



Tell It On The Mountain

Sierra Vista Presbyterian Church

559-683-6742

October 2005

Dear Sierra Vista Friends,

Much attention has been focused on hurricanes these days. When one thinks about it, a hurricane is actually little more than a drop of water and a molecule of air multiplied by billions and set in motion. Who would think that drops of water and molecules of air could make such a difference in the lives of so many people as they have on the Gulf coast?!

The same can be said for the Church of Jesus Christ. You may not think that your life makes that much difference in the bigger scheme of things. And in fact that is true—very little that you and I do makes a big difference in and of itself. The big difference comes when insignificant little actions and words are added to other insignificant little actions and words.

Not long ago I found myself waiting at a newly installed traffic signal in Clovis. No one was moving in any direction. We were all waiting. I had been there before and it had become clear that one of the left turn signals was stuck, holding all other lights red for longer than usual. Knowing it was my turn next I gave serious thought to running that red light.

But, as I was beginning to take my foot off the brake, a question popped into my mind: “What would my act of disobedience do to the other drivers at that intersection? Could it possibly erode their will to obey the law?” I chose to wait until the light turned green.

Such a little thing, you might say. Yes, it is, but it’s no small truth, is it? One insignificant little action or word adds to others, like one snowflake upon another, until all traffic becomes snarled.

The good news is that the “power of small” works for good as much as it does for ill. Consider the difference a smile makes. Or a sacrificial act of kindness. One “thank you”. A prayer. A commitment to give....

And think of the transforming power of many insignificant little acts multiplied times four or five hundred, harnessed by the Holy Spirit and all pulling in the same direction! That sum total defines Sierra Vista Presbyterian Church’s real potential!!!

Your part in Sierra Vista’s future is significant. Please keep this in mind, especially later in October when we consider how best to steward the money, time and talent our Lord has entrusted into our hands.

Together we have untold potential to turn our part of the world right side up!

Expectantly,

Rick Irish
Interim Pastor



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A NEW YEAR, A NEW NAME

Dear Friends,

As I write this letter, **Samaritan's Purse** launched a response to Hurricane Rita while continuing work in Louisiana and Mississippi to help families and communities recover from Hurricane Katrina. Disaster teams and equipment were pre-positioned in Mississippi as Rita came ashore near the Louisiana-Texas border. A tractor-trailer loaded with emergency supplies and equipment was ready to roll into the region as soon as Rita passed.

Participating in this year's **Operation Christmas Child** has special significance knowing that some of our shoebox gifts will be going to children left destitute by the aftermath of one of the worst natural disasters in our country's history. You can make a difference in the life of a child by simply filling a shoebox with toys and needful items and bringing it to church (watch for an upcoming **Operation Christmas Child** brochure in our church bulletin).

I hope you will participate in this annual holiday project which reaches boys and girls around the world with the Christian message of hope. As you wrap your gift of love, please continue to pray for the suffering victims of Hurricane Katrina and Rita. And pray for those people who are working tirelessly to help them.

Serving together,

Pastor Paul



One of my favorite praise songs of all time is "Refiner's Fire." When the song was written in the early 1990s, I was a young teenage kid dependant on summer trips to Calvin Crest, where I received my annual dose of Christian discipleship. Returning to my little hometown without a formal youth group to attend, I tried desperately to clutch onto the pictures of grace I had seen and experienced as a kid who simply wanted to know Christ more. "Refiner's Fire" was a tool that I could use. It was a metaphor I could understand:

*Purify my heart, let me be as gold and precious silver
Purify my heart, let me be as gold, pure gold*

The song would echo within my heart; its words teaching me about the nature of sanctification.

*Refiner's fire, my hearts one desire
Is to be holy, set apart for your LORD
I long to be holy, set apart for you my master
And ready to do your will*



I believe I went as far as figuring it out on my Harmonica.

*Purify my heart, cleanse my from within and make me holy
Purify my heart, cleanse me from my sin, deep within*

These lyrics became the cry of my heart. I longed to be set apart for my master and now I had a chorus to declare that desire. So as I approach the completion of my first year serving as the High School Youth Director of SVPC, I've been reflecting.

How can we as a church interconnect the words of this song to the students with whom we've been entrusted? What are ways we can contribute to the mission over the youth of our community who are filling the mobile in their pursuit to know God more? I am struck by the hunger exhibited through our students who are not content with traditional modes of youth group entertainment! They come with tough questions, real questions that cannot be dismissed merely because we look at them as kids! Agreeing with the song, they sing "I long to be holy, set apart for you my master and ready to do your will."

