

The Voice

Volume 1, Issue 4

News from The Gathering By The Bay

August 2010

Culture of Healing Conference - by David Gschwend

Years ago, while reading Luke 4, the Holy Spirit shook me to the core as I read the following words:

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to release the oppressed, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor (Luke 4:18-19).

In some revelatory fashion, I knew the Lord was saying this was to be true for me and for every follower of Jesus. Yet, twenty or so years ago, I had no idea how to get there from where I was. I was clueless.

A few weeks ago, the Gathering hosted the *Culture of Healing Conference* here in Santa Cruz. Along with a team from Bethel Church in Redding, we had churches and believers from the Greater Bay Areas come to pray and be prayed for. We had a foretaste of what it could look like to see Luke 4 become a reality in our churches. One man who came for prayer accepted the Lord



after being asked twice whether he wanted to become a Christian or not (*preach good news to the poor*). He testified that when he gave his life to Jesus he experienced a sense of rain falling on him. The living waters of the Holy Spirit were falling on him! Praise God. Most of the physical ailments that he had been experiencing are now gone. I heard last week that he has already read the four gospels and is now reading through the Book of Acts.

Unbeknownst to most people who attended, one woman in the back started manifesting a demonic stronghold. With the help of a couple of leaders and for the first time

since she was twelve years old, she was quickly freed of its presence (*to release the oppressed*). Jesus came to destroy the enemy's work.

The number of people who received full or partial healings are too numerous to share here. One woman had not been able to breathe deeply for years. Yet, after a short time of prayer, her lungs were healed and she was able to breathe freely for the first time in years (*proclaim freedom for the prisoners*). God just loves to heal peoples' bodies, souls, and spirits!

If you notice, we did not call this a Healing Conference. We called it the "Culture of Healing" Conference. One dictionary definition of **culture** is "*the sum total of the way of life among a group of people that is transmitted to the next generation.*" That is what I am talking about! As we follow Jesus, healing is to be a holistic way of life in every dimension. It is a way of life that we naturally pass on to the next generation. Healing the sick, setting free the oppressed, sharing the gospel, having a cup of coffee, are all

Calendar of Events

- SANTA CRUZ RISING— WED. 'S 6:30-8:00 AM AT FCC OFFICE
- SAN JOSE INTERCESSORY PRAYER—MON.'S 9:00 AM AT HULTGREN'S
- HARP & BOWL TRAINING—FRI.'S 7:00-9:30 PM, HOME OF MICHELLE PROUGH, SANTA CRUZ
- AUG. 28TH CELEBRATION—SC GATHERING 5:00—8:00 PM, APTOS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP, FREEDOM BLVD., APTOS
- WOMEN'S RETREAT, SEPT 10TH-12TH, HOME OF DEBBIE MORGAN, SANTA CRUZ

in a normal day's work! One foundational aspect of the Gathering that is vital is the **culture we are building**. In a nutshell, we have five lifestyle elements we want to inculcate in all of our lives: the Presence of the Lord, the love of God, the power of God, the joy of the Lord, and the priesthood of all the saints. Taken together, these create the culture we long for... and the lifestyle we want to exhibit to the world and transmit to our children. Out of these flow healings, salvations, renewed marriages, and transformed families, churches, cities, and nations. The "Culture of Healing" conference was only one facet of the love, power, and presence of God. I am excited to see those things that come next.

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The team from Bethel Church in Redding relaxes and celebrates at the Gschwend's home following the Culture of Healing conference

Growing Pains in San Jose —by David Gschwend

GROWTH PAINS
ARE GOOD BUT
SOMETIMES
MESSY



The *Gathering Ministry Triad* illustrates three foundational distinctives of the Gathering. Those distinctives include *Mission, Culture, and Governance*. Some recent developments in San Jose are taking us to the next level of how our governance will operate. Up until now we have been functioning with a *Leadership Council* (the Hultgren's, Peter Cathcart, and David Gschwend) and one staff person (Dave Gschwend). This has served us well, given our current size. However, with the recent addition of the new house church led by Hosac and Elizabeth Sharpe, we are endeavoring to expand our leadership to the next level.

