



GARDENA VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH



HERALDING THE GOOD NEWS

BY PASTOR DOUG, SENIOR PASTOR

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There are times when singing a Christmas carol that I've wondered about the Biblical accuracy of the carol. This has never been the case with Charles Wesley's carol, Hark the Herald Angels Sing. Wesley used an old English word "herald" which means "a royal or official messenger". Written within a year of Wesley's conversion, the inspiration of his newly-made commitment to Christ was still fresh. Rather than simply tell the nativity story, Wesley pours theological truths into this text. The first verse tells the story of the angels proclaiming Christ's birth, and the second and third verses go on to make it very clear why the angels sang.

**“All this is from
God, who reconciled us
to himself through
Christ and gave us the
ministry of
reconciliation.”**

2 Corinthians 5:18

Simply by describing Christ, Wesley tells us the entire Gospel story. This carol contains many Biblical truths such as:

- Christ’s deity
- Christ’s humanity
- Christ’s kingship
- Christ’s work of reconciliation
- Christ’s fulfillment of prophecy
- Everlasting life in the Lord Jesus Christ

Wesley literally heralds the good news through this wonderful carol. **2nd Corinthians 5:18** says that God reconciled us to Himself through Jesus. But Paul doesn’t stop there. He goes on to say in verses nineteen and twenty, *And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.* What has been “heralded to us” we demonstrate and declare to others. This Christmas season we can become heralds through our acts of compassion and generosity along with simply inviting people to our Sunday morning advent services and the Christmas Eve service. This Christmas season, become a herald of good news!

Glory to the newborn King!

Pastor Doug



Operation Christmas Child was again a great success as GVBC contributed a total of **455** boxes! We have heard that our boxes were processed on November 30 and are en route to the Philippines or Micronesia. Many children will be blessed with the useful gifts and supplies as well as the opportunity to hear the gospel message in their own language. Distribution takes place through churches, who are grateful for this help in their evangelism. The children will also be given an opportunity to participate in a local discipleship program called The Greatest Journey. Let’s pray for the **455** children who will be touched by our boxes. Thank you for helping to spread the gospel around the world through these special Christmas shoeboxes!



PARENT CONFERENCE

Over 50 parents attended the GVBC "Focus" Parent Conference the weekend of November 15-16. As families find themselves surrounded by the distractions of schoolwork, sports, extracurricular activities, and technology, parents can easily get caught up in what's urgent and thereby lose sight of what's truly important. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 reminds us that we are to love God with all that we are and trust God's Word in all that we do, then train our children to do the same. Practical workshops were offered on the following topics: planting early seeds of faith, what disciple-making looks like at home, becoming your child's prayer warrior, managing seasons of transition, delighting in your child's design, and putting technology in its proper place. Our goal was to drive home the point that parents have the huge privilege and responsibility of being the primary spiritual nurturers of our children. Praise God for an encouraging response!



UNITE BILINGUAL WORSHIP SERVICE

We had our first UNITE worship service in November! It was a wonderful time of worshiping together in both English and Japanese, hearing a testimony of how God worked in the life of our brother Brandon Tasaki, and also a time of food and fellowship! We were blessed with 68 people, some of which were newcomers. One of the biggest blessings was seeing people from our church community connecting with Japanese international students from El Camino College. God's heart for the body to be united in Christ was really apparent.

In 2020, UNITE will be held every two months, with the next being Saturday, January 18. Please pray that God would continue to use this service as a space for both Japanese speakers and English speakers to connect, and that God would work through us. Pray also for the international students who come, that they would be saved through encountering Christ in His Gospel preached to them and encountering the unique love that only comes from His body.





CHRISTMAS POTLUCK

We had a great turnout for our GVBC Christmas Potluck on Sunday, December 8th! Newlyweds Shoki and Cindy Hioki were our MCs for the night, leading us through a program that included a welcome from Pastor Doug and Pastor Eiji, Christmas carols sung in both English and Japanese, games led by Thomas and Minako Fujimoto, and a special acapella quartet rendition of Little Drummer Boy by Wendy Katagi, Teresa Louie, Layne Wakuta, and Clark Cottrell. Huge kudos to the hospitality team for their behind-the-scenes work with setup, decorations, and kitchen prep/cleanup. Thanks also to audio/visual helpers Gerald Mayewaki and Brandon Hirano, photographer Jeff Lew, as well as many others who made it possible for the Christmas Potluck to bring our entire GVBC church family together and make the night special for all of us!



MISSIONS



DAN AND CASI BROWN

SIM/ASIAN ACCESS

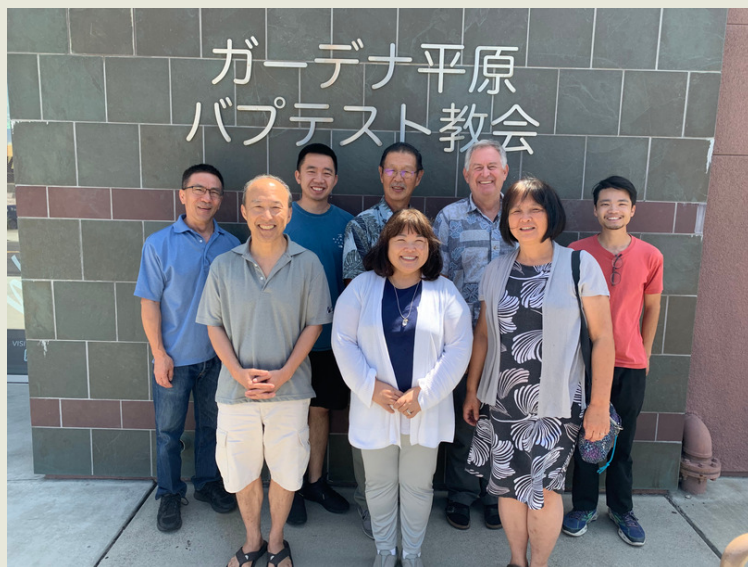
GVBC is happy to welcome Dan and Casi Brown as new missionaries. They have served with SIM/Asian Access since 2012 as missionaries to Japan. They serve at the Oasis Chapel in Rifu with Pastor Makito Matsuda. They are considered a bridge between the church and the community as they focus on evangelism and discipleship. They are involved in Oasis Chapel's cafe, English classes, school PTA, neighborhood councils, and more. They have also worked with the short term missions teams that GVBC has sent since 2013. They have 3 young children, Abbi, Rylie, and Landon.

