



# The BELL TOWER

VALLEY COMMUNITY CHURCH

## Lead Where You Are

Hosting a major event always leads you to wonder if it will be worth it. Will all the hours spent in preparation and execution produce anything worthwhile and lasting? It's a fair question and one we need to think and pray about.

As I shared with you in January's *Bell Tower*, we at VCC are hosting the Global Leadership Summit on August 9-10. It is a huge undertaking and one that will require a lot of hard work from a lot of people. So, naturally, we need to understand why we are doing this. While there are many good reasons for this commitment, I want to share with you the one that I think is most crucial.

One of, if not the most important, responsibility a church must embrace to fulfill its mission is to develop leaders. Way back in 1984, Ginger and I packed up our ten-month-old son Christopher and headed to Vienna to join a team of people committed to assisting churches in Eastern Europe with their most acutely felt need: leadership development. It had been the strategy of the communist governments to control and reduce the impact of churches by limiting or outright eliminating the development of leaders. Hamper, control, or remove leaders and you could control or destroy the movement. In that environment the importance of leadership that was trained and encouraged became evident to me.

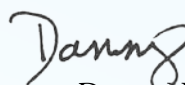
Now fast forward to the present. Here we are at VCC in 2012 and we are asking ourselves how well we are preparing our church, not just to survive, but to thrive well into the future. On the foundation of what God has done are we ready to move boldly into what God has for us ahead? Are we truly becoming a Christ-centered community where lives are being transformed? Are people being cared for and helped in their walks with Christ?

Are we individually and as a church growing more and more into the image of Christ? Are we preparing the next generations of leaders?

These are important questions that we must answer and we are committed to doing all we can to live up to this calling. We want everyone who is a part of VCC to be fully yielded to the Lordship of Christ and to live a life of blessing and impact for God's Kingdom. In order to do this we must be getting better and better as leaders now and we must be raising up and preparing new leaders.

The Global Leadership Summit is a powerful tool in this process. While our staff and some of our elders have already benefitted from previous Summits I want more of you to experience this wonderful environment for growth. For those already in leadership roles this can only help you be better. For those who might respond that you are not in a specific leadership role I would say that at its most foundational aspect, leadership is influence. If that is so, then all of us are leaders. All of us influence people everyday in our families, jobs, schools, and neighborhoods. And maybe some day God will call you into a specific leadership role. The Summit can give you excellent tools to help you be better prepared to have an impact for Christ.

I am truly excited for us to host the Summit. While realizing the potential for our own church's growth we also get the opportunity to bless the whole East Bay by being hosts. Let's pray and work together to make this a truly memorable event, launching us forward in God's plan for us.



Danny Hall  
SENIOR PASTOR



THE GLOBAL  
LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

# Serving at the Summit | Valley Community Church... a place to give

Expecting to reach more than 155,000 leaders this year, The Global Leadership Summit partners with hundreds of host sites around the world to train, equip, and inspire Christian leaders. This annual 2-day global experience is providing leadership development and fulfilling the vision of seeing every Christ-following leader in every church follow his or her God-given calling of carrying Christ's transformative power into our broken world.

This summer, August 9-10, Valley Community Church is privileged to be a premier host site for the satellite-transmitted Summit. Within the broader context of our Spiritual Growth Pathway, the Summit will provide our congregation a broad range of opportunities to learn and grow as well as to serve. We have been given the opportunity to serve God and His glory with this conference and we believe that God wants us to share this excitement with you; allowing you the opportunity to feel the joy of serving the local church and community.

We have a talented Leadership Team in place and are now talking to some great people to step into a number of Operations Team Key Leader positions. In May we will be rolling out the various support volunteer opportunities. Please prayerfully read through the Team descriptions below and ask where God might be calling you to serve. For more detailed duties and to indicate your interest you can email either Kris Jarvis (GLS Onsite Event Manager) at [kpjarvis@comcast.net](mailto:kpjarvis@comcast.net) or her assistant Mary Richardson at [mrichardson@vcclive.org](mailto:mrichardson@vcclive.org).

