

Gardena Valley Baptist Church

SPIRIT

Issue 19
October 6, 2010

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,

During the first 2 months of 2011, we will be holding our fourth Capital Stewardship Campaign. We will not be calling it Nehemiah 4; in fact, we don't have a title yet. We only know that Nehemiah 3 will end in November. We have a debt of \$3,703,123 and a monthly payment of \$26,826. We, as a congregation, voted to assume this debt when we started building what we now occupy. We praise God for all we have been able to do, but we also recognize our responsibilities during these hard, economical times.



So how do we begin? I have talked to Silvio & Jessie Carrara and they have agreed to be part of the leadership. The three of us have felt that before any more discussion takes place, we as a church need to be praying for God's plan. So the first group of people we are recruiting is the Prayer Leadership Team. This team will be responsible for calling our entire church to pray. The goal I have given them is, "Let's get everyone praying!"

Why pray first? Because God has promised to lead us. We are not to plan things and then ask God to bless it. He is not our chaplain; He's the boss – and prayer is the way He communicates with us. Everyone prays.

I am sure there will be a time when the team will ask all of us to commit this campaign to prayer. How we pray; when we pray; for all the details of what to pray for will come from them, but I am asking for your prayers NOW because I need it.

This campaign is to be the Lord's, so we start by asking for His guidance. Please start praying right now for guidance for the Prayer Leadership Team as they seek how to organize us, communicate to us, and lead us in prayer for "The Campaign".

I want to thank you right now for your prayers.

God bless,
Pastor Steve

Making Decisions for Christ

Baptisms on

Sunday, September 19

My name is **Cassie Baja Donavan**. I turned to God when I was about eight. My mom had gone crazy. She would think stalkers were in the computer so she ruined it. She would think the TV was going to grab her so she would sleep the farthest away from it. But, the thing that really hurt was she thought, since she had a bad childhood, she had to make mine horrible and she would physically abuse me — like hitting me with stuff and all that. And, I would just think, “God, tell me why. If you say you are the true God, why won’t you stop this?”

Then, when I was about 10, we came upon Citylights Church and I went to it. But, I would just go to see my friends. And, one day I actually listened to Pastor Thien’s [Doan] message and I thought it really spoke out to me. So, after church I went home and prayed for forgiveness and I accepted Jesus into my life. So, that’s how I fully became a Christian.



Hello, my name is **Christopher John Bishop**. This is my testimony on how I gave my life to Christ. When I was in high school, I used to be a very selfish person, thinking I could do what I wanted and get what I wanted when I wanted it. I was watching a video on TV which really made me turn my life to Christ and try to follow His words as I was watching someone singing and ripping the pages of the Bible. I was so furious when I saw that. When that happened, I started going to church, but tried to follow the words as much as I could. I didn’t have any other personal guidance to help me at the time. Then, someone invited me to another church. When going there, I thought I was really loved, but then they mentally abused me in my thoughts, telling me what to do, what not to do, how to live my life, judging me in the words of the Bible, and giving me ultimatums, which really hurt me. In two months, I left the church. I was going out of my mind! I stopped going to church for a while,

thinking what should I do with my life?

I started working in 2001 without my old church knowing about it and I stopped returning their calls. Three years later, in 2004, I felt the Spirit of God inside me. This was when I started praying in the break room at my job, before going to sleep, and before I started working. This was the time when I truly decided to trust in Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of my life. That was my truth and He came inside of me and I felt Him. I used to always be a person who likes to please people. The only person I have to please now is God.

I started coming to GVBC in 2005. Don Kittleson, a classmate at El Camino College who attended this church, invited me. It felt like family here when I came. Speaking of family, my uncle is Edward Bishop who has been a member of this church for a long time. I began a new relationship with him in my family. And, I felt like he was like a real father figure to me.

