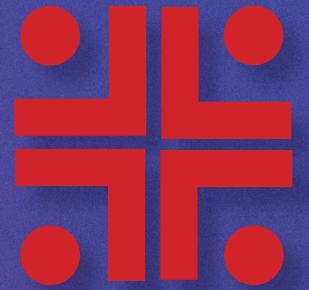


# Intersections

The Magazine of Glendale City Church

[www.glendalecitychurch.org](http://www.glendalecitychurch.org)



February-March 2023

# PEACE WALK





GLENDALE CITY CHURCH  
**A W A R D E D**

*Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America*

# *Church of Compassion*

*2 0 1 7 & 2 0 2 0*

*Revealing Christ, Affirming All*



Glendale City is a Christian church affiliated with the Seventh-day Adventist denomination. Our congregation was one of the first Adventist churches established in this part of Southern California. While we continue to partner with this denomination, we are in a posture of protest against the unjust actions taken by our General Conference that attempt to undermine the contextualized work of the Adventist churches and centers of education in the Western United States. We are in solidarity with the actions of our Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists that:

- Ordain both women and men as clergy
- Protect the right of Adventist centers of education to teach current science to its students while honoring God as Creator
- Stand with congregations that welcome and include our LGBTQ loved ones in their faith communities



*Finding God at the  
Intersection of Our Lives*

Glendale City Church welcomes people of all backgrounds into our church community. We do not discriminate based on gender, sexual orientation, race, culture, wealth, education, or religious background. If you are learning to love God and others, you belong here. God excludes no one. Neither do we.

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PEACE  
FELLOWSHIP**

**PROUD TO BE AN  
ADVENTIST PEACE  
FELLOWSHIP  
CHURCH**  
[adventistpeace.org](http://adventistpeace.org)

Intersections is a bi-monthly publication of the Glendale City Church of Seventh-day Adventists

**Editors**

Leif Lind, Todd Leonard

**Layout and  
Design Editor**

Javier Gutiérrez

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Mission

## *Revealing Christ, Affirming All*

Our mission is to reveal the love of Christ in all its tenderness and grandeur to the community in which we live. We desire to embrace the wonder of humanity in its complexity, diversity, and beauty—and to do so without precondition. In short, we yearn to reveal the splendor of Christ and to affirm the worth of all people.

Vision

## *The Open Table*

We are committed to curating open tables—simple relational spaces that foster loving mutuality, compassionate service and holistic spirituality—that hospitably welcome new people into our faith community.

Would you like to receive Intersections on a regular basis? We publish our magazine every other month. If you would like to be on our mailing list, please email [glendalesda@gmail.com](mailto:glendalesda@gmail.com) and let us know!

# Intersections

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# Folk Theologies

By Loren Seibold

For a long time I've been taking note of what I call "folk theology"—notions that are commonly assumed, though no one can show any evidence for them. These are simplistic ideas that come about for reasons that have little to do with the Bible, but take up residence in the collective mind of the Christian community.

The ones I'll describe here aren't especially harmful, and may even have some small value. But, as I'll note at the end, they are kin to others that aren't so innocuous.

## Books on the Bible

I started thinking about this years ago when I was talking to a woman who felt herself (with considerable justification) not to have lived a very Christian life. As she was enumerating the tragedies and transgressions that added up to her life story, she added this: "But pastor, in all of my life, I have never laid another book on top of the Bible."

This is an example of folk theology. There is nothing in the Bible about the order in which you stack books. It comes from lessons offered to little children in Sabbath School to teach them respect for the Bible. It had stuck with her, though—the one thing that she could draw on to claim a bit of spiritual awareness, even though what was in the book she hadn't lived out particularly well.



I was taught about Bible stacking, too. I remember wondering, at an early rather literal age, whether I could carry my Bible next to my Primary Treasure, because if it was held at my side, one document wasn't clearly on top. Or what happened when you put your Bible on a bookshelf? Did it have to be at the end of the shelf? Can you stack two Bibles on top of each other? Later I heard a pastor say that old Bibles had to be specially burned, leading to more questions about the status of the Bible as a physical book.

