

May 31, 2007

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kingdom causes



Al hambra



Church Pastor of the month:

This month we recognize Pastor Vern Ermeling of Emmaus Lutheran Church. Pastor Vern also serves as a Chaplain with the Alhambra Police Department.

Both Vern and his wife Kathy (certified grief support facilitator) are people of God's hope and mercy. No matter who Vern is talking with, it is apparent that Pastor Vern has great hope in the Lord. As he comforts people facing loss, death and challenging times, he readily points people to the hope we have in Jesus. He is convinced that hope in God is the best thing he can offer, especially in times of pain and crisis.

If he isn't at Emmaus Lutheran Church, he can be found in his second office: Lovebird's Café where he is a regular fixture.



Our MISSION is to be catalysts that inspire, connect and mobilize people toward personal and community transformation by bringing God's hope, love and shalom to all in the city of Alhambra.

Our VISION is to see Alhambra transformed as God's people live out the Great Commission in Alhambra and as people of good faith and people of good will work together for city transformation; to see God's Kingdom come to Alhambra as it is in Heaven.

Inspiring people to pray for Alhambra, to have a Kingdom paradigm and to share stories of what God is doing in Alhambra

We pray together "God's Kingdom come, God's will be done in Alhambra as it is in Heaven" Matthew 6:10.

Pray 4 Alhambra May 2007 Prayer focus:

Alhambra Pastors/Churches

Prayer points are distributed to every Alhambra Church monthly in English, Chinese & Spanish. **Monthly prayer points are available @ www.kingdomcauses.org**



Alhambra Fact of the Month:

Currently the Alhambra faith community is collaborating for emergency preparedness. The emergency preparedness task force of the faith community meets monthly to prepare facilities and church members for emergencies, providing training and education. The main focus is to be the presence of God's hope in times of crisis, to bring about a sense of peace and hope throughout the stages of life and this is especially needed in times of crisis. Our ability to survive and overcome tragedy is greatly influenced by our perspective and sense of hope. The faith community through history has been a place of comfort and hope (i.e. 9/11, 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake/tsunami, Hurricane Katrina, etc.) Currently 12 churches are participating in this task force. If you are interested in getting involved in the ministry of God's hope and presence, please see our webpage: <http://kingdomcauses.org/220725.html>



HOPE

If you lose hope, somehow you lose the vitality that keeps life moving, you lose that courage to be, that quality that helps you go on in spite of it all. And so today I still have a dream.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

Hope—is something we strive to have or want to have more of. Without hope, life seems directionless and disconnected. Hope is what bridges the gap to where we are, from where we have come from, to where we are going. It is about possibilities, dreams and transformation. Hope is made possible by the cross. The sacrifice of Jesus, his death and resurrection makes our hope real and sure. Only He was able to bring hope and life through His death. Suffering, death and loss was not the end of the story. Jesus proved that He was our ultimate hope; that God has something better for us.

At the beginning of May a tragedy struck Alhambra. A high school sophomore at Alhambra High School took his own life. This young man seemingly had so much love and good in his life. He had a family who adored him, friends who wanted to be like him and a bright future ahead of him. His suicide leaves us with more questions than answers. Suicide compounds the grief of death because we don't know why this had to happen to him. We watched as over 800 people poured into Bethany Church of Alhambra to remember this young man's life. City Councilpersons, YMCA Board members, School District representatives, Alhambra PD, Pasadena PD and LA Sheriff's personnel, local pastors, school teachers, school crisis counselors, youth pastors and countless numbers of students all attended. It was amazing to see the community come together, to collectively grieve and seek God's hope, each playing their role, together caring for one another. Chaplain Bob (Pasadena PD), Chaplains Phil and Mary co-officiated this service. Father Bob offered a profound message about death and life. In John 12, Jesus speaks of his imminent death. He said unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. This is the hope we can find in death. We can learn from death and loss and choose life. Wheat stalks were given to the family and those present as a symbol and reminder for us to allow God to bring life out of death and loss. We stood in solidarity and held hands as a sign that we would not let death have the final word. God will bring life out of this tragedy.

HOPE—this is what we offer when we don't understand, when we don't have the answers, when we know that God alone can help us. HOPE is not an individual possession but something shared by the community. This death was a tragedy, but God brings us HOPE in the midst of such loss; hope that from death can come life. How are we symbols of God's hope in Alhambra?

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Connecting the Church and engaging the Church and City



Did you know that Alhambra Police Department has a chaplain program? Pastors Jim, Vern, Phil & Mary all serve as Alhambra PD Chaplains. The current chaplain program was established in 2001. The chaplain program is a way for the faith community and the PD to be connected and partnered for the good of the community. Chaplains are spiritual representatives available to the PD and the community at large. The chaplain's first commitment is to the members of the PD, to care for them and

to be ministers of God's peace, hope and presence. It is not so much about what a chaplain says but what a chaplain does. Presence ministry, being there, is the work of a chaplain. Other responsibilities include: performing weddings, funerals, death notifications, providing counseling and prayer. The chaplains do regular ride-alongs & participate in PD special functions/events. The chaplains initiated the annual PD appreciation service/BBQ in 2004.

