



GARDENA VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

Folding Our Tents

BY PASTOR DOUG

I remember it well – our family had left Congo for a visit to the US. We landed in New York, rented a car, and drove across the US, stopping at campsites along the way. On our way out of New York city we purchased a tent – still in its box. It was pouring rain when we reached our first campsite. The feeble flashlight barely cut through the pitch black as we wrestled the tent open. Finally, the tent relented and we climbed in for the night. Throughout the night I had water dripping on my face, but the on-going rain discouraged me from going outside to find out what the problem was. In the morning, the rain had stopped, so I squeezed out of the tent opening. Standing back and studying the tent I discovered I just climbed out through a window that had been dripping on me all night because we had put the tent up upside down. I was glad to fold up that tent and put it away.

Paul compares our bodies to tents in 2 Corinthians 5 and Eugene Peterson's Message version puts it like this:

What's in this issue

1. Folding Our Tents
2. Children's Ministry Update
3. Annual Business Meeting Note
4. Youth Camp Review
5. College Camp Review
6. Christian Song
7. Missions Report
8. Family News & Memorials
9. Calendar

"For instance, we know that when these bodies of ours are taken down like tents and folded away, they will be replaced by resurrection bodies in heaven—God-made, not handmade—and we'll never have to relocate our "tents" again. Sometimes we can hardly wait to move—and so we cry out in frustration. Compared to what's coming, living conditions around here seem like a stopover in an unfurnished shack, and we're tired of it! We've been given a glimpse of the real thing, our true home, our resurrection bodies! The Spirit of God whets your appetite by giving us a taste of what's ahead. He puts a little of heaven in our hearts so that we'll never settle for less."

2 Corinthians 5:1-5



Palm Sunday · Good Friday · Easter

1 Corinthians 15:53

For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

One thing I have always appreciated about the Bible, is that its heroes are all flawed people. Their humanity shows. In the above passage Paul may be expressing his own tiredness, physical handicaps, and pains, something he wrote of in more than one of his letters. By the time we get to 2 Timothy 4:6 it is clear that Paul was ready to fold up his tent and put it away. In 1 Corinthians 15, the Apostle states that our fleshly bodies cannot enter into the eternal presence of God. Instead, we gladly set aside our earthly "tent" so that we may possess the new heavenly one which God has prepared for us, and which will never be subject to decay. One day we will fold up our last tent and put it away so we might participate in resurrected life freely given to us by the One who has conquered death.

During this season of pandemics and lockdowns, we have groaned in these earthly tents. We are more aware than ever of the physical limitations of this life. As we draw near to Easter, resurrection seems more welcoming and relevant than ever before! We are ready to be let out! We yearn to be set free from our "sheltering in" and experience our own resurrection. As Holy Week draws closer, we look forward to:

Celebrating Christ's entry into Jerusalem on **March 28th**
Remembering His death on Good Friday, **April 2nd**
Exulting in His resurrection on Easter Sunday, **April 4th**

Worshipping the Resurrected Christ!

Pastor Doug

In-person Service Registration

Easter Sunday will be our first service available both online and in-person! In order to follow proper health and safety guidelines, you will need to register to attend worship service in-person. Check out our website <https://gvbc.net/> for registration information. Registration will be open Tuesday - Friday the week before Sunday service. For even quicker access, you may also download our GVBC app <https://bit.ly/gvbcapp/>. If you need assistance, please call our church office (310-323-5683) and we can help you with that.

Children's Ministry Update

BY SUSAN WAKUTA

Heartcraft: KIDS CHURCH Online Retreat took place on Friday, February 12, 2021. We welcomed twelve 4th & 5th graders who discovered the treasure of God's heart found in Mark 12:30-31, Love God, Love People.

Sweetheart's Widows Weekend: On Saturday, February 13th, we hosted a Valentine's Day Party for the widows with dancing from the Hula Ministry, a devotional on being God's masterpiece, and a song by Layne Sinatra. On Sunday February 14th, we delivered a special lunch to 48 lovely ladies. The children made over 100 Valentine's Day cards to also pass out to them.



Annual Business Meeting Note

BY JAMES CHANG

On Sunday, February 21, from 1:00pm - 2:30pm, we held our 2021 Annual Business Meeting with about 138 in online attendance over Zoom. Together, we accepted the November 2020 Annual Election Meeting Minutes as well as the 2020 Annual Report. If you would like a copy of our 2020 Annual Report, please contact the church office. Pastor Eiji shared with us about the ways online ministry has expanded Nihongo ministry to see new lives come to know Jesus. Pastor Daniel shared about the many ways GVBC has continued to pull together in community in spite of this Pandemic. We look forward to the new ways God will minister in us and through us in 2021!

