

Pastor's Newsletter – December 3, 2010

Saints and Friends!

There is so much happening in December, and so many initiatives happening in the church right now, it's hard to know where to start! But here is at least a snapshot of what's happening and coming.

1. TONIGHT: Christmas Concert--In our church: Orangewood Academy music groups. Be there by 7:00 pm, the Bells will start right at 7:15 pm! The Church is decorated beautifully, this will be a lovely night. Instead of paying \$30 or \$50 at Dorothy Chandler Pavilion or somewhere, why not come and enjoy Jim Woods and the best of Orangewood, and give these kids the gift of a full church cheering them on!

(And find Bob Meckstroth, Jerry Bowron, Josh Tameifuna, Sue Arlic, and Linda Yu and thank them for decorating the church this last Thursday! There may have been others, but that is who I heard about!)

2. POTLUCK: Tomorrow is our monthly potluck for December--BUT there is an added motivation this month--we have 7 people being baptized and 1 coming in by Profession of Faith--plan to stay for the Potluck to welcome them into our church. Several chose this date especially so they could feel part of the church family. Here they all are: Jonathan Campos; Jason Arano; Ray and Cristina Cason; Stella Ledesma; Earl McCoubrey,, Jim Chambers, and Tacho Villareal. It is a big day for them, and a big day for our church. Hug them on your way out of church, and get to know them at the potluck.

3. THAILAND MISSION TRIP: June 21-July 4/6, 2011. **MEETING:** Right after church, 12:30 pm, NORTH ROOM. If planning to go, or interested in going, and have some questions, come into the North Room for 15 minutes and I can answer any questions.

The Church Board and the Missions Committee have now approved the Thailand Mission Trip. We have about 28 already signed up, and 19 deposits to take to the Travel Agent Monday. If somehow you missed the early announcements, and are still interested in going, please let me know right now by seeing me Sabbath, or call (951-236-7262), or email:

pastordan@gardengrovesda.com. We will be building a house on the campus of Chiangmai Adventist Academy, doing a major series of evangelistic meetings at the school in the evenings in the church that Ralph Smith and I and others built for them, and then touring Chiangmai, Bangkok, and the beach town of Krabi. If there is a chance you might go, let us know!

4. CHURCH DIRECTORY: The Church Board voted Tuesday night for us to have a new Pictorial Church Directory. We have so many new members, the only way all of us are going to get to know the names is to have this Directory done!

The good news is that if you sign up for the earliest photo shoot, December 9, and order a package of pictures that night, you can get them in time to use them for Christmas gifts! So sign up at the table after church. What the Bible says about "the first shall be last" will be in heaven--down here, "the first will be first"! The samples we saw at the Board, which you can see tomorrow, were just excellent.

"Portrait sign-ups for our new church directory will begin this Sabbath right after church or right now online at www.gardengrovesda.com. The button is on the left titled "Directory Picture sign ups". If you sign up for the first session, you are guaranteed to receive your portraits before Christmas Day. All those who sign up and want to have your picture in the directory will receive a complimentary 8x10 portrait. Whether you are a member or not, you can come and take your family portraits. There is no sitting fee. The photographers are highly trained and will arrange you and your family in different variations of poses."

5. BREAKFAST BANQUET: December 18, 8:30-10:30 am.

There will be no Sabbath Schools Sabbath morning, December 18. We will be having a Family Sabbath School and Breakfast on Sabbath, December 18, 2010, in the Fellowship Hall. Many of you will remember these events from several years ago. The Sabbath School Department would like to encourage all of our church members to come, not just those who attend the Sabbath School. Breakfast begins at 8:30 am followed at 9:30 am with a special program presenting "The Missing Magi" with the Children's Choir led by Amanda Johnston. We will also celebrate the birth of Christ with congregational singing of Christmas Carols and in fellowship with our church family. If members want to contribute to the breakfast, they may bring muffins, sweet rolls or Christmas breads. All other food and drink will be provided. The YAM (Young Adult Ministries) Choir will be leading carols!

ALSO: TOYS: If you would like to help brighten a child's Christmas, you can donate a toy to be given by Community Services when the Christmas baskets are given out. Please bring unwrapped toys for ages up to 12 years. Save this date and join us for a special Christmas family gathering and breakfast.

