



Expressions of gratitude:

From a recent visitor to our church services:

What was so obvious instantly was what I would call spiritual vibrancy. The place pulsed with it. There's a sense of commitment, an expectation of good, an acknowledgment of the presence of harmony, a demand to prove, and a natural inclusion of others — as though the world were concentric circles emanating from the here and now, that includes families and friends, neighbors and neighborhoods, the state, the country, other countries, and really... I sensed no walls. So this was indeed "Church Without Walls."

Being a person "out there" in one or more of those circles, I felt the tap on my shoulder as an invitation to be there in person, just as I have felt it and joined services by phone from remote locations.

Thank you, to ALL of you who are redefining the possibilities for church! I am grateful and inspired.

"After reading about your society in the June *Christian Science Journal*, I decided to look at your

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A Giving Church

— Thanksgiving 2007

Christian Science Society — San Juan Capistrano, California

It is always a joy to communicate with you and send our warmest greetings from the Christian Science Society of San Juan Capistrano.

2007 has been another year of growth for our church. We've welcomed many visitors throughout the year and are grateful for the commitment of new members and participants. New challenges have promoted a deeper search and understanding of unconditional love and true spiritual growth among us all.

Here are some highlights from 2007:

Our focus this year has been to rededicate ourselves to our purpose: "to promote spiritual growth, unconditional love and healing" and through monthly metaphysical workshops we are striving to better fulfill our mission. And our monthly "Growing Church Workshops" have helped us re-define and refine the true business of church and its practical application in today's



Youth create donation houses for "Homes of Hope"

world. Several "Open Forum" discussions devoted to Youth Outreach, Reading Room, and Expansion have resulted in opening thought to further exploration and growth.

We were blessed to have the Christian Science Publishing Society request one of our members to write an article for the *CS Journal* (June issue) "Church Alive" section. Many opportunities for sharing Christian Science and our collective expression of church resulted from the article, and we feel truly fortunate to be part of this worldwide movement of thought.

Outreach to our community — local, national and worldwide continues — to play an important role in the life of our church. We continue to tithe each month to an organization whose mission we support with our prayerful attention as well as monetary contribution.

Included in our 2007 tithing were **The Principle Foundation** and their dedication to helping meet the financial challenges of those relying on Christian Science to meet their needs..... **Petals of Africa School** in Kenya where we continue to focus much of our outreach efforts...

We supported **The Dana Point Earth/Ocean Society**, founded by one of our members and some 20 of our Sunday School students and families participated in an Earth/Ocean Day clean-up at the harbor for the second year. We were also treated to an interactive workshop, "Seeking Spiritual Solutions to Environmental Issues", conducted by one of our members, a professor of environmental policy along with some of our Sunday School students. Continuing our focus on the environment, we tithed to **The Surfrider Foundation**, committed to

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Growth and progress...

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protecting the world's oceans and beaches through research, education and activism. **The Institute for Religious and Cultural Diversity** received our support with emphasis on their annual religious diversity forum whose theme this year was "Spirituality and Healthcare". Beyond tithing, our Society participated in this year's event through Q & A discussions with forum participants and a table for the distribution of the Christian Science textbook and other literature.



Photos from Ngochoni Petals of Africa School, one of our outreach projects. Left: students greeting visitors. Right: students busy marking the next week's Bible Lesson.

Locally, we tithed to **CARE (Capistrano Animal Rescue Effort)**. CARE representatives shared their mission, dreams and challenges with us prior to a Wednesday evening testimony meeting and joined us to hear that night's readings which were devoted to "Praying for our pets". The evening was filled with inspiring healings and proofs of Love's care for all of God's creatures.

The Albert Baker Fund another of our tithing recipients, continues its important work in providing financial assistance to those seeking a wide array of educational opportunities. They are currently expanding their reach to other continents, including Africa. We are blessed to have one of our members chair the Fund and keep us informed of their activities and progress.

As we approach the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons, we will again **focus on the needs of families in our local community** and the organizations that serve them.

