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THE SCROLL

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF CHURCH OF THE MASTER PC(USA)



FROM PASTOR BEN

BY THE REV. DR. BENJAMIN D. SELLER

We live in a world that is imperfect. We have trouble relating to one another. We are a hurting people who often disagree and see things differently, but into that reality bursts Genesis 1:27, God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

In our humanity we sometimes forget to realize that we are all created in God's image. The early Christians used a phrase, Imago Dei, to speak about their relationship to God. Imago Dei literally means, the image of God. They taught that God's ruach (spirit) literally indwells in us. If we believe God's words to be true, then we are called to react differently to one another, both those we agree with and those with whom we disagree. With that scriptural reality set in our minds, take a look at this excerpt from an article which I just read about our country...

We dream. We want the best for our families. We worship as we see fit or we don't. We sing and we dance, we celebrate our accomplishments and stress our failures. We cry. And we bleed. And we die. We agree sometimes. And disagree others.

And that's America. That's who we really are.

And despite what we are fed, here in the media or on Facebook or Twitter or from Uncle Ned or Aunt Buttercup at the Thanksgiving table, our thoughts about political issues do not define us. Yes, they are components of who we are, the building blocks of what we want for the world, but they do not make us. And they do not make us enemies...We judge neighbors not by the character we never get to know, but by the political signs in their yards. We have made enemies of ourselves.

These are the words written by John Archibald, a journalist out of Alabama in a write up titled, America Was Attacked Wednesday, Now What? The specific event to which it is referring was the shooting at the practice for the congressional baseball game a handful of years ago. The writer was lamenting the horrific way we treat one another and the lack of respect for one another. As I read the piece, I kept harkening back to Genesis 1:27.

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FROM PASTOR BEN (CONTINUED)

BY THE REV. DR. BENJAMIN D. SELLER

How have we gotten to the point of so little respect for one another? As we see, it permeates into everything. We hear our leaders often say that ours is a Christian nation. If we are, what does that look like? We sure don't sound very Christian in how we speak to one another. What if we emblazoned the words from Genesis 1:27 in our hearts? How are we to reclaim goodness in culture? Maybe it begins with ME. Maybe it begins by seeing others as image bearers of the divine whether I agree or disagree with them. We might be pleasantly surprised that though this is hard, some people might want to hear more about this savior whom we worship. Sometimes it happens merely by treating people as who they are, children of God.

