

Anaheim SDA Church  
Mid-week Pastor's Update  
February 1, 2017



*"You must not mistreat or oppress foreigners in any way. Remember, you yourselves were once foreigners in the land of Egypt." Exodus 22:21 (NLT)*

If you've been following the news at all lately, you probably know of President Trump's executive order from late last week that put into effect a travel ban for people from certain countries. The resulting exclusions have caused an outcry of protests and demands to recant, or modify, the order.

Wherever you may stand politically on the issue, I hope we understand that leaders (even Christian leaders) have a different role to play than we (Christian) private citizens do in our daily lives. Our task, in part, is to pray for our leaders, that God would help them govern well (1 Timothy 2:1-2, Romans 13:1) while we also pursue justice and liberation for the oppressed (Isaiah 58:6-7, James 1:27, *et al.*). Whether we feel what the government is currently doing is right or not, we still have our personal lives to live out and answer for, and we are all subject to the Biblical counsel for how we do this.

A reminder that God gives several times in scripture to the Israelites is that they are not so different from the ones they are tempted to despise. In their own history they faced such subjugation, and I sense God urging the Israelites that, given their history, they should consider the principle of the Golden Rule regarding treatment of others.

This strikes even closer to home for us when remember Jesus' illustration that "everyone who sins is a slave to sin." (John 8:34). Just as the Jewish people were being frequently reminded of their liberation, it's important for us to remember that slavery isn't so far back in our own history either. We should look to our liberation with gratitude to God, extending it to others joyfully as well.

It is well said that “We are a nation of immigrants”. No matter how many generations back our own ancestors may have come, we must answer the question: where would our families be if the rules for coming had been different at that time?

And for those who would counter this suggestion with a claim of “Well, they’re radical terrorists!”, I would just urge those persons to consider what if we, in our religion our ethnicity, were stereotyped along with the worst of our kind. Would I like to be accused of being a cruel slave owner? Or a crusader who slaughters in the name of Christ? No, and in our own society we know those distinctions are far and away different than we are. But when we paint with a broad stroke the “them” that are seeking asylum from the very forces we are also trying to protect against, we will see that the vast majority of them would indeed be counted as friends.

A few more words of counsel from the scriptures: *“He [God] defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing. And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt.”* (Deuteronomy 10:18-19 NIV).

And let’s not forget that in the Sabbath commandment, which we as Adventists hold very dear to our hearts. It states “nor the stranger within thy gates” as to whom should be guaranteed the right to Sabbath rest from work. Immigrant workers, who are often oppressed because they generally have fewer to no worker benefits, are *specifically remembered and noted* as deserving Sabbath rest alongside God’s people.

The Lord is a great lover of all those who are displaced. He is necessarily so, because we all fit this description ourselves. Our lives are displaced because of sin, because of suffering, and indeed, because of the Great Controversy, of which we are all victims and refugees. Let’s remember that He has looked upon us all with a compassionate heart, opening the way to his own kingdom for we who would seek refuge. The least we can do is extend a smaller mercy to others who are where we’ve been, in one way or another.

God bless you all.

Sincerely,  
Pastor Mark Tatum

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### **Prayer Requests:**

- Praise the Lord, some of our church members with recent health emergencies are on the mend. Claudia F is back home recuperating well from her surgery. And both Vivian R. and Daniel G. have been released from the hospital, though still could use prayers for healing & strengthening going forward. We pray to see these members back with us soon. Please keep Nicole H. and Rosa F.’s ongoing health concerns in your prayers as well.

- Esther Sellers is praising the Lord that situations have improved for a couple of her counseling patients. She still asks us to pray though, as some of them are still going through hard times.
- The Flores family requests prayers for a young man named Nicolas, a friend of their family, who recently suffered a bad car accident. Pray that he recuperates and can return to regular life soon.
- Pray for several ‘prodigal’ children of church members who have left the faith, whose parents are praying fervently that they come back. (The Lord himself knows this feeling many times over!)
- Pray for our church as a whole, and all its volunteers, that we may work efficiently and happily in ministering to our members, families, and overall community. Pray particularly for God’s will to be done in our up-coming business meeting this Sabbath.
- Particularly as we have recently passed through a major transfer of power in our own U.S. government, pray for our leaders, both national and international, that they may make wise decisions, and that we may have a peaceful and stable society to do our Spiritual work in (1 Tim. 2:1-4, John 9:4)

