

# Report of the Superintendent



Evelyn M.R. Johnson  
The Pacific Southwest Conference  
April 2010



## REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

*“Be strong and courageous, for you are the one who will lead my people to possess all the land I swore to give their ancestors. Be strong and very courageous....This is my command to you — be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:6 and 9)*

In its 108<sup>th</sup> year of ministry the Pacific Southwest Conference (hereinafter referred to as PSWC) is a regional partnership of the Evangelical Covenant Church with 158 churches serving almost 45,000 worship attendees. We exist to discern God's Kingdom building movement and align our resources to support opportunities for planting, adopting, and developing healthy, reproducing congregations. Our vision for mission is to be a mosaic of churches working interdependently to reach the unchurched and equip believers to transform lives and communities. Our mission priorities are: church planting, congregational vitality, and compassion, mercy, and justice ministries. During 2009 and entering 2010, four strategic directions have guided our choices: maintaining the momentum in church planting, strengthening existing churches, equipping persons for mosaic living, and nurturing the partnership as a community of churches. We believe each of these areas to be critical in creating a bridge to the future.

As we return to Mission Springs Camp and Conference Center this year for the annual Celebration, I am keenly reminded of the critical importance of bridges. In spring 2007 we had a “bridge crisis” at Mission Springs. The old bridge had deteriorated and was condemned. Alternate routes had to be temporarily constructed and ultimately a new pathway was created with a new bridge that opened in December 2008. As I reflect on recent years that experience is a metaphor for Pacific Southwest Conference ministries. Since fall 2008, we have needed to create alternate routes to continue being faithful to our mission and vision for mission in the midst of an economic crisis, locally, regionally, and nationally. Creative approaches were implemented to continue planting churches, stimulate pursuit of congregational vitality, and lessen personnel costs and travel. Yet, these alternate pathways did not lessen God's movement in our midst to transform lives and communities. The bridge to the future for individuals, churches, and the conference as a whole was still being created. I commend the PSWC staff, Executive Board, and our churches for living into the reality of what it means to “be strong and courageous....do not be afraid or discouraged.”



**The new bridge at Mission Springs, a metaphor for PSWC ministries**

## FOCUSING

### Maintaining Momentum in Church Planting

In April 2009, we celebrated fifteen years of a church planting movement by honoring leaders from 68 church plants launched since January 1994 and recognizing six church plants that were started and closed. Celebration brings joy into life and joy makes us strong! In God's strength, we became more intentional during 2009 in exploring opportunities to plant Covenant churches in Nevada. Wayne Carlson, Director of Church Planting, began monthly exploration excursions to Las Vegas and was accompanied often by other PSWC church planters and Walter Contreras, Director of Outreach and Hispanic Church Planting. In fall 2009 God called Arturo and Sandra Salas for more consistent on-site exploration in Las Vegas. The end result of this exploration was the launching of our first Covenant Church in Nevada on April 1, 2010. In addition, during 2009 God called two bivocational planters to launch church plants in Arizona. The PSWC's partnership with the Bayside Family of Churches, Modesto Covenant Church, and Rolling Hills Covenant Church helped launch four more churches in California. The Mission Expansion Fund (a joint investment account with the ECC from the proceeds of a recent land sale) provided an additional income stream to maintain our full appropriation commitments to other church plants. In a year with limited funding for church planting, God provided what was needed to maintain the momentum.

## Strengthening Existing Churches

The definition of an existing church has been somewhat ambiguous in the context of the church planting movement since 1994. The question is often asked, “How long does a church plant stay a church plant?” As the Commission on Congregational Vitality and staff develop services for existing churches, the target group is increasingly termed “4 years of age and beyond.” This category has been affirmed by Covenant leadership now with a change in policy allowing use of a percentage of closed church funds to support congregational vitality. The PSWC is blessed to have a tithe of the Mission Expansion Fund being used to support the various conference services for churches, age 4 to age 133. The legacy of closed churches will continue living through strengthened existing churches as well as new churches. During 2009, support for existing churches has been provided through Veritas workshops and Taking Your Ministry Pulse workshops led by Alan Forsman, PSWC Leadership and Congregational Coach, and Congregational Vitality Commission members as well as follow-up coaching by PSWC Vitality coaches. In addition, Alan Forsman, Greg Yee, Associate Superintendent, Walter Contreras, and I have provided coaching and resourcing during times of transition including pastoral searches for a number of congregations. At one time during 2009 we were connected with 27 PSWC churches that were in transition. Appendix A gives an overview of the pastoral changes and persons serving in transition roles.