The idea that the Bible was to be honored as an object evolves from the belief that the Bible's message is singular and spiritually vital. The instruction that "When you lay your Bible down, don't put anything on top of it" is a simple physical expression of the Bible's importance. Similarly, remember when the Sabbath School teacher said, "How many of you have your Bibles today? Hold them up!"?

Pieces of printed paper bound together with glue and covered with leather were the proxy for the truths in the book. But of course the object is far easier to honor than the contents.

If there's a source for this idea, it's probably how Jews treat the Torah and Muslims the Qur'an. Rabbis teach "the ladder of holiness" which has explicitly to do with book stacking

As a physical expression of this ladder of holiness, the Talmud prescribes that a Sefer Torah [a hand-copied Torah] can be stacked upon another Sefer Torah, but an individual book of the Five Books of the Torah could not be put on top of a Sefer Torah. Similarly, a single book of the Five Books could be put on top of books of the Prophets or books of the Writings, but not vice versa.<sup>1</sup>

Islam, too, has restrictions on the handling of the book. They would "consider it inappropriate for example to place a general text book on top of the Qur'an in a pile and would never toss one around or treat it carelessly."<sup>2</sup>

It is a good thing to treat a Bible—indeed, any good book—with care, though it seems to me that respecting the physical Bible is a minor consideration compared to taking seriously the meaning of the words in it.

## Stars in your crown

My wife tells of feeling troubled as a child that she wouldn't have any stars, or jewels, in her crown in heaven because she'd never been responsible for winning a soul to Christ. Mother to the rescue: "You'll have at least one," her mom told her, "because you were responsible for your own decision to follow Jesus." That was enough to put her child's heart at rest.

While there are many references to crowns in the Bible, the precise formulation of earning jewels for souls doesn't appear.

Daniel 12:3 says:

And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

Here wise believers are metaphorical stars, but there is nothing about their being awarded to the saints for soul winning. This meaning is reflected in William Cushing's 1856 hymn "When He Cometh," in which souls are jewels in Christ's crown, not ours.

---

1. Jeffrey Spitzer, "How to Treat Jewish Holy Books", (<http://t.ly/wiMx7>)

2. "Sensitivities to consider when handling the Qur'an" from the Lambeth Institute, teacher's information sheet. (<http://t.ly/ta-2>)



When He cometh, when He cometh  
To make up His jewels,  
All His jewels, precious jewels,  
His loved and His own:  
Like the stars of the morning,  
His bright crown adorning,  
They shall shine in their beauty,  
Bright gems for His crown.

We Adventists can look a bit closer to home, though, for the source of this idea. In Ellen White's 1846 book *The Daystar* she describes a scene of the 144,000 gathered in heaven, and says, "Some crowns appeared hung [heavy] with stars, while others had but few."<sup>3</sup>

A few years later, in *Testimonies* Volume 3, she writes, "It is their privilege to have stars in their crown because of souls saved through their instrumentality."<sup>4</sup>

Dirk Anderson, in an excellent essay on the topic, points out that there is a previous source: Methodist leader Phoebe Palmer's 1945 book, *Entire Devotion to God*, which was in Ellen White's library. Writes Anderson,

Palmer makes it abundantly clear that "stars" in the crown are the reward of those who work diligently for the Lord. A lack of stars indicates one who did not do much work for the Lord. As proof of her theory, she quotes a man who supposedly had a heavenly vision: "He noticed the crowns differed greatly in brilliancy. Some were beautifully set with stars, while others were almost or quite starless."<sup>5</sup>

Since we know Ellen White was a prodigious borrower, could she have sourced this idea from Palmer? Possibly, but it seems equally likely that this bit of folk theology was already floating around, perhaps as a way of teaching soul-winning to the young—as Ellen White once said, to "Inspire [children] with ambition to gain stars for their crown by winning many souls from sin to righteousness."<sup>6</sup> Anderson notes a reference to it as early as a 1787 Methodist magazine.

Hymns both reflect and pass along notions present in the culture. Note the second verse of E. E. Hewitt's 1897 "Will There Be Any Stars?"

In the strength of the Lord let me labor and pray,  
Let me watch as a winner of souls;  
That bright stars may be mine in the glorious day,  
When His praise like the sea-billow rolls.  
Will there be any stars, any stars in my crown  
When at evening the sun goeth down?