In 2008, I thought my life was going to end because I was encountered by young gang members, asking me what gang I was from then they quickly sucker punched me. When I was attacked that night, I knew somehow God was right by my side. I sent the message on Facebook and the message got spread. So, I got a lot of prayers from you guys and my family, too. I was blessed that you guys showed me some love and support and kept me in your prayers, too. I will never give up on my faith so keep on praying for me and my job, too, because it’s crazy out there looking for a job nowadays.

I want to thank you guys for helping me so much through my troubles and my personal issues as well. If it wasn’t for the love and support of this church, I wouldn’t be here. Thank you.



Making Decisions for Christ

Baptisms Continued



Hello, my name is **Brandon Takeuchi**, and I'm here to talk about how I came to know Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. To start off, I didn't grow up in the church and I didn't grow up knowing Jesus as my Savior. Some of you know about my past with my family and you know it wasn't so easy growing up.

All went well up until I hit high school. I would say, to this day, my first two years of high school were the worst two years of my life. But, it didn't start out that way. When I first started, I met two people who brought me to GVBC for the first time. These two people were Lauren Yoshiba and Stephanie Mikamo.

I remember to this day the way I acknowledged them was with a head-nod and a *what up?* Dean Yokota [high school leader] can agree. After I went to my first meeting, I enjoyed it and continued to come out on a weekly basis. I began to continue for a couple months until I decided to do something different.

I think, most of you can agree, while you're in high school, you want to be known as the *cool guy* and not as a *nobody*. That's what I wanted. I wanted to be cool and I felt the group I hung out with wasn't what I wanted. So, I decided to ditch the group and hung out with the *cool* group. Unfortunately, wanting to be cool comes with a price. As I said, the first two years of high school were the worst years of my life. I was bullied and messed with and known as the guy who never fought back when someone messed with me. To this day I honestly feel like I was the guy who everyone hated.

Day-in and day-out I came home with different color arms caused from the physical pain I took from the people I hung out with. For two years I endured this pain. It wasn't until the summer after my sophomore year I really decided to make a change in my life. I decided one of the days, during the summer, I would come to a Friday night meeting at GVBC. Coincidentally, Melissa Frey was there that night as well. She gave an announcement about worship practice for summer camp. And, I still remember she said, "If you want to come to practice, signups are in the back. Practice is next Friday before high school group."

So I thought, "Hey why not? I'll give it a shot." But here's what I went into it with: Only two things went through my mind during the announcement — practice and music. No lyrics, no worship, no God. I went to the practice not even caring about worship or what these songs meant. I just cared about playing music. Then camp came around. I also had only two things on my mind — playing music and meeting girls. Hey, I was that guy! Looking back, both of those things were a failure. I was horrible at playing music, but thought I was the best. And, I couldn't talk to a girl for squat! But, I did get something out of it. I made new friends and got a better understanding of what worship is and who God really is.

Throughout the week I started meeting new people and opening up a little more, day-after-day. But, my mindset going into camp completely changed after leaving camp. And I decided I would change my style of life and live a better one for God. I went to school, leaving my old friends or hanging out with them. Praise God they still loved me and still wanted to hang out with me. To this day, that was a time I definitely remember and do not regret to this day. Since becoming a Christian, I've realized God has given me a gift which has allowed me to overcome my struggles and bring me to the place I am today. And that gift is music. Music is the tool which sparked my interest in wanting to be part of this church. It's allowed me to serve in so many different ministries and serve in many different ways. It's because I was given an opportunity to do worship which has gotten me to where I am today. As I said, I serve in so many ways, using the gift of music. Many of you have even supported me this past summer to serve with a ministry all about evangelizing through music. A mission trip is really where I looked back to where I've come from to where I am now. God has worked in my life in so many different ways and has put me through many trials and struggles. But, by His love and grace I've gotten through and continue to strive to love Him and serve Him day-in and day-out. You guys are my church family and most of you have helped me become who I am today. God is good. Thank you!

[Austi Kaji and Julie Tofukuji's testimonies will appear in the Oct. 20 issue]



“Actions Which Impact Lives”

Profile of Ryan Shiozaki

By Kathy Aiso

“There is no experience better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up.”

