THE SPIRIT NEWSLETTER
November 2022

IF GOD IS FOR US...

Happy Thanksgiving! Has God ever spoken to you in a very clear voice; and there is no doubt in your mind that it was Him? At the Sunday Harvest Festival set-up on October 30th, I shared that God told me, “I am for you.” When I think of someone who is “for you,” it is an understanding that this person is on your side; he/she supports you and is in agreement with what you say or do. But when **God is for you**, a spiritual dynamic brings things to another level. God who is all-powerful, all-knowing, and loving, is for you. This reminds me of Joshua, Esther, and the disciples in crazy, lopsided situations in the Bible. Yet they believed God was for them and they prevailed.

IN THIS ISSUE

If God is for us...
Susan Wakuta

College Car Wash
Brad Toy

New Senior Pastor
Perry Ishibashi

Missions Report
Bob Matsushima

November Board Update
Hermann Schurr

Family News & Calendar
GVBC

I am thankful that God was “for us” in the Harvest Festival planning which was fully on GVBC's campus this year. Serving and collaborating with the different ministry leaders and the core team was awesome and fun because it spurred new ideas to keep the Harvest Festival relevant.

“If God is for us, who can be against us?”
-Romans 8:31

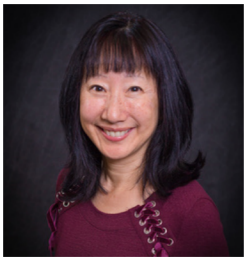
God was “for us” in meeting the needs of the Harvest Festival. Whether it was set-up, during, or clean-up, God provided over 100 volunteers. From our youth to senior citizens, English & Nihongo congregations, different ministries & community groups, guest relations, & individuals who wanted to serve, I praise God for our church coming together to love on the children and families. It was also great to have the café again. Among our usual staples, such as hotdogs, chili rice, and popcorn, we returned to selling our delicious spam musubis made by the Nihongo ladies. Of course, we sold out quickly. We raised $1,636 from food sales which benefited our KIDS CHURCH scholarships.

A huge need was the low amount of candy just a few weeks prior to the event. This church generously donated 26,000 pieces of candy. And as a GVBC tradition, we give out toothbrushes and toothpaste in the exit bags for the children. A big thank you to Dr. Stephen Hiroshige and Dr. Anne Yamane for their kindness in providing dental supplies.
The second part of Romans 8:31 is “who can be against us?” On October 31st, the evening was filled with joy and the presence of the Holy Spirit. There was such confidence in knowing that no evil was allowed to disrupt the goodness of God. We welcomed 296 children and 273 of them were not regular attendees. Again, there were many families that I did not recognize that night. It is my prayer that these children felt God’s love and will return to check out KIDS CHURCH.

May we be thankful that God’s words are true. If God is for you, who can be against you? NOTHING!

Susan Wakuta

KIDS CHURCH
Elementary Director



College Car Wash

Brad Toy

On October 16, 2022, the College Ministry had the privilege and honor of expressing their thankfulness to the GVBC Pastoral Staff. For the past few years during Pastor Appreciation Month, the College Ministry takes a Sunday afternoon to joyfully wash the Pastoral Staff's cars. The La Salle Ave parking lot was used from 1:30pm to 4:30pm to wash the outside and clean the inside of the pastor's cars. About 30 students joined in providing this small gift to the pastors. We feel that this is a great practical way to show how much we appreciate the shepherding that the Pastoral Staff provides for the GVBC family. We realize that the work of a pastor is difficult, stressful, tiresome, and often thankless. We pray that we will have more opportunities to express our gratitude to God and the staff for the work they do to further the Kingdom!

"Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their way of life, imitate their faith."
-Hebrews 13:7

New Senior Pastor

Dear GVBC Family,
We thank you for your prayers and support of the Pastoral Search Committee over the last year. At the Congregational Meeting on October 23, 2022, Pastor Daniel's call was overwhelmingly affirmed by our congregation. We are truly blessed and excited as he steps into his new role as Senior Pastor, effective as of November 1, 2022. We look forward to his service in the many years to come, along with his wife, Linda, and their son, Joshua. We are thankful for God's continued guidance and provision for our church family. And again, we thank you for your continued prayers as God leads us forward, together, in ministry.

Blessings to you,
Perry Ishibashi
Board Moderator

Missions Report

Bob Matsushima

Corenne and Phil Smith

IM and Hope Unlimited, Brazil

Corenne, Phil, and daughter Bella returned to Brazil on Oct 23. Upon arriving they heard the news of the death of 16-year-old Thallyson. He had lived at Hope Mtn for 4 years, but had recently run away, and was killed over issues of drug turf. Please pray for the Smiths as they grieve, as well as adjust to ministry. Phil sent an update on Nov 3 mentioning the overall tense situation in Brazil after the recent election, and chaotic looting in some areas. Pray for new house parents needed at Hope Mountain, and the boys residing there. Pray for the upcoming opening of the new church plant near Hope Mountain for graduates and the nearby community. We also need prayerful guidance and leadership for the possible plans of sending a 2023 GVBC team back to Brazil.

Cyril Nishimoto

IWA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ at GVBC. I'm thanking the Lord so much for your faithful and generous support of IWA's ministry! Please pray for us as we launch Iesu Chado.
For His glory, Cyril.

