



Gregory L. Hoenes
Director

Our Challenges

1

To serve the socio-economically, culturally, ethnically and geographically diverse people, missional territory and field of ministry historically characterized as “Anglo/Other.” This includes the Navy-based community out at Ridgecrest in the high desert; coastal Oxnard/Ventura; and the urban and increasingly chic Hollywood, Culver City and Santa Monica areas.

2

To present Jesus in a context that’s culturally fluid/American and dominantly English-language based.

3

To keep an external missional focus rather than an internally localized one.

4

To develop disciples of Christ with deep faith, capable of both following and leading.

5

To equip pastors for the professional challenges they face, assisting them in developing competencies increasing in scope and scale.



Ronda Harrison
Administrative Assistant



The WR Team

I'm very proud of our pastoral team! It's been a pleasure to work with them to reverse declines in attendance, membership, baptisms and tithes in our territory — and to increase our competencies, professionalism and accountability. We're developing an ever-stronger and diverse team with pastors (Americans and foreign nationals) of African, Korean, El Salvadorian, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Brazilian, Columbian and Jewish/mixed European descent, including two women. Our youngest pastor is 24, and our oldest is over 80.

During the last quadrennium, we've ordained three pastors: William Sellers, Chad Washburn and Branden Stoltz. José Gutierrez is in the process. Seven more of our pastors are on the ordination track.

Retirements, terminations and movements out of our conference have both diminished our pastoral ranks and made it possible to rebuild. We've welcomed to our field Jonathan Clark (Hawaii), Mike Stevenson (Nevada), Paolo de Oliveira (Fuller Seminary), Sarah Grover (Lancaster), Eustace Laurie III (Potomac), Callie Williams III (SECC), Ron Park (Florida), Jason Whitley (Andrews) and Sergio Caishpal (PUC) into our region. We've elevated José Gutierrez and Erwin Joham from part time to full time. Three of our pastors already have doctoral degrees; four more are currently pursuing them.

Our team is not just our pastors...it's our lay representatives and executive committee representatives to our WR Committee (WRC). This amazing group encompasses vast areas of professional expertise and represents significant local church involvement. We've had medical professionals, engineers, architects and facilities managers, lawyers, teachers, realtors and business professionals—all of whom love and serve the Lord.

Overnight Retreat

On November 4-5, 2017, our WRC went on an overnight retreat in Ventura, Calif. — a first for our region. Members of our conference prayer and spirituality team led out along with special guest, pastor and poet Dan Kittle. We worshipped, ate, walked on the beach and had a memorable WRC meeting overlooking the ocean, all while growing closer to each other. We're looking forward to retreating in Camp Cedar Falls this November!

Sabbath Field Trips

We've also taken trips to our remote WR churches. In February 2018, we worshipped in Tehachapi and toured the new Adventist Health facility. We then spent time at Lake of the Woods, a small church doing big, amazing things. This year, we worshipped in Ridgecrest; they've done a radical redo of their school, with all-new branding, equipment and more! We shared supper at Mojave church — also in revitalization mode, recently changing its name to High Desert Seventh-day Adventist Church to reflect an expanded mission to surrounding communities of California City and Rosamond.



Elders Training

In October 2018, WR held a special training for 119 local elders emphasizing minimizing conflict resulting from confusion about roles of lay leaders vs. pastors. Ongoing training for lay leaders is one of the region's strategic missional objectives moving forward. Other objectives include parsonages for our pastors and directed funds to place more women into remunerated ministry in this region once again.

As always, our churches make the difference.
The stories are great ... the space to share them, small!
Fortunately, the Recorder has been telling them all along.

The next four pages tell our stories from the past four years.
Click on the links to read the full articles!

Malibu Group

Lay pastor Judith Miranda has been growing the Malibu group in an unlikely territory — and it's growing against the odds. The efforts made by Judith and her team to connect in that community with their “Salute to Public Servants Day” were highlighted in the February 2016 issue of the *Recorder* (click to read!).



Ojai Church

Ojai church celebrated “50 Years of Service” with what the community described as a “new age Shangri-La” (click to read!). Even with these challenges, the story of Jesus continues to be told. It was a great day to remember just how God has led! And under Pastor David Gardner’s leadership, tithe has been increasing and the church has been growing. Praise God!

Culver City Church

“Culver City Church Initiates Compassion Sabbaths” is a story told in August 2016 of a ministry to the homeless population on and around Venice Beach (click to read!). This has become a quarterly event, with the number served topping 2,000 as of August 2018. In a follow-up article, member Christine Diaz writes on their expanded ministries and offerings to the homeless of Venice Beach, highlighting the sense of inclusion, welcome, love of food and warmth. *This is Sabbath School!*



Thousand Oaks

Pastor Jon Clark and his wife, Gaylene, of the Thousand Oaks church were inspired by their contacts with those who served them at salons and restaurants to host a “serving the servers” event, a unique approach to community relations and evangelism featured in the January 2017 issue (click to read!).

