

## A NOTE FROM MATT

As you may have noticed, we have begun upgrading the sound and lighting systems in the Worship Center. We are very excited about these upgrades as they will lead to a significantly better quality of sound and lighting and greater flexibility in what we can do. So far, all that is observable is that several new light fixtures have been installed in the ceiling. However, there is much more to come. There will be more light fixtures and a set of new speakers, among other things.

The most visible element of these upgrades will be a large number of fabric-covered panels that will be installed on the interior walls of the worship building. These panels will dampen the echo in the room and make for sharper and clearer sound. The color of these panels will be similar to the color of the walls, so they should not stand out a great deal, but they will change the room's look to some degree.

As we come to April, I also wanted to highlight a key opportunity to serve. On April 13, Orchard will host a work day at two different locations in town. One will be a painting project at The City Center. The City Center is a faith-based transitional living center for homeless families with children. The other opportunity will be at The Arch Homeless Shelter, operated by Mercy House. Volunteers at this site will sort donations and do some other odd jobs. I encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities to serve and put your faith into action as we seek to make a difference in our community together.



Grace & Peace,  
Pastor Matt Hoyt  
[matt@OrchardVentura.org](mailto:matt@OrchardVentura.org)



## SUNDAY MESSAGES

April 7 - Guest Preacher Melinda Hoyt

"I AM the Bread of Life"

John 6: 32-39

Jesus is the one who fills us



## NEW MESSAGE SERIES

Esther: God Behind the Scenes

Esther is the only book in the Bible that doesn't mention God. On the surface, God seems absent from this story. Sadly, that's a familiar idea for many of us. Sometimes, we may feel like God is absent from our lives and world. But the story of Esther reveals that God is always present behind the scenes, often working with great power, even when He may seem absent to us. Esther is the story of God's loving and sometimes hidden providence, the truth that He is over all things working out His will, and the amazing truth that He uses ordinary, flawed people to accomplish His plans. In the end, through a series of stunning reversals, we find that God is definitely not absent but is, in fact, the central character in this story and that He is always at work for the good of His people and for His glory.

April 14 "Where is God?"

Esther 1:1-22

It may seem to us at times that God is absent when, in fact, He is present behind the scenes. God used one person standing up for what was right, exposing the frailty of this worldly kingdom and creating the opportunity for his plan to unfold. God's power and providence mean we always have hope, not least of which is for a greater Kingdom.

April 21 "God Prepares the Way"

Esther 2:1-18

While Xerxes is enacting his plan, God's providence leads Esther to become Queen because of the role she will play in His plan. God is often at work in our lives in ways we can't see, and He can use us despite our situations, shortcomings, and sins.

April 28 "Buckle Up"

Esther 2:19-3:15

We live in a broken world where life is often hard and unfair, and we often sin and suffer, but God is always near and at work for the good of His people. So we always have hope, not least of which is for a greater King!

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



Melinda Hoyt  
Children's Ministry Director  
[Melinda@OrchardVentura.org](mailto:Melinda@OrchardVentura.org)

**ATTENTION : All adult & youth volunteers for VBS & World Tour**

Save the date: Friday, May 3, 7-8:30pm in the Worship Center for Team Meeting with important info and training.

Be sure Melinda has your t-shirt size now!

**We still need more help**, so if you're available to pitch in June 17-21 from 9 AM - noon for our enrichment day camp or June 24-28 for VBS, Please sign up online, on the patio, or contact Melinda. We need all types of help from activity leaders to extra supervision and greeters to small group leaders and assistants at all our fun activity stations.

Plan on being at church Sunday, **June 30** to welcome our camp families for **VBS Sunday**.