—John Andrew Holmer

Ryan Shiozaki’s short-term mission in June with Citylights Church not only blessed the people he ministered with, but gave him unexpected blessings, too. As a new Christian, Ryan gave his testimony to 200 homeless people. It was a first for Ryan, who had never given his testimony to such a large group. Although Ryan was nervous, he trusted God. God blessed him in a special way with an affirming comment afterwards from a former prison inmate named Kai.

Actions speak louder than words

After hearing Ryan’s testimony, Kai told him about his background (how he served a 30-year jail sentence for attempting to kill a police officer), then mentioned he had just accepted the Lord. What moved Kai to make the decision? Ryan’s testimony as well as the loving actions of GVBC high school youth, who were serving the homeless that week. They could have done anything else during their vacation, Kai reasoned, but they chose to serve the homeless. Their loving actions spoke louder than their words, which touched Kai’s heart. Conversely, Ryan was touched by Kai’s heartfelt affirmation about the youth.

Eye-opening experiences

This being his first exposure to serving the homeless, Ryan was blessed in other ways during the week. “It was eye-opening to see homeless people struggling in their health and finances. Despite the obstacles, they trusted in God and grew stronger in the Lord,” Ryan shared. Ryan felt humbled, knowing he grew up in the best of circumstances, a stable home, where all his needs were met, surrounded by loving family and friends.

In addition to giving his testimony Ryan, along with the other youth, hosted a Vacation Bible School and a carnival. They also helped with the food pantry, distributing food and serving at other ministry sights around Long Beach. The week turned out to be one of the most unforgettable and life-enriching experiences, one Ryan will never forget. He felt blessed to be used by the Lord.



Growing up in the South Bay

A native of Long Beach, Ryan grew up with his older brother, Randy and parents in Torrance and Palos Verdes. Along with his family, Ryan attended Palos Verdes Baptist Church from the ages of five to eight. At the Faith United Methodist Church in Torrance, where the family attended during Ryan’s preteen and early-teen years, he gained an understanding of who the Lord was. He participated in Sunday school and the middle school youth group.

Joining a very welcoming youth group

Growing up in the South Bay, Ryan attended schools in Torrance and later, Palos Verdes. This past June, he graduated from Peninsula High School, where he played on the varsity basketball team. He is grateful to Kelcie Kadowaki, a lifetime friend, for inviting him to GVBC. Beginning in September 2009, he began consistently coming out to the high school youth group. “I found Pastor Daniel Matsuda and the youth group very welcoming,” he recalled.

It started out as a social thing, but as time passed, Ryan began wanting to learn more about God. As Ryan began learning from his Christian friends, Kelcie, Isaac Ide, and Reed Sata, he gained a deeper understanding about his faith. In time, Ryan’s faith grew. After returning home from the Alpine Winter Retreat this past March, Ryan accepted the Lord. Friends Kelcie, Isaac, and Ryan Colwell helped him with his decision. Ryan is thankful for all his Christian friends, but mentions Kelcie, Issac, and Reed as the most influential persons in his Christian walk. From the beginning, they answered his questions about God, as well as held him accountable for his walk. They continue to do this for him, which he really appreciates.

God’s plans for his life

In other ways, Ryan has been blessed personally. In a short period of time, when he accepted the Lord, Ryan also got his acceptance to U.C.L.A. A dream fulfilled, Ryan considers going to U.C.L.A. a blessing. Growing up, Ryan attended all the U.C.L.A. football and basketball games with his dad (a U.C.L.A. graduate and also, Bruin fan) and his brother, Randy.

(Continued on page 5)



Don't just preach — take action!

Since becoming a Christian, Ryan takes opportunities to witness to his non-Christian friends. In speaking about effective witnessing, Ryan shared, "You can't just preach about God. Your actions must display your faith. Words are not enough." Kai's affirmation about the GVBC high school youth personally reaffirmed this to Ryan. Applying it to his personal life, Ryan wisely strives to witness to his non-Christian friends through example.