3. Ellen White, *Day Star*, Jan. 24, 1846 (<http://t.ly/lZoXr>).

4. Ellen White, *Testimonies* vol. 3 (1872), p.94

5. Dirk Anderson, "Stars in the Crowns of the Redeemed?" posted March 2022 (<http://t.ly/GqRs>). Phoebe Palmer quote from *Entire Devotion to God*, p.114

6. Ellen White, *Testimonies* vol. 6 (1901), 451



When I wake with the blest in the mansions of rest,  
Will there be any stars in my crown?

The Bible says that we are rewarded for faithfulness ("Well done my good and faithful servant... enter into the joy of your master!" Matthew 25:21), but that the reward for souls won will be displayed in heavily laden crowns doesn't seem to have biblical support. It seems more probable that those reckoned as saints will have done their work for Jesus, not jewelry.

So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, "We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do." Luke 17:10.

### Folk theology

Many of these folk theologies originated with someone's trying to make the Bible's teachings meaningful to children, and these simpler ideas were subsequently grandfathered into adult theology. People hold on to them, I suspect, because so many of the theologians' complexities are at best marginally helpful to ordinary folks, and tend to just clutter our minds with abstractions.

There is little harm in the above instances, and possibly some helpful lessons. Other childish theologies, though, aren't nearly so benign. Children who have been raised to believe that God loves only obedient children and is angry at disobedient ones end up with a rather twisted view of God. Ellen White once wrote,

God hates unruly children who manifest passion, evil tempers, etc. He cannot save them in the time of trouble. They will be eternally lost."<sup>7</sup>

—along with their parents, she adds.

This turns God from a loving being of generous and kind disposition, into a stern and angry one—and it's not accidental that many Adventist adults still see God as more about judgment than grace, and treat others accordingly. Theologies of legalism and fear, theologies that are tribal and excluding and even hateful, also appeal to immature minds.

But they're far from harmless. No one's happiness is going to be affected by whether Bibles are stacked properly, but they will by being taught that God is angry and demanding about little things, a Being mostly interested in what we eat or what church we belong to or whether we go swimming on Sabbath afternoon. No one's spiritual growth depends on what kind of crown you expect in heaven, but it does make a difference if you believe in a petty God who values insignificant conformities more than character and kindness.

We Adventists have, I fear, become too familiar with this immature view of God. What will it take to make more of us see God as great, gracious and understanding, rather than petulant and unlikable?

Loren Seibold is the Executive Editor of *Adventist Today*, and is proud to be a member (though, sadly, an infrequent attendee) of the Glendale City Church. He and his wife Carmen live in Ohio.





# PEACE W HONORS LEGACY





# WALK KING'S



Despite a gloomy forecast, blue skies prevailed on Monday for the third annual Glendale Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Walk where community members gathered to honor and celebrate the life and legacy of King on the national holiday.

More than 500 people attended the event, bringing Glendale residents, local legislators and supporters together for the nearly one-mile peace walk in remembrance of King.

The event began at 10 a.m., when attendees gathered in front of the First Baptist Church of Glendale. Soon after, a celebration rally began at the church with a speech from U.S. Rep. Adam Schiff and music performances.

The walk began at 11:30 a.m. and the hundreds of attendees followed the route, which looped through downtown and ended back at First Baptist Church for festival-like activities.

With new additions to the community event such as food trucks, festival booths and Schiff as the keynote speaker, the turnout was double that of the previous year, organizer Rev. Todd Leonard of Glendale City Church said.

"Today, as we walk on the street, we commit to fighting for one another, to protecting one another, to loving one another, as we love ourselves," Schiff said. "Let's reflect on the ways we can do even more to stand up to injustice. ... Let us hold up Dr. King's words in our hearts: 'Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.'"

Schiff went on to discuss the rise of hate crimes in Los Angeles, noting that this past year saw the highest surge in hate crimes in nearly two decades. Leonard spoke to the positive impact collaborative events such as this Peace Walk can have on bringing communities together amid polarizing times.



"It's easy, even in our community, to just be stuck in our own little micro communities where we're all alike or share similar backgrounds or similar beliefs or policies and politics," Leonard said. "And something like this all of a sudden shows you the diversity of the city... In this moment we're seeing all this cross intersectionality taking place. It's a symbol of what needs to happen."

