

# THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS

Published by **The First Baptist Church of Los Angeles**  
760 South Westmoreland Avenue • Los Angeles, CA 90005 • (213) 384-2151 • [fbcla@fbcofla.org](mailto:fbcla@fbcofla.org)



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**An American Baptist Congregation Making God's Love Known in Los Angeles Since 1874**  
*International • Intercultural • Ecumenical*

## INVITE SOMEONE TO CHURCH!

In the past year we have updated our church's website. It was a fun and interesting experience to undergo. As I was describing the process to a college friend who works in promotions, she asked, a business-oriented, marketing question: "Who are your biggest competitors?" Competitors? I said we don't see other churches as "competitors" and we are not intentionally in the business of "stealing sheep" from other congregations. It felt odd to compare our professed ministry of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ through words and deed with a business model of offering a "product" that effectively attracts new "customers." So my friend re-phrased the question and asked instead, "What are people's other choices for how to spend their Sunday mornings?" That was an easier question for us to answer.

Each of you know that it is easy to rationalize how much more preferable it is to stay at home rather than a) deal with the bad traffic, b) find suitable clothing, c) locate a decent parking space, or d) spend the morning hours inside a church building. Also, given how many people now have to work on Sunday mornings, or have been working overtime hours during the week and feel exhausted by the time Sunday morning rolls around, it is not surprising that our biggest "competition" is the option of simply staying home.

For other people, the option of attending church rarely if ever crosses their mind on Sunday mornings, since they neither actively profess the Christian faith nor claim to belong to a Christian denomination. They will say they are good people, spiritual and caring people willing to help those in need – and that is all likely true. But their "community of choice" may involve Facebook or work colleagues or neighborhood friends or a hobby/sports group. They may have negative memories about church from growing up, negative perceptions about the institutional church today, and no desire to challenge those views through actively engaging in church life now.

So, in reaching out to people who make other "choices" on Sunday mornings, start by asking them what images they associate with the word "church." Most likely they will describe for you a building, possibly one with stained glass windows and hard pews. Yet the bible never talks about church as a building. It always uses organic images – the body of Christ, the living vine, the fellowship of believers touched by God's Spirit. Church is what happens inside walls (worship, prayer, laughter, trust, com-passionate work), not just the walls themselves. Church is the people, not the place where people gather. So let's invite someone to church and show them that church is more than a building.

*Carlton A. Rhoads*

### Embrace the Cause!

If only Adoniram and Ann Judson could see the fruit of the seeds they planted in Myanmar (Burma) 200 years ago! They'd be thrilled to see the impact of churches like U Naw Memorial Church—the first Baptist church in all of Burma, established by Baptist missionaries, and named for the first convert baptized by Dr. Judson in 1814.

This thriving, intergenerational church is actively providing free medical care to the poor in surrounding villages. “The doctor volunteers, nurse volunteers and the some church members donate medicine,” says Pastor U Toe Toe. “We go together to help the villagers.”

The church is also pouring its heart into ministries for outreach, education and training for children, as well as for adults. It is a church reaching out to all people in this predominantly Buddhist country.

Recalling how a pastor took him under his wing when he was a child, Pastor Toe Toe is committed to training young people in his church. “When I go into the mission field, I take the youth. They can then see what I do so that one day they may want to be a minister.”

U Naw Memorial Church is dedicated to education and to sharing the gospel in the



surrounding villages. “After the Nargis Cyclone, our church donated some food and nearly 100 tents. Some young people had no education so we invited some to stay with us,” said Pastor Toe Toe.

“Not only Christian. Seven Buddhists are still with us, and six are now converts attending church,” he says.

“We have a vision within this decade to have 20 mission fields and 20 new church plants and 2,000 new believers,” says Pastor U Toe Toe. “We want to serve all the people—including other religions—because everybody is a child of God.”

Churches like U Naw are actively helping people come to faith in Jesus, grow in their relationship with God, and change their worlds through the power of the Spirit. *As a result of faithful work started 200 years ago, Christians now number 1.7 million in Myanmar!*

**This is the kind of work YOU make possible around the globe through your gifts to the World Mission Offering.**

### NEWS SCHEDULE

The **next issue** of the *First Baptist NEWS* will be published **October 14, 2013**. Material and articles for the October 14<sup>th</sup> issue should **arrive** in the church office two weeks before publication, or no later than **9:00 a.m. on September 30<sup>th</sup>**.

### THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS

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## 200 YEARS OF MISSION. . .AND BEYOND

In 1813, missionaries Adoniram and Ann Judson landed in Burma (now called Myanmar) in southwest Asia. Their vision as the first commissioned American Baptist missionaries inspired American Christians to become part of one of the most significant mission movements in Christian history. Now 200 years later, you are still part of this movement!

Today through American Baptist International Ministries (IM), the Holy Spirit continues to work in and through missionaries, churches and people like you to bring God's blessing to all the families of the

earth. When you minister to an IM missionary in prayer... when you fund a global project... when you assist a missionary as a volunteer... when you learn at a World Mission Conference... when you serve alongside an international partner – you are serving as hands and feet of Jesus in mission!

Your gift to the World Mission Offering makes you a crucial part of this global mission movement. Your gift will support the entire work of IM missionaries, staff, projects and partners in 70 countries.