So over the last couple of months as we've been working this question into our program, I've been seeking to establish a name that identifies our students more than the words "Youth Group" ever can. I've been trying to find a word that can connect our fellowship with a message to better describe why we come together, much like a thesis affects the direction of an essay, and I'm happy to report I've come to a conclusion. Instead of "youth group" we are now "The Refinery."

As we strive to "be covered in the dust of our Rabbi" in trying to know Him more by attempting to simply be more like Him, we now have a title to express the fiery purification we collectively endure as we grow closer in our relationship to our "Abba" father, but while a title is never enough to conclude such a mission, it gives us a beacon, so that every time "The Refinery" is repeated we are reminded of the work Christ is doing in our hearts. Thus we are mindful of the fact that "He who began a good work in us, carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:6).

Grace and Peace,
Ryan McKenzie, Director of The Refinery

MEMBERSHIP: YOUR CHOICE

The difference between a church *attender* and a church *member* is commitment. Attenders are spectators from the sidelines; members get involved in ministry. Attenders are consumers; members are contributors. Attenders want the benefit of a church without committing to marriage.

The Christian life is more than just a commitment to Christ, it includes a commitment to other Christians. Joining the membership of a local church is the natural next step once you've become a child of God. You become a Christian by committing yourself to Christ, but you become a *church member* by committing yourself to a specific group of believers. The first brings salvation; the second brings fellowship.

Why is it important to join a local church family? Because it proves you are committed to your spiritual brothers and sisters in reality, not just a theory. God wants you to love *real* people, not *ideal* people. You can spend a lifetime searching for the perfect church, but you will never find it. You are called to love imperfect sinners, just as God does.

Come & See what membership is all about at Sierra Vista

Our next class will be held over two days: Saturday, October 15th, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sunday, October 16th, 12:30 p.m. in the Chapel. Lunch provided both days. Childcare available. Reserve your spot by calling the church office, 683-6742, by October 11th. Or sign up at the *Welcome Tent* on the patio October 2nd or 9th.

This class is required for membership, but many attend just for the valuable information given. You'll learn about the history of Sierra Vista and have an opportunity to meet many of those involved in leadership.

SENIOR FELLOWSHIP EVENTS

FALL AFTERNOON AT CALVIN CREST!

We will share a Fall Sunday afternoon together!
We will meet at Calvin Crest **October 2nd from 2 –6:30 p.m.** for a social time, games, appetizers, dinner and dessert.

There will be apple picking and maybe some berries! Bring your bags. Bring your games! Bring your appetizers and desserts to share!

The cost of dinner will be \$8 per person. Questions??? Call Gene & Yhonna Loy at 658-8942.

POTLUCK AND ORNAMENT EXCHANGE

November 14th at 5:30 p.m.
This is a time of great fun! Come join us! Please bring a salad, main dish, or dessert and one wrapped ornament per person. Questions??? Call Gene & Yhonna Loy at 658-8942.

"I WILL SING AND MAKE MUSIC" - Psalm 57:7

Praise team workshops will be offered one Saturday per month. Join us for our first workshop on Saturday October 15th from 9 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. It will include a time of worship and training for: audio/visual, bass guitar, drums/jembe, guitar, piano/keyboard, and vocal. To sign up contact Denise Jones #658-7519 or jonesidosio@yahoo.com

HOE DOWN & CHILI COOK-OFF

**NOVEMBER 11
6:30 - 9:30**

Fall is definitely in the air, warm days and cold nights. A time of harvest, a time of thanksgiving, a time of square dancing? Yes! At our first and hopefully annual **HOE DOWN & CHILI COOK-OFF**. This family event spearheaded by our own creative & lovely Denise Jones is sure to be a fun packed and memorable evening. Please mark your calendars and come and share a special time of family fun. This event will offer something for everybody. For the kids, face painting, crafts, bobbing for apples, hayrides and great food. For the adults, square dancing, family fun, hayrides, competing for the title "Best Chili in the Mountains" maybe a pie eating contest? And enjoying more of those scrumptious desserts prepared for us by our own awesome cooks.

Watch the bulletin for more information. See you there!

You may call Denise Jones or Cyndi Presho for information or to volunteer.

NEW TO THE CHURCH LIBRARY

"Creative Correction" by Lisa Whelchel

"Stress and Your Child" by Dr.

Archibald Hart

"The Still of Night" by Kristen

Heitzmann

"A Rush of Wings" by Kristen

Heitzmann

"Intimidation" by Wanda Dyson

"Obsession" by Wanda Dyson

"The Prince" by Francine Rivers

"Rally Round the Glag" (#18 in the "Tales from Grace Chapel Inn" series)

Check out a book and enjoy!

