



# 2019 Church Leadership Candidates

(Alphabetical order by first name)

## 2019 Board Candidates

### ALI HEDGPETH

*Spouse:* Glenn Hedgpeth  
*Occupation:* Full Time Seminary Student, Fuller Theological Seminary (Graduation: 2019)  
*WACC Member:* Since 2010

From my earliest memories, I always had faith in God and an awareness of His presence, as well as a belief in the Gospel. However, it was not until my early twenties that I had a personal encounter with Jesus, understood the depth of my need for a Savior, and was confronted with the radical love of God as displayed through the Cross of Christ.



I have served as a small group leader and taught WACC's The Well Bible study for the past eight years. Further, God has called me into full time ministry and I have followed that call by pursuing formal seminary education with a focus on recovery and spiritual formation. My husband and I are both deeply invested in the flourishing of this city, most importantly those living in the margins. Lastly, I am a mother of four busy and beautiful children, which has given me perspective on the unique spiritual needs of the family in our present cultural context.

I believe God is redeeming, restoring, and liberating lives and relationships here at WACC through Jesus. People are experiencing true belonging, which allows vulnerability and true healing and transformation. This God graced freedom, love, and belonging mobilizes us to go out into the community in the Spirit of God, bringing Jesus to people and people to Jesus. I see WACC becoming a safe haven for all, where people encounter Jesus and lay their burdens down to enter into new life.

## **EDUARDO SUASTEGUI**

*Spouse:* Patricia Suastegui  
*Occupation:* Senior Systems Engineer, Aerospace Corporation, FFRDC  
*WACC Member:* Since 2005

Christ met me and saved me when I was twelve years old, and I was baptized at the age of twelve.

At my prior church, I served in the Trustees board, where I oversaw maintenance and upgrades to the alarm system, and I also served on the board of Deacons. After a constitutional update to church board structure, I chaired the Nomination committee for two years and served multiple terms on the Church board, with one term as board secretary. In my professional career, I have also engaged in and led efforts to meet challenging technical problems and resolve project execution issues. Here at WACC, I have on occasion taught adult Sunday School, and I have led a community group.



At WACC, God is building up His people through passionate worship, practical preaching, life-changing community groups, and vibrant children’s and youth ministries. WACC also generously impacts our community, and reaches to the ends of the world through our missionary work and support. With Like Never Before, WACC now stands on the threshold of a new era rich in opportunity, challenge, and fulfillment. It has been exciting and humbling for me to see how God’s people have stepped out in Faith to jointly make Like Never Before a reality as their Lord moves and empowers them. I look forward to the blessings and miracles God will bring to us through this transformational period.

## **GARY CATES**

*Spouse:* Carol Cates  
*Occupation:* Certified Public Accountant, Partner at LSL CPAs and Advisors  
*WACC Member:* Since 1996



I received Jesus as my Savior and was baptized at age 12. I rededicated my life to Christ in 1986 at age 34 as member of Hacienda Heights Baptist Church.

My qualifications include that I was the managing partner of Vilmure, Peeler & Boucher CPAs from 1994 to 2013. I have over 44 years

experience as a CPA working with individuals and small businesses in the tax, accounting, and business advisory areas. I have served on the finance committee at WACC for 11 years. I'm involved in a men's small group, community group, and men's ministry.

God has blessed WACC with amazing resources; both financially and with gifted staff. We must continue to be good stewards of what God has given us to use for His glory. My desire is to serve God in a leadership role as WACC expands its outreach in our community and around the world. I believe God will continue to change lives through WACC as we remain committed to our mission to bring Jesus to people and people to Jesus.

## **LISA BARNES**

*Spouse:* Kirk Barnes

*Occupation:* Academic Intervention Specialist/Teacher, La Serna High School

*WACC Member:* Since 1994

I have attended WACC since I was a toddler, and have always had a deep love for God's church and for His people. As I grew, my love for being a Christ follower began to deepen. I saw the need to live and love missionally. Through my small group, and Rooted, I have grown to be even more aware for how God uses a small community of Christ followers to help us learn to confess, grow, pray, love and serve others more like Christ did.



I have served previously on our Church Board and search teams (Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor, High School Pastor, Special Needs Director). I currently serve on the Community Engagement Liaison team and on the Missions Administrative Team. My current involvement includes Creative Arts, Women's Ministry, Local and Global Engagement.

