the one hand, salt was used in the Middle East to preserve meat to keep it from spoiling. As such, Christ followers are called to be preservatives of that which is good in the world from the inherent evils of fallen society.

On the other hand, salt was a scarce flavor enhancer and considered very valuable. Followers of Christ stand out as those who “enhance” the flavor of life in this world.

Christians, living under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in obedience to Christ, will inevitably influence the world for good, as salt has a positive influence on the flavor of the food it seasons. Where there is strife, we are to be peacemakers; where there is sorrow, we are to be ministers of Christ, binding up wounds, and where there is hatred, we are to exemplify the love of God

in Christ, returning good for evil (Luke 6:35).

In the analogy of “*light to the world*”, the good works of Christ’s followers are to shine for all to see. The presence of light in darkness is something that is unmistakable. In a similar way, the presence of Christians in the world must be like a light in the darkness, not only in the sense that the truth of God’s Word brings light to the darkened hearts of sinful man (John 1:1-10), but also in the sense that our good deeds must be evident for all to see... to the glory of our Father in heaven (v16).



Jesus warns us that salt should not lose its saltiness and that our light shouldn’t be hidden under a bushel basket. Otherwise, what good is it?

Allow me to be political for a moment. We don’t live in a country with Ceasar or a king. We live in a constitutional republic where each law-abiding citizen is given the right and the responsibility to vote. The privilege, in other words, to make a difference in how we are governed.

So, why is it that an estimated 20 million Christians

Article continued on next page →

in America don't vote? Laziness? Cynicism? Self-righteousness? Confusion?

Friends, one small, but very important way that we, as Christians, can make a huge difference is in how we vote. Why is that so important? Because who we vote for determines a lot of things... especially in a deeply divided culture.



As a country, we've learned that who we vote for largely determines if those who govern us will be honorable, respect the sanctity of life, our freedom of speech, our freedom of religion, the right to defend my life and my family, how the next Supreme Court Justices & Federal Judges will be selected, how the Constitution will be interpreted, how we'll be taxed and how those taxes are spent, whether we'll be at war or if peace is preserved, how the economy is influenced, how our laws will be upheld, how our police and firemen will be respected, whether our borders will be secure, our veterans will be

cared for, our freedoms honored, our history properly estimated and esteemed, our future secured and our nation blessed under the mighty hand of God.

So, when we vote this Fall dear friends, we do so as Christ-followers who seek to represent Him well as salt and light. In this world we never vote for a perfect person or law. Sometimes we have to discern between lesser choices. Even so, we always prayerfully do so under the perfect guidance of God's Holy Spirit and His Word.

On a broader note, we will be exploring how Christians might best engage our culture when it comes to a variety of issues. Keep your eyes open for upcoming films and forums concerning "Christ and Culture" which will challenge us to think more deeply about what it means to be salt and light in a world that desperately needs Jesus.

With Love in Christ,

STEEL GIRDERS



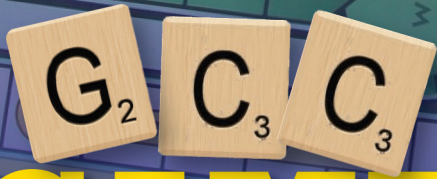
*for Mind
Builders*

Join Dr. Clement at 10 a.m. on Wednesdays

Ever wonder about questions like...

- Who really is God... why should I care about what He thinks?
- Why follow Jesus when there are so many religions to choose from?
- How's it all going to end... is there really a rapture?
- Does Jesus really save us from Hell and did Jesus really go there?
- Times have changed... isn't the LGBTQ movement okay?
- What's this business about demons?

If You Have Questions Like These... PLAN ON ATTENDING!!!



G₂ C₃ C₃

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.

Please Welcome our New Church Members

Bob Braun	David Grenrood
Janet Caputo	Julie Grenrood
John Caputo	Jim McNally
Pat Cavalcante	Kiki McNally
Judy DeLeeuw	Virginia Phillips
Randy DeLeeuw	Dee Warner



THE GOSPEL IN
Jonah

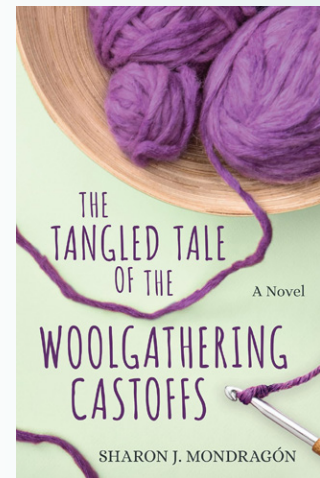
PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDY
TUESDAYS AT 11:00 AM
BEGINNING APRIL 9TH



Women's BOOK CLUB

The book for April is: *The Tangled Tale of Woolgathering Castoffs* by Sharon J. Mondragon.

