

# southernconnect



**James G. Lee, Jr.,**  
Vice President

## Jesus, the Great Samaritan

One of my favorite passages from the Bible is found in Luke 10:25-37.

Jesus is speaking to a crowd that had gathered to listen to Him. In the crowd that day is a man who is skilled in the religious dogma of Jesus' own tradition—a kind of professor. The man stands up and asks a question: "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" This is a trick question. So Jesus responds with a question. "What does your law say?" The man replies, "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and strength and mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." "You're right," Jesus says. But then the man asks Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?"

Jesus, who often taught in parables, responds by sharing a parable. He says, "A certain man." What is interesting about this parable is that Jesus does not share any details as to who this man really is. In the parable, Jesus doesn't say if this person is educated or uneducated, rich or poor, or if he was from one of the elite families. We don't know his race, his tribe, or his pedigree. He simply says, "A certain man." He was a human being; one of God's creation; a child of God who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him for dead.

You know the story well. The priest saw the man in need but decided to walk by on the other side. The Levite, curious to know what had happened, stopped and looked. Inspiration says that, at that moment, he was convicted of what he ought to do but did not respond. In fact, he started to wish he had not come that way.

Remember, this parable was given in response to the question, "Who is my neighbor?"

Were not these two men, the priest and Levite, called to be representatives of God to the people? Aren't they supposed to have "compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way" (Hebrews 5:2, KJV)?

We are called to "preach the gospel to the poor, ... heal the brokenhearted, ... preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind" (Luke 4:18, KJV).

Jesus mingled with the outcasts. Jesus labored to restore the physical and spiritual needs of those who were socially impoverished.

Ronald J. Sider, in his book *Churches That Make a Difference*, says, "Our sharing of the gospel is flatly unbiblical unless our words and

actions present the wonderful vertical and horizontal transformative worked by Jesus' gospel."

Jesus ministry was marked with service to the poor, the marginalized, the imprisoned, the disenfranchised, the hopeless, the hurting, and the helpless.

The Scripture reminds us: "plead the cause of the poor and needy" (Proverbs 31:9, KJV).

HUMANITY WAS DECEIVED,

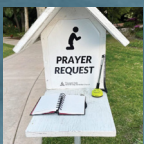
BRUISED, ROBBED, RUINED,

AND LEFT FOR DEAD BY SATAN.

BUT, JESUS HAD COMPASSION.

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### Thousand Oaks Church Featured in Local Paper

A seemingly small gesture by the Thousand Oaks church has made a big difference. In the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, as people were feeling increasingly isolated, the church sought ways to connect with the community. Read more in the Thousand Oaks Acorn community paper.

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# Thousand Oaks Church Featured in Local Paper

BY LAUREN LACSON

Community outreach isn't going unnoticed during these times—at least in the city of Thousand Oaks.

A seemingly small gesture by the Thousand Oaks church has made a big difference. In the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, as people were feeling increasingly isolated, the church sought ways to connect with the community.

One intentional act they chose was to place a mailbox in front of the church, inviting the community to share their prayer requests.

This April, the Thousand Oaks

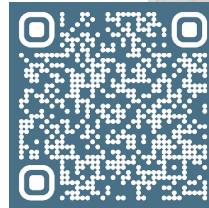
Acorn community newspaper shared a story on their website about the impact of outreach at the Thousand Oaks church, entitled "Collecting Notes to the Divine," written by Dawn Megli.

The story highlights the ways the church has engaged with the community—and how the community is responding.

According to the article, the mailbox has been up for 18 months and four to eight prayer requests have been submitted every week. During Sabbath morning services, the church prays over the



PHOTO: NITE LORE/ACORN NEWSPAPERS



requests that have been submitted. Some have even left cards in the mailbox to share that their prayers have been answered. Visit the link below or scan the QR code to read the story. ●

<https://www.toacorn.com/articles/collecting-notes-to-the-divine/>

## in transition

### NEW EMPLOYEES

Voted March 10 & 24, 2022

**Samuel Rodriguez** | Auditing Assistant, SCC Auditing, as of March 14, 2022.

**Enze Zhang** | Pastor, Chino Valley Chinese church, as of April 5, 2022.

### TRANSFERS WITHIN SCC

Voted March 10 & April 14, 2022

**Tracy Garnett** | From Administrative Assistant, SCC Greater L.A. Region, to Administrative Assistant, Greater L.A. Region, and Conference Clerk, as of March 7, 2022.

