

ENTHRONING THE GOD WE LOVE

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

- PSALM 103:1

I remember hearing those words of the psalmist over and over again in my college fellowship group. I didn't get it. How could I bless the Lord of Creation? He made it all. Isn't He the one who picks up the check so to speak? He's the Host, the Master, the Provider and the blessing. It seems kinda silly that we would bless Him.

But the psalmist is emphatic that we are to bless the Lord from our very soul with all that is within us. Besides, it's Lent and doesn't that mean we should be walking around in proverbial sackcloth and ashes with a spirit of repentance? Is it not the season for blessing the Lord.

The truth is, it's always the season for blessing the Lord. Look at the words that follow in Psalm 103: *"And forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's."*

Meditate on those verses for a moment. This describes just a few of the benefits the Lord bestows on His children. Lent is indeed a season where we very intentionally focus on the theme of repentance (and yes, we should always be repentant). The point is, genuine remorse for our sins should direct us to the

only One who is able to deal with our sinful selves... the One who as the Psalmist would, forgives us, heals us, redeems us, crowns us with love and mercy, satisfies us and renews us.

Okay, but that still doesn't answer the question of *how* we can bless the Lord.

Actually, humbly recognizing our sinfulness and our total dependence on the grace of God is the first step toward genuinely blessing the Lord. There is no way in the world that God is honored by anything less.

Allow me to pause and ask a quirky question, if you were the King of the Universe, on what kind of a throne would you sit? Obviously, you could

make it out of anything... diamonds, starlight, angel hair... But what does the God who has everything truly prize as so valuable that he would make His throne out of it?

David prays in Psalm 22:3 *"Yet, you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel."* Another translation says that He *"inhabits"* the praises of His people. In other words, He takes up residence as Ruler in a throne room echoing with our worship. Out of all that exists in the universe God chose to build



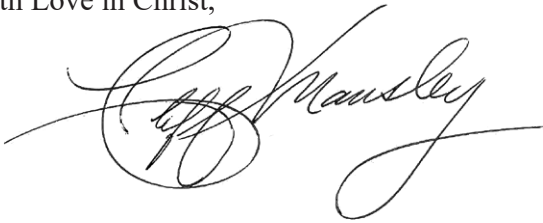
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His throne out of the blessings of His people. He sits upon our praises as He rules the universe.

As we move through the season of Lent... a season of repentance... reflect on the truth that repentance moves us away from a sinful lifestyle and toward a God who cherishes the affection of our hearts as more precious than anything. Every time we pray, every time we praise, every time we worship or we witness to His glorious name we are enthroning our God with blessings!

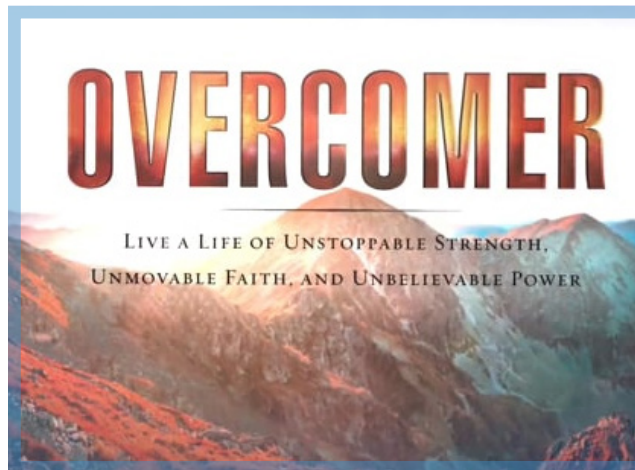
With Love in Christ,



THE GOSPEL IN GENESIS

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

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



SUNDAY MORNING SMALL GROUP

In March, the group will be viewing & discussing the *Overcomer* series by David Jeremiah. Ways to live a life of unstoppable strength, unmovable faith, and unbelievable power.

SUNDAYS AT 8:30 A.M.

Women's Ministry

Baby Shower

All ladies are invited to join us **FRIDAY, MARCH 3RD, AT 11:30 A.M.** for our Women's Ministry Baby Shower. Bring along an unwrapped Shower Gift for Choices Pregnancy Centers.

The shower will be a salad & dessert potluck.

Grace Community Church has recently joined the True Charity initiative. For more information on their program, please visit their website at www.truecharity.us



TRUE CHARITY NETWORK

Learn. Connect. Influence.

BASEBALL ANYONE?

Our church is putting together a group to go to a ball game.