## FLEECE BLANKET PROJECT

Donations of 54 inch x 1 3/4 yard fleece in prints and solids are needed for the an **Orchard kids project**. We will be making tie blankets for children attending this summer's **Royal Family Kids camp**

Melinda

## YOUTH MINISTRY



**Rich Smith**

Interim Youth Director

[Rich@OrchardVentura.org](mailto:Rich@OrchardVentura.org)

March saw continued Youth Sunday school at 9 AM, Youth Group Sunday afternoon (4-6 PM), High School Guy's Group Monday night (6-7:30 PM), Roast with Rich Tuesday afternoon (3-4:30 PM) at the Starbucks by Buena, and High School Girl's Group Wednesday evening (6:30-8 PM). Youth calendars are online under "Orchard Youth." Scott is continuing a series on relationships from Proverbs on Sunday morning. I continue to work through biblical foundations with messages about identity and purpose. David teaches through the minor prophets on Monday, and Lizzie works through a discipling book on Wednesday.

Breakfast Burritos will continue on April 14 and May 19, 2024. Follow-up conversations from Winter Camp commitments have occurred. Students are encouraged to become more faithful in their personal times with God (praying,

reading scripture, and memorizing passages), participating in Orchard youth activities, and participating in community service.

In Youth Group, we continue to address the themes that we are God's representatives in our homes, schools, and wherever else we are and that our job is to represent him well since he loves us unreservedly. On St. Patrick's Day, we went to the Ventura Harbor for a treasure hunt and learned about John and Andrew's calling to become "Fishers of Men." Also, along with the younger children, we recently decorated Easter bags for guests of the Arch (a shelter for those in need.) The Arch is filling and distributing these bags.



The Youth Leadership Team continues to amaze; many thanks to David Pels, Scott Lynn, Lizzie Barminski, and Anson Tan. Amanda and Steven Phillips stepped up to lead our St. Patrick's Day Ventura Harbor Treasure Hunt groups. There's always room for you, too, if you have a desire to help youth grow into their full God-given potential. See Rich Smith if interested. Have a great month!

Rich

## SONSHINE PRESCHOOL



**Annette Walters**

Sonshine Preschool Director

[Annette@OrchardVentura.org](mailto:Annette@OrchardVentura.org)

We are well into springtime! After so much rain in the late winter, we are really enjoying all the green and flowers that are popping up all over campus. While the season of rain felt dark and challenging

(especially after the flooding), the season of spring feels bright and fresh. I can see why so many wise people equate the seasons of life to the actual seasons.

One season I never like is the end of the school year, and it is coming quickly! We only have about ten weeks of school left. I can remember when we were ten weeks into this school year, and it felt like the end of the school year was so far away. It feels like I just blinked, and now we are so close to the end! I am trying to enjoy this time and avoid getting too bogged down in planning for next school year. It's a good thing these kids make that so easy.

We are busy preparing for our Spring Sing and Art Show. It will take place at the beginning



of May and is always a fun, entertaining, endearing evening. We sing in the Worship Building, then head down to the classrooms for dessert and check out all the fantastic artwork. Last year, we had some lovely Orchard Community Church folks help us with the hospitality. It was so nice to have such a warm representation of Orchard members at our event! If you have any desire to help with this year's event, please reach out to me!

As always, thank you for your continued support of our preschool.

Annette

## DISCIPLESHIP CORNER

**Rich Smith**

Discipleship Elder

[r\\_smith122@hotmail.com](mailto:r_smith122@hotmail.com)

Good news! There are many small groups and 9 AM Sunday morning opportunities to help you to grow in your spiritual life. Sunday morning worship is essential, but it is not the only essential. If you have been feeling the least bit empty, as if there is something that you are missing out on, 2

that could be your prompting to try something new, like a small group or a Sunday 9 AM class. They're there, waiting for you. What used to be routine pre-Covid seems so much harder now, but it is still utterly doable. You can do it!

Speaking of doing it, I counted ten local mission partners Orchard is supporting on the Orchard website. Getting enough volunteers for church and mission activities is a persistent problem throughout the church that you can solve. Your Orchard Directory on pages 43-61 describes Orchard's various ministry team activities from last year, most of which are ongoing. Find one that appeals to you and reach out to the Elder of that area.