In light of Glendale's history as a "sundown town," community members like Mona Field find comfort in the city's trajectory toward positive change. The term "sundown town" refers to local zoning and other municipal laws that exclude people of color, particularly Black people, from living within the city's borders. In 2020, Glendale officials passed a resolution that recognized and apologized for the city's history of prejudice that earned it the "sundown town" label.

"Just to see that there's now a whole lot of people in Glendale who believe in racial justice and social justice is very reassuring because when I started working in Glendale in 1983, it was a very different place," said Field, who serves as the president of the League of Women Voters of Greater Los Angeles. "[Glendale] is better now. It's more diverse and there's more of this social awareness."

In addition to a number of impressive speakers, the event also featured musicians such as rapper Michael Jelks, known as "Mikol." He sings about the struggles he faced in the foster care system and the importance of creating his own destiny.

"I feel like Dr. King, y'all I got a dream. Don't let them ever take your purpose y'all, you gotta dream. Are we too blind to see? Do we try to see? If you never take a chance you'll never catch what's behind the scenes," Mikol rapped.

The Peace Walk included festival booths from organizations such as TechGYRLS, Temple Sinai of Glendale, California State Library and more. Coinciding with King's dedication to peace and equality, these booths emphasized being an ally, the importance of inclusion and love to all.

Partners of the Peace Walk included Adventist Health Glendale, Glendale City Church of Seventh-Day Adventists, First Baptist Church of Glendale, YWCA of Glendale, Temple Sinai of Glendale, Glendale First United Methodist Church, USC Verdugo Hill Hospital, Dignity Health Glendale Memorial Hospital and Health Center, Verdugo Community Church, YMCA of Glendale, Glendale Unified School District, Glendale Teachers Association, glendaleOut, GALAS LGBTQ+ Armenian Society, Glendale Library Arts & Culture, Civic Sundays, GTU and Glendale Environmental Coalition.

United together across various racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds, Glendale residents of all ages exhibited their commitment to King's values and legacy on Monday.

"Rev. Dr. King taught us that we can transform hatred and prejudice. We can stand up to intolerance and bigotry," said Rick Schechter, Rabbi at Temple Sinai of Glendale. "He taught us we can offer society a vision of our shared humanity, instead of the myopic view of one's differences. It's a vision of love. It's a vision of kindness and cooperation."











# Saturday Schedule & Worship

Each Saturday at  
Glendale City Church

- 9:00-11:00 a.m.
  - Courtyard Café, Central Courtyard or Fellowship Hall Lobby
- 9:30-10:30 a.m.
- Personal Growth Marketplace
  - Grace Center Sabbath School, Fellowship Hall
  - The Living Project, Classroom Four
- 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
  - Sanctuary Worship
  - City Kids Worship
    - 11:00-11:15: Praise Time, Multipurpose Room
    - 11:15-12:15
      - Tiny Tots, Birth-4, Classroom 2. Parent or adult guardian required
      - Godly Play, 5-12, Classroom 1.
- 12:15-1:15 p.m.
  - Open Table Worship, Chapel

## Sanctuary Worship Schedule

- **February 4:** Kris and Debbie Widmer, "Our Transgender Parenting Journey"
- **February 11:** Zdravko Plantak, Religion Professor at Loma Linda University
- **February 18:** Mike Kim
- **February 25:** Todd Leonard
- **March 4:** Todd Leonard
- **March 11:** Leif Lind
- **March 18:** Todd Leonard
- **March 25:** Todd Leonard

## Open Table Worship Schedule

- **February**  
*Listening to the Shrinks.* Winter is a great time to learn some good psychology. We'll welcome in some practitioners in person and by video.
- **March**  
*The Sacred Feminine.* Expanding our understanding of God and listening to spirituality and theology through feminine voices.



## SDA Kinship International Saturday

Glendale City Church welcomes the Seventh-day Adventist Kinship Advisory Council to its campus on February 4. Kinship is an LGBTQIA+ affirming and inclusive community for current and former Seventh-day Adventists. Our sanctuary worship will feature Kinship President, Floyd Poenitz and Kris and Debbie Widmer who will share their parenting journey with their transgender child.

