

## Off the Hook

By Mike Sciarra



I love to fish. My favorite things about fishing are catching, eating, and cleaning them, in that order. The crowning glory of my childhood was catching forty trout in one day at Tinemaha Creek in the Eastern Sierras below Bishop. I credit my Los Angeles Police sergeant father with allowing me to surpass my daily limit by catching ten each for my mom and two sisters. I came back to the campsite before noon with ten and all I remember was my dad saying “Go catch your sister's

limit”. It was dream come true for a ten year-old city boy who was really a country boy at heart. Fishing in Tennessee is a beautiful thing for me. It's quiet, refreshing, relaxing, and renewing. Near my in-laws' home there is a lake that holds promise of hooked fish and peaceful calm. When I grow weary and a bit jaded by life in the big city, I long for that place, wishing I was there on the dock, casting out my line, thinking, dreaming, envisioning the future, but mostly just enjoying the moment and communing with Jesus, sometimes alone, but usually with some of our five kids.

I've fished that spot on the lake since 1994 when Angela's parents moved back to their hometown to retire. I've pulled a few trout and catfish out over the years, but it's the bluegills that are there in abundance. I think the kids and I caught sixty-five one day last summer. We cleaned and ate almost forty of them.

This year I did something really out of character; I did the 'catch and release' thing, of which I'm not a fan. I quite literally let the fish off the hook. My reason for turning over a new leaf had to do with two things: lack of fish caught as well as the anticipated reaction back at the house from those who don't appreciate the joys and smells of eating freshly caught fish.

Letting the fish off the hook (I also let some off the stringer alive) reminds me of what Jesus does with us. He captures our hearts in mercy and grace, showering us with His extravagant love, drawing us to Himself, we who were destined for “the frying pan of hell” due to sin. He catches then releases us to live in the newfound freedom we have in Him. Not to keep gratifying ourselves, but to give ourselves to Him in grateful service. To live the rest of our lives not for self, but “for Him who died and rose again on our behalf” (2 Cor. 5:15).

Amazingly, Jesus does something more. He turns us into “fishers of men” (Matt. 4:19), sending us to share the message of life, the gospel of the grace of God in Christ with all who live and breathe, in the hope that God will grant to them, as well, “the repentance that leads to life” (Acts 11:18). God has let us off the hook of sin so that we'd do “the work of evangelists” (2 Timothy 4:5), sharing Jesus with whoever will listen. It's a beautiful thing, a wonderful process. Our job is to go where God sends us; it's God's job to reel them in.

*And He  
said to  
them,  
"Follow Me,  
and I will  
make you  
fishers of  
men."*

*Matthew  
4:19*

a place  
to grow  
in  
faith

## Monthly Worship Service at Fountain Senior Assisted Living

Begins September 7, 2008  
1:30 PM – 2:15 PM

*“I’m sitting here alone,  
forced to live in my own little world,  
without friends or family.  
No one comes to visit me.  
I’m so lonely. I wish someone cared.”*

by David Andritch

Did you read the quote above? Isn't it sad!? Who could have said that? ... Plenty of people. There many elderly men and women who have been placed in nursing homes because they are unable to take care of themselves without assistance. Many of them have good minds, but have physical limitations... and many of them are desperately lonely.

We are about to begin a ministry to reach out to a small pocket of this group in a simple way. They have lived a long life and should not be abandoned now --- just because they have grown old. Will you volunteer to help in the worship service that will be held the first Sunday of every month? If you can read the scripture, teach a lesson, or lead music – fantastic! We also need people to smile, help the seniors find their place in the song books, hold their Bibles, and just make them feel welcomed and loved. Children, youth, and adults of all ages can truly make the difference in the lives of these men and women.

To volunteer or for further information, please contact David Andritch ([dandritch@graceorange.org](mailto:dandritch@graceorange.org)) or Bryan Bush ([bushhome@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bushhome@sbcglobal.net))



### Calling all Singles!

by Tom Licata

A group of eight single adults got together on Sunday, August 3 to make plans for a singles small group. The group is excited and decided to meet twice a week in case someone can't make one of them. The two nights will be Sundays and Fridays at 6:00pm, unless it conflicts with other events going on at church. The first small group meeting will be Sunday, September 7 including a potluck and share time here at the church. So if you're single and want to meet with others who you can identify with – then you're invited (and invite a friend too)!

### What Has the Young Families Class Been Up to This Summer?

by Darin Schoolmeester

This summer, the Young Families Class has been and is currently involved in a discussion-oriented study on worldviews and other world religions. As we are learning about how other people groups view God, man, truth, and reality, the goal is to gain a better understanding of how to build relationships with people we encounter. This knowledge can have a dramatic and positive impact on how we share our faith in Christ. We have also enjoyed some rich times of fellowship as we pray for one another and have welcomed in some new couples.