I've been writing about four steps to grow our faith:

- Daily time with God in scripture
- Small group discussions
- Discipling others or being disciplined,
- AND finally service

This last one, service, is participating in the community to help others. It's where your faith gets made real and where you might grow and be rewarded the most. Not rewarded materially, but spiritually, that feeling of being significant and worthwhile, of being used by God. If you're not already involved, now's the time. Try it, you'll like it!

**Discipleship Calendar:** All groups below are ongoing and welcome new participants any time.

### Sundays:

- 9-10 am  
**Biblical Foundations for Life** (in the library for all adults),  
**Parent Life** (in Room 6 for parents of kids 0-18)  
**Youth Sunday school** (in the youth building for middle and high school students).  
**Men's Fellowship Group** (in the

conference room for all men)

**Childcare** ages birth-5th grade (on the playground).

- 9:15-10 am  
**Intercessory Group Prayer** (in the farmhouse for all adults).
- 4-6 pm  
**Youth Group** for all middle and high school students (in the youth building).

### Mondays:

- 6-7:30 pm  
**Guys Group** (in the youth building for all high school guys)
- 7-8 pm  
**Monday Night Zoom** small group (Open for all, ask [Jerry Horstmeyer](#) for the Zoom information)

### Tuesdays:

- 10 - 11 am  
**Pastors Bible Study** (Open for all; in the library)
- 12:30-2:30 pm  
**Card Games Common Interest Group** (1st and 3rd Tues., in the library, open to all).
- 6:30 pm  
**Young Adult group** (Contact [David Pels](#) for location)

### Wednesdays:

- 9:30-11 am  
**Women's Bible Study** (in the Worship Center for all women)
- 6:30-8 pm  
**Men's Small Group** (in the conference room for all men)  
**Girl's Group** (in the Youth Building for all high school girls)

See the [Orchard website](#) under "Connect" and "[Small Groups](#)" for more.

## PNC

The Pastor Nominating Committee has been searching for a pastor/director of discipleship and outreach for several



months. We have reviewed many resumes and held interviews. There are many applicants who show a love for the Lord and His church, but none so far with the skills, experience and fit we are looking for. The PNC is now taking a short break to revise the job description. Once it is approved by Session, we plan to begin the posting of the job anew.

The Pastor Nominating Committee:

LuAnn Smith, Chair  
Deya Jacob  
Judy Alexandre  
Barry Reagan  
Randy Metz  
David Pels  
(Pastor Matt attends the meetings)

## COMMON INTEREST GROUPS

### COORDINATORS NEEDED!

We are currently in need of coordinators for the following Common Interest Groups: Animal Lovers, Education, Fishing, Gardening, Hiking/Walking, Live Theater, Reading, RV/Camping, and Sports.

### What does a Common Interest Group Coordinator need to do?

**Communicate** with group members to coordinate meeting time(s)/location(s).  
**Facilitate** discussions in the group to determine what frequency of meeting or events is appropriate/desired and the focus of the group.

**Ensure** participation is logged for meetings in Church center app (note can be delegated to group member) for feedback to staff

**Ensure** [event forms](#) (can be done online via phone or computer) are submitted for notification to Church office of upcoming events (on or off campus)

**Have a great time** while sharing Christ's love and serving our community!

For further information or to sign up, please contact Jerry Horstmeyer at [jerzorchard@gmail.com](mailto:jerzorchard@gmail.com).

## PRAYER CORNER



By Joy Downing Riley

A huge thank you to Jenn Rodriguez from Turning Point Foundation, Rich Smith, Larry Verloop, and Clare Riley for working more than 4 hours in the rain on the Prayer Garden - Phase 2.

## SURVEY DATA

Many thanks to everyone who participated in our Spiritual Assessment Survey! We received about 65 responses and were able to find themes that will enable us to plan for your future spiritual growth at Orchard Community Church.

