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Arizona Ministries CONTACT

The Newsletter of the Arizona Association of the Church of God

Arizona Association of the
Church of God
Vision Statement:

The Association exists to be a powerful witness for Christ in Arizona by serving and equipping leaders, congregations, and ministries of the Church of God to fulfill the commission of making disciples of Jesus Christ.

Contributions to the Arizona Association of the Church of God may be sent to:

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CONTACT

The Newsletter of the Ministries of the Arizona Association of the Church of God
"A Ministry of Partnering Churches"



CRAIG FRANK
EXECUTIVE MINISTER

September 2011

Highlights:

- ◆ Open Door Attitude

Inside this issue:

<i>News and Notes</i>	2
<i>Events in View</i>	2
<i>Contributions</i>	3
<i>7 Reasons to Lead...</i>	3
<i>National News</i>	3

"Open Door Attitude"

The picture of Jesus knocking at the door based on Revelation 3:20 is one of the more prominent images in the New Testament. There are artist's renderings of it. The verse reads, "Look. I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends" (NLT).

Jesus doesn't force his way into our lives. He waits for us to invite him in, and then relates to us as a friend sharing a meal. He doesn't *compel* us, but *calls* us, giving us the freedom to accept or turn down his invitation. The call is to relationship, and out of that relationship with him, authentic faith and love grows. He wants us to open our hearts, knowing that hearts cannot be coerced into allegiance.

I think this is a summary statement of the attitude Jesus most wants to develop in us and in the church – an open door attitude. An *open door attitude* allows Jesus to work freely in our lives. We show a willingness to relate to him, listening and responding to what he reveals and instructs us to do. A *closed door attitude*, on the other hand, puts up resistance to his invitations. It is revealed in statements like, "This is the way I am and this is the way I like things. Don't try to change me." The old quote, "I'd like to buy three dollars worth of God, please. Not enough to explode my soul or disturb my sleep..." applies here.

This verse is found at the end of letters to the seven churches in Asia Minor (Revelation 2-3). In each letter, he commended them for their strengths. He challenged them to address the areas in which they were lacking. And he gave a promise of blessing to those who would take the responsibility of making the necessary changes to address those challenges. Alas, churches, like people, can refuse the invitation – "this is the way we are and the way we like things" keeps the door closed to his ability to work. Three dollars worth of God doesn't work.

This is a great instructive word for both individual Christian growth and also for church life. Jesus invites us to listen to him, but doesn't force us to. If we do, he will encourage us, challenge us where we are lacking, and give us the opportunity to address those areas. If we do, there is always reason for hope because his blessing is to supply what is lacking in our faith. But if we close the door to him, he won't make us change. We just won't benefit from his loving instructions, remaining stuck where we are by our limited views, choices, and faith steps.

- Craig Frank, Executive Minister

Refresh your spirit.....renew your strength.....restore your hope!



Jeff Jenness

State Convention

Jeff Jenness and Jim O'Bold from the COG Board of Pensions spoke to practical financial concerns at the State Convention at the Gathering Place Church on Saturday, August 5. In their presentations, they introduced a new resource called "Seven Steps to Financial Freedom." This is excellent material for local church use in a teaching series or small group study (available from COG Ministries at chog.org).



Rusty Akers

A panel of six pastors and laity spoke to current issues facing the church in light of our history and heritage. They offered positive hope as the focus remains on loving God and others, serving with joy, and maintaining an attitude of overcoming obstacles in the power of the Spirit.

Pastors Rusty Akers, Virgil Brainard, and Mike Woosley challenged the church to be united in purpose, message, and mission in the closing afternoon worship service. Joel and Kristin Bullock led worship.



Joel & Kristin Bullock

Events in View

AACOG Fall Assembly Meeting

October 1, at 9:00 am at Community of Hope Church in Maricopa at 18700 N Porter Road. The Assembly will begin with worship and an ordination service, followed by the meeting of the Association.

