

PRESS RELEASE

**CONTACT: LYN WALKER
DIRECTOR, PUBLIC RELATIONS
408-246-6790 EXT. 210**

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BETHEL CHURCH OF SAN JOSE ANSWERS MAYOR REED'S CALL TO HELP CLEAN UP SAN JOSE DURING ITS 40 DAYS OF COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN

MARCH 15- The timing couldn't be better for Bethel Church of San Jose (Bethel) to launch its 40 Days of Community campaign. Mayor Chuck Reed made a passionate request for help in painting over the City's graffiti, unaware Bethel was already planning to do so during its up coming Community Day. The campaign officially began Sunday, February 10th. Its Bethel's way of letting the community know they care and they're more than just a "Sunday-go-to-meeting-church." Bethel sees it as a positive step of action and involvement in the community.

According to Sr. Pastor Bret Allen community is the best solution for loneliness, fatigue and despair. "Launching 40 Days of Community is almost revolutionary in our self-serving cultural," Allen said. "I hope after this experience we have a deeper sense of community and a deeper vitality of relationships outside of the church", Allen added.

Matt Blankenship, pastor of Youth Ministries is heading up the project. Blankenship explained how at first it was very difficult to give away free services. "When we first went around to individual homes offering free home repair many refused our help," Blankenship said.

Leery homeowners in the area couldn't understand why a church like Bethel would be interested in giving "no strings attached" assistance for free. When attempts on their own failed Blankenship enlisted the help of the San Jose City Council "Once we put the word out that we were looking for community projects to get involved with things began to snowball," Blankenship said.

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BETHEL'S 40 DAYS OF COMMUNITY

Bethel is located in the district of Councilmember Pete Constant, who was delighted to help out. "This is yet another example of Bethel Church's commitment to the residents of San José. I truly appreciate the heart for service that inspires their members to look beyond the church walls to the needs of the community," Constant said.

Along with the project from the City, Bethel is helping out another organization very dear to its heart, Teen Challenge. Teen Challenge, a worldwide organization, possesses one of the most effective programs for drugs and substance abusers.

As an outreach Bethel has agreed to paint the Asbury House. Located in San José, the Asbury Family Center is a rehabilitation center where children can stay with their parents during their parent's rehabilitation. This facility houses 13 families and is the only Teen Challenge Family Center in the nation where children do not have to go into foster care while their parents go through the program.

Joe Cook, the South Bay Director for Teen Challenge was very thrilled to be a part of Bethel's community effort. Cook believes community involvement gives the students additional support while going through the program. "This undertaking will be a huge morale boost for those living at the center," Cook said. "The fact remains that we need the help of the community and volunteers to really make the kind of difference that those in need of our services deserve. We're thankful to all who give of their time and resources, these are investments into real lives and make a real difference," Cook added.

Each Sunday Pastor Allen has taught on various facets of community responsibility and involvement, but on March 15th, Bethel parishioners will have the opportunity to put feet to the practical teachings on Community Day.

Bethel's Community Day will consist of three outreaches on Saturday, March 15.

Teen Challenge Family Center Work Project (painting)

Teen Challenge Vacation Bible School (VBS for the children)

Location: Asbury Family Center

444 N. 26th St.

San Jose, CA

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

San Jose Graffiti and Trash Clean-up

Location: Winchester Blvd.

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Other 40 Days of Community outreaches that took place in February were a free puppet show and lunch featuring Tony Borders, and a Club Kangaroo "Parents Night Out" for parents of special needs children.

For more information about any of these activities, or to sign up to volunteer log onto www.bethel.org or call 408 246-6790.

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