

southernconnect



Gregory L. Hoenes,
West Region director

Christian *Leadership*

Christian leadership centers on love and is built on service—though to lead is different than love, and it's beyond mere service. Much is said about what it means to lead and even more is written on leadership. My reflection seeks to pull us back a bit from the

— whether religion or science, politics or commerce. This is the kind of character-forming truth-seeking that, when set in the diversity that is part of God's design, grows us in the image and likeness of our Creator and Redeemer! It involves the whole of our lived lives.

To *lead* takes us *toward* something. To be led is to be brought through the promptings of the Spirit into a relationship with Christ and all creation, to exhibit and work out of the gifts that are given by the Spirit, and to reflect the fruits that

noise and confusion that surrounds this idea.

To *lead* starts with being *led*. Christ the Good Shepherd, whose comprehensive program of feeding, watering, sheltering, protecting, disciplining, and seeking the lost sheep offers a model for raising families at home and church. In this mode of leadership, needs are answered and we learn to hear the voice of the One who calls us each by name. The practice of hearing the Shepherd's voice and distinguishing it from the aural clutter around us means learning to discern. Discernment must involve identifying what is true. Here, I'm speaking of what is true in all of life, including acknowledging that our knowing is limited.

To *lead* isn't what we occasionally do! Rather, it's how we're constantly being formed in the context of our foibles and our humanness. Leading understood this way might well revolutionize the Christian church. This honest and contextualized truth-seeking applies equally to all spheres of knowing

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come with the gifts given through this same Spirit. It seems obvious, and yet, I would say it's rare, too. To legitimately *lead* requires a spiritual foundation. The disciplines that form Christian character need tending to more than ever! The Spirit guides us toward an integrated understanding of reality—not limited to Christian jargon (“Adventese” in our case), or forms of “faith” that belie substance.

To *lead* may or may not involve positional leadership. It always involves the choice to be humbled by the grace we constantly receive; to see ourselves aright in relationship to others—for we are all beloved children of God; and to act responsively to the Christ represented by those in need before us. In other words, Christians are led to live out the self-sacrificing love of Christ. We are to lead lives that are informed by this vital tenet of our faith!

May the Spirit move, Christ be revealed, and the Father be glorified as you love, serve, and lead! ●

INSIDE

The Latest on Coronavirus

Find links to the latest guidelines and resources for digital ministry opportunities.

Plus, discover how SCC churches have been creating and offering amazing worship and ministry opportunities. Read stories of how SCC churches have been compassionately serving their communities during this pandemic.

IN EVERY ISSUE

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Our churches in SCC have been focused on service, community, and faith as we have navigated through the chaos of the COVID-19 pandemic these past few months. Here are just a few highlights of the ministries in our regions.

Asian-Pacific Region

Many of our Asian-Pacific Region churches have expanded their community outreach efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Chino Valley Chinese church is distributing hygiene products, like masks and sanitizer, to the community; plus, they're serving their members who are touched by the effects of coronavirus through a \$10,000 relief fund. One member of L.A. Cantonese church is making masks by hand and sharing them with encouraging literature. Read about our El Monte Vietnamese church on p. 42.

These are just a few of the ways our Asian-Pacific churches are embracing compassionate service. Please continue to pray for our churches and communities as we seek to exalt Christ through service.

Greater Los Angeles Region (GLAR)

On behalf of the Greater Los Angeles Region, we want to report that God is better than good! I am proud of all the pastors in our region; they have stepped up to the challenge and have done an exceptional job of staying connected with their members. Many of our churches, led by our pastors, are streaming their services on the internet, Facebook Live, Zoom, and other media outlets. Our pastors and churches continue to host virtual Wednesday night prayer services, Revelation seminars, small group meetings, board meetings, and more.

Though we don't know when we will be able to get back into our churches, I am confident that until we do, our GLAR pastors and churches will continue to be faithful in caring for their members and preaching the Word of God by any means possible. Thank you for your prayers, and may God continue to bless us all!

Royal L. Harrison, director

Hispanic Region

Members of our Hispanic Region churches have been uniting (virtually!) in prayer, worship, and outreach during this challenging and uncertain time. Spanish American, Temple City Spanish, and Huntington Park Spanish churches are among those that have been operating food banks. Many Hispanic region churches are hosting 40 or 100 days of prayer or posting daily devotionals. We are blessed by the hard work of our pastors and local leaders. Thank you for your prayers for ministry in our Hispanic Region churches.

L.A. Metro Region

In the L.A. Metro Region, churches are focusing on providing basic necessities, like food, for those in their communities who need it most. Eagle Rock church has continued hosting its weekly soup kitchen, and Glendale City is providing free meals through their Sunday Lunch Program. Vallejo Drive has provided food for many families experiencing food insecurity and job loss.

Digital ministry is thriving in the L.A. Metro Region as our churches and pastors seek to provide context for worship and fellowship virtually. We solicit your prayers as we continue to serve and worship in this challenging time.

West Region

Community service has been an important focus in our West Region churches. Ventura church has served their community through their food pantry while also offering drive-through coronavirus testing right on the church property. Simi Valley church has served their neighbors with their community garden and drive-through food pantry, called Simi at the Garden, in partnership with L.A. non-profit Food Forward.

West Region churches have also been finding creative ways to worship and fellowship. Our churches have found countless digital tools to continue the work of ministry. Ministry has not stopped—in fact, it has expanded!

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in transition

TRANSFERS IN SCC

Voted February 27, March 12, & April 9 & 23, 2020

Gustavo Cruz | From Pastor, El Camino Spanish / Mid City Spanish churches, to Pastor, Glendale Spanish church, as of Feb. 29, 2020.

Samuel Del Pozo | From Pastor, Glendora Spanish / Pomona Spanish churches, to Pastor, Glendora Spanish / Monrovia Spanish / Pasadena Spanish churches, as of March 7, 2020.

Lawrence Dorsey II | From Pastor, Normandie Avenue church, to Pastor, Altadena church, as of March 22, 2020.

Homer Hart | From Pastor, Berean church, to Pastor, Hidden Treasures company, as of March 7, 2020.

Richardson Honore | From Pastor, Altadena church, to Pastor, Berean church, as of April 12, 2020.

Yonny Jimenez | From Pastor, Glendale Spanish church, to Pastor, La Voz Sylmar church, as of Feb. 22, 2020.

Eustace Laurie | From Half-Time Pastor to Full-Time Pastor, Tehachapi church, as of Feb. 2, 2020.

Jose A. Diaz | From Part-Time Pastor to Full-Time Pastor, El-Shaddai / Panamerican Spanish churches, as of Feb. 2, 2020.

Luis Liñan-Olivera | From Pastor, Hollywood Spanish church, to Pastor Panorama Spanish / Newbury Park Spanish churches, as of Nov. 1, 2019.

David Merino | From Pastor, Long Beach / La Amistad Spanish churches, to Pastor, Paramount Spanish church, as of Jan. 4, 2020.

Luis Peña | From Pastor, Unassigned, to Pastor, Huntington Park Spanish church, as of Feb. 1, 2020.

Eustace Laurie | From Pastor, Tehachapi church, to Pastor, Canoga Park Community church, as of April 12, 2020.

Jose Gutierrez | From Pastor, Palmdale church, to Pastor, Tehachapi, High Desert & Lake of the Woods churches district, as of May 10, 2020.

NEW EMPLOYEES

Voted March 12, 2020

Alexander Pereira Salles | Pastor, L.A. Portuguese church, as of March 4, 2020.



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