

Together

Worldwide Church of God News

May/June 2008

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Volume 3, Number 3

Southern California Begins Round of U.S. Conferences

Christ, Commission, Community

On Friday, February 8, this year's round of regional conferences began in Agoura Hills, in Southern California, as 180 elders, ministry leaders, and members gathered to learn how our connection with Christ translates into more meaningful ministry in our communities. In coming months, similar conferences will be held in eight additional locations in the United States (see box on page 3).

Connected with Christ

The conference began on Friday afternoon with a presentation by

Dan Rogers titled "Who Is Jesus?" He stressed that God thinks before he speaks, or plans before he creates, and he planned to create us and save us before we were even born. He has the love and the creative power needed to bring his creation to completion.

This was followed by presentations by Ted Johnston and Randy Bloom, who spoke on their work as part of the ministry development team. They offer a wide variety of seminars, such as spiritual formation, church health and development, ministry life, ministry skills, children's and youth ministry, church multiplication leadership training, and reconciliation.

After this, pastoral team members gathered with their district pastoral leaders to discuss developments in the churches, the needs of the pastoral teams, and ways in which Church Administration & Development could assist them in their work.

The keynote address given on



Above: Ministry leaders and members gather in Agoura Hills, California. Below left, Dan Rogers addresses the audience.



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Friday evening by Joseph Tkach was titled "The Mystery of Godliness: Connected in Christ." He explained the key elements of a Trinitarian Christ-centered theology: Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God, and he is the lens through which we interpret all the Scriptures. The good news begins with him, and ends in him. Life is meant to be lived in union with Christ, and when we are connected with him, we are also connected to one another.

Putting theology into practice

On Saturday morning, Dan Rogers spoke on "Who are we in Jesus?" He began by noting that Christ lives in us, and we live in

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Left: Bermie Dizon, pastor of NewLife Fellowship in Pasadena, leads a discussion at a pastoral leaders' meeting. Above, left to right, Don and Anne Cline (Nipomo, CA), Richard and Sally Parker (Long Beach, CA), James Nicholson and Gary and Risa Crowell (all three from Honolulu, HI).

him. Phrases like “in Christ” or “in the Lord” occur almost 150 times in the New Testament, and we all live and have our being in him.

People sometimes ask, What would Jesus do? But we can also ask, What is Jesus already doing? He works in and through us, the church. We are a community working in participation with Christ, letting him work through us.

Christ is the master architect of a magnificent building—his church—and we are workers who put up temporary scaffolding in order to help build the structure. Sometimes we forget that our ministry methods are like the scaffolding that was necessary for one phase of the building, but in time it serves its purpose and needs to be removed and perhaps built in a different shape in a new location. Our methods may change from time to time, but Christ is still working through us for his glorious purpose.

In the afternoon, a variety of workshops were offered:

- Marriage, led by Dr. Jim Kissee
- Parenting, led by Dr. Jeb Egbert
- Starting a new church, by Randy Bloom
- Financial questions and answers, by WCG Treasurer Mat Morgan
- Team-based ministry, by Ted Johnston

No presentations were scheduled on Saturday evening. Some participants chose to gather in informal meetings to share what they learned and to discuss how they might implement these ideas and strategies in their own congregations. Others used the free-time opportunity to gather for fellowship.

The conference ended with a lively worship service and a sermon by Dan Rogers on “Why do we dance with Jesus?” He again stressed that God wants to draw us into the divine life, pulling us into an eternal relationship in which we participate in a joy-filled



Spanish-speaking leaders discuss their ministries. From left: Soledad and Manuel Ochoa (Westminster, CA), Lorenzo and Rita Arroyo (Antioch, CA), Gildardo De La Rosa (Santa Ana, CA), and Martha Turcios (San Fernando, CA).



Above, Joseph Tkach speaking on "The Mystery of Godliness." Above right, Ted Johnston at a seminar on team-based ministry. Below, Randy Bloom speaks on planting new churches. Right, Jim Kissee giving a marriage seminar.



of the regional conference on February 10, the coordinators of other regional conferences met to discuss the details of conference administration to ensure consistency in the various regions.

