

# COMMUNITIES of JOY

COMMUNITY OF CHRIST

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA MISSION CENTER

MAY 2010

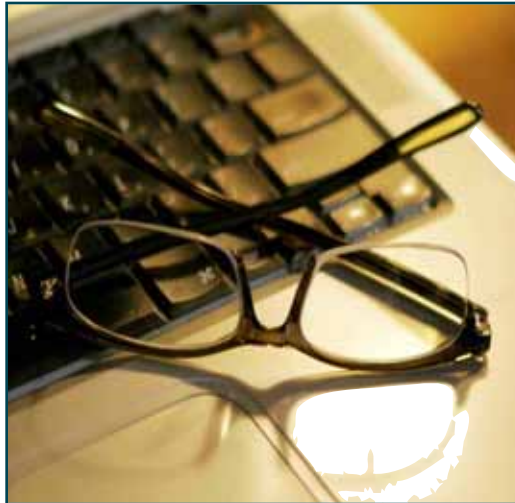
## New Lenses

By Terry Read, SCMC President

*For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*

-1 Corinthians 13:12

My vision needs correcting. I currently require 1.75 magnification to do any reading or close work. I use “currently” because it used to be 1.5. Without such aids reading is like trying to recognize someone in the fog. Actually, it’s better described using the Apostle Paul’s metaphor as “through a dark glass.” With my reading glasses (about \$10 from the drug store), I can see clearly and easily. If only spiritual vision could be corrected so easily. However, God does graciously provide clear and effective assistance through a myriad of means. One of these helps is through scripture.



*To truly love  
is to love as  
God loves...*

In his letter to the believers at Corinth, Paul concludes his beautifully poetic and timeless description of true love with a metaphorical insight into the transformation of a person who loves in the manner of God. We are lovers, yes, but we love through eyes clouded by self-centeredness, fear,

and underdeveloped emotional and spiritual strength. Yet with God’s love to anchor us, shape and guide us, we can love through clearer and stronger sight. We begin to behold the beloved: our neighbors and ourselves. To truly love is to love as God loves—without condition and with full knowledge.

Our newest scripture in the Community of Christ provides yet another piece of “vision therapy” for our spiritual eyes. Section 164 of the Doctrine and Covenants presents a sacramental lens through which to view our world: baptism. Of course, the counsel given in this section concerns our actual practice of baptism, but throughout the text there is a thread of this sacrament at once profoundly symbolic and drenchingly real. Consider the numerous references:

✚ The section’s preamble includes another Pauline metaphor: “As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ (from Galatians 3).”

✚ Verse 2 refers to “the grace and authority of Jesus Christ through which baptism occurs.”

✚ In verse 3, we are each “urged to examine the depth of [our] baptismal commitment . . .” through which we have become “fully immersed in the servant life of Christ . . .” and are called to live its meaning daily.

✚ Verse 4’s counsel concerning the Lord’s Supper naturally links to baptism and the reaffirming of our defining covenant.

✚ The section’s guidance addressing human behavior and relationships is also seen through the lens of baptism: “When you are truly baptized into Christ you become part of a new creation. By taking on the life and mind of Christ, you increasingly view yourselves and others from a changed perspective.” (verse 5)

✚ In the section’s concluding paragraph (verse 9), baptism’s vantage point is again lifted up: “When your willingness to live in sacred community as *Christ’s new creation* exceeds your natural fear of spiritual and relational transformation, you will become who you are called to be.” And finally, it is viewing the world through this lens and living in that vision which “respects and reveals God’s presence and reconciling activity in creation.”

Yes, the mission of Jesus Christ is what matters most for our journey. And that mission is to and toward the vision of the new creation. When I “look” back to my baptism, it’s tempting to get a little nostalgic, focusing on the warmth and love of that moment and setting. But my new “lenses” present a different scene. There is love, most certainly, but instead of warmth and comfort, there is a restlessness around me, urging me to move ahead, toward places and people—known and unknown—in whom I can see with increasing clarity the beauty of God and God’s desire.

I hope you can look at your own baptism, whenever and however it occurred, and get such an image. It’s a wonderful way to not only check your vision, but begin to improve it as well. ■

## Southern California Mission Center at the World Conference

The affirmation of our newest scripture highlighted the recent World Conference (held April 10-17 in Independence, MO). Counsel to the church, which is now Section 164 of the Doctrine and Covenants, received the approval of an overwhelming majority of the 2800 delegates representing more than 50 nations. Among those delegates were 31 members of the Southern California Mission Center, from 11 of our congregations.