The current focus on "Like Never Before" excites me as I think of the vision of building both literally and spiritually on our strong foundation so that more people would know Christ and have a place to be encouraged, healed, equipped and sent out to live and love like Jesus. The church is growing, and people are joining small groups, serving, and pursuing opportunities to be trained to serve in this area and in other countries. I believe that through prayer, increased dependence on God, a heightened awareness to his Word, and guidance of His Spirit, we will truly see a time "like never before" in our church's history.

## 2019 Nominating Committee Candidates

### **BARRY CHARTIER**

*Spouse:* Sheri Chartier

*WACC Member:* Since 2000



At the age of fourteen, during a church service, I realized my need to take Jesus Christ as my personal Savior. I have been a Christian for sixty years. I have served on the Missionary Administrative Team and Short Term Missions Team for more than fifteen years. I have led several missions trips to the Bahamas and Mexico.

I am happy with the direction WACC is going. As WACC continues to reach out to every segment of society and the world, and build up the Christians they have contact with, I will support WACC.

### **COURTNEY BUSHYEAGER**

*Spouse:* Matthew Bushyeager

*Occupation:* Teacher, Glen A. Wilson High School

*WACC Member:* Since 2017

I began my faith journey at WACC in fifth grade. I was blessed by many Sunday school teachers and youth leaders who allowed me to ask questions and explore what it meant to be a follower of God. I made the decision to follow God at Sugarpine Christian Camp as an eighth grader.

I've had many opportunities inside and outside of the church that have allowed me to develop my skills as a leader. WACC has provided many outlets from youth sports, youth ministry, missions, and worship ministry. Through these different avenues, I've been a part of outreach, worked behind the



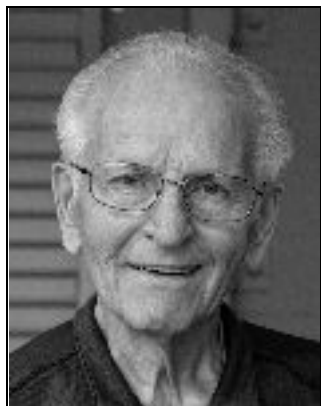
scenes, and worked alongside others to reach the people of our community. I'm also a high school teacher. Each role I've taken has shaped me for the better, and has given me skills to do my best and do it with the best intentions.

As I've been at WACC most my life, I've seen firsthand how God has blessed the lives of people in and around the community, as well as the lives of other across the world. I believe that God always has and always will use WACC for the better. As he continues to use this church, we need to trust that he will provide as we step out and further his kingdom.

## **CURT FAUTH**

*Spouse:* Zelda Fauth

*WACC Member:* Since 1984



I grew up attending a country church. It was at an “old-fashioned” revival meeting when I, during the altar call, accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Savior. I have walked with Him for 75 years.

I was on Pastoral staff at WACC for more than 23 years as Christian Education pastor, then the Care pastor and pastor to Seniors. I was also heavily involved in a men’s small group ministry called “Top Gun” and led several groups through the curriculum for a six-year period. I mentored several younger men throughout my tenure. Prior to church ministry I was in public education as a Math teacher, Counselor and Administrative Vice-Principal.

I am excited about what God has in store for WACC’S future. In our large congregation, small groups, all sizes and shapes, are the only way to go. I’m glad the Church Board and Pastoral Staff are both very supportive of this direction. I’m so appreciative that our church is active within our community and our world, sharing their generosity beyond the church walls. I’m very excited about the re-launching of men’s ministry. We have a strong pulpit ministry and am grateful that Pastor John is at the helm.

## DENISE WATKINS

*Spouse:* Hugh Watkins

*WACC Member:* Since 2001

I was raised in a Christian family so I always believed in and worship Jesus all of my life. I was baptized when I was twelve.

Currently, I co-lead Women in Fellowship (Sunday class), The Well Bible study, is Food Coordinator for Alpha, is part of the prayer team, and is a chaplain for WACC. In the past, I have conducted Bible study in my home. Prior to retiring, I supervised many individuals, making sure programs ran smoothly.



I see WACC touching many people, leading people to Jesus and teaching what our purpose is. We are here to worship God and be the hands and feet of Jesus. I love seeing the diversity in our church. God is for all regardless of your background or past sinful life. This is what I see at our church.

