

# southernconnect



**Velino A. Salazar,**  
*President*

## Life Is for *Service*

**W**ho doesn't recall the famous children's television program "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," with those unique songs "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" and "It's Such a Good Feeling" to open and close his 895 episodes, along with the statements "It is a wonderful day in this neighborhood," "You are my friend," "You are special because you are you," and "I like you just the way you are."

Millions of parents (including my wife and me) of Gen X and Millennial toddlers preferred their children watch this unparalleled educational program.

Among the many sayings Mr. Rogers repeated over and over through the episodes, "Life Is for Service" was the most popular, and he also used it in various college commencement speeches.

Did you know that Mr. Fred Rogers was an ordained Presbyterian minister (ventriloquist and vegetarian as well)? No wonder the topics he addressed in his half-hour segments were so important to parents when other children's programming avoided them and instead displayed competition, war, segregation, hostility, anger, etc. He encouraged children to be creative, honest, authentic, inclusive, amiable, and helpful. "Serve others and be kind" was his motto.

There is no doubt that the teachings of Jesus influenced Mr. Roger's philosophy of life, shaped his worldview, and motivated his work. Serving others is what Jesus taught and modeled many times and in different ways. His famous statement on serving others (Matthew 20:25-28, NIV) can be summarized from His comments about His mission: "just as the

Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve."

And, in Matthew 25:40 (NKJV), He explained how to serve others, relating such service to Himself: "Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me."

Our conference leadership, following Jesus' mission, is inspired by Ellen G. White's statement on the purpose of the church: "The church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world" (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 9). We have chosen "Exalting Christ by serving others" as the motto

for our strategic plan for this new quinquennium 2019-2024.

Such a strategic plan embraces mission and vision statements, core values, and objectives. Please read below the synopsis of these items, and visit our website ([scc.adventist.org/about](http://scc.adventist.org/about)) for more details and stories related to our mission and service. Let's join together—church

members, teachers, and pastors—in a servant attitude to fulfill Jesus' mission in our conference territory.

**Our Mission:** The Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists exists to exalt Christ by serving its diverse communities through networked and creatively engaged churches and schools.

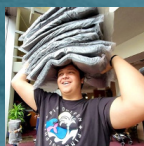
**Our Vision:** Embracing Community in Christ. The supporting text for this statement is Ephesians 4:15-16.

**Our Core Values:** 1) Integrity With Transparency 2) Engagement 3) Stewardship 4) Unity in Diversity 5) Relationships & Team.

**Our Objectives:** 1) Rigorous leadership & accountability process 2) Discipleship & leading others to Christ 3) Affordable education solutions 4) Community engagement 5) Develop extravagant givers. ●



## INSIDE



### Vallejo Drive Shares Love

Members meet long list of needs in the community during day of outreach



### Light Above Offers Free Guitar Lessons

Initiative unites youth ministry and music ministry for this congregation

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Photos courtesy of Audrey Zorek.

# Vallejo Drive Shares Love

BY ARAYA MOSS

as a way to teach kids how to care for those in need. He started asking for donations to purchase 200 blankets—\$8 each—at the end of October. With help from the congregation and Facebook friends, they raised enough money for 473 blankets.

In addition to the blanket, food, and clothing distribution, various outreach initiatives took place throughout the day. One group shared the Christmas spirit with staff, patients, and patients' families at Adventist Health Glendale by singing carols. Another group visited a local fire station to share homemade cookies with the firefighters and offer prayer for both protection and gratitude. One of the ongoing outreach programs at Vallejo Drive includes helping children in need in Belize;

this time, volunteers made Christmas cards for the children. A prayer group stayed at the church to pray for protection, for guidance, and for those served by each outreach team.

"Vallejo Drive church is becoming a church focused on reaching out to the community and sharing the love of Jesus," said Zorek. "Under our pastoral leadership, we are excited to continue to minister to our community."

Vallejo Drive organizes a large outreach day each quarter, plus smaller outreach initiatives each month. Plans are already in the works to collaborate with other churches.

"I was very blessed when I saw my vision coming true as we reached those 400 plus people on the streets," said Zorek. "The best way to feel love is to share love." ●



Members and volunteers from Vallejo Drive church spent a Sabbath in December engaging with the community of Glendale and beyond. Children, young adults, and adults distributed a total of 473 blankets, 400 hot vegetable soups, hundreds of socks, hygiene packages, sleeping mats, and candy canes to about 500 people.

Audrey Zorek, Vallejo Drive's children's ministry director, came up with the "Kids Connection Blanket Project" within the children's ministry program

# Guitar Lessons at Light Above

BY LAUREN LACSON

This year, the Light Above Company has started offering free guitar lessons as part of its music ministry. While the students are primarily children and youth from the church, the free lessons are also a way to share the gospel with the community around the church.

Bob Cañete, the church's book-keeper and the lead guitar teacher, sees this as an important ministry opportunity. Cañete has been teaching guitar for more than 15 years. "It's the retention part," he says of this ministry. "It's the youth ministry and the music ministry as one."

The lessons are offered every Sabbath from 2-3 p.m. on the church campus. Four other teachers assist Cañete in teaching the students. As soon as the first lesson last month, there were already students participating from multiple churches.