The counsel was first presented to the church on January 17 during a worship service at the Temple, and webcast live to members around the world. President Stephen Veazey invited the worldwide church to join with him in prayer, discussion, and discernment about the document in preparation for its consideration at World Conference.



The new scripture provides the opportunity for people baptized in other Christian denominations to become members of Community of Christ without being rebaptized. Guidelines for this new provision will be developed by the First Presidency. The scripture also emphasizes the power of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper (Communion). In addition, the new section calls for Christ-like principles to govern human behavior and relationships, with the provision of national conferences to decide specific policy concerning such issues. The new scripture concludes with paragraph 9f: "The mission of Jesus Christ is what matters most for the journey ahead."

The conference featured an ever-increasing commitment to the full participation of all, regardless of culture or language. Translation was provided in nine languages with a greater emphasis on consideration by English speakers. Frequent reminders to "speak slowly, speak clearly, speak loudly" evidenced this increased importance. The Tuesday evening ordination service was presented entirely by Spanish speaking ministers (with side by side English translation).

The Conference was characterized by a consistent atmosphere of mutual respect with little or no rancor. Many remarked on the peaceful spirit that graced the proceedings, particularly the legislative sessions, where differing points of view were expressed. ■



*Some of the SCMC Delegation look upward during a break.*



*Scott Murphy is ordained to the ministry of Apostle by President David Schaal and Apostle Jim Slauter. He will serve as Apostle to the newly constituted Western Field, of which SCMC is a part. Scott will be our guest minister at reunion this summer.*

## San Jacinto Prayer Walk

By Gwen Lute



Justin Pearson and I met at the Hemet-San Jacinto Congregation on Saturday, March 6 at 8:00AM to start our prayer walk in the neighborhood surrounding the church. Dean and Orilee Crawford signed up for coffee and they also brought their prayers to kick off the walk! The forecast was rain and so I had called many friends asking for prayers to hold off the moisture until afternoon. The first miracle! The sun even shone from time to time during the walk.

The second miracle was that both Justin and I were well enough to go! I had been suffering from the flu for several weeks and Justin woke up the Saturday of the prayer walk with a sore throat. Yet from the time I picked him up he started feeling better! Justin was

better, I stronger, and the sun came out! "From this day forth," we proclaimed, "we are expecting miracle after miracle in Christ's name!"

The scriptures include the promise "Where two or more gather there I will be in the midst." On this, the first day of our prayer walk, some might say only two did the walking and only two brought coffee and doughnuts, and it was a wash out. But they wouldn't have seen the miracles, right there in front of us.

After Tony and Lindy Carnahan showed up and prayed for Justin, we then offered prayers for every home on Rosario and Margarita Streets—50 homes in all—and added a special door hanger telling the family of our gift. Justin and I sang praise songs and prayed for each home. What easily could have been cancelled became a successful launch for our new ministry!



The second week saw our numbers double as Sam Rose and Dean Crawford joined Justin and me. We are optimistic about the coming weeks of adventure as God goes before us into a world in need of the love that only comes from Christ! ■

## Senior Ministry

By Denise Leichter, RN  
SCMC Staff & Support Minister

The Senior Health and Advocacy Ministry has begun! Logistics and communication have been the priorities for getting started this first month. Our first newsletter is out, email communications started, some special home visits, and the Gardena Congregation has allowed me to share in their first Sunday School class about seniors. They have also begun a needs assessment.

Jacquie Bethel of Gardena had this to share: "During our class time Denise shared with us the program the Church is rolling out for seniors and it



was very exciting and in some ways surprising! We have so many aging in our midst yet we weren't even tapping into their needs as a group. The presentation was very eye-opening as to the ways that each of us can get involved in providing for those that are in need. As a congregation we look forward to the opportunities to serve our seniors!"

Connection has been made with a very special 90-year-old and her daughter for a pastoral visit in their home. Her heritage goes back to some significant names and times in the church and it was a shame the whole day couldn't be spent together! Sharing in table fellowship with some of our seniors during Buckhorn Work Week has also been a blessing, and I am excited to see LOTS more of you at Reunion. We'll have a few special events for the seniors.

Mark your calendars and watch for flyers on an upcoming seminar of note: SENIOR HOUSING: Home through Hospice. This educational forum will be June 17<sup>th</sup>, 10:30AM-2PM in Northridge with lunch included.

