

Lent

A TIME FOR RENEWAL, CONVERSION AND CHOICES

Michele McGrath, SCMC Financial Officer

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, forty days before Easter (not including Sundays) and ends on Easter Eve. This year Ash Wednesday falls on March 9th. Lent is a period of personal reflection and inward soul-searching and repentance as we remember Christ's sacrifice. The traditional practices of Lent are prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Has your interpretation of these gotten a little stale or tattered? Is your practice a little too self-centered and not Gospel-centered enough? Our list of Lenten suggestions might provide a new way for you to look at these traditional activities. It might even be a path towards sharing them with family, friends, and co-workers.

SCRIPTURAL GUIDANCE

This is the kind of fast day I'm after: to break the chains of injustice, get rid of exploitation in the workplace, free the oppressed, cancel debts. What I'm interested in seeing you do is: sharing your good with the hungry, inviting the homeless poor into your homes, putting clothes on the shivering ill-clad, being available to your own families. Do this and the lights will turn on, and your lives will turn around at once. -Isaiah 58:6-8 *The Message*

CREATIVE IDEAS FOR LENTEN LIVING

- ✚ Fast from eating/serving food prepared outside your home for one week, donating the savings to a food pantry or homeless shelter.
- ✚ Reduce your consumption of energy: Calculate the monthly average for your electricity and water bill. Try reducing it by 25% over 90 days. Have your kids do the math, offering to let them keep half the savings and giving the other half to the poor of their choice!
- ✚ Create a list of people you don't like or with whom you are not reconciled, or people who just bug you. See if through prayer or acts of mercy or exercises in forgiveness you can move some of them from the "enemies" list to the forgiven and peace list. Place the list in a prominent place in your home. (Use initials if necessary.)
- ✚ Conflict resolution: Wherever two or three are gathered . . . there are bound to be disagreements. Brush up on your conflict resolutions skills. Identify a conflict within your home, family, workplace, congregation, or nation. Create a win/win solution to the issue. Feel free to research it or ask other for help. Don't be afraid of your wounds. Be willing



to work with or around your weaknesses. Have a less critical voice towards yourself, and then others.

- ✚ Reduce your credit card spending by 10% for one month. Increase your charitable giving by 10%. Fast one week from all use of credit cards, including your ATM card.
- ✚ Consider "tithing" your grocery shopping: Buy an extra 10% and contribute it to a local food pantry or shelter. Better yet: Buy the same amount but use 10% less and donate the rest.
- ✚ Invite the poor to your table. That could be somebody from a shelter, or a lonely person such as a senior. Call and inquire. Invite a neighbor over. Explore your options. Ask your children for suggestions!
- ✚ Acquire some good spiritual reading material. Look for books that encourage you to get out of your comfort zone. Contact the mission center staff if you are looking for suggestions.
- ✚ For one week or one month, eat only foods grown within 100 miles of your home.
- ✚ Research issues such as poverty, homelessness, and hunger in your local community online. What surprises you? What calls out to you?
- ✚ Plan a peace-making event with someone in your family. Send a friendly card to someone you haven't spoken to in a while.

Continued on page 2

Lent, continued from page 1

- ✚ Study the cultural habits of a group of people you find interesting or irritating. Plan a field trip to get to know them better. Visit a mosque, a Jewish temple, an evangelical church.
- ✚ Take a risk at work to make it a better place to be or more fair in its treatment of employees or the earth. Make a suggestion to your boss.
- ✚ Make some in-roads in saving energy or recycling at home or at work.
- ✚ Get involved in some sort of justice project.
- ✚ Go meatless for one meal or one day a week.
- ✚ Share some time with those who are poorer or hungrier or needier than you. Locate and name the needs and needy in your neighborhood, city, or near your congregation.
- ✚ Go a day (or a week) without the privilege of your birthright. Live as if you don't have an American passport or identification. Live as if you don't have a driver's license, no access to credit or ATM cards, or private vehicle or airline travel.
- ✚ Ask around: What are the needs? How could I possibly help? Check with your local school, library, food pantry, boys and girls club, sports center.
- ✚ Plant a fruit-bearing tree or vegetable plant and commit to sharing the produce with a local food pantry or neighbors. Food pantries severely lack fresh produce!
- ✚ Simplify your lifestyle. Empty a shelf or drawer or room or part of the garage. Donate the items to the poor.
- ✚ Work aerobic exercise into a more friendly part of your day and week.
- ✚ Experiment with a new method of prayer.

