

And then God said

NEVER AGAIN

When I came to Community Church of the Verdes and first stepped into the sanctuary, I was overwhelmed by the beautiful modern vibrant stained glass window in the front with a beautiful rainbow over what could be heaven, what could be the Jordan River, or what could be the Verde River.

Arizona has some of the most beautiful rainbows I have ever seen, especially in the monsoon season when we have a lot of rain. After the rain, as the sun begins to shine, a brilliant rainbow appears over Four Peaks or the Mazatzals. These rainbows are not simply the happy accident of nature; they are a gift of God, they are a sign of God's unending love for us. Let me explain just how big God's promise is to every one of us.

PICTURE

After Adam and Eve sinned, the inclination of the human heart was toward evil; St. Augustine said our hearts are curved inward toward self. God saw this, and so he called the one righteous man Noah to build an ark for him and his family, and for a portion of animals. God then sent a flood to destroy the earth and start a new creation with Noah.

Then God said, "Never again. Never again will I curse the ground, never again will I destroy every living creature (Gen. 8:21), and never again will I send a flood to destroy the earth" (Gen. 9:11). God promised his love, and as a sign of his promise, he put a rainbow in the sky and said, "When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh." (Gen. 9:14-15) Even then, God had a larger plan

to save humanity. God knew he would send Jesus Christ “not to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.” (John 3:17)

Never again, God said. You are loved. Have you accepted God’s never again in Jesus? Have you accepted his love? Think about this the next time you see a rainbow, for it will be a sign to you.