

Grace grams

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF GRACE IN THE DESERT
JANUARY 2021

Join us for a Message Series and Bible Study – “The God Questions”

Whether we are new to the Christian faith or life-long members of the Family of God, there are questions we strive to answer ... join us as we delve into these questions over a six-week message series and Bible study

Everyone has questions about God, the Bible, and life...right? And it's ok to ask them!

Starting January 3, 2021, at 10:00 a.m., we are beginning a new series and Bible study called “The God Questions” that will explore answers to these topics:

Week 1: Is God real?

Week 2: Is the Bible true?

Week 3: Do all roads lead to heaven?

Week 4: If God is so good, why is there bad?

Week 5: Which is right: creation or evolution?

Week 6: What will heaven be like?

This is the perfect opportunity to invite your friends, family, neighbors and coworkers to join you and grow deeper in their faith, or perhaps encounter God for the first time. This series will also help equip you to help others with their questions!

SERVICE TIME IS CHANGING

Effective January 10, we will be changing our service time to 9:00 a.m. Arizona time. Our worship format will be the same ... just an hour earlier.



Church Events

Jan 3 at 10:00 a.m. -- Worship
Epiphany
“Is God Real?”

Jan 5 at 6:30 p.m. -- Bible Study
“Is God Real?”

Jan 10 at 9:00 a.m. -- Worship
“Is the Bible True?”

Jan 12 at 6:30 p.m. -- Bible Study
“Is the Bible True?”

Jan 17 at 9:00 a.m. -- Worship
T-Shirt Sunday
“Do All Roads Lead to Heaven?”

Jan 19 at 6:30 p.m. -- Bible Study
“Do All Roads Lead to Heaven?”

Jan 24 at 9:00 a.m. -- Worship
“How Can a Good God Allow Suffering?”

Jan 26 at 6:30 p.m. -- Bible Study
“How Can a Good God Allow Suffering?”

Jan 31 at 9:00 a.m. -- Worship
“Which is Right – Evolution or Creation?”

HAPPY AND BLESSED NEW YEAR!

God is amazing ... we just need to look around us at His Creation to know that He is imaginative and creative – and that He loves us so much to give us such beauty in our lives. This year that is ending is one that we will never forget – and not for all the right reasons ... or has there been good in the world this year – how has God blessed us even in the midst of a pandemic? Well, how many of you are closer to family and friends than you were at this time last year? How many of you have made new friendships from

those who were acquaintances because of the communication you have had over these last crazy months? How many of you have a greater appreciation for all that you have instead of focusing on what you don't have? How many of you have grown closer to God because of the journey you have been traveling this year?

Yes, 2020 has been a crazy year – one that we won't soon forget – but let's remember that even in the craziness, God is always with us, journeying with us, holding us and loving us and granting us Grace and Peace – no matter the circumstances. ☺



Pastor Ceri's Corner

First of all, please allow me to wish you a most Happy and Blessed New Year! As was noted above, we are probably all happy to see 2020 in the rearview mirror. ☺ But as I contemplate the ending of one year and the beginning of another, as I think of the loss and the lost opportunities due to COVID and other circumstances, I have to wonder how long it will take us to learn whatever it is God wants us to learn from this crazy time.

It is my humble opinion that He wants us to learn to love and cherish each other, just as He does. I believe that He wants us to honor and respect each other, even if we don't agree politically or in our faith. We are all God's creations, after all, and He made us different/diverse – not to cause division, but to savor those differences and the uniqueness that is each of us. I wonder when we will learn that we can do so much more united than we can divided. I wonder if God sees us as He did the Israelites – as a stiff-necked and stubborn people who had turned their backs on Him and His ways – who worshipped other gods. We may not think we do that, but when money, and politics, and fame, and any one of a

number of other things become more important to us than the Unity that God intends for us, when they are more important than loving as He loves us ... then we are idolators, as well.

My prayer as we start a new year is that we will find common ground – the common ground of Jesus – and not worry so much about what we don't agree on, but on how we can show the One we do agree on to the world.

Remember in the Old Testament when God disciplined the Israelites with plagues and no rain from the heavens and even exile and defeat by those armies who were stronger and mightier than they. Seems to me that we are in the midst of a plague right now – and Arizona is experiencing a drought that came on very suddenly. Our political and racial discord is taking us to division that we have not seen in decades. Where will it end?

My prayer is that it will end with us realizing that God is in control and that when we, like the Israelites of Old, turn back to Him and live in His ways and His Truth and His Love, then we will see things get better pretty quickly.

God Bless you all as you enter into this new journey called 2021. May we all learn, again, to Love as He Loves us and walk in His Ways. Love you all ... Pastor Ceri ☺