Remember, if you need an Advocate or a Minister, or want to refer a friend, you can reach me at [SeniorMinistry@CofChristla.org](mailto:SeniorMinistry@CofChristla.org).

Following a recent visit from Denise, Lola Negaard said, "I thought I had taken care of so many things relating to my situation. I did not think of many of the things that the Senior Ministry is making us aware of. There are so many things that seniors and those that live alone need to be aware of. These things will make it easier and just provide some peace of mind. Through the past year I have had a lot of changes in my life and these are really important to me."

## Lennox and El Segundo Congregations: A Journey of Faith and Stewardship

By Denise Leichter

What is the good news of closing a congregation? As the planning developed for the final service celebrating the El Segundo Congregation, care was taken to honor relationships and create a setting of gratitude. What an amazing journey the people from Lennox and El Segundo have taken dating back to 1934. The last few months of home visits, phone calls, e-mails, and letter writing resulted in a packed sanctuary on February 28 at St. Michael's Episcopal Church (El Segundo's home for more than the last decade). Special guests included Steven Shields, former El Segundo pastor, Matthew Naylor, President of Outreach International, and Susan Skoor, Apostle for the Pacific Field.

The roll call of Presiding Elders and Leaders included notable pioneers—ordinary people that took the message to the streets and helped shape a ministry that has made a difference around the world! The bad news of having the Lennox property taken away in 1987, and then not investing in another building became the **good news** of investing in people and projects for nearly 25 more years. Funds were invested in:

- Hispanic ministries helped send young people to Graceland;
- Local vocational grants helped change lives of at-risk youth;
- Fostering sanctuary and spiritual needs in Los Angeles and Tecate helped birth new congregations;
- Camperships helped ensure no child would miss the opportunity to attend a potentially life-changing youth camp;
- Outreach International helped bring disaster relief and provided backing for “sustainable” projects that will change communities for generations to come.

Some of the children from Freeman Avenue who are now adults attended the celebration to share in tearful gratitude for the opportunities they were given as well as what they are now giving back to their communities as Graceland board members, small business owners, teachers, police officers and good neighbors.

Through the years this faithful band in Lennox and El Segundo lived out the mission of the church by responding in courageous LOVE, planting seeds of PEACE with ongoing and long suffering cultivation, listening to the hard life stories with new HOPE, and ultimately leaving a sense of tremendous JOY. There will be a “sequel” to this story as members visit and join new congregations and add their life testimonies and service. The Freeman Avenue group is planning new types of reunions and opportunities with La Nueva Esperanza en Cristo to mentor and encourage others.

Because of the wise and thoughtful stewardship of capital assets, El Segundo's recommendations for distribution of funds was approved and enacted by a special mission center conference. As a result, outreach ministries received extra funding, including the new congregation Welcome Home, youth ministries were further bolstered by additional monies, and a new ministry begun to serve and advocate our senior members and friends.

This little group of faithful stewards of El Segundo has produced, and continues to produce, one of the largest and most diverse group of disciples we have ever had in our mission center, not so much because of who came in, but because of those who were blessed and sent forth to serve! ■



Some of those on the Presiding Elder roll call who attended the celebration: (l to r) Jeannie Kuhn, Linda Espiritu Santo, Steve Shields, Linda Barentine, Greg Barentine.

### *All I Could Do Was Cry*

*On Friday, all I could do was cry  
As the blood trickled down His face.  
How could they treat Him like that? Why?  
I didn't know what to say  
He healed the blind and the lame.  
He made the world beautiful for me.  
Now nothing would feel the same  
As the cross rises on Calvary.  
On Sunday it was known to EVERYONE  
That Jesus Christ had risen again that day.  
He was brighter than the rising sun.  
"How marvelous is He," I want to say.  
"He died for you, He died for me;  
With his love, we are set free."*

— Sarah Gurney



# Summer, Anyone?

by Kyle Logan, SCMC Children and Youth Minister

As I prepare for the summer camping season, I am inspired by what has already taken place this year in children and youth ministry. Jr. High and Sr. High Camp were both in February and both camps were transformative for the youth in attendance as well as for the adults. At Hunger Challenge, we learned that "Change Starts Here!" The youth learned how sustainable good is needed all throughout the world and it starts with them right where they are. The Sr. High traveling ministry Journey Takers has met a couple of times this year and provided excellent ministry for those with whom they met. You can see it has been a busy year so far.



We start the summer this year with **Junior Camp**. The theme for this event is "Grounded in Jesus" and children will learn what it means to have their roots planted in the teachings of Jesus. I hope to see all children who have completed 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade at Buckhorn June 4-6.