We hope you will find in these spiritual practices a deeper solidarity with Jesus, a profound sense of hope and joy, a greater awareness of the movement of the Spirit, and a delightfully greater understanding of God's love for one and all. ✚

2011 SOUTHWEST INTERNATIONAL-SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REUNION

Wholeness through Christ

July 8-15, 2011

Buckhorn Camp – Idyllwild, CA

All Ages

Family Camp

Great Food

Recreation

Inspiring Worship

Encouraging Fellowship

Stimulating Learning

Fun for All

GUEST MINISTRY: David Waring, *Apostolic Assistant-Africa/Haiti Field*
 Karen Waring, *Registered Youth Worker Program Coordinator*
 Robin Linkhart, *President, 5th Quorum of Seventy – Western Field Mission Coordinator*

Special Ministry
for
Young Adults

Come Join Us in Sacred Community

REUNION AND YOU . . . This joyous annual experience for our people, once again attended by numbers in the hundreds, continues to be an inspiring and fulfilling time in our communal life as fellow disciples. With the overwhelmingly positive inaugural SwIMC/SCMC Reunion last summer, anticipation grows once again this year. Where else in our world today can we experience in such quantity and quality the possibilities of God's beloved community?

If you've not already registered, please plan now for this year's Reunion. You are warmly invited to "reunite" this summer with your sisters and brothers in the blessed experience of glimpsing God's community on earth.

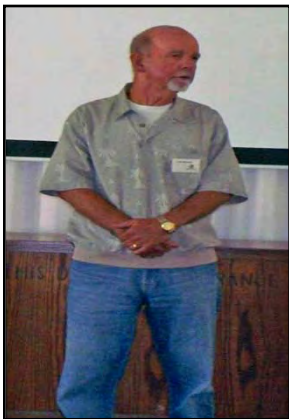
To register, go to <http://cofchristla.org/reunion.htm>, or Contact Rickie Miller, *Registrar*
 EMAIL: RMiller@cofchristla.org / TEL: 805-577-5907 Financial assistance is available.

SHAMROCK Blessings

Denise Leichter, SHAMROCK Ministries Director

We had a great turn out for our January SHAMROCK event in Costa Mesa, and the congregation and leaders were wonderful hosts and presenters. Perry Pace and a business associate spoke on reverse mortgages and financial planning for 2011. The Visiting Angels made a presentation on selecting and utilizing non-clinical services in your home. Larry Bauman shared a heartfelt testimony on aging and the power of attitude and blessings. Van Van den Bosch reported on his visit with the War Era Veterans and potential benefits for services in the home or Assisted Living. We ended our time together with a lunch at Mimi's Cafe and people returned to their homes from Hemet to Santa Barbara.

Green was the color of the day at our St. Patrick's Day Event at Temple City. Be sure to mark your calendars for our next event on May 14th at the Orange Congregation. The numerous SHAMROCK Congregational Representatives are doing a GREAT job caring for seniors with local needs, and the Pastors are making referrals for resources that help members and families. SHAMROCK BLESSINGS TO ALL . . . you are to me! 🍀



Larry Bauman - Orange Congregation - shares a testimony.



Van Van den Bosch - Temple City Congregation - shares info on War Veterans benefits.



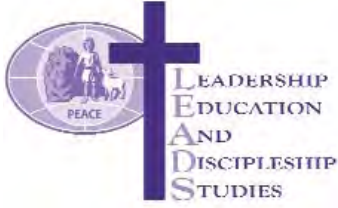
Nearly full house in Costa Mesa.



Costa Mesa Pastor and financial advisor Perry Pace presents information.



Denise Leichter reunites with Clara Tegarden at the Arizona Winter Reunion.



*Would you like to enhance the worship ministry in your congregation?
Do you want to add depth to your own public ministry skills?*

If so, please join on **May 21-22** for **Public Ministry**, a 15-hour course designed to improve individual skills in worship ministry. This is part of the LEADS series and has application for all ministers—whether ordained or not.

The class will be led by **Robin Linkhart**, President of the 6th Quorum of Seventy, and Mission Coordinator for the Western Field. Robin has a Master of Arts in Christian Ministries from Community of Christ Seminary and has long served in the church in ministry.

