



**Santa Clara
First Baptist**

3111 Benton Street
Santa Clara, CA 95051
Telephone: 408-241-7635

***Our Mission:
Why are we here?***

The purpose of Santa Clara First Baptist Church is to evangelize and disciple the people of the Santa Clara Valley.
Matthew 28:19, 20

December Birthdays

1 st	Hayden Gregoire	13 th	Dee Opstedal
2 nd	George Garcia	14 th	Pat Graham
3 rd	Bebe Barife	18 th	Irmgard Ciarlo
5 th	Michael Reiley	19 th	David Turley - Japan Missionary
8 th	Matt Stephens	21 st	Vera Masters
8 th	Unice Chang	21 st	Alaina Hawkins
10 th	Jim Lovelace	22 nd	Steve McLenegan
12 th	Duane Esquibel	23 rd	Marlene Goldman
12 th	Wendy Gregg	30 th	Alexandra Paez

The Celebrate

Santa Clara First Baptist Church

December 2011

Christmas Eve



Candlelight Family Service 6:00PM

Come celebrate the birth of Jesus at our Christmas Eve Service December 24th at 6:00pm. This worship gathering will be a time of reflection and gratitude with familiar carols, Scripture readings, and candlelight.

Nursery care provided.

What’s Your Next Step?

This past Sunday our church family came forward to sign their names on the sanctuary floor as a way of rededicating themselves to God and His purposes for SCFBC. I was thrilled to see so many respond to the invitation.

This is just the beginning, however. Now that we have made these commitments we have to ask ourselves the questions, “What’s next for our church?” and “What’s the next step for me?”

Each of us needs to be aware that we will face opposition to our decision from both within and without. Even though change (growth) is absolutely necessary for ourselves and our church we will resist it. It’s simply easier to remain where we are. I mentioned in last week’s message the situation of a woman who needed to make some life changes. Her comment to a support group perfectly illustrates our inadequate thinking, “I know I live in hell, but I know the name of all the streets.” Just because we may feel comfortable in surroundings doesn’t mean we should stay there. We cannot stay “here” any longer. We must move to “there.”

Know that only the Holy Spirit can free us from our lethargy and fear of change to make our next step for God. Here are some preliminary actions you can take to hear and respond to God’s promptings for your life. Spend time in concerted prayer asking God to give a vision of His preferred future for you and our church. Listen to/review the four messages of the Church Renovation series to remind you of God’s will for His church. Reread the scripture passages from each message to reinforce His truths. Discuss what you’re learning and hearing from God with others. Listen for what God has been revealing to them.

I stated in the last message that God has a better future for all of us if we choose to go His way. Far from the doom and gloom messages we hear today God gives us this shining proclamation, “The best is yet to come!”

I look forward to what God will do in and through us in the coming year.

Blessings,
Pastor Rich

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER
Mission Emphasis:
Retired Ministers & Missionaries;
Bethlehem work days & performances

- 3 - 8:30am Diaconate Mtg – Lib – Barbara C. 739-2935
- 3 – 10am – Costume Fitting – Bldg B - Rhonda
- 4 – 12pm - Bethlehem Lunch/walk through – FH –Jerry 615-1690
- 4 – 1pm – Costume Fitting – Bldg B - Rhonda
- 4 – 6pm 1st Sunday Praise & Prayer Service
- 6-7 – 7pm - Bethlehem Rehearsals– Jerry 615-1690
- 11 - 12noon Life Grp Leaders Mtg–Rm 19 – Pastor Rich
- 8-12 -6:30-9:00pm Bethlehem – All Church event – Jerry -615-1690
- 13 - Bethlehem clean-up all week – Jerry 615-1690
- 13 -1:00pm Bethell Circle
- 14 – 1:00pm Baits/Turley Circle – Parlor
- 15 - 11:30 am SR/BD Lunch Bunch—Betty 244-5949
- 17 – Bethlehem cleanup this week & every Saturday
- 18 - 12noon - Mission/Schools Mtg. – Lib – Jim G
- 19 -7pm Finance Comm Mtg – Lib – Dan 892-8213
- 21– 6pm CityTeam Outreach/Cold weather gear distribution – Jonathan 813-2505
- 24 - Bethlehem Work Day
- 24 – 6pm - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
- 25 – Merry Christmas
- 26 – Christmas Holiday – Office Closed
- 27 – January Celebrate articles due to Dave
- 29 – 6:30pm Youth Ice Skating Event – Jerry 615-1690

