

# The BELL TOWER

VALLEY COMMUNITY CHURCH

## love with a purpose

Jesus taught us that all the Law of God could be summarized in the two concepts of loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and loving others as ourselves. Love God, love others. It seems so simple when put that way and yet in those simple statements resides all we need in order to evaluate how well we are growing both individually and as a church. Am I and are we growing in love for God and others?

Currently there are a number of ways we are seeking to spur ourselves on in this quest and I want to highlight two or three for you. First, we are in the middle of a series on Sunday mornings entitled "We Believe." In these studies we are taking a look at some of the core beliefs that frame and define our faith. The majority of these focus on the nature and character of our triune God. In order to love God more we want to discover together some of the rich beauty and majesty of our God. The more we see Him in all His glory, the more we are humbled and changed by His amazing mercy and grace.


Interwoven into these weeks is our annual Missions Weekend. This year our theme is Love With a Purpose. You can find details about the weekend on page 4 of this *Bell Tower*, but I want to encourage you to give this event (May 19-20) a top priority in your plans. Our goal is not only to share stories and information about what God is doing in a variety of ministries with whom we are partnering both financially and through volunteering, but also to hear stories of ordinary people who simply heard God's call on their lives and responded. Through these stories I hope you will be encouraged to ask yourself how you might learn to love with a purpose in the world where God has placed you.

We sometimes think of missions as some exotic calling reserved for a few, when in reality it is the normal response of people who have been touched by the grace of God. We often feel inadequate, but that is the genius of God's plans as He is faithful to supply all we need to accomplish

whatever He calls us to do (1 Thessalonians 5:24). We need only have an open heart and mind to how God might use us to love our neighbor. This weekend affords you a wonderful opportunity to be challenged to consider ways you can do this.

Finally, here's a reminder that we are hosting the Global Leadership Summit August 9-10. I featured this in last month's *Bell Tower* and there is lots of information in this issue as well. What does this have to do with loving God and others? Part of the way we love is being willing to invest in others, helping them grow in their knowledge of God and assisting them as they learn to love others. The Summit is designed to help us be better at influencing others in their spiritual journeys.

Love God, love others. God is giving us ample opportunity this spring and summer to go deeper. Let's pray and participate in these opportunities and trust God to grow us up to His glory and the good of others.

  
 Danny Hall  
 SENIOR PASTOR



love God  
 love others



Excited? Yes! As lead of the Promotional Strategist Team for the upcoming 2012 Global Leadership Summit hosted via satellite by Valley Community Church, I am excited about the opportunity we at VCC have for hosting leaders from throughout the East Bay with an injection of vision, skill development and inspiration. So just who are those leaders that are targeted as attendees of the Global Leadership Summit? The simple answer is YOU! Every one of us, regardless of our position in life, has influences (leadership) on the people around us. It can be at work, at church, at school, at home, or a recreational activity or a hobby. Yes, that position of influence is leadership and we all need to have our leadership bell rung once in a while.

The Global Leadership Summit offers leaders like YOU new ideas, fresh perspectives, powerful motivation, and personal challenges to put into action in your life, work, and ministry. The Global Leadership Summit is really a university-type experience, with world class faculty offered each year to pull and stretch us, as well as provoke new thoughts and ideas on how to be a better leader.

Now that I have convinced you that you need to attend, I would like you to consider inviting/encouraging those whom you influence to attend alongside you. These can be co-workers, ministry co-workers, teachers, sons and daughters, friends, neighbors! This is an opportunity to present Christ in a very educational and dynamic setting.

## *Volunteers Needed* by Kris Jarvis

As Kevin stated, we are thrilled to host the Global Leadership Summit. Obviously a conference of this magnitude takes many volunteers. We are grateful the following folks have agreed to head up the areas listed below:

**Promotional Strategist** Kevin Sousa

**Promotional Strategist Assistant** Jerry Sjodahl

**Onsite Event Manager** Kris Jarvis

**Onsite Event Manager Assistant** Mary Richardson

**Producer** Brenda Elser

**Technical Directors** James Whittle & Danny Min

**Volunteer Coordinator** Judy Woo

The Global Leadership Summit is unashamedly Christian in intent and purpose but has relevancy for everyone, believers or non-believers. This year's speaker line-up is phenomenal featuring such speakers as Condoleezza Rice, John Ortberg, and Bill Hybels among others. (Check out the speaker lineup and lots of other pertinent information at <http://www.willowcreek.com/events/leadership/>.)