Each Network of House Churches is overseen by its own *Leadership Council*. The *Leadership Council* functions as an elder board similar to conventional church. The Council is the legal governing authority required by our By-laws and the rules for non-profit organizations. Some of the Council's roles include: 1) serving as the ultimate authority over the Network and the pastoral staff, 2) protecting the teachings of the church, 3) managing and overseeing the budget and finances, 4) being responsible for any disciplinary function as needed, and 5) making sure that the people are being cared for and shepherded. While the shepherding responsibility first lies with the House Church leaders, the *Leadership Council* has the broad overview of shepherding responsibilities. At this season, we hope to add some more members to our *Leadership Council*.

An additional team we are in the process of adding is our *Five-Fold Team*. We use the acronym APEST to describe this group which stands for (apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, teachers). The APEST concept comes out of Ephesians 4. What we find is that the apostles, evangelists, and some prophets tend to have an outward focus and perspective. The shepherds, teachers and some prophets tend to have an inward looking focus and perspective. Together they provide a healthy tension and balance to make sure that the leadership is looking both outward and inward. Some of the roles and functions of this group would be to:

1. Seek God's direction on reaching out into new territories in our region to bring the Kingdom of God.
2. Seeking God's direction on how best to shepherd and care for our people within the Gathering.
3. Help to equip others as apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers...as well as equip the saints and help them discover and grow

in their own gifts and ministries.

4. Catalyze new works outside the walls and inside the walls of the church.

We hope to start an APEST team in San Jose with a September launch on the fourth Tuesday of the month. This team is not limited to five people but will include leaders who are developing and growing in one of these areas.

A future ministry leadership expansion will be to form San Jose's House Church Leadership Team. As San Jose grows more home groups, we will eventually have a time when the leaders of all the groups get together regularly for fellowship, prayer, training, and encouragement. We plan to start the House Church Leadership Team once we hit four or more groups in San Jose.

Growth pains are good but sometimes messy. We hope we stay ahead of the curve and continue to flex and adapt to the needs in the San Jose area. We will keep you posted on further developments.



A Lightning Update on Monterey—by Brian Bajari

Since June 1 I have been on Sabbatical from Carmel Presbyterian Church. October 1 marks the beginning of my full transition to Gathering by the Bay.

- In June we baptized one of our new followers of Jesus who was birthed out of the homeless ministry. On a beautiful day at Monterey Beach, with about a hundred people celebrating – mostly our homeless friends, we cheered and wept at what they witnessed.
- July we (the Bajaris) spent some renewing time

away in upstate NY – swimming, fishing, boating, & tubing on Canandaigua Lake.

- While we were away, one of our simple churches said goodbye to one of our founding families. This family is moving to VA in order to work at the Pentagon. They also hope to plant a simple church in their new environment.
- Throughout the summer another simple church has been actively praying, planning, & starting a community garden in Seaside

that has been named the Giving Garden (<http://seasidegivinggarden.org/>). They are teaming up with an older Lutheran community in order to build bridges into the neighborhood.

- August & September mark the beginning of my fund-raising season. And while there are days when I feel a bit unsettled about the whole process, it seems that the King always brings in incredible affirmation about this new unfolding path.



Bettie is one of our homeless friends who loves Jesus & has an incredible ministry among the poor in Monterey

A Little Something about the Bajaris—by Brian Bajari

I have been married to my wife Suzie for 15 years & have four children – a family beyond my dreams.

Suzie works as a marriage family therapist among at-risk children for gang & domestic related violence in East Salinas. She hikes small mountains, loves finding little critters in tide pools, & jumps on trampolines when no one is looking.

Mykaela is a 6th grader with an old soul – she loves to harness up & climb trees, rocks, and mountain faces – she draws just about anything (watch out Dr. Seuss), writes poetry that melts souls, & is currently collecting carabineers.

Palmer is a 4th grader who runs faster than Einstein's equations, is a Bear Grylls-like explorer & biologist,

houses a museum of ancient artifacts in his bedroom & will jump off of tall buildings.

Norah is a 2nd grader who was born with a song in her feet & a dance in her



voice – she collects invisible fairies with shimmering wings, will dance to any whisper of music, loves pink, ponies, & pigs, & will tell you what is really happening if you want to know.

Jaden is one and a half – and enjoys bird-watching (especially quail), waters plants & himself with his green pail, will kick & throw any ball in sight, & enjoys hugging friends around the neck.