6 WEEKEND SERVICES:

FRIDAY NIGHT: Christmas Concert, Orangewood Academy, 7:00 pm, Bells 7:15 pm, Concert 7:30 pm. We are honored to host this event for all the churches that are a part of the Academy!

SABBATH SCHOOL: 9:30 am - Do what you can to get all your young people into Sabbath School! Each lesson builds on the one before and leads to the one coming after, hundreds of hours were put into the design and order of the lessons and values presented. We have recruited some outstanding leaders in each division now, and are blessed with their energy and creativity. Just make it a habit to get your young people there! If you have to go away, go after church, so that that habit of SS and Church is imprinted on their very DNA.

10:00 am - PASTOR'S CLASS--"ISSUES"--Fellowship Hall. All welcome, as we are asking all the best and hardest questions about each of the Fundamental Beliefs.

DIVINE WORSHIP: 10:55 pm--The Praise Team will lead. We have a very special guest, Josh Tuburan, who has led out in praise for me many, many times, and as gone around the world with us. He is just an outstanding piano player, and is now teaching music at a college in San Bernardino.

ADVENT CANDLE: Come on time, for the lighting of the Advent Candle for each Sabbath, building towards the five candles on Christmas Sabbath.

CHILDREN'S STORY: We are committed to having a Children's Story, and often a gift, every Sabbath, except for when they have Children's Church on the 3rd Sabbath of every month.

BAPTISMS: Seven Baptisms tomorrow--an incredible day for our church and for them!

MESSAGE: Starting a new series going chapter by chapter through the Gospel of Matthew. "GENEALOGY THEOLOGY!" Most people skip right over the genealogy in Matthew 1, but there 's a reason why the Holy Spirit put it there!

POTLUCK: Fellowship Hall.

7. GENERAL NEWS: The Kitchen and Community Services have all new freezers and refrigerators, as the Board came to the conclusion that we just could not tolerate the problems with the ancient equipment any longer! There are 4 new heavy-duty trash cans strategically placed around the buildings--if you see any trash as you come in but especially as you leave, just take a second and put it in one of the trash cans, and help us keep our relationships with the renters who come after us pristine! The TV monitor for the Narthex is up, and should be hooked up shortly. The Welcome Kiosk should be done within the next 2 weeks, and installed in the Narthex. We are also working with a design service to put together a Welcome Brochure to pass out to every guest. We have reason to believe that the Conference will approve us establishing a Search Committee within the next two weeks to begin the formal process of adding another member to our pastoral staff.

FINANCES: We have come a long way in 14 months! There are so many things that are new and right, now! But we have the sound system upgrade still to do, carpet in the Fellowship Hall, and so many ministries we want to start next year! If you can stretch and put some extra into **CHURCH BUDGET** during December, we will work incredibly hard to make every dollar stretch to the max to build up this church until it is the church that we are all hoping it will become during the next 12 months. We are thrilled with where we are, a solid, flourishing congregation of 300 attending, life and excitement everywhere, long lists of people who have visited our church. But we think God has a much greater vision yet for us, and we are absolutely committed to reaching every inch of what God wants us to do!

So be faithful with tithe, have no regrets with God at the end of the year, and do what you can to make Garden Grove truly a magnificent church!

8. PATHFINDERS / ADVENTURERS:

1. Meeting Saturday night, 6:30 pm, Pathfinder Room, Christmas Party! Come dressed to go caroling, hat and scarf are always nice. Bring a snack or dessert for everyone to munch on, and gift of \$5 or less for the gift exchange game. We will finish or start Gingerbread houses!
2. Tickets still available for the Nutcracker Ballet, \$17.50, going up to \$22 at the door. Saturday night, December 18, 7:00 pm, Sunday, December 19, 2:00 pm. The club gets 50% of all tickets sold. Come watch our own Sarah Caldwell dance in the Ballet!
3. Order a Bamboo plant for \$10 to raise money for Pathfinders.

9. YOUTH--A pre-New year's Eve party, Thursday night, December 30, 6:30 pm to 12:30 pm. Fellowship Hall. Anybody welcome. Under 25, bring a snack to share. Over 25, \$3 to help cover pizza and drinks. Volleyball, hopefully basketball, table games, movie, etc. A very cool night!

That's all the news at GGSDA! Or at least most of it!