

Communities of Joy!

Southern California Mission Center

November 2004

Hemet Celebrates Four Superannuations

Four of our brothers and sisters who have ministered for many years in Southern California were superannuated by the Hemet Congregation at a celebration service on October 17. Those superannuated were Elder Delpha Evelyn Baker, Evangelist Floyd P. Larrison, Evangelist Earl Henry Beitler, and Evangelist Bill Ivory, Jr.



Evangelist Floyd Larrison

Brother Beitler and Sister Baker were not able to attend the service, but were represented by family members. The congregation and the families of those honored shared in potluck after the service.



Margaret Beitler accepted a certificate of superannuation for her husband, Evangelist Earl Beitler, from SCMC President Paul Davis.



Evangelist Bill Ivory, Jr., Irene Ivory, and SCMC President Paul Davis, at the superannuation ceremony.

Fall Fiesta Visits the Religions of the World



J.W. Windland, Dee McDonald, and Denise Leichter at the Fall Fiesta visit to a Buddhist temple.

Thirty-five happy Saints attended the 9th annual Bridge Builder Fall Fiesta October 18-19 at the Center for Christian Ministries. J.W. Windland, the guest minister, made an excellent presentation on the religions of the world. The event concluded with a tour of the Hsi Lai Temple in Hacienda Heights.

Costa Mesa Honors Bob Bass



The Costa Mesa Congregation honored Bob Bass with superannuation on October 10. Bob has been a member of the Community of Christ since 1959 and a priesthood member since 1963. He and his wife Sheila were presented with a certificate of superannuation by Pastor Perry Pace, a plaque from the congregation, and a special cake shared by all at the potluck that followed.

Baja Ordination Party

Linda Espiritu Santo and Linda Hewitt participated recently in the ordination of Rosa Lopez of the El Sauzal Congregation in Baja. Though torrential rains made travel difficult for many of those who wanted to attend, Don Compier, Dean of Community of Christ Seminar, also joined in.

Linda E. S. reports, "We may look a little wet—and we did not sing Dios Manda Lluvia (God Send Us Rain), but we were blessed by the 'lluvia' of the Spirit; and Rosa Lopez is now our newest elder and pastor in Baja. I know that she and the congregation sense and continue to need our support and prayers."



SCMC Conference Nov 14

Come join with your friends in the congregations of SoCal Mission Center on November 14 at the Center for Christian Ministries at 9468 Broadway, Temple City 91780. Peter Judd, counselor to the president of the church, will preach and ordain Mike Hewitt to the office of high priest and bishop. The schedule for the conference is

- 8:30 Refreshments
- 9:00 Praise singing
- 9:15 Business session
- 10:45 Worship
- 12:15 Lunch provided by Covina

A nursery and activities for the children will be provided from 9 to lunch. The items of business are

- Reports of SoCal MC leaders, including 2003 audit
- Consideration of the call of Mike Hewitt to the office of high priest and bishop
- Sustaining of Mission Center Leadership
- Recognition of outstanding youth and youth leaders
- Resolution to approve 2005 SCMC Operating Budget
- Election of Camp Buckhorn Board of Directors

Peter Judd was ordained a member of the Quorum of the First Presidency in April 2000. He served as a member of the Council of Twelve Apostles from 1996 to 2000, assigned to the South Central and West Central Fields. He previously served twenty-four years in various capacities on the church's headquarters staff and briefly as a staff appointee in the North Central Field. Peter is the author or co-author of six books and a number of articles, pamphlets, study resources, and other publications for the church. He is married to Kristin Phillips-Judd and has two adult daughters.



Our Ministry Worldwide Will Be Hurt Unless You Give

Dear Saints,

Fewer of us are giving to our worldwide ministries every year. Total giving is also down. Contributions this year are short by 12%. A dramatic and sustained increase in World Ministries giving is required to reach our goal of \$10.9M. To continue the level of ministries and services currently being provided around the globe we all need to give more. Please take seriously the challenge offered in the statement by President Grant McMurray from the November *Herald* "Up Front," included with this Communities of Joy.

Yours, Paul Davis

LeRoy Blankenship at Upland

You are invited to enjoy the ministry of songwriter, musician, and children's author, LeRoy Blankenship, with the Upland Congregation on Jan 8 at 4 PM. LeRoy has been in the ministry since 1958, serving as a pastor and full-time evangelist traveling all over the world. Please join your friends at Upland for a great afternoon.

Elaine Stienon's New Book Published

Enjoy an exciting walk through history with Elaine Stienon's newest book, "In Clouds of Fire," a historical novel set in the 1830s. The settlement of the church in Kirtland, the first troubles in Missouri, Zion's Camp, and the construction of the Kirtland Temple are all woven into a story about the diverse people who joined to form the early Kirtland community. The books make excellent gifts for any occasion and may be ordered on the internet at www.authorhouse.com or directly from the author at 1241 Irving Avenue, Glendale, CA 91201.

Pastoral Counseling Class Dec 4

The Aaronic Ministries Focus Team is sponsoring an introductory class on pastoral counseling at Temple City on Saturday, 12/4, 2-5 pm, followed by a dinner at 5 pm. There is a \$10 charge for the meal. Please contact Tonia Cooper at 714-847-5731 or tonia@cofchristla.org by November 29th to register. Mike Hewitt, SCMC Financial Officer, will be the facilitator.

