



Dear Rocky Peak,

It's hard to believe, but we are already coming to the end of another year, and I have several important things to share with you, including our:

- Christmas Eve Services
- Christmas Generosity Initiative
- RP Singles Ministry
- RP Bylaws & Doctrinal Statement
- New Worldview Series & Life Group Study
- Year-End Financial Update

So, let's take a few minutes and catch up.

Generosity Initiative

Hope Gardens

Several times each year we turn our attention to somewhere in the world where people are struggling, and where we can help in a practical way. We call these special projects *Generosity Initiatives*.

Over the past several years, we have dug over 100 water wells in Africa, built a home for hundreds of endangered girls in Uganda, remodeled a homeless shelter in Los Angeles, purchased a new center in Thailand to serve children rescued from sex trafficking... and much, much more!

This year our Christmas Generosity Initiative is to serve *Hope Gardens Family Center for Women and Children* in nearby Sylmar.

Hope Gardens is associated with the Union Rescue Mission. Their mission is to help single women transition from homelessness to independence by providing food, shelter, financial and job training, medical and dental care, family therapy, spiritual discipleship, and more. This center is located on 71 acres in the foothills of Sylmar, and serves up to 75 women and 150 children at a time.

Today, most of their buildings need repair or remodeling. The total cost to repair all the buildings is \$325,000. Our goal is to upgrade as many of these buildings as possible. For example, the cost to remodel the dining room is \$70,000, the lobby, \$35,000, the lodge, \$111,000, and so on.

We will share more about this initiative in our services this weekend, but I want to get it on your radar now so you can begin thinking and praying about it. If you would like to support this initiative right away, you can give on our website or app, drop your check into an offering kiosk on campus, or mail it to our offices.

Christmas Eve

The Generous Gift

We are looking forward to celebrating Christmas Eve again this year as a church family. This year's service will include Christmas carols, a string quartet, special music, a spoken word, and a short message called *The Generous Gift*.

Since Christmas falls on a Sunday this year, we will not hold our regular weekend services. Instead, we will host **three services** on Christmas Eve at **2:00, 3:45, and 5:30pm**. We will also livestream all these services in *The Ridge* and online.

Our Kids Ministry will also provide a Christmas program for children (birth-5th grade) at both the **2:00 & 3:45** services. After each service, we will be serving hot chocolate, coffee, and Christmas cookies on the patio. There will also be a Christmas photo booth where you can take pictures with your family and friends.

I hope you can join us!

Christmas Eve is always a great time to connect and celebrate the coming of our King, and it's also a great time to invite family and friends to join us—especially those who have not yet given their lives to Christ! So, I encourage you to ask God to show you if there is someone He wants you to invite this year.

RP Singles

Coming in 2023

On **Friday, February 3rd**, we are launching our new singles ministry—RP Singles—and we are very excited about it!

This is something we have wanted to do for a long time, but we have been waiting for the Lord to bring the right leaders at the right time to launch it. Last summer God surprised us by calling Pastor Joel and Christy Enyart back to Rocky Peak to lead this new ministry, and we believe they have the right gifts, heart and experience to lead it well.

RP Singles will be a place for single adults **of all ages** who are looking for community where they can pursue Jesus together. So, if you are single, mark this date on your calendar and watch for more information in January.

RP Bylaws 2.0

The Update

For many years our elders have wanted to update our official church bylaws, which include our doctrinal statement. Most of the proposed changes are small. The main reason we are recommending this change is because we want to update our doctrinal statement to clarify our commitment to biblical teaching in the area of human sexuality, as recommended by our legal counsel.

This past year the elders have been working on this update, and in the process, we decided not just to amend our current doctrinal statement, but to recommend a new one!

Here's why.

First, we are **not** changing any of our doctrinal positions! Our current statement has served us well and we are in full agreement with it.

However, it is not very well-rounded, well-balanced, or well-written! In fact, it always felt a bit clunky—as though it was the result of a “cut and paste” project that didn't cover its topics in an equally thorough way.

So, this past year we reviewed many different evangelical doctrinal statements to serve as the foundation for our new document. In the end, we selected the doctrinal statement of the Evangelical Free Church of America (think Chuck Swindoll). It covers the same topics as our current statement, but in a more thorough and robust way. Then, to make it our own, we added some of our own language to reflect our communication style at Rocky Peak.

We will be presenting these new bylaws, with this new doctrinal statement, for your approval at our all-church Encounter on **Sunday, January 29th**.

To prepare you for that we will post our current bylaws, with our current doctrinal statement, and the new proposed bylaws, with the new doctrinal statement on our website in early January for you to review.

If you have any questions or feedback on these proposed changes, you can discuss them with our elders and staff at our regular Q&A sessions after any of our weekend services on **January 21-22** and **January 28-29, 2023**.

Worldview... Renewing Your Mind

New Series & Life Group Study

In January, we will take a break from our current weekend series (*Christ, Culture, & The Cross*) and start a new series called *Worldview... Renewing Your Mind*.

Our culture has gone through many rapid and radical shifts in the last few years. On the surface, it might seem like these changes are just random. But the reality is they are all flowing out of a secular worldview that is becoming increasingly influential in our culture.

I believe if we want to follow Jesus well, and impact our culture for Christ, we need to understand this worldview, how it compares to the biblical worldview, and why the biblical worldview is so much stronger.

Over the past few months, I've been doing the research for this series, and one of the books I started listening to just a few weeks ago is called *Faithfully Different* by Natasha Crain. And the more I listened, the more I liked it! It is extremely well-written, easy-to-read, and very comprehensive. She does a great job explaining the secular worldview that is shaping our culture, what the biblical worldview looks like in contrast, and what we need to do to follow Jesus well in the midst of a culture that is increasingly hostile to biblical Christianity.

As I was listening to this book, I found myself wondering several times if this was a book we should read together as a church. Then a couple weeks ago, while I was spending time with the Lord, it suddenly seemed clear God was calling us to do this—much like when we went through *Rooted* or the *Pursuing God* studies together in the past.

So, we are asking all our Life Groups to use this book as part of our Life Group study this winter session that starts in January, and we are very excited about it! We believe the combination of this new series with this new study has the potential of being one of the most important series we've ever done.

If you want to get a jump on your reading, feel free to order the book (or audiobook) right away. But we are ordering this book in bulk and will be selling it at a 40% discount on campus before the start of the Winter Life Group session.

2022 Finances

Year-End Giving

As we approach the end of the year, I want to give you a quick update on our finances. As we enter December, we are a little behind on our contribution budget—about \$100,000 for the year.

But December is our largest financial season of the year. This is the month when many people catch up on their giving or make special year-end gifts. We usually receive about twice as many contributions in December as in other months, and we budget accordingly.

Our goal this December is to catch up on our general contributions and end the year in the black so we are ready for everything God has for us in 2023.

As we come to the end of the year, I simply encourage you to ask the Holy Spirit to lead and direct your giving this month. I believe if we all do this, we will have all the resources we need. And a special thank you to those of you who have given so generously all year long!

Well, I think that's it for now.

Once again, as we come to the end of another year, I want to thank you for all your love and support. For Lin and I, serving at Rocky Peak continues to be one of the greatest privileges of our life. May the Lord meet you in a powerful way this season as we celebrate the coming of Christ together!

In Him,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael". The script is cursive and fluid, with a long, sweeping tail on the letter 'l'.

Pastor Michael