

Gardena Valley Baptist Church

Issue 17

September 4, 2013

SPIRIT

GVBC MISSION STATEMENT

Helping people discover Jesus and become His fully devoted followers.

GVBC PURPOSE STATEMENT

At GVBC, we seek to glorify God by:
 ~ reaching the world for Christ
 ~ uniting as His family
 ~ worshipping Him with our lives
 ~ growing in Christ-like character
 ~ and serving others in love.

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Dear Family:

On Sunday, September 15th, we will begin a year-long celebration of GVBC's 100th Anniversary. We will conclude our celebration with a weekend of praise on August 16-17, **2014**. The 100th Anniversary

Committee decided to make this a year-long celebration so we could space out different events over a twelve-month period and not cram everything into a week, or a month. I will talk about what has already been planned, but first, I want to talk about our September 15, 2013 Worship Service.

Our two worship services will be in the Community Hall and will include some special groups leading us in praise music: hula, Ukulele Jammers, Nichigo Choir, and a new song written and sung by Wendy Katagi. The service will be translated into Japanese, (transmitted through headsets) and we will sing our hymns in two languages. After each service, we will be having a meal so plan to stay! The second service will start at 11:00 AM on that Sunday to give us time to enjoy the meal and fellowship.

Our Pre-100th Anniversary started with the Pre-Centennial Golf Tournament. Our theme was to bless others in our area because God has blessed us. The four organizations we are blessing are: City of Gardena Human Services, City of Gardena's Senior Day Care Center, GVBC's Food Ministry at St. John's, and CPAF (Center for Pacific Asian Family). Each will receive approximately \$4,250. Tak Shimazaki and his team did a great job!

During the next year, 100th Anniversary items, including t-shirts, will be available to purchase. Adam Marshall is writing a history of GVBC, which will be published. Different groups are planning reunions. TFC (Teen Christian Fellowship), which met in the 70's and 80's, has planned their reunion. What about leading your own reunion? How about ABW/Circles or all the Youth Leaders who ever served at GVBC? Be creative!

Back to the 15th worship service. On that day my message will be, "Remember to Celebrate Your God Encounters". We will look at God's instruction to us to celebrate; remember His Name and why this is important.

I pray you will plan to be here. I pray you will invite someone to join you. I pray that as we celebrate, God will draw us closer so we can reach out to others.

God bless!
 Pastor Steve

GOD'S LOVING PURPOSE
PROFILE OF STEPHANIE HERNANDEZ
BY KATHY AISO

“When we experience the fiery furnace of suffering — whether physical or emotional, whether persecution from without or humiliation from within — God’s loving purpose is to make us pure and strong.”
— Julie Ackerman Link



Through the fiery furnace of affliction, **Stephanie Hernandez** grew spiritually. Two weeks after graduating from West High School, Stephanie and her youngest sister, Elizabeth, were involved in a horrific car accident.

A youth fell asleep at the wheel

While driving Elizabeth to swim practice at 7:00 a.m., a male youth, who had fallen asleep at the wheel, crashed into Stephanie’s vehicle. Her car was so damaged by the accident that she and Elizabeth had to be lifted out, after the roof was cut open. Stephanie was not only unconscious, having sustained a head injury, but the accident caused the major bones in both her legs to be broken. Elizabeth sustained a broken bone in one of her legs.

Handicapped and unable to walk

Stephanie was taken to Harbor/UCLA Medical Center where she stayed in I.C.U. for a week. She was then transferred to Kaiser/Harbor City where she spent two more weeks. At 18 years old, she was handicapped and unable to walk. She now needed help with the most mundane tasks such as, having her teeth brushed and putting on her clothes. Over the next three years, she required 16 surgeries and physical therapy twice a week. Stephanie also had to learn to deal with daily pain which was ongoing. She learned to walk in a year.

Angry at God

As a new Christian, Stephanie became angry and understandably questioned God, “Why did You allowed this accident?”

At one point, she thought to herself, “I’m NOT going back to that church,” referring to GVBC where she had been saved a year earlier. However, Stephanie changed her mind as Christians from GVBC reached out to her. As other friends deserted her these Christian — including the Pastoral Staff and former youth leaders — stepped forward, supporting and showing love and kindness to Stephanie. Her close Christian friends handled the physical challenges and logistics of transporting her to include her in activities.