For survey results, email Worship Elder Joy Downing Riley at [jdredit@yahoo.com](mailto:jdredit@yahoo.com)

## LOCAL MISSIONS

Local Missions answers the call of Deuteronomy 15:11b, *"Therefore I commend you, 'You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy, and to the poor in your land.'"*

It is so good to welcome Spring! The Local Missions Committee has been busy, and we're looking forward to being even busier with our upcoming Spring activities in April and May. On March 10,

we had the opportunity to again serve and share Sunday Supper with the residents of Tender Life. The delicious meal was provided by Becky Graves, Cheryl Hayden, Jean Callahan, Joan Smith, Judy Alexandre, Karen Carpenter, Marilyn Reeder, Priscilla Anderson, Sara Kolb, Shirley Gapper, and Tamir Reagan. Thank you all! Those staying and enjoying the meal with the girls were Karen Carpenter, Marilyn Reeder, Priscilla Anderson, and Sharen Reyes. Thirteen of us gathered around their large table, including three little ones, and three babies upstairs napping, and we talked and talked. We talked about everything from pregnancies to transportation. One of the girls was so proud and excited to tell us that she'd recently completed DUI classes and was looking forward to getting her driver's license. We rejoiced with her as she shared this news. If you'd like to be a part of this great ministry, contact Priscilla Anderson at [prillu1950@gmail.com](mailto:prillu1950@gmail.com).



through May. Having a place to call home can mean safety, connection, rest, warmth or security. For those families transitioning from homelessness to permanent housing, the move can seem overwhelming. To help them settle in, the **"Move-In Project"** offers support. And Orchard Church folks are helping by donating and assembling sets of needed kitchen supplies, which are necessary and



costly. Your donation is valued and so appreciated! The list of specific items needed are posted on

the church app or web site. [Please register items online](#) that you donate so others know what items are still needed! You may drop these donations off at church in the "Kitchen Basics Bin", or bring to the church office during the week. (Monetary donations are welcome to purchase items not donated.) If you are interested in volunteering for assembling on June 1 at 9 AM, contact Joan Smith at [joanhome64@hotmail.com](mailto:joanhome64@hotmail.com).

April also brings two volunteer opportunities on **Saturday, April 13.**

One is the chance to make a difference at **City Center** by

painting a block wall behind their **new Children's Center**. All materials will be provided. We need 4-6 volunteers to help from 9-12 that day. If you have questions, contact Priscilla Anderson at [prillu1950@gmail.com](mailto:prillu1950@gmail.com). You can sign up using the [Church Center app](#) or scan the above QR Code.



On Saturday, April 13, the other volunteer opportunity is to organize donations made to **Mercy House** year-round shelter, also known as **The Arch**. You'll be able to tour the facility, do some needed work, and see some interesting items that some have donated. We need six volunteers to help from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. If interested, contact Judy Alexandre. You can sign up using the [Church Center app](#) or scan the above QR Code. These are two opportunities that will make a difference for many! **Please consider volunteering.**

We will host a **Blood Drive with Vitalant** on Sunday, May 19. Watch for information on signing up in the Thursday "What's Happening at Orchard" email or contact Jacob Ward at [jlw912@hotmail.com](mailto:jlw912@hotmail.com).



The **Whitney Tutoring Center** is up and running and supervised by Sandy Wendt. We have 15 students enrolled in grades 1 - 4. The center is open on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, with eight tutors serving. If the need arises for more students to be tutored, there would be a need for additional tutors and/or hours in the next school year. If you are interested in helping contact Sandy at [tutoringcenter@orchardventura.org](mailto:tutoringcenter@orchardventura.org)

Remember, we have bins every Sunday to collect **nonperishable food and hygiene items**.

We would **welcome new committee members**. If you have a heart for local outreach, contact Priscilla at [prillu1950@gmail.com](mailto:prillu1950@gmail.com).



**Royal Family Kids Camp (RFKC)** is happening again this summer in the Ojai valley from July 1 - 5 . Our mission is to provide a week of positive memories for children 7 to 11 years old that are in the Family Preservation, Foster Care, and adoption system. Some of these children have had a rough start to their lives through no fault of their own and need people to come alongside them to show they are wanted. The camp also provides respite for the care-taking family while the children are at camp. This is a God-centered camp that seeks to show kids

the love and hope of Christ.

