

| THINK |

# BOLDLY VENTURE



*This message was delivered June 12 by  
President Steve Veazey as part of the church-wide  
journey toward 2023 World Conference.*

## *New challenges require new forms of ministry.*

By Steve Veazey  
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**T**he world is changing. Old forms are crumbling. New possibilities are emerging. We live between what was and what will be. We need faith, curiosity, openness, and boldness.

God is challenging assumptions, shaking up structures, disrupting routines, and making connections.

The Holy Spirit breathes anew into our lives, the church, and creation. God's aim is a new creation in us, among us, and around us!

Nothing is more important than discerning what God is up to and our role in it. Doctrine and Covenants 162:2c urges:

*As a prophetic people...discern the divine will for your own time and in the places where you serve. You live in a world with new challenges, and that world will require new forms of ministry...*

Discern the divine will...new challenges require new forms of ministry! Discernment is more than planning and or asserting personal views. It is engaging in spiritual practices so we can be more aware of God's activity and how best to respond. Discernment is willingness to venture with God beyond the familiar. If you or your group need a discernment guide, some evangelists and those who have completed the

Spiritual Formation and Companion Program are available.

Recall Jesus's parable of the Samaritan (Luke 10: 29-37). We will explore it extensively at World Conference 2023 with the theme "Courage."

A traveler was robbed and beaten. Two religious figures—a priest and a Levite—passed the traveler but did not help. In fact, they crossed to the other side of the road. Then the Samaritan—assumed not to be so religious—saw the nearly dead man and had compassion. The Samaritan boldly moved toward the man, tended his wounds, took him to a safe place, and paid the expenses for his care.

Everyone "saw" the same situation. However, only one discerned what to do. The Samaritan perceived God's call and courageously responded. The others, captive to their human biases, were oblivious to God's call even though they thought they were in harmony with divine will. The Samaritan saw as God sees and responded as God does. That's the heart of discernment!

A map of the future would be nice, but that's not possible given this time of cultural shifts and disruptions. Neither can we go back to the past because that world no longer exists. We must keep venturing boldly with God, like people of faith and vision always have done.

Our journey is not left to blind faith. Like a reliable compass, the Holy Spirit guides and emboldens us. That compass works best as we are moving in response to God’s call. Jesus said the Holy Spirit “...will guide you into all the truth” (John 16:13 NRSV). The guide is the pathway! The journey is the destination!

Throughout our history prophetic voices have urged us toward God’s fullest vision for creation. Our journey has included processes of clarifying our sacred story, identity, and purpose. The results are found in our mission statement, Enduring Principles, and other documents (Sharing in Community of Christ, 4th Edition, 2018). With scripture as our foundation, we take these vital sources of insight and focus with us as we journey.

The Holy Spirit guided us to an ideal name: Community of Christ. It is faithful to our heritage and vision of the gospel lived in Christ-centered community. It emphasizes God’s revelation in Jesus Christ and the importance of experiencing Christ in sacred community. Our name provides direction and focus.

We also have one another as we journey, our beloved worldwide faith community. We are a diverse people. Through the Holy Spirit we are being fitted together as a global community through which Christ lives (Ephesians 2:19–21). We are becoming a dwelling place for God or holy temple, spanning the Earth. Our beautiful Temple reminds us of this destiny. As we journey, we are discovering:

...the power of community in Christ expressed locally in distinctive fashions while upholding a unity of vision, foundational beliefs, and mission throughout the world.

—Doctrine and Covenants 163:11a

A hopeful future for Community of Christ is possible—if we choose it. The Holy Spirit urges us to boldly venture there with God. Doctrine and Covenants 165:1c-e affirms:

Community of Christ, a divine vision is set before you... Lovingly invite others to experience the good news of new life in community with Christ. Undertake compassionate and just actions to abolish poverty and end needless suffering. Pursue peace on and for the Earth. Let nothing separate you from this mission. It reveals divine intent for personal, societal, and environmental salvation; a fullness of gospel witness for creation’s restoration.

Our vision speaks of holistic salvation for persons, groups, and the entire creation. Salvation in all dimensions. God’s vision of restoration is much bigger than many imagine.