Christian love and support

All of Stephanie’s Christian friends shared words of encouragement with her, telling her God had a plan in the accident. In the beginning, she did not agree with them. As time passed and Stephanie witnessed God’s love through these Christians, received spiritual, emotional, and physical support from her physical therapists, and was counseled, she was able to grieve and gradually heal.

“In this imperfect world, God promised He will never give us more than what we can handle,” she affirmed. “He’ll always be there to rely on. God showed His plan was far greater than the one I had for my own life. He allowed this trial so I could learn to rely on Him, not on myself.”

A new attitude to seek God

With this new attitude, Stephanie returned to church with a strong desire to seek God. Today, she continues in ministry as a youth leader for the high school ministry. She is also a Young Adult Women’s co-leader with Ashley Donald. Stephanie, along with Ashley, Daren Lou, and Danny Ueda were instrumental in reinstating the Young Adult Ministry. Last month, Stephanie shared her testimony at the Women’s Breakfast.

A native of Inglewood

A native of Inglewood, Stephanie and her family [pictured on page 3 with her mother, Aurora Hernandez] moved to Palmdale when she was three. Around age 15, she and her family moved back to the South



Bay, residing in Torrance. Growing up, Stephanie, her three younger sisters, and parents attended a Catholic church until she was a teenager. At the Catholic church, she learned about God, but nothing was mentioned about having a personal relationship with Him.

Through one of her close friends, Stephanie Garnica, Stephanie was invited to a Friday-night youth meeting. As she began attending the high school youth meetings, she gradually became interested in Christianity. Later at summer camp, she began understanding what Christianity was all about. She accepted Christ and was baptized at GVBC in the fall of 2009.

A career perspective change

Following the accident, Stephanie's career perspective changed. Having benefited from the physical therapists' holistic (spiritual, emotional, and physical) approach to therapy, she became interested in helping others as a physical therapist herself. In Fall 2011, Stephanie received a B.S. in Kinesiology with an emphasis on Physical Therapy from Biola University. She plans to attend graduate school to further her studies in physical therapy.

God's plans always come to fruition

One of Stephanie's favorite Bible passage, Jeremiah 29:11-13 reminds her that although she had plans for her life, it's always God's plan which comes to fruition.

"God's plan is for our good and far greater than anything I could ever imagine," Stephanie affirmed.

"For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart."

In realizing her dependence is on the Lord and His plan for her life, Stephanie walks closer with Him. She knows He always has her best in mind.

AUGUST BOARD REPORT BY DAVID CHENG, MODERATOR

Doing church as a team

Your Board had a fairly busy agenda for our August meeting. Teresa Matsushima, our newly elected Board member, gave a devotional on lessons she learned from a conference she attended titled "Doing Church as a Team." One lesson was, everyone needs to do their part using their gifts. We should start with our interests. If we are serving where we should be, we will not get burned out and servants will give time because they see God's vision.



Financial report

For General Fund giving, the month of June was a positive one, with total revenue of \$105,490 and total expenditures of \$94,863, resulting in a net gain of \$10,627. Year-to-date, the church remains in positive territory with a surplus of \$95,038 as of end of June. Preliminary figures for July giving showed revenue dipping significantly to \$92,185 in comparison to June. The largest drop was in the English congregation which saw attendance down during the month.

Nehemiah giving for June was \$30,136, an improvement over May, but significantly short of the \$36,310 budget projection for the month. Calculations indicate approximately \$250,000 that was originally pledged will not be forthcoming due to death, retirement, and financial setbacks experienced by our Nehemiah givers. Your Board is looking at the possibility of encouraging pledging by new attendees who did not have the opportunity to participate in the campaign. Please keep Nehemiah in your prayers.

(Continued on page 4)

Approval of six new members

Your Board reviewed and approved the applications of six new members, all from the Nichigo congregation. These included several who joined through baptism and others via transfer and Christian experience.

Your Board voted to terminate one person's membership at the written request of the individual. Your Board also approved the awarding of scholarships to two individuals.