## VOLUNTEER CENTRAL HOSTS

Register all volunteers onsite; responsible for Volunteer Central, keeping it clean and setting up snacks.

## REGISTRATION TEAM

Oversees guest check-in, walk-in registration and registration solutions during the Summit; oversee the processing of host church registrations prior to the conference.

## FOOD SERVICE TEAM

Teams will provide for guest breaks, food for Volunteer Central, and lunch service.

## CONFERENCE INFORMATION CENTER

Provide guests information about our building, local area, and ministries of our church.

## FACILITY TEAM

Will know everything that is going on throughout the building the week of the Summit; janitorial services, setup and strike breaks, resource area, guest check-in and registration.

## USHER TEAM

Usher team will care for needs of guests, ensure distraction-free environment, and manage distribution of session handouts.

## PRAYER ROOM TEAM

A volunteer prayer team prays for guests and all needs of the Summit.

We need you—but most importantly—you will be blessed in this opportunity to serve our church and God. Don't miss out.

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LEAD WHERE YOU ARE



THE GLOBAL  
LEADERSHIP  
SUMMIT

August 9-10, 2012  
[willowcreek.com/summit](http://willowcreek.com/summit)

## Pray, Serve, Travel

Recently the CLASSICS (65-something) ladies gathered together to assemble gift baskets for girls in Mexico and to pray. These wonderful VCC women continue to serve and bless others; as prayer warriors and as servants. At the same time they have the opportunity to enjoy each



other's fellowship at these special gatherings set up by Janet Moore.

At their gathering in March, the ladies prayed for the team that went to Ethiopia with Doctors Giving

Back, and they prayed for the young women who will receive the "pampering baskets" in Colonet, Mexico as they put the baskets together. They also prayed for our adults who will travel to Mexico this summer on a short-term mission trip, and they prayed for those in Mexico who will receive these missionaries.

If you are interested in being a part of the CLASSICS gatherings, contact the church office at 846-6622 or email [sharford@vcclive.org](mailto:sharford@vcclive.org). The ladies meet 2-3 times a year for various activities.

### 2012 Short-term Mission Opportunities

The next adult missions trip to Colonet, Mexico will be from Saturday, July 21 to Sunday, July 29. If you would like to take part in the mission trip to Colonet, Mexico, contact Terri Rees-Estrada at [terrireesestrada@gmail.com](mailto:terrireesestrada@gmail.com).

Jan Ash will be taking adults to Ensenda, Mexico in late August, early September. One of the projects they will be working on is building a dormitory space for 4-5 people and putting in a concrete pad that can be used for construction and parking. Contact Jan at [jash@vcclive.org](mailto:jash@vcclive.org) or call her at 846-6622x403.

Ginger Hall is taking a group to Bangkok, Thailand from September 22 through October 7, 2012. Space is limited to six ladies. You can contact Ginger at 408-828-4771 if you are interested.

A short-term trip to Guatemala is also being planned.