Full of Sharon Mondragon's characteristic humor and heart, this book wrestles with the loneliness of being the forgotten spouse of a dementia patient, moving past the fear that the spouses often face into the love and compassion that can make all the difference.



**MEETING THURSDAY,
APRIL 11TH, 10:30 A.M.**

Sparkle Day

Volunteer to help us make the church sparkling clean.

Cleaning followed with lunch.



**WEDNESDAY,
APRIL 24TH,
9 AM - 12 PM**



SIGN UP IN THE LOBBY.

LIFE GROUPS

Here at Grace Community, we are organizing Life Groups who will meet together for fellowship and spiritual growth outside of Sunday Morning.

We want everyone to find community, not only because life is more fun when we are together, but because we know faith deepens in new ways when we are in relationship with others who are pursuing Jesus! We have five year-round groups that are already meeting.

Please share your interest in a Life Group by contacting Deb Schmitt, Life Group Coordinator, at debschmitt3@gmail.com or 360-871-0851 (call or text).

Deb will contact you to get the details needed to connect you with a Life Group.



MEN'S BREAKFAST

AT GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH

The Men of Grace Community Church will be holding an on-site Men's Breakfast on April 1st at 8 a.m. Our men's cooking team is excited to prepare pancakes, bacon (thick-cut!), sausage, coffee, juice and more!

APRIL 1ST - 8:00 AM - GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH

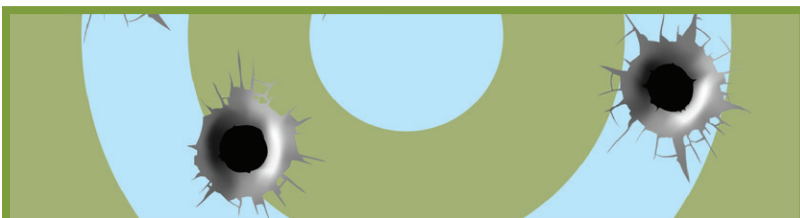


Victor Schaefer will be interred at the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona on Monday, April 8th, at 2 p.m. Pastor Cliff will hold a brief service graveside.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY PASSAGE FOR APRIL

1 CORINTHIANS 1:18

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.



