

I LOVE YOU AMERICA!

Happy Birthday, America. Today you're 247 years old. I've known you for almost a quarter of your life, so I know you well. You've always been my home. And I love you!

I've been all over the world, but I've always come home to you. There's so much I admire about you. Your energy, your creativity, your entrepreneurial spirit. You invented the blues, jazz, and rock 'n' roll.

You've led the world for most of a century in science and technology. You even put a man on the moon! You came up with the idea of preserving vast tracts of your natural beauty through the genius of National Parks.

You've given us great artists like Walt Whitman, Harper Lee, and Bob Dylan. You provided refuge for great thinkers like Albert Einstein, Hannah Arendt, and Abraham Joshua Heschel.

You opened your door to millions of immigrants from around the world — the poor looking for nothing more than safe haven and a new opportunity. Indeed, you're at your best when you live up to the lofty ideals of Lady Liberty.

*Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

What causes my heart to soar when I think of you sweet land of liberty are your godly foundations. Even before you were discovered Christopher Columbus penned these words:

"I was led of the Holy Spirit to carry the message of the Gospel to undiscovered lands."

This is what the Pilgrims wrote in the Mayflower Compact about why they came to your shores in 1620:

"In the name of God, amen. Having undertaken for the glory of God and for the advancement of the Christian faith, do solemnly and mutually in the presence of God, covenant and combine ourselves together."

Twenty-three years later, as more and more people settled in New England, the Puritans formed The New England Confederation. This is in their Constitution:

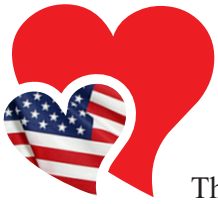
"Whereas we all came into these parts with one and the same end and aim, namely, to advance the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to enjoy the liberties of the gospel in purity and peace."

As each state organized itself, the founders' commitment to the Gospel is evident in the documents drafted:

The defining purpose of the colony is clear in The Delaware Charter: "To further propagate the Holy Gospel."

continued →





The Virginia Charter: *“Propagate the Christian religion to such people who yet live in ignorance of the true knowledge and worship of God.”*

The Rhode Island Compact: *“We submit our persons, lives, and estates unto our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.”*

At the signing of your Declaration of Independence, Benjamin Franklin said:

“Gentlemen, if it is true that not one single petal from any flower falls to the ground without escaping God’s attention, will the distress of this nation go unheeded? Let us therefore determine to seek His face.”

You know what happened after he said that? Every one of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence took a knee. Not to protest police, but to pray and seek the wisdom of God.

It is this same Congress that formed the American Bible Society. Immediately after creating the Declaration of Independence, the Continental Congress voted to purchase 20,000 copies of the Scripture for the people of this nation.

This is what your first President, George Washington, wrote in his Personal Prayer Book:

“Oh, eternal and everlasting God, direct my thoughts, words and work. Wash away my sins in the immaculate blood of the lamb and purge my heart by the Holy Spirit. Bless, O Lord, the whole race of mankind and let the world be filled with the knowledge of thy son, Jesus Christ.”

The 6th President of the United States, John Quincy Adams, spoke these words in 1821:

“From the time of the Declaration of Independence, the American people were bound by the laws of God and the laws of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which they all acknowledge as the root of their conduct. We all came together to obey the word of God.”

By the way, Adams was also the chairman of the American Bible Society.

Patrick Henry: *“It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded not by religionists but by Christians, not on religion, but on*

the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

The framers of our nation got the idea of the three branches of government from Isaiah 33:22:

*“For the LORD is our judge, (Judicial branch)
the LORD is our lawgiver, (Legislative branch)
the LORD is our king; (Executive branch)
it is He who will save us.”*

In 1782, the United States Congress voted this resolution: *“The Congress of the United States recommends and approves the Holy Bible for use in all schools.”*

Look at the role pastors played in your early days America:

A pastor, Frances Bellemy, wrote the *“Pledge of Allegiance.”*

Another pastor, Samuel Smith wrote the Hymn *“My Country ‘Tis of Thee.”*

John Leland, yet another pastor, wrote the introduction of the first Amendment to your Constitution.

Most of America’s College Presidents were preachers of the Gospel. 106 of the first 108 colleges were started on the Christian faith.

Harvard College, named after John Harvard, a Christian minister, was founded in 1636 with this statement being its Original Rule:

“Let every student be plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well, the main end of his life and studies, is to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life, and therefore to lay Christ...as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning.”