The funding for the camp is all raised through private donations. All the people who make this camp happen are volunteers, giving their time and energy to create this unique experience that has a deep impact not only on the campers but the people who serve. We want to serve about 40 children this year, which means we need many volunteers from the faith community.

We need volunteers from every stage of life ranging from 16-100 in both full-time and part- time positions. What are the ways you can help? You can apply to be a counselor or a support staff. Even if you can only help one or two days, during the mornings or evenings, you can make a difference. Can't go to camp? Then maybe you take some time to help with opportunities such as camper registration or welcome home dinner or writing notes of encouragement to the children. You can donate funds or items for backpacks and birthday boxes that are given to each kid. There are so many ways that you can make an impact on a child's life.

If you would like to know more about what Royal Family Kids camp is about and how you can make a difference, I would love to speak to you. You can send an email to [venturarfk@gmail.com](mailto:venturarfk@gmail.com).

In His service,

Greg Pels  
Director RFKC Ventura



## GLOBAL MISSIONS

Jesus enjoined his disciples, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to

me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28: 18-20

As a church, our giving to missions (global and local) and our prayers for our partners are some ways we follow Jesus' command. The partner updates below give us examples to enlarge our vision about opportunities to "Go and teach" at home or abroad.



Once again, this year during Lent the Global Mission Team coordinated Significant Sacrifice, an opportunity for people to bring offerings of what we would have spent on something for ourselves, as a donation to Water for Good (formerly Lifewater International). Our gifts will bring clean water, hygiene, sanitation and the love of Jesus to people in Benza, Ethiopia. Pastor Matt and other members of Orchard visited Benza in the past to observe this project.

Our goal this year is to be able to donate \$3,000 dollars toward the Benza project, and **we collected \$4,422.09!**

In Benza nearly 1 in 5 people do not have a toilet, so they go outside in the open. This is a major public health crisis and potential safety concern, especially for women and children. Over 70 percent of the population is using an unsafe source of water. The good news: diarrheal

disease, a leading cause of death for children under five years old, can be decreased substantially with drinking safe water and practicing proper sanitation and hygiene. Below is one woman's story.

Workenesh lives in Bode Village with her husband and five children. She was never able to go to school and she works hard and provides for her family by preparing food for them, cleaning the house, washing their dishes, working on the farm, and fetching water from a spring. The spring is unprotected, meaning that it is highly contaminated by waste from livestock nearby and erosion from nearby land.

"We don't have clean water. We travel a lot of kilometers when the dry season comes starting from February to May because of the decrease of the spring," she said. The round trip to bring water back to her family when the spring is running takes an hour. The water, which is unsafe for drinking, often makes them sick. When Workenesh and her family are sick, they cannot farm, which causes them to lose money. Additionally, they must spend much of their hard-earned money on hospital visits. This cycle perpetuates poverty, but is hard to break without safe water.

The objectives in Bensa include equipping 5 primary schools across three districts – Gonjobe, Denbi, and Hache – and one primary school in Murago. Other projects planned are: Constructing a solar-powered spring serving nine villages, a gravity spring water system, establishing four water points at schools, constructing seven new school latrine blocks, and supplying the area with a total of 23 wells – 17 new borehole wells, two shallow wells, and four hand-dug wells.



**From the Bates—**"God has surprised us, as He has so many times in the past, by opening up a

bright and fresh pathway. After a long discernment process on all sides, we have decided to join a new organization, Orthodox Christian Mission Center. We are very excited about this as we will continue the work we started in Romania with Viata and IMPACT and spread it further around the globe--under the banner of what has already begun here, Orthopraxis. Dana will serve as Multi-Country Missionary in Youth Education & Ministry."

