

Rooster Tales



Vol. 20 No. 11

December 2019



Upcoming Walk Weekends

Please consider sponsoring for the following upcoming Walks:

Men's Walk #254, February 6 - 9, 2020

***Go forth date: December 13 - extended**

Phoenix Christian Preparatory School, Phoenix
Don Campbell, Lay Director

Women's Walk #255, February 13 - 16, 2020

***Go forth date: December 13**

Phoenix Christian Preparatory School, Phoenix
Kathi Upham, Lay Director

Men's Walk #256, March 5 - 8, 2020

***Go forth date: January 5**

Sierra Vista UMC, Sierra Vista
Ron Pitt, Lay Director

Women's Walk #257, March 12 - 15, 2020

***Go forth date: January 12**

Sierra Vista UMC, Sierra Vista
April Tucker, Lay Director

***We must have at least 20 pilgrims by this date**

Gathering Schedule

Flagstaff Area: TBD

January 11, 2020 - More info to come!

5:00pm potluck with worship to follow.

Joe & Barb Meehan's contact is 928-607-0738

Phoenix Area:

West Side Gathering at Spirit of Hope UMC

January 2020 - 14403 N 75th Ave, Peoria

More info to come!

Nancy Oyler's contact is 480-558-6717

Wickenburg at First Presbyterian Church

January 17, 2020 - 180 N Adams St.

6pm potluck refreshments with a service at 6:30pm.

Deb Berner's contact is 515-865-4870.

East Side Gathering / Christmas Fellowship

December 13 - Please RSVP to Pastor Mel

Munchinsky by Dec.11 at 480-266-0468 or

miloslaymunchinsky@gmail.com. Mel has

offered his home for this special gathering,

bring a treat to share and get ready to sing carols! 6:30-8pm.

Tracy Thompson's contact is 623-221-2852.

Tucson Area: St. Mark's UMC

January 18, 2020 - 1431 W Magee Rd., Tucson

4pm Potluck followed by Worship at 5:30pm.

There will also be a training scheduled before the gathering at 2:30pm, more info to come.

Charlie Edwards' contact is 520-576-3494 or cmedwards4873@yahoo.com

De Colores!

DECEMBER

A Note from the Community Spiritual Director

The Blanket

Most of us have seen the Christmas TV show each year, it's become a tradition, "A Charlie Brown Christmas." We laugh at Charlie's attempts to be "in" and the acceptance of Pig Pen and Snoopy just seems to be above the confusion and craziness.

But there is a moment in the program that speaks volumes about our faith and our struggles in faith. All the children are participating in a Christmas pageant at school. During the program, Linus takes center stage. Linus, this character with so much wisdom in the comic strip, yet so filled with insecurity so he carries that ubiquitous blue blanket and sucks his thumb. There on stage he begins reciting the Christmas story from Luke 2:8-14. When he utters the words of the angel, "fear not," Linus drops the blanket symbolizing the separation of his fears and insecurity in the presence of God. The birth of Jesus separates us from our fears and Linus is able to drop the false security of his blanket. It's a powerful moment in the story, but it's not the end of the story.

At the end of his monologue and to our astonishment, Linus picks up the blanket again. What happened after boldly proclaiming we no longer need to fear? But, Linus walks off stage with the blanket in his hand. What is your blanket? Yes, we all have one, it just might take a different form, a pet, special object, alcohol, overindulgence in food, or escaping through reading, there's always a security blanket somewhere.

Oh, we have those moments of unshakeable faith and conviction when scripture comes alive and we experience God's presence and for a time, even if it's only moments, we no longer need that blanket. Whether out of habit or need, we reach out and pick that thing up again. Faith, while powerful, is also very delicate.

We know the truth and like Linus, we proclaim it and the wisdom and passion is there. But soon, there we are again, looking in the mirror and there around your shoulders is that tattered old blue blanket – again. We've become so used to it we hardly notice it there. It's back. Our insecurity, our fears, our doubts.

As the show comes to a close, the children are gathered outside around one of those "Charlie Brown Christmas Trees" and just one red ball hangs on it. In the background the tune to "O Christmas Tree" is playing but suddenly everything changes. Linus kneels down and places his blanket as a tree skirt. It is the last time he touches it and the music shifts to "Hark the Herald Angels Sing, Glory to the Newborn King." The moment has changed into an impromptu worship. Now the tree is fully decorated, full of growth and beautiful in transformation from the disfigured, ugly, barely-alive twig.

Like Linus and the gang, we can speak truth and hear truth and that's all well and good. In this moment as they sing and share, a place of worship, they "respond" to that truth, perhaps much like the shepherds who were instructed to "fear not" on that very first Christmas Eve. You can lay your blanket down anywhere, but you'll probably pick it up again, yet there's one place you can leave it forever behind you and that's not at the manger, but at the foot of the cross where Jesus gave it everything. Just like Linus, it's for your good to leave it, but also for the good of others.

It's the end of the show and Linus, well, Linus has laid his blanket down and this time he doesn't look back. Are you still picking up your "security blanket?" What is it you're holding on to that is keeping you from being fully God's, fully healed, fully restored? This Christmas might be the perfect time for you to leave your blanket at the foot of the cross and not look back. Do you remember that moment in the Emmaus weekend when you gave up your burdens at the cross with that little cracker-shaped cross at the intentions Eucharist? Did you pick that burden back up? Do you have new ones to release? Renew your commitment to Jesus once more and discover the joy of freedom with your first love.

~Pastor John

A Note from our Board Gathering Chair

John 4:36 Those who harvest are receiving their pay and gathering fruit for eternal life so that those who sow and those who harvest can celebrate together! This verse struck me or rather prompted me to my computer to write a few words for all who celebrate together! Since my husband Scott and I have volunteered as Gathering Chairs for the Arizona Walk to Emmaus and are now helping to facilitate the Eastside gatherings, I have noticed it seems much more difficult to get us to come together in our perspective areas than it should be. I know from my own experience many months when the gathering roles around I spend the day thinking of how I am just too busy or just too tired and maybe I will just go attend next month, "besides there will be others that show up... right?"

The truth my sisters and bothers is that we need you to show up! We really need you to be willing to participate! Did you know that even if its been years since you have been on your walk we would LOVE for you to share your testimony! How has life changed since your walk? What changed for you when you served on your last walk? How did God show up the last time you sponsored someone?

In addition to testimonies, we really need you to reach out if you are willing to serve as a Pastor or a music leader! If you are willing to support your local gathering in any way please please contact your gathering coordinators! We really need your help! Call or send an email with your contact information so that we can start building gatherings that are filled with celebrations!

For the Westside Gatherings - Nancy Oyler's contact is 480-558-6717

For Wickenburg Gatherings - Deb Berner's contact is 515-865-4870

For Tucson or Green Valley Gatherings - Charlie Edwards' contact is 520-576-3493 or cmedwards4873@yahoo.com

For the Northern Arizona Gatherings - Barb Meehan 928-607-0738 or meehan.barbara@yahoo.com and Joe Meehan 928-607-0738 or meehanj7@yahoo.com

For the Eastside Gatherings - Tracy Thompson 623-221-2852 or sntplusthree@gmail.com

De Colores!

Tracy Thompson



BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2019

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Music **Dean Neasham**
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Pre-Emmas

Three Day

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December 2019

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