Up-coming Events

- JANUARY
- 1 – New Year’s Day
 - 4– 10am White Cross – Lobby - Virginia N’s 266-1734
 - 6-8 – High School Winter Retreat – Andrew 278-1996
 - 6-8 – Leaders Retreat/Diaconate Mtg – Redwood Glenn
 - 7 - 9am Bethlehem Workday – Jerry 615-1690
 - 7- 10am Prayer Quilting –Rm 19 - Rhonda 246-2242
 - 8 – 6pm 1st Sunday Praise & Prayer Service
 - 10–1:00pm Bethell Circle
 - 11–1:00pm Baits/Turley Circle – Parlor
 - 12 -10am Prayer Quilting –Rm 19- Rhonda 246-2242
 - 14 – 8:30am Men’s Ministry – FH– Adam 230-6848
 - 14 – 6:00pm Bethlehem Volunteer Banquet – FH – Jerry 615-1690
 - 15– 12p Life Group Leaders Mtg – Rm 19–Pastor Rich

- 15 – 12:15pm – Mission/Schools Team Mtg – Lib–Jim
- 16-7pm Finance Comm Mtg – Library – Dan 892-8213
- 16–Martin Luther King Holiday – Office Closed
- 18- 6pm CityTeam Outreach –Jonathan 813-2505
- 23 – February Celebrate articles due to Dave
- 26 - 11:30am SR/BD Lunch Bunch – Betty 244-5949
- 27-29 – Jr. HS Winter Retreat – Jerry 615-1690

- FEBRUARY
- 1 - 10am White Cross – Lobby – Virginia N. 266-1734
 - 2 – Diaconate Annual Reports due to Dave
 - 4- 8:30am Diaconate Mtg – Lib – Barbara C. 739-2935
 - 4–10am Prayer Quilt Ministry–Rm 19–Rhonda 242-2242 or Gladys 243-6828
 - 5 –12p Life Group Leaders Mtg– Rm 19 – Pastor Rich
 - 5– 6pm 1st Sunday Praise & Prayer Service - Sanctuary
 - 8- 1:00pm Baits/Turley Circle
 - 9– 10am Prayer Quilt Ministry – Rm 19 – Rhonda
 - 11 - 8:30am Men’s Ministry–Parlor – Adam 230-6848
 - 12–12pm Quarterly Family Gathering –annual report- FH–Barbara C. 739-2935
 - 14– 1:00pm Bethell Cir – parlor
 - 15 – 6pm -CityTeam Outreach – Jonathan 813-2505
 - 20 - President’s Day Holiday – Office Closed
 - 20 -7pm Finance Mtg– Lib – Dan 892-8213
 - 20 – March Celebrate articles due to Dave
 - 23- 11:30am SR/BD Lunch Bunch – Betty 244-5949
 - 25- 11am Scholarship Brunch – FH – Ellen Imhof



Book Nook and Library Corner

Request... *Does anyone have the 2010 Leadership Summit Team DVD? We are looking for it - Please look around your homes, cars, under the bed and where ever else books end up and will everyone who has a book or DVD checked out from the SCFBC library please return them so they can be processed into the new system and have a bar code put on them. It will help us finalize the entry process. You can always check it out afterward. Thank you for your help—just put them in the red box in the lobby.*

Holiday Blessings to you and your families! This months features will be Thanksgiving and Christmas movies for your families enjoyment. Get a bag of popcorn, maybe some hot chocolate, a blanket and curl up and enjoy the movies and time with the family!

- An Old-Fashioned Thanksgiving - based on a short story by Louisa May Alcott
- The American Christmas Carol—The Tim Janis Ensemble performance of Christmas carols
- Noelle - story of a chance for a new beginning
- The Ghosts of Dickens’ Past—untold story of a simple act of charity
- A Grandpa for Christmas—wishes do come true
- Bethlehem 2005 - see or show your friends the SCFBC experience on DVD
- A Carnegie Hall Christmas Concert– filmed live on Public television by great performers
- Chicken Soup for the Soul For the Holidays - inspiring stories
- Christmas with a Capital C—putting Christ back in Christmas
- The Christmas Wish - Grandpa’s mystery is a lesson
- Christmas Snow - change of heart
- Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol - the classic film about Christmas spirit
- The Christmas Card - the perfect card
- The Christmas Shoes -
- The Christmas Blessing - a continuation of The Christmas Shoes

Thank You for your books and DVD’s contributions that we are able to take to Book Buyers and Book Traders which generates trade funds to buy additional or updated materials for the SCFBC Library. Thank you for your monetary contributions for the Library also. **Thanks** to your generous contributions, materials are always coming and being processed in!