Blessings as we begin the fall,
Pastor Ben

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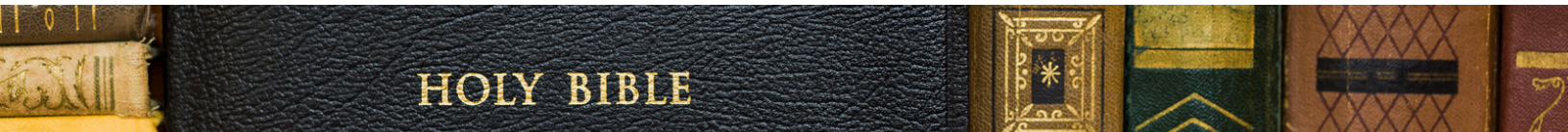
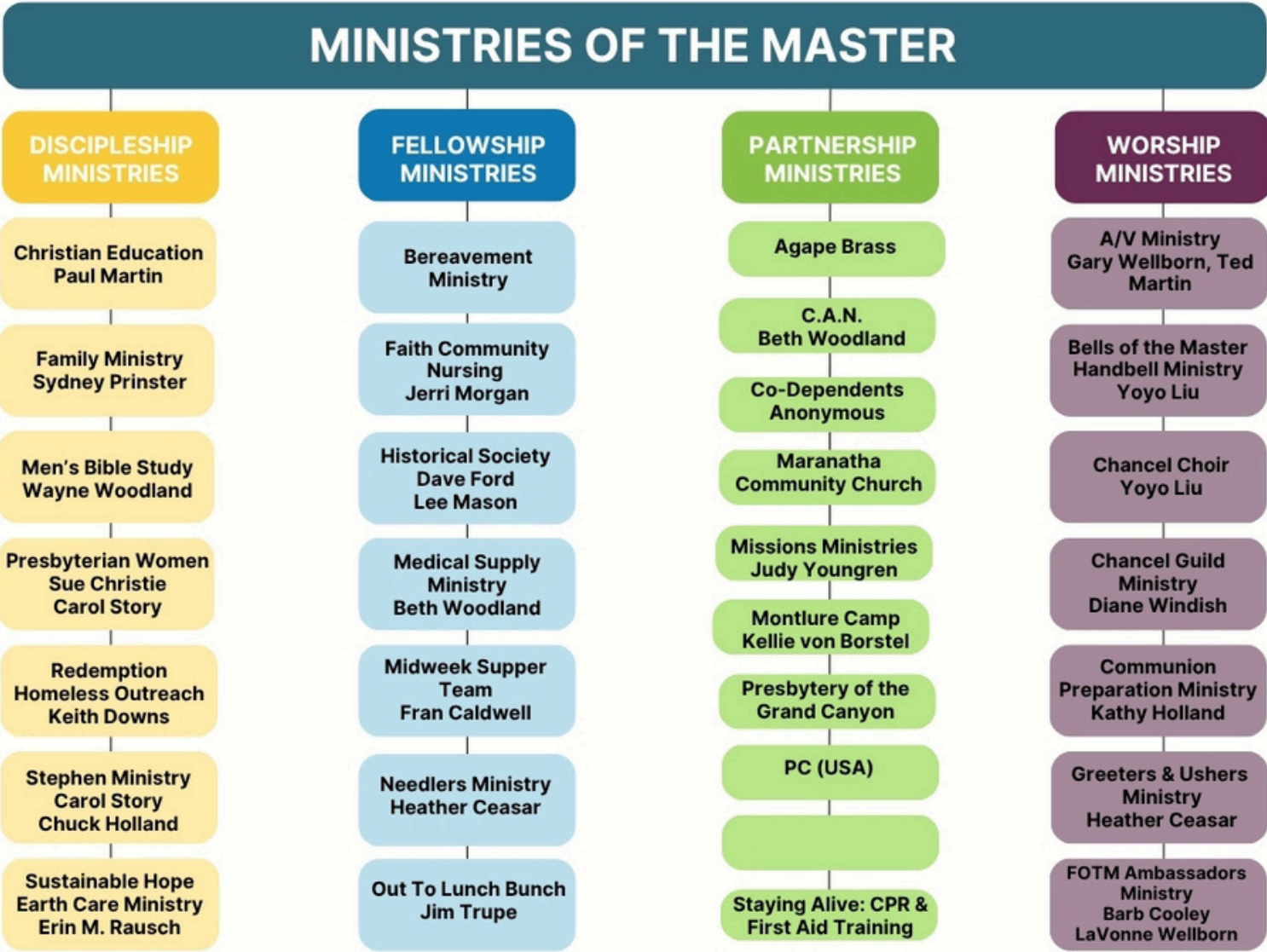
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HIS WORK, OUR HANDS

We are a community built on the love of Christ here at Church of the Master. Take a moment to review the four Pillars of Ministry that support our House of Worship. Within each, you will find just a few of the active, diverse ministries we embrace. For more information, call the office to connect with each ministry leader.



HOLY BIBLE

DEACON'S CORNER

I love the old hymns we sang when I was growing up. Our "family pew" was right behind the pastor's wife. She had a beautiful voice which added to my joy. "Have Thine Own Way, Lord" was sung so often that the "all knowing teenager" me got tired of it. Now, the "older and much wiser(?) me misses it. The words remind me that I'm not the one in charge of things and, certainly, not in control.

"You are the Potter. I am the clay" Clay is very unimpressive on its own. It doesn't have any plan or agenda. It's just there. It has no aspirations of greatness. It doesn't do anything. It just is.