## Equipping People for Mosaic Living

“On our own, we are little more than bits of stone and glass. Together we are the body of Christ.” This quote from the introduction of the Mosaic Bible describes our intent. Shift has happened in the PSWC. During the last decade we have shifted from 20% in 2000 to 44% in 2010 of our churches serving an ethnic group other than Euro American or being multiethnic. These churches represent 28% of our total worship attendance in 2010 compared to 12% in 2000. Learning to live and lead effectively in this context is a priority as we create a bridge to the future. In early 2009 the Commission on Multiethnic Ministries and the Commission on Church Outreach merged to form the Commission on Compassion, Mercy, and Justice. The continued overlap between this new Commission and The Mosaic Center Board led to transferring the Commission’s responsibilities to The Mosaic Center (TMC) Board in early 2010. This separate subsidiary corporation of the PSWC focuses on equipping people to engage in breaking down racial and economic barriers within and among churches. The TMC’s priorities have been awareness building, leader formation, resource development, and networking. During 2009, the primary services included: Journey to Mosaic trips, J2M2, a speakers’ bureau, and general networking. A vision is now being explored to develop a Center for Outreach and Evangelism in partnership with the Fred Jordan Mission in the Los Angeles area. A feasibility study is in process to discern the potential of a similar Center in the San Francisco area. These Centers would provide residential opportunities for persons to engage in nonformal educational experiences focused on living and leading effectively in multiethnic, multicultural, and multiclass contexts.



**2009 J2m<sup>2</sup> participants and co-leaders, a ministry of The Mosaic Center**

## **COLLABORATING**

### The Community of Pastors

The community of Covenant credentialed pastors in the PSWC as of April 2010 includes 401 persons of which 32 are retired and 43 are inactive. We believe all pastors and staff ministers need to pursue self-care that includes physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions. In addition to self-care, pastors and staff ministers need to be in a constant process of retooling to adapt to a changing context. We acknowledge that “no one size fits all.” Thus, the Pastor Care Commission, Ministerial Association, and PSWC staff provide a variety of pathways to access support and retooling experiences. These services include: coaching and mentoring, cluster gatherings, pastoral spiritual direction, retreats (fall Pastors’ Retreat, Retired Pastors’ Retreat, and Prayer Retreats), continuing education

(Celebration gathering), vocational assessments (Midwest Ministry Development), and crisis care (Crisis Care Pastors and the Benevolence Fund). We benefit greatly from the partnership with the Department of the Ordered Ministry in both credentialing pastors and providing ongoing care and support. The Department's Sustaining Pastoral Excellence program, funded by the Lilly Endowment grant, has stimulated greater interest and made many opportunities more accessible to enhance the health of our pastoral community.

### Camp and Conference Centers

The ministries of the PSWC camp and conference centers, Mission Springs and Alpine, focus on individual and congregational life transformation. Over 35,000 persons are served annually through one-day excursions, weekend retreats, and/or week-long camps in these settings. We are grateful for the collaboration with the Executive Directors, Bryan Hayes and John Gehring, and their staffs in furthering the vision of the PSWC to be a mosaic. Camp Mosaic launched this past fall at Alpine with TMC is an example of a new initiative to translate this vision into action. We are currently pursuing the organization of both Mission Springs and Alpine as subsidiary corporations of the PSWC to streamline some of the governance and yet have accountability to the PSWC through its Executive Board as members of the corporation. The 108<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting will consider a proposed amendment to the PSWC Constitution and Bylaws to dissolve the current Camping Commissions and open the way for a new structure.

### Women Ministries

I want to take this opportunity to applaud the collaborative work of Women Ministries in supporting the whole church. I especially want to commend the pursuit of ministries to bring light into the darkness experienced by many in domestic abuse scenarios and victims of human trafficking. This year's denominational project, Breaking the Chains: Hope and Restoration for Freed Slaves, is focused on resourcing a ministry, New Day for Children, to provide a safe place for those rescued from this life of slavery. This is more than "just another project" for us in the PSWC as it is resourcing a ministry being developed with the guidance of pastor, staff and members of First Covenant Oakland. I can simply say "thank you Women Ministries, thank you Paul Wilson and others at First Covenant Oakland for launching this ministry, and thank you God for valuing all who you created and calling us to do the same!"