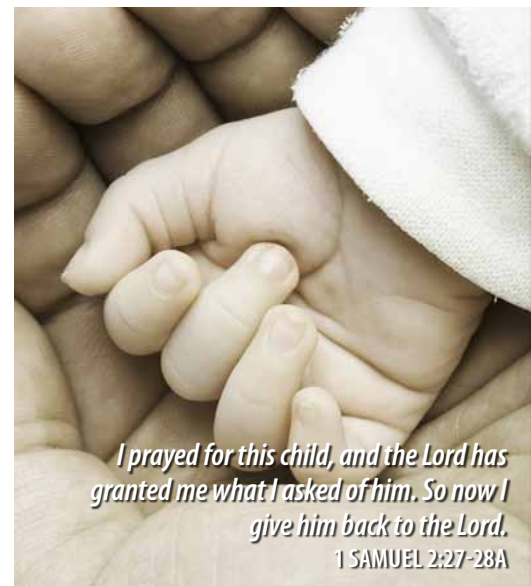


## Giving Back What God Has Given

In the Old Testament in 1 Samuel 1, we read the story of the birth of Samuel. His mother Hannah has been barren for many years. Each year when the family goes up to the temple to worship and sacrifice to the Lord, she is tormented by her husband's second wife (who has children) for her inability to bear sons. This goes on for many years. In her great anguish and grief, Hannah prays to God for a child and God answers her prayers. After Samuel's birth Hannah tells her husband: "After the boy is weaned, I will take him and present him before the Lord, and he will live there always." After waiting for so long, how is it that Hannah gives her son over to the service of the Lord at the tender age of three or four? Perhaps it is because the source of Hannah's greatest joy is not in the child, but in the God who answered her prayers!

On May 13, parents have the opportunity to give thanks to God for their precious children. Take the time to dedicate your baby or other young children to the God who created and loves them. Give them back into his loving care so that together you may grow your children into the men and women God wants them to become.

Baby dedications will take place at both services on Mother's Day weekend. There will be a short class for parents who have never participated before on Sunday, May 6, during second service in Room B210. Please watch the bulletin for sign-up information. You may leave your children 0-K in their classrooms during second hour.



*I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him back to the Lord.*  
1 SAMUEL 2:27-28A

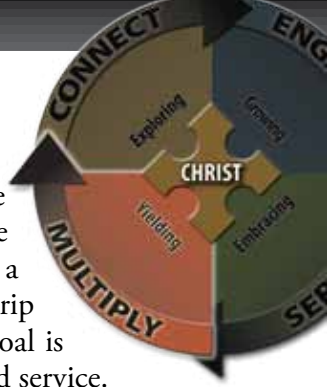


## Where to Next?

Colorado, Washington, Hawaii—TNT has had the opportunity to serve children in each of these states by running sports camps for low income families. Once again, this summer, we will be doing this through a partnership with Uncharted Waters Sports Ministry. The mission trip is a 7-day journey, destination unknown, in mid to late July. The goal is to share Christ with elementary aged children through testimony and service.

During past Sports Camps we have seen transformations in the lives of our middle school students and the students we have served. If you are interested in sending your middle school child on this trip, you may pick up forms in the youth office or print them at the Valley Community Church website, [vcclive.org](http://vcclive.org) soon. Watch *Keeping Connected* for the destination reveal and when you can start signing up.

The cost for the trip is being determined with airline tickets to be purchased by the end of May. If you have any questions, please contact Ryan Cochran at [rcochran@vcclive.org](mailto:rcochran@vcclive.org) or give him a call at 846-6622 x411.



## CrossPoint *by Don Elser*

You turn on the TV. A movie is in progress. Everyone seems elated. A couple has gotten together—after what seems like some confusion, an evil empire has been conquered and a child is returned safely in dirty battered clothing to her crying mother. The credits roll.

You have this vague feeling that this might be a pretty great motion picture, **but you've got absolutely no context. It's a great ending with no sense of story.** No tension. No drama. Some confusion.

At times Easter can be like this—especially for people newer to the faith. Even if we're familiar with the story, it can be odd to hit the end of the week with balloons and lilies and fanfare and a bold "He is RISEN!!" without any time to "experience" events that led up to the credits rolling on Easter Sunday.

Because of this, we will be hosting **a special evening event on April 1, called CrossPoint.** It will be on Palm/Passion Sunday...we'll move from the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem that morning, to a Cross focus that evening.