Ongoing outreach projects have our continued commitment to prayer and financial support. One of our members is actively involved in the work of enlightening the world on **what is happening in Burma** to the ethnic tribes being forced to flee their own country. This year we have

helped to purchase communication systems that are allowing the world to hear the real story of what is not reaching the outside world. We are updated periodically on both the challenges and progress and how we might focus our prayers for the Karen tribes and others facing oppression. During periodic visits to the region, our contact in Burma has attended our services via conference call and shared with us examples of **progress and the visible power of prayer**.

A unique opportunity this year resulted in our collaboration with the local Catholic church in supplying goal posts for a **community soccer field** used by local Hispanic teams. And once again, 22 participants from our Sunday School and church will **build a home in Tijuana, Mexico though the Homes of Hope project** (see photos, page 1 & 4). Materials and furnishings were donated by our Society and the labor supplied by this volunteer work force.

Because we strive to demonstrate a true "**church without walls**", our outreach has extended far beyond our local community and has including financial contributions to our local **Christian Science Nursing Facility**... a donation to the post-Katrina

building efforts of a **Christian Science church in New Orleans**... financial assistance to an **informal Christian Science group** starting up services in the **San Fernando Valley**..., to the jointly sponsored **Christian Science Reading Room in Houston, Texas**, struggling to stay open, we offered matching fund support... we provided underwriting for the recent **Youth Summit** held at UCLA... and **scholarships** opportunities for our Sunday School students wishing to attend camp or participate in other **Christian Science youth activities**.... And this year a **benevolent fund** was established to meet immediate needs.

By far our largest outreach effort continues to be the **Ngochoni Petals of Africa School in Kenya** (see photo above). We continue to actively pray in support of the growth and important work going on in this elementary school run by Christian Scientists several continents away. Our Society sponsored a **benefit concert featuring Julia Wade, soloist of The Mother Church** (see photo, page 5). The sold out event brought together Christian Scientists and guests from throughout Southern California to enjoy a spiritual

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Expressions of gratitude

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website. I love that you have readings from your Wednesday nights listed and I found one that was particularly good for me at the moment and printed it out.

I love that you are not bound but rather enhanced by the rules in the *Church Manual*, that you are flexible and your love of community screams out loud and clear. May we all strive towards the same goal... You make me excited about being a Christian Scientist! — *from a transplanted American living in Sydney, Australia, the last 25 years.*

I am immensely grateful for the harmony that is being reestablished in my life through the study of Christian Science. My life had been plagued with conflict and confusion. But this veil is being lifted right before my eyes. Through the study of Christian Science, I have learned that I can trust in God. God is Mind, all knowing. God is Love, all loving. God is Spirit, everywhere. I've learned that God's idea, His creation has structure, organization, purpose, harmony, beauty. Relationships have improved; a deeper appreciation for life and awareness of good has been gained. I am so grateful to Mary Baker Eddy for writing *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, to Christ Jesus, our Way Shower and God because

God's love is comfort and strength, guiding us in the right direction one step at a time.

This year I've been reminded of the humility that active engagement in church brings. We may come with one idea about what we should do, or what activities church should be involved with, but the spiritual idea of Church will uplift and redeem those thoughts and actions into something much better and more God-like, and more truly useful to humanity. It's a powerful force, and it has nothing to do with a group of people who gather in San Juan Capistrano... it's a universal idea.

Since we have joined SJCCSS spiritual progress has been made evident in our daily lives. Besides physical healing, we've had a complete turn around in our business. We needed a new business model as what we were doing had little future and was not profitable. We needed a match with what we could bring to a company and a product we needed and could respect. About the time we joined the Society we dismantled the existing business structure radically and began work with another company that fulfilled the needed match. It provided every detail of what we had only dreamed of establishing. Our income changed from a very large deficit to a very big profit while we are able to bring

people happiness with what is produced and taught. Best of all has been the joy in our new work opportunity with spiritual growth through exposure to Mrs. Eddy's relating of Christ's teachings.

This church is like a loving family and being a part of it has renewed my joy for church attendance and participation. And most of all, it has inspired and encouraged me to grow spiritually day by day. What a great church giving us constantly new ways to pray!... it is a breath of fresh air!

This has been a year of learning patience and more skill in listening to what God is really trying to tell me. As a result, I've had healings of some things I didn't even know needed healing. I've learned anew that our Society is love, healing, friendship, family, and working together. And hugs.