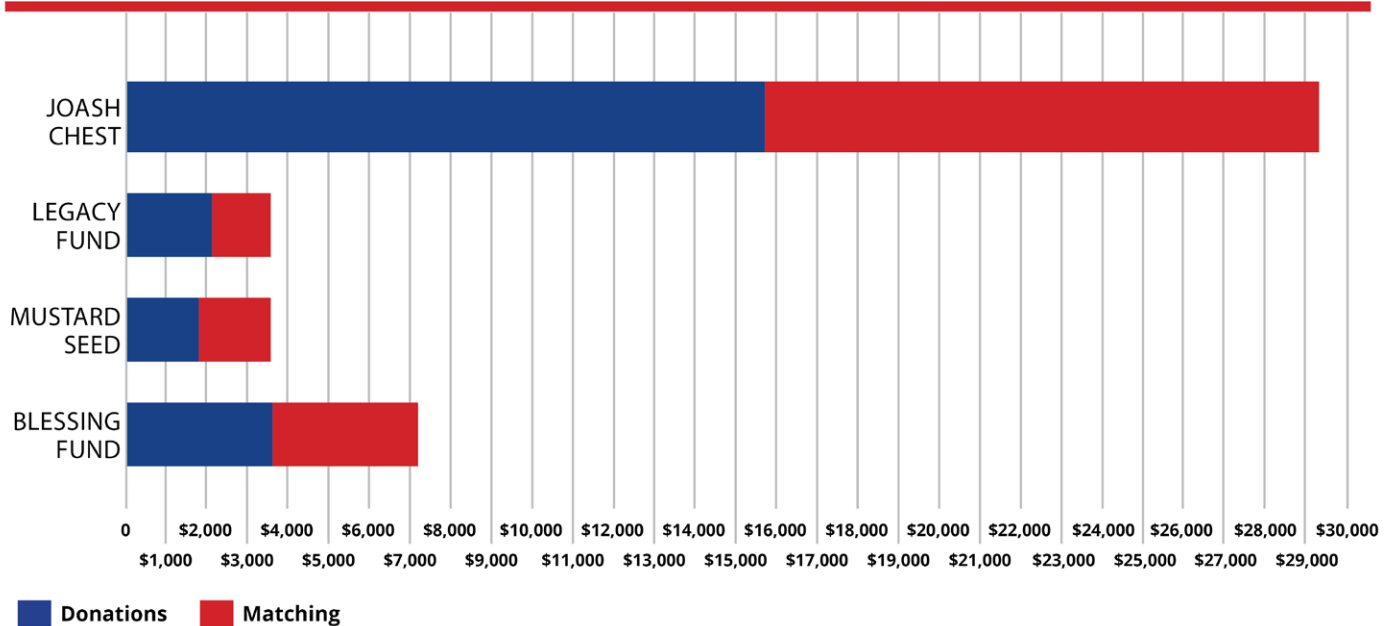
SHARPSHOOTERS CLUB

The club meets every month on the 3rd Friday in the church parking lot at 9:15 a.m. Then they carpool to the range at 9:30 a.m. **April 19th is the next trip.**

Shooters will need hearing and eye protection, paper targets, ammunition, a pistol and or rifle. Please bring \$10 (cash) for range charges. We ask that you watch the following safety video <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=W2Vrc2R1oGU> if you haven't already.



ABOVE & BEYOND



LEAVING FOR THE SUMMER?

Because we love you and want to keep in touch, would you please fill in one of our Summer Contact Information forms if you are leaving for the season. The forms can be found in the lobby.

Let us know the dates you generally expect to be out of town and when you hope to return. You may also want to provide us with any prayer requests and other relevant information for your church family at Grace.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

SUNDAYS AT 8:30 A.M.



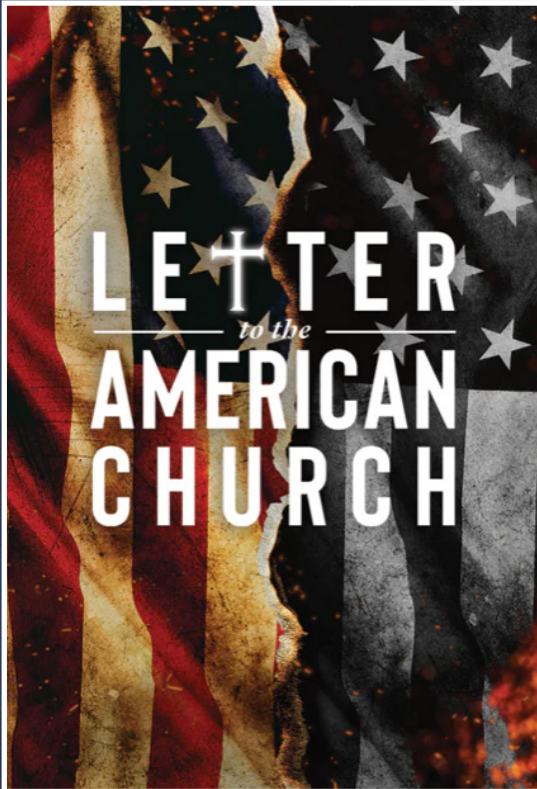
Come and join the group on Sunday mornings for study.

The group will continue the study, ***Power-Full: A Journey through the Book of Acts*** by Louie Giglio through April 14th.

The last two Sundays of the month will feature studies by Alistar Begg, ***He Won't Back Down*** & ***The Human Face of God***.

APRIL 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Men's Breakfast at Grace 8:00 AM Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM Worship Meeting 11:00 AM	2 Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM Trail Life 6:00 PM	3 Dr. Clement Class 10:00 AM Parkinson Support Group 3:00-4:30 PM	4 Bell Choir 1:00 PM Swing Kings Rehearsal 2:30 - 4:30 PM	5 TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM	6
7 Sunday School 8:30 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM Communion Book Give Away After Service	8 Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM Worship Meeting 11:00 AM Vic Schaefer Interment at Nat'l Cemetery 2:00 PM	9 Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM Trail Life 6:00 PM	10 Dr. Clement Class 10:00 AM Game Day 1:00 PM	11 Choir Rehearsal 9:00 -11:00 AM Women's Book Club 10:30 AM Bell Choir 1:00 PM Deacon's Meeting 2:00 PM	12 TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM Finance Meeting 10:00 AM	13
14 Sunday School 8:30 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM	15 Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM Worship Meeting 11:00 AM	16 Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM Trail Life 6:00 PM	17 Dr. Clement Class 10:00 AM Session Meeting 1:30 PM	18 Choir Rehearsal 9:00 -11:00 AM Bell Choir 1:00 PM MOVIE SCREENING <i>LETTER TO THE AMERICAN CHURCH</i> 2:15 PM	19 TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM Sharpshooters 9:00 AM BLACK RIVER JAM CONCERT 7:00 PM	20 TEA PARTY & STYLE SHOW 11:30 AM
21 Sunday School 8:30 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM	22 Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM Worship Meeting 11:00 AM	23 Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM Trail Life 6:00 PM	24 Dr. Clement Class 10:00 AM Sparkle Day Clean Up 9:00 AM- NOON Game Day 1:00 PM	25	26 TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM	27
28 Sunday School 8:30 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM	29 Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM	30 Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM	LEGEND Worship & Study Group Meetings SPECIAL ACTIVITIES GCC Rehearsals Other Groups			