Next up is the **Journey Takers Caravan**. We will be traveling to Denver, Colorado on June 18<sup>th</sup> and returning on June 26<sup>th</sup>. The youth will be providing ministry in Las Vegas, St. George, Grand Junction, and Denver. They are excited to jump into all of the wonderful opportunities they will have to provide ministry as they strengthen bonds of friendship.

**Primary Camp** is June 26-27 at Temple City and Linda Read will be the Director. The theme this year is "Peace and Forgiveness." Children will learn how to be peacemakers at home, at school and in their communities. Primary camp is for children in grades K-2.

At **Reunion** this year our guest youth ministers are Zac and Katie Harmon-McLaughlin. They will be providing ministry with the Junior High and Senior High throughout the week in their classes, campfires, and in free time. I hope you have an opportunity to make it up to Buckhorn to meet them. Reunion is July 9-16.

**SPECTACULAR** is July 24-31. SPEC is for youth who have completed grades 10-12. We will be leaving on the 23<sup>rd</sup> to meet up with the rest of the Calizonia Delegation in Independence. The theme for SPEC this year is *Revolutionary!* Registration and money is due on May 15. Please be punctual if you want to go.

We finish off the summer camping season with **Junior High Camp**, August 13-15. The theme for this year's camp is "River of Life." The location for this camp is to be determined, so if you are interested in attending Jr. High Camp or know someone who is, please get in contact with me.

During this camping season, I would challenge you to take a moment everyday to pray for our children, youth and staff that will be at camps. We want to give our children and youth the best opportunities to learn how to be disciples of Jesus Christ.

check our website for more info on Children/Youth Ministry and upcoming events at [www.youth.cofchristla.org](http://www.youth.cofchristla.org). Also, as always, if you would like to help out in any way with children/youth ministry, please contact Kyle Logan.

[KLogan@cofchristla.org](mailto:KLogan@cofchristla.org)  
909.562.9308

## Dates for Camps

JUNE 4-6	Junior Camp <b>Grounded in Jesus</b>
JUNE 18-26	Journey Takers Caravan
JUNE 26-27	Primary Camp <b>PEACE &amp; FORGIVENESS</b>
JULY 9-16	Reunion <b>Sharing in Community of Christ</b>
JULY 24-31	SPECTACULAR <b>Revolutionary!</b>
AUG 13-15	Junior High Camp <b>River of Life</b>





*Junior High Campers show off their award-winning cookie creations.*



*Markus Fluker, Suzy Amador, Siara Juarez, and Ana Galindo*

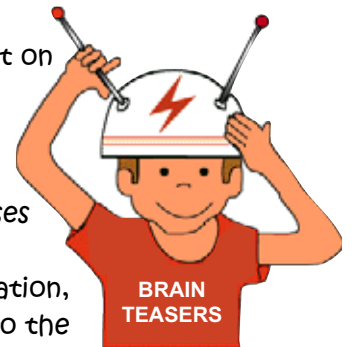


*Campers crafted this rendition of the weekend's theme.*



## Brain Teasers

1. You are driving a bus. At the first stop, 2 women get on. The second stop, 3 men get on and 1 woman gets off. Third stop, 3 kids and their mom get on, and a man gets off. The bus is grey, and it is raining outside. What color is the bus driver's hair?
2. An Arab sheik is old and must will his fortune to one of his two sons. He makes a proposition. His two sons will ride their camels in a race, and whichever camel crosses the finish line **LAST** will win the fortune for its owner. During the race, the two brothers wander aimlessly for days, neither willing to cross the finish line. In desperation, they ask a wise man for advice. He tells them something; then the brothers leap onto the camels and charge toward the finish line. What did the wise man say?
3. Your dad tells you that he will pay you \$6.00 an hour for the 6 seconds that you take to wash your hands before dinner. How much did you make for washing your hands?
4. You have a 3 gallon jug and a 5 gallon jug. You need to measure out exactly 7 gallons of water. How can you do it?
5. What can run but never walks, has a mouth but never speaks, has a head but never weeps, and has a bed but never sleeps?



