

# 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)

Volume LXXXIII

No. 16

AUGUST 3, 2015

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

### FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR'S PEN

#### The Interim Journey of First Baptist, Los Angeles: *Trusting God in the Transition*

Dear Church Family and Friends,

I pray that you are all enjoying the summer, an opportunity for rest and relaxation. Many families us this time to take vacations. The summer is also a time to connect with family and friends and prepare for what lies ahead. We just concluded our church wide learning opportunity on "Discovering, Developing and Deploying Our Spiritual Gifts." We will offer Spiritual Gifts Small Group opportunities in August and September for members to continue to connect, engage, study and learn more about God's transforming Spirit.

Through the use of our spiritual gifts, God desires to perform a makeover in each one of us. As we find in Ephesians 2:10, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." You are his masterpiece. God wants to give us an extreme makeover. He wants to give us a second chance. God is doing a redo in us! A Start Over! Do you know what God's saying though this passage? He wants to give you a redo. He wants to give you a second chance. He wants to give you a new life. This little phrase, "You are his workmanship." The Greek word here literally it's the picture of a masterpiece in the making that's in progress. You could picture a beautiful piece of art and you're the canvas and God is painting and reworking and recreating and you're on his easel and you are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus. Or you could see it as a sculptor and He's resculpting your life and He's taking the clay of who you are and He's forming the different parts and He is making you – you are his workmanship. Or you could be a literary work; this word was used of a poem or a literary work that it was in progress. You are the workmanship of God. He's recreating you, how, though your relationship in Christ. Why? For the purpose of good works, doing good. God has a purpose for your life. Did you notice the little phrase, literally that we're preordained for you to do. Before the foundations of the earth God knows you and he loves you. He understands you, He cares about you, He wants to save you, He wants to put away the old, have you have a relationship with Christ, demonstrate the kindness of who He is, the love of who He is, the wisdom of who He is and then what he wants to do is He wants to take you and take you on this extreme makeover process where

your life is beautiful and winsome and loving and kind instead of the way it used to be.

You are God's own masterpiece. That means, you are not ordinary or average; you are one-of-a-kind original! When God created you, He went to great length to make you exactly the way He wanted you. You're not meant to be like everyone else; God designed you the way you are for a purpose. Everything about you is unique and everything about you matters. You may feel like your life looks ordinary today, but when you understand your value—not only who you are, but also, whose you are—then you will love yourself more, and you will also love those people around you in a greater way. Realize that because you belong to Him, you are extremely valuable.

With Hope, *Norman Bullock*

#### **2015 ABC-USA Mission Summit**

The American Baptist Churches, USA recently held its Biennial Mission Summit, June 26-28, 2015, in Overland Park, Kansas. During the gathering, hundreds of American Baptists have signed on to the Epistle of Metanoia. The epistle was drafted and signed by members of the American Baptist family at the event, and then put online to allow for signees from across the United States, Puerto Rico and the world.

The President of ABCUSA, Rev. Dr. Don Ng, first read this letter (see below) before preaching the closing sermon of the event. The scope of this letter is broader than solely those who were at the Overland Park Convention Center.

#### **An Epistle of Metanoia from the 2015 Mission Summit to the ABCUSA family**

In light of the sin of racism that has infected each and every part of our nation we, the gathered delegates and participants of the 2015 Mission Summit of American Baptist Churches USA, the most diverse Protestant body in our nation, grieve racism's effects on our people. Therefore, we collectively speak against and repent of our participation in the sin of racism wherever it is found. The presence of white supremacy for too long has gone unacknowledged and prevented us from living as the body of Christ.

Between now and the 2017 Mission Summit we urge each ABCUSA congregation to covenant in order to seek justice & reconciliation, hold one another accountable in

*(Continued on Page 2)*

## FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR'S PEN *(continued)*

this endeavor, and pursue local incarnated manifestations of the Beloved Community.

### Board of General Ministries Statement

The General Secretary search activity has brought forth strong and qualified candidates, each of whom is uniquely gifted in ways worthy to be celebrated and honored.

Unfortunately, breaches of confidentiality have compromised the integrity of the search. As a result, the Board of General Ministries during executive session Wednesday morning, voted to suspend the search process at this time.