- And during the week after the conference, the eight WCG mission developers (see page 4) gathered to coordinate the work the churches are doing around the globe. We'll have more to say about their work in future issues of *Together*.

dance with the Father, Son, Holy Spirit, and uncountable others as we encourage more people to join the dance.

Three additional meetings

In Agoura Hills, three other meetings occurred in conjunction with the conference.

- On February 6-7, District Pastoral Leaders for Arizona, California and Nevada, along



Lower left: Neil Earle (Glendora, CA) and John Adams (Union, NJ) chat after one of the meetings. Above, Jeb Egbert presents a seminar on parenting. Right, Carmen Fleming (Orlando, FL) and Paulina Barrero (Bogota, Columbia).



with District Pastoral Leaders who are also coordinators for upcoming conferences, met with Church Administration & Development for DPL training.

- After the conclusion

2008 regional conferences

- April 4-6 — Portland, Oregon
- April 25-27 — Chicago, Illinois
- May 16-18 — Union, New Jersey
- May 30-June 1 — Denver, Colorado
- June 27-29 — Lexington, Kentucky
- July 25-27 — Dallas, Texas
- Sept. 12-14 — Kansas City, Missouri
- Nov. 14-16 — Orlando, Florida



Kalengule and Nsama Kaoma,
West, Central, and East Africa.



Gary and Wendy Moore,
Canada and Southern Africa.



Hector and Paulina Barrero,
Central and South America.

Mission Developers Organized Into Four Teams

Our mission developers now work in four teams, with two developers in each team:

For Africa, we have Kalengule Kaoma, of Zambia, and Gary Moore, the National Director of the WCG in Canada, who recently spent a year working with leaders in South Africa. His wife, Wendy, was the National Director in South Africa for several years. Gary will focus his attention on the southernmost African nations, while Kalengule serves the much larger area northwards.

For the Americas, we have Hector Barrero, pastor in Bogotá, Colombia, and Charles Fleming. Hector will work primarily with Latin America, and Charles will continue to coordinate our mission work in the Caribbean nations.

Our work in Asia, Australia, and the Pacific Islands is coordinated by Rod Matthews and Eugene Guzon. Rod works out of Australia, serving an area stretching from Pakistan in the west to Polynesia in the east. Eugene works primarily in the Philippines, but also coordinates some of the missionary work being done by Filipinos elsewhere in Asia.

The fourth region is Europe. There, James Henderson in the United Kingdom and Santiago Lange in Germany work with different groups of nations. James works with France, Estonia, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Scandinavia, and Santiago oversees work being done in Austria, Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland.

We'll have more about the mission projects in future issues.



Charles and Carmen Fleming, the Caribbean.



Ruth and Rod Matthews, Asia and Oceania.



Shirley and James Henderson,
the United Kingdom and parts of Europe.



Santiago and Elke Lange,
Germany and parts of Europe.



LuLu and Eugene Guzon,
the Philippines and parts of Asia.



“Assimilating New People” seminar

New Beginnings Christian Fellowship, Gainesville, FL, hosted an “Assimilating New People” seminar on Feb. 24, conducted by Randy Bloom (a member of the CAD Ministry Development Team). People who attended this event learned about practical ways to welcome guests into God’s “household,” help them become disciples of Christ, and participate in the life of a local congregation.

It was a joy to observe how the Lord blessed this activity, which was attended by 41 people from the Gainesville, Jacksonville and Tallahassee congregations, as well as other invited guests, including Larry Hinkle, District Pastoral Leader. It was a labor of love, and our thanks go out to everyone for the help they extended as we all worked together and learned together. Randy also conducted this workshop for Abundant Grace Fellowship in Ft. Myers, FL, on Feb. 23. We share here some of the comments we received.

“What attracted me to this particular seminar was the topic under discussion: ‘Assimilating New People.’ All of us have had the privilege of meeting and greeting new people, and were once new people ourselves. I came to this seminar with a desire to learn and be more effective in serving in this way.”

