



Christ's Church of Fountain Hills History

Christ's Church of Fountain Hills was founded on May 3, 1984. The founding Pastor, Don Lawrence, was 29 years old at the time. After holding worship services during the month of April, the church's Foundation Sunday was held and twenty two individuals became founding members.

The church originally met in Suite One of the Enterprise Plaza, on Enterprise Dr. Three months later, having outgrown Suite One, the church moved their worship services and Sunday School classes into the adjacent building on the corner of Enterprise and Panorama, the former site of the Presbyterian Church. Suite One of the Enterprise Plaza was used as the church office. As the church continued to grow it remodeled the worship facility and eventually added a second service. The church also rented additional office space in the Enterprise Plaza which was used as a youth center and Sunday School classrooms.

The church placed a heavy emphasis upon children and youth and, as a result, many young families joined the congregation. With two full worship services and Sunday School classrooms at capacity with children and teens, the decision was made to purchase property and build their own facilities.

In 1990 the church purchased 5 ½ acres of property located at 15555 E. Bainbridge Avenue, at the corner of Bainbridge and Glenbrook Avenues. The church began holding worship services in the McDowell Mountain Elementary School in June that year, while waiting for the construction of the new 6,500 square foot multi-purpose church facility. This facility provided a worship area, four offices, library/conference room, five classrooms, kitchen, nursery, restrooms and foyer. The new building was completed in February 1991. The building was financed through a church bond program.

After moving into the new facilities in early 1991, the church again continued to grow. It was at this time that Associate Pastor Gary Emmons joined the church staff. Outstanding children's and youth ministries as well as a dynamic music ministry attracted people of all ages to the young congregation. Over the next decade the church added two additional worship services to accommodate the crowds. They also expanded their staff to include full time youth and children's pastors.

Their adult ministries also continued to expand. The thriving Retired-And-Rambling group started at that time continues to meet twice monthly for a potluck and speaker and special

outings. The church also increased the number of weekly HomeTeam meetings; these are attended by adults of all ages for fellowship, Bible Study and prayer. Currently, the HomeTeams also take on various church and missions' responsibilities.

In the late 90's it was decided to build a larger and formal sanctuary. At a congregational meeting held on January 17, 1999, the congregation of Christ's Church of Fountain Hills voted unanimously to proceed with the building of a new 400 seat sanctuary. At that same meeting, the congregation voted unanimously to enter into a Capital Gifts Campaign to fund the new project.

Ground breaking for the new building was held in December 2000. Construction began in January 2001. The first service was held on September 16, 2001.

The new building includes a beautiful 400 "theater-style-seating" sanctuary, choir room/chapel, nursery, communion preparation room, foyer and restrooms. State-of-the-art video and sound technology enhances the worship experience. The new facility has allowed the church to expand its outstanding Christmas and Easter theatrical productions which have become well known in the community. The highly talented praise and worship team, "Proclamation!" leads the contemporary worship service each week.

The "old building" was remodeled to become a youth center/fellowship hall along with the church offices and Children's Ministries wing. Each Sunday morning the youth have their own dynamic worship service and the children have their own exciting activities as well. Midweek youth and children's gatherings enhance the Sunday morning programs.

On November 23, 2008 the church held a dedication service for its new Prayer Garden and Columbarium. The beautiful prayer garden with its walking paths, benches and shade trees provides a tranquil location for meditation and prayer. The garden also includes a Columbarium in which cremation remains are inurned.

Over the years the church has continued to expand its missions emphasis. Twice a year the church travels to Rocky Point, Mexico to build homes for the homeless. It is estimated that somewhere between 55 and 60 homes have been built by the church. The church has also taken work teams to the American Indian Christian Mission, near Show Low, and the Arizona Reservation Ministries, near Globe, to assist with various Native American ministries. Through Project New Hope International, the church has sponsored the establishment of a church in a barrio on the outskirts of Trujillo, Peru. Once a year, the church sends a work team to Peru to assist with various projects with their newly established "daughter" church. The church has also made trips to Swaziland, Africa to work with AIDS orphans and to Juneau, Alaska to work with a youth camp. The Fountain Hills Extended Hands Food Bank is another charity the church is involved with along with Mesa's Paz De Christo where the church sends a group once a month to assist in the food line.

On May 5, 2009, Christ's Church of Fountain Hills celebrated its 25th Anniversary with a special Celebration Worship Service and an afternoon neighborhood carnival. At the service all founding members and charter members were recognized. Also, all former staff members present were introduced and recognized. The Board of Elders made a special presentation to all of the existing staff members, including current Pastors Gary Emmons, Chad Pace, Jared Fox and the original founding Pastor, Don Lawrence, who still continues to lead the flock at Christ's Church.

For more information about the church, please contact the church office at (480) 837-3121 or visit the church website at www.ccfhaz.com.