Be a part of it. Give to the World Mission Offering!

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Over the years various rooms and areas of First Baptist Church have been identified by the name of a member or a class. This list continues from the last issue of the NEWS to briefly explain the "who" and "when" of these identifications. In every case, a bronze plaque is seen by the door or entryway to each room or area, with the wording that is quoted below.

### THE HELEN HARRELL ROOM

Dedicated in memory of Helen Gordon Harrell, beloved teacher of Double Circle Class, 1935-1959. (Mrs. Harrell was the daughter of A. J. Gordon, founder of Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts. Her membership at First Baptist was from 1918 to her death in 1967. This "Room 10" is on the ground floor across from Robbins Dining Hall.)

### HARRIET C. ROBBINS DINING HALL.

(This important gathering place for the congregation is named for a long-time member, Ms. Harriet Robbins who died in 1983; she had united with First Baptist in 1919 and over the years gave leadership as Moderator; as a Trustee; and as an educator.)

### THE CUMMINGS WORLD NEIGHBOR LOUNGE

Dedicated September 1980, Recognizing Oliver and Edith Cummings: three decades of ministry at First Baptist Church, Los Angeles. (Oliver deWolf Cummings was Associate Minister on the church staff from 1950 to his retirement in October 1983, when he was named Minister Emeritus. Originally Minister of Christian Education, he later developed the extensive Good Neighbor Ministry with senior adults and, with Mrs. Cummings, led local, national and world travel experiences. Travelers were encouraged to enjoy the beauty of God's world; to be good neighbors to others; and to be ambassadors for

peace wherever they went. His honorary Doctorate is from the University of Redlands. Death for her came September 23, 1986 and for him, two months later on November 30. This Lounge is located outside of Robbins Dining Hall.)

### ALBERT H. BABCOCK, JR. D.D. MEMORIAL CONFERENCE ROOM.

Associate Minister, 1963-1979. (The Babcock family is closely identified with the church's recent ministry. Dr. Babcock led the Christian Education program for many years and later joined with Lulu, his wife, to become the successors of Oliver and Edith Cummings directing the Good Neighbor Ministry with seniors. His honorary Doctorate is from the University of Redlands. Daughter Sandra Babcock Rogers serves part-time in the Church office setting up the bulletin and NEWS for printing. The Babcock Conference Room is on the lower floor hallway outside of Robbins Dining Hall.)

### THE GLENN J. BROWN YOUTH CENTER

Dedicated February 1966, in memory of Glenn J. Brown Jr., Minister to Youth, 1954-1957. (Glenn Brown was a participant in the church's youth program, a member from 1945-46, and later from 1954-57. He was sponsored by the church to attend the University of Redlands. Seminary training followed at The Colgate Rochester Divinity School and he then returned to First Baptist as Youth Minister. Death by cancer claimed him in November 1965.) This room is currently rented to the Koinonia church.

### THE ROB ROBERTSON ROOM

Dedicated to the glory of God in loving memory of Robert Carl Robertson, member 1954-1976. (Mr. Robertson was a key leader of the Ambassador Church School class and a deacon of the church.

His vocation was as a landscape architect for the city of Glendale; he used his talents to beautify both the church and the church's apartment project, Vista Tower Residences.)

### USHERS: FAROAT ROOM

Dedicated to the memory of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel E. Faroat. (This room at the west end of the sanctuary narthex houses supplies for the ushers. The name "Faroat Room" honors the service of Mr. Faroat and all ushers over the years.)

### THE VINCENT ROSENBERGER ROOM

Dedicated to the glory of God and in loving memory of Vincent A. Rosenberger, member 1929-1978. (This room is located adjacent to the elevator on the second floor of the education building, attractive with a fireplace and windows overlooking the church's interior patio. Mr. Rosenberger was a trustee, and a founding member of the Baptist Service Corporation, owner and operator of Vista Tower Residences across the street from First Baptist. His son, Dean, and granddaughter Shirley Parsley are still members.)

## WEDDING SPACE

Do you know anyone that is planning a wedding soon? The ultimate Church Sanctuary setting for a wedding is right here at First Baptist Church of Los Angeles.

The main Sanctuary and the Francis Chapel are available to be rented for wedding ceremonies. The Robbins Dining Hall is also available to be rented for wedding receptions.

For more information on the wedding program and package that is available at First Baptist Church, please contact Sheila Johnson/ Wedding Coordinator for First Baptist Church at (562) 225-3641 or visit the church website at [www.FBCofLA.org](http://www.FBCofLA.org)

– Sheila Johnson,  
Wedding Coordinator

760 South Westmoreland Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90005



**INVITE-A-FRIEND AND OUTREACH MONTH**  
**WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2013**

**10:00 a.m.**

Worship in the **Francis Chapel:**

**“THE GREATEST TEACHER EVER”**

(Please read Isaiah 50:4-9 in preparation)

**REV. CARLTON A. RHODEN**, Preaching

– World Mission Offering –

**11:30 a.m.**

Church School Classes for All Ages



**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2013**

**10:00 a.m.**

Worship in the **Francis Chapel:**

**“LOST SHEEP?”**

(Please read Luke 15:1-7 in preparation)

**REV. CARLTON A. RHODEN**, Preaching

**11:30 a.m.**

Church School Classes for All Ages