*If you have a prayer request you would like to submit to our prayer list, please contact Pastor Mark or Maritza in the church office, and let them know.*

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**Announcements:**

**Adult Sabbath School:** Each week, our Adult Sabbath School program starts at 9:30 AM in the Sanctuary. This week we will begin our February theme of Love, with the following topics in up-coming weeks:

- 1.-"The greatest demonstration of love: Jesus" by Pastor Mark Tatum
- 2.- The love story of St. Valentine. Video presentation
- 3.-" The biochemistry of love " by Dr. Israel Chambi
- 4.-" Is the Mother Nature an expresión of love?" by Dr. Clifford Vanc

**Kids’ Sabbath Morning Program:** Our children’s service starts with light refreshments and song-service in the Pathfinder room at 9:30 in the morning. Then, at 10:00 they are dismissed to their respective Sabbath Schools. Please make it a point to arrive on time so your kids (and you) can get the fullest benefit of our Sabbath School programs!

**Prayer Groups & Bible Study:** Although January’s “Month of Spiritual Emphasis” has recently finished, we want to keep the Spiritual momentum going through weekly prayer groups and Bible-Study opportunity. Prayer meeting meets in the sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays (English) and Wednesdays (Spanish). Friday night Bible study (currently in the book of Isaiah) meets at 6:00 p.m. in the Primary Sabbath School room. We hope you are blessed with these

supplements to your personal prayer/devotional times! May we ever walk closer to Christ, and be more bonded to each-other.

**Potluck this Sabbath!** This being the first Sabbath of February, everyone is invited to stay for lunch and enjoy great company in the Fellowship Hall immediately following our church service. Please bring a vegetarian dish to share. Immediately following the potluck, we will have a...

**Church-wide Business Meeting:** This Sabbath afternoon we will be having a business meeting for all church members to attend in the fellowship hall immediately after potluck. Future plans and the direction of our church will be discussed. Please plan on staying for this important meeting.

**Food Bank Hours & Distribution:** Our food bank is open every Saturday from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. in the room adjacent to the fellowship hall. Please share about our Food Bank with your relatives, friends, neighbors, or anyone who might benefit from receiving food. We are also looking for volunteers who can help, particularly as Vivian is needing to take some time off from her duties. We need people who can volunteer during the week to pick up food from grocery stores, serve in the food bank itself on Sabbath afternoons, and some who can take extra food to homeless people (and we can suggest places to take it to). If you would like to volunteer, please contact Ana Elias, or speak to Maritza in the Church Office.

**Pathfinder Joshua Tree Camping Trip:** The county-wide Pathfinder trip is scheduled for this weekend, but we are currently unsure whether our own church's trip will be a 3-day trip or an all day 1-day trip on Sabbath. Please speak to Margarito Gonzalez for more information. Either way, let's pray for our club members to have a great time.

An **International Food Fair** will be our church's social event for the month of February. It will take place in the church fellowship hall on an up-coming Sabbath evening. Look for more information coming soon in regards to date and time. Mrs. Furness is facilitating the organization of this event. Feel free to contact her for more details.

**Pastor's Office Hours:** Both this week and next, Pastor Mark plans to be at the church from 2-6 p.m. on Wednesday and Friday. Feel free to come by to talk/pray/study the word together. If these times are not convenient to you, or you would like to schedule a special meeting at a certain place/time, don't hesitate to contact Pr. Mark at the information below.

**Weekly Pastor's E-mail:** If you know someone who benefit from receiving this weekly devotional thought, please have them contact Pastor Mark at [prmarktatum@gmail.com](mailto:prmarktatum@gmail.com), or (714) 650-1245 with contact info to be added to this e-mail list.

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Alright! I think that pretty well sums-up what's going on at the church lately! We pray you are blessed with the community and services we foster at Anaheim SDA church. We so appreciate the commitment and dedication of our members and volunteers. As always, we pray that your week is blessed until we meet again. God bless you and yours as we continue going forward.

Sincerely,  
Pastor Mark Tatum