

The Way Forward at PGCC: Christmas 2011 and New Year 2012 Edition



Christmas – Fun to Receive; Joyful to Give

When you are a kid, Christmas is pretty much all about receiving (and as hard as it can be to receive as a grown up, it is kind of fun to get something that you've been kind of hoping for) – part of growing up is to recognize that it is actually true that “it is more blessed to give than to receive.” Moreover, part of growing up in Christ is to then be responsible for what we have been given; that it is from the hand of God for us to steward for His glory. I'm thankful to our church for the consistent financial support that we've seen this year as well as the giving to special appeals like the Benevolent Fund and to Missions. Your regular giving as well as the compassionate giving all help make the way forward possible. That said, and as we come to the end of the year, there are two issues to bring to your attention:

Closing the Gap

Here at PGCC and UTown Church, as we come to Christmas and the end of the year, we want to make sure you hear the call to “Close the Gap.” In other words, through the year our expenses have outpaced our income which means that we've been using up our cash in the bank. We have recently amended the budget to close the gap going forward, but we humbly ask for you to consider giving over and above to help restore the funds that we count on to cover the cash flow needs of the church operations. To help, simply give to the General Fund on our offering envelopes or online at our website www.pgcc.org

Cash for (the Dove's) Clunker

Our missionaries to Thailand, The Dove family, have just made an urgent appeal for funds to replace their aging and undersized car with a van. (They are a family of 5 who often have others alongside in a car meant for four.) They hope to raise at least \$10,000 by Christmas. Simply put “Dove van” on the “Other” line of our tithing envelope or online, www.pgcc.org “Mission Other” – “Dove Van” in message box.

Next: God is ahead of us. 2012 is in His hands. We are very excited about the planning that the Lord has arranged as we have sought to listen to Him about next steps. We'll start the month of January (remember we have a church service on January 1st) with a study of Romans chapter 12 with a focus on the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the role of the gifts to build up the body. Our theme of “belonging” will be in view and our aim will be to foster a heart of unity together. In order to cement this theme, we will have a couple of special ministry weekends: on January 20-22 we'll have George and Karen Ewald with us for our first ever “InTreat” and Terry and Melissa Bone will be with us the following weekend, January 29, to preach and then lead us in a ministry workshop “A Culture of Honour and Blessing.”

The InTreat: We feel called to start the New Year with a special time apart for our church – there is nothing like a retreat to create an environment for people to get to know one another and spend time with the Lord together. An InTreat is a retreat in your own place (and maybe a new word.) Friday evening and Saturday morning we'll gather to seek God and enjoy getting to know one another. (More details will follow.) Saturday night and Sunday we'll have ministry times open to the public.

The Blessings Workshop: After the profound time that we had with Terry Bone earlier this year we were hoping to have him return to continue to minister. God went ahead of us and arranged the plan. Terry and his wife Melissa will be with us here January 29th. They have developed an excellent teaching series (The Blessing) and will present the heart of this on Sunday morning and then a two hour workshop after lunch that same day. There is an astonishing fit with this as they have on their hearts the call to help establish an environment of honour and blessing – the very thing we are asking God to do. They will do some teaching that includes how to practice blessing in all aspects of your life; they will pray for us (personally and as a church) for the release of blessing so that we can become a people of honour and blessing. Friends, it is an honour to be your pastor – I am praying for this Christmas to be graced with His light of hope – and that in 2012 He will truly reign.

With appreciation,

Greg