"Mold me and make me after Thy will. While I am waiting, yielded and still." Now add the potter and things really begin to change! That moldable, pliable lump of clay begins to take on a shape crafted by skillful hands. It yields to the desire of its maker. The clay is totally submissive to those hands. From the clay's viewpoint, the shaping and finishing are probably uncomfortable. The spinning is the first challenge. Sometimes, you collapse or go flying off the wheel. But, eventually, you have a shape. The glaze gives you color and character. So now you have become useful, maybe even beautiful. But you are still too soft to endure.

So firing becomes the next challenge in the process. The extreme heat can cause flaws to appear. Most of the time, the shape, whether useful or decorative, comes out hardened and ready for service. Our clay is still somewhat fragile however. It can still crack or shatter. Sometimes it can be glued back together to salvage it. Other times there's no hope.

You can now see where I'm going with this pottery lesson. Our lives are shaped and molded just like the clay. We have powerful, skilled hands working on us. We suffer trials and are tried by fire. We may even break. But this is where we differ from the clay. We have God on our side! He is much stronger than Elmer's or superglue when we are broken. He restores us and makes us whole. We are reshaped into what He desires us to be - a new, improved version of ourselves over and over again. When we are "yielded and still" we allow God to use us according to His plans. We may not be a beautiful statue in a museum or an ornate piece on a shelf. We may be a mug in the cupboard. But whatever your task may be, let God "melt me, mold me, fill me, use me." (Yes, I know that's a completely different hymn.) Anyway, be clay.

Food for Thought

Before the judgement seat of Christ, my service will not be judged by how much I have done, but by how much of me there is in it. A. W. Tozer

In His service with love.

Fran



STEPHEN MINISTRY



Stephen Ministry-Christ Caring for People through
People

CHRIST CARING FOR PEOPLE THROUGH PEOPLE has been Stephen Ministry's motto throughout its 50-year history. Christ cares for the whole person—body, mind, and spirit. Jesus tells us, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12). Stephen Ministers want those they care for to receive God's healing and wholeness. Stephen Ministers are the people the Holy Spirit has called and equipped for Stephen Ministry. They are God's channels and instruments, bringing Christ's care to those who need it. As St. Francis prayed, "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace," so Stephen Ministers pray, "Lord, make me an instrument of your care and compassion." *Excerpts from a devotion by The Rev. David Paap Program Director Emeritus Stephen Ministries*

Are you broken in spirit, mentally exhausted, or living with a chronic illness? Are you facing something that is overwhelming you? Talking confidentially with a Stephen Minister may help you explore your thoughts and feelings and figure out how to move forward to reclaim joy or peace.



Think about your life and the lives of the people around you. If you or they could benefit from the care and support we offer here at Church of the Master, we encourage you to reach out to us Stephen@CotmMesa.org or **480-985-1660 ext. 1** to learn how to receive support through care from a Stephen Minister or from one of our other resources.



Equipping God's People for Ministry since 1975



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



NEW! Sacred Self-Care, a Book Discussion

Presbyterian Women in the Synod of the Southwest Book Discussion Group

invites all women to join in a discussion of *Sacred Self-Care: Daily Practices For Nurturing Our Whole Selves* by Dr. Chanequa Walker-Barnes. This is a seven-part devotional that asks what your divine creation means for how you care for yourself in order to be available to do the work God created you to do. All meetings will be held on ZOOM the **first Monday of each month, October 2026 through April 2027 at 6:30 p.m.** A book suggested by Presbyterian Women's Racial Equity Committee is available online at Amazon, Thriftbooks, Alibris and World of Books, or at a local bookstore.



Remember to mark your calendars for these upcoming activities!

- Our first fall Bible Study - **Thu, Sep 10 at 9 a.m.** in Memorial Hall. Workbooks are available (\$10 free will offering) from Carol and Linda Hayball in the Narthex and Memorial Hall following each Sunday service and at the Bible study.
- NEW! An evening Bible Study – **Thu, Sep 10 at 6 p.m.** – Sabbagh Room.
- Our Fall Gathering – **Sat, Sep 26 in Leupp, AZ.** This time of fellowship, fun and faith includes complementary limited space round trip bus transportation from Tempe (Sep 25 & 26), \$75 double occupancy lodging, fellowship, lunch, workshops, and the opportunity to support nearby Navajo and local businesses. Pick up a flyer in the narthex for details or reach out to Linda Hayball with questions or to register.

