



## FBCD's Ignite Youth Groups' Hottest Stories & Updates!

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January 2015

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# Meaning of a Butterfly

By Alex Perez

Just as there are many different meanings of symbolism to the color blue and to the symbol of water, there are many different meanings to the symbol of a butterfly. Some people say a butterfly represents freedom or that it should be a reminder to release fear from our lives. Well in this case, for the New Year a butterfly represents new beginnings. I don't know about you but many times throughout my life, whether it was during just a random conversation with my friends, or a discussion for English class, I have been asked a question that I always seem to have a different answer for every time: "If you could start your life over, would you?" Well, one time I remember it was just a really bad week, just one wrong thing popped up after another so my answer was "yes", since it was a class discussion many of my classmates tried to fight me on it. My only answer to them was, "It was my life" and it wasn't like they would have to restart their life with me. Another time, when I was asked all was going well so I said no, I figured why would I want to start my life over if at that specific time and place I knew I would end up ok? The point is people see the New Year as a new beginning, and I think we should see everyday as a new beginning, a fresh start, and another opportunity to do work and bring honor to the Lord. The harsh truth is we don't get a restart button, but we do get a new start to every day we are given. I'm sorry to say this but butterflies don't live for very long, only about a week and even then they don't know how long they have until they die. We are the same, we aren't sure of when our time on earth is up. As my beautiful, wise mom always reminds me of often, "We aren't guaranteed the next week or next day or the next hour so live your life according to God's plan." And I think that is great advice to start this New Year; live your life according to God's plan in every opportunity you get. I pray 2015 turns out better than 2014 did for all of you and that God finds more ways to use you.



A picture I took while visiting the Seaport Village Art Gallery.

# Guatemala Missions Trip Review

By Matthew Ramirez

I want to thank God for giving me this opportunity to attend the Guatemala missions trip. I'm excited to tell you what to expect if you feel a calling to go to Guatemala this up coming year and I get to share some of my experiences. First I would like to tell you that God chooses how He will affect you and use you on this mission trip. For me personally, I went because I wanted to help, it also gave me the opportunity to work alongside my brother and father. I was a part of doing construction with a man who's digging a ditch so all the water can runoff this cliff and he wanted to build a wall so his kids can play there safely. That moment was the first time I felt my back ache but it was a different kind of ache.

Next thing I did was go to a school and Alex and I where given a task to build the outside wall of the second story building. Most of our day was spent there. When it came time to complete the wall I wanted to help out more but my back ache had returned - much worse pain than I had ever felt before so I was told to take a break. I didn't want to, I felt useless there, like I wouldn't benefit anybody. In my head, I felt like a

failure just watching other people work while I sat there. Later that evening, I didn't eat with everyone else, partly because my back was hurting, but mainly because I felt I would look weak in front of everyone. That night was the hardest to go to sleep; I put all those negative thoughts in my head. Wednesday and Thursday came and went and I was doing what I could.

Finally, Friday came and it was my group's turn to teach. That's when I really felt it hit me; I felt that we didn't do a good job in teaching the most important lesson, what it means to be saved. That night everyone was asked if they wanted to go shopping because we would be leaving the next day. I didn't want to go because I told myself again I failed, big time.

I stood behind and talked to God and just prayed, after that I felt a peace inside. I felt I did what I could do on this mission trip. I learned to lean more on God and come to him first and not to beat myself up about

everything. That is something I still struggle with today. I learned that God has different plans for us. Some people wanted to affect the kids and make a difference in their lives but instead they were affected by them; or like me, I wanted to help to the highest degree but I was restrained and learned to lean more on God and trust His plan for me.

If you pray and talk to God and you feel He is calling you than go to Guatemala or any missions trip, then go. He will teach you something there and it will be an unforgettable experience.



Josue and Nancy Lemus, founders of the Jeremiah Project



Antigua, Guatemala

*For information on the next Guatemala Trip see Pastor Jackson!!*

\*\*The Jeremiah Project is a program in Antigua, Guatemala that serves lunch to children off the streets or children from impoverished families. From Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. -3 p.m. the children join in on fun activities that not only help build friendships and relationships with others there, but also helps them develop educational skills. There they may also attend school after 6 months of being in the program and receive tutoring.