And I help plant simple churches around the Monterey Peninsula & offer Jesus-centered spiritual direction to people of all backgrounds. My vocational calling is to help realign North American church practices with the scriptural patterns of radical service for renewal & shalom – where the gospel is unearthed & blooms among the last, the lost, & the least. I also have a passion for helping the recovery & healing of child soldiers & slaves in northern Uganda. Mostly I love being with my family.

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The Voice

Harp & Bowl Intercessory Worship—by Trudi Iverson



Trudi Iverson

I have recently returned from a three-month internship at the International House of Prayer (IHOP) in Kansas City, Missouri. I learned so much there including their model of Harp and Bowl intercessory worship. Upon my return home, the Lord laid it on my heart to establish a House of Prayer in Santa Cruz.

One of my questions in response to the Lord was, “How in the world do I do that?” He said, “Make a start. Start with **Harp & Bowl.**” The term **Harp and Bowl** is taken from Revelation 5:8 . . . *“the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.”* The harp represents the worship music of heaven; the bowl represents intercession. The

perfect model of worship is found around God’s throne; worship and prayer are intertwined. See Revelation Chapters 4 & 5.

Isaiah 56:7 says, *“I will . . . give them joy in my house of prayer . . . for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.”* Abba Father’s heart is for His church to be a house of prayer for all nations! His promise for us is supernatural joy in being His house of prayer. He wants us to enjoy prayer! Combining worship and intercession increases faith, focus, and unity, which sustains enjoyable prayer.

The great missing element in the prayer and worship movements of today is the scripture itself. In *Harp and Bowl* we pray the Word. God’s Word is the transcript of His heart! God’s language unifies our heart with His and

others. He delights in answering prayer based upon Scripture. Isaiah 55:11 says, *“My word . . . will not return to Me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”*

The sustaining reality of IHOP’s prayer model is each individual experiences intimacy with the beautiful God. Psalm 27:4 says *“One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek Him in His temple.”*

If you would like to learn more about **Harp and Bowl** intercessory worship and why it is integral to the current prayer movement, join us on Friday nights. For more information contact trudi@gatheringbythebay.org.

Living the Life You Didn’t Expect —by Kathleen Schwab

“I WONDERED...IF I DIDN’T DO ANYTHING WRONG, WHY AM I SUFFERING SO MUCH?”

A friend once asked me if I thought God had favorites. Instead of answering the question I asked what he thought, and it turned out he did think God had favorites, and the idea bugged him. King David appeared to be one of these favorites, and David lived a less than exemplary life. How, my friend huffed, did such a person end up a favorite with God? I could see it got under his skin.

This idea of favorites hit a button for me also, though perhaps for a different reason.

I quietly suspected that I was a favorite of God, not that I went around bragging about it. That suspicion held for most of my youth. He must be favoring me, how else to explain my life? I was raised by a single mother who survived on disability checks; nevertheless, I won merit scholarships to a preparatory boarding school and a nationally ranked college. I married a man who was not only crazy about me, but made plenty of money, and we had two beautiful babies. I lived a charmed life. This means God loves me, right?

Then things unraveled. Unlike Job, I didn’t lose everything in a day, but it happened just as inexorably. A lay-off, a stock market dive, some investments gone bad. Then the real disasters hit. Our son was badly injured, and I developed a chronic pain condition. The pain went from annoying to difficult, as I spent time and money seeking a solution. I had to leave work, and finally could barely get out of bed without the help of prescription painkillers. Even with medication, I lived in near constant pain.

Some Musings—by Linda Neuschwander

Take Every Thought Captive

Quick!-as soon as it is weaned!
Before it can run wild down just any old street
 feed on garbage
 develop a taste for trash
 get worms
pick up distemper
 come down with mange
 foam wild with rabies
before it learns to howl at the moon
 before the time of angry first heat
and giving birth to a litter of feral notions
-mongrel, unpredictable, unproductive, dangerous, ugly
 before it bites someone
catch it
take it in
bathe it
feed it well
train it to a leash
rest with it before the fire
let it learn your voice
only then can you bless it
with some useful occupation it will love
fetch the ball
follow the hunter
pull the cart
guard the house
watch the child



Reflection

framed in guilt
silica and silver caught up together
sands of time fused clearly
stage the changes
with silvering that has no power
to ameliorate or mitigate what has been lost
or at least is now transformed
but oh so inadequate to accurately portray
the endless alterations within, subtle and
coarse
with no mercy
presenting to the viewer an up-to-date catalog
of what is and what has passed away
documenting gifts taken for granted
as well as fruitless vanities
all now departed
but begging the question
staring one in the face
how does one receive the present?



