

## Church blessed by special gift

Three generations of the Kreutziger family donated the painting by Randall Hasson.

By DIANE REED  
ANAHEIM HILLS NEWS

Nobody told Artist Randall Hasson that he wasn't supposed to put words on his paintings.

If they had, the Kreutziger family might never have found the perfect piece of art for the narthex of Light of the Canyon United Methodist Church in Anaheim Hills.

The painting, "Family Blessings," is covered with sacred words from the Bible.

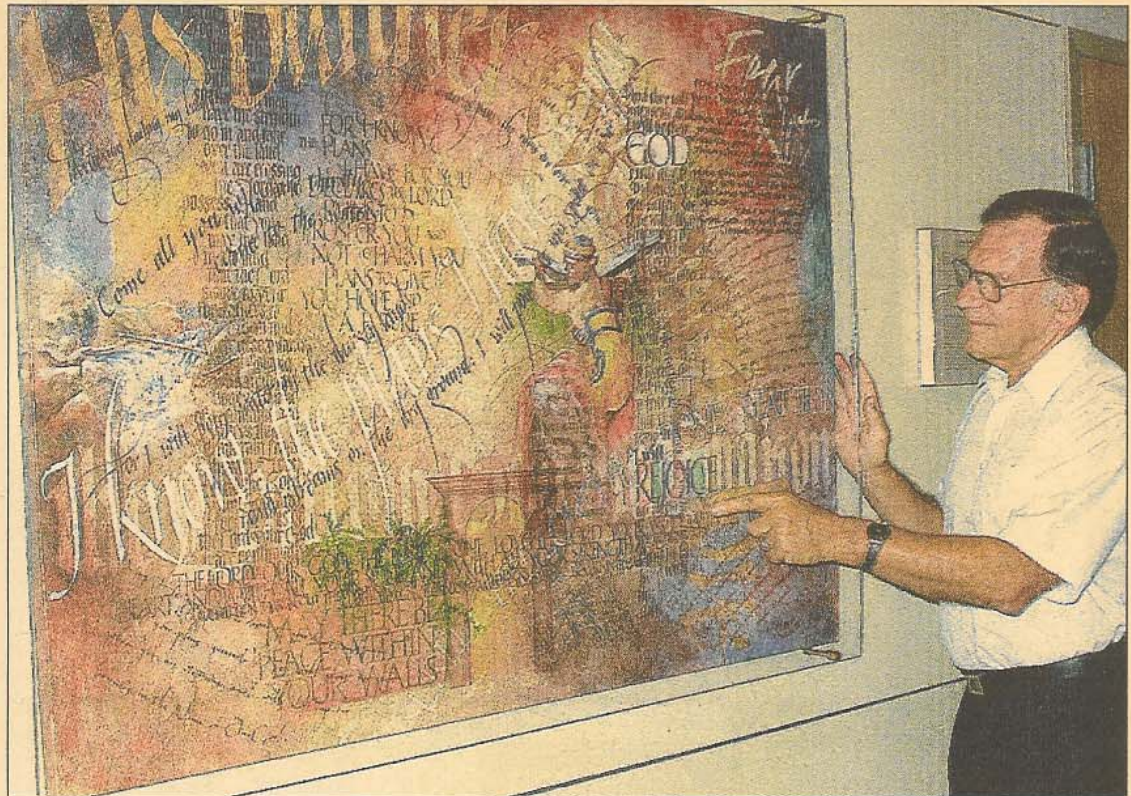
One verse in particular caught Betty Ann Kreutziger's attention.

"When I saw it, I knew the picture was meant for us. But it took me another year to raise the funds," she said.

The words are from Jeremiah 29:11. It says: "For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Kreutziger was familiar with the passage. It had given the small congregation the courage to step out in faith and build a permanent home after a decade of meeting in rented and borrowed facilities.

And, there it was — that same passage — beautifully emblazoned on the brilliant canvas in front of her, along



PHOTOS BY DIANE REED, ANAHEIM HILLS NEWS (ABOVE), AND COURTESY RANDALL HASSON, BELOW

Pastor Tom Rothhaar of Light of the Canyon United Methodist Church points to one of 14 Bible scriptures in painting, above. The painting contains several passages highlighted below.

