

# GARDEN GROVE SDA CHURCH

## Pastor's Newsletter

December 17, 2010

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Dear Saints!

**PASTOR:** Garden Grove was given a blessing we have been praying and hoping and working for, for a long time--our Conference administrators this week approved GGSDA appointing a Search Committee to look for a Youth/Young Adult pastor! The Church Board will be meeting at 8:00 pm Monday night to appoint a representative search committee, that will certainly include young people themselves, and their leadership. I will meet with Conference leadership early in January to go over all the available names they are aware of, and then Pastor Sandy Roberts will be meeting with our committee until a decision is made! They would like to have a name to present to the Executive Committee by the end of January, so that is just terrific news. Some of the details and protocols will still be negotiated, and some of that will depend on our continuing to grow in our Tithes Base. But they are all hearing great things about our church, and we give thanks to God for the blessing He has poured out on our church this year. If you have the name of someone you want the committee to consider, feel free to pass it on to me, and when the committee begins to meet formally with the Conference we will add them to The List!

**YOUTH/YOUNG ADULTS:** Tonight they are going to Orangewood Children's Home. Meet between 5:15 pm and 5:30 pm. OCH will be checking us in together, so we all need to arrive by 5:30 pm at the latest. We are putting on a little program for the teenagers. If you are able, please bring snacks to donate (cookies, crackers, juice, etc.) For questions, **call** or **text** Elianna Campos at 714-210-9901. All participants must be at least 18 years old. 401 The City Drive – South.

**BREAKFAST BANQUET:** 8:30 am Sabbath morning. The biggest event for this weekend is the renewal of the annual Christmas BREAKFAST BANQUET! There are no Sabbath Schools anywhere tomorrow morning! Instead, everybody is invited to come up to the Fellowship Hall, starting at 8:30 am, Sabbath morning, December 18. A beautiful breakfast banquet will be served all during 8:30 am to 9:30 am, with music in the background and then our own Wayman Nelson giving us a "organ concert" on his keyboard, 9:00 am to 9:20 am or so. At 9:30 am there will be a short program, with carol singing with our YAM choir, and then at 10:00 - 10:10 am will be a Christmas Cantata, by our new Children's Choir and their director, Amanda Johnston.

At 10:40 am, the YAM singers will lead carols as we all process down to the Church Sanctuary, where Lisa Bethen and the Worship Committee have planned another highlight Christmas Sabbath, with music, Children's Story, the next Advent Candle.

**The MESSAGE/HOMILY** will be: "IMMANUEL--The God Who Is Always Coming."

The text is: Matt. 1:22 "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 'The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him IMMANUEL--which means "God with us.'"

But the story comes from 1 Samuel 4, where they took the Ark of the Covenant into battle with them, hoping that that would mean God would be with them and give them a great victory.

Questions for your family to discuss:

- What was so wrong about taking the Ark into battle with them?
- Should the Ark have always been left in the Most Holy Place, where only one high priest could see it, or should it be taken out into the real world, where everyone could see it, and God could use His power to bless everybody who saw it and touched it?
- If you were God, would you stay invisible, or would you be more obvious than God is now?

**THE GIFT GOES ON:** 4:00 pm, Sabbath afternoon. The Vietnamese group have planned a very special Christmas program in the Fellowship Hall. I have the short homily, "STAR WARS 7: SEE IT BEFORE IT COMES OUT!"

**COMING:**

**CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE:** 7:00-8:00 pm, Christmas Eve, Friday night, December 24. Mass choir for anyone who wants to join and sing "O Holy Night" and the "Hallelujah Chorus". Music, Children's story, gifts, with a reception in the Fellowship Hall, with hot chocolate and cider, and cookies. Start your Christmas celebration with Jesus Himself, and set the tone for the time with your family!

**PRE-PRE-NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY:** Thursday night, December 30, 6:30 pm til late, Fellowship Hall!

