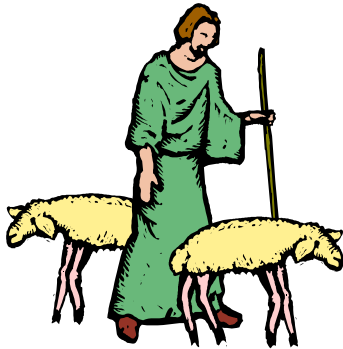


THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

The Newsletter for the San Francisco, San Leandro, San Leandro Hispanic and Tracy Congregations of the Worldwide Church of God

March 2004
Volume 4, Issue 1



Sunday Will Never Be the Same

By Pastor Jim Roberts

Editor's Note:

Pastor JR submitted the following article to Barbara Dahlgren for the San Jose Newsletter, "Light In the Valley". Please read it from a reporter's perspective.

Highlights
From this Issue

Sunday Will Never Be the Same	1
What's in a Name?	2
A Laundry Bag Full of Love	4
Shadows	6

"We wanted to position ourselves to be available to God if He should choose to use us to impact our community."

"Hey, days don't matter!" Or do they?

This question lay at the heart of a decision reached by the San Leandro congregation to begin meeting for Services on Sunday. Before a WCG congregation can even consider changing worship days, the vast majority must be convinced that our New Covenant theology really does release us from an obligation to be Sabbatarian about any day. It requires belief in the concept that Jesus Christ is our Sabbath Rest, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Once we believe that, we realize days don't matter. So, why switch? One day is as good as another, and we are comfortable where we are. Right? But now we must ask ourselves, what is the purpose for the church? What is its mission? What is our congregational mission and vision? When San Leandro determined the answers to these questions,

we drew the conclusion that days do matter, not in a legalistic sense, but in a mission sense.

When we drew up our mission statement, we put ourselves on a collision course with our worship day. That statement is: To be and to make disciples through sharing the love of Jesus Christ. Our day was Saturday and in the afternoon at that. Now Saturday afternoon is known to be the worst time for Services if a church expects to reach potential disciples in its community.

We began to cultivate two words as keys to our future: positioning and availability. We wanted to position ourselves to be available to God if He should choose to use us to impact our community.

We began to question whether Saturday p.m. church was a good position to be in for availability for seekers in our neighborhood. We realized that Sunday morning is the time when almost any potential convert in our culture then would increase opportunity to share

God's love in a significant way.

But we were limited by finances and opportunity. We had affordable rent where we were meeting. We would have to wait for the Lord to open a door if He intended to honor our commitment to disciple-making. And He did just that!

A Samoan group was renting the smaller Chapel across the lawn from the large Sanctuary where we met. The Chapel seated about 50, and it did not take 50 Samoans to outgrow it! So the Chapel became available to make us more available. We negotiated with Christ Presbyterian for use of the Chapel, and the Session voted in our favor. We would make our move on Feb. 1, 2004.

So this crazy pastor who was committed to reaching the community, growing the church and making disciples, moves his congregation into a smaller hall with less room for growth! Sometimes thinking big requires thinking small. Our new vision meant we had to think positioning first for

Continued on Page 6