Youth Camp Review

BY MICHELLE YORK

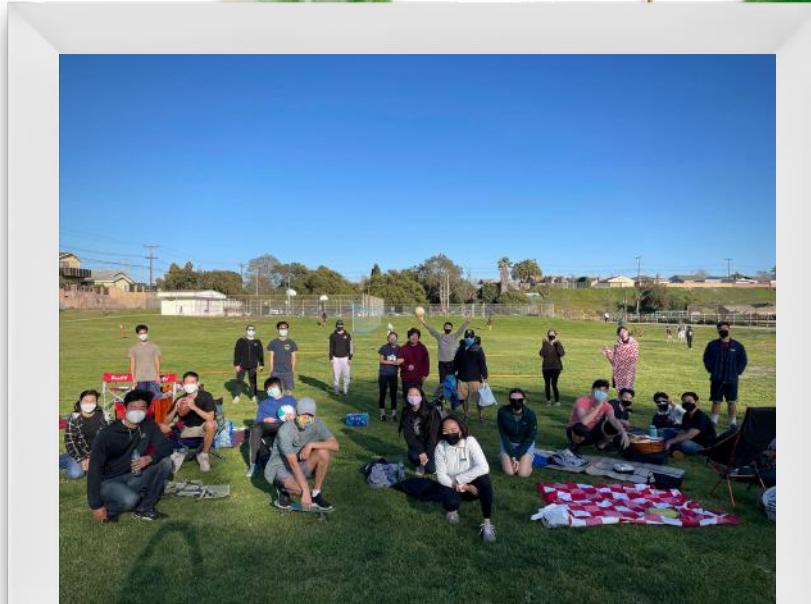
From February 12-14, 53 students and leaders gathered on Zoom for an online Youth Winter Camp. Though such a different experience from going to the mountains, GVBC Youth wanted to provide an intentional weekend to focus on worshipping God, listening to Him, and exploring big life questions. This year's theme was about beholding God, seeing Him for who He is as Creator, Redeemer, and King. On Sunday, there was an optional social distanced park hangout, which was great to be able to see one another in person, play games, and enjoy some snacks. Special thanks to the youth leaders who served!



College Camp Review

BY VINCENT FU

On February 27, 28 of our college students and leaders gathered on Zoom for an all day retreat. The retreat's speaker, Kent Hirano spoke on the importance of "Delighting in the Lord". This retreat helped us realize in this tough time how good God truly is in providing for us. During an optional socially distanced lunch break at a nearby park, college students enjoyed each other's company. Some brought their instrument for worship while others played casual volleyball. Even though this retreat was not typical, we are especially thankful for the planning done to make this happen.





Christian Song

BY CYNTHIA COPELAND

2017 held great promise for Christian Song who was a recently minted Eagle Scout and the recipient of a full scholarship to the highly competitive U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO which is one of three military officer training facilities in the country. His plan was to study management and fulfill his lifelong dream of piloting remote aircraft known as drones. Up to this point, he attended a local Presbyterian church with his family. But after 18 months in Colorado, God was steering his life in another direction. At the time, he felt he was not sufficiently surrounded by fellow believers. His academic work suffered and he found himself returning home. "I had no Plan B. I was so stressed out and worried. This was the darkest part of my life." He began to pick up the pieces of his life by taking classes at El Camino in preparation for transfer to USC as an International Relations major studying political science, Korean language and fulfilling his commitment to the military by being involved in the ROTC program.

On the spiritual front, after his return from Colorado, his mother as an encouragement organized time Monday to Friday for the entire family to be together and to daily read 4 chapters of the Bible to discern God's purpose and character during this time of great uncertainty and deep disappointment and to listen carefully for what God's plan was for Christian's life. His mother's abundant faith in the Lord has been fruitful and the family practice of daily Bible reading has continued. His parents encouraged Christian to worship with other young believers and this began his plan to visit several congregations in the South Bay. His journey was not a long one from the family home in Gardena, but it has been one that has led him to experience deeper spiritual growth with other young believers that Christian had been yearning for. GVBC was the first church Christian visited along with his parents. It was on that Sunday, that the Songs recognized a dear, long time family friend whom they had known at the family's church in Torrance. Clearly this was a blessed assurance that God's hand was active in Christian's search for a church family. Brandon Hirano's warm welcome to the new visitor and his introductions to other college aged students set the stage for Christian to consider the possibility that GVBC could be his new church home.

Since being led to GVBC, Christian has been an active member of the audio-visual ministry which has been providential in being a part of a team headed by Michelle Dresser by providing the technical expertise allowing us to worship during the pandemic restrictions. He is also in front of the camera on Sunday mornings along with Michele Hirano providing the announcements. Christian is involved with Core Ministry as well. He continues to grow his faith through Sunday lessons with Brad Toy and has been encouraged by his Men's College Group leader Dave Uratsu to develop and compose his testimony.