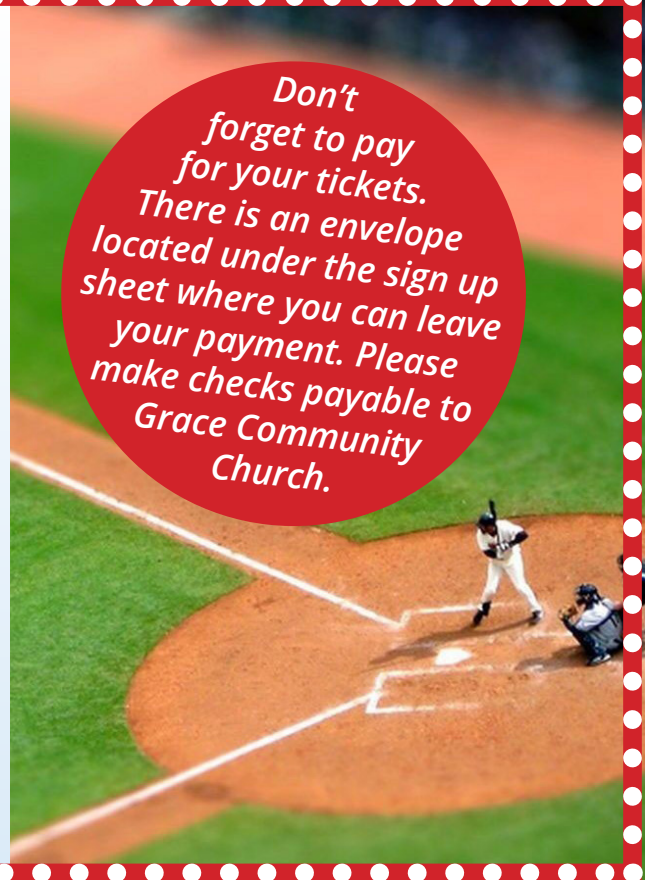
SATURDAY, 3/18 AT 1:05 PM

Colorado Rockies vs.
Kansas City Royals

\$40 EACH - LEGENDS DECK

Includes lunch & beverage from Boston Market.

SIGN UP IN THE LOBBY!



Don't forget to pay for your tickets. There is an envelope located under the sign up sheet where you can leave your payment. Please make checks payable to Grace Community Church.

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Richi's Diner

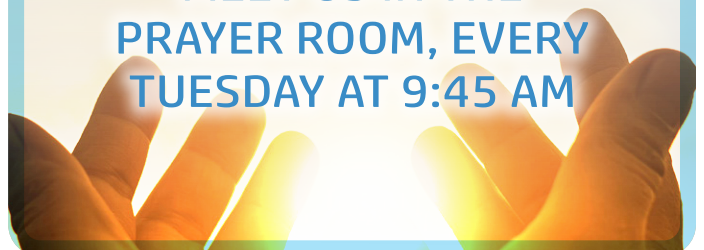


MARCH 6TH - 8 AM

TUESDAY MORNING

— PRAYER GROUP —

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



minute for

MISSIONS



It is our hope and prayer that each of us is able to share our God given talents in the service of our fellow man.

CHOICES PREGNANCY CENTER

Margo Treller, GCC Liaison

Please contact Choices Center or see Margo Treller, Liaison for more information and continued updates on the center and its successes. Praise God for His Blessings - Christ in us for the Love to our neighbors.

TRAIL LIFE USA, ARIZONA TROOP 0001

Tim Tunnell, GCC Liaison

For additional information on how you can support Trail Life and our Troop, please contact Tim Tunnell, Collin Stewart or Pastor Cliff.

MERCY IN ACTION INTERNATIONAL

Bill Lewis, GCC Liaison

This is the work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We can't be there, but we can support this worthwhile ministry.

PHOENIX RESCUE MISSION

Bob Alexander, GCC Liaison

CROSSROADS PRISON MINISTRIES

Roy Herman, GCC Liaison

The Mission Committee is looking into participating in a hands-on ministry that connects

prisoners with mentors in a Christ-Centered relationships.

The heart of Crossroads is connecting people inside prison with mentors on the outside. We connect people in prison, who are often lonely and in need of encouragement, with caring volunteer mentors who write them letters packed with hope and love. We are committed to creating life-changing Bible study material for people in prison. As mentors review their students' lessons, they find that their lives change too.

After completing the first level of Crossroads Bible study courses, students are connected one-on-one with a mentor who guides them through their studies. As the student and mentor exchange letters, they develop a close relationship that transforms both of them.

This mentorship program is utilized by ministry leaders in more than twenty countries. They provide these leaders with resources, training and support as they bring the Gospel to prison cells around the world.

"I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me....Truly I tell you, whatever you did to the least of these bothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Mathew 25:36, 40

For additional information please contact Roy Herman, GCC Liaison.

