

January 2020 News & Notes

January Calendar

Just a couple of things to mention here regarding the calendar for January... the Retreat/Camp runs from January 6-12 in Adelaide, so we're NOT going to have church here on the 5th figuring many people will be traveling that day. At this point the plan will be to have family services on January 19th & 26th, and we'll likely have one of those be outdoors as well assuming the weather cooperates. This will allow our Sunday School teachers to have off for all of January. Normal services will resume February 2nd.

Spiritual Growth Program: Growing through Challenges

Speaking of "normal services," we're going to run the latest spiritual growth program developed by the GC home office starting February 2nd. It's a bit scaled back from previous years, and is only a 4-week program, so essentially it will be something we do just in the month of February. I think this will actually make the program a bit more enjoyable to have a shorter commitment this time. As usual we'll have discussion group on Monday evening at 7:30 for the duration of the program. Here's a quick summary of what it is about:

Life is rarely without its hardships. Sometimes they can feel like an avalanche, the weight bearing down, and we are unable to move. So how can we better prepare ourselves for these overwhelming times?

This four-week program explores the Biblical story of Gideon, a young man who was called on by the Lord to overcome many challenges. Through his example of patience, hard work, and faith, we too possess the tools to come out stronger on the other side.

Women's Weekend, March 2020 - confirmed!

It's official, we're doing it again! March 6-8, 2020, in Peshurst (*coincidentally in a large house 10 minutes from the church, but not at all connected with the church*). There is a group of women signed up, so far, and we've got room for more - but space is limited! Are you another woman who'd like to participate? Let us know so that we can include you in the conversation! Please drop Jenn a line directly: jenn@beiswenger.net. Day visitors are welcome.

Kogarah Storehouse Donations

We normally make a donation to the Kogarah Storehouse this time of year, but normally we are collecting donations through Christmas in order to maximize the donation size since we get some extra attendance this time of year. However, in consultation with the Kogarah Storehouse we agreed to make the donation before Christmas in order for the recipients to get a Christmas present of sorts.

As a result, Jenn, Zach and I dropped off the donations on the 20th of December, and I've got to say, they are always VERY grateful for our donation. In fact, within a couple of minutes of my putting the first box down they were going through it to give some of it away. Apparently they were very low on supplies, so the lucky man who was about to be sent away with very little got a bit more. I know that it can feel like what we give is little, but to those who are receiving it, every bit counts.



Final Thoughts

It isn't only the end of the year, but the end of a decade! It's good to reflect back on the past every now and again without dwelling on it because we can get a sense of how our life has changed over the course of time. What I hope is that you can say that you are a better person, spiritually, than you were 10 years ago.

Think about it. Maybe you're more patient now, or perhaps you have learned to be more generous with your time and/or money. Maybe you've had your fair share of troubles, but have come to appreciate that the Lord brought you to a good place and have developed a more peaceful outlook on your life, more free of worry. Or perhaps it is something else entirely.

While I know we are supposed to be humble, it is a useful exercise to see

spiritual progress in oneself. Quite simply, it's motivating to see progress. When we see and feel things working better, we want to do more. We don't want to go around boasting about what a great person we've become, but we should be grateful to the Lord for the improvements that have come about in ourselves.

If you really want to make somebody else's day, take a moment to appreciate the growth of somebody you know. The Lord has been working with them too, and if you reflect on who they were ten years ago you'll realize that they've been working to become a better person as well. If you could offer a little acknowledgement and appreciation I think you'll find it will go a long way to brightening their day and starting the next decade from a better place.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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