The classes were designed for

beginners, starting with the basics, such as parts of the guitar, how to strum, and basic notes. Soon each student was able to play "Jesus Loves Me."

Each class has a corresponding video lesson. These videos include a tutorial as well as music sheets created for the guitar accompaniment to various hymns from our church hymnal. Check out these video lessons on YouTube; the channel name is "Light Above Classical Guitar Lessons." ●



Photos provided by Bob Cañete.



# in transition

## TRANSFERS IN SCC

*Voted October 10 & November 14, 2019*

**Harold Crook** | From Superintendent of Schools to Vice President for Education, SCC Education, as of September 23, 2019.

**Danny Chan** | From Pastor, Eagle Rock church, to Region Director, SCC L.A. Metro Region, as of November 1, 2019.

**Oscar Garcia** | From Pastor, El Shaddai / Panamericana churches, to Pastor, Lincoln Heights / Glendale West churches, as of November 16, 2019.

**Ezequiel Gonzalez** | From Pastor, Lincoln Heights / Glendale West churches, to Pastor, Hollywood Spanish church, as of November 16, 2019.

**Jaime Heras** | From Pastor, Paramount Spanish church, to Region Director, SCC Hispanic Region, as of November 1, 2019.

**Gerard Kiemenev** | From Region Director, SCC L.A. Metro Region, to Assistant to the President, as of November 1, 2019.

**Luis Linan** | From Pastor, Hollywood Spanish church, to Pastor, Panorama Spanish / Newbury Park churches, as of November 16, 2019.

**Rolando Rivera** | From Retail Clerk, Adventist Book Center, to Part-Time Pastor, Newhall Spanish church, as of November 1, 2019.

**Carlos Varona** | From Pastor, Panorama Spanish / Newbury Park churches, to Pastor, Los Olivos / Shalom Spanish churches, as of November 1, 2019.

## TRANSFERS OUT OF SCC

*Voted October 10 & November 14, 2019*

**Alina Mitchell** | Principal, Antelope Valley Adventist School, as of October 8, 2019.

**Luis Peña** | From Region Director, SCC Hispanic Region, as of November 1, 2019.

## NEW EMPLOYEES

*Voted October 10, November 14 & December 12, 2019*

**Mishelle San Felipe** | Accounts Receivable / Accounts Payable Junior Accountant, SCC Accounting, as of October 21, 2019.

**Terry Tryon** | Teaching Principal, Antelope Valley Adventist School, as of October 7, 2019.

**Linda Biswas** | Associate Pastor, Vallejo Drive church, as of November 1, 2019.

**Bob Cañete** | Chief Accountant, SCC Accounting, as of November 11, 2019.

# stay in touch

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- 2 Visit [scc.adventist.org/subscribe](http://scc.adventist.org/subscribe).
- 3 Scan this QR code.

## EDITOR

Lauren Lacson

## Submit a story

scc.adventist.org/  
submitastory

Last December, the SCC and SECC literature ministries teams joined together to distribute 480,000 GLOW tracts in Los Angeles and Orange Counties—in just five days! Stay tuned for the full story on this amazing mission trip in the next issue of the *Recorder*; in the meantime, here's just one of the many testimonies about what took place.

Marco Topete, Literature Ministries coordinator for SCC, approached a lady who was sitting outside on the ground some distance from him. He walked up and handed her a GLOW tract. She looked at the tract and said, "God answers quick! God answers quick!"



"I THANK GOD YOU LISTENED TO GOD."

She went on to share that she had been heavy-minded and praying that God would reveal Himself to her. She was going through some tough times—and right away, a GLOwer came to share hope and talk with her.

Topete shared with her that he was about to skip her since she was far from where he was, but that he felt impressed to go anyway. She replied with tears in her eyes, "I thank God you listened to God."

Amen! God uses us in powerful ways when we surrender to Him and offer our time and treasure to serve Him. Don't forget to check back in the March issue of the *Recorder* for the full story! ●

Southern California  
Conference of  
Seventh-day Adventists

## President

Velino A. Salazar

## Executive Secretary

John H. Cress

## Treasurer

Orville Ortiz

## Vice President

James G. Lee, Jr.

1535 E. Chevy Chase Dr.  
Glendale, CA 91206

818.546.8400

info@sccsda.org

@SCCAdventists

scc.adventist.org

## REGION NEWS

## Asian-Pacific Region

Every year, the Asian-Pacific Region pastors and their families gather together for a festive holiday party. This year, the team gathered at Glendale Korean church for a devotional time, followed by dinner and games.

This annual event is a special time to gather for fellowship. Please pray for these pastors and their families as they continue God's work this year.



## Hispanic Region

This year's annual holiday party gave Hispanic Region pastors and their families the opportunity to fellowship over food and games.

This year's party included a photo booth and plenty of fun and games. The time was well spent, and these co-workers had the opportunity to grow closer as they celebrated the holiday season. We look forward to the work that lies ahead this new year and appreciate your prayers.



## West Region

There was snow! And he got the picture. William Sellers, pastor at Ridgecrest church, excitedly snapped this church shot during a recent snowfall—and then promptly fell, breaking his tibia and femur. He had surgery, has extra hardware now, and is ministering with the support of his church community. Thank you to the wonderful saints in this Ridgecrest church family. You have been and continue to be true disciples. Your sense of community is awesome!