**CrossPoint is a time of quiet candlelit reflection on the sacrifice of Jesus** and the final phrases he uttered as He was being crucified for the sins of humanity. It involves a limited amount of congregational participation and welcome at the beginning, video support, and then moves toward a time of dramatic readings and simple music which leads us through all of the "last words of Christ." **It will end in complete darkness—except for a light on a rugged Cross—and allow participants to stay and pray for as long as they'd like, or to leave quietly.** Most people who have attended a service like this find it moving and appreciate the time and space to reflect on the sacrifice of Jesus in preparation for the celebration coming on the following Sunday.

iNVERSION will be finishing their evening by participating in this service. They are welcoming those who wouldn't normally attend iNVERSION to come early at 6:00PM for the teaching leading up to this worship experience at 7:30PM. **People are welcome to participate in either part of the evening—or both—as they sense God leading them.**

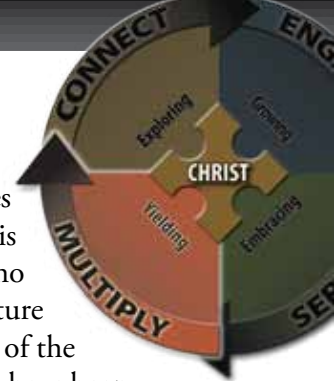
Hope you are able to be part of this experience of **"being with Jesus" at the Cross!**

Sunday, April 1, 7:30PM in the Sanctuary. Childcare provided for babies through 5th grade.



## All Summer Long!

One of our most popular high school summer activities is the annual mission trip to Ensenada, Mexico. This trip impacts our students in many ways. For those who are traveling to Mexico for the first time, there is culture shock along with the excitement of traveling outside of the United States for maybe the first time. For those who have been before there is the excitement of getting reacquainted with friends they have made the year before and an anticipation of seeing if the work they did the previous year has withstood weather and life.



This trip impacts students in a big way. Our students work hard. Mornings are spent on construction. They may be starting a new home or adding a second room onto one that was begun the previous summer. They help with repairs on and around the church. Some groups are assigned to prepare meals and carry water to the workers. In the late afternoon they get cleaned up and break into groups that go out to different locations where they hold Vacation Bible Schools for the local children. They lead worship and share the Gospel through Bible stories. Like our own VBS, they have a craft activity that they prepare before their departure and have the children complete during their VBS time. They return with a new respect for what it means to be Christian and to live a Christian life.

<b>IMPORTANT DATES</b> Ensenada 2012 • Saturday, July 21 to Sunday, July 29, 2012		
WHEN?	WHAT?	WHERE?
Wednesday, May 2, 8:00PM	Parent meeting	The Hall
Wednesday, May 2	Registration due	
Saturday, May 5, 8:00AM	Car wash	Parking Lot
Wednesday, May 30, 6:00-7:30PM	Mandatory meeting	Seminar Room
Wednesday, May 30, 6:00-7:30PM	Parent notary signing	Youth Office
June 10-15	2012 HS 'Xtreme Camp (required)	
Monday, June 25, 6:00-9:00PM	Mandatory meeting	The Hall
Monday, July 9, 6:00-9:00PM	Mandatory meeting	The Hall
Monday, July 16, 6:00-9:00PM	Mandatory meeting	The Hall
Friday, July 20, 9:00AM 'til done	Packing & practice	The Hall
Saturday, July 21, 6:00AM	Departure	The Hall

This trip is not for the faint of heart. There is month of mandatory planning meetings and at least one fundraiser before the trip. Your child is encouraged to participate in fund raising activities to help offset the cost of the trip.

*The cost is \$700, until May 30, with a down payment of \$100 and the balance due on May 30. On May 31 the cost increases to \$1,000 and is payable in total. If you are not a member or regular attendee of VCC Student Ministries, the cost of the trip will be \$1,000-\$1,200.*

## Octopus, Pink Milk, and Prayer

What do octopus, pink milk and prayer have in common? They were all a part of last years 'Xtreme Camp. If you and your middle school or high school child are looking for something they can do this summer that borders on the extreme, this could be just the place for them. Set among the redwoods of Northern California, your child will hang out with their peers and enjoy sports and crazy games together. Best of all, your child and their friends will hear God's word and learn about His passion for their lives!