Prayer Requests:



Please pray for the Kingdom Causes Alhambra Board: Winnie, Debbie, Gisella, Khiem, Nestor, Richard and Dennis.

Please pray for a unified prayer movement for Alhambra.

Please pray part-time intern and admin assistant volunteers to help with the work of Kingdom Causes Alhambra. They are needed ASAP.

Please pray for upcoming Alhambra City forums on emergency preparedness June 5, 6, 7—for the city to participate.

Please pray for the Alhambra Pastors who meet monthly for prayer—please pray for God's protection, encouragement and blessings upon them.

Please pray for prayer and financial partners: for an expanded ownership of God's work in Alhambra.

Upcoming Events and Opportunities to Serve

• **Alhambra Day @ LA Dodgers Game** at Dodger Stadium. (LA Dodgers vs. Colorado Rockies) on Friday, August 17th 7:30 pm. Limited tickets available!! To purchase tickets: email Mary: mary@kingdomcauses.org Tickets \$10/each with part of proceeds benefiting the Heart Institute - Children's Hospital Los Angeles. Cash or check accepted (made payable to Alhambra Chamber of Commerce).

• **You don't want to miss out on this summer's.....**

Family Nights:

1st Baptist Church —a Wednesday night summer session for families to learn and play together starting June 21st.

Vacation Bible Schools (VBS):

Sage Granada Park United Methodist Church 6/23-24, 3-6 pm

Chinese Bible Missions Church 6/25-6/29, 9:30-3:30 pm

St. Therese Catholic Church 7/30-8/3

Alhambra True Light Presbyterian Church 7/30-8/3, 9:15-12:30 pm

Youth Camps/Training:

Sunrise Christian Community 6/18-6/30

To volunteer, pray for or sign up children/youth, please find churches contact info at www.kingdomcauses.org—click on *connecting to churches*

Ministry Advancement Funds. God is bringing together people of good faith and people of good will to bring about His Kingdom purposes in Alhambra. We are excited to serve that cause. Kingdom Causes Alhambra is responsible for raising ministry advancement funds for the work here including staff salaries and local program funds. The monthly budget is \$4,998. With individuals, local churches (ATLPC, Chinese Bible Missions Church, Emmaus Lutheran Church, 1st Baptist Church and 1st Methodist Foundation) and businesses we have on the team already, we are at \$3,395/month. We are fully operational but not fully funded yet. *Would you please prayerfully consider joining the monthly partner/support team? Thank you!*



\$4,998

\$3,395



Contact info:

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Kingdom Causes is a registered 501 (c) (3) non-profit community mobilizing organization.

Mobilizing people around key Kingdom issues

Task Forces:

1. **Emergency Preparedness of the Faith Community**—this taskforce began in January and has grown to almost 20 churches represented. Pastor Phil Hilliard (Bethany Church) and Mary Glenn are the co-leaders. We are working to partner together to bring God's hope and peace in day to day times and in crisis. If you are interested in being involved with this task force, please contact us. We meet the last Sunday afternoon monthly at Bethany Church.

What will you do in an emergency? Come to the Alhambra City Forum on Emergency Preparedness June 5, 6 and 7th. This forum will encourage you in your own preparation and provide information on what the city and its' partners are doing to prepare. The faith community will be sharing what it is doing in regards to this. You are invited to come to this city wide event taking place at Alhambra City Hall (Council Chambers) 111 S. First Street from 6:30-8:30 pm. Please see web page for more info: <http://kingdomcauses.org/220725.html>

2. **Youth**—BELIEVE is a mentoring program for at risk students. The directors: John Lewis (UYWI) and Mary Glenn are working with the PD to provide alternatives to the court system for first time offending high school students and for at-risk students. We are currently reviewing mentor applications and will begin mentor training soon. If you are interested in being a part of the work with Alhambra youth, please contact us.
3. **Mental Health**—Dr. Christine Wong leads this task force of gifted mental health professionals. They are currently working on ways to encourage, support and equip/resource the churches in the area of mental health. On 5/31 the task force team will be meeting with Alhambra church pastors/leaders for the purpose of sharing mental health resources among the Alhambra faith community.

If you are interested in volunteering for upcoming events/programs, please contact the Kingdom Causes Alhambra offices. We need representatives from the community to be part of these task forces, collaborating for Alhambra! Together we can partner for God's Kingdom Causes! If you see a need in the community, an area that needs to be looked at, please let us now and let's work together!

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is being sure of what we **hope** for and certain of what we do not see.