Please pray for them:

1. For Dan & Casi's relationships with various people, for conversations and opportunities to share the Gospel.
2. Pray for the English cafe and the people attending. Pray that the seeds of God's Word that go out during their lessons would be watered, take root, and the Lord would bring growth.
3. Pray for the kids as they are studying English-reading and writing. Pray that they would grow spiritually through this, relying on God's strength for their learning.

THAILAND SHORT TERM MISSION UPDATE!

Please pray for the Thailand short-term mission team as they prepare to serve next month January 15-30. They will work with Mike and Becky Mann and their ministry bringing a water system to the Lahu people in northern Thailand. This trip has been funded by 2018 Advent Conspiracy. The team's prayer letter can be read at the church website. <https://www.gvbc.net/globalmissions>



UPCOMING SHORT-TERM MISSION TRIPS

The Brazil team will serve June 20 - July 2 and the Japan team will serve June 24 - July 8. Applications for both teams will be available in early January.



HULA



UKULELE



GVBC's Hula Ministry (Akua Ohana O'Hula) was invited to dance for the Torrance Rose Float Association's fundraiser (TRFA)! When TRFA called Tammy Cosare, ministry leader, she let them know that they were a "praise" hula team and only danced to worship songs. Several hula teams were being considered, so they didn't really think TRFA would select the "amateurs" to be their entertainment.

However, God had a different plan, and to their surprise were chosen! How wonderful to be able to share God's love at this secular event! Their team of 15 danced to 6 worship songs for approximately 200 people. Darin Yamada, their hula Kumu (teacher), introduced each song and God's message of love and hope. TRFA was very pleased that their committee made the right choice!

As a result of this event they were invited to dance at a fundraiser for Community's Child, a shelter for homeless women and children. Our Lord works in mysterious ways! If you would like to learn how to dance hula, or would like more information about the Hula Ministry, visit GVBC's website: <https://www.gvbc.net/hula>

The Lord has expanded the **GVBC Ukulele Ministry**, led by Marianne Matsuda, to reach out to disabled children and their families. When Marianne heard about Asia America Symphony Association's (AASA) announcement that they were going to teach disabled children how to play the ukulele, she knew it was a calling for her to answer their vision to reach out. She suddenly became their instructor! Working with AASA and other non-profit organizations, Marianne and some of her ukulele students (the Jammers) instructed blind children and autistic children how to play the ukulele. The parents' faces were so moving to watch as they responded to their children's joy of making music. Some of AASA volunteers and the student's teachers, and parents are learning to play the ukulele too! If you would like to learn how to play the ukulele, or would like more information about the Ukulele Ministry, visit GVBC's website: <https://www.gvbc.net/ukelele>





FLOWERS

Donations and Flowers given in honor or loving memory:

FROM

Howard & Sawako Imatomi

Howard & Sawako Imatomi

Betty Shiotani

Amy Kato

Ueda Memorial Fund

TO

Robert Arai's birthday

For Piano/Organ Repair Fund

Amy Kato's birthday

For Piano/Organ Repair Fund

Amy Kato's birthday

Bob Kato

Edith Matsumura

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

ELECTION MEETING RESULTS

Our Annual Election meeting was held on Sunday, November 17. Both the 2020 General Fund Budget and Constitution amendments were adopted. Thank you to the Constitution committee comprised of Hermann Schurr, David Cheng, Genie Doi and Amy Kushigemachi, along with Pastor Doug Brown, who worked very hard for months on the revision.

We also elected to the Board of Deacons:

Perry Ishibashi
Vice Moderator



Jim Kawashima
Assistant Treasurer



Bill Dresser
Member At Large



Minako Fujimoto
Member At Large



Keiko Imatomi
Member At Large



LETTERS

Our sympathies are with Gary & Yumiko Sanders and their children Duke, Jade and Hawk, on the passing of their father and grandfather, Larry Sanders. Larry passed away on December 10. The funeral service will be Sunday, December 22, 3 PM at GVBC with Pastor Daniel officiating.

Dear GVBC family,

Thank you so much for all the prayers, letters, and support that you showed to me while I was in the hospital! I really appreciated the beautiful flowers that you sent, as well as the many visits by the pastoral staff, college ministry, and other members of the congregation. Thanks for showing God's love to me in this difficult trial!

Sincerely,

Wesley Shiozaki



MINISTRY OUTLOOK

December 22nd	Christmas Services @ 8:45 AM & 10:45 AM
December 24th	Christmas Eve Service @ 6:00 PM
December 25th	MERRY CHRISTMAS
January 1st	HAPPY NEW YEAR
January 4th	Work Day / Christmas Decorations Take Down



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