As a husband, father, businessman and individual, church provides a foundational rock which standing upon allows me to see more clearly the guarding and guiding necessary in daily life. I am truly thankful, for without church, and each of the members making it a whole, each of these offices I hold would be overwhelming.

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Expressions of gratitude

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I live far away from church geographically. But miles have proved no obstacle to a full church experience.

I find the closer I grow to our Parent, the closer I feel to my church brothers and sisters. How could I not?

As a result, the occasional rumblings of internal strife within our little SJC family — which I sometimes picked up via phone and email conversations — have become less and less "real" to me. In fact, they've become "unreal" to me, if you wanna know the truth!

Like the bang of thunder, the flash of lightening and the downpour of rain, all of which make way for sunshine and calm, so have the anxious feelings I had in response to these church conflicts faded into oblivion.

Am I grateful that the storm in my thought about church has stilled? You betcha!

Recently I've been thinking about how God calls on each of us to do whatever it is our duty to do. I was

reminded that the word "vocation" means "one's calling" — what one is called by God to do. I found a beautiful quote, which I think sums up what we at SJC are all about, individually and collectively, as we come together in the physical church or on the phone church, or on the Skype church — as we bring church wherever we go and as we find church wherever we are. The quote is by Frederick Buechner, author of *Wishful Thinking: A Seeker's ABC*: "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."

How wonderful it is to have found a church family! In all my years studying Christian Science I have often been isolated from other students because of my geographical location. In the San Juan Society I am enjoying the companionship of like minded individuals who deeply and sincerely desire spiritual growth. It is a joy and a blessing to come together

with them at our meetings and other events, working for the community. With thanks and blessings to all.

My gratitude is running over, as you would say, "My cup is running over". Music is the rhythm of Soul, which is one thing I am grateful for. This church experience has given me a sense of Soul, harmony, and peaceful feeling of belonging to a wonderful church family. I have seen many wonderful healings.

My wife and I have appreciated the friendly and relaxed church atmosphere this year as well as the variety of music that brings the service "to life!" We find that church provides a place where we can come to renew our spiritual awareness and growth in a wonderful, supportive atmosphere!

The San Juan Capistrano Society gave me a chance to read for awhile as Second Reader. Before reading, I had never really understood how Readers prepare for the preceding Sunday Service. Each day is filled with preparation for it and searching for the correct meaning of the Bible text including *Science and Health* — seeking the meaning that heals. Truly, I was learning.

During church participation, I learned to be less judgmental and opinionated. I learned not to judge my fellow church members

from what I thought they as Christian Scientists should say and do. I watched their sincerity in dealing with other members and their healings of all kinds. Somewhere along the years, I began to Love them more, respect their opinions and cares. I am saying that I have improved along these lines and seek to learn more. San Juan Capistrano Society has been to me an invaluable learning experience.

"The loveliness of Love is all around"

Warm friendship and joy is our sound!

My appreciation as a member of the San Juan Society

Is boundless as we express no impropriety!

Our attitude of outreach and unconditional love Expresses qualities not from below but from above!

Three cheers for our church without walls

"Come join us for fellowship" daily it calls.

I have received many blessings from my participation in the CS Society of San Juan. The joy and love that is expressed has a very healing atmosphere. The wonderful workshops have demonstrated to me how business meetings can be harmonious and problems resolved. The Metaphysical Workshops have given me inspiration and helped in healing situations that arise with family and

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Youth and chaperones from the Society gather around the home they built as part of the Homes of Hope project.

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anyone that comes to me for healing. There is a wonderful feeling of unity and love in these workshops.

Thank you, SJC, for loving so much that you've provided the telephone call in. Many Wednesday evenings and Sundays, I have been able to call in from remote Indian reservations and could just feel the love and support.

Many thanks to the members of this Society who served as the catalysts for propelling me into a deep spiritual study during the last half of this year. Having the opportunity to engage in this research has resulted in untold blessings for me, my family, my friends and my world.

I've grown in appreciation of my fellow church workers and their incredible devotion, dedication, perseverance, talent, and divine energy.