Lean not on your own understanding

Ryan's favorite Bible verses, Proverbs 3:5, 6 remind him not to depend on his own understanding, but on God's. As the sovereign creator of the universe, God knows what's best.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him. And He will make your paths straight."

As Ryan increasingly trusts in God, his actions reflect more of his Heavenly Father.

Our prayers and condolences go out to:

- ✎ Maria Tachihara in the passing of her brother, Daniel Eto, who passed away on Sept. 22. He was 89 years old and lived in New Jersey.
- ✎ To the Shinoda family in the passing of Alice Shinoda. The funeral will be on Saturday, October 9, 11:00 AM at GVBC. Rev. Sam Tonomura is officiating.

New baby announcement:



👶 Congratulations to Roger & Kathy Sato in the birth of their baby girl, Kylie Ami who was born on September 21 at 3:30PM. Kylie was 5 lbs. 8 oz. Proud grandmother is Dora Sato.

Letters to our family

- ✉ Dear GVBC, The Hisako Miya [passed away on July 25] family would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation for your loving support during our time of loss. We hope your life was touched by Hisa and the memories you shared with her are treasures you will keep for the rest of your days. We rest in the assurance that she is at peace and rejoicing with her Lord and Savior in heaven. Thank you for your kind expression of sympathy. Ken Miya, Carolyn & Mark Fong, Amy Miya
- ✉ Dear GVBC, Thank you for the prayers and beautiful flowers for my mother's (Gladys Goon Choi) celebration of life service on September 18. That was very thoughtful. Thank you for welcoming her like a

Family News

lifelong friend whenever she visited. She enjoyed our church very much. She was baptized and sang in the choir of First Baptist church in Seattle. She was a member of the First Chinese Baptist church in Sacramento until her passing. So, she was no stranger to the worship songs and loved singing along at our church. May God continue to bless your ministries. Love through Christ, The Choi Family — Barbara Moncada and Family

In the news:

- 📰 A picture of Patty Yanaga (GVBC's Adult Choir Director) was spotted in the Thursday, September 16, 2010 *Gardena Valley News* under an article titled "City Employees Honored." On September 9, the City of Gardena acknowledged and honored its employee with an Employee Recognition Luncheon.
- 📰 Our own Jenna Schurr was spotted in two pictures in the *Gardena Valley News* Thursday, September 30 edition in an article titled "Kiwanis chicken hits the spot." The Gardena Kiwanis Club held a Barbecue Chicken fundraiser on August 7 at the Nakaoka Community Center. Jenna (from the Key Club of the California Academy of Math and Science) was volunteering in the kitchen, helping to prepare the chicken.
- 📰 Congratulations to Todd Kushigemachi who has an article published in the October 11-17, 2010 *TV Guide* on page 8. His article is titled "Sister Wives Under Fire."

Mission Field

Catherine Nold wrote in her article titled "Dan Buttry plays key role in historic Naga peace agreement" which appeared in the International Ministries Come. Grow. Change. newsletter:

Dan Buttry, global consultant for peace and justice for the American Baptist International Ministries was a key participant in the historic Naga peace meetings which resulted in the signing of a peace accord between three nationalist groups in the northeast India state of Nagaland on September 18.

Dan participated in four sessions which took place in Chiang Mai, Thailand, including the session during which the final "Journey to a Common Hope" document was signed. Dan expressed his hope for a future of peace in

Nagaland, "The reconciliation among the Nagas hopefully will make possible a more effective process of negotiation with the government of India to find a long-term and mutually-agreeable solution to the Indo-Naga conflict that first erupted into violence in 1955."

Since the 1990s, the Nagaland Baptist Church Council has been praying and working relentlessly with all churches for peace, unity and reconciliation of the warring Naga groups. The Council expressed the hope: "We are encouraged to see that FNR [Forum for Naga Reconciliation] is making headway toward unity and reconciliation . . . we encourage every organization to be a part of this Common Journey. May God continue to guide and bless the reconciliation undertaking."