**YEAR-END GIVING:** The Church has been blessed with everybody who gives faithfully to the Tithe (10%), and to Church Budget, where we need at least 3% from everybody to give our church a chance to be excellent in all that it does, to the glory of God. We have already passed the \$400,000 mark for Tithe, and we are just amazed and blessed. We have just about cleared our entire Tuition Aid commitment of over \$20,000, and I am just very, very proud of our church, we poured thousands into evangelism, and it has just been a great year. Our membership has gone from 1028 to over 1150. Almost every week we have a baptism or Professions of Faith.

But we also humbly ask you to also focus on Church Budget for this year. We have done well all year long, but not as well as with Tithe! The Tithe goes to the Conference, and pays for the pastors, part of the teachers' salaries, and to support the work of the Conference and the church around the world. But it is Church Budget that does all that Garden Grove SDA is trying to do.

It looks, as of this minute: (1) We need about \$6000 to make Budget for December; (2) We will need about \$19,000 to make up for losses where we have had to go into a deficit to repair the church after the flood and to deal with deferred maintenance that just could not be put off any longer.

And so we need \$25,000 between now and the end of the year to finish up well, and start 2011 ready to take the church to the next level. No one person can carry much of that. But if everybody is absolutely faithful and stretches and puts God and the church first on their list, we can have this church firing on all cylinders, excellent in all that it does, and then we can focus on truly doing some new and creative ministries into our community this next year, more evangelism, getting onto the media, etc.

Just remember that everything for 2010: Tithe, Church Budget, Thailand, everything else, needs to be in or postmarked by midnight, December 31!

**PICTORIAL DIRECTORY:** Many have already had their picture taken, but we want everybody! We can't do this every 6 months, so please make sure you sign up, and keep a record of your family by getting some family pictures by professionals!

Portrait sign-ups for our new church directory will be this Sabbath right after church or right now online at [www.gardengrovesda.com](http://www.gardengrovesda.com). The button is on the left titled "Directory Picture sign ups". 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. If you bring canned or boxed food to your appointment, you will receive a discount if you choose to purchase any pictures.

**BALLET: Fundraisers:** The Metropolitan Ballet Company presents *The Nutcracker Ballet*, and our very own Sarah Caldwell will be performing in a lead role! Proceeds from ticket sales will go towards the Garden Grove Pathfinder Club thanks to the generosity of the ballet company! Thank you to all of you who purchased tickets early to help support our Club! Please see Sandra Caldwell for more information. [Phone: (562) 773-9450; Email: [scald262@yahoo.com](mailto:scald262@yahoo.com)]

**Upcoming Meetings:** Our next Pathfinder/Adventurer Club meeting will be on January 15, 2010 at 6:30 pm in the Pathfinder Room. We hope to see you all there!

**YOUNG ADULTS:**

**Pre-New Year's Eve Party**

When: Thursday, Dec. 30, 6:30 p.m. - 12:30 a.m.

Where: Fellowship Hall

Info: Under 25, bring a snack to share. Over 25, \$3 to help cover pizza and rinks. Volleyball, hopefully basketball, table games, movie, etc. A very cool night!

**Volunteering Opportunity**

When: Wed., Jan. 12, 5-8 PM

Where: Mercy House, 612 E. Warner Ave., Santa Ana

Info: We need 10 volunteers to help serve dinner at the Amory Emergency Shelter. Please see attached sheet for more info. Email [jennifer.frehn@gmail.com](mailto:jennifer.frehn@gmail.com) if interested

**Friday Night Live**

When: Jan. 28 at 7:30

Where: Youth Chapel

Info: A night of music, worship, food and good times. Guest speaker TBD. Contact [Annie Mejia](#) or [Lesieli Tameifuna](#) if you are interested in helping out!

**SAD NEWS:** Elder Neal C. Wilson, former President of the General Conference for many years, and the father of the current president, Elder Ted Wilson, passed away this week at 90 years old. His father was also a high church leader. He was an amazing man who had a very powerful influence over the church for almost 25 years as the president of our Division and then the General Conference. Services are still being planned. Gifts in his honor can be sent to ADRA, Adventist Heritage Ministry (Tom Neslund is the president), Adventist World Radio, or Christian Record for the Blind.

**MAXWELL SERVICE:** Sabbath, January 8, 4:30, Loma Linda University Church

God bless you all, and Merry Christmas!  
Pastor Dan