Future plans... there is so much to do to help you get connected with books and materials and things to learn. We are working on a Library Purpose Statement as a guide to picking and pulling and accepting materials into the library and we have a “wish list” to make the library experience better for all of us. Please feel free to visit the Book Nook or the Library and check out the Christian books and DVD’s for all ages.

Merry Christmas from the Library Committee



Birthday Lunch Bunch

All are welcome! The birthday Lunch Bunch will have it’s final gathering of 2011 on December 15th, the location for this celebration will be announced later or you may contact Betty Downing at 408 - 244 - 5949. This group meets monthly to celebrate birthdays of each person appearing on our list maintained by the church office. If your birthday does not appear or you would like yours added, contact the church office with your information to be updated in our database.

Forgiveness: The Gift that Keeps on Giving

We’ve probably all heard about people who take in a wild animal as a pet. A chimpanzee, or a snake or a tiger—they can look cute and harmless when they are small. However, the pet grows up, and then the person makes the 6 o’clock news when that pet turns on them and attacks. We shake our heads in disbelief and think, “Well of course you got hurt—you can’t keep a wild animal as a pet!”

But most of us are harboring pets every bit as dangerous. They may have started out tiny, but these pets are quietly thriving inside us. These pets are called “Grievances”, and they range in breeds. Yours may come from a time when someone hurt your feelings or cheated you, or it could be that you suffered when something horrible or cruel was done to you or your loved one. Our grievances can range from major crimes to minor insults.



We know as Christians that we are supposed to forgive, and maybe we’ve even told the offender, “I forgive you”—but we secretly hang onto our pet Grievance, feeding it, stroking it, and nurturing it.

Are you feeling road rage?

Did you know that “road rage” is always a reaction or response that a driver has to what someone else has done to them? Think about that—someone may have done something wrong or even illegal to you, but it’s your response to them that can become a crime. “I know that maybe I should forgive,” you may say, “but this person hurt me so badly that I can’t forgive them (and I’m not ready to let them off the hook for what they’ve done).”

Who are you really hurting?

In Matthew, Jesus explains that “if you forgive others when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins” (6:14-15). I always read this as a veiled threat—“If you don’t forgive that person, then as punishment, you won’t be forgiven!” But I’ve come to see this verse in a new light. God wants the very best for me—he cares about me and hates whatever harms me. I believe that in these two verses, Jesus is giving us an urgent warning. He cannot forgive us if we are harboring a pet grievance—it stands in the way between us and God.

Do you feel like God’s not listening to you, or that he’s not even there?

When we have unconfessed sin (like a pet grievance), our prayers are ineffective. God wants nothing short of total repentance before he can lavish us with all the love and grace he has planned for us. So, holding on to a wrong done to me means that my prayers are blocked (1Peter 3:12).

How do I forgive when I’m still so hurt and angry?

Forgiving others is probably the toughest thing God requires of us, but fortunately he does not expect us to forgive others on our own strength. Only by the power of the Holy Spirit can we truly release our pet grievances and be free of them. The SCFBC Library* has wonderful resources on the process of forgiving others, but the first step is choosing to forgive. Remember, choosing to forgive someone does not make what they did okay—that is between God and that person. But choosing to forgive someone is definitely the first and hardest step for us. There’s an old saying that Christmas is the time (for) giving. Don’t let another day go by without confessing your reluctance to forgive. In the words of David, “Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, ‘I will confess my rebellion to the LORD.’ And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.” (Psalm 32:5)

Jenny Gregg
Deacon of Maturity

A few of the titles include:
Fire of Grace, by Richard W. Rouse
Total Forgiveness, by R. T. Kendall
The Gift of Forgiveness, by Charles Stanley

Missions Activities



Mexico mission team worked on a new restroom at Rancho el Refugio during a three-day weekend trip from SCFBC to Ensenada vicinity for construction at this charity institution. This trip was in September. We typically do two of these construction trips per year. Sign up the next time you hear of one of these opportunities. If you want to hear more, or want to be sure you get on the next trip, contact Jim Garvey (garveyjim@sbcglobal.net).

Work weekend at Redwood Glen Christian Camp in October. We only had three volunteers; but, we managed to rebuild this laundry attached to a mobile home., removed the roof, replaced about half of the structural members, re-roofed and cleaned up. RWG provided overnight housing, lots of food, and all tools and materials. Quite an enjoyable outing. If you hear of a RWG workday, please sign up.