### Communications

My attention was captured by a recent blog post. It was titled, "The Past is Still With Us." The comment read: "The idea of people gathering together or being social isn't anything new. For ages that's been the case and it's not going to change anytime soon. Today, people do the same thing, they've just moved online." That comment captures the essence of a challenge before the PSWC in enhancing connections. The motivation to connect is there, but the means is changing. During the last decade, we moved from extensive printed words on letterhead or newsletters to e-letters and a monthly Quick Connect via e-mail and have "tweaked" our web-site created in 2000. These shifts are creating a bridge to the future. I look forward to what emerges from our Director of Conference Ministries, Anita Eyer, your new Superintendent, and the "tech savvy" staff in providing new pathways to connect.

### Centro Hispano de Estudios Teológicos—Hispanic Center for Theological Studies (CHET)

During its 20 year history, CHET has partnered with the PSWC in preparing both pastors and lay leaders to minister in the Hispanic/Latino community. Overall this ministry is a stellar example of "doing much with limited resources." An average of approximately 430 students per quarter have been served by CHET during the past year with an annual budget of less than \$330,000. The PSWC budget has included a contribution annually to support our partnership. The dream of a permanent home for CHET dedicated to their use is becoming a reality at 1005 E. Palmer Avenue in Compton. There has been a Covenant ministry for over 40 years at this site, beginning with the first African American congregation in the PSWC in the late 60s. Sufficient remodeling work is



**1005 E Palmer Ave property in Compton, future home of CHET**

scheduled for completion by midsummer 2010 to allow the fall quarter to begin at the new site. Individuals and churches are being challenged to assist through financial gifts and/or involvement in work teams to minimize the costs required for remodeling. A CHET Sunday in the PSWC is planned for May 2010.

## IMAGINING

In 2006 the theme of our Celebration was IMAGINE. I wrote in my Annual Report then that I imagined a future PSWC that would be characterized by: mission-minded, reproducing congregations that are authentic Christ-centered communities, attentive to the needs of the lost and the hurting in their sphere of influence; the raising up of a multiethnic team of young leaders with multiple opportunities provided for their growth and development; geographic clusters that are communities of nurture and vision for pastors, staff ministers, and church leaders; and believers, locally focused and globally connected, that pray in many languages and value the gifts of all persons.

We gather at this 2010 PSWC Celebration to give thanks to God for that which He has done. The vision is becoming a reality. We have been creating a bridge to the future. We will gather our pile of “stones” as the Israelites did to remember where we have been and where we are in 2010. That is good and appropriate. But, God is calling the PSWC into the future. Imagine 2027 when people gather at the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Pacific Southwest Conference to celebrate God’s faithfulness. What stones will they bring to mark where you have been over the next 17 years? With Paul’s words in Ephesians 4:1, I urge you to “live a life worthy of your calling!” God has led the PSWC to this point. He will guide the PSWC into the future. Be still and listen for His voice. There will be junctures at which the PSWC will need to make choices to go or not go into unknown territory. Hear God’s command to Joshua as His command to you: “Be strong and courageous....Be strong and very courageous....Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God will go with you wherever you go.”

## TRANSITIONING

In May 2009 I sensed the intersection of two streams of thought --- one being my personal need to reduce travel and be more physically present with my husband, Phil, and the second being a deep sense that a new leader was being prepared to lead the PSWC forward into the next decade. After much prayer, I knew this was God’s call for me personally and for the future of the Pacific Southwest Conference. The journey since February 1, 2000, as Superintendent has included many mountain-top experiences as well as dark valleys. Yet, even in the darkest of times, the report of persons saying

“yes to following Jesus” through the ministry of PSWC churches made it all worth it. I have made mistakes. I simply say “I’m sorry. Please forgive me.” Yet, by the grace of God, I did some “right things.” Perhaps the “right” thing was to be God’s instrument in calling forth a team that has served and will continue to serve you well. It is with great joy that I welcome a new leader into your midst. Pray For him, support him, and join him in advancing Christ’s mission in this region.



