

Pastor's Newsletter – January 29, 2010

Dear Saint!

OA WEEK OF PRAYER: There is much to quickly report, so I will get right to it, as it is nearly sundown already. I have just got home from doing the Orangewood Academy Week of Prayer, two sessions every day, grades K-5 and 6-12. I have loved being there, even though I do not know most of the students yet, and several of the faculty. But I came away very moved by the quality of the faculty that were helping put the chapels together, especially Pastor Oscar, the Bible teacher, Jim Woods with the music, and many others. They work so hard to create an exciting spiritual environment. Our own GGSDA / Triple Ex praise teams did nearly all of the music leading, and were just awesome, and I was very proud. A number of kids signed up for baptismal classes today, and Pastor Ruben will be following those up.

FLOODING: Now to the big news for the day: Some time during the night (after 10:30 pm, when the last choir members left) a pipe leading to the defunct fountain in the narthex burst several leaks. Michele Lopez walked into the narthex this morning to see a mini-lake of water. The entire narthex and sanctuary were flooded. To make a long story short, Adventist Risk Management got involved, professionals are there, and all the carpet is being ripped up and removed from the sanctuary and platform as we speak. The work will be going nearly around the clock all weekend to keep the rest of the walls of the church from being destroyed by the moisture seeping up into them. The elders have determined that this qualifies as the “ox in the ditch,” to preserve as much of our functioning of the sanctuary as possible!

SERVICES: Therefore—our worship service will now have to be in the Fellowship Hall. The mini-platform has been set up, the chairs have been set up, we have an excellent piano there, and AV system. There should be no real change in the quality of shape of our worship at all, and we must give thanks to whoever planned such a major-league Fellowship Hall with enough capacity so that we can do this! We do not know whether we can get back into our sanctuary by next Sabbath or not. Our SS rooms can be utilized as normal, and the restrooms near the Fellowship Hall and Board Room should still be functioning, we hope!

The churches that rent from us will also have to use our Fellowship Hall this weekend, and have been very accommodating. Our Evangelism Committee potluck will move into the Pathfinder Room, and “The Gift Goes On” will move into the Youth Chapel.

Please don't make other plans because of this problem! Come to church as normal! Nothing should be changed in any way, except that you need to go up some steps or up in the elevator! Otherwise everything should be exactly the same! The narthex carpet and North Room carpet will not be removed until next week, so if you stay out of the sanctuary you will not be quite as horrified! But unless something changes there may still be people trying to get everything wet out of our building before worse damage sets in.

WEEKEND SERVICES:

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS: Same schedule, 9:30 am food, 9:45 am praise, 10:10 am Study/Discussion for both groups.

CLASSES: All classes should be able to meet in their usual places, including the North Room.

WORSHIP SERVICE: 10:50 am - Songs of Gathering will begin in the Fellowship Hall, with Amanda, Melissa, and Silvino leading our praise time. We have some terrific plans for the worship service, and Pastor Winsley Hector, who has thrown in his lot with us, and has been a pastor in England and Alhambra for many years, will give us a message, “WE DO NOT WELL”. His private summary for me tells me this will be a highlight message—he teaches classes at Loma Linda, and is completing his doctorate at Claremont. Greet Winsley and Cleo to our church!

GRACE TEAM!! From 12:30 pm to 1:15 pm we will have a special class for the Evangelistic Committee and anyone else who would love to learn some more about how to make connections with spiritual seekers, and how to give Bible studies. We have Mark Finley’s book, “*Studying Together,*” for each person who comes.

EVANGELISM COMMITTEE: Potluck in the Pathfinder Room, after the Grace Team class, followed by our subcommittee and Committee meetings, until 3:00 pm or 3:30 pm.

PATHFINDERS / ADVENTURERS: I believe their meetings will be as scheduled in the Pathfinder Room at 6:00 pm, no changes.

“SMALL” GROUP: The group wasn’t so small! Over 30 showed up, and the Board Room was overflowing. Until the North Room flooded we were going to move there next week, so we may stay in the Board Room. But still feel free to come, and we will move to wherever we need to fit everyone in. We had great food from Muna Soltan, and the book *Experiencing God* by Henry Blackaby is just outstanding. If you can’t come every night, come as many times as you can, I think you will be blessed. Just a great, quality discussion last night.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT: The makeup concert for the Orangewood Academy Christmas Concert is this Thursday night, February 4, 7:00 pm, at the chapel. This was because Jim Woods broke his wrist and arm and could not conduct from the piano as he always does. His arm is out of the cast now, he played for our Week of Prayer all week, and the concert is back on! So go celebrate some Christmas in February!

I need to run get ready for tonight and Sabbath. God bless you all, and thank God for Risk Management, Bob Meckstroth, Bob Maukovich, Sam and Michele Lopez, and Jim Chambers, who have led the way in salvaging our church from this disaster. And the professional teams who are in there cleaning up the mess. Pray that all the processes of insurance and getting it all replaced will go quickly, and the Sanctuary and narthex will end up better than ever.

Happy Sabbath, and God bless you all!

Pastor Dan