A DECADE OF SERVICE
October 1995 – October 2005

This month we celebrate 10 years of service in the use of our building additions of our new sanctuary and the new PromiseLand Building. This construction added 10,000 square feet to our original facility and we have put the space to good use in service for Christian ministry.

Groundbreaking was held on **February 17, 1995** and construction was completed in October, 1995. We first used our sanctuary on **September 24, 1995** when we met in the amphitheater and marched with joy into the sanctuary, singing all the way with the bells pealing forth in celebration.

On **October 22, 1995** was the day of the formal dedication. Participating in the ceremony were the Reverends Bill Welch, Rick Harrison, Earl Kuester, Greg Horn, Henry Greene and Tom Elson. Elson brought the message entitled, “Why We’re Here.”

Cristel Biasell led the praise songs “Surely the Presence of the Lord is in This Place,” “Holy Ground by Beatty and “Holy Ground” by Davis; the Sierra Singers, led by Cathy Walker, sang “Festive Praise” and “How Amiable Are Thy Dwellings,” and Chris Welch and Christel Biasell sang of duet, “Find Us Faithful.” Congregational hymns sung were “Now Thank We All Our God” and “Let Us Build a House of Worship” (tune Hymn to Joy), and “The Church’s One Foundation.”

Scriptures read were Psalm 96 and selected passages from John 17.

Following the dedication service, the celebration continued with a silver reception hosted by Ronna Hendrickson, chair.

Persons instrumental in fund raising and construction were the following:

Building Team Members Past and Present (beginning in 1989): Del Bireline, Vern Carson, Don Hansen, John Jarrett, Dennis Jones, Jane Juliana, Al Lewis, Greg Owens, John Ramsey, Jim Van Burgh, Chris Welch, and Bill Welch, ex officio.

Growing Through Faith Campaign Team: Al Lewis, Chair, Ron Cox, Cindy Jones, Bill Lohuis, Warren Studer, Jean Thibodeaux, and Nancy Trauger.

Drafting and Design: John Ramsey

Contractor: Glen Lauterbach

Project Supervisor: Al Lewis

“Why We’re Here” Dedication: Rick Harrison, Ginny Harrison, Bill Welch

We are ever grateful to these people who worked long and hard to give us a new facility and a renewed ministry for our Lord. Why not give them a smile and a “thank you” when you see them?

And now we are standing on the threshold of a new decade. What new challenges await us as we continue to serve the Lord with gladness?



Betty Strain

SESSION NOTES AND VOTES
September 20, 2005

IT WAS NOTED...

- Average attendance for Aug 21 – Sept 18 was **454.**]
- A Hoe Down and Chile Cook Off will be held Nov 11. It is an all church event.
- MOPS is off to a good start for their fall program.
- New flooring for PromiseLand is being researched.
- *God is Closer than you Think*, by Ortberg, is being taught Tuesday noon’s by *Paul De Pledge*.

IT WAS VOTED...

- To accept with regret the resignations of Elders *Aaron Eames ‘07* and *Ginny Harrison ‘06* and Deacon *Neal Moberly ‘06*.
- To honor the request of **Tom and Marlene Elliot** to be removed from our rolls as they have joined the Mennonite Brethren Church in Dinuba.
- To honor the request of *Gordon and Carol Levy* to be removed from our rolls.
- To ratify the marriage of *James Bass, Jr. and Lynne Silva*, on 8-27-05. Officiating pastor was *Rev. Richard Southard*. Witnesses were *Joy Greenwood and Mark Greenwood*.
- To endorse an **All Church Mission Trip** to Jackson, Mississippi on October 22 – 29, 2005, to help with relief efforts. *Ryan McKenzie* will coordinate the work party.
- To receive the August, 2005, Statement of Operations and the General Checking Account as presented.
- To hire a Nursery Worker to work from 8:30 – 12:30 Sunday mornings.
- To approve the job description of the Nursery Worker.
- To approve *Janet Burkett, Laurie Kenyon, and Alex Noecker* as Wedding Coordinators as *Lana Jackson* and *Teri Lucas* are resigning.
- To amend the Fund Raising Policy to include **All Church Benevolent Projects** as it pertains to **Operation Shoebox, Angel Tree Ministry, Alternative Gifts**, etc. These will be annual events or held less often as deemed appropriate. New proposed *All Church Benevolent Projects* will be approved on a case by case basis.
- To approve moving the piano on stage in order to alleviate crowding in Sunday worship service.

Betty L. Strain, Clerk of Session