My challenge to each and every one of you is to think about three people within VCC you can influence to attend the Summit and then think about three people outside of VCC you can influence to attend. Then go do it! You will not be disappointed that you attended and asked others to attend; you will be blessed and strengthened in your days and years of leadership yet to come!

So don't wait to register. We have an awesome rate of just \$75 for being one of the host sites for the 2012 Global Leadership Summit which is available for VCC members and attendees. You can register at [vcclive.org](http://vcclive.org), by clicking on the 2012 Global Leadership Summit page in the scrolling banner section. Rates will increase to \$105 on July 24th. If you have any questions or concerns or need the password code to register, feel free to contact the VCC office or email me at: [sousaphone@earthlink.net](mailto:sousaphone@earthlink.net).

The dates are August 9 and 10! Looking forward to seeing you all there and experiencing it together!

**Onsite Resource Coordinator** Martha Wensel

**Registration Lead** Sue Carlstrom

**Food Service Lead** Amy Brabender

**Conference Information Center Lead** Elaine Hilbelink

**Facilities Lead** Keith Brown

**Head Usher** Rick Wilhite

There are lots of support volunteer positions available, and we need your help! Take a look at the next page to see how you might like to serve. Signups will take place this month.

*continued on the next page*

## CONFERENCE INFORMATION CENTER

(Thursday & Friday) – This area serves as a central location for conference guests to receive information about the ministries of the host church plus local restaurant and attraction information. It is helpful if these volunteers are good with area directions and familiar with local restaurants.

## FACILITIES

(Wednesday, Thursday & Friday) – Janitorial support throughout the conference and physical setup of the conference guest service areas.

## FLOATERS

(Wednesday, Thursday & Friday) – Persons willing to jump in and help wherever possible and whenever needed. Typically these are volunteers who show up at the last minute but are willing and able to serve wherever needed.

## GUEST BREAK SET-UP/SERVE TEAM

(Wednesday, Thursday & Friday) – Prepare breaks for conference guests and lunches for the volunteer and staff team. These volunteers will be very busy during the conference assembling carts for breaks, delivering food, and cleaning up after breaks.

## GUEST CHECK-IN

(Thursday & Friday) – Handout guest name badges, distribute conference materials and welcome conference guests. Many times this will be a guest's first interaction with your church. Therefore you want to make sure these volunteers are friendly, familiar with the church, and can work well under pressure.

## MEDICAL SUPPORT

(Thursday & Friday) – Nurses, doctors and EMTs on-call for emergency medical service during the conference.

## NAME BADGE ASSEMBLY

(Wednesday) – Responsible for taking the conference name badges provided by the WCA and preparing them for distribution to the guests at check-in. They will separate, tear, paper clip, and assemble the name badges in alphabetical order.

## PACKING ASSISTANTS

(Friday evening) – Assist the Operations and Resource teams in inventory, packing, labeling, and moving the materials to be returned to designated destinations.

## PRAYER TEAM

(Thursday & Friday) – Intercede for conference guests, volunteers, and speakers, and be available to pray with the conference guests as needed.

## REGISTRATION SOLUTIONS

(Thursday & Friday) – Help guests who encounter problems at Guest Check-in. These volunteers need to be organized, work well under pressure, and preferably computer literate.

## RESOURCE CENTER ASSISTANTS

(Thursday & Friday) – Assist the cashiers with bagging purchased items, processing credit card purchases, answering guest's questions, and line control.

## RESOURCE CENTER CASHIER

(Thursday & Friday) – Assist in running the cashier station at the resource center. They will need to be comfortable handling electronic payments and be able to work well under pressure.

## RESOURCE CENTER SETUP & STRIKE

(Wednesday & Friday Night) – Help to unpack & pack boxes of resources and display product for the Resource Center.

## USHER

(Thursday & Friday) – Help guests find available seating, distribute hand-outs at the doors, and be available to direct guests in case of an emergency.