Living the Life You Didn't Expect (cont'd)

What, I tried to figure out, had I done wrong? I wasn't perfect, but I couldn't think of a major transgression. I began to get a clue why the story of David annoyed my friend. David did some pretty bad stuff, and got some major blessing. (Personally, I think David paid a high price for his sins, but that is a different story.) To a person who has tried to work hard and play by

the rules only to see life go awry, someone who does wrong and still seems blessed is like salt in the wounds. The psalmist asked, "Why do the wicked flourish?" and I wondered the corollary: "If I didn't do anything wrong, why am I suffering so much?" Someone once said, "God has not protected us from pain. But He hasn't protected Himself either." This, I think,

is the crux of the matter. He suffers. He loves every one of us deeply: many reject Him outright. Even of those who espouse Christianity, many keep Him at arms' length, or follow Him conditionally. He doesn't protect Himself from these pangs.

I'll admit I like the prosperity gospel better. I'm good at rules, so I like the idea that if

OUR VISION:


That our WALK with God would be characterized by a lifestyle where we are a...

- **Worshipping community** – *loving God with all of our hearts, souls, mind and strength* (Mark 12:30)
- **All are gifted priests** – *but you are a...royal priesthood* (1 Pet. 2:9)
- **Loving community** – *loving our neighbor as ourselves* (Mark 12:31)
- **Kingdom focused** – *making disciples of all nations* (Matt 28:19)



Budget Report— Bev Peltzer

The Gathering's fiscal year runs from July through June. Below you will see figures showing last month's and last year's income and expenditures for the San Jose and Santa Cruz networks. The monthly giving is allocated between five funds for each network, based upon percentages set by each Leadership Council. The balance in these funds for each network as of July 31, '10 is also reported below.

			San Jose Gathering		Santa Cruz Gathering	
			Jul 2010	Jul '09 - Jun '10	Jul 2010	Jul '09 - Jun 10
			Income			
			Contributions			
			\$3,180.00	\$45,124.04	\$8,183.90	\$106,976.07
			Earned revenues			
			\$0.45	\$2.64	\$0.00	\$2.66
			Special events			
			\$0.00	\$472.50	\$3567.15	\$2,58446
Fund Balances			Total Income			
	San Jose	Santa Cruz	\$3,180.45	\$45,599.18	\$11,751.05	\$109,563.19
Benevolence			Expense			
	\$1,473.06	\$344.44	Benevolence			
Church Planting	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,800.00	\$611.00	\$14,904.71
Ministry	\$683.71	\$203.85	Local Outreach			
Missions	\$1,158.66	\$858.94	\$0.00	\$1,921.68	\$0.00	\$827.86
Outreach	\$5,299.01	\$1,338.64	Ministry Expense			
Reserves	\$1,750.00	\$0.00	\$3,306.10	\$38,030.68	\$10,513.36	\$84,897.42
Total	\$10,364.44	\$2,745.87	Missions			
			\$246.40	\$3,986.92	\$607.70	\$11,799.77
			Total Expense			
			\$3,282.50	\$45,739.28	\$11,732.06	\$112,429.76
			Net Income			
			-\$102.05	-\$140.10	\$18.99	-\$2,866.57

Living the Life You Didn't Expect (cont'd)



I just do the right things I will be financially secure and have a great family life. And learning the rules of right and wrong is a valuable thing. But the "rules" approach to life is like living at home with your parents. Mom and Dad protect you and reward you in appropriate ways. A whole other level of living happens when we move out on our own into the real world. This is the place where a person can do all the right things, and bad things still happen. This is where

God lived when He created a perfect world, gave Adam and Eve everything they needed, and they betrayed Him.

He doesn't want us to suffer, but He wants us to be with Him. And He lives in a place where suffering can happen. Doctors tell me I am unlikely to ever recover from chronic pain. Barring a miraculous

healing, I am going to live in this body that suffers the consequences of the fall. My hope is that I can enter into what Paul calls "the fellowship of His sufferings" as I walk with Him through a fallen world and beyond. I still harbor a sneaking suspicion that I am a favorite of His. Aren't we all?

We're on the Web!

www.gatheringbythebay.org