**ANSWERS:** 1. Whatever color your hair is! Remember, you are the bus driver! 2. The rules of the race were that the owner of the camel that crosses the finish line last wins the fortune. The wise man simply told them to switch camels. 3. 1 cent. 4. Fill the 5 gallon jug, pour it into the 3 gallon jug until the 3 gallon is full, leaving 2 gallons in the 5 gallon jug. Now pour the 3 gallon jug out. Pour the remaining 2 gallons from the 5 gallon into the empty 3 gallon jug. Now fill the 5 gallon from the faucet. You now have exactly 7 gallons. 5. A river!

## New Life Begins

By Heather Weeks  
 (on behalf of the plant team, now called "The Home Team"  
 Mark Barentine, Douglas Graves, Glenn Johnson, Heather Smith,  
 Heather Weeks, and Pastor Linda Read

Sunday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, marked the kickoff worship service for our new Welcome Home Congregation. More than 80 people joined in the celebration of Palm Sunday including neighbors from the Covina community, the congregational plant team, and visitors from all over the mission center. We shared in a creative service that included sacred dance, live music, a children's bell choir, waving of palm branches and a reflection on the things that keep us from embracing a new life in Christ. We finished the service by planting a palm tree in the yard as an ongoing symbol of the new life of the congregation.



Following the service, we enjoyed a delicious meal, one another's company and delighting in the children playing in the yard. A few adults even joined in a great game of soccer. Looking back on this wonderful day, the plant team felt profound gratitude for the beauty and support of all those who were a part of it, and most of all, for the amazing grace and love of God's Spirit which always waits with open arms for each of us, saying: "Welcome Home."



*Children and Youth bell choir.*



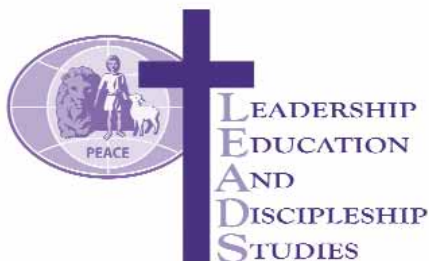
*Mark Barentine leads planting of palm.*

You know the credit card commercial that says "What's in your wallet?" Well, we want to know what's in your closet...your cupboards, your shed, and under your bed! Welcome Home is having a recycling event—Free for All/All for Free—and all are welcome to participate (see page 8 for details). We can share our unneeded and unused stuff with our community and maybe find some things to bring home and put to good use. Think about it—you get to empty your closet and then acquire gently-used items you can use to fill it back up again ☺. Please join us for this fun outreach event that both saves money and is good for the planet. ■



*Pastor Linda Read leads the new congregation's first worship.*

Contact Pastor Linda Read at 909-631-0393 or [LRead@cofchristla.org](mailto:LRead@cofchristla.org) for information about "Free for All/All for Free" and also about how you can start a tradition of doing this same kind of event in your congregation as a way to reach out into your neighborhood. Reaching out has never been so good for the earth, so good for your home and so good for your congregation!



## LEADS

UPCOMING COURSE: **MISSION**

May 22-23, 2010

Temple City Center for Christian Ministries  
9468 Broadway, Temple City

Our series continues with a course on Mission and Evangelism led by Kris Judd, President of Seventy. Join us on Saturday and Sunday, May 22-23 for another quality education experience. The cost is \$20 (lunch and snacks—free will offering) not including books. To register, contact Tonia Cooper ([tonia@cofchristla.org](mailto:tonia@cofchristla.org) or 714-847-5731) to enroll AND to receive required reading material.

Kris is Field Missionary Coordinator for the Canada and Pacific Field and is president of the 9<sup>th</sup> Quorum of Seventy. She received her undergraduate degree in psychology from Graceland and a specialist degree in school psychology from Iowa State University. Kris is married to Peter Judd, former apostle and member of the First Presidency. ■



*Kris Judd, President of Seventy*

## Skoor Farewell

Dear Friends,

Memories wash over me as I recall the years I have spent with you. My first experience at Camp Buckhorn, as a brand new apostle, will always remain a wonderful inauguration of my years on the Council of Twelve. Skits and laughter, conversations of depth and spirit, worship experiences and ordinations, classes and conferences—each are peopled with dear friends I have come to love and admire. Your friendship and support for me through the years has enriched my personal life as well as my ministry, and no words of mine can adequately thank you.

Although field assignments were not firmly established in March, when I was among you I suspected that it might be my last visit as your apostle. The knowledge added poignancy to my activities, and I cherished each moment of connecting and sharing. I take joy in the fact that we are the Community of Christ and are connected to one another beyond geography, assignments, and roles. And you now have a wonderful new apostle, Scott Murphy. He's a great friend of mine, whom I respect and admire greatly. His gifts and ministry will bring new blessings to you.

