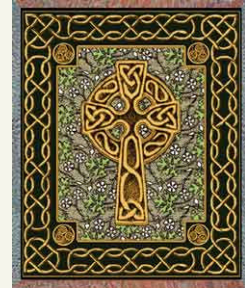




"LIVES CHANGED TO CHANGE LIVES"

# In the Know...

**THE ROCK**  
A CHRISTIAN CHURCH



## WELCOME...

### WHAT'S NEW?

- **December Message Series:** Do You See...*"Sometimes the obvious is not so clear."*
- **Christmas Service** Dec. 21st  
A special audio-visual experience of the re-telling. (Invite your friends & family)

### HOW ARE WE DOING?

- **Commitments to Christ in 2008: (3)** Liz, Micah, Cianna.
- **Baptisms 2008: (5)**  
Joey Shepstead, Kenny Robinson, Liz Krejci, Matt & Tabitha Hornyak.
- **Newborns 2008: (8) + 1**  
Hunter Splinter, Maximus Purdy, Summer Austin, Micah Thaniel, Julianne Cicalone, Hunter Hanson, Caleb Jordan, Isabella Rose, & **Daily Echo.**

### • Giving Report: 2008

January	\$7,182.20
February	\$10,967.88
March	\$16,317.82
April	\$7,149.86
May	\$10,779.28
June	\$9,154.43
July	\$9,767.86
August	\$11,394.43
September	\$6,624.52
October	\$7,631.87
November	\$13,505.13
December	\$2,553.37 (2 wks)

Monthly Need: \$12,000

'08 Need: \$132,000.00 (Nov)  
'08 Giving: \$110,475.28  
'08 Deficit: **\$21,524.72** (Nov)

### • Prayer Needs:

**Jayshuan** recuperating from back surgery. **Florence Hofman** recuperating from knee surgery, **Financial** strength and stability for The Rock. Partners would be faithful in tithing 10% to support God's work in people's lives.

We are excited that you have decided to be here with us today. **"The Gathering"** is our worship experience designed to be interactive and engaging. Our desire is to connect with God and each other through relationships.

We want you to know that you matter to us because you matter to Christ. Vicki Lynn and I, along with the partners of The Rock, look forward to connecting with you sometime during The Gathering.

We will begin in a few moments. Meanwhile enjoy the baked goods in the back along with a beverage.

You are invited to participate in communion any time during the service at the communion station in the back. We have developed a prayer station in the case that you need prayer or simply a place to be silent and reflective. Our goal is to create an experience that is relaxed and meaningful. We hope you enjoy the service and we look forward to your next visit.

Blessings,

Chris & Vicki Lynn Tong



## DO YOU SEE...

Each year our world celebrates Christmas for other reasons than the real one. Because of this, we have the opportunity to share the true story and the real meaning of Christmas with our friends and family. *Did you know that people are more receptive to hearing the story of Jesus Christ now than any other time of year?*

Most of the news today is really bad. We are in the midst of a global recession, over 600,000 are unemployed (Las Vegas Sands just cut 216 jobs), new housing & commercial construction has halted, foreclosures and bankruptcies have increased, investor fraud revealed (over \$50 billion lost), political deceit (the selling of Obama's senate seat by the governor of Illinois), the bailout of banks & the big three automakers, war in the Middle East continues, and terrorism is still a threat. These events affect us in personal ways and have sucked the joy out of the Christmas season. Our world can really use some good news this season.

No amount of presents under the tree have the power to change our circumstances. Do you realize

that the greatest gift we can give this Christmas is not found at Walmart? The greatest gift we can give is hope that is only found in Jesus Christ. Do you see that we have that very hope that our world is searching for...We were designed for relationship with God and each other. **Christmas is not about "Presents under a tree," Christmas is about "God's Presence."** The good news is that there is a savior for our world and His name is Immanuel.