LOCATION: Temple City Center for Christian Ministries † 9468 Broadway, Temple City

COST: \$20 plus materials (purchased on your own) / Free will offering for food

REGISTER: Contact Tonia Cooper; EMAIL: Tonia@cofchristla.org TEL: 714-847-5731

WEBSITE: <http://cofchristla.org/leads/index.htm>

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. *Preaching*¹, Fred B. Craddock, Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1990. ISBN 0687336481
2. *Worship Resources*, Gardner, Jane M., editor, Independence, Missouri: Herald House, Year A
ASSIGNED READING: *Introduction to Worship Resources*; Lectionary Usage; Worship Planning and Preaching
3. *The Preaching Life*¹, Barbara Brown Taylor. Cowley Publications, 1993. ISBN 156101074X

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED TEXT (bring to class): *The Sacraments: Symbol, Meaning, and Discipleship*, ed. Andrew Bolton and Jane Gardner. Independence: Herald Publishing House, 2005. ISBN 0830911731

NOTE: Please bring scriptures, any scripture commentaries you find helpful, and assigned texts to class.

¹ Available online at amazon.com



Robin Linkhart

President's Address: "The Mission Matters Most"

WEBCAST APRIL 10

President and Prophet Stephen M. Veazey will address the church via webcast on Sunday, April 10. Viewers here in Southern California can tune in at 4:00PM Pacific. President Veazey will talk about the mission of Jesus Christ and how we can live that out now and into the future as Community of Christ. For those who cannot view or listen via their own computer, encourage people to gather together to watch the live webcast at www.CofChrist.org in English, French, and Spanish. Here in our area, there will be corporate viewing set-ups at the following congregations:

- ▶ Inland Empire: 1894 S. Commercenter West, Suite 402 San Bernardino, CA
- ▶ Orange: 395 S. Tustin Street, Orange, CA
- ▶ Simi Valley: 3701 Alamo Street, Simi Valley, CA

If additional congregations arrange for group viewing, we will pass along information via the E-Bulletin. For more information about the webcast, please go to <http://www.cofchrist.org/broadcast/upcoming.asp>.



*President Steve Veazey
President of
Community of Christ.*

Communities of Joy

Communities of Joy is e-published quarterly by the Community of Christ Southern California Mission Center. Deadline for the next issue is June 1.

EDITOR Terry Read
MAIL 15657 Ladera Vista Drive, Chino Hills, CA 91709
EMAIL TRead@cofchristla.org
Mission Center Office 805-577-5907
Technical Advisor & Distribution Tonia Cooper
Typography & Layout Jean David

Youth Ministries in 2011 is Off and Running

CAMPS AND ACTIVITIES ARE IN FULL SWING!

Journey Takers started off the year in Santa Barbara. Our youth gathered there visited a unique donation center called the Unity Shoppe, where the poor enter as customers, treated with appropriate service and respect as they select from among the foodstuffs that are displayed on shelves much like in a grocery store. The youth were amazed at what they saw and I could tell that the wheels started turning as they thought of ways they could help out in their communities.

Junior High Snow Camp took place on the first weekend in February—a triumph given that we nearly had to cancel due to low numbers. All told, fourteen friends shared in a great weekend, including eight delightful campers (yes, I said “delightful”). The theme of the camp—**Epic**—led us deeper into the stories of Jacob, David and Goliath, Moses and Jesus.

Senior High Snow Camp burst forth on the second weekend in February, boasting the largest camp size yet with 45 campers! We had youth from all over Southern California and Las Vegas. Our theme—**BLING**—pointed us toward our understanding of treasure. Carla Long, our guest minister (Financial Officer, Sierra Pacific Mission Center), offered our youth some ways different than the world’s ideas to look at finances as well as how to live generously.

Our **Youth Hunger Challenge** is coming up March 18-20. Make plans now to help the youth in your life to join in. Those attending will be fasting to raise money for Outreach International. The goal is to raise \$6,500 in order to donate a water well for a Village. If you want your extra change to bring change to the world, sponsor one of our youth and help us meet the goal.

Kidtricity is also coming up. April 2 is the big day for our children in grades K-5. The Simi Valley Congregation is hosting the event and is inviting children from the local community.

This summer the Senior High youth will have the opportunity to go on the **Journey Takers Caravan** to Seattle as well as go to **SPECTACULAR** at Graceland University. Both of these events bring extra costs to the families of the youth who are attending. Please help our youth get to these events by participating in one of the many fundraisers happening throughout the mission center.

As always I ask that you continue to keep Children and Youth Ministries in your prayers and help spread the word about the different events happening throughout the year.