100th Anniversary Celebration

The 100th Anniversary Committee decided to use income from the future sale of items with the official logo to help raise funds for related activities. Because the Board must approve fundraisers that take place on the church campus, this matter came before your Board for review. Your Board approved this request.

The Committee also decided to contract with the Torrance Marriott Hotel to hold the 100th Anniversary

Celebration Luncheon on Saturday, August 16, 2014. (MARK YOUR CALENDARS!)

Administrative items reviewed

There were also a number of administrative items your Board reviewed and approved. These included: modifications to the church's contract; paid sick days; and sabbatical study leave policies. Your Board also approved Pastor Annette Kakimoto's preliminary proposal for her sabbatical in 2014.

Church attendance down for July

Pastor Steve noted the church attendance was down significantly during the month of July. We surmised, because school schedules are being tightened, there is a smaller window in which families can take vacations. As a result we speculated, many families took their vacations during July, resulting in fewer people attending church during the month.

Until next month . . .

MISSION FIELD



GVBC VBS Mission Project

We collected composition books, pens and pencils as our GVBC VBS mission's project this summer during VBS. Over 200 composition notebooks were collected. Pictured is Teresa Matsushima (L) with Andrea Shu in Teresa's garage where these

items were stored. Andrea picked up all the boxes of donated items.



Sheryl's trips will be within the U.S. She will be going to conferences, presenting papers, and accompanying Pete to a meeting and one workshop. "God has given me health and strength and safety. Thank you for your part in the ministry," Sheryl ended her letter.

Erin Kawaye, OMF International

One of Erin's highlights was walking with two Christian siblings, Tiffany and Tim. In fall 2012, Tiffany made the decision to apply for long-term service with OMF International, whose motto is "Heart for Asia. Hope for Billions." In June 2013, Tiffany attended the candidate course and has been appointed to serve in East Asia long-term with Erin and her team. God placed in Tim's heart the desire to mentor a team at his church to minister at the same place in East Asia where he serviced at in 2010. This church team just returned from their mission and debriefed on August 5 in Southern California. Erin requests prayer for Tiffany and Tim's parents, who are all Christians, as well as the parents of all the youth missionaries. Some are Christian and others are non-Christians and all share different issues. Erin stated, "It isn't easy for any parent to surrender their hopes and dreams for their children's success and future in favor of the mission field. There are also issues for those with non-Christian parents, who don't understand why their child is getting involved with mission." Erin praises God for the 81% financial support she has received this year. She requests prayer for the remaining 19%.

Sheryl Silzer, Wycliffe Bible Translators

In early August, Sheryl returned after leading two workshops in Papua, New Guinea. There were almost 40 people and nine facilitators involved. The attendees were excited about what they can do to foster better relationships with each other. Many countries were represented: New Guinea, Australia, UK, Germany, Sweden, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, Finland, Colombia, Canada, and the U.S. "These two workshops were probably the best ones so far," wrote Sheryl. She thanks you for your prayers. Currently, plans are underway for a return trip in August/September 2014. For the rest of 2013,



Our prayers and condolences go out to

✉ Kari Maeda and family in the passing of her husband, Dennis, who passed away on Friday, Aug. 22. The funeral service will be held at GVBC on Wednesday, September 11 at 6:00 p.m. Reception following in the Community Hall. Pastor Steve Langley will officiate.

NOTE: A correction to the *Spirit* Issue 15, August 7, Family News = should be Tom & Joyce Mayeda Jones (not Janice Mayeda) condolence in the passing of Tom's mother.

Baby Announcement



👶 Congratulations to the Frey and Langley families. JJ & Melissa Frey gave birth to their third daughter, Kara Joelle, who was born on Monday, August 26 at 11:47 p.m. Baby Kara weighed 5 lbs. 14 oz. and she was 19 inches long. JJ refers to Kara's two older sisters, Mary and Leia, as "Mommy 2 and Mommy 3." Proud grandparents are Pastor Steve & Nancy Langley and Mike & Nora Frey.