AMEN Clinics

The April 2017 issue highlighted follow-up AMEN clinics, which came upon the heels of the massive downtown medical outreach Pathway to Health in 2016 (click to read!). One such clinic was sponsored by West Region’s Northridge, Canoga Park, Van Nuys and Sylmar churches. Expertise, volunteers and pastoral care came from many places, including other West Region churches. Hundreds were served.



Camarillo Church

Camarillo church celebrated its 50-year milestone in 2017. As Pastor Erwin Joham was quoted saying, this was *“an excellent opportunity...to see where God has led in the past. Our challenge now is to build on that and to make a real impact in the community. Our plan and hope is to implement the biblical principal of having everybody in the church involved in soul-winning, with the goal of having small units all working in concert toward this common goal.”* By the way, it’s happening!

In 2018, a service for the 100th anniversary of Veterans Day was held, soon after the shootings in Thousand Oaks and fires that had ravaged the area.



Hollywood Church

Hollywood church was featured in the January 2018 issue for its outstanding shower ministry, started in 2013 to meet a serious need by creatively networking with social workers in training. The December 2018 issue covered Hollywood’s 100-year milestone anniversary and celebration. Pastor Branden Stoltz captured the aspirational and missional ethos of the church well: *“We want to be a place where we love fully, completely”* as Hollywood Church is a place where *“God’s Spirit is given space to change lives.”*



Adventist WestPoint

The May 2018 issue had a feature on Adventist WestPoint, which has become a special time of connection and mentoring for our pastors who are awaiting ordination. WR pastors are both quoted and pictured in this article. This year, our WR group provided much of the music for the WestPoint in Reno, with Pastor Ron Park at the keyboard.

Canoga Park Community Church

In 2017, Canoga Park Community church hosted monthlong evangelism efforts. The seminars were taught by Jason Whitley, who had recently returned from seminary. Bible workers played an important supporting role in connecting with community members and church members alike. By creating a collaborative and creative event, and involving young people in the series and its follow-up, more than souls were won.



Santa Clarita Church

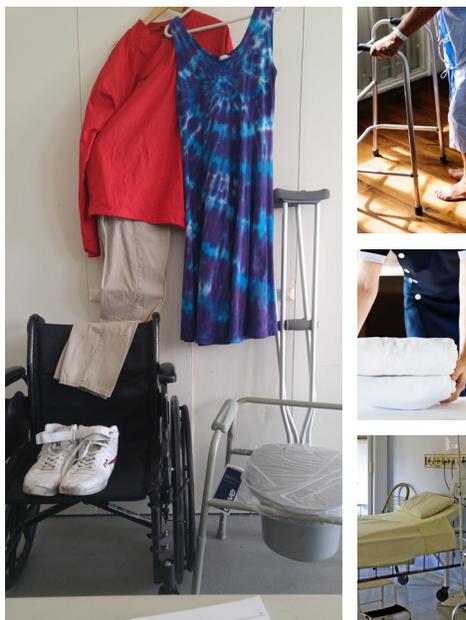
In the November 2018 issue, an important milestone ministry was introduced to our conference. The Santa Clarita church has started a special needs ministry called “My Friend’s House,” created in part to meet the needs of members. It’s also a vision for ministry, positioning the church to offer something really unique in the Adventist community. The church’s commitment has entailed hiring a trained teacher. The sense of normalcy and belonging that this ministry is bringing to segments of this close church family is awesome.

Tehachapi Church

Tehachapi church was featured with the baptism of nine individuals in the March 2019 issue. “Why is this newsworthy?” you ask? Because this wasn’t the result of evangelistic outreach, nor is Tehachapi a big church. Rather, it was the Spirit, the work of Eustace Laurie III and the communion experienced in the congregation that preceded this joyous event.



And these are just the few stories that've been told!
Here are a few you haven't heard:



Simi Valley Church

Simi Valley church has been running a much-needed medical closet ministry, which has almost everything! (Items include hospital beds, adult diapers, portable commodes, walkers, wheelchairs, crutches and the like.) These items are loaned free of charge for a specific amount of time to people in the Simi Valley community who have the need. The medical closet is staffed under the direction of Nellie Sevilla, Simi Valley church community services director, by volunteers who are also members of the church. The medical closet is open to the public every Wednesday morning or by appointment as needed.

Van Nuys Church

Van Nuys church took their Pathfinders and Adventurers camping in Mammoth last summer. And it's not just an isolated thing: Pastor Ron Park wants more action and activity around campus as he plans to install a basketball court, for members, yes, but also to attract community youth!



The Place

We welcome The Place company to church status! After years operating as SCC's largest company (400+ members), The Place is taking its place among SoCal churches. We rejoice in this ministry's ongoing growth and success!

Thousand Oaks Church

Things aren't always positive. After a very difficult two years plus that left the Thousand Oaks church a shadow of its former self, the work of reconciliation and renewal has begun. It's an every member decision — an every member process. Many thanks to Pastors Ayars and Clark, who led the way through this transformation.