

A LASTING LEGACY

One of the sweetest, most generous men I've ever met was a guy named Leo. Leo was one of the custodians at my middle school in New Jersey. Somewhere in his mid-sixties he was short, quiet and unassuming.

Leo had a reputation for always helping the kids who forgot their lunch money or didn't have any money for lunch. Sometimes, if Leo trusted you, he might look at you with a twinkle in his eye and suggest that you help out someone else in need.

This was strange thinking for most of the boys I hung out with. We were used to pinching our nickels and dimes to buy a candy bar or a milk shake. But for some odd reason we didn't want to let Leo down and we kind of liked being generous with the kids he pointed out to us.

One day, Leo directed my attention to a new girl and said, *"I haven't seen her eat lunch in a week."* Then, without giving me a choice, he tapped her on the shoulder and said something like, *"Cliff wants to buy you lunch today."*

Well, I must have blushed a thousand shades of red because that girl was pretty cute. And for the rest of the year, I shared lunch with Jenny. I guess that was a sweet little gift that Leo shared with me.

At the beginning of eighth grade we saw Leo less and less. Pretty soon we were told that Leo was very ill with cancer. We didn't know much about that sort of thing, but it sounded awful.

We wrote get-well cards, sent flowers, and earnestly prayed for Leo to get better. It didn't happen.



Midway through eighth grade Leo went home to be with the Lord. But when he departed this mortal coil he left something very important behind.

It was reported in the newspaper that Leo left his entire estate to his church. That included a little house located on the wrong side of the tracks. It also included over \$500,000... a staggering

sum of money for a custodian to leave behind in 1975.

The pastor of the church was quoted in the paper saying something like, *"Leo loved Jesus, loved his neighbors and he loved the church. He was the kind of cheerful giver the Lord loves."* I know this because the clipping is in my middle school scrapbook.

My folks didn't know Leo except through my stories. Even so, they buzzed with excitement over *"Leo's legacy."* I didn't know what that word meant.

My father explained that a legacy is what a person leaves behind to bless others when they are gone. He said that the first blessing of Leo's legacy was being generous with my fellow students. The second blessing of his legacy was teaching us boys to be generous with others. And the third blessing of his legacy was his generosity towards his church.

Dad explained that the money Leo left for his church would help them carry out a ministry that would change people's lives. He said, *"One day you'll meet people in heaven who are there because Leo was generous."* I never forgot that.

Friends, what we give in the cause of Christ can make an eternal difference in the lives of hundreds, if not thousands of people.

continued →

St Paul once said in 2 Corinthians 9:6-7, “*whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*”

Jane and I have learned to love to give generously. It isn't merely out of a sense of duty, but out of a passion for what we see Christ doing in and through His people right here at Grace Community Church. We don't need to thump our chests or trumpet what we give. God knows all about the amount and that's all that matters.

Ultimately, Jane and I look at our giving as a sacred act of worship to honor the Lord.

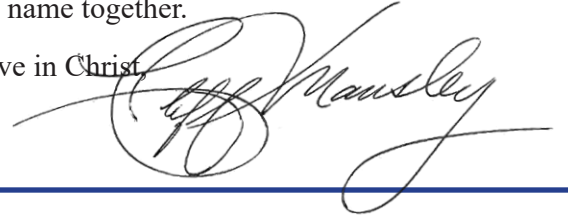
There are a multitude of good causes in this world we

could support, but there is no greater God-glorifying cause on the face of the earth to us than the cause of Christ... that His light and love goes forth, the good news is proclaimed, lives are changed, and the Church is blessed.

This is the lasting legacy Leo wanted to build. It's the same lasting legacy that every Christ-follower should pursue as we seek to bless the Kingdom of God on earth.

Beloved, Christ made us His ultimate cause... let us make Him our ultimate cause as we generously honor His holy name together.

With Love in Christ



Thank You GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH!

We are wonderstruck with your loving welcome on Sunday the 3rd September!

Philoxenos is biblical Greek for hospitality which literally means love for strangers. You have just exemplified the biblical truth. We know some of you from our earlier visits, but most of you are new. May the good Lord bless all of you!

