

# THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS



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

## FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR'S PEN

Dear FBCLA Family and Friends:

In my devotional reading this morning, I came across an excerpt from "The Cloud of Unknowing" that I would like to share with you to reflect on as we continue our journey as a congregation of committed believers in Jesus Christ –

*"Do not give up... When you first begin, you find only darkness and as it were a cloud of unknowing. You don't know what this means except that you feel a simple, steadfast intention reaching out toward God... Reconcile yourself to wait in this darkness as long as is necessary, but still go on longing after Him who you love."*

That, my friend is what worship is all about. Worship should be at the center of everything we do. When we are in an attitude of worship – even in the darkness of our lives, God is still moving. Look at the passage from Acts 16:25-26 as confirmation:

*25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.*

*26 Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose.*

As I meditated on that excerpt and this scripture, I was reminded of the association between darkness and midnight. Friends, there is something sacred in the midnight hour. It is that thin space of 60 seconds that separates yesterday from a new day. "Midnight," the cusp that brings the promise of fresh possibilities, is a time of change. While we are sleep, midnight quietly buries yesterday's disappointments and birth's new beginnings.

God moves at midnight. There is power at midnight, breakthroughs come in the midnight hour, deliverance comes in the midnight hour. Moses knew this when at midnight, God struck down Egypt's first born. In Psalms 119, the Psalmist rose in His distress at midnight; Paul and Silas prayed and sang unto the Lord, and the chains were broken. And it will be the midnight hour that Bridegroom himself has promised to return.

In the quiet moments of the new day, beckoned out of sleep, arise to partake in this sacred stillness. Forego the comfort of the bed and surrender to the gentle nudge of the Holy Spirit. Though darkness engulfs night, midnight is the dawn of a new day. Rise to embrace the midnights of your soul with joy, with praise, with prayer.

Let us pray: Almighty God, help Your Church to embrace the midnights of our soul as a time of renewal that brings transformation through Christ, Jesus our Lord, Amen.

With Hope

Pastor Bullock

## SPIRITUAL GIFTS MINISTRY

On Saturday, May 21, the SGM sponsored a Spiritual Gifts Symposium entitled, "Discovering, Developing and Deploying Your Spiritual Gifts." During the symposium, passages like 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, Ephesians 4 and 1 Peter 4 were shared that go into specific detail about what these gifts are and how they should be used. It's clear every spiritual gift is a reflection of God's nature that you carry within you. And because your spiritual gift reflects God's design and direction for your life, you'll find great passion, joy, and satisfaction in expressing it. Your spiritual gift also will be a place of deep spiritual formation in your life, as God uses it both to powerfully connect you to God. Every spiritual gift gives off clues. Your spiritual gift will cause you to react a certain way in a given situation. If there's a problem, people with the spiritual gift of shepherding will be immediately concerned that people are cared for and growing in their discipleship as a result of the issue. Those with the gift of intercession (prayer) will immediately say, "We need to pray about this," while those with a leadership gift will begin looking at solutions for the problem. The Apostle Paul provides the church with a blueprint in Ephesians 4 as it relates to the role of spiritual gifts in the church. Christ gives different gifts to different members of the Body. Our job is not to compare our gifts and abilities, nor to feel superior or inferior to other members of the Body, but to make use of our respective gifts to serve others. Our works of service are to be used for building up the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12). As we work together, each of us serving according to the gifts and opportunities Christ gives us, we will grow into "unity in the faith" (verse 13). Although there is only one faith (verse 5), God's people reach unity of the faith through works of service, ministering to one another's needs in Christ.

## Biblical Foundations on Spiritual Gifts from 1 Corinthians 12 1.

Paul wants the saints to be informed about spiritual gifts, a. so they will recognize their own gifts; b. they will know how to relate their gifts to the rest of the body; c. they will recognize that one Spirit controls all of the gifts; d. they will not misuse or

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

abuse their gifts; e. they will not be fooled by the falsely gifted; and f. the church will experience no division or confusion because of gifts. 2. Gifts must acknowledge and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is in the business of glorifying Christ and all gifts that the Spirit gives are under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. 3. The Holy Spirit is in complete control of all gifts, even though, a. there are diversities and varieties of gifts; b. there are difference organizations and arrangements of gifts; c. there are different operations of gifts; and d. there are different manifestations of gifts. 4. All of the gifts are given for the benefit and profit of the church.

### PROVIDING HOPE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

First Baptist has partnered with Hope-Net, a local charity that helps those in need who live and work among us for many years. Every Friday morning from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., 50 weeks a year, this program provides bags of groceries for needy families who are in need with no questions asked. We are able to serve all nationalities including Latinos, Caucasians, Asians, African Americans and others reflecting the neighborhood's diverse population. We serve many families who are in need. Our next initiative is to be able to provide fresh fruit and vegetables to our community, many of whom would not be able to access it otherwise. We are working our partners to develop a plan so that our community can have access to fresh fruits and vegetables. If you are interested in donating to this vital ministry or would like to volunteer, please contact the church office. Special thanks to Lee Strand, Teresa Negrete, and Vance Smith for their faithfulness to this ministry.

### JUNE EVENTS

**Saturday, June 11, Men's Fellowship Breakfast with the Pastor** – All males of First Baptist Church are invited to breakfast with the Interim Pastor, Dr. Bullock, on Saturday, June 11 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. as we discuss ways to develop the church's Men's Fellowship Ministry. Please RSVP your attendance by calling the church office at (213) 384-2151.