Yale was established in 1701 *“for the...religious education of suitable youth...to propagate in this wilderness, the blessed reformed Protestant religion....”*

Princeton was started with its first President Rev. Jonathan Dickinson declaring, *“cursed be all that learning that is contrary to the cross of Christ.”*

The *New England Primer* was America’s first schoolbook. The Lord’s Prayer was on its cover. The alphabet was taught in theological verse:

1. *“In Adam’s fall we sinned all.”*
2. *“It’s Heaven to find, the Bible’s mind.”*



3. "Christ crucified for sinners died."

Who can deny the Christian influence of your founding America? To say anything other than that we are "One Nation Under God," is to be grossly ignorant, or willfully revisionist.

Oh sure, not every one of your founders was an orthodox Christian, but they did acknowledge that God was the Supreme Ruler over man and his government. And not just any old god, it was the freedom to worship the Lord Jesus Christ.

What an awesome foundation with which you have

been blessed America! As the glorious old song says, "God mend thine every flaw!"

Today, we give thanks for you America... for your incomparable foundations, for your extraordinary accomplishments, and for Almighty God under whom we truly flourish. May we, in every way, return our hearts to His heart that we would once again shine brightly with the love and light of Christ. Amen.

Blessings and Love,



FINANCE TEAM CORNER

	2023 YTD Actual	2023 YTD Budget	Difference	%
Unrestricted Contributions	176,342.00	159,280.00	17,062.00	10.71%
Total Operating Expenses	147,831.41	144,341.34	3,490.07	2.42%
Capital Improvement Expenditures	16,482.07	0.00	16,482.07	
Total Expenditures	164,313.48	144,341.34	19,972.14	13.84%

Actual Unrestricted Contributions are much higher than the budget. This is good news!

We wish to thank you for your kind generosity.

As you can see, we have spent more than the budget for actual Operating Expenditures. Not so Good!

We have also spent almost \$16,500 on Capital Improvements. These items are not included in our Operating Expenses.

We have purchased the following Capital Improvements that are not included in the Operations Budget:

Rock for the Front Landscape Bed on Mountain View Blvd. (with the Sign (approx 1/3 acre)	2,114.16
Shelves for Storage	867.91
1 New Air Conditioner	13,500.00
	<hr/>
	16,482.07

Look for our next update in the August Newsletter.

- The Finance Team

A BAPTISM AT GRACE COMMUNITY

Sandy Case who wanted to publicly declare her commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior was baptised on June 25th, 2023.

Here is her testimony:

My life before knowing Jesus as my Savior was one of never being affiliated with a church, but believing in God as the creator of all living things on earth, following The Ten Commandments exposed to his teachings through Bible Camp and I thought I felt his presence, but then on my return home, I ignored Him and my everyday life went on.

Three months after my husband's passing in 2019, I began thinking about attending a church. I thought about the churches in Sun City Grand and this church came to mind. I drove here and wrote down the name and time of the service. The following Sunday, upon entering Grace Community Church, I had such a warm and comforting feeling come over me. It was an emotional experience, but I found the people very caring and I now continue to attend "our" church.

Because of the love that I feel at Grace Community Church, Pastor Cliff's informative weekly sermons and my continued learning of the teachings of Jesus Christ, I can now say that I accept Jesus Christ as my Savior.

Sandra Case






WATCH OUT FOR SCAMS

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

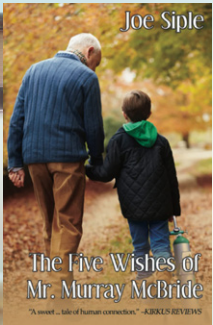
PLEASE KNOW THIS...

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.



Women's

BOOK CLUB



Joe Siple

The Five Wishes of Mr. Murray McBride
by Joe Siple

The group will be reading *The Five Wishes of Mr. Murray McBride* by Joe Siple. The group will meet on Thursday, July 13th at 10:30 am.



WHY READ THE BIBLE?

It Teaches You How to Pray

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

He said to them, "When you pray, say:

*"Father, hallowed be Your name,
Your kingdom come.*

Give us each day our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins,

for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.

And lead us not into temptation." (Luke 11:1-4, NIV)

The gospels are packed with recollections of Jesus praying. He prayed in basically any situation at any time of the day about anything He wanted to talk with God about. His followers, who were called His disciples, saw Him praying all the time. You should also learn to pray like this. The Lord's Prayer, quoted above, is a great template to follow when learning to pray. Try praying this prayer yourself and bringing your requests to God.