“I benefited a lot by realizing that even though God gives the increase, we still have our part to do by being friendly, courteous and kind.”

“Besides the fellowship, I also learned some ways to attract people to come to church, how to welcome visitors and help give them a sense of belonging.”

“When God sends us new people, they are his guests, not merely our visitors. We need to make them feel welcome and appreciated as they come to Christ’s table.”

“I learned that our congregation is doing some things right, but also learned how we can improve.”

“This time together was a blessing. We were able to share ideas and had a joyful time with our learning.”

To schedule a ministry development workshop for your congregation or district, contact Church Administration & Development.

Paul Volpe Jr.

World War II veteran honored

William (Bill) Hicks, 87 years young, a 49-year WCG member and deacon of the Pittsburgh, PA, congregation, was among 27 veterans in southwestern Pennsylvania honored for being members of the elite Tuskegee Airmen during World War II. This was a group of black soldiers who became pilots and mechanics in the specially commissioned 99th squadron, which later merged and became the 332nd. They flew over 15,000 sorties, escorted bombers and performed air-to-air dogfights with remarkable results. They trained hard and proved their keen abilities.

They wanted to be known as a unit, so they painted the tail of their planes bright red. By 1944, bomber squadrons were requesting the “Red Tails” as their fighter escorts, because of their superior record. Near the end of the war, German fighter pilots refused to engage the feisty “Red Tails” because of their high reputation, and the fear of being shot down by a pilot of another race.

Bill Hicks was a Red Tail mechanic. He scored so high on his aptitude test that his application had an unusual footnote: “White Man!” When these black pilots returned

to the United States, many scoffed at their claims to have been pilots. The major airlines refused to hire black pilots until 1965, 20 years after the war, though they had more than proven themselves capable. A few were hired as mail carrier pilots.

The local Public TV station, WQED, did an excellent 57-minute DVD program called the Tuskegee Airmen. Bill was interviewed at his home, and is on the video for about three minutes. He also shared his experience in a sermon, “Don’t Give Up,” on Jan. 27. He was honored at the Soldiers and Sailors Museum History Hall on Feb. 1 and 2.

The congregation honored him on Feb. 3 after services. Bill is proud that he can still wear his uniform after all these years. We are proud to have Deacon Bill as a pillar in our congregation and our community.

Tom Smith



Group visits member with ALS

On Dec. 16, 13 members of the East Suburban Community Church of Pittsburgh, PA visited Mary Ellen Stewart after the morning worship service (photo above). She has had Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS, or Lou Gehrig’s disease) for six years. The members sang Christmas carols and fellowshiped with Mary Ellen, her daughters and a nurse. Mary Ellen cannot communicate with voice, nodding, hand nor eye signals, but the family can read her facial expressions.

Tom Smith

Baxter Kruger conference in Big Sandy, TX

Nearly 200 members representing 17 congregations attended a conference with theologian Baxter Kruger in Big Sandy, TX on Feb. 23. The WCG New Beginnings Christian Fellowships of Big Sandy, TX, and Texarkana, AR, hosted the conference at the former Ambassador Hall located on the ALERT Academy campus just east of Big Sandy (formerly Ambassador University). Morning and afternoon sessions with Dr. Kruger featured gospel overview presentations and Q&A opportunities.

Jerome Ellard

Upcoming events

Ambassador College reunion

The Ambassador College Class of 1978 is planning a 30-year reunion Aug. 1-3, 2008, near Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas. Students who entered AC Big Sandy or AC Pasadena for the fall 1974 semester and students who joined our class at any time before graduation in June 1978 are welcome to attend. Faculty and staff are also welcome.

Registration information and a registration form are available at www.acreunion.info. Select "registration" and you should receive basic information about costs for the hotel, meals, entertainment, etc. plus a second page that you should print, complete and mail by July 1.

We need your help to locate classmates. Click "Lost & Found" on the website to see our list of '74-'78 Big Sandy and Pasadena classmates. If you have contact info for anyone on the list, please encourage them to respond to acreunion78@yahoo.com.

While on the website, request your personal log-in, then post your profile. This will be a meaningful forum for those who will not be able to attend the reunion.