As I said on that Sunday, you made us feel as if we are members of the Grace Community family. We hope that Pastor Cliff and Elders will take us as members!

You have taken your existential love to a different level when you showered your blessings on us in the name of House Warming. We are very grateful to your love and affection.

We are reminded of the passage in Philippians 4:19, “*And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.*”

Sincerely, Clement and Sathya

INTRODUCING TWO NEW CLASSES WITH DR. CLEMENT

PRACTICES OF THE PRAYING HEART

How the Prayers of the Bible Shape our
Relationship with God

Sunday Mornings at 8:30 a.m.
in the Prayer Room

BEGINS SUNDAY OCTOBER 1ST

DECISIVE ISSUES FACING CHRISTIANS TODAY

How Christians Make Sense
of a World Upside Down

Wed. Mornings at 10:00 a.m.
in the Fellowship Area

BEGINS WED. OCTOBER 4TH



FINANCE TEAM CORNER

2023 YTD Actuals

Beginning Balance Checking Beginning 1/1/2023	14,497.10
Unrestricted Donations Received through 09/26/2023	272,967.40
Transfers From Other Bank Accounts	4,500.00
Payments through 09/26/2023	(271,147.04)
Capital Improvement Expenditures	(16,482.07)
<hr/>	
Current Available Funds - AM Trust Checking	4,335.39
September Expenses not Paid	(7,500.00)
Negative Cash	(3,164.61)

We wish to thank you for your continued generosity.

Just a note - August and September Unrestricted Contributions are below the budget.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

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

WATCH OUT FOR SCAMS

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.



TIS' THE SEASON

Here in Arizona it's the season for many activities to begin again as we welcome back friends and neighbors from cooler climates following a long, hot summer.

The NFL is in full swing, (the Cardinals won a home game, woo hoo), the Arizona Fall League begins play on October 2nd, community bands and choruses are rehearsing again, and here at Grace, Bible Studies, life groups, and music programs are starting up.

The Women's Bible Study continues to meet every Monday from 9:30-11:00. We are finishing a series on the "Names of God" this month with a potluck brunch on the 9th. We will begin an eight lesson series titled ***Waiting for God*** by Juanita Ryan on October 16th. *"We spend much of our life waiting. For healing for ourselves or a friend. For a wayward daughter to return to God. For a new job. For marriage and children and grandchildren. Sometimes the waiting can cause us to feel stuck, or forgotten by God. But waiting time is not wasted time."*

There are two music groups that will begin rehearsing on Thursday October 5th. The Vocal Choir meets from 9:00-10:30 a.m. in the choir room. The Handbell Choir meets in the Sanctuary from 1:00-2:00 p.m. Come and join us to sing and/or ring. Even if you've never rung a handbell we have a slot for you.

The vocal choir will be singing a few familiar pieces like *"All the Glory Belongs to Jesus"* and *"More of You,"* as well as helping introduce some new modern hymns to the entire congregation, namely, *"Great is Thy Faithfulness (Beginning to End)"* by One Sonic Society and *"Christ the True and Better"* written by Matt Boswell, Keith Getty

and Matt Papa. (look for links below or look them up on Youtube).

I have planned four songs for the Handbell Choir to enhance our worship experience this Fall and Advent season. The first two, *"Sing A New Song to the Lord"* and *"The Lord's My Shepherd"* will include the vocal choir and/or piano.

It is such a blessing to have Ruth Lee and Tammy Gordon joining us with their lovely flutes. You can expect to hear more from them soon. We are still on the lookout for someone willing to play the Lowrey organ in worship. It can be in addition to the piano accompaniment, or as a periodic special offering. Anyone interested in beating on a conga or cajon? We have 3 instruments ready to be played. What about guitar, bass, harp, trumpet, violin, etc. I would love to plan music to include you in our worship.

And speaking of instruments, the 2023-2024 Concert Series is set. I will be looking for volunteers soon to help with ushering, hospitality, parking, and set-up/breakdown. The concert schedule is printed on the next page.

Take one of our concert brochures from the lobby and share it with friends and neighbors.

