

# 2010

the journey begins

## JANUARY

### SERVING IN MISSION

*Think of that, a church who having given themselves...*

*Pastor Troy*

The second statement of our church's mission statement, after the first and most important (Seek – to bring others to faith in Jesus Christ), is a statement showing our commitment to mission: Serve – in mission locally and globally. As the year 2009 passes I'd like to highlight the ways in which our congregation has served in mission both in giving and in action. Over the past year – our congregation has given well over 10% of our giving to mission.

- Our annual budget gives around \$10,000 to the work of mission in our Presbytery – for ethnic congregations, for outreach, and for our children's sake in the mission and ministry of Calvin Crest
- This year we started a home-grown outreach to help feed a hungry village in Zimbabwe in partnership with former members of ours who we love dearly. We started the project in March – to date we have raised, outside of our budgetary giving, over \$11,000 dollars in less than a year to directly purchase food packs that are delivered to a village in Zimbabwe
- We donated over \$1500 for our denomination's One Great Hour of Sharing offering, which is an annual donation given to hunger programs and disaster assistance relief.
- Our congregation has given financially to C.A.R.E. our local food bank. Our church has also facilitated a monthly donation of food items to C.A.R.E. which has grown considerably over the year. It has grown to such an extent that other partner churches in the Ministerial Association are going to join our church in monthly giving of food items to accommodate for cutbacks that are occurring in our local distributors of food.
- Our congregation has donated thousands to our Deacons – who helps people in need in our church and community, and who have organized three separate trips to the Salvation Army facility in downtown Modesto, to feed over 125 people on three separate occasions.

- Our Deacons facilitated the giving of gifts to a number of local families, notably this year's Christmas gift drive, which helped 27 children and 19 adults.
- Members of our church have partnered with other members of our community to donate to the Ministerial Association's Christmas Fund. We were able to disburse over \$17,000 worth of vouchers to local food markets to needy families in our community, with even more money pouring in. This is the most that we've disbursed since I've been a part of the Ministerial Association. And it happened this year, in all of years?
- All of these examples do not even include that variety of other ways in which members of our church have given of themselves compassionately – when I hear stories of members visiting other members in the hospital or in their homes, when I hear of them gathering together for dinner and praying over each other through difficult circumstances – I cannot help but believe that we are blessed by God to bless others.

In thinking about this I was reminded of Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 8:

*<sup>1</sup> And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. <sup>2</sup> In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. <sup>3</sup> For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, <sup>4</sup> they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. <sup>5</sup> And they went beyond our expectations; having given themselves first of all to the Lord, they gave themselves by the will of God also to us.*

Think of that, a church who having given themselves first of all to the Lord – they gave themselves to others who were in need. This may or may not be the legacy of this church for the duration of its existence. All I know is that I, as your pastor, am amazed by 2009 – the grace of God has been poured out on this church. My prayer is that it continues.