Letters from our church family

- ✉ We wish to thank our GVBC family for your love and support during this time. Peter's passing was very unexpected and sudden. Your prayers, flowers, cards, telephone calls, hugs, and meals made us realize how blessed we are to have such caring church family. We are truly touched and by your kindness. Love Silvio and Jessie Carrara
- ✉ Hello GVBC, It was a joy for me to be with you and to share. About two weeks later [Pastor Villa was our guest speaker for our services on July 28] my daughters and I attended your contemporary [second] service and they were thrilled by their experience there. I had wanted them to experience a truly contemporary service. The future looks promising — although I'm officially retired — I have been invited to interview in a couple of truly urban churches. In the meantime, I continue to apply at Von's and Ralph's grocery stores. Blessings and peace, George Villa

KidZone
Friday Night Activities
7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Community Hall

Sept. 6 1st Grade Welcome
Pizza Party starting at 6:30 p.m.

Sept. 13 Carnival Night

Sept. 20 Creationary

Sept. 27 Frisbee Toss

Oct. 4 Snow White Tag

Oct. 11 Over-the-Line Game

Oct. 18 Photo Scavenger Hunt

Oct. 25 Volleyball/ Balloon Ball

Harvest Festival
Thursday, October 31, 2013
5:30-7:30 p.m at GVBC

For more information, please contact Susan Wakota at
(310) 323-5683 or by email at susan@gvbc.net

Gardena Valley Baptist Church
1630 W. 158th ST
Gardena, CA 90247



CONTACT: office (310) 323-5683.
EMAIL: gvbc@gvbc.net [put your event in the subject line]. You can also contact event leaders directly.
WEBSITE: www.gvbc.net

♥ **Basic Christianity Class**

📖 Sundays through October 20, 8:45 a.m., room 113.
 📖 Starts again on Sunday, November 3 for 30 weeks at 10:45 a.m., upstairs in room 218.
 Both classes taught by Pastor Ron Matsuda. No sign up needed. Join at any time. Contact the office.

♥ **OASIS**

Wednesdays, 7:00 p.m., room 218. No signups needed. Taught by Pastor Ron Matsuda.

♥ **Driftwood Healthcare Outreach**

Saturday, September 7, 1:50 — 3:00 p.m. Come and visit with the residents of Driftwood Healthcare Center in Torrance. Share in songs, crafts, and your personal time. Contact Jodie Rivera for more information at Jodie_Yoshida@yahoo.com.

♥ **Hope for the Future Bible Seminars**

- Thursday, September 12 and 13, 7:00 — 9:00 p.m. Speaker is international Bible and apologetic teacher Dr. Patrick Zukeran. See flyer at Guest Center for topics and to sign up.
- Thursday, September 19, 6:30 — 8:30 p.m. Room 201. Hope for the Future health ministry. Topic is "Looking Ahead: The Impact of Health Care Reform." Guest speaker is Dianne K. Belli, Keiro Chief Administrative Officer.

Please bring refreshments to share with the group.

♥ **GVBC Bilingual Saturday Services**

Saturday, September 14, 7:00 — 9:00 p.m. Every second Saturday of the month. Refreshments served in Room 201 after the service. Everyone welcome. For more info contact Pastor Eiji Osato, ext. 676, eiji@gvbc.net.

♥ **Perspectives on the World Christian Movement**

Monday, Sept. 16, 2013 to January 13, 2014, 6:30 — 9:30 p.m., Rooms 218 & 220, 16 sessions. This is a dynamic course where you can discover what God is doing around the world and consider your part in His purposes. This class will help you understand how you can use your skills and passions to glorify God in all the earth. For info and to register visit www.perspectives.org (search for "class in Gardena, CA."). Flyers available in the Narthex. For info contact Tommy Park, email at: thomas.y.park@gmail.com.

♥ **Keep Gardena Beautiful**

Saturday September 21, 8:30 a.m. — noon. Volunteers will gather to clean up our city park, right-of-way, and neighborhoods — plant flowers, paint, do minor fix-ups. A lunch will follow at Mas Fukai Park. If you have signed up to paint, be sure to dress appropriately — old pants and shoes and

use your Keep Gardena Beautiful t-shirt. Signups still taken, but T-shirts not guaranteed

♥ **High School Glow in the Dark in the Park**

Friday, Sept. 27, 6:30 p.m.. The High School event will be at Guenser Park for "Glow in the Dark in the Park." Contact Daniel Matsuda, ext.681, daniel@gvbc.net.

