

# History of the Lassen Street Church of Christ

The original members first met together on September 6th, 1959 and were known as the Sepulveda Church of Christ. They came from the Winnetka congregation, the San Fernando congregation and other congregations around the area; some people seeking a more central location. The first location was at the Northridge Military Academy, a U shaped building located on the North West corner of Parthenia Street at Hayvenhurst Avenue. As of 2016, that building is still there. They met in the dining hall on the North East side. Bible classes were in a couple of classrooms across the front of the U shape building. There was a gospel meeting that first week to get things started. The guest preacher has been remembered as one of the Lovelady brothers, probably Ronny. Both Ronnie and his brother Glenn were gospel preachers at the time.

After several years, they moved to the Northridge Woman's Club building at the corner of Canby Avenue and Gresham Street. It was a white frame building which is no longer there. This building seems to be referred to by some people as the Performing Art Center. It had a stage in it and probably got that name from the stage. On February 22-25, 1962, there was a debate on the "issues" of the 1950's between Bob Melear and Hoyt Chastain on that stage; the two preachers on stage, each at a table with a podium between, and a timekeeper with a bell. This building had an outbuilding that was being used for classes. Eventually, the city informed them that the outbuilding needed to be brought up to code. Since this was too expensive and the congregation had grown to the point where more room was needed, a new building was planned.

Property was purchased at 16324 Lassen Street, Sepulveda, California (now North Hills). Since the new building was located on Lassen Street it became known as the Lassen Street Church of Christ.

This property was a farming residence with a swimming pool below the house. The farm house was to be used for the preacher residence. The swimming pool was filled in which is now below the upper parking lot. The building was built at the time when the San Fernando Valley was in the process of being developed. Many of the members were in the construction trade, so they became a source of building expertise with a lot of donated labor and materials.

The property contained a plot of land behind the house which was not needed and was sold to help finance the building, probably in 1970ish. A contractor bought that plot and split it into 2 lots. There is a block wall separating the plot from the church property.

In 1988, the outside classroom building was constructed due to the lack of sufficient classroom space for the many classes that were going on. The main source of financing for this building came from a deceased member who left a substantial amount of money to the church.

The phone number (213) 892-0533 has never changed except for the area code (818) 892-0533.

Bob Melear was the first preacher at the Northridge Military Academy and the Northridge Woman's Club. Don Wilson was the next preacher at the Northridge Woman's Club location. He continued preaching after the new building was completed.

Over the years, the church has supported as many as seven outside preachers at one time. The list of preachers would change periodically as their needs changed. This continued until June 2008 when the congregation lost a lot of members and, therefore, the treasury went to a level where the church could no longer provide this support.

<b>Construction crew</b>	<b>Wife</b>
Merlyn Buck (contractor)	Lorain
Jerry Bilyeu (construction)	Peggy
Lewin Dockens (electrical)	Ruth
Richard Russell (construction)	Rosemary

<b>Preachers</b>	<b>Wife</b>	<b>Date of Service</b>
Bob Melear	Mary Helen	1959
Don Wilson	Jo Ann	prior to 1965 - 1970
Jady Copeland	Dorothy	1970
Wayne Timmons		prior to 1976
R.J. Stevens	Pauline	prior to 1976
Dann Walker	Michelle	August 1979 - May 1981
John Trokey	Linda	June 1981 - May 1985
Dann Walker	Michelle	June 1985 - April 1988
Craig Bradley (trainee)		July 1987 - June 1989
Bruce Evans	Linda	July 1989 - October 1997
Andy Cantrell	Claire	May 1998 - February 2006
Aaron Burleson	Patti	August 2006 - March 2017
Javier Villa	Verenice	April 2017 - Present

<b>Elders</b>	<b>Wife</b>	<b>Date of Service</b>
Walt Hunter	Louise	prior to 1965 -
Merlyn Buck	Lorain	prior to 1965 - August 1984
Jady Copeland	Dorothy	prior to 1973 -
David Ramsey	Susan	prior to 1986 -

Deacons	Wife	Date of Service
Lewin Dockens	Ruth	prior to 1967 - 1991+
Vaughn Elmore	Lorain	prior to 1967 - ?
David Ramsey	Susan	prior to 1973 - 1994+
John Adams	Kathy	prior to 1973 - 1993
Gerald Brumett	Greta	prior to 1973 - ?
Jerry Dockens	Beverly	prior to 1976 - 1993
Rex Lynch	Vicki	1974 - 1989
Loren Peacock	Marilyn	1983 - 1986
Larry Bustetter	Kay	prior to 1986 - 1994+
Grant Faris		1992 - ?
Steffen deBois		1994 - ?
Mike Odorizzi	Susan	1994 - ?

### Some of the original members in 1959:

Last name	First name	Wife name	Children
?????	Galbraith	Jonnie	
Baird			
Bilyeu	Jerry	Peggy	2 sons
Brown	George	Ethel	
Buck	Merlyn	Lorain	Linda Barry
Cawthon	Fred	Adelle	
Dockens	Lewin	Ruth	Jerry Judy
Hatch	Dick	June	Terry 2-3 sons
Hendren	Jack	Olive	Jackie Jennifer
Hunter	Walt	Louise	Tina Becky Brent Crystal
Kelly	Al	Westine	Elaine 2 granddaughters
Miller	Norman	Flo	Norma Flo Sue Linda
Russell	Richard	Rosemary	
Shoemaker	Fred	Joyce	James 1 daughter

### Other original / later members:

Brawner		
Crowder		
Elmore	Vaughn	Lorain
Knight	Herald	Mary
Van Hoosen		

# Information sent to me from Al Kelly's daughter Elaine

Notes from the personal address book of Al Kelly.