EPCWO
WORLD OUTREACH

We received a newsletter from our EPC Missionaries, the Adamsons. Printed copies are available in the Missions Publications stand in the lobby.

A TRAIL LIFE FIRST!!!

Our very own Trail Life Troop One of Grace Community Church went to Lake Pleasant for it's very first camping trip ever! Using equipment and tents that they earned, our older boys enjoyed a day of kayaking and endured a night of stormy weather. A fun time was had by all!

At the same time, our younger boys held a "Camp In" with their dads. Pitching their tents in the sanctuary (no stakes needed) the boys had a blast roasting hotdogs, singing songs, telling stories, talking about scriptures and playing games. What a wonderful ministry we have at Grace Community for boys!



THE JOASH CHEST

We encourage you to make a gift to the Joash Chest Fund which will ensure that our ministry facilities are well maintained and upgraded. Please pray about how God would lead you in generous giving.



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

**Actual
Unrestricted
Contributions
1/1/23 - 2/28/23:**
\$70,293

**Budgeted
Unrestricted
Contributions
1/1/23 - 2/28/23:**
\$59,301

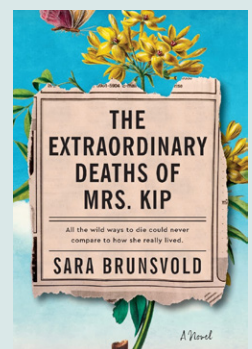
Joash Chest Fund:
\$62,840

Sincerely, Patti French, Treasurer



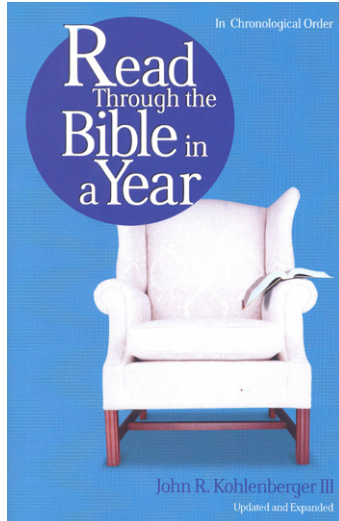
Women's BOOK CLUB

The next Women's Book Club meeting will be held Thursday, March 9, at 10:30 a.m. They will be discussing *The Extraordinary Deaths of Mrs. Kip* by Sara Brunsvold



SINGING THE LEVITICUS BLUES

Some of us have been singing the “Leviticus Blues” lately. As we read through the Bible this year, it’s easy to get bogged down in when you start reading the third book of the Bible known as Leviticus.



Leviticus can be some very heavy reading, BUT DON'T GIVE UP! This book is very important to our understanding of the Old Testament sacrificial system. And understanding the sacrificial system is absolutely necessary to our understanding of Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

Leviticus is one of the most referenced books in the New Testament and by the time you reach the Book of Hebrews you'll be looking back to Leviticus frequently.

Leviticus isn't always easy to understand. We don't always know the exact details of why and how some sacrifices were made. Even so, the more we understand Leviticus the more we'll begin to understand the gravity of Christ's sacrifice for us.

Keep in mind that the pivotal verse in Leviticus is 19:2 which says, “You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.” That verse opens up a

whole other set of questions, but simply put, we can only be holy through faith in a holy and righteous God revealed to us in the person of Jesus Christ.

So, while Leviticus may at times be laborious, be encouraged, your efforts in reading this book and other challenging books of the Old Testament will be ultimately beneficial to your understanding of Jesus Christ and the Bible. Remember, that the entirety of the Bible... every word, every verse, is designed to point to Jesus. So read on dear friends!

DEACON CARE GROUPS

You may or may not know it, but you have most likely been assigned a Deacon. Each of our Deacons have a portion of people who are members or regular attenders of Grace Community.

The purpose of the Care Groups is three-fold: **1)** to help you when you have specific needs... spiritually, physically, emotionally; **2)** to help the pastor with an awareness of the needs of a growing congregation, and; **3)** to help others to know how to best pray for and encourage you.

Pastor Cliff has asked the Deacons to try to communicate with you at least once a month, in person or by phone. Please don't be surprised or taken aback by their forthrightness in speaking with you.

You are welcome to say anything to your Deacon, but make sure that you be very careful to specify if something is confidential or should be shared with the pastor.