♥ **JEMS Ladies Luncheon**

Saturday, September 28, 8:00 a.m. — 1:30 p.m., \$12 per person, Wintersburg Presbyterian Church, 2000 N. Fairview St., Santa Ana. Hosted by JEMS Women's Ministry & the women of Wintersburg. Speaker: Vivian Mabuni, "A Place of Abundance." Choose from 15 different workshops. Workshop fees to be paid directly to the workshop leader for supplies. Do not include with your luncheon payment.

DEADLINE to register is Friday, September 20.

Checks payable to JEMS. Mail registration and checks to Clara Shota, 16916 Alexander Ave., Cerritos, CA 90703. Contact Clara at (562) 926-4160. Registration brochures in the Narthex.

♥ **Baptism Sunday** September 29

♥ **Fall Quarter Community Groups Start**

Sunday, Sept. 22 and end on Sunday, Nov. 10.

OCTOBER

♥ **M.O.M. (Mexico Outreach Short-term Missions)**

- ♦ October 5, Saturday one-day trip to Tijuana
- ♦ Dec 20-22 three-day trip to San Telmo

We are collecting soap and shampoo samples all year long for the Mexico Missions' trips. Please bring them to the church office labeled "Teresa" Matsushima." Place it behind Jan Magnani's desk on the table in the office (by the windows). God bless. [NOTE: a U.S. passport is required. Spanish is helpful, but not required]. To sign up contact Teresa Matsushima: treesaw47@gmail.com.

♥ **GVBC Annual Men's Retreat**

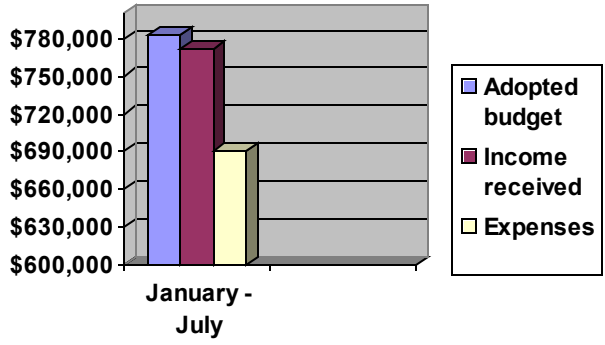
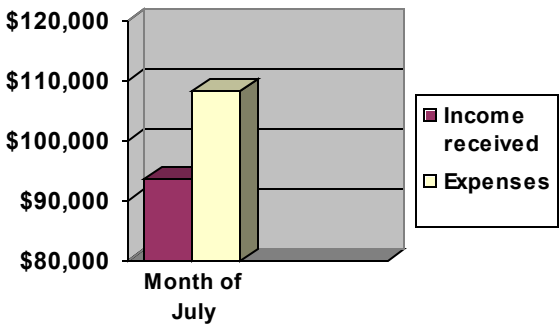
Saturday, October 12 to Sunday, October 13, Victory Ranch. For all men and their guests — college age and up, please join us for our Annual Men's Retreat at Victory Ranch. Sign up starting Sunday, September 8 in the Courtyard. Questions: contact Daniel Ueda at dudeitsdanny@gmail.com or Kent Komae at kkomae@aol.com.

♥ **Harvest Festival** Thursday, October 31.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ♥ **NO Friday Night Youth** on November 1 as it is the weekend of the Youth Leaders' Retreat.
- ♥ **Daylight Savings Ends** Sunday, November 3. Fall BACK one hour!
- ♥ **High School Epicenter** Nov. 8, Community Hall.
- ♥ **KidZone** Friday, November 8 will be in rooms 250 & 251 due to the Sr. High Epicenter.
- ♥ **Classes offered at GVBC**
 Sunday, November 17, 101, 301 - Part 1, and 401
 Sunday, November 24, 301 - Part 2
- ♥ **Baptism Sunday** December 29

FINANCIAL REPORT



Donations and Flowers given in honor or loving memory

FROM
 Merrick Yoshida and
 Jodie & Voltaire Rivera
 Ueda Memorial Fund
 Ruth Fukushige
 Edith Higashi
 Jean Urabe

IN LOVING HONOR or MEMORY OF
 Kazumi Yoshida
 Lois Ueda
 Shoichi Sam Fukushige
 Yoshio Higashi
 Ted Urabe

Monetary donations given in honor or memory of loved ones go into the College Scholarship Fund, unless specified.