The World Church Leadership Council is involved in group discernment. This includes constant listening to the Holy Spirit through the voices of various ages, cultures, and life experiences around the world. The council has drafted a statement of emerging themes. Excerpts include:

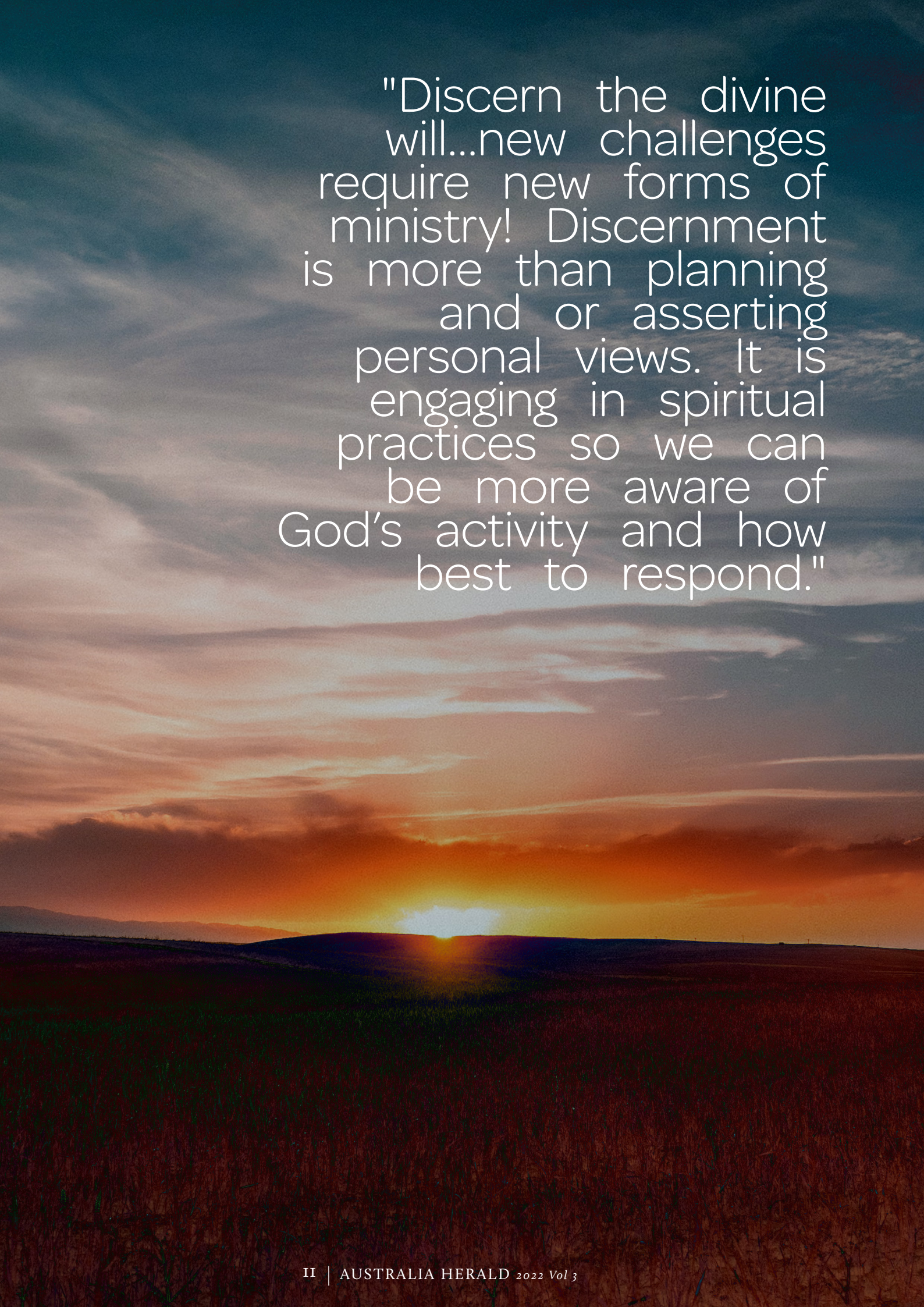
The soul of Community of Christ is expressed most fully as we embody Jesus Christ, the peaceful One, and his mission. This happens through relational, spiritual, invitational, and globally connected Christ-centered communities actively pursuing justice and peace on and for the Earth. We are discovering that a posture of simplicity, agility, and flexibility will equip and poise us to faithfully live the heart of our calling in a changing world.

These sentences are not the end of discernment. They provide opportunities for explorations of principles, possibilities, and insights in all apostolic fields. The church’s constant call is to discern the time in which we live; our varied contexts of mission; and what our approaches to ministry should be as we embody the soul of Community of Christ and follow Jesus, the peaceful One.

As we journey to World Conference, we are urged to prepare spiritually for joint discernment, important decision-making, inspiring worship, and intercultural community-building. In September, I will present added information and perspective to help us prepare. I look forward to speaking with you again at that time as we continue to venture boldly with God!





A full-page background image showing a sunset over a field of tall grass. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright orange and yellow glow that fades into a darker blue and purple sky. The grass in the foreground is dark and silhouetted against the bright light of the sunset.

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