## VOLUNTEER CENTRAL HOSTS

(Wednesday, Thursday & Friday) – Register all volunteers as they arrive onsite and take care of Volunteer Central, keeping it clean and setting up the snacks.

## CROSS-TEAMING

These are volunteers who are trained, willing and able to serve in various capacities on multiple teams. For instance: Check-in, Conference Information Center, Food Service Team.



**THE GLOBAL  
LEADERSHIP SUMMIT**




*Volunteers Needed!*








## love with a purpose

### 2012 missions emphasis weekend

Save the date! Our annual Missions Emphasis Weekend is scheduled for Saturday, May 19 and Sunday, May 20. Our theme is    **love** with a purpose—how God is empowering people to make a positive impact on the lives of those in need in our world. Once again we will share a wonderfully diverse international meal on Saturday beginning at 5:00PM. Our guest speaker this year will be Nathan George from Trade as One, a Christian based fair trade organization. Nathan will give his testimony as well as information about the mission of the organization.

Clowns for Christ will also share their story with us and with the children to get them ready for their Sunday program. In addition, Rob Sullivan will tell us about his and Geri's time with the Rafiki Foundation in Nigeria.

On Sunday morning, we will have only one Sunday service which will begin at 9:00AM. Our guest speaker on Sunday will be Chris Baltzley. Chris is a wonderful example of our theme    **love** with a purpose. By simply being willing to hear God's voice and follow him, God has used Chris in a variety of ways. He has partnered with ministries in a number of locations including Kyrgyzstan; New Zealand; Portland, Oregon and currently in Folsom, California. His story is a living testimony that God can use any of us anywhere. You will not want to miss this.

We will also SKYPE with Mike O'Brien, one of our missionaries. He will update us on how our support is empowering the local church in the area where he works. Clowns for Christ will provide a skit in preparation for their time with Children's Ministry.

Our service will be followed by an extended time of fellowship and seminars with many of our missionaries including: Roger Hederstedt, Pablo & Martha Garcia, Michael Towson, Rahda Manickam, Barry Francolino, Janae Blea and Glenn Ashcraft. We will also feature programs on our short term missions and Christian response to homelessness in the Tri-Valley. Clowns for Christ will entertain the children with skits, songs, face painting, and their positive Christian message. Lunch will be served at 11:30AM.

In preparation for this weekend, we are still in need of prayers for our missionaries and for our entire Missions Emphasis Weekend as well as cooks and leads for the International Dinner and donations of air miles to transport our missionaries.

## Much is happening in May!

**Friday Friends praise concert:** Friday, May 4, 7:30PM

**HS car wash fundraiser:** Saturday, May 5, 8:00AM

**Parent's Night Out:** Saturday, May 5, 5:00PM

**Shadow Cliffs baptism & picnic:** Sunday, May 6, 12:15PM

**Kidz summer signups begin:** Sunday, May 6

**HS graduation banquet:** Friday, May 11, 6:00PM

**Growing Up Female, level 1:** Friday, May 11, 5:00PM

**Growing Up Female, level 2:** Saturday, May 12, 9:00AM

**Mother's Day/baby dedications:** Sunday, May 13

**MS car wash fundraiser:** Saturday, May 19, 8:00AM

**International dinner:** Saturday, May 19, 5:00PM

**Missions Sunday:** Sunday, May 20, 9:00AM (ONE SERVICE)





## Ways you can help our youth earn money for their summer mission trips

**HS Car Wash  
Saturday, May 5**

**Parent's Night Out  
Saturday, May 5**

**MS Car Wash  
Saturday, May 19**

**MS Cinnamon Twists  
Sunday, June 3**

**Discount Fair Tickets  
Sundays, June 3, 10, 17**

## Wash, Parents, Twist, Fair!

What do car washes, parent date night, cinnamon twists, and the fair have in common? They each are part of the youth earning opportunities for summer mission trips. All money which is collected from these events will help defray the cost of high school and middle school mission trips for youth who participate in the fund raising events.

On Saturday, May 5, from 8:00AM until noon the high school students will be available here at the church to wash and shine your car. The car wash is free. They are asking for donations to help send them to Ensenada in late July to build and repair homes, and run Vacation Bible School for the children of this rural area of Mexico.