Hope to see you August 1-3 in "BIG D"!

Summer Festival in Ferrara, Italy, Aug. 23-30

The Italian church invites members and friends from all over the world to join them in their festival, which will be held in the town of Ferrara. For information about the town, see www.ferrarainfo.com.

Aug. 23 is arrival day; Aug. 30 is departure day. There will be worship services and seminars with simultaneous translations into English, youth activities, fellowship meals and excursions to the surrounding areas, including Venice. John Halford and James Henderson hope to join us as guest speakers.

During our stay, Ferrara is also host to another major event in the evenings: the Ferrara Buskers Festival, a parade of the best street musicians in the world (see www.ferrarabuskers.com).

Housing costs are about 50 Euros (\$78 US) per person per day for a double room. For more information, see www.wcg.org/events, or contact Joseph Caristi at Jcaristi@cs.com; phone (908) 362-7650.

New name for WCG online education

We are pleased to make two announcements. Our online *graduate* program will now be known as **Grace Communion Seminary**; secondly, we are opening enrollment to WCG members who have bachelor degrees.

The name Grace Communion Seminary (GCS) has been adopted as an appropriate description of the theological content and level of our online graduate program. Ambassador College, a California Corporation, will now be doing business as Grace Communion Seminary.

WCG Australia will continue to administer Ambassador College of Christian Ministry, or ACCM (www.ambascol.org), as WCG's educational program for anyone who has *not* completed a bachelor's degree.

Graduate courses will be available this fall for any member with a

bachelor's degree. Program details, including application, class descriptions, schedules, and course registration information, are now available at www.gcs.ambassador.edu. You must go through the application process before you can take a course.

At GCS, three graduate programs are available. New students should apply for the Certificate of Theological Studies, which requires two theology courses and two biblical studies courses.

The second level is the Advanced Diploma in Christian Ministry. It requires three more courses (one in church history and two in ministry).

The third level is the Master in Pastoral Studies, which requires seven more courses (a total of 14).

Requirements for each program can be seen on the website.

Administrators and professors of GCS are members of WCG. You can view their brief biographies on our website, which can also be accessed from the WCG homepage.

Grace Communion Seminary emphasizes God's great gift of grace and the communion we have in Christ with the Father and Jesus and one another through the Holy Spirit.

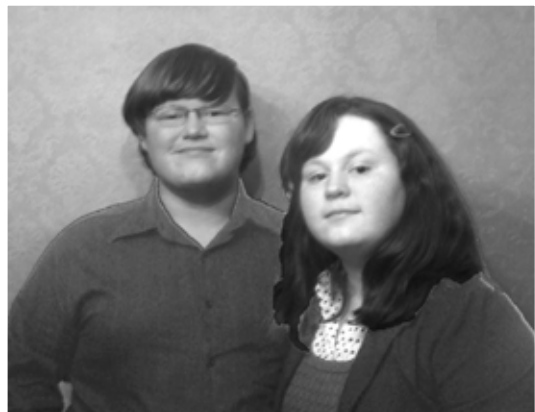
GCS Purpose Statement:

Grace is the essence of our lives. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ reveals God to us, grants us life in him, leads us in forgiving and being forgiven, and gives us salvation.

Communion defines the relationship we have with God, Jesus, and one another. The communion of the Holy Spirit binds us with Jesus who is the head of the Church, enlivens God's love in our hearts, and unites us as followers of Jesus Christ.

Seminary describes the scope of our educational goal. We are committed to enabling pastoral ministry in the universal church that effectively shares the love of the Father with the world.

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Cor. 13:14).



Youths Serving the Lord in Song

They sing in church, on the radio, at professional sporting events, at county fairs, and in assisted living facilities. People love to hear them so much so that they have become popular performers in the Seattle, WA, area.

