

## California Visits-Part I--Vol. 8, No. 44

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Thursday last week Linda and I flew to "The Golden State" to attend a meeting of our churches in Wheatland, CA. They hold a business meeting every other June, but in the interim they get together every quarter for worship and fellowship. This is quite a commitment as it's 600 miles or a ten hour drive between the northern and southern churches. We couldn't make the summer meeting due to other commitments, so we promised to attend the fall gathering.

As noted in an earlier eNews the Churches of God, General Conference (CGGC) congregations in California originated in the migrations of the 1930 and 1940s which John Steinbeck immortalized in The Grapes of Wrath. Many people from CGGC congregations in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and the Midwest made the journey west in hopes of employment and a better life. I vividly recall the stories Ira (He died last November 11.) and Pauline Burns told about those times. They pastored the Wheatland Church where their son John and grandson Michael now serve.



Dining al fresco at Lucca's

We arrived in Sacramento a day early and decided to play tourists with the extra time. Thursday afternoon and evening we walked about the neighborhood of our hotel and found a great restaurant called Lucca <http://www.luccarestaurant.com/> not two blocks away.



An example of Lucca's fine fare

We also checked out the old governor's mansion with wonderful botanicals all around. The nearby Convention Center was also quite impressive (pictured below).



The historic governor's mansion



That evening we drove across town to Gunther's <http://www.gunthersicecream.com/> which is an ice cream shop not unlike Dietsch Brothers in Findlay, Ohio, but dare I say it, better. Given the 1960s ambiance it made us feel like young people out on a date, which we were at least nostalgically.

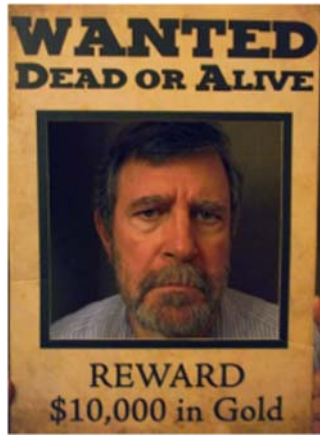


Ed's triple dip sundae



At Gunther's





The CGGC's Most Wanted?

Friday we drove 33 miles northeast of the capital on route 80 to check out the gold fields in Auburn. Not that we expected to find any, but one never knows. We stopped first at the Placer County courthouse which houses a museum telling the story of the community from prehistoric times to the present. It's a first rate exhibit with many notable features including 94 ounces of raw gold (flakes, nuggets, ore samples, etc.) on display (pictured below).



Museum exhibit

We got a tragic taste of the old west when a pair of desperados killed a policeman in Sacramento and then fled to Auburn that day. The shooter was finally caught, but not before killing a second officer and wounding a third officer and a civilian. Frankly, we were glad to get out of town.



The Placer County Courthouse

We drove to Roseville and checked into the hotel before heading over to Wheatland for dinner at the church. It was like a grand reunion as we hadn't seen most of the people since 2012. The meetings began at 7 with congregational singing, special music, and a message by John Burns on



being true to the word of God and faithful in service.



A group from the Manteca Church shares special music



The ordination service (l to r): Michael Hopper, Michael Burns, and John Burns

As part of the service the Eldership ordained Michael Burns (John and Anita's son) and Michael Hopper into the Gospel ministry. I was honored to offer the dedicatory prayer. After the service everyone adjourned to the fellowship hall for cake and drinks.



Prayer for the ordinands

To start the day on Saturday the Wheatland folks served everybody a farmer's breakfast which included pancakes, bacon, sausage, toast, fruit, scrambled eggs, sticky buns, and more.



Brad Taylor leads devotions

The session began with singing followed with devotions led by Brad Taylor from the Farmersville Church. I gave a report on CGGC ministries, highlighting the work around the world. I thanked everyone for their support, and circulated a brochure of staff services available through the General Conference office. After a break several of the churches shared in special music individually and as groups. Ryan Cooney preached for the assembly to close out the morning.



Ryan Cooney gives the closing message



Special music from a Hispanic group

The Wheatland Church served everybody one last time for lunch. The food was plentiful and the dessert table irresistible.



Saturday afternoon and evening we spent at our hotel catching up on our reading, emails, and sleep.

ONe Mission together,  
Ed  
*Soli Deo Gloria!*

**California Visits - Part II** (Next week)

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## **Rob Warren to Speak on Reaching the Post-Christian Generation at GLC Gathering**

Rob Warren, a pastor at the h2o church which ministers to students at Bowling Green State University, will be sharing on reaching the post-Christian generation on November 22 at the Christian Ministry Center in Findlay, OH. [Click here for a registration brochure.](#)

