

Communities of Joy!

Southern California Mission Center

April 2005

Canoga Park and Simi Valley Youth Fast for World Hunger

After a 24 hour fast, the youth from Canoga Park and Simi were certainly ready for a potluck. Doing their part for world hunger, the youth were sponsored by members of the congregations, and raised over \$2000 for Outreach International in the World Hunger Challenge led by the Harris and Sweeting Families. Supporting the youth, both



congregations gathered for the end to the fast and to FEED THE KIDS. And it's a good thing, too. Double rations were required to fill the void.

The youth participated in a scavenger hunt/can drive as part of their fast challenge. Carrying a list

of different foods to find, they scoured the neighborhood for donations of food even though they themselves had not eaten for nearly six hours. Discussions and learning experiences followed, with lots of juice, and ended with a campfire, which, according to Joy Harris, "went on and on and on."

The next morning the youth, still without food, headed for church at Canoga Park. As a surprise, the Simi Valley congregation closed their facility for the day and headed down to support the children. Even the patriarch of the congregation, 101.8-year-old Ken Morford, and his wife, Opal, made the trip. The children shared their personal experiences with the

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Community of Christ Names Stephen Veazey President-Designate

On March 4 the Community of Christ First Presidency, Council of Twelve Apostles, Presidents of Seventy, Presiding Bishopric, Presiding Evangelist, and President of the Quorum of High Priests met to receive a recommendation from the Council of Twelve regarding who is called to serve as the next president of the church. Following worship, discussion, and the sharing of testimonies regarding the call, the council unanimously expressed support for Stephen M. Veazey to be called to lead the church as prophet-president.



Stephen Veazey

According to a statement provided by the Council of Twelve, "Brother Veazey senses that call as well. He shared with the council expressions of how the Holy Spirit has been working in his life, preparing him for this moment and supporting him as he prepares for the challenges of this role. He affirmed his faith and trust in God, saying that when he has answered Christ's call, God has always been there to sustain and direct him. If delegates at the special World Conference, June 2-5, 2005, support this call, Brother Veazey will serve faithfully, working closely with the World Church Leadership Council to ensure that God's purposes are lived out in the church's mission."

Stephen Veazey has been a full-time minister since 1983, and a member of the Council of Twelve Apostles since 1992. In April 2002, he was set apart as president of the Council of Twelve and was assigned by the First Presidency as director of Field Ministries.

July 20-23 IYF
at the Temple

July 23-30 SPEC
Graceland U

If you are a 9TH-12TH grader and want to attend IYF/SPEC this summer, **YOU MUST REGISTER BY 4/15** and submit a \$100 DEPOSIT to Denise Leichter. Flights, hotels, and transportation arrangements are being made now, and we have to finish our budget and fund raising efforts with a correct count for campers. Don't miss out on these events!

"Stand for God" at SoCal MC Conference April 24

The Southern California Mission Center will meet in conference on April 24 at the Center for Christian Ministries in Temple City. The business session will convene at 9 AM, with worship at 11. Apostle David Brock will be our guest minister, speaking on the theme "Stand for God." Pastor Francis Stienon is planning the worship service.



David Brock

Business items for the conference:

- Elect delegates from our jurisdiction to the World Conference to be held in Independence, Missouri,

June 2-5.

- Consider amending the current year operating budget to hire a youth minister and reduce the amount congregations are contributing in support of mission center ministries.
- Ratify the amended bylaws for Buckhorn Camp, Inc.
- Consider a resolution submitted by the Temple City Congregation to grant them rent-free use of the Center for Christian Ministries.

To be nominated to serve in our World Conference delegation, submit your name to Tonia Cooper, Conference Director, at tonia@cofchristla.org or 714-847-5731.

Let's Look at Possibilities

by Mike Hewitt

In the fifteen months that I have been in the Southern California Mission Center as Financial Officer, I have observed many interesting things as I have visited in the various congregations. Although there are a few issues to deal with and some problems to overcome in every congregation, I am always able to look for and see many possibilities for growth and expansion wherever I am.

What are some of these issues that need to be discussed and worked upon? Coming from an area where camping was a vital part of ministry, I am surprised at how little the valuable resource known as Buckhorn Camp is utilized by many members. It is a majestic and awesome place that doesn't seem to be a very important part of the recent worship experiences of many. Reunion has always been a significant spiritual highlight of my year. Camping experiences can be life-changing for all ages, but especially for children and youth.