Online Giving Services Available
 Online services are available through our website at www.gvbc.net, "Give."

World Mission Offering
 During the month of October, we will be collecting our annual World Mission Offering.



GVBC 100TH ANNIVERSARY KICK-OFF
and
DELICIOUS MEAL
Sunday Services, Sept. 15
8:45 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Join us as we "Kick-Off" our year-long 100th Anniversary Celebration (which is August 16, 2014) with both services in the Community Hall and a delicious meal after both services! **NOTE** time change for second service.

Put the date on your calendar today!



Issue 18 will be uploaded to the website on Wednesday, September 18. Hard copies will then be available in the Narthex and Community Hall. All articles should be submitted by Sunday, September 15.

The *Spirit* is copyrighted © 2013 and a publication of Gardena Valley Baptist Church, 1630 W. 158th Street, Gardena, CA., 90247, (310)323-5683, FAX: (310)768-2783, Email: gvbc@gvbc.net, Website: www.gvbc.net, Senior Pastor: Steve Langley (310)323-5683, ext. 0, Editor: Susan J. Shelley, ext. 673, susie@gvbc.net. Office hours: 9:00am—5:00pm. The *Spirit* is published twice a month to keep members and friends informed of programs of the church and to report news about GVBC and its people. Announcements, praise, prayer requests, and letters are welcomed. Articles are subject to editing and/or postponement.



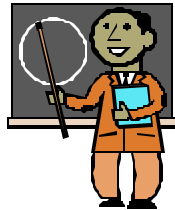
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✠ Morning Worship @ 8:45 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.
 ✠ Nichigo Japanese-speaking Service @ 10:45am Sanctuary

Sunday, September 8/Teacher & Leader Recognition
 Pastor James Chang ~ Advent Conspiracy

Sunday, September 15

Both in the Community Hall
 100th Anniversary Celebration Kickoff
 Pastor Steve Langley ~ Remember to Celebrate Your
 God Encounters
 Enjoy a delicious meal after each service

Sunday, September 22

From Forgiven to Forgiver Series

Sunday, September 29/Baptisms

From Forgiven to Forgiver Series

English-speaking children's Sunday school runs
 concurrent with the Worship Services. Nichigo children's
 Sunday school 9:30 a.m., Room 206.

Steve Langley, Senior Pastor, ext. 0
 Daniel Matsuda, Associate Pastor — Youth, ext. 681
 Eiji Osato, Associate Pastor — Nichigo, ext. 676
 James Chang, Assistant Pastor — Neighborhood, ext. 682
 Annette Kakimoto, Assistant Pastor —
 Leadership Development, ext. 680
 Chris Koga, Assistant Pastor—College, ext. 685 (pt)
 Layne Wakuta, Pastoral Intern — Middle School, ext. 684
 Susan Wakuta — Elementary Children's Director, ext. 689
 J.J. Frey, Worship Coordinator (pt)
 Wendy Nakano, Office Manager, ext. 672
 Peggy Kushigemachi, Financial Assistant, ext. 675
 Jan Magnani, Secretary, ext. 671
 Rei Abe, Nichigo Secretary, ext. 677 (pt)
 Aubrey Matsunami, Christian Educ. Secretary, ext. 678 (pt)
 Susie Shelley, Newsletter Editor, ext. 673 (pt)
 Kevin Hatashita, Maintenance Asst. (pt)
 Socorro "Coco" Kagawa, Maintenance Asst. (pt)
 Kevin Maeda, Maintenance Asst. (pt)
 Gerald Mayewaki, Maintenance-AV Asst. (pt)
 Andrew Sunada, Maintenance Asst. (pt)