## EDD ELLER

*Spouse:* Ginnie Eller

*Occupation:* Sales-Commercial Flooring, CG Flooring

*WACC Member:* Since 2003



I was raised in a Christian household, and accepted Christ at age seven. I was baptized same time as my father, and re-professed my faith for God age 13, when I was able to truly understand what it meant.

I have experience in business management, coaching kids' sports, and maintaining a household of five. Also I've been a member of the worship team for the last fourteen years.

I see God moving through WACC. From the way people get behind the Church and are getting out into the world to make it a better

place to the cutting edge technology that seems to bring people thru the doors. I feel that WACC is a safe and loving community where people want to be involved.

## **GLEN PETERSON**

*Spouse:* Cindi Peterson  
*Occupation:* Office Director, World Relief, Southern California  
*WACC Member:* Since 2008

I began my journey to faith in Christ as a child in a Christian home with strong church support. I chose to follow Christ in believer's baptism in 1968. God has led me in my Christian walk over many years, as has been faithful through my life.



I earned a Master's of Divinity from Denver Seminary. I have participated in leadership in churches as a speaker and teacher, board member, as a catalyst to align mission and integrated programs. I have led on various committees and projects and as a consultant working with leadership executives, managers, boards, and board chairs to ensure people know how to be successful in their roles. At WACC, I have served on the nominating committee, led JobQuest Ministry, taught membership classes, assisted with the establishment of Campus Church at Whittier College, helped with music and creative arts in planning, producing and execution, sung in the choir, served as an usher, greeter, and Easter baptism coach. At World Relief, I assist churches and church leaders to initiate and improve programs to diverse populations to become involved with their communities that include refugees and other immigrants.

Whittier Area Community Church is a place where God is at work transforming people. Through those changed lives, God impacts the community and the world for good. WACC has a tremendous foundation and history upon which God builds to form a church that will reach many more people and meet the future needs of the community and others. I believe that WACC can and will rise up to the great causes of our day as an instrument of God's love and evidence of His presence in our world and community.

## JACKIE “JACK” WONG

*Spouse:* Elizabeth “Liz” Wong  
*Occupation:* Registered Nurse, Surgery Partners  
*WACC Member:* Since 1996



I was 21 years old and my best friend from college became a Christian and began to witness to me about Christ. At the same time, a co-worker, a messianic Jew, also began to witness to me. Soon, I also trusted Christ.

I taught high school Sunday school for four years. I coached youth sports at WACC for six years and have been refereeing at WACC for the past fourteen years. Professionally, I was a general manager of a small business for sixteen years.

WACC is holding to God’s mission to reach the unsaved and to care for the population in need and at risk. The church is fostering and developing in and through its members a heart for our fellow human beings. WACC gives all credit and glory to God. God is the central focus. The church nurtures and cares for its members.

## JOHN PAUL GARCIA

*Spouse:* Kimberly Garcia  
*Occupation:* Realtor, Coldwell Banker Alliance Realty  
*WACC Member:* Since 2016

I came to faith when I was around 15 years old during some changes that were going on in my family. I started attending church and have seen God working in my life.

My wife Kimberly and I joined Alpha and it touched our hearts. Once we finished, we continued in Alpha by serving as table helpers and co-leaders. After attending Alpha, Kimberly and I were asked to lead a Community Group, and have been group leaders for two years. We also facilitated two Rooted groups. Being involved and serving in these groups has helped us grow in the church, as well as have a stronger faith with God. We encourage everyone to join a small group.





I believe God is using the WACC congregation to go out and make a difference in the community. I also see God bringing WACC attendees closer by gathering in small groups and being able to get to know one another. By doing so, God is using those in small groups to go out and serve in the community and in the world. God is doing a tremendous amount of work through our church. The biggest thing I see is him working with us to give back in the Like Never Before campaign to build our new worship center so we can continue to bring Jesus to people and people to Jesus.

## **KARI KRAMER**

*Spouse:* Fred Kramer

*WACC Member:* Since 1997



I went forward at my friend's church at the age of seven to ask Jesus into my heart. Although I always knew Jesus was with me, my faith really started to grow as a freshman in college.

