

# Current

A Taft Avenue Publication

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*Equipping the church to reach the world for the glory of God through Christ*

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Indeed, you are our glory and joy.  
— 1 Thessalonians 2:20

November 9-11, 2012

Alpine Camp and Conference Center

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Thanks for a fantastic time of fellowship at Church Camp!



## *What We Are Learning Now:*

# Finding Community at TACC: 12 Ways

1. **Embrace without reservation the biblical Gospel of salvation by faith alone in Christ alone (John 14:6; 17:3; Romans 3:19-26; Acts 4:12).** There must be a clear, truth-filled, biblical understanding of belief, repentance, the substitutionary death of Christ, and eternal life.
2. **Commit to regular meetings and membership. Community requires an every week togetherness (Psalm 42:4; Hebrews 10:34-35).** Be with other believers, physically and cognitively and spiritually, regularly on Sundays, and with other believers in homes. Membership cements the relationship and ensures protection and fuller participation in ministry.
3. **Listen, help and serve others spiritually (Acts 2:44-45; 1 Corinthians 12-14).** Selflessly serve using your gifts. When you see a need, do something; you probably have a spiritual gift that corresponds to the situation.
4. **Be thankful for God's gift to you of other Christians (Acts 2:42; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2 Thess. 1:3; Phil 1:3; Romans 1:8; 1 Cor. 1:4; Colossians 1:3).** Cultivate gratitude and pray for your church-mates.
5. **Give money to Taft Avenue Community Church (Philippians 4:10-18; 2 Corinthians 8-9).** The vested-in practice of giving is a community necessity.
6. **Eat together—in each other's homes (Acts 2:42, 46; Romans 12:13).** Practice hospitality, not entertainment.
7. **Imitate, as image bearers, the humility, accommodation, unity, submission and fellowship of our triune God (Philippians 2:1-8; John 5:22; Mark 1:12; Ephesians 4).** Put off: comparing (1 Corinthians 4:5; 10:12), complaining (James 5:9; 1 Peter 4:9), arguing and bickering (Ephesians 4:25-32), blaming. Put on: the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 13:14).
8. **Obey and honor your leaders/elders (Hebrews 13: 7, 17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Corinthians 16:10-11).** In the EFCA the congregation reserves the right to vote on 5 things: the annual budget, elders, buying and selling of real property, constitution and by-laws, and the calling and discharging of the Senior Pastor.
9. **Pray together (Acts 1:14; 2:42; 4:24-31).** This should include personal needs and the spread of the gospel throughout the world.
10. **Spread the Gospel – individually and in groups (Philippians 1:27-2:18; Matthew 28:16-20; 1 Thessalonians 1:6-8; Colossians 4:5-6).** The church's mission is the glory of God through the spread of the Gospel. We must be consumed with His glory by Gospel evangelizing.
11. **Protect each other's spiritual welfare (1 Thessalonians 2-3; 5:14; Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5; 2 Cor. 2:1-11).** Be watchful. Bear their burdens, cry with them, laugh with them, support them - encourage, admonish, help and be patient. **Come with spiritual life to share (Romans 8:16-17; Malachi 3:16; 1 Peter 2:2),** astonished with a word from the Word and the Spirit. This necessitates the practice of personal spiritual disciplines: reading Bible, prayer, fasting, etc.
12. **Worship together (2 Timothy 4:1-8; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 11:17-34; Ephesians 5:18-21).** Be baptized, participate fully in the Lord's Supper, pray together, sing together, give together, listen to the announcements together and try to be interested in them, and listen to preaching together.

On the Frontlines, Then & Now:  
*George and Donna Warren*



*George & Donna with Tim, Rob and Christina (in womb), 1971*



*George and Donna, 2012*

*George and Donna Warren serve with ReachGlobal, providing pastoral care for families and single missionaries serving in Latin America. The main objective for their Member Care team is to equip, train, and care for their missionaries through personal visits to them on their respective fields of service and debriefing sessions five times a year. Debriefings are held for all missionaries when they return to the US for Home Assignment. George and Donna delight to walk with their missionaries during times of great joy and victory as well as walk with them in times of special need. The following is an excerpt from their November newsletter.*

While we were there in Minneapolis, Mother Dorothy became unresponsive. The family called 911. We flew home the next day. The following day she was well enough to return home from the hospital. How thankful we are for her continued good recovery and for her excellent caregiver Francis!