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

♥ Hula Ministry

Thursdays, 7:00 — 8:30 PM, Room 220. Learn to dance hula to Christian music. All are welcome. No experience necessary. Pick up a flier on the Narthex counter for more info and to sign up.

♥ Mexico Outreach Missions (M.O.M.)

🌐 Friday, December 17 to Sunday, December 19, San Telmo Christmas Mission Trip

[NOTE: a U.S. passport is required]. Spanish is helpful, but not required. Contact Teresa Matsushima via the church office.

WANTED for Mexico Mission Trip: Hotel soap and shampoo for the Mexico prison ministry in December. Leave them in the church office with my name, Teresa Matsushima. Contact her via the church office or email her at: reesaw47@sbcglobal.net

♥ Alondra Park Birthday Lunch Outreach

Saturday, October 23, 12:00—1:30 PM. Lunch preparation at 9:30 AM at GVBC kitchen. Please sign up at the Guest Center in the Courtyard. Contact Cindy Matsuda or email her at: hopecindymatsuda@gmail.com.

♥ Harvest Festival

Sunday, October 31, 5:30 — 7:00PM, GVBC. We'd appreciate it if each family could contribute 1-2 bags of candy. Candy will be collected in the box in the Narthex. Also, we need donations of small pumpkins (4 to 5 inch size) for the Littlest Pumpkin Patch booth. Help is needed with set-up, clean-up, candy distribution, security and traffic control. Set-up will be on Saturday morning, October 30 and Sunday, October 31 after second service. On Sunday, October 31, doors will close at 7:00 p.m. However, clean-up will begin at 7:30 p.m. to allow the children enough time to visit the booths. Contact Susan Wakuta in the church office at ext. 684 or by e-mail, susan@gvbc.net.

♥ Fall Back One Hour

Sunday, November 7 Fall back one hour.

♥ Samaritan's Purse Christmas Child

It's time to prepare our Christmas child shoe boxes. On Sunday, October 17 shoe boxes and brochures will be available for pick up in the Narthex. Also available are plastic shoe boxes for \$1.00 each (our cost). Optional: you can gift wrap your box if you like. Be sure to wrap the lid separately. Pray for the child or children who will receive it. Optional: you can include a note to the child(ren) (place in a separate envelop) and a photo of yourself or family. If you want, include your name and address. The child may want to write you back. Place a \$7.00 or more donation (to cover shipping and other project costs) into your box. Write one check (payable to Samaritan's Purse) for all combined donations. You can also donate online at: www.samaritanspurse.org (look for the EZ Give button). Tape a label (found in the brochure) with Boy or Girl and the age group and bring it to our Thanksgiving Service on November 21. Fill your gift box with things such as school supplies, small toys, hygiene items, hard candy & lollipops (double wrap all candy), mints, gum, T-shirts, socks, ball caps, sunglasses, hair clips, toy jewelry, watches, flashlights (with extra batteries), etc (see brochure for suggestions and what NOT to pack). All boxes will be inspected at the donation collection centers before shipment.

🎭 Christmas Musical: *A Prodigal Christmas*

Two performances on Saturday, Dec. 4, 11:00AM and 3:00PM, Sanctuary. Admission is FREE! For more information contact David Cheng prodigalchristmas@gmail.com or Susie Shelley, ext. 673, or suzewriter@gmail.com. Check out our Facebook page at "Prodigal Christmas Musical."