### EVENTS

## Wednesday Noon Concert Series

Streaming on Glendale City Church's YouTube Channel.



SCAN FOR MORE INFO

February 15, 2023 at 12:10-12:40 pm  
Live in the Sanctuary of Glendale City Church  
Pianist Brendan White  
Chopin program

March 1, 2023 at 12:10-12:40 pm  
Live in the Sanctuary of Glendale City Church  
Adriana Zoppo - Baroque program featuring the  
viola d'amore

March 15, 2023 at 12:10-12:40 pm  
Live in the Sanctuary of Glendale City Church  
Calico Winds- woodwind quintet program



# Pledge<sup>+</sup>

## CRAFT YOUR GIVING PLAN WITH PLEDGE+

Glendale City Church relies on your consistent and generous donations to three areas: Tithe, Church Budget and your Pledge<sup>+</sup> item. Tithe supports Adventist Ministry in Southern California and empowers the funding of our congregation's two full-time pastors. Church Budget pays for our other part-time pastors and ministry staff, youth ministry, music ministry, facility maintenance, utilities, and so much more. With Pledge<sup>+</sup>, you're invited to target a portion of your donation to the ministry you're most passionate about.

**100% of your donation to Glendale City Church is tax-deductible. Annual donation receipts are distributed in January.**

Thank you for believing in the mission of Glendale City Church!

### TITHE

Received: \$ 147,689.12  
Goal: \$ 100,000  
Difference: \$ 47,689.12

### CITY CHURCH BUDGET

Received: \$ 66,208  
Goal: \$ 66,000  
Difference: \$ 208



## How to Give

### On Website

[GlendaleCityChurch.org/donate](http://GlendaleCityChurch.org/donate)

### With Church App

Download at Your App Store

### By Mail

610 E California Ave, Glendale, CA 91206

### In Your Estate Planning or By Stock Transfer

Contact our Campus Administrator  
Irma Curiel Acosta



## CHURCH DIRECTORY

### Phone System for Pastoral and Church Staff

*Dial 818-244-7241 and enter the extension of the person you would like to reach.*

### Pastoral Staff

Todd Leonard, Senior x205  
Mike Kim, Associate x206  
Leif Lind, Associate x207  
Johnny Ramirez-Johnson, Ministry & Outreach x219

### Church Staff

Irma Curiel Acosta, Campus Administrator, x202  
June Salazar, Accountant x204  
Mindi Rub, Clerk x221  
Malisa Smith, A+ School Director x203  
Anji Arm, City Kids x222  
Clarissa Shan, Choral Director x223  
Kemp Smeal, Organist x224  
Dave Ferguson, Concerts x218

