

# southernconnect



**Marco Topete,**  
*Literature Ministries  
Coordinator*

## Where Can We Find *Hope?*

**H**-O-P-E. It's a four-letter word with a world of significance. Hope. It is an attribute that you cannot afford to live without.

Can hope really be found in this world—especially when reading the news is just another opportunity to learn about a fresh shooting or natural disaster? If hope was something that could be found on a

grocery store shelf, we would zero out our budgets to have it. Maybe we'd even empty our bank accounts to get some extra hope for our loved ones who may be running on empty. How can one attain it? What is God's answer to finding hope?

"To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: **which is Christ in you, the hope of glory**" (Colossians 1:27, NKJV, emphasis added).

Here is God's answer to a hopeless world and a hopeless people. It is Christ in us, Christ behind us, Christ beside us, and, especially, Christ ahead of us! Without the hope of the soon coming of Jesus, this life is meaningless. The pain we go through is pointless. The questions we have are nonsense. But the hope of the earth made new with a Savior dwelling amongst us—that is what makes the difference. Let us place our hope in the author of Hope.

"This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the

veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 6:19-20, NKJV).

Did you catch that? Hope is what anchors our soul! Hope takes us behind the veil, into the very presence of God Himself. No matter where you are today, hope can take you further. Hope leads you through the storms of life and into the very presence of the Life Giver.

Truth be told, we all need hope. But hope is the byproduct of having Jesus. Do you feel like you have been

floating around without hope? Have you been beaten down by the waves of life? There is a sure anchor. This anchor does not promise that waves will not come, but it promises to keep you steady when they do show up.

I remember clearly a time before I knew my Savior. I woke up in a cold room. My back was achy from the hard bed I just got out of, and my eyes were adjusting to the limited light. I walked up to a little square window with heavy bars over it. The jail cell I was in overlooked the 101 freeway in San Jose, Calif. I saw all the cars zooming by and thought to myself, "I wish that was me." Free. To say that I was hope-

less is an understatement. I had no desire to even try to get out of the mess I had gotten myself into. It was when I was the most hopeless that I met Him who is the most hopeful.

Friend, where do you find yourself as you read this? Jesus is in the business of bringing light into the darkest places of your life. If He spoke light into existence in the beginning, surely He can do it for you today. ●

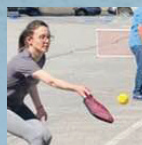
"HERE IS GOD'S ANSWER  
TO A HOPELESS WORLD  
AND A HOPELESS  
PEOPLE. IT IS CHRIST  
IN US, CHRIST BEHIND  
US, CHRIST BESIDE  
US, AND, ESPECIALLY,  
CHRIST AHEAD OF US!"

### INSIDE



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*Conference-wide spiritual renewal weekend inspires prayers of bold faith*



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# Faith in the “Person of Jesus”

BY LAUREN LACSON

“I believe if ever the church needed a revival, that time is now,” said Debleaire Snell, pastor at First Adventist church in Alabama, during SCC’s Spiritual Renewal weekend this April. From Friday evening to Sabbath afternoon, Vallejo Drive church was filled with attendees longing to experience revival.

“Our objective was to offer a time of Spiritual Renewal for our SCC members,” Janet Lui, the leader of SCC’s prayer and spirituality team, shared. “We believe this objective was met for those who attended, from the positive comments of those attending. Our only desire would be for more to have received the blessing.”

Cecia Garcia, the worship leader

on Friday night, said, “Tonight was a truly profound and powerful experience. Gathering to worship from various churches and praise the blessed name of Jesus was uplifting; to hear the collective prayers was inspiring; and the calling we received from the message was so empowering. Truly it was a night of spiritual power!”

On Sabbath morning, Snell spoke about 2 Kings 20:1-11, where Hezekiah is told that he will die from an incurable illness. Yet, as Snell pointed out, the king was bold enough to ask for a miracle that appeared not only improbable—but downright impossible.

When God honored Hezekiah’s faith by preserving his life, He proved His faithfulness to His people. “The



Photo by Lauren Lacson.

same God that answered Hezekiah can give you a little more time,” Snell said.

On Sabbath afternoon, Snell presented a message entitled “Hearing God’s Voice.”

“What a rich blessing it was for me personally to attend the SCC spiritual renewal weekend,” said Anita Roberts, Loma Linda University church member. “Pastor Snell is not only a godly man and a powerful speaker, but he truly was used by God to reach our hearts with conviction and recommitment to the Lord. His messages were biblical, relevant, and timely! Thanking and praising God.” ●



Photo by Cindy Winegar Callado.

One Sunday this March, 14 health enthusiasts gathered in the Pasadena church parking lot, which had been turned into pickleball courts, to learn America’s fastest growing sport (according to *USA Today*). Pickleball was developed by three dads in Bainbridge Island, Wash., in the summer of 1965 to challenge and entertain their “bored” children.

This sport is a mix of tennis, badminton, and table tennis. It’s a fun game that can be played by all ages—anyone who can hold a paddle and get the light, airy ball over the net—and it’s played by two to four at a time.

Ernie Medina, a professor at the

## Pasadena Learns Pickleball

BY RESA RECALDE

Loma Linda University School of Public Health, has become an ambassador for the sport. That day, he brought equipment to demonstrate and teach the fundamentals of pickleball to the group. He also brought four of his friends who are also pickleball enthusiasts: Bob Privett and Ryo Shinagawa from Corona, Alex Crescencio from Azusa, and Justin Napod from Sylmar.