ALL WOMEN HERE ARE PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN!



FAITH COMMUNITY NURSING HEALTH MINISTRY TEAM

My name is Jerri Ann Morgan, for those who have not met me yet or if you have not yet heard about the new exciting ministry at COTM, let me introduce the Faith Community Nursing Program. I have been an RN for 45 years and am honored to serve as COTM's first Faith Community Nurse and develop our program with Pastor Ben.

Faith community nursing is a recognized specialty practice of professional nursing focusing on blending professional healthcare with spiritual care and promoting holistic wellness across the lifespan for individuals, families, and our church community.

The FCN addresses the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the congregation & individuals and families within our church, promoting prevention, compassion, and healing in ways that reflect the values and belief of our faith community.

The FCN serves to promote primary prevention, wellness education, and wellness advocacy, assisting with resources within the church and the local community, the healthcare community, support groups and personal insurance resources,

The FCN provides support during times of life transitions like those due to an acute illness or with the management of long term chronic illnesses, and assists with resources to navigate the complex medical care systems.

HEALTH MINISTRY TEAM

Is a group of church volunteers who collaboratively work with the FCN to plan, provide guidance, support and oversight for the wellness events and services to respond to the physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of the congregation.

The FCN works collaboratively with our new Health Ministry Team. Together we prioritize and assist in the planning of educational programs and workshops as identified by the congregation, for the health of our community. The team assists with administrative support, networking with community resources based on our members needs. We also develop policies and processes for the safety and wellbeing of the congregation while on the church grounds.

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING EVENT

Our first wellness program will be on **October 11th** immediately following the service. This will be a Blood Pressure Screening event. We will provide some blood pressure education, including the correct way to take your blood pressure at home and if you bring your blood pressure device in we can verify it is working well when we take your blood pressure. We will provide some other general education on lifestyle modifications: diet, exercise and stress management along with a recommendation to see your health care provider if indicated.

Blessing to all, Jerri Ann Morgan RN, FCN, MSN-L

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Jerri RN

Faith Community Nurse



DOLLAR\$ & \$ENSE

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee would like to start educating the congregation on basic financial considerations and highlighting our monthly financial positions to create an awareness of the ebb and flow of our financial obligations. Each month, we will bring you a high-level overview of the designations of monthly revenue and total expenses paid in the previous months.

Year over year revenue for July was higher by \$25,392

Year over year expenses for July were also higher by \$8,101

June 2026	Earned (School) Revenue	\$20,154.43
	Contributions	\$82,471.57
	Expenses	\$80,364.93
	Net Revenue	\$22,261.81

Summary:

It was a typical July operationally with the exception of our largest expenses being SRP/electricity and the City of Mesa for the on-going water leak issues. The FCS school rate increased as of July 1st. The higher contribution rate (year over year) was due to the receipt of a partial estate gift. This highlights the importance of our on-going education and conversations about legacy giving that Lynn Martin has shared with us throughout the years.

Key definitions for understanding Church Finances:

In nonprofit accounting, **revenue**, **expenses**, and **net income** are related but distinct concepts, and understanding them is important to interpreting a nonprofit's financial health.

1. Revenue

Revenue is the **total amount of money** a nonprofit receives from all sources before subtracting expenses. This includes:

- **Earned revenue** (e.g., program fees, service contracts, ticket sales, merchandise)
- **Contributions** (e.g., donations, grants, bequests, in-kind goods) [Nonprofit Accounting Basics](#)

Revenue is the starting point — it's the "top line" before any costs are deducted.