### College/Career Ministry Update

by Brian Zuniga

Despite busy schedules, demanding jobs and loads of homework, the College/Career group is still going strong at Grace. After finishing a long study through the book of Romans, the Sunday morning Bible class is now going through 1 Corinthians. This study has been challenging to the students and has generated many excellent discussions. In addition to Sunday mornings, the College/Career group meets on Sunday nights for further Bible study and fellowship. The Sunday night study has been a great help in allowing everyone to get to know each other better and grow in friendship as well as allowing them to study the Bible more closely. We recently started the Gospel of Mark after finishing a study of 1 Samuel. Very soon the graduating High School seniors will move up and join the group. This is always a refreshing and revitalizing time and our prayer is that all of us would encourage one another to seek God and that we would, together, become more like Christ.



## Ministering in the Dominican Republic by Matthew Holbrook

Approximately 25 high school students (along with adult leaders) are planning to go to the Dominican Republic for about 5 days in November. The purpose of the trip is to come alongside Rebekah Holbrook (who is there on a two year mission trip) and work with her in her ministry to orphans and “at-risk” children. Rebekah is a part of a ministry, Kids Alive, that ministers to these at-risk kids – defined as children from abused, impoverished, or neglected backgrounds.

Our high school students will have the opportunity to minister through children’s programs, outreach events, drama presentations, and manual labor. It should be a wonderful time to reach out and to meet serious needs in the Dominican Republic – and to encourage Rebekah in her ministry. Please be in prayer for the preparation for this trip in the coming months.

### **Mission Reports-** *Hear what God has been doing through those in our congregation and your prayers.*

#### **Uganda- Amanda Cech**

God is doing awesome things in Uganda, things that are worth suffering all the itchy long skirts, eight hour taxi drives, stomach flu’s, and mosquito bites in the world! This summer, seven fellow college students from The Master’s College and I were blessed to get a glimpse of God’s work in Uganda, Africa. For six weeks, we were given the privilege of working with the Hurley’s, missionaries who taught us what it’s like to live a gospel-centered life with an emphasis on discipleship on the mission field and at home. We saw how souls were being saved through their ministry of bringing Ugandans into their home and sharing the gospel with them, then training them to share the gospel. With lots of prayer and support, the Hurley’s are trying to build a training facility for Ugandan pastors answering the great need for solid Biblical theology in Ugandan churches! We also saw God working in Gulu, northern Uganda, through Action International missionaries Jerry and Candice Bingam. We saw the love they show to every kind of person, particularly those suffering with AIDS and the women who were abducted by rebels, endured every kind of suffering, and now have several small children. What faith they now have! God changed my heart in many ways this summer and increased my love for Him and His incredibly powerful gospel. Thank you SO MUCH for your prayers and support! Please continue to pray for Uganda as God continues to show His power there.



#### **Operation Barnabas- Raymond Wan**

The week we spent in Goshen, IN was definitely a highlight for our team. We helped out at a basketball camp held at the church. The weather forecast called for rain 3 of the 4 days of our camp. Bad news for us because we had chalked all the court lines out in the parking lot and if it rained it would mean that we would have to cancel the camp that day, which was not an option. So Monday morning, the first day of camp, we took an hour and did a prayer walk all around the church and prayed it wouldn’t rain and that everything would work out. We had been praying all day and it had been raining all day. An hour before camp was supposed to start it stopped. Literally there were clear skies just above the church and dark black clouds everywhere else. Basketball camp happened, everything worked out as planned, and no joke, 5 minutes after it ended, the rain poured. There is power in prayer. This happened all week and through this basketball camp we saw 35 kids give their lives to Christ. Thank you for your prayers and support.



#### **Rancho San Juan Bosco Orphanage, Tecate Mexico- Simon Goodyear**

Building a relationship with a family in Tecate, Mexico at the Rancho San Juan Bosco Boys Orphanage has been an incredibly rewarding adventure that puts a smile on my face every time I think of them. Several years ago a building project was started at the orphanage, to provide them with a much needed larger dormitory. The building is nearing completion, with the final color coat (stucco) completed. God has incredibly blessed this project by so generously providing the materials as well as many people willing to go down to work. Misael and Yolanda, the couple that run the orphanage, are always blessed when people come to help, whether working on the new dorm, helping to prepare lunch, or playing with the kids. For me personally, the blessings I have received from my involvement in this project are too many to count! We are currently working to raise money to buy a new deep freezer for the kitchen as theirs broke a couple months ago. Thank you for all your support, with prayers and donations. You have been generous and caring, thank you. Contact Simon Goodyear at (714) 931-5540.



## NEW SPACE FOR THE HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY

by Matthew Holbrook

After months of hard work, the high school group was excited to finally move into their new room in early July. Located next to the Fellowship Hall, the new high school room was re-configured from a layout that used to serve as the church nursery. After knocking down a few walls, removing the carpet, adding a creative “industrial look” with cement paint to the floor, painting the walls, installing curtains, and adding some decorative trim, the new room is now an ideal meeting location for the high school ministry.

The high schoolers have some big dreams for the room as they hope to continue to work on and improve the meeting area. There are plans to add some new overhead lighting, install a video projector and screen, hang some artwork, and improve the sound system. These additions will come with time (and more money). In the meantime, though, the group is very excited about the new space. If you have not yet seen it, make a point to check it out the next time you are at church. Any high school student would be happy to show it off to you!