**The Pacific Southwest Conference Staff, April 2010**  
**Front row: Anita Eyer, Walter Contreras, Greg Yee, John Gehring, Alan Forsman, Laura Chellew, Nelly Bothi, and Dolores Fowler. Back row: Evelyn Johnson, Bryan Hayes, Dan Melgren and Wayne Carlson**

**God blessed me during this journey as Superintendent through intersecting my life with some of His special servants, most of whom were new connections.** Whatever the length of the interaction, God taught me through them. In general, that list includes:

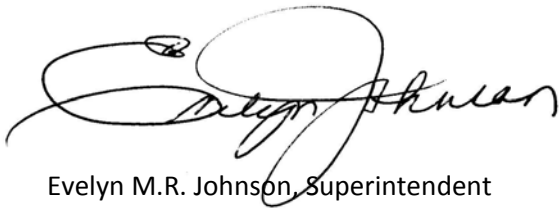
- gifted and Godly staff persons, camp directors, and contracted personnel who were committed to the vision for mission and gave of their best for the Master,
- courageous Executive Board members who went beyond their comfort zone at times,
- dedicated Commission members who kept us real through connecting us with local needs,
- wise denominational leaders who gave counsel and helped me wrestle with tough issues,
- supportive Superintendent colleagues who shared the joys, understood the struggles, and helped me keep perspective,
- expert legal counsel who helped me and many church leaders avoid potential blunders, and
- passionate pastors, staff ministers, and lay leaders who pursued Christ and Christ's mission.

**In addition, God has blessed me during this journey through lifelong connections including:**

- loving friends and relatives, both far and near, who stayed connected,
- beloved sons, their wives, and the grandchildren who provided reason to take "breaks," and
- my life partner, Phil, who at just the right times gently reminded me that "God was in charge" and faithfully prayed for me, the PSWC staff, and all of you.

**To God be the Glory! Great things He has done!**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Evelyn Johnson', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Evelyn M.R. Johnson, Superintendent

Attachments: Changes to Pastor/Staff Minister Roster and Overview of PSWC Churches

## Changes to Pastor/Staff Minister Roster

### ***Lead Pastors leaving positions in 2009/early 2010***

Brian Brown – New Hope Community Covenant Church, Brentwood  
 Rocky Cook – First Covenant Church, Fresno  
 James Gaderlund – Foothill Covenant Church, Los Altos  
 Scot Gillan – Grace Community Covenant Church, Tucson  
 Young Jin Hoe – Korean American Covenant Church, Marina  
 Brian Kim – Newsong Community Church - North Orange County, Fullerton  
 Craig Knudsen – Community Covenant Church, El Cajon  
 Jason Lee – Korean Covenant Church, Los Angeles  
 Bruce Metcalf – Hilmar Covenant Church, Hilmar  
 Patrick Nave – Sanctuary Covenant Church, Sacramento  
 Russ Ogren – Sierra Bible Church, Murphys  
 Manuel Tabujara – Fil-Am Covenant Church, Elk Grove  
 Robert Thompson – Puna Congregational Church, Kea'au, HI  
 David Waterman – Chapel in the Pines, Arnold  
 Michael Wilson – Escalon Covenant Church, Escalon

### ***Credentialed Staff Ministers leaving positions***

Frank Alioto – Hope Center Covenant Church, Pleasant Hill  
 Mark Almlie – Redwood Covenant Church, Santa Rosa  
 Bo Bannister – Community Covenant of Goleta, Santa Barbara  
 Bob Balian – Bayside of South Sacramento, Sacramento  
 Dan Beach – Redwood Covenant Church, Santa Rosa  
 Linda Buie – Turlock Covenant Church, Turlock  
 Mae Cannon – Hillside Covenant Church, Walnut Creek  
 Maureen Chen – Great Exchange Covenant Church, Sunnyvale  
 Stacey Greely – Kerman Covenant Church, Kerman  
 Seth Lindberg – Rock Harbor Covenant Church, Rocklin  
 Ian McDougall – Lakehills Covenant Church, El Dorado Hills  
 Abel Orozco- Great Exchange Covenant Church, Sunnyvale  
 Joel Payne – Redeemer Covenant Church, Orangevale  
 Christian Schalecky – Community Covenant Church, Santa Barbara  
 Jeffrey Smith – Peninsula Covenant Church, Redwood City

### ***Church Planters concluding service with closure of the church plant***

Chris Kalton – Mosaic Covenant Church, Santa Maria

### ***Lead Pastors installed during 2009***

May 2009 – Mark Kirchgastner – Dolores Park Church, San Francisco  
 October 2009 – Robert Anderson – Redeemer Covenant Church, Orangevale

### ***Church Planters starting since May 1, 2009***

Brad Boydston – MasterPiece Church, Laveen, AZ  
 Jeffery Carl – Bayside in Galt, Galt  
 Eddie Ledesma – Real Life Covenant Church, La Habra  
 Scott Nelson – Covenant Grove Church, Modesto  
 Abel Orozco – Jesus the Recreator Covenant Church, San Jose  
 Mario Romani – Renacer Covenant Church, San Jose  
 Arturo Salas – Amistad Covenant Church, Las Vegas, NV