Seeking Prayer and Offerings

It is with heavy hearts that we report bad news from our partnership in Ensenada. On Wednesday, November 16th, Pastor Victor Romero Juarez and Saul Hinojosa Ontiveros from our partner church Rayo de Luz were in a fatal car accident. Plans are underway for providing support for both of the families who tragically lost fathers/husbands. Pastor Victor is survived by his wife Estela, daughter Raquel, and sons Jacob and Felix. Saul is survived by his wife and son Adrian. For further details, please contact Andrew Wong (andrew@scfbc.org or 408-858-7572). Please keep the families in your prayers.

Volunteer Opportunities

Sacred Heart has volunteer opportunities perfect for individuals or Life Groups. They need volunteers to receive and sort food and clothes donations on Saturday mornings (9-12). Their facility is located at 1381 S. First St. (at Alma) in San Jose. To volunteer: contact Shannon at shannon.mcmaken@gmail.com or directly to volunteers@sacredhearts.org or 408-278-2170.

City Team Ministries has numerous individual or group opportunities. Check out Family and Youth Outreach (for example) at <http://www.cityteam.org/san-jose/volunteer/> or contact Dick House at dhouse@cityteam.org.

Mission to Schools and Students – Scott Lane Elementary

Thanks to the 5 people who volunteered for the After School SOAR program at Scott Lane and the 7 people who assisted with the October 28th Carnival at Scott Lane.

School Supply Donation Drive:

Thank you for all the donations already given for our Scott Lane Donation Drive. We will continue to collect school supplies through the month of January, so keep them coming. For a list of suggested items to buy, please pick up a flyer at the Info Table. We suggest picking something up as you go shopping for yourself. **Currently Kleenex and Sanitizer are the shortest in supply.** Donations may be dropped off in the labeled tub in the Lobby. For more information contact Peggy Shalloe (appey2many@att.net) or Michelle Lasher (mklasher@sbcglobal.net).

Cold Weather Jacket Collection:

Because Scott Lane is in a low-income area of our city, some families are unable to buy warm jackets for their children. We are collecting donations of children’s cold weather jackets. Jackets need to be BLUE, GREY OR BLACK. Jackets must be in good condition with working zippers, no tears, stains, or team logos. Donated jackets may also be dropped off in the donation tub in the Lobby where the school supplies are dropped off. For more information contact Shannon McMaken (shannon.mcmaken@gmail.com).

Box Tops for Education:

You can drop off your box tops at the Info Table in the “Box Top” Box. For more information contact Peggy (appey2many@att.net). We’ve already passed some off to the school.

Missions Deacon, Jim Garvey

Youth News

Reflect High School Group

In November, we continued studying parables. We studied the parable of the lost son, and how when we come back to God, he’ll be there with open arms to welcome us back. We also studied the parable of the persistent widow and how we should never quit asking for righteous things, as God will reward us. We finally studied the parable of the wedding feast and how we should not turn down the invitation that God gives us.

Reflect members also participated in the annual Spaghetti Dinner, serenading our guests with **That’s Amore**, and great service.



Bryant, and Will Weeks provided. Hopefully they will stay on as regular mentors. I also appreciated the parents coming early and helping with snack setup.

Committed

Committed continues to read through The Story, a chronological Bible that has been revised to read like a story. Both High School and Jr High meet on Sunday mornings at 9:15am in the Youth Room with Kimberly Barnett.

Youth Staff - Danijela, Mary, Andrew, Alexandra, Fion, Kimberly, Jerry

Upcoming EVENTS

- December 8th—12th** - Bethlehem
- December 7th** - No Reflect—Bethlehem Rehearsal
- December 8th** - No Element—Bethlehem
- December 14th** - Reflect Christmas Party
- December 19th** - Reflect Pier 39 Trip
- December 22nd** - Element Christmas Party
- December 29th** - Ice Skating—Combined Event

More events at www.scfbc.org/element & www.scfbc.org/reflect

Youth Spaghetti Dinner - Recap

Thanks to our congregation and friends for coming out and supporting the youth department on November 5th. From your generous donations and tips, we were able to raise more than \$1600 for the upcoming winter camps. This will allow all of our students who participated to receive a discount of \$50 off of their registration fee!



The Element Jr. High Group

In November, we had huge growth in the Jr High group. We are now averaging 17 kids on Thursday nights and it is great that they are bringing friends. Jerry has been teaching a series on Belief and what it means to own your beliefs and what it means to believe in God and Jesus. As part of the lessons the kids enjoyed all the funny pictures of Jerry from his childhood with short-shorts and hair.

We had a blast at the Spaghetti dinner and the boys loved having their cool mustaches for the night and everyone did a great job as servers.

Also one of our leaders Fion Cheng has been in Africa all November helping build wells in some local communities, so I appreciated the help that Les Hawkins, Brittane