My daughter, has used the keys of DiscoveryBound, the CS youth group, to open new doors this year. When the fires broke out this year, her first request was that we read the Lesson aloud. She is making Christian Science her own and this is a wonderful development to see!

From one of our dear friends who is presently incarcerated:

I have something to share with you all. When they announced new members joining The Mother Church in June of this year, I was one of them. It has already been such a blessing, knowing my connection with my larger church family.

I do so much look forward to Class instruction. It's already my privilege to pray for those needing support and there have been several beautiful demonstrations just in the last couple of months. God is so good, only good!

I'm using this "free" semester to focus on my studies in *Science and Health*. The weekly Bible Lessons just amaze me, how the Truth is so profoundly opened up for us.

I now understand what dear ones would mean in testimony meetings when they'd say their gratitude was boundless. It's truly beyond words. My love to you, our growing church family.

I am — or have been until recently — one of the "unchurched."

My work commitments involve significant travel across North America, around 50% of the time. Any "conventional" church membership participation has always been restricted and interrupted.

I've found with this society that I have been able to attend and participate regu-



The Society sponsored a benefit concert featuring Julia Wade, soloist of The Mother Church.

larly, and feel a great sense of continuity in my church experience. My being at a distance, and in different locations, has not kept me from serving, participating, being involved in church. I've been given opportunities to serve in ways I can, and love the ability to do so regardless of where I am.

I am so grateful for the efforts of this society to make this type of participation possible, to make this a "church without walls."

Both of us are enormously grateful to the Christian Science Society of San Juan Capistrano for the unconditional love expressed by its members and attendees. It is not easy to put into words the warmth and genuine caring that is abundantly expressed. Mrs. Eddy's hymn, "Mother's Evening Prayer," especially comes to mind with her words in the second stanza of: "*His habitation high is here, and nigh, His arm encircles me, and mine, and all.*" This inclusion is what is felt. Also another

part that is very meaningful to us is the joyous music and insertion of other songs and renditions in the services — broadening our horizons — or lifting our musical perspectives. Lastly, the ongoing community outreach and beyond is inspiring and makes us aware of others in need and what we can do for them. It shows us that we are all together in the one family of God.

*Christmas in
San Juan
Capistrano*

**Join us for a
celebration of
Christmas...**

**Wednesday
December 19 at 7:30 pm**
our traditional candlelight
service presented by the
Sunday School students

**Sunday
December 23 at 10:00 am**
a service filled with special
holiday music and guest
musicians.

Growth and progress...

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feast of beautiful music and the inspiring story of progress at Petals. Funds raised from the concert, coupled with a contribution from our church, are helping to build classrooms, aid teachers' salaries, purchase land, install solar panels and provide financial aid to students.

Also far across the globe, we continue to send quarterly **care packages to our soldiers serving in the Middle East**, accompanied by letters of gratitude and encouragement from our individual members.

Closer to home, we sponsored a booth at the local **Swallows Day Mercado** (see photo below), sharing CS literature in English and Spanish beneath a banner proclaiming "God is Love!" And we also participated at a "Spiritual Diversity Day" sponsored by the University of California at Irvine, sharing literature and answering questions.

We continue to supply literature for one of our members who shares it throughout native American reservations in Arizona and New Mexico and often calls in to our services during her visits to these tribes.

Our outreach this year appears to have doubled our last year's giving, thanks in part to the generosity of several churches that have disbanded and shared with us their abundance for the purpose of blessing mankind.

We have continued to make our facility available to two interdenominational **Spanish Bible Study groups** each week and are also keeping the Spanish language activity in our Ready Room alive.

With much gratitude to those who have shared so generously, we have acquired additional space in our facility for our five Sunday School classes, allowing us to expand our assembly room used for services and meetings. More walls will soon be tumbling down!



Staffed with happy faces — our booth at the Swallows Day Mercado

A Church Without Walls...

If you cannot make it in person to church services and workshops, you may still attend via telephone!

Join in any of our services by conference call:
1-712-580-8020 and then enter the access code **12111#**.

You are always welcome!

Sunday Church Services and Sunday School are held at 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday Testimony Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m.

Child care is available for the very young.

All are welcome with open arms!

We invite you to join us at 10 a.m., Thanksgiving morning for a service filled with prayer, gratitude, song and praise.