AZ Christian Women Convention

Make a Mark on Things... Your Legacy Gift

October 28-29 at Country Inn and Suites-Deer Valley, 20221 N 29th Ave, Phoenix. The speaker is Vickie Mullins, "The Legacy Expert," who has written eight books on family legacies and ignites passion for others to develop their own family legacies. Complete registration information has been sent to all churches.



Vickie Mullins

Winter Blast

"Shocked" is the theme for Winter Blast for middle and high school students, December 2-4. The speaker is Hoy Kim, Student Pastor at Antelope Christian Fellowship in California. The Cody Bracy band, from Florida, will lead music. Costs include \$40 registration, plus hotel cost (up to 4 to a room). Complete information will be sent to all churches.

Ministerial Assembly Christmas Dinner

Monday December 5, 6:30 pm
at Crosspoint Church of God
655 E Warner, Suite 101, Tempe

Seven Reasons to Lead Your Church in Church Planting

-from Building Church Leaders, 3/1/2011

1. The Biblical Reason – It is the result of obedience to the Great Commission, following the apostolic pattern
2. The Evangelistic Reason – While age is not a guarantee of evangelistic effectiveness, in general younger churches tend to baptize more people.
3. The Demographic Reason – It takes new churches to reach a growing and diverse population.
4. The Cultural Reason – Missionary work is about meeting people in the highways and hedges, sharing the truth, gathering new believers together as a local church, and allowing the cultural expressions to develop. We present an unchanging gospel; however, methods must be appropriate for the people to whom we are called.
5. The Historical Reason – Because of a long chain of obedient disciples, the gospel arrived in communities, resulting in new churches.
6. The Economic Reason – The money our churches invest in missionaries and resources for church planting is oftentimes a very wise and necessary investment for Kingdom work.
7. The Denominational Reason - Denominations that cease to plant churches today are denominations that will cease tomorrow.

State Ministry Contributions

Freely you have received, freely give.

-Matthew 10:8

Highlights:

- 21 congregations have contributed to the operating budget this year – the highest number that has ever contributed
- Thank you for partnering in the life impact that occurs through the state ministries and for "abounding and excelling in this gracious work." -2 Corinthians 8:7

	October 2010/June 2011
Acacia Hills, Tucson	2,307
Bridge Community, Laveen	782
Crosspoint, Tempe	738
East University, Mesa	800
First Church, Tucson	1,392
Gathering Place, Phoenix	450
McDowell Mountain, Scottsdale	750
Mountain Park, Phoenix	8,000
Mountain Valley, Prescott Valley	963
North Hills, Phoenix	6,170
Nueva Esperanza, Maricopa	530
Nueva Vida, Glendale	5,173
Nueva Vision, Mesa	129
Nuevo Amanecer, Tempe	1,967
ONE Community, Queen Creek	200
Stetson Hills, Phoenix	3,750
Valley Community, Phoenix	3,314
West Side, Glendale	15,636
Westside, Tucson	147
Individuals	3,460
Total Contributions	\$56,511

National Church News

- Disaster Relief – recent significant natural disasters have occurred around the globe, including the earthquake and tsunami in Japan, and the tornadoes in Alabama and Joplin, MO. Funds have been sent by the national church for each of these. Donations can be sent through the website: chog.org, then click "Compassionate Ministries."
- Strategic Planning Conference for the national church, September 13-15, in Nashville, TN.
- "Making Room" is the theme of the annual Christ's Birthday Observance by the Christian Women's Connection (formerly WCG). Materials have been sent to all churches.
- "Evangelism through Diversity" is the theme of the NIYC (National Association) Dec 27-30, 2011, at the Indianapolis Downtown Marriott.
- "Live Romans 8" is the International Youth Convention (IYC) theme – it takes place July 4-7, 2012 in Denver, Colorado.
- "Standing Together" – the Global Gathering of the Church of God, June 22-25, 2013, in Anderson, IN. Gathering of people from all the countries in the world where the COG has an active ministry.