# January/New Year Thoughts

## By Pastor Jackson

We have seen a ton of things happen this past year. Looking back, there are a couple of things I wish I could have done better or that I feel that I might have messed some things up. On the other hand, there are several things that I feel like I did really well on or that I really have improved on. But that was last year. We are at the beginning of a New Year. What will 2015 look like? Where will we go? What will we do? How will we get there? Who will be a part of that adventure? Right now, there are a lot of unknowns.

A lot of the time there is the temptation to live in - and to relive - the past. The Bible tells us something different. "Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me His own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:12-14 (ESV) We are called to leave the past behind and push forward towards God's goal.

***One of the goals we will be pushing for is to Develop and Strengthen a STRONG FOUNDATION.***

***We'll be looking at a Strong Foundation Personally, In Christ, and With Each Other.***

For this Month, we'll be looking at "Goal setting", "How God Brings and Makes Things New" and several Bible characters who experienced God's Newness of life.

The big event we'll be looking at this month will be the TURN YOUR CAMPUS Conference at Biola University. We will hear from several world class speakers, as well as several musical artists. (Propaganda, DJ Icy Ice, The Josh Chavez Band). There will be over 40 Workshops and Seminars that will be available for students, parents and educators. This event will take place Saturday, January 17th. We'll be meeting at the church at 7:30 a.m. and will be back at the church by 7:00 p.m. Lunch will be included. The cost of the event will be \$20, however, if you pay by January 7th, the cost will be \$15. This will be a wonderful opportunity to connect with hundreds of other believers and to hear and learn practical ideas about growing, concepts to stretch your perspective, as well as ways to address concepts you might have either avoided or are just clueless to.

This month we'll also take time to refine teams, develop leaders and to seek balance between fun with service, and growing with fellowship. You'll want to connect with us as often as you can since we'll try to push the envelope and begin to gain momentum.

We'll be getting additional updates on the church website as well as on our youth/parent Facebook pages. If you are not connected, you won't want to miss out! I am greatly excited about the possibilities for this upcoming year. We'll be repeating some of the things we have enjoyed in the past (Planet Wisdom, YS Training, Summer Camp at Thousand Pines, and the Reflections of Beauty Conference, Food Run). We will also seek to try new options as well. (Middle School Retreat, Guy's Camp, and the Dare To Share Conference)

I hope that you, your friends, and your loved ones will join us for this journey. If you hit some rough spots last year, you can do better this year. If you encountered some amazing things last year, they can spring you forward even further this year.

So Excited to see what God will do,

*Jackson*

Jackson Fong  
Student Ministries Pastor  
First Baptist Church of Downey



# New Year's Word Search

C F B E G I N N I N G F G Y O P R X C X  
 C E R X Y R A U N A J O H N A H X B V L  
 C L L A B T O O F M E O J O Y O P Z X I  
 G A M E S C Y L I P K D K E S Q Y L I K  
 N I A I B C D D O F H F A Z P S N U C Z  
 E I T D C R N H P P A R T I E S A V C I  
 W X J L R I A O D L Z I C I P I W M O O  
 T N T T G P J T T D A E D N M X N R M O  
 Z U Z H P F A M I L Y N W C F E C Y B L  
 C U T Y Y A D I L O H D S R H L I I X S  
 E X P E C T A T I O N S E C V G H D A O  
 P A R A D E S Y E N G S V F P A T D B U  
 V P R S V M O A E O O E H G U R F G B K  
 Z P M T U T U Z S L G Q P B R Q M O O Q  
 W P J Q E H O U U C J Z N J V S Y B O Q  
 T P B I L K M T Y U G N G H D C H L V I  
 C L Q P C Y I C Z D N E H J V X P L C L  
 I E O K K O Q J V E L J J C V K V C W S  
 O B E N N U B K L J X X O I X K L L X X  
 K U U S C X Z X K Z V U I W S W V Q V Q

WORDS TO FIND:

- BEGINNING
- FRIENDS
- MIDNIGHT
- JANUARY
- CELEBRATIONS
- GAMES
- NEW
- RESOLUTIONS
- HAPPY
- PARADES
- JOY
- FAMILY
- HOLIDAYS
- PARTIES
- FOOD
- FOOTBALL



# Past December Events

## ALL NIGHTER





# December Events

## CHRISTMAS PARTY!!



I pray everyone had a safe and lovely Christmas and New Year!!