Then later that same Saturday (May 5), they will be providing care for our own VCC children birth through fifth grade from 5:00PM to 8:00PM here at the church. Parents, this is a great opportunity for you to arrange a date night to go see that new movie that is out, or try out a restaurant that serves something besides hamburgers or pizza or even to spend a quiet two hours alone, together, just the two of you. For \$20 per child, \$50 maximum for family, your children will have fun with other kids AND our high school students. There will be games, crafts, movies and snacks provided. If you are interested, contact Diane Gandy at [mdgandy@comcast.net](mailto:mdgandy@comcast.net) or give her a call at 925-484-3903.

If you can't make the May 5 car wash and/or your car is dirty again, you will have another opportunity to get your car washed when the middle school students host a car wash at Splashes Car Wash in Livermore on Saturday, May 19. There is a set price for this car wash of \$19.99 and you will need a coupon which will be sold in advance. Ask your favorite middle schooler if they are selling coupons or drop by their table after services on Sunday, May 13. All personal sales will go directly into that student's account. Money collected from the table sales will be divide among all youth who participate in the car wash. You can also contact Sheri Ellison in the youth office to purchase a coupon. Sheri can be reached at 846-6626x420.

On Sunday, June 3 you won't be able to miss the aroma of freshly baked cinnamon twists coming from the church kitchen. Middle schoolers will be cooking and selling cinnamon twists that day. Watch the bulletin and *Keeping Connected* for information regarding this yummy event.

On Sundays, June 3, 10 and 17 our students will be selling discounted Alameda County Fair tickets and carnival wristbands. The tickets and wristbands are a great price and can be used any day that the fair is open. The fair runs from June 20 through July 8.

Parents, if your student is planning on participating in the summer mission trips, encourage them to participate in these earning events.



## Setting Us Free Update

We are very excited to let you know that as of the end of April we have paid down our parking structure loan by \$760,000. We are so grateful for God's provision and your ongoing support.

We continue to pray for guidance in using our ten percent tithe towards missions. We mentioned in church a number of weeks ago that we have directed \$8,000 to David Eckman and "What God Intended Ministries" to allow David to translate the Aphasis material into Chinese.

Additionally, we are happy to let you know that the Missions committee has also approved \$4,300 of the tithe to go to Andrew and Bonnie Burger who lead Campus Crusade at Chico State. This summer, they will also be part of the leadership training for two months for Campus Crusade staff from all over the United States in Ocean City, New Jersey. Our Setting Us Free funds are making this possible and for the continued growth of their ministry skills.

Another \$8,835 is being directed to our missionary partner, Hope for the Nations. Hope for Nations is actively engaged in launching a Church Planting Movement (CPM) with national partners among an unreached group while at the same time trying to be "Good News to the Poor" in a very practical way. They do the latter through a project called the "Bareng Empowerment Center." The "Empowerment Center" provides after school English and computer classes free for the community, as well as a place for leadership meetings and trainings for work in Church Planting Movements (CPM).

The Missions committee continues to prayerfully consider other tithe opportunities. As decisions are made on where to direct the money, we will continue to keep you posted.

## COME & CELEBRATE

Baptism is a picture of what happens in the life of the person who has chosen to believe in Jesus Christ by faith and has been saved by His grace. It illustrates what we cannot outwardly observe but has taken place in the new believer's heart. Baptism is a time when the new Christian gives public testimony that they have believed in Jesus Christ and have been born again. In order for their testimony to be public, the church body must be present to receive them.

At Shadow Cliffs, we celebrate baptism by immersion; beautifully illustrating the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Putting a person under the water emphasizes the burial of Christ, being raised out of the water symbolizes Christ's resurrection and the believer's new life in Christ as do the words "buried with Christ, raised with Christ" which are spoken along with immersion.

God's plan for each believer is to join a local assembly of believers where they can fellowship, worship, show thankfulness to the Lord in giving tithes and offerings,

and work with other believers in carrying on the Lord's work. Baptism is the symbol of our common bond and shows our commitment to the Lord first and to each other.