Have you noticed that in the Gospel of Matthew, the author begins his account with the birth announcement of Jesus by saying, *"He will save his people from their sins...and they will call Him Immanuel which means, "God with us"* (Matthew 1:21-23) and ends the good news with Jesus giving his last parting words to his disciples saying, *"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age"* (Matthew 28:20). Do you see what the author is emphasizing? From beginning to end, "Christ's presence" is more than enough. No matter how bad our circumstances, the God of this universe is with us always and that

is all we need.

Times have been hard, sometimes even unbearable. The greatest present we can give is not under a tree, it is the hope that is in Christ by sharing the story and the real meaning of Christmas... Jesus was born to save the world.

*At the very first Christmas, God became a man; God with us. Jesus came to set us free from sin. The baby born to a virgin was God's way of entering our existence and centuries later we are still telling His-Story. Christmas is God's Story, a story of hope through Jesus Christ who shows us how to experience life with real meaning, through his death & resurrection he offers us hope beyond the grave & promises His "Presence" forever.*

In the midst of all the "hustle and bustle" I pray that we see that Christmas is about God's nearness and His desire to do whatever it takes to restore our relationship with Him even if it meant His life. Our world more than ever needs to hear, see and experience God's presence. Do you see that we are the bearers of this message? Who will you tell?

# PARTNERS TOGETHER

## • Rock'in Christmas Party...

If you missed the annual event, you missed an incredibly wild and outrageous party. About 40 people brought wonderful holiday food to share. The Christmas games were fiercely competitive including the traditional "Christmas Charades." The women won again by a score of 12 to 11. We divided into groups of four and shared our stories of how the "Presence of Christ" has changed our lives this past year. We prayed for each other & were encourage to focus on Christ's presence rather than the presents under the tree. The evening ended with dessert and more laughter & games. Don't miss next year's event.

## • HELP before & after service...

Due to budget cuts, CCSD (Clark County School District) has increased our facilities use by an additional 15%. Because of this, we will cut our time frame by one hour which means that our set-up and tear-down time will be severely impacted. Beginning January 4, 2009, we will set-up at 4:00pm. We need every available person to help transform the auditorium into a worship center within one hour. We will also need your help after the service. The worship & tech teams will place the gear in front of the stage or tech area and we will need FREE hands to take the gear to the trailer. As ancient fortune cookie says, *"Many hands make work light."*

## • The Challenge

At our last "All church meeting" we were challenged to double our average attendance in 2009 in order to reach "Critical Mass." Critical Mass is determined by the room size and number of people that create a sense of energy and life that communicates that something is definitely happening. For us 150+ would be our critical mass. We were challenged to reach an average of 150+ people for three months straight. When we reach Critical mass, Pastor Chris will put his head on the line...meaning, we can shave his head or dye his hair any color. We have launched a campaign called, "Each One, Reach One" where every partner takes responsibility in inviting people to The Rock.



• A special audio-visual experience of the re-telling of "The Nativity Story." **Sunday, December 21st @ 5:30 pm.** Invite your friends and family to re-experience Christmas in a fresh new way with powerful visuals & a stirring audio experience along with familiar Christmas carols and a new song called, "A Song of Hope." Give someone you care about the most incredible present; the opportunity to experience the presence of Christ this Christmas."

• **Rock'n Karaoke Night & Christmas Singing.** Tuesday Dec. 30th. 6:30 - 9pm at the home of Glenn & Geri Cazar 7347 Comanche Creek Ave. LV 89179 [Mtn. Edge] Bring finger food to share and socks to wear. Call Dave Reed 245-4742.

## CONNECT THROUGH SERVING & GROWING...

### More Newborns

Congrats to Jared & Darcie Splinter upon the recent arrival of Daily Echo; their second child, December 12th. Congrats to Joe & Sarah Ancheta on the safe arrival of Caleb Jordan; their second child. Also congrats to Juan & Stephany Manriquez on the arrival of Isabella Rose; their third child.

Let's keep praying for Joe & Liz Hemphill as they are expecting their first child very soon.

### More Birds Need Cooking

Thanks to the Hilton Hotel and Dave Ventimiglia's connections, we have 8-10 turkeys that need to be cooked and fillet for our friends on E Street, 8:30 am Saturday, December 20th. Please sign-up at the connection table with Christine Hardin. We've got the turkeys, now lets step-up and share them by preparing the birds for our friends this Christmas.