I have been involved in the Stephen's Ministry at WACC as well as serving as a Deaconess, Bible Study small group leader, Sunday School teacher, Discovery Days volunteer, VBS volunteer, baptism committee, FAD volunteer, Marriage Core Group Leader (with Fred), and Baptism Coach. I worked on the Malawi TIAMIKI Pediatric Clinic project, as well as taking several teams to work in Malawi thru the years. I have been on the MAT and STAT for missions. In 2017, we started a "Legacy Grandparenting Group" with 4 couples. Our goal is to raise grandparent awareness of their opportunity to bring Jesus to our grandkids and bring our grandkids to Jesus.

I see God working through WACC to empower our church members to reach out to our world and our families telling them the good news that Christ is risen indeed. Pastor John talked about impacting the lives of the next generation in the *Summer at the Movies* Series. He encouraged us to notice, remind, and challenge the next generation. As a fairly new grandmother, I was excited to have a new mission in life, to have a part in showing my little ones the Good News that God has a plan for their lives and they are loved. WACC is reaching out in new and exciting ways to reach our neighbors and friends in practical ways. Also adding in the Grandparenting component WACC is in the front lines of a nationwide movement reaching the children of our children for Christ.

## MONICA WILSON

*Spouse:* Jeff Wilson  
*Occupation:* Educator, Sage Oak Charter School  
*WACC Member:* Since 1981

I accepted the Lord as my Savior when I was 12 at a Youth Evangelical Meeting in Buffalo, New York. As a long time member of WACC, I have been involved in many ministries. My husband and I are part of a Sunday School class in which I have served in missions, socials, and prayer. For nine years, I coordinated Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study and also served on the Women's Ministry Team. Most recently, I have been part of the Community Liaisons Team with my Sharing Books Ministry, which I started four years ago to bless various people and community organizations through books.



God is moving mightily in our church, bringing many new people who want to get to know and serve Jesus. As our building project gets underway, it will be exciting to watch the Lord do more than we can ask or imagine in our congregation, in our community and in the world through the people of WACC.

## OSVALDO “OZZIE” RODRIGUEZ

*Spouse:* Rebecca Rodriguez  
*Occupation:* Physician, Kaiser Permanente  
*WACC Member:* Since 1996



As a young High School Student, I believed that being more perfect was the way to fill my God shaped hole. I strived to fill that hole with more and more achievements, being left more and more empty. During Spiritual Emphasis week at Whittier Christian High School I gave up striving and filled the emptiness with Jesus.

I have served as a Missionary for HCJB (now Reach Beyond). In that role, I was Associate Director of Medical Education, serving over the Medical Students. Although I have since left the position, I had served as the Director of Per Diem

Physicians at my medical group for several years. I have served on the WACC Board for two previous three-year terms, in addition to coordinating Bylaw changes in 2010. I am currently serving with the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 985, as the Leadership Corp Patrol Advisor and Life to Eagle Coach, helping young boys finalize their goals of becoming an Eagle Scout.

The greatest strength of WACC is our community! We are truly a family. I see God powerfully solidifying our “family” and deepening our bonds. I also see God reaching our community through the work of our local “Go” ministry. Our involvement in the world through Missions is well known to those around the world and greatly appreciated by those serving abroad. I see God using WACC as a strong support for the missionaries and missions efforts throughout the world.

**SPENCER SAHAGUN**

*Spouse:* Kristin Sahagun  
*Occupation:* District Leader, PetSmart  
*WACC Member:* Since 2003

I grew up being a believer, but did not regularly attend church. I accepted Jesus as my Savior after I began attending WACC in 2003.

I have worked in leadership for the past twenty-five years. I currently lead a team of over 600 leaders and associates. I am responsible for their growth and development, and for maintaining an overall positive work environment.

I can see the work being done to bring people to Jesus and Jesus to people. Having worked in various ministries during the last thirteen years, I have seen firsthand the impact our church and congregation has had within the community and individual lives.



## 2019 Church Auditor Candidate

### GORDON HOFFMAN

*Spouse:* Debbie Hoffman  
*Occupation:* CPA, Owner, Romberger, Wilson, & Beeson, Inc.  
*WACC Member:* Since 1987



I came to faith at age six, with help from my father, following an invitation to receive Jesus after a church service.

I have a background in accounting, auditing, and taxation for businesses, both for-profit and nonprofit, as well as for individuals. I have served as WACC's internal auditor, and as a member of the Finance and Audit Committees.

God is using WACC to reach people, all to God's glory. My experience would be helpful to assist the Church Board, staff and congregation by helping to ensure the proper stewardship of financial resources and reporting of financial information.