APRIL 18TH - 2:15 PM

JOIN US FOR A SCREENING OF **LETTER TO THE AMERICAN CHURCH**

From the film's website... A film adaptation of the best-selling book, "Letter to the American Church" written by Eric Metaxas.

The film lays out the parallels between early 1930's Nazi Germany and other totalitarian regimes with what is happening in America today and how the church has been mostly silent facing this evil.

Eric and several leading conservative voices of today, explain how cultural Marxism has taken over America, including the church.

This film is a wake-up call to the church to stand up and speak out against the evil that is manifesting in our country.

Our cast gives practical examples on how to take action and turn our country back to freedom, liberty, and ultimately, God Himself.

HOW I TALK TO GOD

by Kelly Belmonte

Coffee in one hand
leaning in to share, listen:
How I talk to God.

"Papa, you're special."
Three-year-old touches my cheek.
How God talks to me.

Rash, impetuous
chatter, followed by silence;
How I talk to God.

Infinite connects
with finite, without words:
How God talks to me.

How I Talk to God by Kelly Belmonte from *The Word in the Wilderness - A Poem for Lent and Easter* by Malcolm Guite published by Canterbury Press.

book
give
away
April 7th



Our church will be giving away books from our library (duplicates, etc.) on Sunday, April 7th after the service.

A table will be set up in front of the church.

We only ask that whatever books you take, you do not bring them back. ☺

PRAYER MEETING

JOIN US IN THE PRAYER ROOM

EVERY TUESDAY
AT 9:45 AM

Worship Bulletin & Newsletter Deadlines

If you would like to submit information for the weekly worship bulletin (for events, meetings, etc.) please send an email to the church office (grace@gcc-epc.com) with the information on **Monday of the bulletin week.**

Also, personal notes such as thank you messages, etc. will now be placed in the monthly newsletter rather than in the weekly worship bulletins.

Please submit any newsletter information to the office by the 20th day of the month prior to the publication month. For example, by April 20th for the May newsletter.

Thank you for your assistance.

BLACK RIVER JAM

IN CONCERT FRIDAY, APRIL 16TH, AT 7:00 PM



Black River Jam is a group of friends that play Old Time Music, in Phoenix Arizona. They play a range of acoustic instruments, including fiddle, banjo, guitar, harmonica, accordion, upright bass, Irish whistle, ukulele, banjolele, rhythm bones, bodhran, and washboard.

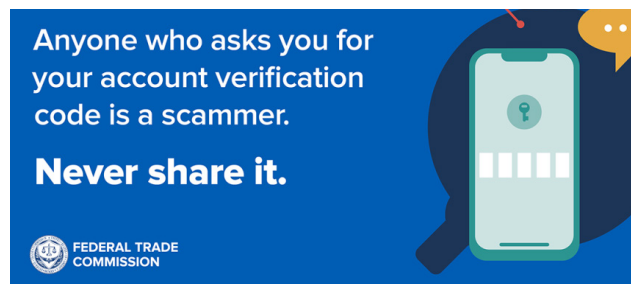
For more information (including a preview video),
go to GCC-EPC.com/black-river-jam

WHAT'S A VERIFICATION CODE AND WHY WOULD SOMEONE ASK ME FOR IT?

By Alvaro Puig, Consumer Education Specialist

When you log into your bank or credit card account, you might get a text message or email with a verification code. You then enter it at the login screen to confirm it's really you. That's a form of two-factor authentication that adds a layer of security to your account — and keeps would-be scammers and hackers out.

Your account password and a verification code work together, like the lock on your doorknob and a deadbolt lock. If you unlock the doorknob but not the deadbolt, you can't get in. Likewise, if you know the account password but not the verification code, you can't get in.



The same goes for scammers trying to get into your account. To break into your account, scammers need both keys. That's why they try to trick you into sharing your verification code.