### Serving our "Samaria"

Thank you to Wendy Stubbs, Adam & Jordan Jones, Tammy Tyler, and Dave Ventimiglia for cooking the turkeys for our friends at E Street. A special thank you to Vivian Browning for the personal touch with the chocolate cupcakes. Over 200 people were served. Thank you to Dave Pena, Tammy Tyler, Jordan Jones, Helen Ale', John Schmidt, Dave Ventimiglia, Christine Hardin, Vicki Lynn & PC for sharing God's love in practical ways.

### E Street Essentials

This winter, you can make a difference for our friends who live in extreme conditions. Below are the essential needs of our friends...

- Toiletries: small travel size (soap, shampoo, toothpaste, & deodorant)
  - New or used Winter Clothes (Sweatshirts, jackets, gloves, hats)
  - New Socks & underwear
  - Wet wipes, tissues, washcloth.
- Every 3rd Saturday; Ethel Pearson park (Washington & E St.).

### Small Gathering

Be a part of a group where life is shared & becoming happens.

#### MONDAYS

- 1) **[Family SG]** 6:30 pm, Noreen Tong & Mitzi Gill Meets @ 266 Bella Matese, 89183 v: 270-8668 [by South Point]
- 2) **[MNF]** 5:30 pm, Steve Ranney Meets @ 9545 Swiss Stone Court, LV, NV 89123 v:528-8805

#### TUESDAYS

- 3) **[Mixed SG]** 6:30 pm, Dave Reed & Eric Honea Meets @ Dave Pena's home 7950 Valladoid Ave LV, NV 89178 v:245-4742 [Mountains Edge]

#### WEDNESDAYS

- 4) **[Moms SG]** 9:30 am, Vicki Lynn Tong Meets: Various Locations v: 340-6378 [Various locations—Southwest]
- 5) **[Women's SG]** 6:30 pm, Jennifer Krejci's, Meets @ 8909 Rendon Street, Las Vegas, 89143 v: 575-3739

#### THURSDAYS

- 6) **[Men's SG]** 6:30 pm, Keith Krejci Meets: various locations v: 575-2740
- 7) **[Mixed SG]** 6:30pm, Steve Ranney & Christine Hardin Meets @ 9545 Swiss Stone Court, LV, 89123 v:528-8805 [Silverado Ranch]

## STAYING CONNECTED

### • DVD Recommendations

Journey to the Center of the Earth, Wall-E & Expelled.

### • Upcoming Releases

"Fireproof," "Madagascar 2" "The Boy in the Striped Pajamas"

### • NEXT SG Leaders Mtg.

Scheduling individual appts.

### • NEXT Meet the Pastors

Saturday, February 7, 5:30 pm

### • Rock T-Shirts

Available @ the connection table  
Short sleeve \$15; long \$20

### • LEADERSHIP TEAM

- David Reed (Team Leader)
- Tony Davis
- Eric Honea
- Haleigh Honea
- Joe Hemphill
- Christine Hardin

### • NEXT Leadership Team Mtg.

Monday, Dec. 22nd 7:00 pm at the Tong's home.

### • Copies of a Message:

Missed a Gathering? Email us...  
ctong\_throcklv@cox.net.

### • CONTACT US:

Office: 340-9202 or 896-8410

**Pastor Chris:** 340-6379

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**Vicki Lynn:** 340-6378

vickilynn\_throcklv@cox.net

**Christine:** 340-9202

chardin\_throcklv@cox.net

**Joe Ancheta:** 308-6748

jjanch23@yahoo.com

**Jimi Jobin:**

JimiJobin@gmail.com.

### SENT PARTNER...

#### ANNA ADAMEK

Our very own missionary in Eastern Europe. Let's stay connected with her.

#### Email Contact:

Anna\_adamek@sil.org

#### JONATHAN & JOJO BRADLEY

Rock partners who are now missionaries in New Mexico as a teacher at Shiprock High School (Navajo Nation). They live in a 28ft trailer & desire to start a church like The Rock.