



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



December 23, 2016

Merry Christmas to you all!

We hope it is a blessing to you—to have the Sabbath the day before Christmas! Hopefully the shopping is over. Presents are wrapped. Desserts are everywhere. The people who are coming to see you are already here. Our sons are here, their girlfriends are here. There is no crazy rush before Christmas Eve. It's the Sabbath!

So light a candle. Turn on your Bluetooth speaker and put some Christmas carols on. And let the heart of Christmas come to you, before the food and parties and giving take over the day, as wonderful as all that is. And maybe the sense of blessing and joy will be even greater, if you start Christmas with truly experiencing the Sabbath first!

GIFT TO GOD: We have tried to be understated in talking a lot about what the Church needs financially before the end of the year, but this week we will tell you where we stand. We are immensely thankful for all who have given all year—to tithe, to church budget, to tuition aid, to community services, to mission trips, and so much more. When you add it all up, it's a stunning amount, and we thank you, in the Name of Christ, because He is the One you are giving to. Someone recommended that I read a new book, *The Immortal Nicholas*, by Glenn Beck, and it describes the incredible gifts the Wise Men brought, when they bowed low and offered them to the Baby they had followed the Star to see. And it's what we do this week—we bow low and give to Him.

We met last night, and here is the latest: Just about \$200,000 has come in for Church Budget so far this year. In order to pay for everything that the Church pays for—we need **\$40,000 more**, over these last two Sabbaths of the year. That's about what has come in during the last two weeks over the last few years, and so if everybody stretches and gives what they have given, as God impresses, we have faith that the Church will have all it needs to pay for all its ministries, support Orangewood Academy, and support the wonderful people who work for our church.

You can give online: www.gardengrovesda.com.

You can of course give it in church at one of our 4 worship services.

You can mail it in (has to be postmarked by midnight, December 31.)

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The promise is there, backed by very Word of God Himself, that He will bless you for being faithful, for honoring Him. It's not one more bill to pay—it's a gift to the heart of God, as much as those given in person by the Wise Men two thousand years ago.

WORSHIP SERVICES TOMORROW:

9:30am—First Service, OC Grace First, Fellowship Hall, with Pastor Tony

11:30 am—Second Service, Sanctuary

Fantastic Christmas music program, with some of the finest musicians—the Bolivar and Leon Families. Anthony is widely considered the best La Sierra University has right now. They will sing classics—"Mary, Did You Know," "O Holy Night," and others. A great Christmas worship service, and a great praise team leading in the carols, with trumpets and organ.

2:45pm—Filipino Fellowship. Fellowship Hall, potluck, slide show from the Pakistan Mission, and a guest speaker, Dr. Joe Dial, who serves there.

4:30pm—Vietnamese Fellowship, Youth Chapel

YOUTH: Youth Sabbath School will be a Party! Music, food--& Presents! Don't miss!

Plus: Youth and Collegiate are joining to do **Laser Tag** Monday night. 7 pm. You need to meet there, so text Pastor Sara-May to sign up and get the place.

240-350-8876.

THANK YOU everybody who helped put on the Christmas Breakfast Banquet last week, led by Chloe Riddle—food, decorations, music—all superb. And as always thanks to Kimber Parks for leading out in the decorations all over the church.

21-DAY DANIEL FAST:

(Note from Lesieli)

"Dear Church families--Hope you had a good year's journey with Jesus in 2016. Looking back on this journey, I felt I've been in the waiting room a lot. Oh, I was busy with work and families, hosting two Chinese students at my house, prayer meetings, mentoring young families. But spiritually I felt I was in the Waiting Room. And there were many times walking through the dark valley, but God brought me out of it and I'm grateful for that.

Through it all God has been amazing and generous in every turn, and I have learned to trust Him in the journey, and He was faithful.

We would like to invite you to join us in the journey of the 21-day Daniel Fast! I know it's coming up so fast. Trust me, I also sometimes dread this journey every year, but my soul is the benefactor of this journey. This will be the 4th year I'll be doing it and my flesh does not agree with this at all giving up the pleasures of food and all the yummy chocolates. But my soul has learned the secret of being contented, and there are things that only the Holy Spirit will reveal when I am willing to give up the physical needs for spiritual food.

The 21 day fasting starts January 8th and goes to January 28th. You don't have to do the whole 21 days. You can do 3 days, 7 days, 10 days or be brave and go for the full 21 days! People have given up just one thing that they love so much and make room for spiritual things. "Call to me, and I will answer you; I will tell you wonderful and marvelous things that you know nothing about", Jeremiah 33:3.

One of the most profound things that the Holy Spirit has invoked on this year is humility, learning the secret to being humble and I'm still working on it but grateful for the revelation."

Lesieli Tameifuna and the Prayer Team

Merry Christmas and Happy Sabbath to you all!

Pastor Dan