Scammers pretend to be someone you can trust, and say they've discovered a problem with one of your accounts — or that someone's using your identity. They may know some things about you and sound very convincing. They may even be very sympathetic to your problem: offering to help you set things right ... and then asking for your verification code to get into your account.

If you give them the code, they can log into your account and transfer all the money out of your savings or investment accounts.

Never give your verification code to someone else. It's only for you to log into your account. Anyone who asks you for your account verification code is a scammer.

If someone asks you for your verification code, don't engage. Hang up. Block their number. Stop texting them. Then report them to the FTC at ReportFraud.ftc.gov.

If you're worried there's a problem with your account, contact your bank, credit union, or investment advisor directly. Use a number you trust, like the one on your statement or in your app. Never use the number the caller gave you; it'll take you to the scammer.

Article from: <https://consumer.ftc.gov/consumer-alerts/2024/03/whats-verification-code-and-why-would-someone-ask-me-it>

GIFT CARD SCAM

There is a scam going around that has affected many churches, including ours. A scammer will send an email or a text claiming to be the pastor or a member of the church staff. They will then ask for gift cards to be purchased and the activation codes to be sent to them.

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.**



Tea Party & Style Show

Join us for high tea featuring a style show. Live music will be provided by a talented local harpist. Please sign up in the lobby by April 7th.

*April 20, 2024
11:30 a.m.*



AT GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH

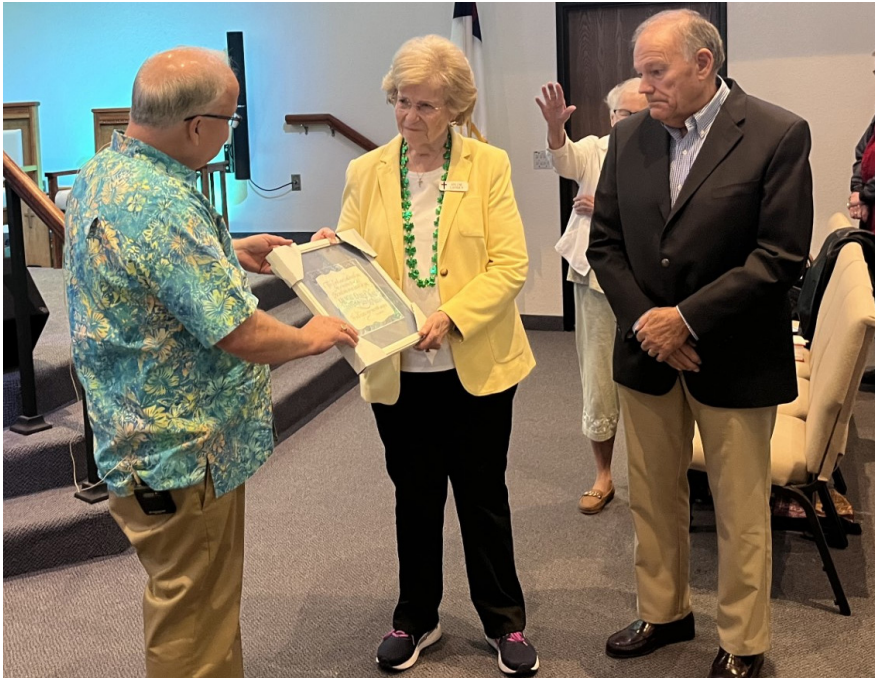
**NATIONAL
DAY OF
PRAYER**



**LIFT UP
THE WORD
LIGHT UP
THE WORLD**

2 Samuel 22:29-31

**JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL
SERVICE AT NOON ON
THURSDAY,
MAY 2, 2024**



Our church wished a fond farewell to Arlene Larimer and Gary Wahlert on Sunday, March 17th. Pastor Cliff presented them with a parting gift during the service.



PRAYER CHAIN

Prayer requests can be submitted on our website at gcc-epc.com/prayer-warriors

If you prefer, you can also directly contact Pastor Cliff (pastorcliff@gcc-epc.com), the church office (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.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Dorothy Gerych	4/3
Michael Gerych.....	4/3
Bill Roeder	4/7
Frances Schaefer	4/7
Bob Baumann.....	4/9
Carla Biermann	4/20
Pat Cavalcante.....	4/25
Frances Lewis	4/25
Lennie Devine	4/27
Peter Cleveland.....	4/30

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

Dick & Marie Rogeness.....	4/16
Dr. K. & Sathya Clement	4/18
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. - 3:00 p.m.

Contact Information:
Phone: 623-975-9038
Fax: 623-537-5565

Website Address:
gcc-epc.com

E-mail Address:
grace@gcc-epc.com