I helped start a sound church  
in Calif. Sept. 6<sup>th</sup> 1959, is now  
Lassen St. Church of Christ

Started Superceda Church of Christ  
it is now Lassen St. Van Nuys  
Calif.

1959

1959						
MARCH						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

1959						
JUNE						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

1959

1959						
SEPTEMBER						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

1959						
DECEMBER						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

6  
tory Service  
nk, California

This was in the religious section of the Valley News on Friday, April 16, 1965  
For us now, it shows the location of the Woman's Club building

**CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**NORTHRIDGE—**  
Canby Ave. and Gresham St. Don Wilson, minister. 10 a.m., Bible Class  
11 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Worship Services.

**WINNETKA—**  
7054 Winnetka Ave.; Roy E. Cogdill and Leon Goff, ministers.

This is the result of some research showing the date of Bob Melear's debate

**Bob Melear** [Church of Christ]

- Lyle McCollum (Church of Christ); West Culver City, CA; November 20-23, 1956; institutionalism
- Ben Crawford (Baptist Church); Keyes, CA; February 3-6, 1958
- Hoyt Chastain (Baptist Church); Northridge, CA; February 22-25, 1962
- Ralph Williams (Church of Christ); written; c 1976; divorce & remarriage. Periodical publication: "Melear-Williams Debate," *Torch* (January 1977)
- J. T. Smith (Church of Christ); Costa Mesa & Santa Ana, CA; March 7-8, 10-11, 1977; divorce & remarriage

# First, second and final locations

The first location was at the corner of Hayvenhurst Avenue and Parthenia Street  
The Northridge Military Academy. It is still there with another name

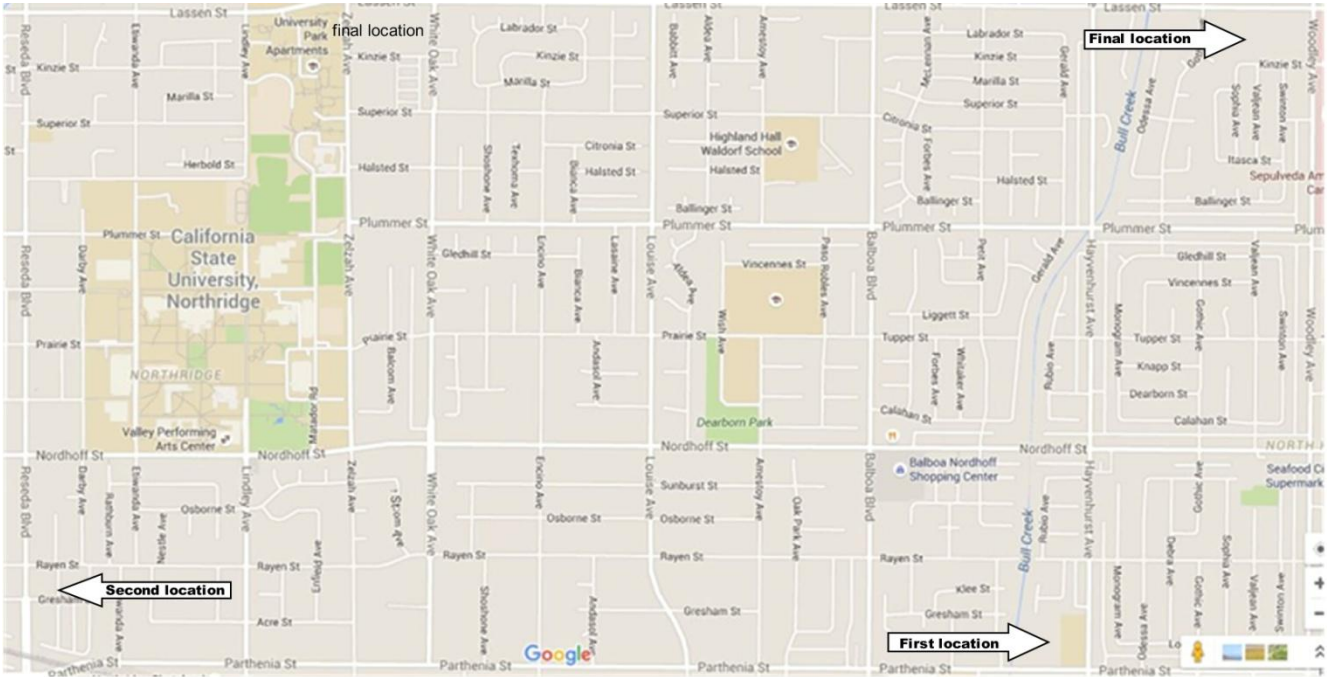


The second location was at the corner of Canby Avenue and Gresham Street  
The Northridge Woman's Club is no longer there





The final location. 16324 Lassen Street



My thanks to those members who supplied information to me. Since I was not an original member, I did not know about this early history. I am the only remaining member of those who were here in 1967 when I first came. I have been asked by current members about this early history which prompted me to do this research.

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This document is not complete, as most of the history is lost. I have contacted some of the original members to ask for any information they can give me either from memory or from documentation they might have kept. What I have was created from financial information starting in 1986, from old bulletins that I have kept for various reasons and information from some of those original members.

If anyone viewing this document has any additional or corrective information, please send an email to me at [lassenstcoc.com](mailto:lassenstcoc.com) or put a message on our Facebook page. I would appreciate it immensely.

Thanks for any help you can give me,

*Loren Peacock*