Our revenue is split into the following categories -

- **Restricted** - to be used for a specific purpose or ministry within a specific timeframe, usually in the year given
- **Nonrestricted** - to be used for general operations
 - **Business Revenue** - Nonrestricted used primarily to cover payroll and associated operational costs

2. Expenses

All expenses paid during any given month both budgeted and emergent in nature.

3. Net Revenue

The amount of revenue left after all operational expenses and liabilities have been paid



Sustainable Hope Earth Care Congregation Ministry

September is planning month here at COTM! As we head into the final quarter of the year, we have several topics on which to focus before we re-certify as an Earth Care Congregation for the 5th year in 2027.



Join us Saturday morning at 10:30 on September 19th as we explore what it means to put our faith at the heart of how we care for our God-gifted, natural blessings.

- We will start our seasonal devotional.
- We will review our re-certification commitments.
- We will finalize the Rev. Doug Baer Memorial Garden expansion plan.
- We will review the City of Mesa Shade Tree Program and help those individuals who qualify sign up to receive free shade trees.
- We will explore tools and resources available to us that help us serve God and one another through smarter, more sustainable living.

September is Planting for Monarchs Month!

Want to help monarch butterflies? Start by planting! This Fall, plant native milkweed and nectar plants to give these beautiful butterflies the food and habitat they need to survive and thrive. Native plants also support other pollinators, strengthen Sonoran Desert biodiversity, and conserve water. Whether it's a pot on a balcony or an entire yard, every native plant we add can make a difference.

Learn more about this initiative, find an upcoming Butterfly Workshop, and download a youth activity book and the new Sonoran Desert Pollinator Plant Guide from this [City of Phoenix Environmental Programs](#) page.



September Meditation - Genesis 2:8-9, 15

The Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil...The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.



Join us in celebrating our friends!

Bobbie Lang - 09/01
Jim Bistodeau - 09/04
Judy Youngren - 09/04
Kathy Burson - 09/05
Sue Pierce - 09/05
Karen Adler - 09/07
Pedro Fredricks - 09/08
Neysa Donato - 09/08
Gwen Eckholm - 09/08
Bonnie Stark - 09/09
Benita Mitchell - 09/11
Janet Martin - 09/15
Stephanie Gregory - 09/17
Julie White - 09/17

Joy Jasmann - 09/17
Bill Duff - 09/19
Annie Jones - 09/19
Larry Raber - 09/22
Jan Gerdes - 09/22
Linda Knowles - 09/24
Kathy Holland - 09/25
Kelsi Broliar - 09/26
John Ahrens - 09/27
Ryan Moon - 09/28
Dion Sanchez - 09/29
Rick Engelsman - 09/29
Faye Williams - 09/30



ANNOUNCEMENT

Welcome Yoyo Liu!

Chancel Choir Returns!

Please join us in welcoming our new Director of Music Ministries, Yoyo Liu! Yoyo comes to us with a Master of Arts in Church Music from Trinity Lutheran Seminary and a Master of Music in Piano Performance from The Ohio State University. Yoyo has extensive experience playing the piano, organ, and hand bells. Please be sure to say hi to Yoyo, her husband Alex, and sweet baby Ethan on any given Sunday.

Yoyo joins us just in time to kick off the fall season of Chancel Choir meeting every Wednesday at 4pm in the choir room and 8am in the Sanctuary before the worship service. Rehearsal is open for anyone looking to sing praise and glory to the Lord!

If you have questions, feel free to email Yoyo at music@cotmmesa.org or you can reach her here in the office by calling 480-985-1660.

Midweek Bible Study

Now that the fall is getting closer, Wednesday Night Fellowship resumes! Please join us on Wednesday evenings starting September 2. Dinner will be at 5 in the Memorial Hall, and Bible Study will be in the Choir Room, at 5:45. We hope to see you there!

The Out to Lunch Bunch - September

The Out to Lunch Bunch is heading to Bobby Q's BBQ at 1610 S. Stapley Dr. Mesa, AZ 85204 this month! Lunch will be at 11:30AM on September 24th. Call Jim Trupe with questions at 480-217-9356.