"I felt like I was the prodigal son who lost everything and returned home. I felt so low; I failed everyone, shamed everyone. But in that time of depression and loss of everything, I was welcomed with open arms by the Lord. I am a believer of the importance of relationship and the use of oneself as a resource. Maybe it's having a cup of coffee and just talking about books, school, finals, relationships, video games, food. I wish to be strong in my faith to offer my wisdom and to share what it took for me to get out of the lowest point in my life. Things may be awful now but just wait, He always knows what is best for you." - Christian Song

Missions Report

BY BOB MATSUSHIMA

CRU



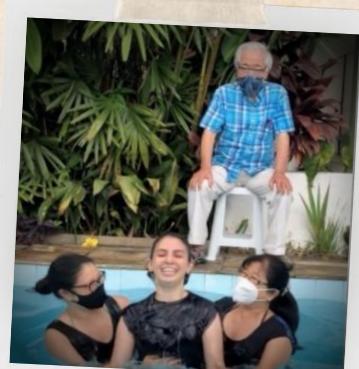
Heather and Jojo Deguzman

In January 2021 doctors found an orange size cyst in Heather's ovary. A gynecologist was consulted and another ultrasound will be performed in March. This will determine if surgery is needed or not. Please pray that the cyst will have shrunk and surgery is not needed.

A CRU Debrief was recently held for staff who are back from the mission field in the past year. Thirty people participated. This Debrief is to help them transition well. Please pray that all individuals will feel God's warm embrace in this transition process.

OC International

Ken and Diane were recently able to sell their apartment. This is a relief as this will enable them to retire from the mission field back to the US without any encumbrances. Yet, ministry still goes on. Ken recently participated in the baptisms in the swimming pool of one of his deacons.



Baptism

One woman's testimony included these words: "In this desperate situation, my sister in law began to study the Bible with me. It took a long time to come to grips with the Lord and His grace. He offered His grace to a very bitter person...the Father has been very gracious to me!"



Mercy Outreach Mission

San Telmo, Mexico

Mission trips were made last year over the Memorial Day weekend and the weekend before Christmas. Because of Covid the number of participants was smaller than usual. Trips in March and October had to be cancelled.

The San Telmo Christian School is now closed because of Covid. The students pick up their homework weekly. The internet is not available so there is no online instruction. Construction has begun following the ground breaking ceremony in December for the San Telmo Christian High School. Please pray for the construction process and adequate funds for completion.

The migrant farm camp and its occupants has been hard hit by Covid. Please pray that God will sustain the workers and their families during this most difficult time.

Family News

Flowers

Donations and Flowers given in honor or loving memory:

From:	To:
Brian & Joyce Gohata	Tomio & Jan Gohata
Howard & Sawako Imatomi	Jeanette Tsutsui

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

New Baby

Grandparents: Eddie & Eileen Yorizane; Glenn & Connie Matsushima
Parents: Craig & Traci

Yorizane
Born Saturday, 2/27/21
@ 5:44am

8 lb. 9 oz. 21 in. long
Leah Ai Yorizane



Grandparents: Niel York & Amy York; Henry Law

Parents: Kyle & Michelle York

Born Tuesday, 3/16/21
@ 2:47pm

6.67 lb. 18.3 inches long
Zoe Reiko York



Letters

Dear Gardena Valley Baptist Church,
Thank you for the delicious gift basket full of goodies that you delivered. Our staff really enjoyed them! Thank you for everything you do for our City. We truly appreciate it!

Happy Valentine's Day.

Sincerely,
Gardena City Hall Staff

Condolences

Our sympathies go to the family of **Mary Sakatani**, who passed away on February 26th.

Our prayers are with Utako Yamanaka. Her husband **Moriyoshi Yamanaka** passed away on March 13th.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of **Herb Kawai**, who passed away on March 15th.

Our deep sympathies for the family of **Jane Tsujiuchi**, who passed away on March 17th. We are praying for her son's family Greg & Chai Tsujiuchi and their son Travis.

Congratulations

Congratulations to **Rudy & Kirstin Carruolo**! They were married at GVBC on March 14th. Pastor Daniel officiated the ceremony.



Services

Online English
Online Nihongo
In-person Service

10:00 AM @ www.gvbc.net/bulletin
10:45 AM @ www.gvbc.net/jp
Register @ www.gvbc.net

The Latest

KidZone Easter Party
Good Friday Service
Easter Sunday Service

3/26
4/2 @ 7 PM
4/4

Important links

Youtube
After Service Fellowship
GVBC App

www.bit.ly/GVBCyoutube
www.bit.ly/GVBCfellowship
www.bit.ly/GVBCapp



**1630 W. 158TH ST.
GARDENA, CA 90247**

310-323-5683
gvbc@gvbc.net