Although we had a trip to Peru planned for right after debriefing, it was canceled in order to be home with Mother as she was recovering. When she became stable, we had peace about heading back to Minnesota for Pre-field Training Live. It was delightful getting to know these new missionaries who are in their final preparations to leave for their respective fields of service. We got to spend nine days with them going over vital topics for cross-cultural living and ministry, such as worldview, culture cues, loving the poor, crisis management, and spiritual warfare. We are encouraged and inspired by their lives and are happy we can share with them from our years of serving overseas in Venezuela. Lord willing, they will soon be heading for Central Asia, Costa Rica, France, England and restoration work in Louisiana.

This month we were able to participate in a weekend retreat for Missionaries in Training from our home church, First Ev Free of Fullerton. These young adults have hearts ready for God's service and are seeking His direction for their next steps. We were excited to hear of their passion and commitment to making a difference for Christ.

Grateful for you,

George & Donna

# Book Review: *One Thousand Gifts*

*One Thousand Gifts* is the story of a personal, spiritual journey. When Ann was four, her little sister was run over and killed by a farm truck. This family tragedy scarred her soul. Now, as an adult, Ann realized that she was living a life of bitterness and anxiety. Even though her name – “Ann” – means “full of grace,” she realized that grace was missing from her life. Ann longed to live life fully, but she didn’t know how.

As a starting point, Ann looked at one of Jesus’ final actions on earth. Jesus, at the Last Supper, took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples.

We remember the Last Supper when we take communion with our fellow believers. Ann began to meditate on how the act of giving thanks – as Jesus gave thanks – is central to living the full Christian life, to experiencing true communion with Christ.

Not long afterwards, a friend sent Ann an email challenging her to write a list of one thousand blessings. Ann began to look for God’s small gifts in everyday life. Ann has a poetic bent, and her entries began along the lines of “Morning shadows across the old floors,” “leafy life scent of the florist shop,” “wind flying cold wild in hair,” and onwards from there. With each entry, Ann began to drive out the habit of discontent, and drive in a new habit of thankfulness.

Along the path of everyday thanksgiving, Ann experiences a renewal of her relationship with God. She describes her experiences in mystical, even romantic, terms. The book closes with a trip to Paris, in which God gives Ann several unique tokens of his affection for her.

Published in 2010, *One Thousand Gifts* was a New York Times bestseller for almost an entire year. (Did I men-

tion Ann is married to a pig farmer and has 6 kids?) On Ann’s website, [www.aholyexperience.com](http://www.aholyexperience.com), you can join an online community of women who are journaling their own lists of 1,000 gifts. I believe there is even an app for that.

I enjoyed *One Thousand Gifts*. God knows that I needed -- and continue to need -- the exhortation to live a life of thankfulness. I appreciated Ann’s raw honesty regarding her struggles in this area. At the same time, Ann’s writing style is stream-of-consciousness, and she takes extreme poetic liberties with grammar. Analytical

thinkers may have a difficult time getting into the flow of the book (it took me a little while). In addition to Ann’s non-linear writing style, the very first page is a graphic description of childbirth. So ladies should not expect their husbands to read this book!

Journaling our blessings is a practical step that we can all put into practice. When I get stressed at work, I have been taking a “thankfulness break” and writing a couple entries. This exercise has helped me redirect focus from my problems to God’s provision and goodness.

Looking back through my gratitude journal, I see many kind acts by other Christians. It is good for us to take time and recognize the blessings that our brothers and sisters in Christ bring to our lives. In fact, One of Pastor Bob’s “12 Ways to Find Community at TACC” is to “Be thankful for God’s gift to you of other Christians.”