Among the participants was

Esther Salazar, wife of SCC president Velino A. Salazar, and members from Glendale Filipino, Pasadena, Pico Rivera, Sunland-Tujunga, and Sylmar churches. Healthy snacks of vegetarian/vegan pizza and green smoothies were served that afternoon.

This event was sponsored by the Pasadena health ministry as part of their ongoing focus on healthy living to their congregation and community. ●



Photo provided by Resa Recalde.



# in transition

## TRANSFERS IN SCC

Voted February 28, March 14, 28 and April 11, 2019

**Peter Baptiste** | From Associate Pastor, Vallejo Drive church, to Associate Pastor, Temple City church, as of March 24, 2019.

**Paulo Candido de Oliveira** | From Pastor Half-Time, Northridge church, to Pastor Full-Time, Northridge church, as of March 3, 2019.

**Derrick Cruz** | From Ministry Director, Gardena Genesis Community church, to Associate Pastor, Vallejo Drive church, as of March 22, 2019.

**Christopher Famisan** | From Associate Pastor / Pastor, Temple City church / El Monte church, to Pastor, Downey-Florence church, as of May 4, 2019.

**Jaime Heras** | From Pastor, Glendale Spanish church, to Pastor, Paramount Spanish church, as of January 1, 2019.

**Marco Topete** | From Assistant Coordinator, SCC Literature Ministries, to Coordinator, SCC Literature Ministries, as of April 1, 2019.

## NEW EMPLOYEES

Voted March 28 and April 11, 2019

**Araya Moss** | Communication Specialist, SCC Communication, as of March 18, 2019.

**Claudia Stylc** | Payroll Jr. Accountant, SCC Accounting, as of April 15, 2019.

## RETIREMENTS

Voted February 28, 2019

**Joycelyn Chase** | From Elementary Teacher, San Gabriel Academy, as of November 30, 2018.



## Two SCC Schools Take Spring Break Mission Trips

*Students helped the Mona Loa Preschool in Hilo, Hawaii, with repairs. They put in 2,000+ hours of construction work. The school's leader, Auntie Janie, was in tears as she said, "This is a dream I have had for years, and you all have made it become a reality."*

*Students ministered to the Adventist FETCH (feed, educate, teach, clothe, heal) school in India, providing repairs to the campus while also conducting VBS and health clinics. They also gave personal hygiene bags to hospital patients and offered prayer.*



## SPOTLIGHT

# Communication Training Inspires

Last month, SCC's communication department kicked off its first training event of the year, in partnership with the neighboring Southeastern California Conference Communication department. Local church communicators, pastors, educators, and more were invited to experience this dynamic and innovative workshop.

Topics included writing fundamentals, church websites, social media, and mobile photography. The object of the training was simple—to educate and equip mission-minded communicators to share the gospel and reach their community even more effectively.

Practicality was key; the information presented was only as helpful as it was applicable. "The information was very valuable,

and we will be able to put it in practice," said Norma Perez, Carson Spanish church secretary and clerk.

"I appreciated the time and effort given to this event," said Randy Ramos, youth pastor at Van Nuys Spanish church, "and learning essential tools to further the gospel."

For those who are interested in learning more, the latest resources for local communicators can be found on our website at [scc.adventist.org/resources](http://scc.adventist.org/resources).

Stay tuned for information about future trainings and event dates for next year. To stay in the know with the latest conference news and calendar events, subscribe to SCC's *In Touch* e-newsletter at [scc.adventist.org/subscribe](http://scc.adventist.org/subscribe)—or text SCC SUBSCRIBE to 444999. ●



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Lauren Lacson

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[scc.adventist.org/submitastory](http://scc.adventist.org/submitastory)

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## REGION NEWS

### Greater L.A. Region

This April, about 1,000 residents of the Compton community came to the Tamarind Ave. church for a town hall meeting held by Congresswoman Nanette Barragan to discuss the issues of potholes in the city.

As the pastor of this congregation, I am dedicated to connecting with the community and engaging in issues that affect the lives of the people. We exist not only to baptize people but also to show compassion and improve the lives of those around us.



Tamarind Ave. church is involved in our community in various ways: we have partnered with a women's shelter, we feed the hungry, assist the homeless, and provide professionalism for those seeking employment. The greatest thing that anyone can be is a servant, and that is what we strive to be.

by *Lanston Sylvester, Tamarind church pastor*

### Hispanic Region

This April, Hispanic Region churches hosted small group evangelism under the banner of NAD's VIDA GPS. The speaker, presented via internet or DVD, was Alejandro Bullón. These meetings reaped a harvest that will be reported in a future issue. Praise God for the souls added to the kingdom.

by *Luis Peña, Region Director*



### West Region

West Region has many active churches, from Santa Monica to Santa Barbara, Frazier Park and Tehachapi to Ridgecrest. Youth programs, musical talent, amazing cooks, and dynamic community service endeavors enrich the ministry of these congregations. Something for everyone! Sylmar just completed a vivid visual media show: EARTH. Ridgecrest works tirelessly to rebrand and showcase their 1st-8th grade school, serving the Indian Wells community for 66-plus years. The Place looks forward to an exciting new chapter, to be shared soon!

West Region pre-ordained pastors just returned from Adventist WestPoint in Reno, where tremendous information was gleaned to enhance worship for everyone. Your church and Region at your service. How can we serve you?

by *Greg Hoenes, Region Director*