## A GREAT Time Was Had by all in This Year's VBS as We Learned to Serve Our Family, Friends, Neighbors, Community, & Jesus in God's Big Backyard!

The week was packed with caring leaders, friends, laughter, awesome snacks, fantastic recreation, small groups, music, imaginative teaching, creative crafts, and amazing decorations. Here is a touch of what our leaders said was their greatest joy of serving in God's Big Backyard . . .

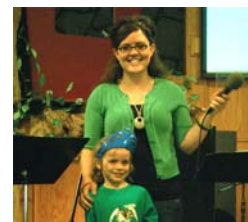
***“Connecting with  
the kids”***

***“The kids. They love you and follow you and you  
have such a great opportunity to encourage them.”***

***“Helping the children and  
teaching them about God.”***

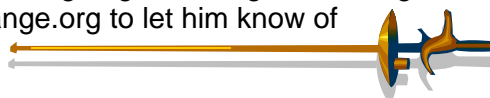
***“Seeing the kids have so much  
fun in the name of Jesus!”***

***“Getting to  
know the kids”***



## Fathers And Sons Together

FAST is a ministry that gives boys the opportunity to learn what it means to be an authentic Christian man in this world as they – with their dads – study God's Word, worship, play, pray, and serve the Lord. Groups are now forming for younger elementary, upper elementary, mixed ages, junior high age, and high school age. Please contact David Andritch at (714) 633-8867 or [dandritch@graceorange.org](mailto:dandritch@graceorange.org) to let him know of your interest. We will have the leader of the appropriate group contact you with further information.



# SPECIAL FALL CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

## Awana Clubs Registration Night

September 3, 2008 6:00 – 7:30PM

## Awana Clubs Kick-off

September 10, 2008 6:30 – 8:30PM

For more information or  
to volunteer, contact  
Jim & Paula Hughes at  
(714) 538 -9307



**Starting September 10, 2008!**

## Wednesday Nights

### @ Grace

Our midweek programs are combining into one night.  
See below for the evening schedule.

**6:00-6:30pm Dinner** (\$3-high school and up,  
\$2-kids, \$15-per family max.)

**6:30-8:30pm Awana Clubs**  
(3 yr. olds through 6<sup>th</sup> grade)

**7:00-9:00pm Jr. High and High School**  
(7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>)

**7:00-8:30pm Adult Coffee and Fellowship**  
(in modular B1)

If you would like more information, please contact the  
church office or a ministry leader.

## Regular 10:00 AM Elementary Bible Hour Resumes Sunday, September 7, 2008

See below for class locations by grade



**Kindergarten**

Room 304

**Grades 1 & 2**

Room 305

**Grades 3 & 4**

Room FH-2 / 205

**Grades 5 & 6**

Room FH-3 / 206



## Angels Big Bang Game

**Friday, September 12**

Spend quality time together watching the Angels take  
on the Mariners followed by a fantastic  
firework show. Game start time is at  
7:05PM. Get your tickets in the church  
office or on the plaza for \$13 each  
(2 yrs. and older, ticket required).



## Golf Tournament

**Saturday, September 13**

10:00AM at the Anaheim Hills Golf Course  
Cost is \$70 per person. Sign up at the Info Kiosk  
or email the church office. Invite a friend too!  
Questions? Contact Ron Hoover at  
(714) 996-3074.



## Men's Retreat

(Alpine Camp and Conference Center)  
October 17-19

John Erwin will be the guest speaker this year.  
This retreat has always been a great time for  
getting to know other men in the church and a  
time of worship, prayer, and study of God's  
Word. Registration forms will be available at  
the Information Kiosk soon.

## Daylight Savings Ends Sunday, November 2

Don't forget to set your clocks back  
one hour Saturday night, November 1.



# Snap Shots

## June-August 2008



(Clockwise from top right: July 3<sup>rd</sup> Celebration Balloon Booth, Men's Breakfast, A Friendly Face at Awana Round-up, Information Kiosk, Father's Day Baptisms, Serve Day with Operation Barnabas Team)

### Fall Calendar: September - November

Labor Day (office closed)	September 1	Coffee House Fundriser	September 28
Awana Registration	September 3	Communion	October 5
Jr. High Pool Party	September 3	Revolve Conference	October 10-11
Youth Sunday	September 7	Awana Sparky Hike	October 11
Getting to Know Grace Class Starts	September 7	Men's Retreat	October 17-19
Assisted Living Services Start	September 7	Holiday Sampler	October 25
Singles Evening Small Group Starts	September 7	Daylight Savings Ends	November 2
All Midweek Programs Start	September 10	HS Dominican Republic Mission Trip	November 6-12
Angels Big Bang Friday	September 12	Women's Retreat	November 14-16
Golf Tournament	September 13	Praise Dinner	November 23
HS Big Wednesday	September 24	Thanksgiving (office closed)	November 27-28
		Bread and Cup	November 30



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