Here are the links I mentioned:

Great Is Thy Faithfulness (Beginning to End) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=82IsquVCptU>

Christ the True & Better - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBkoMxglh2o>

Have a blessed autumn, enjoy the cooler days and evenings, and share the love of the LORD with all you meet.

Michele Southerland

2023-2024 CONCERT SERIES

November 17, 2023, 7 PM – AZ SWING KINGS

December 8, 2023, 4 PM – PARK PLACE BRASS

January 12, 2024, 7 PM – GOLD RUSH

February 9, 2024, 4 PM – GUITARS ON FIRE, *Gal Drimmer*

March 8, 2024, 4 PM – WOMEN IN SONG

April 19, 2024, 7 PM – BLACK RIVER JAM

Sign-Up Online at GCC-EPC.com/events



MEN'S BREAKFAST

Biscuits Café



OCTOBER 2ND - 8 AM

TUESDAY MORNING

— PRAYER GROUP —

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

**NEW
MEMBERS
CLASS**

SIGN UP NOW!

New Members/Inquirers Classes
will begin October 15th.

Everyone needs to be part of a spiritual family. Grace
Community Church is a great place to call home!

The classes will meet at 4 PM at
the church on the following Sundays:

October 15th, 22nd, 29th & November 5th, 12th

**IF INTERESTED IN JOINING OUR CHURCH
SIGN UP IN THE LOBBY TODAY!**



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.



Sparkle Day THANKS!

Many thanks to everyone who helped make our church sparkling clean this past month. What a wonderful blessing! At least thirty people helped to deep clean the kitchen, the sanctuary, and the windows. We cleaned up trash and metal objects left from the roofers along with several other projects necessary for tidying up the exterior of our building. Folks had a lot of fun working together and eating pizza. The whole building looks fantastic! Again, thank you pitching in. Truly, many hands made for light work!



WHY READ THE BIBLE?

It Shows Us God's Will

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — His good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:2)

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Do you ever wonder, "What does God want to do in my life? How do I know which path to follow?" There are a lot of Bible verses that mention God's will, but these two give you a broad and specific answer. Broadly, work on transforming your thought life to align with God's thoughts. How? By reading God's Word. More specifically, live in joy, pray always and radiate gratitude for the blessings in your life. This will also lead you into God's will.

OCTOBER 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sunday Class with Dr. Clement 8:30 AM	Men's Breakfast at Biscuits Cafe 8:00 AM	Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM	Dr. Clement Class 10:00 AM	Choir Rehearsal 9:00 - 11:00 AM	TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM	
Worship Service 10:00 AM Communion	Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM	Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM	Parkinson Support Group 3:00-4:30 PM	Sharing & Caring 10:30 AM		
	Worship Meeting 11:00 AM	Trail Life 6:00 PM		Bell Choir 1:00 PM		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Sunday Class with Dr. Clement 8:30 AM	Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM	Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM	Dr. Clement Class 10:00 AM	Choir Rehearsal 9:00 - 11:00 AM	TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM	
Worship Service 10:00 AM	Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM	Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM	Game Day 1:00 PM	Women's Book Club 10:30 AM	Nominations Committee 10:00 AM	
Operation Christmas Child Begins	Worship Meeting 11:00 AM	Trail Life 6:00 PM		Bell Choir 1:00 PM		
				Deacon's Meeting 2:00 PM		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Sunday Class with Dr. Clement 8:30 AM	Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM	Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM	Dr. Clement Class 10:00 AM	Choir Rehearsal 9:00 - 11:00 AM	TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM	TRAIL LIFE BBQ FUNDRAISER 11 AM - 2 PM
Worship Service 10:00 AM	Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM	Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM	Session Meeting 1:30 PM	Sharing & Caring 10:30 AM	Sharpshooters 9:30 AM	
New Member's Class - 4:00 PM Pastor Appreciation Day	Worship Meeting 11:00 AM	Trail Life 6:00 PM		Bell Choir 1:00 PM	Finance Team 10:00 AM	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Sunday Class with Dr. Clement 8:30 AM	Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM	Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM	Dr. Clement Class 10:00 AM	Choir Rehearsal 9:00 - 11:00 AM	TOPS Meeting 8 AM - 10 AM	
Worship Service 10:00 AM	Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM	Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM	Game Day 1:00 PM	Bell Choir 1:00 PM		
New Member's Class 4:00 PM	Worship Meeting 11:00 AM					
29	30	31	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">LEGEND</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="background-color: #d9ead3; padding: 5px;">Worship & Study</div> <div style="background-color: #fce4d6; padding: 5px;">Group Meetings</div> <div style="background-color: #d9ead3; padding: 5px;">SPECIAL ACTIVITIES</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #d9ead3; padding: 5px;">GCC Rehearsals</div> <div style="background-color: #d9ead3; padding: 5px;">Other Groups</div> </div> </div>			
Sunday Class with Dr. Clement 8:30 AM	Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM	Prayer Gathering 9:45 AM				
Worship Service 10:00 AM	Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM	Pastor's Bible Study 11:00 AM				
New Member's Class 4:00 PM						