As I travel in my current field, I will carry you in my heart and continue to uphold you in prayer as you carry out the mission of the gospel in California. May your loving spirit reach out to many, both within and outside the church, to transform lives and expand the witness of Jesus Christ.

Blessings,

*Susan*

Susan D. Skoor, *Apostle*  
Canada and Pacific Mission Field

*People from Burbank, Santa Barbara, Canoga Park, Simi Valley, and Ventura congregations gathered in Ventura to share with Susan Skoor.*

## An Ultimate Recycling Event!

May 16, 2010 @ 1:00PM



Clean out your drawers, closets, cupboards, garage, shed (and under your bed!)

Bring all clean & gently used items that you no longer need or use to share them with your community. (Take some home, too!)

## Reduce, Reuse & Recycle

Join us for Services & Dinner  
Sunday, May 16 at 4PM

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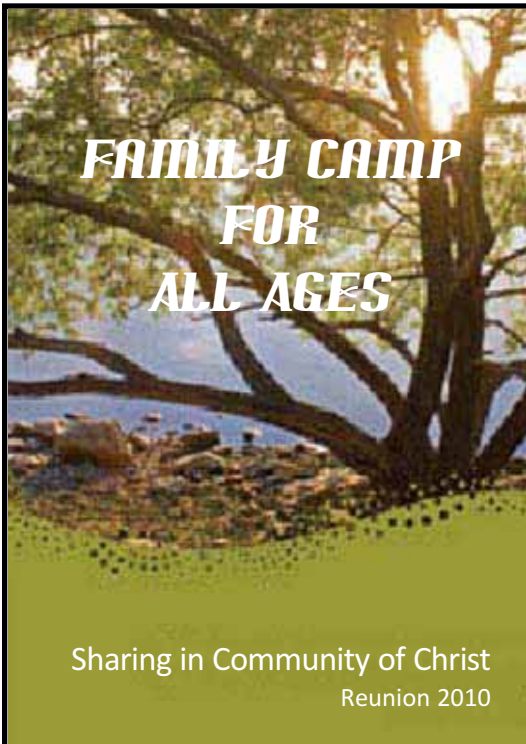


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Call Linda Read for more info:  
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"Come As You Are . . . All Are Welcome"





2010 SOUTHWEST INTERNATIONAL-SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REUNION

*Sharing in Community of Christ*

JULY 9-16, 2010

BUCKHORN CAMP - IDYLLWILD, CA



Sharing in Community of Christ  
Reunion 2010

**SHARE YOUR MINISTRY**

Volunteers needed to bring ministry through:  
 • Children's Ministry Coordinator • Children's Classes  
 • Afternoon Recreation  
 Please contact Lora Davis: [LoraLee007@att.net](mailto:LoraLee007@att.net)

**GUEST MINISTRY**

Scott Murphy

*Newly Ordained Apostle, Western Mission Field*

Zac and Katie Harmon-McLaughlin  
*Graceland Campus Ministry Interns*

Ken McLaughlin  
*Outreach International*

**COME JOIN US IN SACRED COMMUNITY!**

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**MAY**

- 3-9 Buckhorn Camp Work Week, Buckhorn Camp
- 9 Mother's Day
- 22-23 LEADS: *Mission and Evangelism* with Kris Judd
- 31 Memorial Day, SCMC Offices Closed

**JUNE**

- 4-6 Junior Camp,\* Buckhorn Camp
- 5 Buckhorn Golf Tournament, Moreno Valley
- 13 Children's Day
- 18-26 Journey Takers Caravan,\* Denver, CO
- 20 Father's Day
- 26-27 Primary Camp,\* Temple City, CA

**JULY**

- 4 Independence Day
- 5 SCMC Offices Closed
- 9-16 SCMC/SWIMC Reunion, Buckhorn Camp
- 24-31 Calizonia SPECTACULAR,\* Lamoni, IA

**AUGUST**

- 13-15 Junior High Camp,\* Location: TBD

\*Contact: Kyle Logan  
[KLogan@cofchristla.org](mailto:KLogan@cofchristla.org) or 909.562.9308

**Servant Ministry Recognized**



At the annual Valentine's Day celebration on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February, the Hemet-San Jacinto Congregation honored and crowned Bessie Campbell for her outstanding service as a Deacon. Her ministry includes not only the care of those in the congregation but also ministry among those in retirement and nursing homes as well as personal friends. ■

**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 July 15.

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