May Peace Be With You,

Kyle

Kyle Logan

KLogan@cofchristia.org

816-590-2239

Riddles

1. What is the most difficult train to catch?
2. What tongue can wag and yet never utter a word?
3. What’s smaller than an ants mouth?
4. What is the only thing you can break when you say its name?
5. Where can everyone always find money when they look for it?
6. What is the difference between here and there?
7. When does a joke become a father?

Riddle Answers
 1. 12:50, because it is 10 to 1 if you catch it 2. The tongue of your shoe 3. What the ant eats 4. Silence 5. In the dictionary 6. The letter “L” 7. When the catch line becomes apparent (a parent)



Special Invitation

Dear Friends,

Has life already or is it about to bestow on you the title of senior citizen? Do you wonder, or even question if you can retire, considering the resources you have available?

You just might find your answer in the community of Hemet/San Jacinto, California. We are located about an hour's drive from Los Angeles and San Diego. If you want to be in the desert, at the beach, or in the mountains, all are just a short drive away. Forty minutes will put you at Buckhorn, our premier church campground for Southern California, big trees, blue skies, and all well-equipped for seniors. There are a number of lakes close by where you can fish or picnic.

Your retirement dollars will go much farther here. For instance, a 2 or 3 bedroom mobile home can be purchased for \$10,000 to \$15,000. Lot rent in our senior parks starts around \$300/month with \$450/month giving you deluxe accommodations: gated community, heated pool, shuffleboard courts, and the list goes on. Then add to all of this a sharing and caring, active Community of Christ congregation with an emphasis on Senior Ministry.

Why not consider Hemet/San Jacinto as your retirement community? I look forward to hearing from you.

Your servant in Christ,

Tony

Tony Carnahan, Pastor
Hemet-San Jacinto Community of Christ
TEL: 951-927-6703



Sondra Plonte, an expert crafts teacher, stands beside the worship center she created for Valentine's Day at the Hemet Congregation.

Eco-Outreach

The Free4All/All4Free, an event originally staged at Unity in Our Community and Welcome Home, was held at the Simi Valley church as part of their ongoing effort to “live simpler so others can simply live”.

The need for responsible reuse and recycling of household goods is evident all around us and this could be a long-term sustainable solution when items like desks and lamps and toys are reused instead of adding to our landfills. “Bring something and take something” was the motto of the day.

The event allows anyone interested to leave items they no longer want or use to be picked up and reused, renovated or recycled by someone else. Seen amongst the giveaways covering nearly the entire front porch and driveway of the church facility were giant stuffed animals, a queen-sized bed frame, lots of baby items, tables, plumbing items, yard tools, dishes, books, automotive parts and just about everything else. The items are FREE. No money exchanges hands.



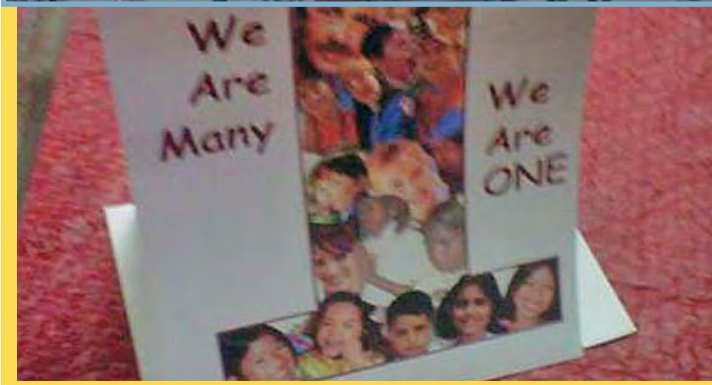
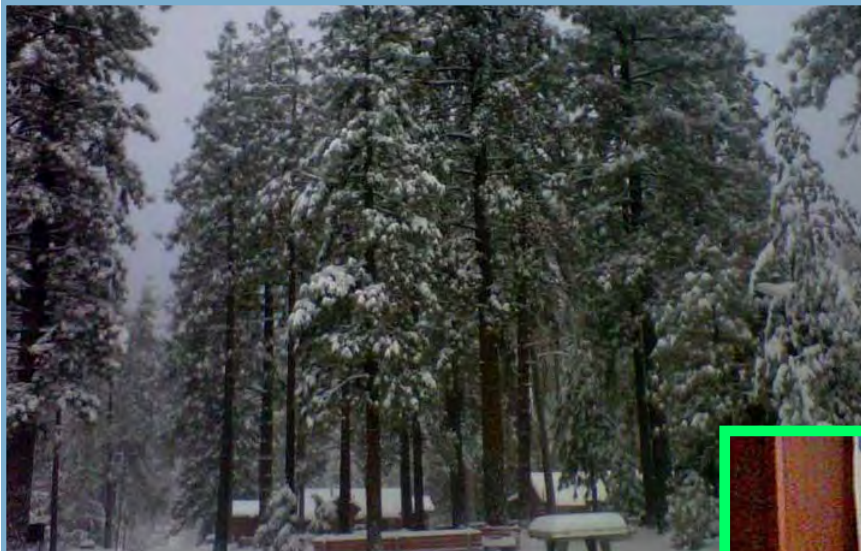
Considering that a 150-pound adult will leave a trash legacy of 90,000 pounds, America faces a trash crisis. Using the Lent 4.5 resource (www.lent45.org), the Simi Valley Congregation is studying how to live simpler so others can simply live. This includes reusing, renewing, recycling, reducing, recovering as presented through the Front Porch website at www.simisaints.com.

