

Date: Thu, 29 Dec 2011 17:37:09 -0500

Subject: Important conference details! Please read/save!

It's here! The GCN conference 2012 is only a week away, and we can't wait to see you there!

This email contains important information you'll need, so please take a few minutes to read this now and save it for future reference.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE

The vast majority of the attendees of the GCN conference are typically in agreement with GCN's mission, purpose, and values. However, GCN's conference has always had an open-door policy, so you may encounter people at the conference whose beliefs, values, and views differ markedly from your own and/or from GCN's.

Because Orlando is also home to the world's largest "ex-gay" organization, there may be people affiliated with the ex-gay movement who decide to register and attend part or all of the conference this year.

Our policy remains unchanged: Anyone is welcome to attend the conference, even if they don't agree with GCN's mission, but we do ask them to respect the conference's purpose and behave accordingly. As always, we reserve the right to remove anyone whose behavior, in the sole discretion of GCN's conference team, is distracting from or working against the stated purpose of the event.

What should you do if you encounter someone whose views are different from GCN's? Whether that person is a concerned Christian parent, a curious non-Christian, or a member of the ex-gay movement, we encourage you to welcome them with generosity and compassion. The GCN conference is a life-changing experience for many, and it just might change that person's perspective.

However, in the unlikely event that you encounter someone who is making you uncomfortable or engaging in inappropriate behavior (seeking sexual contacts, advocating a message contrary to GCN's, etc.), please notify a member of the conference team immediately.

We are also aware that some members of our community have strong emotional reactions to the topic of ex-gay ministry, due to their own painful experiences. If you are concerned about the possibility of encountering someone who might trigger something painful for you, please contact our office in advance of the conference, and we will work with you to address your specific needs and ensure that you are able to attend the conference safely and happily.

In all of our interactions at this year's conference, let us continually strive to embody our theme, "Ambassadors of Reconciliation," seeking out ways to build bridges and change lives without compromising our faith or our integrity, as we share Christ's light and love for all.

CONTACTING US

If you have any questions between now and **Tuesday, January 3**, please call the GCN office at [**\(919\) 786-0000**](tel:9197860000).

The GCN office will be closed starting on Wednesday, January 4. From that point on, you should contact the hotel at [**\(407\) 352-1100**](tel:4073521100) and ask to be put in touch with (or leave a message for) a member of the GCN conference team.

SCHEDULE

Registration begins: Thursday, January 5, at 5 p.m.

Conference ends: Sunday, January 8, at 1 p.m.

An updated schedule of events (subject to change) may be found on our website at:

<http://www.gaychristian.net/conference/schedule.php>

LOCATION

The conference is being held at:

DoubleTree by Hilton Orlando at SeaWorld

10100 International Drive

Orlando, FL 32821

[\(407\) 352-1100](tel:4073521100)

There's more than one DoubleTree in Orlando, so when giving directions, remember that we are at the **DoubleTree at SeaWorld** (on **International Drive**). International Drive is a well-known Orlando thoroughfare.

TRANSPORTATION

The hotel is about 10 miles from Orlando International Airport (MCO).

Bus service from the airport is available for only \$2 via Orlando's public Lynx system. To find the best options for your arrival time, visit the [Lynx website](#).

Shuttle service to/from the airport is available for approximately \$30/person roundtrip by [Mears Transportation](#). Other options, such as SuperShuttle, taxis, and rental cars, are also available at the airport.

If you would like to share a ride, you can communicate with other attendees on our [Conference 2012 forum](#). Please note that GCN provides this forum for your convenience only; any ride-sharing arrangements you make are strictly at your own risk.

Self-parking at the hotel is available for \$5/day at the GCN conference rate. (Published rates are higher; valet parking is also available at a higher price.) If you will be self-parking, tell the front desk when you check in and ask for the conference rate.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE

Upon arriving, check into your hotel room as usual. (If your room is being covered by scholarship, your name is already on file with the hotel, but you will still need to provide a credit card for "incidentals." In other words, even if GCN is paying for your room, anything else you charge to the room is at your expense!)

Conference registration and check-in is from 5 to 8 p.m. on Thursday. When you check in at the hotel, ask for directions to our registration table. We'll have volunteers available to give you your nametag and other important conference information.

If you arrive early, feel free to hang out in the lobby! Other attendees often congregate in the hotel lobby before registration, so you might be able to meet some new people before things even get started.

If you arrive after registration closes at 8 p.m., or you arrive on another day of the conference, please head to the registration table anyway. We'll either have a volunteer or posted information to let you know what to do.

WHAT TO PACK

You don't have to bring anything other than yourself, but here are some suggestions to consider when you're packing, to help make your trip more enjoyable:

- **casual, weather-appropriate clothes** - January in Orlando is typically very mild, with temperatures expected to peak in the high 60s and low 70s (around 20-22°C). Weather can change quickly, however, so we recommend checking weather.com when packing to get the most up-to-date predictions. You do not need to dress up for any conference events unless you choose to; please wear what you are comfortable in. (Nothing suggestive or profane, please, out of respect for other attendees.)
- **a Bible** - No one will look at you funny if you don't bring one, but you may find it useful to have a Bible handy during some of the sessions and for your own personal study.
- **pen and notepad** - Or anything to take notes with. You never know when you might want to jot something down.
- **a camera** - There are sure to be lots of memories this weekend, so if you like taking pictures, be sure to bring your camera! (Also be sure to pay attention to our photo guidelines to help protect others' privacy.)
- **toiletries, medications, etc.** - Whatever you need for the weekend, make sure it's with you.
- **something to sleep in** - If you're sharing a room to save money, we recommend that you bring something modest for sleeping to ensure the comfort of your roommate(s).
- **money** - You should be able to take care of most of your travel expenses with a credit or debit card. However, it's often helpful to have cash and/or checks when you travel, just in case. You may wish to tip shuttle drivers and hotel employees, and there will be a number of books, CDs, and DVDs available for purchase at the conference. Some vendors may not be able to accept plastic.
- **snacks** - You might want a snack for the plane or between meal breaks, particularly if you need to watch your blood sugar.
- **business cards** - This can be a wonderful opportunity to network, so if you have business cards, you might want to bring them!

If you're planning to spend time in the Orlando theme parks, consider other things you may need for the time outside, such as **sunscreen, hats, ponchos** (especially if you like water rides but don't like getting wet), etc. Remember, January weather in Orlando can be warm one minute and chilly the next, so layers are your friend!

ONE FINAL THING

We're planning a special raffle on Friday night with the opportunity to win theme park tickets! Do you have something you'd like to raffle off to support GCN? Bring it with you, and let us know when you arrive!

Well, that's it! Have a happy new year, and we'll see you soon!

In Christ,
The GCN Conference Team