**Chona Tupas-Torres** | From Executive Assistant, SCC Treasury, to Executive Assistant/Registrar, SCC Education, as of April 10, 2022.

### LEAVING SCC

Voted March 24 & April 14, 2022

**Iki Taimi** | From Director, SCC Senior Youth & Young Adults Ministries, as of April 30, 2022.

**Gamal Alexander** | From Pastor, Compton Community church, as of March 31, 2022.

**Jim Oliver** | From Camp Manager, Camp Cedar Falls, as of April 22, 2022.

### RETIREMENTS

Voted March 10, 2022

**Alberto Frederico** | From Pastor, Rolling Hills church, as of February 28, 2022.

# SAY HELLO

 SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

We love to share stories from our churches and schools, but what about personal testimonies? Our #SCCSayHello social media campaign is where we share the testimonies of our SCC members. Share your story to inspire someone today! Scan the QR code for the simple submission form.



## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“Do justice to the afflicted and needy” (Psalm 82:3, KJV).

“Oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor” (Zachariah 7:10, KJV).

Richard Stearns, in his book *The Hole in Our Gospel*, paraphrases Matthew 25:41-43. “For I was hungry, while you had all you needed. I was thirsty, but you drank bottled water. I was a stranger and you wanted me deported. I needed clothes, but you needed more clothes. I was sick, and you pointed out the behavior that led to my sickness. I was in prison, and you said I was getting what I

deserved.”

Who is our neighbor? Our neighbor is every person who is in need of our help! Our neighbor is every person who is

WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR? OUR NEIGHBOR

IS EVERY PERSON WHO IS WOUNDED

AND BRUISED BY THE EVIL ONE.

wounded and bruised by the evil one! Our neighbor is every person who is the creation of God.

Humanity was deceived, bruised, robbed, ruined, and left for dead by Satan. But, Jesus had compassion. He

left His glory. He undertook our case. He healed our wounds, died for our sins, and covered us with His righteous robe.

Jesus is truly the Great Samaritan! ●

## SPOTLIGHT

# One House News & Events

southern  
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### Submit a story

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It's been a time of transition for our SCC Senior Youth & Young Adults (SYA) Ministries team, and there are many exciting programs in the works.

Coming up soon, the SYA team is excited to collaborate with our SCC Communication & Media Production department to bring you a leadership summit on all things digital ministry next month.

So, if you're a ministry leader, or are interested in learning more about leadership and digital ministry, mark your calendar for **July 17, 2022, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.** for an event jam-packed with valuable resources, helpful sessions, and practical tips to help you in your local ministry.

Check out the link below for more info and registration. See you there! ●

<https://scc.adventist.org/leadershipsummitjuly2022>



SCAN TO WATCH



SCC.ADVENTIST.ORG/  
ONEHOUSE

## REGION NEWS

### Hispanic Region

Hispanic Region churches have been busy when it comes to evangelism. This March and April, multiple Hispanic Region churches held evangelistic series, including Baldwin Park Bilingual, Central Spanish, EastMont, El Rio, El Camino A Cristo, Huntington Park Spanish, Glendale West Spanish, Long Beach Spanish, Mid City Spanish, Paramount Spanish, South Gate, Spanish-American, Van Nuys Spanish churches, and others. Still other churches hosted evangelism events during the month of May.

Hispanic Women's Ministries also hosted an event this April, in which several of our churches participated.

Many of the series lasted one week and were themed "An Encounter



With Jesus," "The Prophecies of the End," and more.

To watch videos of the presentations from the various churches, visit <https://scc.adventist.org/hispanic-region-evangelism-2022>.



### Greater L.A. Region

This April, SCC's Greater Los Angeles Region (GLAR) hosted a two-week-long evangelistic series entitled "N.O.W. (Virtual) Bible Conference."

Emil Peeler, senior pastor at the Capitol Hill church, was the main speaker, with Royal Harrison, GLAR director, and Lanston Sylvester, senior pastor at the Tamarind Ave. church, as associate evangelists. Topics presented during the series included:

- How Do I Discover My Purpose in Life?
- Reversing Generational Curses
- How to Find Peace in the Midst of a Pandemic
- How to Manage Your Finances By Giving
- Tips for Building Healthy Relationships
- How Will the World End?

To catch up on the presentations and view the nightly programs, visit <https://scc.adventist.org/nowbibleconference2022>.