From OCMC: "Dana and his wife Brandi moved to an impoverished coal-mining region in Romania in 1999. They developed Romania's first adventure education and ropes course summer camp called Viata ("the Life" in Romanian), which has given around 700 youth a transformative summer camp experience every year and introduced them to the Orthodox Way of life. As a follow-up to the summer camp, Dana & Brandi developed a service-learning model called IMPACT that, besides teaching all sorts of life-skills, introduces youth to Orthodoxy by living the "liturgy (service to others) after the Liturgy." IMPACT has gone on to become a global best practice model and is used in over fifty countries through organizations like World Vision. Dana has worked closely with the Romanian Orthodox Church and plans to share these experiential learning models throughout the world through OCMC and its partners. Dana and his wife converted to Orthodoxy in 2004, and Dana went on to get his PhD at Oxford on Orthodox theology in dialogue with

development studies (causes of poverty and well-being). Dana and Brandi have two children, Briana Jelsa and Gabriel Matei. Their passions are hiking, mountain biking, and spending time outdoors."



**Union Biblica Honduras--**  
**Orlando Japaz,** recently spoke at the International

Biblical Union Global Congress in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He challenged attendees as the church of Jesus Christ to, "Hunger and thirst for righteousness" in their lives that it would be reflected in their work promoting justice for all people.

**Prayer requests and contact information for our mission partners.**



**AnAntalya, Turkey--Ramazan Arcan,** [ANTALYA](#)  
[EVANGELICAL CHURCH](#)

Please pray for Ramazan and his church as they prepare for an Impact team to visit this summer. Pray also for those who were recently baptized: for spiritual growth, a supportive Christian community and courage in situations where they experience rejection.



**Bila Tserkva, Ukraine--Nita Hanson,** [Home | GHT MAIN](#)

Please pray for peace in Ukraine and for protection for Nita and the GHT staff. Pray for healing and help for those suffering loss and the effects of war trauma. Pray also for strength and healing for Nita who had knee replacement surgery 2/12 and developed medical complications. She hopes to return to Ukraine 4/27.



**Lupeni, Romania—Brandi and Dana Bates (New Horizons)**

[Brandi.brianna@gmail.com](mailto:Brandi.brianna@gmail.com) or [danabrandi@new-horizons.ro](mailto:danabrandi@new-horizons.ro) or [OCMC Missionary Dana Bates - Orthodox Christian Mission Center](http://OCMC Missionary Dana Bates - Orthodox Christian Mission Center)

Please pray for successful installation of central heating in the Bates' home. Pray for Dana and Brandi as they prepare for an Impact short-term mission team this summer. \*\*Note: their Impact program (see previous) is a different ministry than Impact the Globe.



**Siquetepeque—Honduras (Union Biblica) Orlando and Sylvia Japas** [Unión Bíblica de Honduras | Facebook](http://Unión Bíblica de Honduras | Facebook)

Please pray the government will continue to allow them to present their program in the public schools and for Orlando and Sylvia as they prepare for an Impact Team this summer.

**J and N**, Serving in Southeast Asia-- J&N have moved home to the US and continue their ministry abroad virtually, with teaching, counseling and prayer several days a week. Please pray for the people they have been serving for over 20 years for growing faith and courage in the face of persecution. For their prayer letters or further information please reach out to Rich Smith at [r\\_smith122@hotmail.com](mailto:r_smith122@hotmail.com)



**Kristy LaBarge, Impact Director**, [IMPACT - International Short Term Missions \(impact-theglobe.org\)](http://IMPACT - International Short Term Missions (impact-theglobe.org))

Please pray for all those preparing for the summer mission trips (Honduras, Romania and Turkey) and for Kristy as she coordinates all of the details for cross training and team travel.



## Water for Good

Stronger Together - Lifewater International, now Water for Good. Pray as they continue to bring safe water, improved sanitation & hygiene, one village at a time with the love of Christ.