Business was brisk on the Front Porch and another event is scheduled in April. No garbage is accepted, just things with plenty of life left. Steps have to be taken now to keep from overwhelming our world with discards and the best part of this plan is that it's Free4All! Free4All was just the right price for these visitors to the Community of Christ in Simi Valley. †

Buckhorn Bucks Bonanza

Another magnificent Northern SCMC Congregation Retreat was held among breathtaking panoramic views at Buckhorn Camp over Presidents' weekend. Buckhorn hosted families from Welcome Home to Santa Barbara, and under the banner "We are Many, We are One!", snow fun exploded from the first night with a heavy snowfall. Two feet of powder welcomed the sledders and snowboarders on Saturday morning along with a big plate of homemade cinnamon buns.

As always, the work for the Buckhorn Buck was plentiful with good deeds and helpfulness the order of the day. The tougher the good deed, the bigger the buck with singing for worship coasting in at 10,000 Buckhorn bucks to table wiping gleaming only 100. The Buckhorn Buck Auction was fierce, but everyone went home with a little love in their arms. Thank you to all the leading families for their ongoing work and support of this retreat. †



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL

- 2 Kidtricity, Simi Valley
- 2-3 Journey Takers, El Cajon
- 6 Church Anniversary
- 8-10 Women's Retreat, Buckhorn w/Sheri Kirkpatrick
- 10 President's Annual Address
4:00PM, Inland Empire, Orange, Simi Valley
- 16 Unity in Our Community, Covina
- 17 Palm/Passion Sunday
- 21 Maundy Thursday Service, Simi Valley
- 22 Good Friday Service, Orange
- 24 Easter
- 30-5/1 SwIMC Conference, Tecate w/David Nii

MAY

- 2-7 Buckhorn Work Week
- 7 Caravan Prep Day, 10:00 – 4:00 at Logans
- 7 SCMC Baseball Night, Ontario
- 8 Mother's Day
- 14 SHAMROCK Spring Fling, Orange
- 21-22 LEADS: Public Ministry, Robin Linkhart
- 30 Memorial Day

JUNE

- 4-5 Primary Camp, Temple City
- 10-12 Junior Camp, Buckhorn
- 12 Pentecost Sunday – LNEC Celebration
- 14-7/2 Journey Takers Youth Caravan
- 19 Father's Day

Strength and Patience: The Re-Dedication of La Nueva Esperanza en Cristo

May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints... -Colossians 1:11-12 NRSV

It began simply enough, even though it was difficult to see how extensive the scope would be. We needed to update the electrical system in the nearly century old structure originally erected as a Jewish synagogue. But it wasn't long before the probing inside the walls of the structure revealed serious problems with its integrity, both at the foundation as well as the roof. The problems were so dire that we feared that building would need to be demolished. Yet through the calming presence of the Spirit, solutions emerged as skilled engineers and workers discovered ways to strengthen the weakened structure. Our building would be as solid and sound as ever as its strength was restored.



The unfolding project began in early 2008.

Yet that was just the beginning. Uncovering these and other problems led to more and more issues. There were times when it seemed that we would never finish the project. Each building inspection produced another problem or raised another question for which answers were elusive. Even though the structure had been made strong again, it was difficult to be patient, particularly as the months went by, many with little or no progress. But like the believers of Colossus, we are continually uplifted by the prayers of the faithful and the promises of God. Again, skilled professionals led the way through the project's complexities toward completion.



Severe termite damage at the foundation.



Ceiling truss severely compromised.