We hope you will plan to join us in celebrating this momentous occasion. Our baptism will be preceded by a church picnic which will start at noon. Testimony and baptism will begin about 2:00PM. The days are usually warm, food is free, and the companionship pleasing. Our baptism celebration is a public display of the faith, community and support we share here at VCC.

*Shadow Cliffs*  
BAPTISM & PICNIC  
SUNDAY, MAY 6, 12:00PM

# Introducing Our Sunday School Teachers

Jack & Cheryl Blea



It is with great privilege that we get to spend one hour with our 4th and 5th graders each Sunday. This year we are learning about every chapter in the Old Testament. I say we, because the students are amazing in their love and knowledge of God's word and, because of their knowledge, Jack and I are learning a few things as well on this journey. Each week we realize that when you teach, you learn twice.

Fourth and fifth graders are excited to dig deeper into God's word and to hear the amazing ways God has provided for His people in the Old Testament. A favorite quote of ours is that "you can't make this stuff up!"

God has such an amazing and creative way of getting a point across. Sometimes in the Old Testament stories the people got that point and sometimes they didn't, just like us today. I think our favorite time during this "hour of power" is our prayer time. It is so humbling to hear the student's prayer requests, and then their prayers. We leave each week feeling God's blessing. We are so thankful to have time with these students.

Ellen Gray

My name is Ellen Gray. I teach 4th and 5th graders during the first hour. We are currently focusing on the books of the Old Testament, everything from Leviticus to Song of Songs.

I teach debate and junior English part-time at Amador Valley. I also help write the school's accreditation report. One morning I felt "a holy nudge", something pushing me to consider teaching Sunday School. The next week Cheryl sent out an email asking for help with the fourth and fifth grade class. I figured at this point it was God's idea. I have found it works out much better to say yes rather than no to God's ideas.



The class LOVES the stories in the Old Testament. Our Old Testament "heroes" constantly find themselves in trouble. Then they call out to God for help. The kids naturally take up and understand these stories because they do not live under the adult illusion of being independent and self-sufficient. I think because children have to be dependent on adults all the time, whether they like it or not, they better understand how to depend on God. This struck me when we were talking about Joshua and the Battle of Jericho. We made a "wall" out of a big box, and wrote on the bricks of the wall (post-its) fears and worries. I watched how the kids wrote down all of

the things they fear: sickness, death, loneliness, bullies, war, talking in front of people, mean teachers, being a new student, being embarrassed, accidents, arguments, and losing a loved one. As much as I would like to think there are easy answers or solutions to all of these fears and worries, there is only one answer, God our Savior. Teaching God's word through the stories of the Old Testament shows kids how the Lord is always dependable. He attends to our cries for help when we find ourselves in trouble. God speaks to us. God sends us help. God saves us.

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My full time job is taking care of and spending time with my family, Kevin, Katie, and Jack. Kevin and I have been married for over twenty years. Katie is 13. She will be at Amador next year. Jack is 10 and in fourth grade. Jack gives me helpful suggestions on my Sunday school lessons. If you feel a “holy nudge” to teach, say yes. God is arranging a blessing for you.

Kurt Kennedy



My name is Kurt Kennedy and I currently teach third grade during the first service. I started team teaching with Tom McCullough in 2004 teaching fifth grade and then partnered with Randy Harman teaching second and third grade for five years.

There are many reasons I am drawn to teaching Sunday school. One is that it’s fun to work with the kids and start showing them how to use the Bible; to look up verses and stories that can help them with their daily lives. Seeing them get better and better at this as the year goes on is a blessing. It is also great to see them be able to start to understand and see God working all around them. Another reason for teaching is that it helps me grow spiritually—one of the best ways to learn something is to teach it. It’s one of the most satisfying activities I do during the week and quite different from my job as a financial manager in the insurance industry.

I have found that children love role playing. They love it when the lesson plans have them act out the Bible story we’re studying that week. Another favorite activity is word games. Parents will often find us playing “hang man” or doing 20 questions on names, places, or things from the Bible when they come to pick their children up.

The two things I have learned after being a Sunday school teacher for so long are patience and to make sure I have brought enough donuts!

Working with these youngsters, I have come to understand and appreciate Proverbs 22:6 in a very personal way:

*Train a child in the way he should go,  
and when he is old he will not turn from it.*