### ***Interim Lead Pastors continuing or beginning service in 2009/early 2010***

Kevin Blue – Church of the Redeemer Covenant, Los Angeles, p/t  
 Timothy Dally – Redwood Covenant Church, Santa Rosa  
 Kreig Gammelgard – Pasadena Covenant Church, Pasadena p/t  
 Marvin Gibbs – Emmanuel Covenant Church, Northridge, p/t  
 Henry Greenidge – Valley Hi Covenant Church, Sacramento, p/t  
 Rick Hampton – Sanctuary Covenant Church, Sacramento  
 Dick Jefferson – Chapel in the Pines, Arnold  
 Fil Nesta and Walter Contreras – Iglesia del Pacto Evangélico, San Francisco p/t  
 Doug Muraki – River Life Covenant Church, Sacramento, p/t  
 Peter Park – Newsong Community Church - North Orange County, Fullerton  
 Phillip Sommerville – Westside Covenant Church, West Sacramento, p/t  
 Kevin Swanson – Sierra Bible Church, Murphys  
 Paula Warren – Church of Philadelphia Covenant, San Jose, p/t  
 William Waters – Alum Rock Covenant Church, San Jose, p/t  
 Bret Widman – Stockton Covenant Church, Stockton, p/t

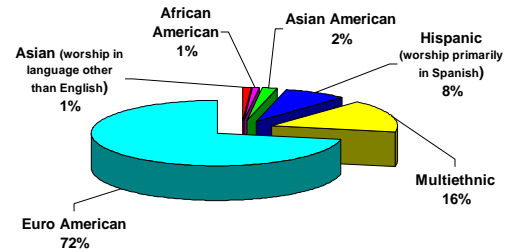
### ***Deaths of Covenant credentialed pastors/missionaries and spouses of pastors/missionaries***

September 2009 – Bernardo Urbano  
 September 2009 – Lucille Johnson  
 November 2009 – Grace Peterson  
 December 2009 – Lora Davis  
 January 2010 – Jean Sands  
 February 2010 – Anice Shepson  
 March 2010 – Marilyn Nixon

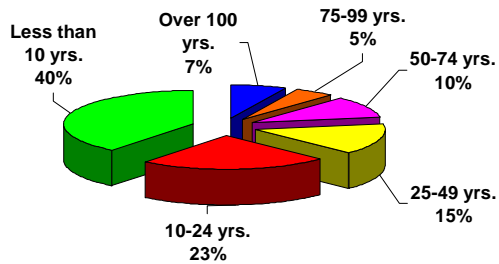
### Just the Facts

- 158 churches as of 4/1/2010
- 44,815 total worship attendance in 11/09
- 93 churches in the North and 65 churches in South (South includes Arizona, Hawaii, and Nevada)
- 11 churches had 50.5% (22654) of total November 2009 worship attendance

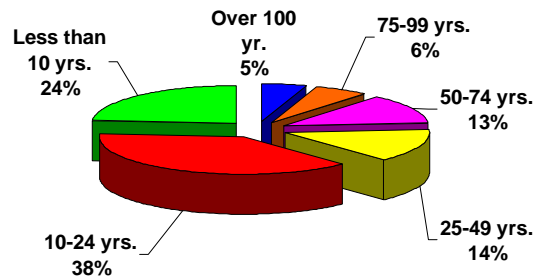
### Distribution of 11/09 Total Worship Attendance by Predominant Ethnicity



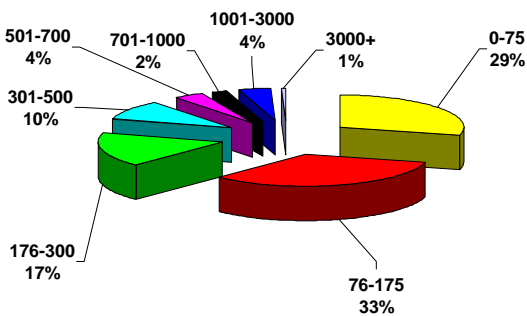
### Distribution of PWC Churches by Age



### Distribution of 11/09 Total Worship Attendance by Age of Church



### Distribution of PWC Churches by Size



### Distribution of 11/09 Total Worship Attendance by Size of Church