**Natalie M.** (who grew up at Orchard), and Wesley, with their 2 sons Tobi and Jet. Please pray for protection for them and their boys and for the people of the Arab nations. Please also pray for requests they recently sent, "Daniel", his wife "Anna" and their teenage daughter "Rachel" are all new believers. They have not told anyone else in their family about their faith in Jesus yet. Please pray for their protection from persecution. Pray that their unbelieving family members, especially "Rachel's" husband, to encounter Jesus and follow Him, too. Pray for Daniel, Anna and Rachel to mature in their faith, to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

March 10th- April 9th is the Muslim holiday called Ramadan. Muslims fast from food and drink all day from sunrise until sunset. Pray for the revelation of Jesus to fall upon Wes & Nat's Muslim neighbors as they fast and pray, and seek favor from Allah. Pray for dreams and visions of Jesus during Ramadan. Pray for divine opportunities, and open doors for Wes & Nat to share the Gospel during this holiday. If you would like to connect with them directly, see photos and their personal website, please reach out to Sandy Dinkler at [sbdinkler@gmail.com](mailto:sbdinkler@gmail.com).

If you are concerned about the condition of the world, want to see how God is working around the globe, and want to learn from churches in other cultures, **join the Global Missions Team**. Contact: Lizzie Barminski at [ewbarminski@gmail.com](mailto:ewbarminski@gmail.com)

## SESSION

### **Highlights of the March Session Meeting**

The Session of Orchard Community Church met on March 14, 2024 in the Library. Moderator Matt Hoyt called the meeting to order at 7:12 pm. Before the meeting was called to order, Elders had shared dinner, fellowship, prayer and discussion with the Deacons at their annual joint meeting.

### **Joint Meeting with the Deacons**

At the annual joint meeting of the Deacons and Elders, Pastor Matt shared a devotional and there was discussion about church leadership, based on Acts 20:28. Elders and Deacons shared some of the highlights and challenges of serving in their ministries, as well as things they wanted each other to know.

### **Pastor's Report**

Pastor Matt shared several prayer concerns and needs in the congregation and how elders could be praying for them and/or reaching out to them. He requested and Session approved his vacation for the week after Easter, April 1-5. Melinda Hoyt will preach on April 7. Matt clarified that due to the VUSD summer schedule moving up, the Tent dates for this summer will be earlier. The tent will be up and Worship will be outside from June 30 (VBS Sunday) through August 4, with the Lemon Festival August 4 and fall kick-off Sunday, August 11.

### **Pastor Nominating/Search Committee**

Elder Judy Alexandre gave an update from the PNC, and shared that they no longer have anyone in the interview process for the Assistant Pastor/Director of Discipleship and Outreach position, and will be pausing the process for a month. During that time, they will make a few

tweaks to the job description before re-posting, and it should then rise back to the top of the list on job posting sites.

**Youth Director**

Session discussed whether the search for a new Youth Director should be started, and not wait until after the Assistant Pastor/Director for Outreach and Discipleship is hired. Based on the status of that search and the need for the Youth to have a new permanent director, the Personnel Committee was directed to create a job description and begin work towards starting the search. They will bring back proposed salary, hours, and possible search committee members, as well as the revised job description, to Session.