### NEWS SCHEDULE

The **next issue** of the *First Baptist NEWS* will be published **August 17, 2015**. Material and articles for the August 17<sup>th</sup> issue should arrive in the church office two weeks before publication, or **no later than 9:00 a.m. August 3**.

### THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS

(USPS 194-440)

Annual Subscription Rate:

\$10.00 per year

Published biweekly by First Baptist Church, 760 South Westmoreland Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90005. PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID AT LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to First Baptist Church NEWS, 760 South Westmoreland Avenue, Los Angeles, California, 90005.

All copy for the NEWS should be typed or written plainly and reach the Church Office no later than **9:00 a.m. MONDAY, two weeks prior** to publication.

**STAFF:** Norman Bullock, *Interim Pastor*; Esther Sanchez, *Administration and Building Coordinator*. James Johnson, *Josue Guevara*, *Odos Nabors*, *Custodians*. John Polite, *Director of Worship Arts*. Kyle Irwin, *Organist/Choirmaster*. Sandra Rogers, *Communications Coordinator*.

**CHURCH PHONE:** (213) 384-2151

**FAX :** (213) 382-9669

VISTA TOWER: (213) 386-2786

**OFFICE HOURS:**

Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

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

**email addresses:**

General: [fbcla@FBCofLA.org](mailto:fbcla@FBCofLA.org)

Norman Bullock: [NBullock@FBCofLA.org](mailto:NBullock@FBCofLA.org)

James Johnson: [JJohnson@FBCofLA.org](mailto:JJohnson@FBCofLA.org)

Sandra Rogers: [SandraBR@FBCofLA.org](mailto:SandraBR@FBCofLA.org)

Esther Sanchez: [ESanchez@FBCofLA.org](mailto:ESanchez@FBCofLA.org)

In moving forward, the Board of General Ministries will name an interim General Secretary at its November 2015 meeting and will discern when to resume the search process.

As you know, searches are personnel matters. For this reason, further details will not be given nor questions taken.

The Board of General Ministries covets your continual prayers for its ongoing vital work, especially the critical task of calling our next General Secretary who will lead the American Baptist family into the future as the hands and feet of Christ.

### Congratulations to David McFadden

David McFadden, faithful member of First Baptist and Church Treasurer, along with three other law librarians, was honored as a recipient of the Robert L. Oakley Advocacy Award during the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Law Libraries in Philadelphia on July 19. He was part of a team of law librarians who successfully advocated for the enactment of the Uniform Electronic Legal Materials Act (UELMA) in 2012. The act went into effect on July 1, 2015.

### Vacation Bible School (VBS)

We had a very successful week at VBS. We had approximately 40 children who registered along with 25 volunteers. It was wonderful to have our young adult women of FBCLA participate and active in teaching some of the classes. Every teacher did an outstanding job. The messages were taught uniformly to the different age groups. The children remembered the stories of Jesus and his teachings of love, protection, faith, and service through the scriptures and lessons. We thoroughly enjoyed Kenneth and Nalis Mercier's contributions of songs, skits and puppet openings and closings each day. Great arts and crafts provided by Shirley Parsley and Lisa Thomas, wonderful food from Maxine McFarland and the Morales family, and pizza on the last day provided by Haydee Gutierrez and Zuleima Argumedo.

*Linda Zaretsky,*  
Christian Education Coordinator

### VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2015



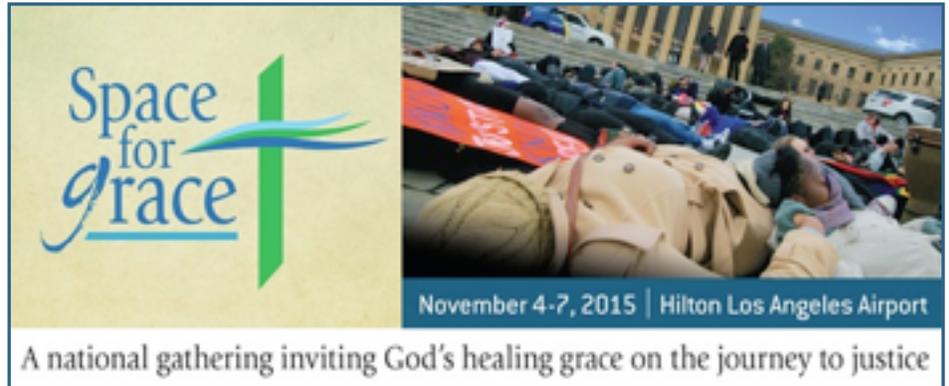


Happy Birthday, sisters, Vu Dastile and Zuleima Argumedo who celebrated their birthdays during closing day of VBS on July 17.