LIFE GROUPS

Here at Grace Community, we are organizing Life Groups that 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!

Groups will begin meeting this Fall in October. Please share your interest in a Life Group by signing up on the clipboard at church or 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 leader.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

COOL WATER

We need people who are willing to pick up water from Costco or Sam's Club on a regular basis. Currently, our overworked staff is lugging all of the water in and it's getting difficult to keep up. Please see Patti French if you are able to help.

SANDWICH BOARD SIGN

We need a volunteer who will put our sandwich board service time sign out every Friday and bring it in immediately after worship on Sunday. There is a sign up sheet in the lobby if you would like to sign up for a week or two of helping with the sign.

THE GOSPEL IN GENESIS

FINDING FAITH & HOPE IN A FALLEN WORLD

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

HAVE YOU BEEN BAPTISED?

"We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life." – Romans 6:4

Have you placed your faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? The Bible tells us that every one of us must make a decision as to whom we will follow... either Jesus Christ or the world, the flesh and the devil. If you've made the decision to follow Jesus then we're taught that we must be baptized as an outward sign of Christ's inward work of grace. Please take time to visit with Pastor Cliff if you haven't yet taken the very important step of being baptized.

Sharing & Caring

SUPPORT GROUP

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



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD BOXES WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PICKUP ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8TH IN THE LOBBY.

For suggestions on what to pack in your shoebox,
visit [www.samaritanspurse.org/
operation-christmas-child/
what-goes-in-my-shoebox-suggestions](http://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/what-goes-in-my-shoebox-suggestions)

**The boxes need to be returned
to the church by Sunday, Nov. 12th.**

ARIZONA'S GRAND CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS



Our church is putting together an excursion to go see the *Celebration of Christmas* holiday show at Dream City Church in December. We have purchased 50 tickets and will be chartering a bus to take everyone to the performance.

Sign-ups will begin Sunday, October 1st. A sign-up sheet will be available in the lobby.

Step into the world of Christmas wonder at the *Celebration of Christmas*, a special holiday experience for all generations. Get ready to be captivated by a Broadway-style performance featuring live animals, a full orchestra, a live nativity scene, and aerial acrobatic stunts that will leave you in awe.

**THURSDAY
DEC. 14th**

\$45 per
person

Be at church by 5:45 PM

**Sign-ups Begin
Sun., October 1st**

Price includes ticket
for show plus cost of
transportation.



Our church will be putting together some gatherings for small groups of six. This will help our congregation, especially new attendees, get better acquainted.

Several volunteers will be arranging these upcoming social gatherings.

Stay tuned for more information...

JOASH CHEST FUND UPDATE

WOW!!! You did an amazing job helping to raise funds for our very first Joash Chest Fund drive. Thank you very much!

By God's grace, we were able to raise enough money to repair the roof (\$39,600)*, replace the power inverters for our solar panels (\$5,600), replace the sound board in the sanctuary (\$5,300) and upgrade our deteriorating lighting system (still in progress, \$25,000).