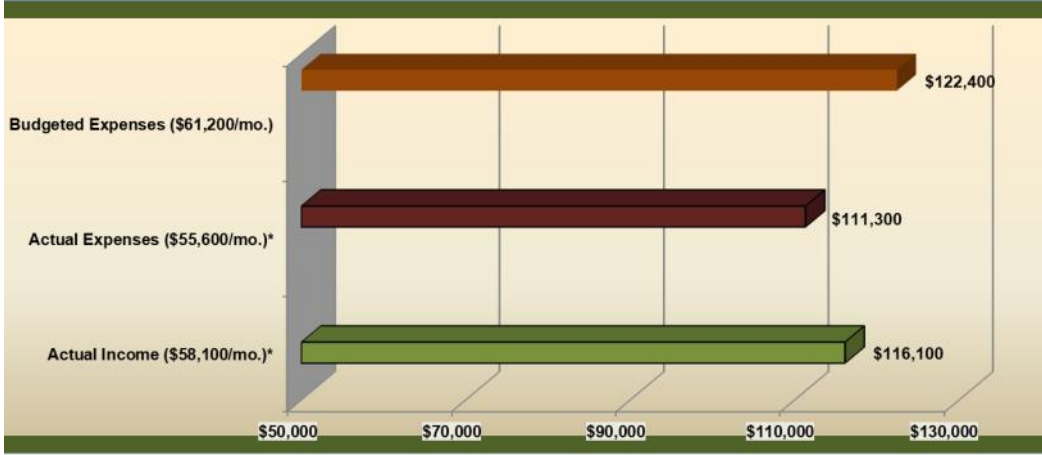
**Spiritual Assessment Survey**

Elders Rich Smith and Joy Downing Riley shared the results of the Spiritual Assessment survey done recently, and the implications of the results. They will be useful in knowing how to write Bible studies, prayer guides and devotionals, lead groups, give input to sermons, and in general help Session know how to disciple the congregation. There are implications for almost all ministries so it was recommended that all teams review the results.

**Presbytery Meeting at Orchard**

Matt discussed the Presbytery meeting that will be at Orchard Saturday, May 11th. Judy Alexandre has volunteered to lead recruiting for the help needed. Lunch will be paid for by the Presbytery, but Orchard people will be needed to coordinate ordering, serving, set-up, RSVP's, etc., and serve as hosts for the day. Anyone who would like to volunteer and have the opportunity to see our ECO Presbytery in action should contact Judy.

Submitted by Sue Hockenmaier,  
Clerk of Session  
*Members of Orchard Community Church may request copies of minutes from Session. Please contact Sue Hockenmaier with your request.*



**FINANCE**

**February 2024 Financial Results**

February saw \$47,800 of giving income while \$51,700 was spent. This is still pretty encouraging for a February and the year-to-date numbers show we're slightly ahead after two months.

Thank you for all you do for Orchard ministries and missions!  
**Scoop Hockenmaier**  
For the Finance Committee



**Small and Common Interest Group Info and Celebration**

April 27 | 3:30 - 5 pm | Library

If you are currently involved or would like to learn more about and participate in our Small Groups, including our Common Interest Groups, please join us on April 27 at 3:30 pm in the library.

We will celebrate our groups, enjoy snacks, and move forward with our newer Common Interest Groups. This will be a time to answer any questions and help groups move forward with exciting and meaningful events and opportunities.

[RSVP](#) to let us know you'll be coming!

**SMALL & COMMON INTEREST GROUP**  
*Info & Celebration*

**We had such a good time at the 2024 Orchard Women's Retreat! We learned from Andrea Messinger, had meaningful conversations with our small groups, did crafts and yoga together, enjoyed some free time in beautiful wine country, and in general had a great weekend together!**



ORCHARD COMMUNITY CHURCH

# Woven Together

WOMEN'S RETREAT 2024



Orchard Community Church  
8180 Telephone Rd  
Ventura CA 93004



**April 12 | 6:30 PM | Youth Building**  
Enjoy dinner with other youth parents, share your joys and concerns, and learn what's on Rich's mind for the Orchard Youth Program. Open to parents of middle and high school students. Please [RSVP](#) on the church app or with [Rich Smith](#).



## ORCHARD GAME NIGHT

**April 14 | 4 PM - 6 PM | Worship Center**

Do you like to play games? So do we. Bring a game to play, and we will bring some, too. All ages are welcome. Bring a snack to share. Please [RSVP](#) on the church app or with [Betsy Harry](#)



**April 19 | 6:30 PM**  
**Off-Campus** - Sign up for the address

Movie Lovers are invited to view "The Lunchbox" (2013). ([Trailer](#))

A solitary widower in Mumbai looking to retire from his accounting job receives the wrong lunch one day, and begins a correspondence - via the lunchbox - with a lonely housewife.

We will also discuss the movie and future plans for the Common Interest - Movies group.

Water and popcorn will be provided. If you wish, bring your own beverage and finger food snack to share.

[RSVP](#) on the church app or with [Lauri Kail](#).  
Seating is limited.