

ANNUAL REPORT

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Isaiah 30:15 says, "Therefore, the Lord God, the holy one of Israel says: In return and rest you will be saved; quietness and trust will be your strength." In the past year of ministry and rest, this has proven true! In my thirty-ninth report to you, I am grateful to share with you some of the highlights, challenges, and ways you can pray as we follow Jesus together.

YOUTH MINISTRIES

- Our mission statement: Follow Jesus, grow in faith, change the world
- "PAUSE" on Wednesdays – We worked through a series on "Big Questions and Answers" using the Free Methodist Catechism and now are in the series, "We Believe." This is a time to study our own beliefs as followers of Jesus and look at the beliefs of other religions
- SUNDAY STUDY - Our youth have benefited from staying in the worship service through the pastoral prayer. This has allowed them to hear the people's testimonies and worship among the generations. During the sermon, we meet in the youth room and study the encounters of Jesus found in the book of John. Estefany Can, Kole t'Sas, and I have been rotating on teaching. Jesus has met us there.
- High School Life Groups – We continue to offer small groups to our high school students as a time to check in with them and hear how it is going in their walk with Jesus.
- Pastoral Care – Our priority is to be sure we connect with every 6th through 12th grader on our care list, whether in-person, visiting their performances/events, texts, or messaging.
- FM YOUTH participated in fun events, including a Taco Time on Milpas, Rollerskating in Ventura, and Christmas White Elephant. We have also served at the Fall Family Festival and the Easter Egg Hunt. Some of our youth are on the FM KIDS childcare team. More events are planned for the near future, and we will soon have the summer calendar confirmed.
- New youth have been coming on Wednesdays thanks to parents encouraging their kids to invite others. We are grateful for all the guys we have coming and pray that we will also welcome more girls.
- Thank you to our faithful volunteer leaders: Rich Lashua, Estefany Can, Alysse Mastromarino, Sam Johnston, Kole t'Sas, and Julie Hashbarger
- The FM YOUTH Advance team is now meeting again to examine the bigger picture of our youth ministry re-building. Thank you to Daisy Moschitto, Doug Conrad, and Estefany Can
- **Pray for us** as we methodically and faithfully work to build momentum back into the youth ministry. We continue to be rebuilding, and it will take time. God is going before us as we love our youth and their families

PASTORAL CARE - Highlights, growing edges, and prayer requests

- Over the past year, our plan for Pastoral Care has continued to improve and grow. I oversee the efforts of our pastoral staff and lay leaders to provide care and prayer for the many different needs of this congregation.
- Daily, I review this list and we spend time working through a shared document including the following categories: upcoming surgeries/procedures, in hospital/rehabilitation, in assisted care, at-home recovery, in mourning, ongoing pastoral care, missing people, housing needs/benevolence, new people and other categories
- Every week, we look over this list in our pastoral staff meetings to be sure we are following up and determine the next steps for our loving and excellent care of the church family
- **Pray for us** as we seek to be diligent in this ministry. It is not our desire to forget anyone. We want to extend the love of Christ to all.

MISSIONS

- Global Missions Leadership team monthly meetings – We continue to gather monthly to pray for our missionaries/projects and dream of ways to continue raising awareness among our church body.
- We came up just short of fulfilling our congregational giving goal (\$49,000) to the Leon family in Costa Rica, the Shattenberg family in Madagascar, Wayne/Vicky Galler in India, the Winslow family in Asia,

Eden Reforestation project, Impact Latin America, and Immanuel University in India. Thanks to our Finance Board and Local Board of Administration for designating funds for the small balance needed.

- Monthly promos – We still actively welcome our missionaries and projects to present their ministries throughout the year. Keeping their names and faces before our people is critical to financial and prayerful support.
- Our chair, Janie Guillermo, has recently “retired” from the position. We give God great praise for all the years she has faithfully served.
- Recently, we have welcomed some new leadership team members and have a few more openings, especially for younger members, as we care for our missionaries and projects. **Pray for** more people to respond to this opportunity.

MEN'S MINISTRIES – This past fall, we had a great Men's Retreat at Toro Canyon Park. Pastor Dennis Leon was our speaker as we all leaned into the theme of listening to God and His people. Our next Men's Retreat is scheduled for Saturday, September 14th. In addition, we have two healthy men's Bible studies meetings on Tuesday mornings and Tuesday evenings. Thanks to Phil Guenthart, Mark Bates, and Bret Foster for their leadership. Pastor Jake is leading another young men's Bible study on Friday mornings. Our men now regularly serve at Pershing Park and offer meals to those without homes. **Pray for** our ministry to help men to continue following Jesus and grow in their faith.

MINISTRY TO THE WIDER KINGDOM OF GOD

In addition to the many other ways, I serve our church through preaching, visitation, weddings, funerals, etc. I also have opportunities to contribute to and partner with these ministries: Coordinator for the Santa Barbara Area Youth Leaders Network, Writer for Interlinc (helping youth leaders maximize music and media across the nation), Lead Consultant/Project Manager with Ministry Architects Youth/Children/Whole Church, a mentor for six pastors through the New Frontiers program at Westmont and the Coordinator of Mentoring for those entering the ordination process in the Free Methodist Church of Southern California.

SABBATICAL - Again, I would like to thank you for the generous sabbatical you gave me last April through July. It was a great time of restoration. My itinerary highlights were a weekend away in Death Valley, time with family in Indianapolis, time with family in Maryland, attending the Youth Ministry Forum at Princeton Theological Seminary, helping our oldest daughter's family after the birth of our second grandchild, four days at St. Andrew's Abbey, a weekend away in Morro Bay, lots of reading/writing/study/play and more. I returned with 19 things I had learned and renewed energy/enthusiasm to serve Jesus and shepherd God's people well.