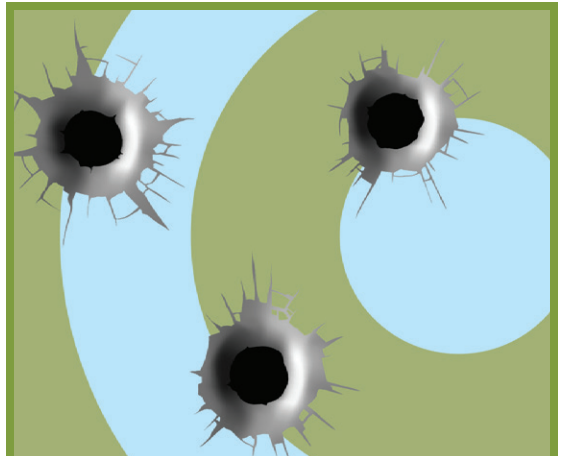
All told, our first effort raised \$80,455. Praise the Lord!

Good news... we are still accepting gifts for the Joash Fund. Your gifts will specifically be used for emergency repairs or replacements for our facilities. For instance, we currently have eight of our twelve air conditioning units that have never been replaced over the past twenty years. Replacing them costs about \$15,500 each!

Our hope is to build up our reserves to make relevant upgrades to our facilities, if and when, they present themselves.

Will we ever raise Joash Chest funds for special projects in the future? Sure, we will, but for now all funds will go into a specially designed reserve account to ensure the long-term care of our facility.

**The front half of the roof was replaced after consultation with several roofers. The back half of the roof is in good condition for the time being. By God's grace we saved more than we initially expected.*



SHARP SHOOTERS CLUB UPDATE

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.

October 20th 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.



BARBECUE FUNDRAISER

TRAIL LIFE TROOP 0001

FOOD • FELLOWSHIP • FUN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21st, 11AM-2PM

TRI-TIP • BBQ CHICKEN
PASTA SALAD
BAKED BEANS • DESSERT

TICKETS ARE \$10 EACH
& WILL BE AVAILABLE
AFTER CHURCH.

PAY WITH CASH, CHECK OR
CREDIT CARD (ONLINE ONLY).

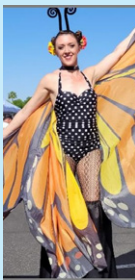
Checks must be made out to
Grace Community Church
(Please put Trail Life BBQ on memo line.)
Online payments can be made at
www.GCC-EPC.com/traillife



Trail Life®

Celebrating Community FESTIVAL & EXPO

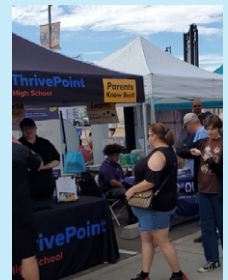
A Community Building Program of Your Chamber of Commerce



FOOD, FUN & MUSIC

Home & Landscape
Health & Wellness
Services & Resources

FREE Food Samples
& Vendor Giveaways




Hosted at Grace Community Church

FREE
ADMISSION

WEDNESDAY
NOVEMBER 8
9 AM - 1 PM

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.

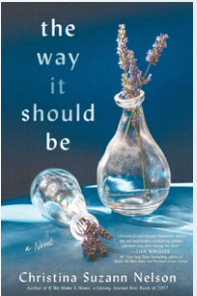



Women's

BOOK CLUB

The Women's Book Club will meet on Thursday, October 12th, at 10:30 a.m.

The book for October is *The Way It Should Be* by Christina Suzann Nelson.

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.



OCTOBER

BIRTHDAYS

Kim DeFevre..... 10/4	Marilyn Koop..... 10/8
Margo Treller 10/5	Nancy Savold..... 10/15
Betti Pflipsen 10/6	Doug Ashburn 10/20
Bobbi Alexander 10/7	Bill Lewis..... 10/20
Elaine Delfosse 10/8	Eural Southerland.... 10/26
Donna Kane 10/8	

ANNIVERSARIES

Richard & Suzanne Urwiller..... 10/5

Joe & Karen Osowiec..... 10/16

Aaron & Lillian Gill..... 10/28



GRACE
COMMUNITY CHURCH
*Passion for Christ
Compassion for People*

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