



## Garden Grove Seventh-day Adventist Church Pastor Dan's Newsletter



July 10, 2015

DEAR SAINTS--

I am sitting here in a largely empty stadium, as the Business Session drones on, during Friday morning. The drama of the momentous meeting on Wednesday is over, most of the observers have mostly have gone away to the booths or to touring San Antonio(!), and even many of the delegates are not in their seats! But by tonight the stadium will fill, as people flood in from all over Texas, and from all over the world. Our Filipino Fellowship has arrived after driving together across the country. Some of our Vietnamese group will arrive tonight. There will be a great night and day tomorrow with fantastic music, great reports of missions all over the world, Elder Ted Wilson's second Inaugural Address at the Divine Worship hour, and the Parade of Nations tomorrow night with the flags and costumes from everywhere the Church is. Even 50 from China are here this Session.

The challenge of course is to accept and deal with the two sides of this--this great and fantastic world Church that we love, 19 million plus more in SS, people bonded together by some core fellowships in the Bible, Jesus, grace, the 7th-day Sabbath, second coming, etc. etc. We cheer great music, we cheer terrific conversion stories and new outreach ministries from everywhere.

But yet there is this other side, split on Wednesday 59% to 41%, YES and NO speeches all day long, one group clapping joyously at the end of the day, the other side silent and heartbroken! And somehow we do our best to keep both of those feelings in tension. We stay in the Church, but we also fight and pray and work and talk and try to persuade, to try to create a Church that is grace-filled, inclusive, that celebrates diversity, that excludes no one, that celebrates and is not afraid of questions, change, new answers.

One writer, Jim WALTERS, from Loma Linda, described the difference between the tension in the Alamodome on Wednesday, and then going to the Convention Center where nearly 400 booths of ministries are housed, where there are all these wonderful people who have a ministry, a dream, a passion, of something that they think will help change the world and make the Church a better place.

Where there are hundreds of hugs between people who see each other only here every 5 years. Where mission trips are committed to, where you get new books, where you cheer people on who are doing great things for God in sometimes very hard places.

Both are part of this thing Jesus calls "My Church"! And He stays "in the midst of the Candlesticks" of Revelation 1. And so we stay, and keep loving the booth-side of the Church, and praying for and fighting for the stadium-side of the Church! And maybe someday, they will merge into one--maybe as we join each other on the clouds!

THIS WEEKEND: Very briefly:

THE WAY is on tonight, Friday night, Youth Chapel.

OC GRACE FIRST: 9:30 am, with Pastor Tony

General Conference Sermon (Sanctuary): 10:30, Elder Ted Wilson

DIVINE WORSHIP: 11:30 am, with Pastor Tony again!

I fly back Saturday night, and next Sabbath will be a special day, with the orchestra from Thailand, some extremely special baptisms, and then a potluck of those who want to hear the debriefing from the General Conference with the pastors who were here--with lunch at 1, and the Debriefing at 2, in the Fellowship Hall.

God bless!

Pastor Dan