JULY 2023

JULY 2023											
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY					
						1					
2 Worship Service 10:00 AM Communion	3 Men's Breakfast at Richi's Diner 8:00 AM	4 4th of July <i>(office closed)</i>	5 Parkinson Support Group 3:00-4:30 PM	6	7 TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM	8					
9 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	12 Game Day 1:00 PM	13 Women's Book Club 10:30 AM	14 TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM	15					
16 Worship Service 10:00 AM	17 Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study & Potluck 9:30 AM	18 Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM	19	20	21 TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM Finance Meeting 10:00 AM	22					
23 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	26 Game Day 1:00 PM	27	28 TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM	29					
30 Worship Service 10:00 AM	31 Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">LEGEND</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="background-color: #709238; color: white; padding: 2px;">Worship & Study</td> <td style="background-color: #FFC080; padding: 2px;">Group Meetings</td> <td rowspan="2" style="background-color: #709238; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;">SPECIAL ACTIVITIES</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #A0A0A0; padding: 2px;">GCC Rehearsals</td> <td style="background-color: #ADD8E6; padding: 2px;">Outside Groups</td> </tr> </table> </div>					Worship & Study	Group Meetings	SPECIAL ACTIVITIES	GCC Rehearsals	Outside Groups
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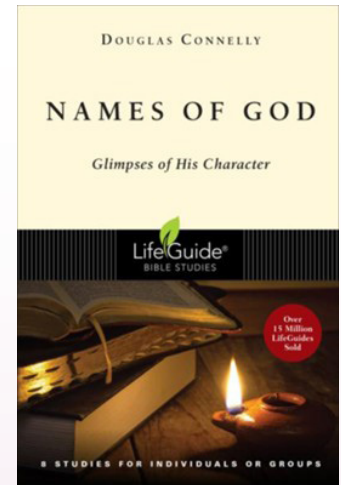
LADIES BIBLE STUDY

The Ladies Bible Study will begin a new study on July 17th.

Names of God - Glimpses of His Character, by Douglas Connelly

“For most of us, our names simply identify us. However, in the Bible, God’s names and titles are windows into his character. This study will explore the key “names of God” revealed in the Bible. Each study is designed to give you a clearer understanding of who God is and draw you closer to God in worship and devotion and trust.”

One Supreme Being - God Most High - God’s Personal Name
The God Who Provides - The LORD Almighty - Holy, Holy God
The God of Glory - The Sovereign God



Book cost: \$10.00

TUESDAY MORNING

— PRAYER GROUP —

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

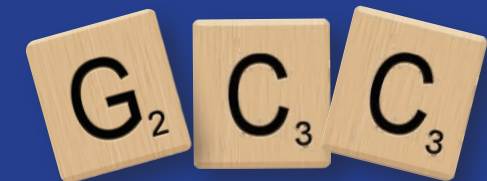
MEN'S BREAKFAST

Richi's Diner



JULY 3RD - 8 AM

Continuing through
the Summer



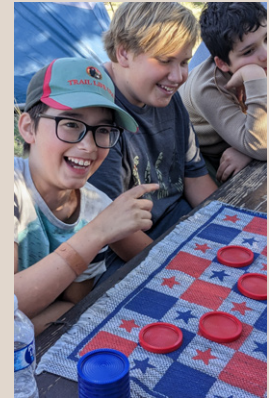
GAME DAYS

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

Bring along your favorite
games and snacks to share.