Some will remember the first dedication of La Nueva Esperanza en Cristo, held in February 2006. But given that the building has essentially been in disarray for much of the time since because of this protracted project, we are **re-dedicating** the church, especially now that the project will yield a **re-newed** appearance, outside and inside, as well as where it maybe matters most: the foundation and structure.

SAVE THE DATE: JUNE 12

All are invited to celebrate the completion of the building project begun over three years ago as a basic electrical upgrade but resulting in a major structural repair and reinforcement, leading to one aspect of the building after another. We have selected a day Christians have celebrated for centuries, one commemorating a new beginning in the cause of Christ: Pentecost. Please join us on Sunday, June 12, at 3PM as we rededicate this church building and its ministries to the mission of Jesus Christ. Due to limited parking, consider carpooling or even better, take advantage of transportation that will be available from the Temple City church. More details will be announced. ✚

SHAMROCK St. Patrick's Day Event

Denise Leichter, SHAMROCK Ministries Director

We had a great time on St Patrick's Day when a wave of green showed up at the Temple City church, the SHAMROCK host congregation. People showed up from Santa Barbara, Canoga Park, Burbank, Temple City, Anaheim and Costa Mesa. Kathy Templeton from Lamoni, IA came the farthest and was of great help and support to our event.

We started with a video tour of Ireland, visiting many places and learning of Irish traditions. The beauty of "26 different shades of green" was visible throughout the country.

Participants were then informed of the new Send Out Cards for online shopping and the financial benefits to SHAMROCK Ministry. Many of those in attendance took the containers for the Soup Kitchen project to start in April at a local congregation level. The Hemet-San Jacinto Congregation project to "call out seniors" locally and across the nation was a positive conversation about how this congregation and community want to make it the very best locale for seniors with affordable housing, great weather and a great worship community. Attendees learned of upcoming events on the SHAMROCK calendar, including fellowship at the Women's Retreat as well as Unity in Our Community. In addition, the Resource Table has lots of information for special needs.

Kelly and Donna Endres from War Era Veterans Alliance spent the entire day with us and provided a lot of information, answered questions and loved the fellowship with the community. For more details; contact them at 800-901-0940.

As expected, Sally provided a great luncheon of Irish food, and Denise begged for forgiveness for the challenges it might have for special diets, but we all loved it! The Raffle time provided See's Candy certificates, Shamrock plants, and a beautiful lap quilt donated by Colleen Van Den Bosch. SHAMROCK goodie bags were shared with all.

Everyone was surprised by the sounds and appearance of our Celtic Bagpiper, Darrel. He provided education and enjoyment with his Penny Pipe, fiddle and two types of bagpipes. It was a very special type of entertainment funded by another generous donation from the Never Say Never Foundation.

Our worship time was reflective and focused on friends of wisdom and love that support us as "Companions on the Journey." We hope that many will join us at the next event on May 14th in Orange for our SHAMROCK Spring Fling. A parting comment: "My body, mind and spirit has been blessed." That's the joy and benefit of this ministry. 🍀



You Are Invited To Women's Retreat 2011!

Enjoy the Journey

Friday – Sunday, April 8-10
Camp Buckhorn (East side), Idyllwild, CA
Register by March 25 and \$ave!

All women, 18 and wiser, are invited to join us at beautiful Camp Buckhorn for our annual Women's Retreat, sponsored by the Community of Christ.

Life is a Journey!

We will focus on remembering to find the 'joy' as we live our lives with passion and courage.

Sherri Kirkpatrick, the former Vice President and Dean of Nursing at

Graceland University, will be our Guest Minister.

"The end is never as satisfying as the journey. To have achieved everything but to have done so without integrity and excitement is to have achieved nothing."
unknown

Sherri founded HealthEd Connect with her husband Jac and visits Africa often, helping people to improve their healthcare.

Sherri has a wealth of experiences with nursing, teaching and ministering in many places. Her life experiences and her special wisdom will help us on our own journeys.

2 nights lodging, 5 meals, full program.... \$110

Save \$20 if registration is postmarked by March 25

REGISTRATION:

Use the enclosed form.
Mail check and form to Registrar:
Carol Strampfer
11735 Altoona Drive
El Cajon CA 92020

QUESTIONS:

Dianne Cooper *diannecooper@cox.net*
619.749.7618
Patti Kome *pattikome@gmail.com*
619.857.9332

Book Adventure

Meet with others who love to read and bring along a favorite book to share.

For more information visit: www.swimc.org

www.campbuckhorn.org