I think there is a need for more education and training in the mission center, whether through Temple School or some other method of delivery. I realize there are problems of distance and traffic, but

these are not insurmountable issues. Perhaps we may need to move to "cluster group" classes for important training initiatives such as "Our Diverse Community" and "Disciples' Generous Response."

I hear about the difficulties some congregations have with finances and remain sensitive to those comments, although most have investments in Pool A. Many other congregations in North America do not have such reserves available to them. I also realize that some don't like the idea of Congregational Contributions (Assessments), since there was significant investment income to fund the mission center in the past.

What are the positive aspects that give me hope for the future? There are some who can see the importance of ongoing Aaronic Ministries education, now being offered twice per year, and the need for regular High Priest gatherings.

The plans in Santa Barbara to build new classrooms have now been approved for a World Church loan and construction should begin soon. A new building for La Nueva Esperanza en Cristo at Central and 21st in Los Angeles has been purchased and services there have begun in a Hispanic neighborhood, offering much potential growth.

In Orange, a praise band has been formed and now plays weekly. People there are

energized about the high quality of their worship experiences and the joy they find in sharing together in study, worship, and fellowship. There have been many changes in the feelings and attitudes of the congregation and others have begun attending there recently.

Linda Espiritu Santo has been appointed as SCMC Missionary Coordinator and has found others willing to assist in this vital ministry with renewed focus for our mission.

I always believe that it is important to see the glass as half-full, with room for it to be filled, and expect that with the support of many, we can achieve excellent ministerial results in the mission center and the congregations. If you see the glass as half-full, you can seek ways to continue to fill it to the top. If you see it as half-empty, you can despair as to why it is not full and see it as shrinking.

As we join together in doing God's work here in Southern California, we can feel the overflowing joy of Christ in our hearts and treasure the experiences of working together in community, serving others, and showing what we have to offer to our world in need.

Vibrant Ministries with Families

On Saturday, April 16, 9-5, at CCM in Temple City, Patti Page of the World Church Family Ministries Taskforce will offer a presentation on the topic "Sharing Vibrant Ministry with Families." While the program is specifically designed for Aaronic ministers, it is open to anyone who wishes to attend.

Cost is \$10 per person, including lunch. Free child care will be provided if children are registered in advance. Please contact Tonia at 714-847-5731 to register.

Workday at Buckhorn: We Need You!

Saints from SoCal MC and SW Int'l MC will gather May 3-8 at Camp Buckhorn for our annual work week. Please come! We have so appreciated your support of our beautiful campgrounds over the years, with your many generous donations of items, time, and talents. We still need kitchen aprons, tea towels, bird houses, outdoor plants, coffee cups, and outside tables and chairs. For our work week, we have some fun activities in mind besides the work. We hope you can join us. Pass it on! "One Mountain, One Message, One Person at a time."

Simi/Canoga Youth Fast for World Hunger

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congregation and performed an original skit. We all enjoyed a wonderful communion fellowship and service with John Hatton's band giving the occasion pizzazz.

Following the service, with the smell of corndogs, spaghetti, and fried chicken wafting from the kitchen, the youth beat feet to the table. The food flew. What we had here was a dozen starving youth and an unguarded buffet table filled to buckling. We were careful to keep our hands out of the way and the family pets safely at our sides.

What a remarkable event for the children as they learned the meaning of hunger, saw how fortunate they truly are, and found the opportunity to join in a service with grateful Saints in celebration of their experience. Amen.

Submitted by Rickie Miller

Golden West Tower Sale Completed

The sale of Golden West Tower, the senior low-income apartment building owned by SoCal MC since 1970, was completed on March 8. The final sales price was \$6.85 million. After payoff of the mortgage and sales costs, \$4.66 million was deposited in a trust fund in the name of Golden West Tower, Inc. The entire amount of this fund must now be invested to create new senior low-income housing. If the invested funds earn a return, the principal and interest may be used by SCMC in our regular ministries in the future. A new board, made up of members of SCMC and World Church leaders, will be formed to manage the trust fund. Paul Davis, SCMC President, is presently serving as president of Golden West Tower, Inc., has overseen the sale process since August 2003, and will now help form the new board.

Upcoming Events

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| Apr 10 | Congregational Leaders Meeting, CCM |
| Apr 16 | Aaronic "Family Ministries" at CCM |
| Apr 16 | Legal Issues Workshop at Victor Valley |
| Apr 24 | SCMC Conference at CCM |
| May 3-8 | Camp Buckhorn Work Week |
| Jun 18-24 | SCMC Reunion at Buckhorn |
| Sep 23-25 | Women's Retreat at Buckhorn |