### High School 'Xtreme Camp

Sunday, June 10 – Friday, June 15

### Middle School 'Xtreme Camp

Saturday, June 16 – Thursday, June 21

### Register Early & Save!

Cost is \$290 until April 29; \$320, April 30-May 20; \$350 from May 21 on. Register online at [vcclive.org](http://vcclive.org).





**REGISTER ONLINE  
AT VCCLIVE.ORG  
BEGINNING MAY 6!**

## **AVOID THE SUMMERTIME BLUES**

If your child is a student in Kidz Connection at VCC that means they are probably showing signs of spring fever as they start to anticipate the coming of summer and the end of the school year. If you are a parent you may be thinking that you will need to keep your elementary age children occupied during the long summer months to avoid the summertime blues—VCC to the rescue! Once again we have some exciting returning events planned for our students. Here is an opportunity, parents, to keep your children connected to God while giving them quality time with friends. Please plan ahead so your children can attend these events. Events are for children who are exiting Kindergarten through fifth grade this June.

Registration for all events begins Sunday, May 6. You will be able to register and pay with a credit card at the Valley Community Church website, [vcclive.org](http://vcclive.org).

KICK OFF the Summer event Sunday, June 3 during first and second service. Bring a friend(s) to this surprise event!



### **Blank Canvas, June 13 & 14**

Two days of drama, music, and art and will run from 9:00AM until 4:00PM. The cost is \$30 per child. Space is limited to 30 students.



### **Sports Camp, June 25-29**

Sports Camp is from 4:00-7:00PM. Choose basketball, cheer, or soccer. The cost is \$65 per child. Sports Camp Team 45 is for 4 and 5-year-olds from 9:00AM-11:30AM and is \$65 per child.



### **Vacation Bible School, July 9-13**

We have another great theme this year that is sure to provide lots of fun and excitement. We will meet in the Sanctuary at 9:00AM and end our morning in the Sanctuary at 12:00 noon. Parents are invited to join us in the Sanctuary for our daily closing ceremonies. Cost is \$25 per child.

During the month of May we will have signups for VBS volunteers and snack donations. Watch the bulletin and *Keeping Connected* for more information.



### **Wild and Wacky Wednesday, July 18**

This is a "surprise and trust" field trip for students. We will depart from the church at 9:00AM and return your children to you at the church at 4:00PM. The cost for each trip is \$30 per child.

Please keep us in your prayers as we move into this next season. It will be exciting to see what God has in store for our students this summer.



## Sharing Closet: *Where your bounty is someone else's blessing!*



Children's Ministries started the Sharing Closet as a free clothing exchange for VCC and Shining Light Preschool families. Knowing that we all have a bounty of clothing that no longer fits our kids we figured why not bring it in and exchange it for something that does! Since this was our first time doing the exchange we were anxious to see what God had in store for us. The donations started coming in slowly...a bag here, a bag there. As the dates grew closer the donations started picking up...3 or 4 bags here, 5 or 6 bags there, until the day came to set up the tables and put out the clothes. We were overwhelmed by the response...over 3000 pieces of clothing!

Due to the quantity of clothing, we ended up running the Sharing Closet for an extra day to allow everyone the opportunity to come and share in the bounty. Not only did VCC and Shining Light families come but we also had truly needy families from the community. They were so grateful and thanked everyone profusely with tears in their eyes.

At the end we still had tons of clothes left over...truly a loaves and fishes story. We connected with Horizon High School a continuing education school for pregnant and teen mothers here in Pleasanton and gave them all the leftover baby clothes. All the remaining clothing was divided up between a foster care facility in Palo Alto and the Richmond Rescue Mission. We also found out through our contacts about a group of people that live and work at the fairgrounds. Our Women's Bible Studies were able to use that contact and make holiday gift baskets for those families.