If you are looking for a New Year’s Resolution that does not require a large investment of time or money, I highly recommend starting a 1,000 Gifts List. Just buy a couple small, inexpensive notebooks -- place them in your purse, backpack, office, car or laundry room -- and start counting your blessings!



By Laura Baxter

# New Year, New Life



# life groups

join one today

## LIFE GROUPS: Where Real Church-Community-Life Happens

Most Life Groups meet weekly to study God's Word, pray and share life together. Below is the current list of leaders and their phone numbers. Sign up on the "Get Connected" card with your preferred nights. Pastor Andrew will call you to follow up.

### MONDAY

**Tom Walters**, 7pm | (714) 639-3458 (open)

\*D.A. Carson's video series, "The God Who is There"

### TUESDAY

**Men's Bagels and Prayer for Families**, 7am

\*Studying *Transforming Grace*, Fireside Room

**Ray and Joyce Barton**, 7pm | (714) 633-4664

\*Book study

**Bob and Vickie Burris**, 7pm | (714) 202-1722

\*Sermon-based discussion

**Fred and Bonnie Kaiser**, 7pm | (714) 538-8418

\*Inductive Bible study, currently in Psalms

**Rob and Sheila Marton**, 7:30pm | (714) 970-2486

\*Sermon-based discussion and book study

### WEDNESDAY

**Men's Bagels and Prayer for TACC**, 6am

\*Studying *Transforming Grace*, Fireside Room

**Women's Bible Study**, 6:30pm | (714) 637-3220

\*Studying "Servants of God," led by Kristie Koontz

### THURSDAY

**Doug and Cathy Keller**, 7pm | (714) 779-0625

\*Sermon-based discussion

**Gordon Peterson**, 7pm | (714) 974-4592

\*Sermon-based discussion

**Jeff and Annie Loo**, Alt. Thursday 7:30pm (714) 851-8462

\*Sermon-based discussion

**Rick and Lisa Hicks**, 7pm | (714) 993-2511

\*Kid-friendly

\*Sermon-based discussion and book study

**College Group**, 7:30pm | (714) 283-8773

\*Studying the book of Mark

*Thank you Ed, Roxanne and Irina!*



To Ed, Roxanne and Irina,

We thank God for bringing you into our church family these past 4 years. We appreciate Ed's leadership in worship, pushing us out of our comfort zone, calling us to focus on God alone. Ed, we also appreciate you mentoring our younger musicians, helping them take risks and give their talents wholeheartedly to Jesus. Maybe we didn't always appreciate the tough questions that you like to ask – but it was good for us to answer them. Thank you.

To Roxanne, we appreciate your soulful voice, your big smile, the way you look to Jesus and raise your hands. We can learn from your patience in affliction and physical suffering. We appreciate your practical counsel and encouragement.

We thank Irina for her joy, for her ministry in the nursery, for her support of her parents, and for her kind participation in the life of the church.

Now you are leaving, there is an empty place in the body. We pray you will find a new church home quickly, and that you will find joy in service there. We pray for rest and healing. And we pray you will come back to visit often!

Love,

*The Taft Avenue Family*

### **Welcoming the New Year...**

**Monday, December 31, 8:30pm**

**-12:30am:** All-Church New Year's Eve Party, Fireside Room. Bring games, snacks, and friends! Ring in the New Year with us!

**Monday, January 14, 6:30-**

**8pm:** Women's TableTalk Pota-to Bar - "Spiritual Checkup: New Year, New Beginnings"

**Sunday, January 27, 6pm:**

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner and Annual Business Meeting.



**Youth Winter Camp @ Ponderosa Pines**

Friday, January 25-Sunday, January 27



Non-Profit  
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An Evangelical Free Church

1350 East Taft Avenue  
Orange, CA 92865  
(714) 637-3220

Office open M-Th, 9am-12pm, 12:30-5pm



*Volunteers, we appreciate you!*

**Do you help out in a ministry at Taft Avenue? If so, come to our Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on Sunday, January 27 @ 6pm. The staff looks forward to serving you!**