\*\*Don't forget to tag pictures, like the one on the right, so they may be shown in our newsletter! Hash-tag it to:

#FBCDowney

Or just email it to either Alex or Jackson. (more info pg 11)

Jeremiah Shangraw during the Christmas Party on December 17.



# December Events

## CHRISTMAS PLAY!!/CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE!!



# Our Goals for 2015

## FBCD Ignite Youth & Leaders



- Get a full time job.
- Be more calm.
- Finish my first year of teaching.
- Be friendlier.
- Be AWESOME!!
- Become more productive in school.
- Pick up my grades.
- Play baseball.
- Change my attitude.
- Stay in shape. Find a job.
- Return to Jill's house as often as possible.
- Try not to miss a single day of school.
- Spend more time with my family.
- Get in shape/lose weight.
- Put more time and effort into school.
- Better my relationship with Jesus.
- Become cadet in ROTC
- Develop Musically/ Spiritually
- Love my family better
- Lead better

## OUR CHRISTMAS WISH LIST

- For everyone to feel God's love and be grateful.
- 5SOS tickets.
- To go to the movies.
- Money.
- Xbox live.
- I just wish for a good time during the holidays.
- Alpha Sapphire.
- Boots, Sweaters, Headphones.
- A new Phone.
- MP3 Player.
- Anime stuff.
- To have family time well spent.
- I wish for Christmas to become more about Christ.
- For my wife to recover from surgery.
- Donkey Kong game.
- More people to become a part of God's family.

## FAVORITE HOLIDAY TRADITION/MEMORY

- Watching Christmas movies all day on Christmas Eve.
- Opening presents at 11pm on Christmas Eve.
- We read the story of Jesus birth before we open presents.
- One year we were waiting for our mom to come join us so we just started singing.
- Tuning to the channel 7 Yule Log to have a "fireplace."
- The Christmas Eve Party at out house.
- When I got a gun from my grandpa.
- Decorating the tree as a family.
- Eat tamales.



# My New Beginning

By Jim Fountain

People may ask (or be thinking), why is Jim Fountain, a retired man of 70, volunteering to be a youth worker when most of the other adult leaders in First Baptist Church of Downey's (FBCD) youth ministry are much younger? Jim's "New Beginning" took place as he joined the high school ministry's volunteer staff of as a roll secretary in 2011 when he answered the call for volunteers. The following is from the May 11, 2014 sermon "Raising the Next Generation" by FBCD's Pastor Danny Posada; it is a very good reasoning of why Jim is a volunteer youth worker.

**Students Matter:** The old proverb that "*children should be seen and not heard*" should be "*children should be seen and heard.*" In Mark 10: 13-16, Jesus was angry with the disciples for scolding the parents for bothering him by bringing children to him. Jesus blessed the children. Mark 14-16 (NLT): <sup>14</sup> "When Jesus saw what was happening, he was angry with his disciples. He said to them, 'Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. <sup>15</sup> I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn't receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.' <sup>16</sup> Then he took the children in his arms and placed his hands on their heads and blessed them"

## How can we [I] leave a legacy in the next generation?

### •we [I] can offer students acceptance.

This means investing in their lives. Jesus said: "Anyone who welcomes a little child like this on My behalf is welcoming Me." – Matthew 18:5 (NLT)

### •We (I) offer students guidance.

Children should see Jesus in us. "Come, my children, and listen to me, and I will teach you to fear the Lord." – Psalm 34:11 (NLT) "Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it." – Proverbs 22:6 (NLT)

### •We (I) offer students correction.

Parents (and youth workers) learn to use "come here" and "no." Trust God for correcting a child calmly, quickly (it doesn't go away with time), and sparingly (don't deal with every single spat – let them work it out). "Those who spare the rod of discipline hate their children. Those who love

their children care enough to discipline them." – Proverbs 13:24 (NLT)

