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Want free clothes? Read this

Irvine church hosting community clothing exchange to help neighbors in need.

By ERIKA CHAVEZ

The Orange County Register

Would you like some "new" clothing items in exchange for your old duds?

The Village Church of Irvine is hosting a free Give One, Get One Clothing Exchange this Sunday, open to the community. The idea: get rid of your unwanted, gently used clothes and go home with a few items for yourself.

The response in advance of the event has been strong, said church volunteer Anjuli Watanabe, with thousands of men's, women's and children's clothing items already donated. Shoes, accessories and even some maternity items will also be available at the clothes swap, which will be held from noon to 4 p.m. in the church parking lot.

"We want people to reach out to their neighbors," Watanabe said. She said that point was driven home by a thankful phone call she received last week. A man fought back tears as he told her of losing his job.

"He said his kids had outgrown their clothes, they were asking for new ones and there was nothing he could do," Watanabe recalled. "It's about helping each other in this tough economy. I think people are starting to understand how much we're really going to need each other."

For every item donated, the giver will receive one ticket good for the redemption of another clothing item. Unused tickets can be donated so families in need of clothes with none to donate can use them; and any clothes unclaimed at the end of the swap will be donated to various nonprofit agencies in need of apparel.

Those who wish to donate clothes and not take any home in exchange can opt to make a tax deductible donation and receive a receipt.

Clothes can be donated and tickets issued ahead of time at various drop-off locations; clothing will also be accepted on the day of the event, but organizers caution that there might be a wait to process the items and receive tickets, depending on the same-day turnout.

The Village Church is at 77 Post, Irvine.

For more information, visit

www.villagechurchirvine.com/clothing_exchange.