The class is designed for Aaronic ministers but is open to all who wish to attend. Topics that will be addressed include how to create a listening environment, how to construct a conversation, how to think systematically, how to interpret stories, how to manage ministerial boundaries, and the use of a pastoral care case.

This class is part of a series of events that will be held twice a year in the mission center, presented by the Aaronic Ministries Focus Team. The next event will be held April 16, 2005 and will have a family ministries focus led by Jeanne Ernest, a practicing clinical psychologist and church member from Raytown, Missouri.

We thank you for your support.
Aaronic Ministries Focus Team

Start your Christmas shopping early at the

Upland Congregation

Fall Boutique

Nov. 12-13, 10 AM to 3 PM

1111 West 14th St, Upland, CA 91786

Upcoming Events

- Nov 12-13** Upland Congregation Fall Boutique
- Nov 14** SCMC Conference at CCM, Temple City
- Nov 20** Covina Fall Festival
- Dec 4** Pastoral Counseling Class at CCM
- Dec 19** Long Beach Christmas Cantata
- Jan 8** LeRoy Blankenship at Upland
- Feb 12-13** Jr Hi Winter Extravaganza at Buckhorn
- Feb 19-21** IYF/Spec Rally at Buckhorn

Up Front



It is time to be plainspoken about contribution trends and their impact on the mission of the church. People of faith are often reluctant to talk about money, feeling that it is unseemly to do so. We sometimes turn our heads, thinking “the Lord will provide.” I am inclined that way myself at times. But I can no longer mince words.

Here is the situation as straight and clear as I can state it. ***We must have a dramatic and sustained increase in World Ministries Mission Tithes or we will be obligated as stewards of the church's resources to make deep reductions in the ministries we are able to support.*** This will mean fewer full-time ministers in the field, fewer missionaries around the world, and fewer staff members providing resources and supportive services from world headquarters.

Last month we published in the *Herald* the fiscal year 2005 World Ministries budget of \$29.7 million. Three months into the fiscal year trends show us well short of our tithing goal of \$10.9 million. We are therefore implementing a management budget, reducing expenditures for the balance of the year. We are beginning work on the FY 2006 budget and have already determined it will need to be significantly smaller than 2005. The extent of the reductions in 2006 and beyond will depend on our members' response to God's call in their lives.

As we have studied it, we think there are several reasons for this situation, beyond the fluctuations of the global economy.

First, we continue to hear that many people think World Church needs are already met by endowments. A review of the budget will show a

number of smaller income sources, including endowments, bequests, and the Stewardship Foundation. But the largest income source that makes or breaks our budget is the line titled “World Ministries Mission Tithes.” In FY 2005 that line is \$10.9 million.

Second, the number of contributors to World Ministries has been in a steady decline for twenty-five years. It is critical that we grow the contributor base, including young families. A new group of disciples must recognize that it is their time to step up and financially support the mission of the church.

Third, our interpretation of tithing allows many different types of contributions to be identified as tithing. There are numerous worthy causes deserving support. ***But the foundational tithe for every disciple should be to share generously and equally between Congregation Ministries and World Ministries. That is where the life of the church is funded.***

Finally, we have to decide what is a reasonable and sustainable budget. Beginning with Transformation 2000 in 1997 we added 200 new ministers to the field. This carried with it an expectation of steadily increasing financial support to fund this expansion. While enthusiastically received and generously supported when first announced, the financial commitment has not been sustained.

We know with certainty that many of our members have additional capacity to share if they feel God's call to do so. We have to find a way to compellingly communicate the mission of the Community of Christ so as to engender a greater financial response.

Ironically, these sobering realities

come at a time when some miraculous things are occurring. In the next month or two we will be announcing details of a remarkable financial gift to the church. The story of this gift is among the most inspiring illustrations of one family's lifetime commitment we have ever witnessed.

This marvelous gift is a blessing, but does not solve our problem. Matched with some opportune increases in our real estate assets, it helps maintain a sound fiscal foundation for the church. However, a sustainable budget is totally dependent on an increase in World Ministries Mission Tithes, the “bread and butter” of our outreach to the world.

One-time gifts are deeply appreciated, and this is the time of year when those become a part of family financial planning. These enhance the consistent, month-by-month generosity of our members that sustains our mission. Our need is for that spirit to be resident in the hearts of our people so that our giving matches our gratitude for God's blessings. We are disciples, followers of Jesus Christ, called into this time in a world of immense need.

I urge you to respond with full and generous hearts, and not just in this month of thanksgiving and harvest. Discipleship is not a short-term commitment. It is the path of a lifetime.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "W. Grant McMurray". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a dark ink on a light background.

—W. Grant McMurray, president

Fall Festival

Dinner and Talent Showcase

*Saturday @ 5:30 p.m.
November 20, 2004*

**Come and feast on fall comfort food
featuring dessert in a pumpkin!
Then enjoy the awesome local talents of
the Covina Congregation and the 7th Day
Adventist Congregation!**

We would like to showcase your talent , too!

Contact us soon to participate!

Community of Christ

2003 E. Cienega, Covina 91724

Contacts: Rena 909/625-2194 or

Eileen 909/989-1386