Dylan, 16, and Dulcinea, 12, live in Bellevue, WA, with their grandparents, Mike and Norma Hill, and attend the Seattle/Bellevue church. They both began singing in church at age 5. With the encouragement of pastor Bill Miller, Dylan sang his first solo, “Amazing Grace,” as special music, and he has been singing ever since. He has a beautiful tenor voice, and he loves to sing and enjoys inspiring others through music, especially gospel music. He also plays piano and cello, occasionally accompanying his sister when she plays her guitar in services.

Dylan has been an active participant in Columbia Choirs (an international award-winning children’s choir) for 10 years. They have performed at the Seattle Symphony, Bellevue Philharmonic Orchestra, and at Seattle Mariners and Seahawks games. Presently they are rehearsing some folk songs and pop tunes for concerts at Disneyland in Southern California. They are also recording a Christmas CD that will be available this fall.

Dulcinea has a fine alto voice, and loves to sing gospel music and share God’s word in song. She also enjoys playing piano and guitar.

Singing as a duet in 2005, Dylan and Dulcinea won second place in their first competition, the Washington State’s 15th Annual Christian Talent Contest. As a result of placing in their category, they have had many opportunities to share God’s message in song in several Seattle-area concert programs and county fairs. They have performed, and were interviewed, on radio station KTSW. They enjoy singing

“God Bless America” at the opening ceremonies for a local minor-league professional baseball team.

Praise from their pastor

Pastor Bill Miller says, “I became acquainted with the very young Dylan and Dulcinea when they were put under the care of their grandparents, Mike and Norma Hill. Under their care, both kids began to blossom. The Hills enabled and encouraged them to find, develop, and use their talents. At a young age, Dylan began to sing solos at church. Not to be outdone by her big brother, Dulcie soon followed suit. They now sing both duets and solos on a regular basis. They also share their instrumental prowess with us, as both have learned to play a variety of instruments. Because their grandparents are very involved, both kids have been actively involved in youth and church functions. They have a sterling attendance record, and like to come and serve at church. They enjoy interacting with members of all ages. Both were counseled and baptized at age 12. They continue to display a sincere dedication to God, which is not easy to do in today’s schools and society. We feel very blessed to have the Hills, Dylan, Dulcie, and all of our young people as a part of our congregation.”

They love serving the Lord

Perhaps even more remarkable than their music talents are their thoughts about serving the Lord. Dylan has this to say about the remarkable opportunities given him and his sister: “We joyfully give up

our spare time to freely serve Jesus with our voices. We are willing to go anywhere and take advantage of all opportunities to spread the gospel, even in places that do nothing for our potential ‘career.’ If we are serving God with all our hearts and desiring nothing in return, and God chooses to bring success our way without us having to compromise our message, our music or our values—then praise God! We want to be musicians with a servant’s heart seeking to serve God in all that we do.”

Dulcinea writes, “Our first time singing at the Puyallup Fair, a young lady was walking by and as we began singing she sat down in the back row and listened. The next day she returned and came up to us with tears in her eyes and gave us both a big hug and told us that she just had to come back again today to hear us sing because we so touched her heart. It meant a lot to us knowing that our song had such an impact on someone’s life. That was the highlight of our day and something we will always remember.”

She also notes, “God’s heart is open to hear us, his touch nearer than our next thought. Our very personal God wants to hear from us personally.” Remarkable words from people so young!

Singing is not all they do. Dylan assists in teaching children’s church, greeting, and setting up chairs. He attends local teen Bible studies and is looking forward to being part of the SEP staff in a couple of years. He also likes to cook, play video games, and recently built a computer for the family.

Dulcinea enjoys art, drama and cooking. She is very helpful at church in setting up chairs and entertaining the younger children.

Together they have invited about a dozen other children to church, teen Bible study and SEP.

May God bless these remarkable young Christians. They are touching the hearts of thousands of people through their music.

Paul Hailey



Births

Nathan Samuel Driver, Feb. 9, second child of Adrian and Carol (Campau) Driver, of Zeeland, MI.

Isaac Stewart Emerson, Jan. 7, first child of Erik and Tori (Kinsler) Emerson, of Everett, WA.

Zoe Dawn Hawkins, Dec. 12, second child of Paul and Michelle Hawkins, of Old Hickory, TN.