Talk about a bounty! From a small idea to share our clothing to being able to really reach out and bless the community has truly been a blessing for all.

We are looking forward with anticipation to our second Sharing Closet on April 25 and 26 in the Kidz Connection Portable from 9:00AM-2:00PM each day. We are accepting children's sizes newborn through size 14 as well as children's books to exchange. So clean out those closets and mark your calendars. Invite your neighbors and friends...all are welcome!

## Shadow Cliffs BAPTISM & PICNIC

### WHY BE BAPTIZED?

#### To follow the example set by Jesus

*And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.*

MARK 1:9

#### Because Christ commanded it

*Jesus said, "Go then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."* MATTHEW 28:19-20

#### It demonstrates that I really am a believer

*...many of the people who heard Him believed and were baptized.* ACTS 18:8

**Sunday, May 6, 12:00-3:00PM**

#### ADULT BAPTISM CLASS

Sunday, April 29, 12:15-2:00PM,  
Fireside Room

#### YOUTH BAPTISM CLASS

Sundays, April 22 and 29,  
10:45AM-11:15AM, Room B210



## Celebration & Blessing



Summer is just around the corner and for many of us it is the end of an era—our children will be graduating from high school! This is a time to give joyful thanks to God that our children have succeeded and are starting on the road to becoming who God has intended him or her to be. And what better way to do that than by participating in the high school graduation banquet.

All parents and their graduates are invited to join us on May 11, for a celebration dinner that honors your students. It is a night of joy and a time to gift your child spiritually. Parents and leaders will have the opportunity to stand before these children and publicly bless their future.

Invitations will be sent out soon with instructions to register online. If you do not receive one and are interested, please contact Laura Rodrigues at 925-846-6622x413 or email her at [lrodrigues@vcclive.org](mailto:lrodrigues@vcclive.org).

## Refreshing Your Soul



Mocha Moments are workshops, seminars, forums, or discussions on various topics that apply practically to women's lives—and even sometimes to men's too. We'd like to address the needs we have as women and families regarding parenting, marriage, finances, image issues, current social issues and more. Sometimes they will be for just women, other times for couples and sometimes specific to a particular age group. But we look forward to meeting together, having coffee and working through the issues of life.

Join us Saturday, April 21, from 8:30AM to 12:00PM for our next Mocha Moment at the home of Sheri Newman for a “soul refreshing” morning with time for quiet reflection with the Lord. Light snacks will be provided and short devotional times will lead us into connecting with God's Word. This will be an opportunity to spend time with Jesus as YOU need it, with no distractions or interruptions—a welcome “time out” from your busy schedule. Come enjoy a cup of coffee as you sit by the fire or a cozy corner or stroll outside. Bring your Bible and/or a journal. This Mocha Moment will be caring to your soul! Questions? Contact Kathy Engel at [BKEngel@comcast.net](mailto:BKEngel@comcast.net) or at 846-9497. Space is limited, so please RSVP to Kathy soon.

## April & May Special Events

**Sunday, April 1:** Palm Sunday

**Sunday, April 1, 7:30PM:** CrossPoint – a dramatic time of reflection

**Sunday, April 8, 8:00, 9:30, & 11:00AM:** Easter Sunday services

**Sunday, April 8, 8:30 to 11:30AM:** Easter Breakfast

**Wednesday & Thursday, April 24 & 25:** The Sharing Closet

**Friday, May 4:** Friday Friends Worship Night

**Saturday, May 5:** HS Missions Trip Car Wash

**Saturday, May 5:** Parent Date Night (a student fundraiser)

**Sunday, May 6:** Shadow Cliffs Picnic & Baptism

**Friday, May 11:** HS Grad Banquet

**Friday & Saturday, May 10-11:** Growing Up Female: FAB2BFEM

**Saturday, May 19:** MS Missions Trip Car Wash