Children's Ministry

KidZone (1st- 5th graders),

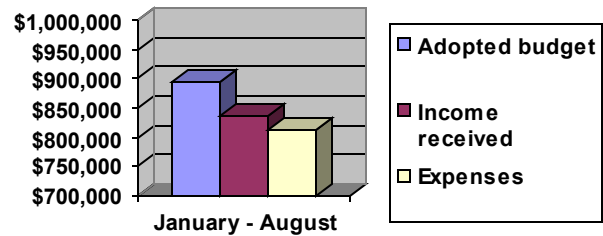
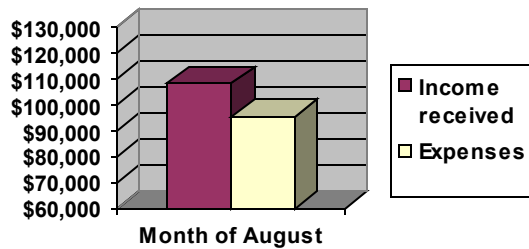
Fridays, 7:00 — 8:30 PM, Community Hall. Wear comfortable clothes and gym shoes to all events.

- October 15 — Bean Bag Target Toss/Card Relay
- October 22 — Marbles & Big Ball Roll
- October 29 — Kickball/Basketball

Contact: Susan Wakuta, ext. 689,
susan@gvbc.net



Financial Report



Donations and Flowers given in honor or loving memory

FROM	IN LOVING HONOR or MEMORY OF
Teresa Choi	Walter Choi
Ken Miya	Hisa Miya
Florence Hayashi	Jack M. Hayashi
	Yayoi Hirashiki
	Michael Maeda
Kiku Florist	Weekly donation of flowers

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

A NEW GVBC

WOMEN'S MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY



The GVBC Women's Ministry would like to establish a women's visitation group. GVBC has a list of women who are members of GVBC, but unable to attend Sunday services due to health concerns or because they are living in nursing or assisted living facilities.

In the past, we would meet and depart from GVBC at around 9:30 AM twice a month on Fridays. Jessie Carrara is interested in hearing from you and equally as interested in hearing your input as to how we can best serve and minister to these women in our church family.

If you are interested in reaching out to these women, please contact Jessie Carrara through the church office or you can email her at jessiec@socal.rr.com.

**Newsletter
DEADLINE**

Issue 20 will be uploaded to website on Wednesday, October 20. Hard copies available on Sunday, October 24 in the Narthex. All articles should be submitted by Sunday, October 17.

The **Spirit** is copyrighted © 2010 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, Editor: Susan J. Shelley, susie@gvbc.net. Office hours: 9:00am—5:00pm, Nichigo Website: www.gvbc.info. 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.





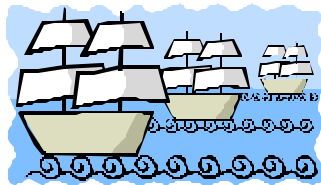
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COLUMBUS DAY
OCTOBER 11



✠ Morning Worship @ 8:45 AM & 10:45 AM
✠ Nichigo Japanese-speaking Service @ 10:45 AM,
Room 201

Series: *Our Withered Gospel*

Sunday, October 10
Undivided Worship

Sunday, October 17
Transformational Discipleship

Sunday, October 24
Compassionate Ministry

Sunday, October 31
Courageous Outreach

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

Steve Langley, Senior Pastor, ext. 0
Ron Matsuda, Associate Pastor — Teaching, ext. 679
Annette Kakimoto, Assistant Pastor —
Leadership Development, ext. 680
James Chang, Assistant Pastor — Worship, ext. 682
Chris Koga, Assistant Pastor—College, ext. 685 (pt)
Daniel Matsuda, Assistant Pastor — Youth, ext. 681
Susan Wakuta — Elementary Children's Director, ext. 689
Linda Matsuda — Director Early Childhood, ext. 683 (pt)
Layne Wakuta, Pastoral Intern — Junior High, ext 684 (pt)
Paul Matsushima, Pastoral Intern, Neighborhood Impact (pt)
J.J. Frey, Worship Coordinator (pt)
Wendy Nakano, Office Manager, ext. 672
Rei Abe, Nichigo Secretary, ext. 677 (pt)
Peggy Kushigemachi, Financial Assistant, ext. 675
Jan Magnani, Secretary, ext. 671
Dawn Robinson, 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)
Kyle York, Maintenance Asst. (pt)