BEAUTIFUL NEW SANCTUARY FURNITURE

Perhaps you've noticed that there are two lovely hand-made book tables located between the chairs at the front of the sanctuary. These are two very generous creations of Mark Brown who responded to a plea from the pastor to have a place for his Bible, hymnal and other materials used in worship. *Many, many thanks Mark!*



Celebrating Community **FESTIVAL & EXPO**

A Community Building Program of Your Chamber of Commerce

**FREE
ADMISSION**

FOOD, FUN & MUSIC

Home & Landscape
Health & Wellness
Services & Resources
Community Connections

**FREE Food Samples
& Vendor Giveaways**

We need a few volunteers to work at the expo booth for GCC. We need two or three volunteers for each shift. There is a sign-up sheet in the lobby. Come help us support & promote our church.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SURPRISE, AZ

MARCH 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY					
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">LEGEND</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="background-color: #c6e0b4; padding: 2px;">Worship & Study</td> <td style="background-color: #fce4d6; padding: 2px;">Group Meetings</td> <td rowspan="2" style="background-color: #c6e0b4; text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;">SPECIAL ACTIVITIES</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #e1bee7; padding: 2px;">GCC Rehearsals</td> <td style="background-color: #bbdefb; padding: 2px;">Other Groups</td> </tr> </table> </div>			Worship & Study	Group Meetings	SPECIAL ACTIVITIES	GCC Rehearsals	Other Groups	1	2	3	4
			Worship & Study	Group Meetings		SPECIAL ACTIVITIES					
GCC Rehearsals	Other Groups										
			Parkinson Support Group 3:00-4:30 PM	Worship Rehearsal 9:00 -11:00 AM Bell Choir 1:00 PM	TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM CHOICES BABY SHOWER 11:30 AM	Trail Life/ Heritage Girls					
5	6	7	8	9	10	11					
Small Group 8:30 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM Communion New Member's Class 4:00 PM	Men's Breakfast at Richi's Diner 8:00 AM Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM	Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM Trail Life 6:00 PM	Missions Team Meeting 10:00 AM Game Day 1:00 PM	Worship Rehearsal 9:00 -11:00 AM Sharing & Caring 10:30 AM Women's Book Club 10:30 AM Bell Choir 1:00 PM Deacon's Meeting 2:00 PM	TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM						
12	13	14	15	16	17	18					
Small Group 8:30 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM New Member's Class 4:00 PM	Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM	Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM Trail Life 6:00 PM	Session Meeting 1:30 PM	Worship Rehearsal 9:00 -11:00 AM W & M Meeting 11:00 AM Bell Choir 1:00 PM	TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM Finance Team 10:00 AM WEST VALLEY SINGERS 4:00 PM	SPRING TRAINING BASEBALL GAME 1:00 PM <i>at Surprise Stadium</i>					
19	20	21	22	23	24	25					
Small Group 8:30 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM New Member's Class 4:00 PM	Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM	Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM Trail Life 6:00 PM	SURPRISE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE EVENT 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM Game Day 1:00 PM	Worship Rehearsal 9:00 -11:00 AM Bell Choir 1:00 PM Sharing & Caring 10:30 AM	TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM						
26	27	28	29	30	31						
Small Group 8:30 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM Presenting New Members	Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM	Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM Trail Life 6:00 PM		Worship Rehearsal 9:00 -11:00 AM Bell Choir 1:00 PM	TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM						

UPCOMING CONCERTS

WEST VALLEY SINGERS - FRIDAY - 4 PM - 3/17

The West Valley Singers are a 20-25 member vocal ensemble that is part of a non-profit performing arts organization based in Surprise. In addition to choral music, members of the West Valley Singers also perform instrumental music, plus vocal solos, duets, trios, and quartets.



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.

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.



UPDATE:

Together our church collected 85 bottles filled with coins, cash and checks for Choices Pregnancy Centers.

SAVE THE DATE

Continental Breakfast
with Guest Speaker
April 15th @ 10 a.m.

.....

National Day of Prayer
May 4th @ Noon

More details coming soon...

Sharing & Caring

SUPPORT GROUP

IMPORTANT SCHEDULE CHANGE:

The group will meet at
**10:30 a.m. on the 2nd & 4th
Thursdays during March.**



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.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

If you didn't get your picture taken for our Photo Directory, it's not too late. You can email a picture of yourself to grace@gcc-epc.com or you can stop by the office Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. to have a picture taken.



THIS FACILITY IS EQUIPPED WITH A HEARING ASSISTANCE SYSTEM.

Please ask for a receiver at the soundbooth.



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.

MARCH

BIRTHDAYS

- Jeanette Hixson 3/2
- Bob Spencer 3/2
- Vicki Tupker..... 3/3
- Bob Kallberg 3/10
- Shirley Fuhrmark 3/11
- Kim Hixson..... 3/14
- Deborah Schmitt 3/19
- Kathy Battiste..... 3/22
- Ned Davis..... 3/24
- Betty Paulsen 3/26
- Suzanne Urwiller 3/31

ANNIVERSARIES

- Dick & Altha Sleeman 3/7
- Merv & Ava Olson 3/8
- Michele & Eural Southerland ... 3/29



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