Makaylah Kay Hebel, Sept. 20, second daughter of Cole and Jennifer (Vershowske) Hebel, of Lake Wales, FL.

Jeremy Paul Judd, Feb. 13, third son of Gerald and Silvia (Baillie) Judd, of Wilson, NC.

Sarah Marie McManama, Jan. 13, third child of James and Denise (Purkapile) McManama, of Orange City, FL.

Ada Meriwether Villers, Nov. 22, third child of Mark and Adela (New) Villers, of Coos Bay, OR.

Achievement

Mark A. Dannehl, member in the Monroe, LA, congregation, was offered a seven-year contract for his first book: *Being Transformed Through Pain and Loss*. The 73-page book is an inspirational true story told to bring glory to God and to inspire others in the midst of trials. It can be purchased at various locations online, such as publishamerica.com, amazon.com, and bn.com.

Elder ordinations

- Jonathan Browne**, Queens, NY
- Joseph Caristi**, Middletown, NY
- Horace Hammond**, White Plains, NY
- Victor Henry**, White Plains, NY
- James Hills**, Manhattan, NY
- Andrew McArthur**, Clarkstown, NY
- David Schurter**, Middletown, NY
- Gus Thomas**, Toronto East, Canada
- Carson Thompson**, White Plains, NY
- Serge Volpe**, White Plains, NY

Anniversaries

John and Wilma Peterson, of the Syracuse, NY, congregation, celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary on April 28. They have four children: Zane, Tara, Shawn and Layna, and seven grandchildren.

Floyd and Lillie Hayden celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Jan. 26. They attend the Christ our Peace Community Church in Indian Head, SC.

Obituaries

John Austin Flynn, 83, of Cheyenne, WY, died Nov. 25. He was born Jan. 24, 1924, in Los Angeles to Austin James and Esther Cleoria (Woodley) Flynn. He married Dorothy Chavannes in Los Angeles on Dec. 16, 1950.

Mr. Flynn worked for Martin Marietta company, and later as a supervisor at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California until 1974.

After his JPL retirement he enrolled in the Los Angeles College of Chiropractic, receiving his license in 1978, and was in private practice. He and his wife moved to Cheyenne in 1993 to be closer to family. He served as a lay pastor, and his life was filled with the expression of his Christian faith.

Mr. Flynn is survived by his loving wife of almost 57 years, Dorothy; his children and their spouses, Mark and Miranda Flynn of Marietta, GA, Ross and Jan Flynn of Detroit, MI, Toni and John Flynn II of Hawkins, TX, Joy Flynn, and Catherine and Ray Fertig Jr. of Cheyenne; 14 grandchildren and their spouses, and three great grandchildren.

Rosalie Turk, 84, died Feb. 17, of metastasized colon cancer to the stomach and lungs. She is survived by four children: Tom Turk, Donna Bechthold (Glenn), John Turk (Paula) and Don Turk. She had seven grandchildren

Birth Announcement

We'd like to let people know about your baby as soon as we can. Just fill out this coupon and send it to the address below. Please submit your announcements within six months. We do not print baby photos in *Together*, but we will put them on our website. See www.wcg.org/together for events, announcements, obituaries, etc.

Michael Morrison, *Together* editor
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Last name		Father's first name	
Mother's first name		Mother's maiden name	
City and state		Baby's sex	
Baby's first and middle names		Date of birth month day	
Number of children you now have. Boys:		Girls:	

and two great-grandchildren. Rosalie will be greatly missed by her family and friends. Cards may be sent to the family at her daughter's address: Donna and Glenn Bechthold, 2420 La Costa Ave., Carlsbad, CA 92009.

Frank W. Whitford, 78 of Medina, OH, died on March 16 of heart failure. A retired mechanical engineer, he had been a member of WCG since 1974. Frank will be deeply missed by his wife of 45 years, Rena, also a member, children Barbara, David, and John, and many grandchildren and great grandchildren. As a Marine veteran who saw combat and was wounded in Korea, he was buried with full military honors.

* See www.wcg.org/together/08/may/announce.htm for more information and photos.



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