

# ENCOUNTERING GOD IN THE DESERT



Oasis Ministry Newsletter

April 2018



## Encounter

God has quickly blessed us with wonderful students in this campus ministry plant. In February, we began our weekly campus ministry gathering called Encounter. We've had 12-20 students and young adults our first few weeks, with people bringing friends, new people each week, and community developing. It is a joy. The evening is structured to help people encounter God.

### What Encounter Looks like

- ◇ Welcome and worship
- ◇ Meditation to bring our minds before God
- ◇ Lesson: Shared teaching time to focus our community on God.
- ◇ Stations: We provide four stations for people to respond to what God stirs in their hearts. The stations are: silence and solitude, conversation and prayer with Hannah, kinesthetic activity which rotates, and continued worship.
- ◇ Closing worship and fellowship

### Lesson Series

The first five weeks we established the pillars of Encounter. Encounter is a place for Authenticity, Freedom, Relationship, Practice, and Presence. Our next series is *My Story: Learning about the Character of God*. We are sharing our life stories and highlighting what we've learned about God along the way.

### Prayer Requests

- Praises for God opening doors & hearts
- Praise that Oasis is now an official ASU student organization!
- Praise for the power of God at work at the Renewal Retreats
- New small groups will draw us closer to God and each other
- Wisdom for using Alpha at ASU next fall
- The Spirit's continued movement at ASU



At Arizona State United. From left: Hannah, Andrew, Jenna, Claire, Allen

## ASU Women Ministers' Brunch

God's abundance overflows in the desert. This fall a group of women in campus ministry at ASU began meeting monthly over quiche, yogurt, fruit, and muffins to share life in Christ and ministry. We meet at the beautiful home of the Chi Alpha ministers. It feeds my soul. I have found kindred hearts and beautiful friendships in this group of passionate, capable, loving women.

This past month I had the joy of my mom coming with me to this group meeting. I loved introducing her to this part of our community and she was overjoyed at God's provision for me in this way.

I was also asked to lead our discussion last month. The topic was resilience in ministry. Here are three things I shared:

- 1) Love Jesus with all that I am
- 2) To love God I must be with God
- 3) Care most for God's opinions and thoughts.

## ASU Partnerships Blossom

*The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.—John 17:22-23, a prayer of Jesus*

As the sun beat down unmercifully in August, all the ASU campus ministers began meeting again. CORA (Counsel of Religious Advisors) met with ASU President Michael Crow, and I met Ben, Shawn, and Victoria, ministers on campus. Eager to learn about Christian life at ASU and to gain wisdom, I introduced myself and asked for advice. Friendships formed. Campus Christian Center (C3) has a monthly meeting for Christian campus ministers. I went. I loved it. I found my people—they loved God, they loved students, and a growing sense of unity permeated the group. I've been to every one since. God provided community immediately. God opened doors to serve and use our gifts for His kingdom work at ASU. Here are some of the ways Oasis gets to partner and lead.

## Arizona State United

A line of students. A dozen ministries. Worship music. Our team—the first faces students meet as they arrive. Allen (MBA student and Oasis student org officer) one of three student panelists. We're new here! How did we get to be at the forefront helping run this awesome event? God! I absolutely loved getting to help plan and run this event, and to work with incredible co-laborers with Christ. This night of worship will happen at the beginning of each semester as the campus ministries unite to praise God, love students, and show the great body of Christ working together at ASU.



Women in Ministry Brunch



# Dialogue on Science and Religion

At ASU the public scientific conversation about religion has often been contentious and disrespectful. The C3 director has a vision for this to change and CORA got on board. On March 13, 2018, in the Carson Ballroom of Old Main, a panel of world renowned scientists discussed faith and science with upmost respect, intelligence, and conviction. It was brilliant.

And we had front row seats! I had the joy of organizing the speakers, flow of the event, and working with ASU staff on set up. Jenna collected, organized, and transmitted all the student questions to our panel moderator along with two professors. Claire did the graphic design.

After the event we got to have follow up conversations with students, and got to know the speakers over a long dinner.

God continues to open more doors than we thought possible. He is powerfully at work at ASU in the scientific community. Please pray for us as we build these connections to students and faculty in the sciences.



Dinner with Science Professors



ASU Veritas 2018

## Veritas

Coming from a university where students only attend events for which they get credit, I was shocked to see Murdock Hall fill, and fill, and fill. 500 seats, plus an overflow room with livestream. No credit. They came to hear neuroscientist Bill Newsom and colleagues talk about free will and how their lives as scientists interact with their love of Jesus. Oasis was the key partner for this event. Claire did the amazing graphics and marketing, Jenna ran the student question submission system, and I was the moderator for the evening. We also worked for months to plan the event. It was fantastic and we are greatly encouraged for future events. I've been asked to be on the executive board for the organization that hosts this event and we're now planning a conference for next year with the support of a significant grant.



# Renewal Retreats

Get away for three hours to be with God. Hosted in the serene, spirit-filled Oasis, small groups are invited to talk about big questions with God and each other. Renewal Retreats are mini-spiritual formation getaways offered every quarter.

We've offered two sets of Renewal Retreats so far. The questions we've asked are *Who is God?* and *Who Am I?* They have a simple structure and are entirely dependent on God meeting people. We come into the space in silence, read scripture, do a guided meditation, have brief teaching on our question for the day, are offered four spiritual practices, have 1.25 hours alone with God, and come back to talk through our experience together and pray.

The groups are intergenerational—students through 70s. They highlight the importance of our time alone with God and our time in community with God. I am finding that they provide a place for rich relationships and deeper connection with God. God is meeting people in this space and speaking powerfully into our lives.

Tempe Church of Christ: Pursuing Life with God, Together.

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# Tempe Church of Christ

The church has been amazing. They are welcoming, supportive, and engaged with our family, the campus ministry team, new members, and all the changes. We are regularly encouraged by the church and so thankful for their love of God and us.

*The church is in a season of growth and spiritual vibrancy!*

It is beautiful to see and a privilege to be part of God's work here. We are immensely thankful for this family who cares more about welcoming new people into the family of God, than about their comfort and preferences. On Easter attendance was higher than anytime in the last six years. The community is increasingly engaged in each others lives. Young people are placing membership. People are growing in their relationships with God and being transformed to be more like Jesus. The wider community is being served. It is a delight to serve this church and serve with them. Thank you, Tempe Church of Christ!