### •We (I) offer students protection.

Avoid having children becoming sacrificial lambs from adverse situations. "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed." – Proverbs 31:8 (NLT)

### •We (I) offer students refuge.

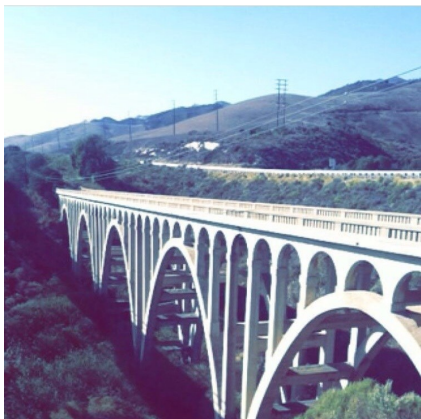
"For I assisted the poor in their need and the orphans who required help." Proverbs 31:8 (NLT)

**Summary:** Here are some things that we (I) need to do. Find a way to invest in a student's life this week. Remember to pray for the students as well as the youth workers. Ask God what type of legacy is WE (I) leaving as youth workers – is it the one God wants US (ME) to leave?

# My 2014

By Matthew Brady

My year has been pretty good. To start off, the transition with Jackson being our new youth pastor has been incredible. I'm going to quote my mom "He's been a real blessing" and he really has. During the summer the Guatemala trip was amazing! I thank God I was given such an inspirational opportunity.



A picture I took during my college visit to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

I was grateful to be of service and help people out that needed it. It was one of the best experiences of my life. Haha, (Then again, my life has only been 18 short years.) This year has brought me new friends, experiences and lessons that I will remember and take with me into 2015. To end off the year I was also really

glad to be a part of the Christmas play. It was a lot of fun and, in my opinion, turned out great. I am so happy to have my church family - they bring such joy to my life. 2014 was fun and I can't wait to see what God has planned for me in 2015, including college. I am excited to be starting a new chapter in my life and it is coming up really fast. I pray to God and trust that He will light my path throughout college and this new year.

# Our 2015

By Alex Perez

Just as Jackson has told us, God has big plans for this youth group of ours. When Jackson first came we would barely get 8-10 people on Sunday mornings and a lot of the times that included leaders as well. I am happy to say that on Sundays we now average 25-35 students, we have come a long way. We have grown closer as a youth group and I pray we continue to grow closer to each other and to the Lord. We have come side by side to pray for one another, we have had so many memories this past year many of which are extremely embarrassing. We have learned from our mistakes whether it is with each other

or just in general and we have sought forgiveness in one another. We have had great laughs from the times Eli just says something goofy and random, to crying together when Joe and Leandra were leaving. From personal experience working with the sound booth, we've learned to push past sticky situations and thank God it wasn't something worse. I am excited to see what the Lord places before us in 2015, and I thank God that He has placed me in a church like First Baptist Church of Downey. I don't believe I would have gotten the numerous opportunities to serve or just be



Picture taken while we gathered to pray for Joe & Leandra July 9.

given amazing experiences like I have anywhere else and for that I am truly grateful. Let's take on 2015 together and with the Lord by our side we will accomplish a lot.



# Upcoming Events!

## January

- Fri/Sat 2-3 All-Nighter (Bring \$5)
- Saturday 3rd Beacon Light (Meet at church at 5)
- January 17th *Turn Your Campus* (Biola U)  
\$20 per person (\$15 if you pay by Jan 7th)

More than 40 Seminars and Music Artists!

(Middle School, High School College, Parents and Educators)

## **February**

Feb 7 Beacon Light Mission

Feb 20-21- Dare To Share (San Diego) \$70 Per Person

## **March**

March 7 Beacon Light Mission

March 20 -21 Stuck in the Middle (Middle School Retreat - @ Westlake Village)  
\$85 Per Person

March 30—April 3 Rainbow Acres Mission Trip (More info to come soon)

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**NEXT MONTH'S THEME IS ON LOVE, RELATIONSHIPS, & PURITY!! ♥**

(Submissions Due Wed Jan 28th)

**To submit pictures or articles for next month email Alex or Jackson.**

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