

Communities of Joy!

Southern California Mission Center

June 2004

Eight Baptisms at Orange!



Eight people were baptized and confirmed at the Orange Congregation this spring. Pictured here are Bobby Cramer, Keith McCarty, Jr, Vicky McCarty, and Kristina McCarty. Evangelist Joe Hammer and Pastor Mark Richards are confirming Vicky. Baptized and confirmed later were Josh Gunter, Ryan Hall, and Stoner and Tiffany Gable.

Canoga Park Christ's Kids

For the past 5 years the Canoga Park Christ's Kids have done something special for all of the women in the congregation. This year they made fresh flower arrangements in bud vases. With the help of Edye Holmes, Christ's Kids also provided the worship center for the Mother's Day worship service and the rest of the services in May.



Prante Performs with US Air Force Band

Costa Mesa member Michael Prante was one of four band members attending Redlands East Valley High School chosen to perform with the US Air Force Academy Band of The Rockies. Michael played the trumpet with the band in the John Philip Sousa march "Fairest of The Fair" in a concert held at The Redlands Bowl April 25. Michael was awarded a certificate and a USAF lapel pin, and received congratulations from the conductor, Lt. Col. Philip Chevallard.



Tahitian Adventure

I spent the first half of May in French Polynesia teaching Community of Christ Scriptures in the Ecole Pastorale, the Tahitian version of Temple School. I was part of a team of teachers and translators including Art Smith and Mareva Arnaud, led by Mission Center President Emile Teihotaata-Mervin, that taught for five days on Tahiti, then again on



three other islands. I also preached and participated in several confirmations, baby blessings, and ordinations.

Jeanne joined me for the last week, including trips to the islands of Amanu and Hau. She left LAX at midnight, flew by 747 eight hours to Papeete, met the team for breakfast at the airport, transferred to a small prop plane for 2.5 hours more to Hau, then took an open 18' motorboat across a bumpy South Pacific to Amanu, just in time for lunch of the Tahitian speciality poisson cru (raw fish salad). By that evening she was teaching "Dum-Dum-Da-Da" to 25 children. Amanu has a population of 100, 85 of whom are Community of Christ members.

My favorite memories from the trip are fabulous food (I was lucky to have Hiroshi teach me to enjoy sashimi before I went), churches full of

people thirsty for education about our scriptures, singing that made my hair stand on end, countless



gifts from stunningly generous people, kisses of greeting and goodbye, and the beautiful faces and smiles of all my new friends.

Most of all, I learned what grace looks like when it is a natural element in the lives of generous disciples. I will treasure this experience and draw from it the rest of my life. **Submitted by Paul Davis**

La Nueva Esperanza Baptism at Lakewood

May has been a month of change and movement for La Nueva Esperanza. The congregation has truly been a nomadic group this month. They have met in Temple City, Up-land, and Lakewood.

On the 16 of May, the congregation had the privilege of attending the last service of the Lakewood Congregation. We were moved by the sharing of those who have been a part of that congregation through the years and the many, many lives that have been touched by their ministry. After the service, Sesar Juarez was baptized by Sherry Southland—which was symbolic of the ministry that will continue due to the dedication and generosity of the Lakewood congregation and of the connectedness of all of us. Sesar's confirmation will be held later in June after the completion of a new pre-baptismal class attended by a number of children.

The decision was made to begin meeting in Lakewood on Sunday mornings until the church is sold—so a month that began with the congregation meeting on Sunday afternoons in Temple City, has ended with the congregation meeting in Lakewood on Sunday morning.

On the other side of the border, Sergio, Sara, and I,

along with Geri Macias and others, began the month assisting with translation at the Southwest International Mission Center Conference that was held in Tecate, Baja California. This was a new experience for everyone—a chance to tie together the “international” part of that area. Geri was able to spend some time here and also in ministry in Baja.



Part of the pre-baptismal class

On Mother's Day, which is celebrated on May 10 in Mexico, the El Sauzal congregation truly had a celebration. Four people were baptized and confirmed; a baby was blessed; and wedding vows were renewed. A couple, Antonio and Manuela, who have been together for 53 years but had never had a church wedding decided they would like to have their union blessed on the same day as their baptisms (and on his 81st birthday). It was an exciting day!

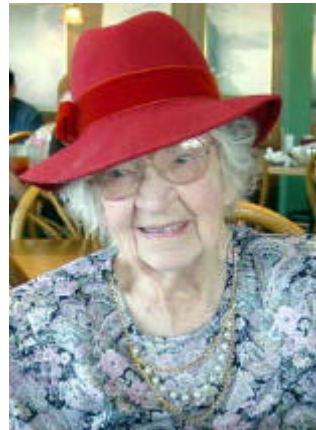
The people of El Sauzal were blessed by the generous donations of the Southern California Mission Center for their new food pantry. As we unloaded the food people

stopped by to ask if we were going to open a store! We would like to thank all of you who were so generous in your response to the needs of the people. ¡Que Dios les bendiga!

Submitted by Linda Espiritu Santo

Costa Mesa Birthday

Costa Mesa member Laveta Bergan recently celebrated her 98th birthday. Laveta enjoys having coffee and donuts daily at her club house, attends church weekly, makes the communion bread monthly (from scratch), helps make over 200 sandwiches a month for the congregation's project for SOS (Share Our Selves), and can always be counted on to bear her testimony.



Laveta also sends out birthday and anniversary cards from the congregation and is always available after the worship service to give hugs.

Upcoming Events

- Jun 19-26** Sr High Camp at Buckhorn
- Jul 17-23** SoCal MC Reunion at Buckhorn
- Jul 24-31** Spectacular at Graceland University
- Jul 24-27** Junior Camp (Grades 4-6) at Buckhorn
- Jul 27-31** Jr High Camp at Buckhorn



Twenty-four members of the Hemet Congregation enjoyed the Temple School class “Our Diverse Community,” taught by Hiroshi Matsushita. Hiroshi will offer the class again in Ventura in October.

Simpson Wins Award with Drum Line



Ocean View High School, where Costa Mesa member Ashley Simpson attends and is one of three cymbal players, competed against other area high schools in the American Drum Line Association competition. For the second year in a row, Ashley's school took first place in their division in the "High Cymbals" category. Congratulations to Ashley and The Ocean View High School Drum Line!