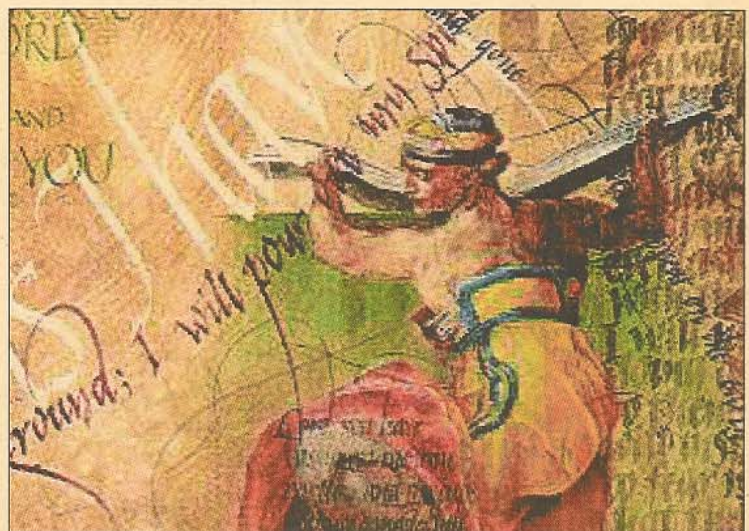
with dozens of Christian symbols.

Kreutziger told her daughter and son-in-law Kristen and Scott Walter about the Randall Hasson painting she had found in a gallery in Solana Beach.

She told her mother Bette Edge, too.

"The three generations of this family joined together to get it for us," Pastor Tom Rothhaar said.

"It was bright," the pastor



## PAINTING

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said. "We liked the way he used color. It just reflected our style. We are trying to have a warm, loving place for people who may have drifted away from the church to come back to."

"New Beginnings has been our theme," he added.

It is one of the themes of the painting, too.

The artist symbolized that theme by creating three gates, one opening into the land of milk and honey, another representing "peace within your walls," and the third representing entry into a place of companionship with God.

If the local church had commissioned the piece, it couldn't have been a better fit.

Not only does it add color and interest to the church, it contains 14 scriptures in whole or part written over and under a variety of other Christian symbols.

They include a circle that symbolizes the peace of God and the perfection of his will; three intersecting arcs depicting the Holy Trinity; a stream representing the Living Water; and the Libyan Sybil, an homage to Michaelangelo's image on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

The painting draws your attention with both words and images.

It captures the imagination in the same way stained glass

windows in a cathedral do.

It seems to have been created for a sacred space.

Hasson didn't paint it for a church, however.

"That was the first piece that I did in this style," he said. "It was done for my brother and sister-in-law, who had written their favorite scriptures on the walls of their new home before the drywall went up."

That was in 1999.

He had them make note of the scriptures and prioritize them. Then, the insurance man turned artist, created this painting for their home.

It was reproduced in every detail for the church.

"Family Blessings contains 15 or 20 layers," he said. "I put the figures in monochromat-

ically and put the colors in later."

He uses thin acrylic washes, and acrylic inks, layering color upon color, text upon images -- writing the words in various styles of calligraphy.

It takes him about three months to complete a work like this.

"I have to admit that when I am painting I think the spirit takes over," he said. "I never know exactly how it will turn out."

It turned out perfectly for Light of the Canyon.

As head of the interior design committee for the church Kreutziger has been seeking out artists to do original works of art for the facility. She found artist Nayer Kazemi who normally works on

fountains and had her create a unique baptismal font and lectern for the sanctuary.

She went to the Jensen Co. for a stained glass piece that will be lighted from behind and visible as people enter the church through the main doors. It will be delivered sometime before Christmas.

Family Blessings now graces the Southern wall of the narthex. It is the last thing that churchgoers see as they leave the sanctuary after services.

"I'd like to say that we appreciate this piece as something that expresses the essence of what this church is," Rothhaar said. "It is a great gift. One that will outlive us all."