TRAIL LIFE UPDATES

TRAIL LIFE TROOP AZ #0001



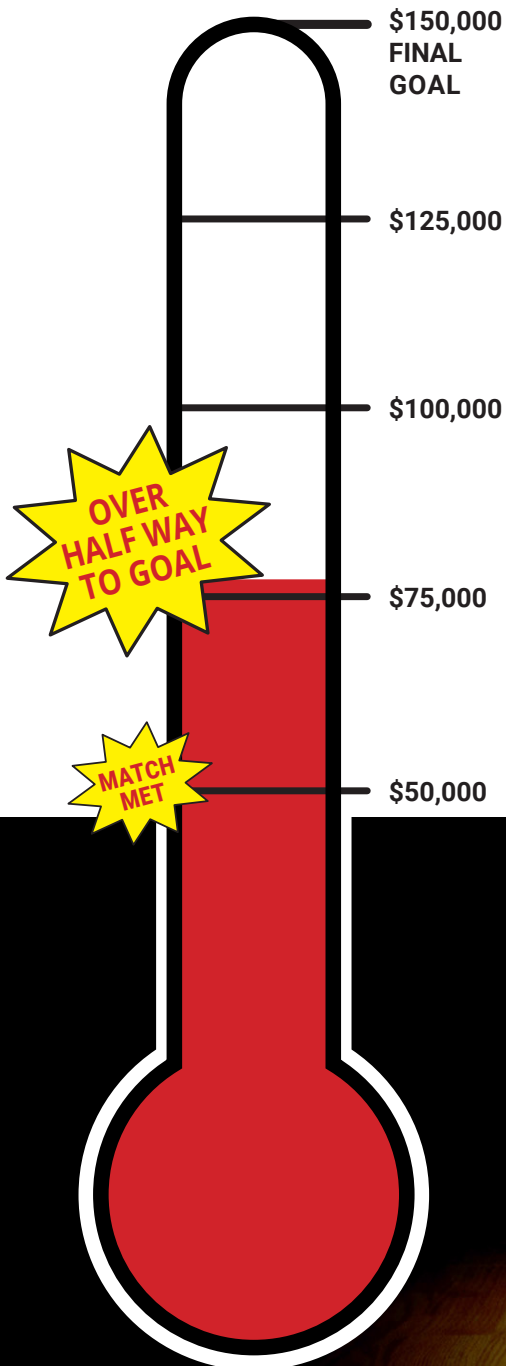
TRAIL LIFE CAMPOREE

Our very own Trail Life Arizona Troop One joined five other Trail Life troops from our area for our first camporee ever! It was held in the Coconino National Forest and included well over a hundred boys and dads. The boys experienced some extraordinary hiking scenery, worked on camping skills, and enjoyed songs, stories and marshmallows around the fire. Pastor Cliff said that the fathers who attended the troop committee meeting couldn't stop talking about it. "They kept sharing stories for an entire hour after the meeting... I guess that's a good thing!"



Trail Life USA is a Christ-centered ministry designed to build faith, character and skill as boys grow into Godly men.

THE JOASH CHEST UPDATE



The Joash Chest Fund has past the halfway point! Hurray!!

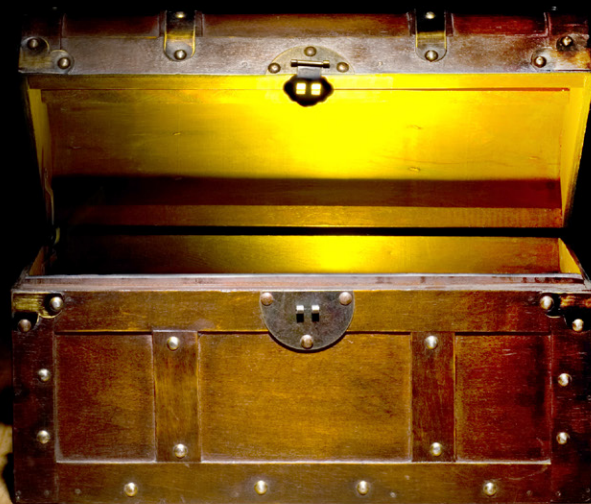
Thank you for the generous support that you have given to this important fund.

This means that it won't be long before we begin roof repairs. The remaining funds will help us to begin upgrades on our deteriorating lighting and sound system.

We have already replaced our broken sound board. Hopefully, we will be able to move quickly to finish the rest of the project.

JOASH CHEST FUNDS AS OF 06/30/2023

Total Funds Received	\$76,255.06
YTD Spending	(5,289.00)
Available Funds	\$70,996.06





SPARE TOOLS NEEDED

Do you have any spare tools, nails, screws, or other handy items that might be useful around the church? We would be delighted to receive any tools which you may no longer need.

Please see Steve Paetz or Pastor Cliff about any donations you may like to make.



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.

JULY CELEBRATIONS



BIRTHDAYS

Ken Ready..... 7/2
 Mark Brown..... 7/7
 Gwen Keinath 7/8
 Gary Treller..... 7/11
 Jan Kallberg 7/19
 Sandy Theis..... 7/24
 Richard Martin..... 7/24
 Barbara Brown..... 7/25
 Nancy Wilmeth 7/27

ANNIVERSARIES

Bob & Virginia Spencer 7/9
 David & Tammy Gordon... 7/15
 Kim & Jeanette Hixson 7/26
 Bob & Bobbi Alexander... 7/31



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
 Fax: 623-537-5565

Website Address:
gcc-epc.com

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