**Sunday June 12, Christian Education Sunday.** Please join us on June 12 for Christian Education Sunday where members of our children and youth will lead us and participate in worship. We will also recognize all graduates (kindergarten, elementary, middle school, high school, and college) at a luncheon following the morning worship service in Robbins Dining Hall.



### 2016 Graduates.

Another sign that summer is here is graduation. Congratulations to all those who have completed their course of study. Let us know if you have a graduate in your family so we can make others aware of this happy occasion in their lives. We will recognize all graduates on Christian Education Sunday, June 14. Please contact the church office at (213) 384-2151 if you or your child are graduating.

### Sunday June 19, Father's Day

Please join us at this special service recognizing and acknowledging all fathers during our Worship Service at 11:00 a.m.

### FRIENDS AND FAMILY SUNDAY

Each Fifth Sunday is Friends and Family Sunday at First Baptist. This is an opportunity for you to invite your family, friends, neighbors, co-workers to join you in worship and engage in fellowship. The next Friends and Family Sunday is **May 29**. Please invite a friend or family member to join us for worship.



### HAPPENINGS AND EVENTS IN THE REGION

#### American Baptist Churches DODGER NIGHT

Enjoy a Star Wars themed night of baseball with family and friends.

Stay after to enjoy Friday night fireworks!

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**FRIDAY, JULY 29, 2016**  
**7:00 p.m.**

To reserve and purchase your tickets, please call Esther Sanchez in the Church office at (213) 384-2151. The deadline to purchase your tickets via the church office is June 24.

### THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS

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## ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING OFFERING

Dear Friends,

It is time again for the One Great Hour of Sharing special offering. By the grace of God, we are given the opportunity to

share our gifts and resources during the month of June with our brothers and sisters in need around the world. All of us have the power to give back to God from that which God has given us, and in doing so, create a more just world for all of God's children. Through our gifts, we participate in the many ministries that serve the hungry, the poor, the distressed, the refugee.

The Hebrew Bible models this offering in the story of Ruth and Naomi, portrayed in the Book of Ruth. When faced with forced relocation due to famine and political strife, Ruth said to Naomi, "Where you go I will go." Solidarity stands at the heart of their story. Solidarity stands at the heart of the ministries of One Great Hour of Sharing. Solidarity stands at the heart of this offering.

Like Ruth and Naomi, refugees today are confronted with dire situations in their homes, and are forced by the necessity of survival to leave behind their communities in order to seek safety and security. Currently, the United Nations estimates over 60 million of our brothers and sisters across the world are refugees or displaced persons. The number is higher than it has been since World War II, and is expected to increase as violence continues in the Middle East and parts of Africa.

Through One Great Hour of Sharing we embrace refugees around the world as our own. We say "where you go, we will go." This offering places us side-by-side with those in

# One Great HOUR OF SHARING

need. It offers us the opportunity to be Ruth for the Naomi's of the world. By supporting One Great Hour of Sharing, we answer God's

call for us to bring wholeness to a fragmented world.

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering reaches across the globe. Sometimes it provides solidarity to those who have experienced loss due to disasters in our own community and congregation, and at other times it says tangibly "you are not forgotten" to our sisters and brothers on the other side of the world. Through our gifts, we can help ensure that all of God's children have what they need. Together, we accompany the refugee and stand in solidarity with the distressed, bringing about the world as God intended.

Thank you for prayerfully considering your gift to this special offering.

Sincerely, Pastor Bullock

## CHURCH OFFICERS

**Moderator:** Shirley Parsley

**Church Clerk:** David McFadden

**Treasurer:** Ann Brodie

### Council of Ministries – At Large

Gerald Gubatan  
Alma Pineda  
Richard Rogers  
Marta Torres  
Linda Zaretsky

### Spiritual Gifts Ministry

John Sturm, Coordinator  
Maria Juarez  
Ben Marte  
Kenneth Mercier  
Santiago Morales

**Note:** *The Council of Ministries (Board of Trustees) is made up of those in **bold print**. The Council meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of every month at 12:30 p.m.; all members are welcome to attend.*

### PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

Zuleima Argumedo  
Daniel Choi  
Gerald Gubatan  
David McFadden  
Shirley Parsley  
Alma Pineda  
Richard Rogers  
Marta Torres



*Congratulations to Antonio and Maria who celebrated their 23<sup>rd</sup> Wedding Anniversary on May 15: Roselda Lack, Teresa Negrete, Lee Strand, Maria Juarez and Antonio Barajas.*

760 South Westmoreland Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90005



**FRIENDS AND FAMILY SUNDAY,  
MAY 29, 2016**

**9:30 a.m.**

Church School Classes for All Ages

**11:00 a.m.**

Worship in the Sanctuary

**“THE POWER OF PURPOSE”**

(Please read Acts 2:41-47 in preparation)

**DR. NORMAN BULLOCK**, Preaching



**COMMUNION SUNDAY, JUNE 5, 2016**

**9:30 a.m.**

Church School Classes for All Ages

**11:00 a.m.**

Worship in the Sanctuary

**“DO YOU WANT TO BE MADE WHOLE?”**

(Please read John 5:1-10 in preparation)

**DR. NORMAN BULLOCK**, Preaching

– One Great Hour of Sharing Offering –