"Iesu Chao is the name of the new ministry being launched by Iwa. Translated from Japanese to English, Iesu Chado means "The Jesus Way of Tea." The call and vision of Iwa have always been to discover why people of Japanese ancestry, whether in Japan or elsewhere, have been resistant to becoming Christians, and to develop meaningful and effective ways for them to understand the Gospel and receive Jesus into their lives as Savior and Lord. After over forty years of Iwa's history, I believe God has given us something that will enable us to fulfill that call and vision as nothing else has before."
Stanley K. Inouye, President and Founder of Iwa

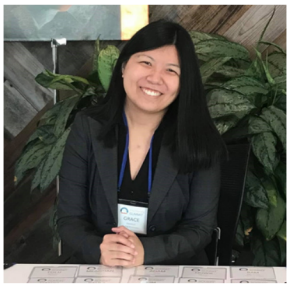
James Choung

InterVarsity

Please pray for:

1. Jiyoung's surgery. Jinhee's sister-in-law had surgery on October 21 for a large cancer mass in her chest. Please pray for recovery, rehabilitation and that God's healing hands be upon her.
2. Speaking @ FallCon (10/28-30). I've been asked to speak again at Greater Los Angeles' InterVarsity Fall Conference on Catalina Island off the coast of LA's South Bay. I'm giving four talks on "Life Together," reflections on the Christian community. Participating campuses include UCLA, UC Irvine, UC Riverside, CSU San Bernardino, and Santa Monica College. Please pray that my words had an impact upon the hearts of the students and that God's power is revealed to them.
3. Call to Faith @ Urbana 22 (12/30). I've been asked to be a plenary speaker, making the invitation to follow Jesus. I turned in a draft at the end of October. Please pray for my preparation and for the Spirit's guidance and inspiration. Please pray for the Urbana Conference and my participation in it.

And, something to celebrate: Jinhee and I celebrate 22 years together this past month! I couldn't have asked for a better friend and partner in life and love, and so thankful that we got two decades together!



Grace Hayashi

InterVarsity

Grace is the Senior Director of Strategy and Innovation. Praise for the completion of the large project she oversaw—8 courses of small group leader training to equip students to be small group leaders, for campus ministries, as well as the Urbana Missions Conference coming December 28-31, 2022. She is thankful for recent productive team meetings. Please pray as she oversees gatherings of key leaders as preparations are being made for ministry.

NOVEMBER BOARD UPDATE

Hermann Schurr

November 1, 2022

For the month of September, expenses totaled $125,858 and revenue totaled $100,112. Expenses exceeded revenue by $25,746. For the full year, through the month-end of September, adjusted revenue is now $26,059 in the red. The estimated October income was approximately $112,000.

The board approved a time of prayer and preparation for Pastor Daniel as he transitions into the role of Senior Pastor. Pastor Daniel will be temporarily stepping away from some of the more traditional pastoral responsibilities from November 2 through November 28 for a time to focus on God's leading for our staff and our church family. Daniel will be participating in the Election Meeting on November 13 and the Thanksgiving Service on November 20. Please be in prayer for Pastor Daniel and Linda during this time. Pastor Mike will complete his role as Ministerial Consultant when Pastor Daniel resumes his full pastoral duties on November 28.

GVBC has received two separate grants through The Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP), a federal effort to provide funding support for physical facility security enhancements to nonprofit organizations. Funds will be used to transition all doors to keyless entry and to enhance both interior and exterior video monitoring. The board had a preliminary discussion of these security enhancements. No date has yet been set as to when these security enhancements will actually be implemented.

In other business:

- The board approved seminarian scholarship funds to help offset seminary tuition expenses for both Tommy Morse and Ben Lee.
- The board approved GVBC membership for 13 individuals: Jocelyn Chang, Hugo Chi, Mercy Deng, DaRon Grier, Marlisa Allen Grier, Odelia Hui, Andrés Martinez, Ephraim Pang, Premla “Pam” Phillip, Praveena Phillip, Sanjay Phillip, Daniel Wesley Serna, and Jordan Yamamoto. We welcome each of these new members to our GVBC church family!
- The board acknowledged the passing of beloved GVBC members Violet Okada (member since January 28, 1962, passed away October 12, 2022) and Yasuko Iwatso (Nihongo member, passed away October 17, 2022).

Thank you for your continued prayers and support for your Board of Deacons!

FAMILY NEWS

Donations and Flowers are given in honor or loving memory:

Reiko Kobata >>> Harold Kobata
Stella Tamura >>> Mits Tamura
Amy Kato >>> Chino Ogata

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

LETTERS

Thank You

Dear Gardena Valley Baptist Church,
Thank you for the beautiful flowers. Our parents loved attending the church and are both rejoicing in God's love and presence.

Love,
Okada, Sakogawa,
& Yamasaki Families

The Pastoral Staff greatly appreciates your kindness & thoughtfulness. Thank you for all of your gifts and words of encouragement throughout the month of October. We've always felt loved and supported by you, and we are looking forward to continuing to build up the kingdom of God together!

Love,
GVBC Pastoral Staff

Food Pantry

The Gardena Emergency Food Pantry would like to THANK YOU for your generous donation. For over 40 years, the Food Pantry has been able to extend a helping hand to individuals & families in our community with food, bus tokens, case management, and homeless services.

Our resources have been impacted due to COVID-19 but your donation allows us to continue serving our Gardena residents. We appreciate your support, and together we will overcome and continue our mission to assist our community.

With gratitude,
Team Gardena

Services

In-Person English: 8:30 AM & 10:30 AM
Online English: 10:30 AM
In-Person & Online Nihongo: 10:30 AM

Calendar

11/13 - **Annual Election Meeting**
11/13 - **Nihongo Baptism**
11/19 - **Family Game Night**
11/20 - **Right Hand of Fellowship**
12/04 - **All Church Christmas Dinner**

Links

Website: www.gvbc.net
Youtube: www.bit.ly/GVBCyoutube
GVBC App: www.bit.ly/GVBCapp

1630 W. 158TH ST.
GARDENA, CA 90247
310-323-5683
GVBC@GVBC.NET

GVBC