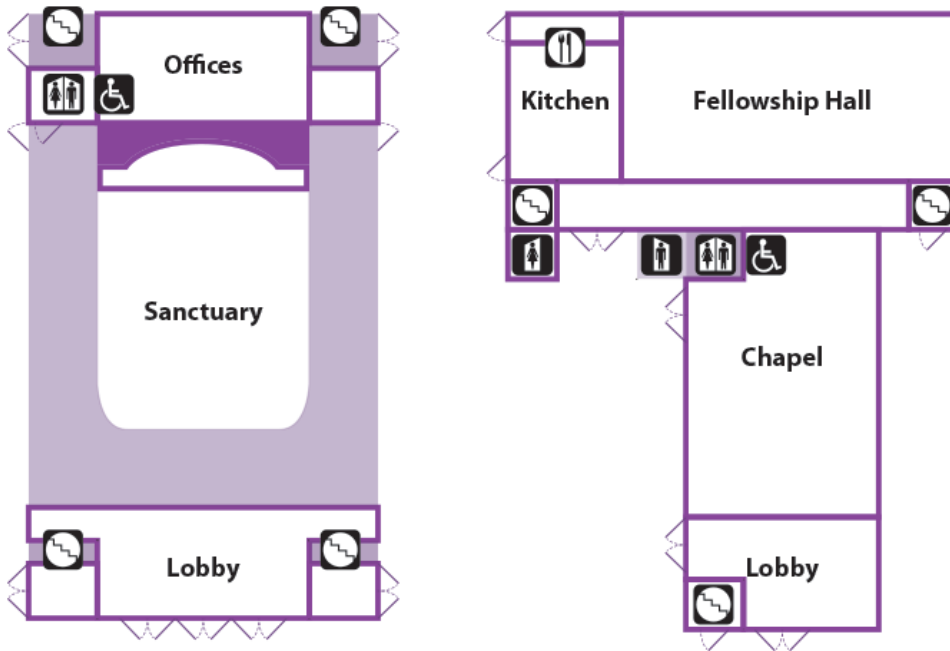
### Church Officers

Church Board Chair—Leif Lind (leiflind4@gmail.com)  
Head Elder – Elizabeth Johnston Taylor (909-747-8836)  
Head Deacon – Jerry Wahagheghe (310-963-1383)  
Assistant Organist – Taylor Ruhl (909-557-5229)  
Audio Visual – Kris Wahagheghe (kris.sn.wahagheghe@gmail.com)  
A+ School Board Chair – Glen Christensen (plbboss@aol.com)

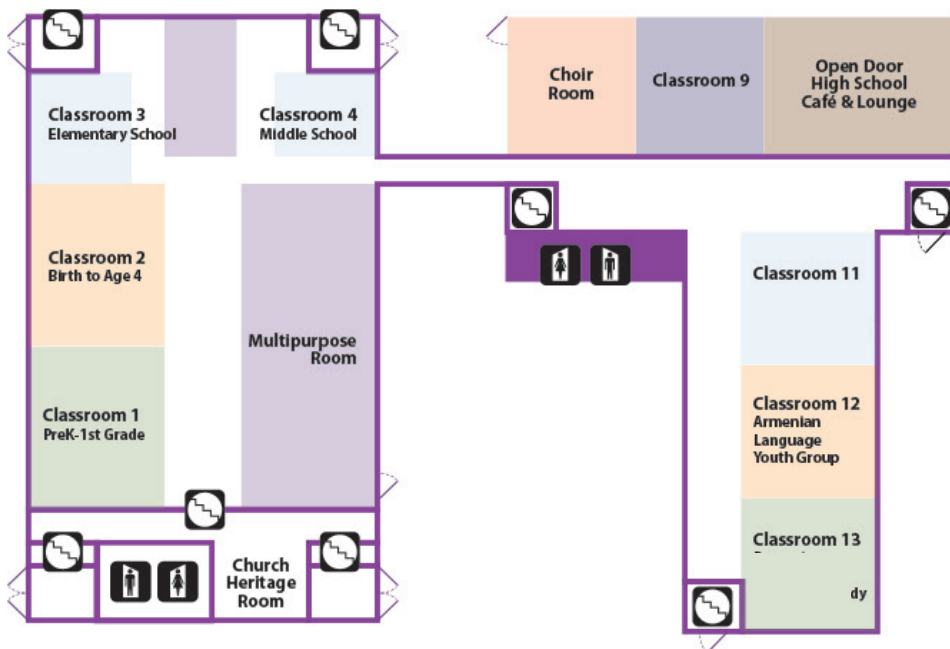


# FACILITIES MAP

## MAIN LEVEL



## LOWER LEVEL



## **M** Transit Info

- **Metro Bus 180:** Stop at Broadway and Glendale Ave. Walk one block west on Broadway and two blocks north on Isabel St.
- **Metro Bus 90:** Stop at Glendale Ave. and California Ave. Walk two blocks west on California Ave.
- **Glendale Beeline Buses 3 & 8:** Stop at Glendale Ave. and California Ave. Walk two blocks west on California Ave.



**Glendale City Church**  
**610 East California Avenue**  
**Glendale, CA 91206-3701**



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Below are instructions on how to link your account:

1. Log on to [www.ralphs.com](http://www.ralphs.com)
2. Sign in or create an account.
3. Under your profile, choose "My Account"
4. Choose "Community Contributions"
5. In the search function, type our school code WJ443 and choose enroll.

Thank you for supporting our school!



**Every Saturday Morning:  
Your Child & Jesus at  
Glendale City Church**

**11:00 am: City Kids Praise Time**

**11:15 am: Age Appropriate  
Groups**

- Birth-4 years: Tiny Tots with Miss Anji (parent or guardian required to stay with child)
- 5-12 years: Godly Play with Miss Debbie