For more than 20 years, the Taste of Larchmont has featured delicious food tasting from exceptional Larchmont Village-area restaurants, featuring live music and a raffle of great prizes. The Taste of Larchmont is Hope-Net's primary fundraising event each year, and will be held this year on **Monday, August 24 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.** **Event Tickets are \$40; Raffle tickets, \$5.**

HOPE-NET was founded in 1988 by First Baptist and several other area congregations to serve the poor in the Wilshire Center area. It's service area now extends throughout metropolitan L.A. – Wilshire Center, Koreatown, Pico-Union, Hollywood, Los Feliz, Silverlake, Adams-Figueroa. Hope-Net operates 13 area food pantries, all located at area congregations (Christian, Jewish, Catholic, Muslim). For more information on Hope-Net and to purchase your Taste of Larchmont tickets, visit it's website at [www.hopenetla.org](http://www.hopenetla.org).



Race, religion, culture and class still divide our world. We are all too familiar with the repercussions of the resulting alienation and polarization – protests such as the “die-in” at the Philadelphia Museum of Art following last year’s Ferguson and Staten Island grand jury decisions.

Space for Grace, sponsored by American Baptist Home Mission Societies, seeks to restore the human connection among all people by gathering intentionally diverse voices committed to exploring different perspectives about contemporary issues that affect congregations and communities across the United States today.

How can Christians live out faith in the midst of today’s racial, religious and cultural dynamics? When can God’s grace become teachable moments that lead to transformed spirits? How does God’s grace work in you? These questions, and more, will be answered in afternoon Learning Experiences in which ministerial practitioners will share lifetimes of experience through dialogue and transformative practical tools.

Preachers, speakers and musical artists from across the country— Brian McLaren, Susan Sparks, Ralph Warnock, Marvin McMickle, Ken Fong and Jacqueline Thompson, to name just a few—will bring God’s Gospel of grace to life. From sunrise to sundown, *Space for Grace* will feature opportunities for memorable and meaningful worship, engagement and reflection that participants will carry home as better reflections of God’s kingdom

because of the Space for Grace experience.

The concluding gala banquet celebrates the grace-filled 24-year ministry of Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III, ABHMS retiring executive director. Renowned speakers such as Dr. J. Alfred Smith Sr. will mark Wright-Riggins’ legacy to the life and ministry of American Baptist Home Mission Societies. Music will be provided by exceptional, well-known artists, and recollections will be shared by longstanding friends and colleagues.

For more information, please visit the website of American Baptist Home Mission Societies (<http://nationalministries.org>) or call the church office. Volunteers are also needed for the Space for Grace Conference. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Pastor Bullock at [nbullock@fbcofla.org](mailto:nbullock@fbcofla.org).

## CHURCH OFFICERS

Moderator: **Shirley Parsley**

Church Clerk: **Gerald Gubatan**

Treasurer: **David McFadden**

Members At Large: **Ann Brodie, Richard Rogers, Vance Smith, Lee Strand, Linda Zaretsky**

Spiritual Gifts Ministry

*Coordinator:* **John Sturm**

*Members:* Kenneth Mercier, Santiago Morales, Penny Pilkenton & Denie Sturm.

**Note:** Council of Ministries (Board of Trustees) is made up of those in **bold print**. The Council meets the **3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m.**; all members are welcome to attend.

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 2015**

**9:30 a.m.**

Church School Classes for All Ages

**11:00 a.m.**

Worship in the Francis Chapel

**"THINGS HAPPEN AFTER PRAYER"**

(Please read Jeremiah 33:3 in preparation)

**DR. NORMAN BULLOCK**, Preaching



**SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 2015**

**9:30 a.m.**

Church School Classes for All Ages

**11:00 a.m.**

Worship in the Francis Chapel

**"LOOKING AND SEEING"**

(Please read Nehemiah 2:13-16 and Luke 10:33-35 in preparation)

**DR. WILLIAM THURMOND**, Preaching