

# 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*

## HOMEcoming REPORTS (continued from last issue)

### DIACONATE MINISTRY

The Diaconate serves to strengthen congregational care, fellowship and undergird the spiritual development of members of the church. Our main focus is Family Ministry, assisting the Pastor in ministering to the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of each church member and family.

I am proud to point out two accomplishments under our Family Care ministry to date:

- With enthusiasm of our Deacons, our sick and shut-in members were contacted by personal visits, telephone calls, or by mail brightening a day in someone's life.
- Friends and Family Days were very successful. The fifth Sunday in even month allowed us to invite friends/family to tellership with us. A luncheon followed Worship service continuing harmonious conversation.

The Diaconate needs more committed people. Please ask me for the handout, "Diaconate Family Care Ministry." Hopefully, you will find your spiritual calling to join this ministry.

*Ann Brodie, Coordinator*

### WOMEN'S MINISTRY

This ministry was re-launched on April 10 2016. The purpose of this ministry is to connect women with gifts with women with needs. We will provide support groups for women, form prayer activities, fellowship opportunities, and bible studies.

This ministry is in the development stage. A leadership council was established recently. There will be more information in the *First Baptist NEWS*. Stay tuned.

*Ann Brodie, Facilitator*

### NEW MEMBERS MINISTRY

The New Members Ministry is a ministry of the Diaconate. The ministry meets with prospective members when they "come forward" in answer to an altar call and at other times. In the past year, the Interim Pastor and the ministry have approached some regular attendees to see if they would like to join the church.

The ministry also assists the pastor in the New Members Class. This is one of the prerequisites for membership outlined in our bylaws. In 2016. there have been two classes with four total students.

One need for the ministry is more members with bilingual abilities. Currently some Spanish or Korean speaking members are brought in but it would be good to have them as more regular members of the ministry.

*David McFadden, Leader of the New Member Ministry*

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY

We have had a busy year in Christian Education at First Baptist.

We ended last year with a wonderful Christmas program that showcased our wonderful kids.

In February I chaperoned a group of students to the Winter Retreat with the ABCLA association of churches at Big Bear. It was a wonderful experience that strengthened the youth and their walk with Christ.

On Palm Sunday, the children and youth led the service with devotionals, singing, and musical performances.

In April we participated in "Serve the City" with ABCLA and served the Watts community and children at the Jordan Downs housing project.

In June we had Graduation/CE Sunday and the children led the service. At that time Santiago and Etna Morales received the Arlo Reichter award for outstanding service in Christian Education.

*(Continued on Page 3)*

## CHURCH OFFICERS 2016-2017

**Moderator:** Ann Brodie

**Church Clerk:** Alma Pineda

**Treasurer:** Shirley Parsley

**Council Members-at-large:**

Gerald Gubatan

Nalis Mercier

John Sturm

Marta Torres

Linda Zaretsky

**Spiritual Gifts Ministry:**

David McFadden, Coordinator

James Johnson

Kenneth Mercier

Santiago Morales

Lee Strand

**Pastoral Search Committee:**

Gerald Gubatan, Chair

Zuleima Argumedo

Daniel Choi

David McFadden

Shirley Parsley

Alma Pineda

Richard Rogers

Marta Torres

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## MEET CYNTHIA FELTON, OUR NEW INTERIM WORSHIP ARTS DIRECTOR

Dr. Cynthia Felton is active as a performer and educator. Church Music and Worship planning has always been an integral part of her life. She has been an active member in church, and has always used her gift to sing as service to God. The bible says in Proverbs 22:6, “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

As a child Cynthia grew up singing in the children’s choir at Greater New Bethel Baptist Church in Miami, Florida. While attending college at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts, Cynthia was a member of the gospel choir for the institution. During her time at graduate school at New York University, she was a member of the historical Abyssinian Baptist Church. There she was a choir member and soloist of the Chancel Choir. After moving to Los Angeles to attend the University of Southern California for her doctoral studies, Cynthia became a member of the oldest black church in Los Angeles, the historical Second Baptist Church. She also served there as a choir member and soloist.

Musically, Cynthia has studied and performed various genres of music; including gospel, jazz, classical, and rhythm and blues. She has also been in several musical theater productions such as *The Wiz*, *Grease*, and *Sweet Charity*. Being instrumental in worship planning and service at various churches, Cynthia believes offering ourselves as living sacrifices to God is essential for growing a deeper faith in Christ and building his kingdom. The language and format of worship must make God’s word accessible and relevant to all who desire to hear it.

Cynthia’s vision for the ministry of First Baptist Church is grounded in bringing more people to Christ through a vibrant worship experience centered in praising God and through the Holy Spirit. Worship comes in various forms and her goal is to add some contemporary forms of worship while holding true to the great traditions of First Baptist. Vital worship requires active participation of all involved, so she will look to the congregation to be an integral part of the service. Some of the additions include implementing a gospel ensemble and a praise team, praise dancers, poetry and theatrical productions. Cynthia would like to bring back the handbell choir, the children’s choir and add a new concert series that will feature different genres of music and could include more outreach to the schools and churches in the community. Outreach is our ongoing expression of God’s love and it also provides opportunities to share our faith in Christ.

Cynthia is honored to be a part of the ministry of First Baptist Church and believes every opportunity to serve and sing praises to God is truly a blessing. She is excited and looks forward to the growth and blessings in sharing with this loving congregation of First Baptist that encourages and equips people to follow Jesus Christ.

Let’s welcome Cynthia and more importantly partner with her in this shared vision of worship.



## HOMECOMING REPORTS

*(continued from Page 1)*

In July, we had a very successful Vacation Bible School that was well attended by the community and was a blessing to all involved.

We are working on relaunching Big Sisters to involve the young adult women who have grown up in this church for fellowship and strengthening their faith.

There continues to be areas that need our prayers and support. We need committed, dedicated teachers as we definitely do not have enough staffing. We welcome volunteers who will be greatly blessed working with the children and youth.

I want to thank all the teachers, workers, and leaders who help us in Christian Education and could not make it without you. I would like to give a special thanks to Nalis Mercier who has faithfully taken the task of children's story on every fourth Sunday.

*Linda Zaretsky, Coordinator*

### FOOD PANTRY MINISTRY

We open our Food pantry every Friday morning from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., 50 weeks a year. The program is designed to provide a bag of groceries for needy families who are hungry 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. Each Friday, we order the next week's food from the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank. The food is delivered the following Monday. Each month, we send a report back to the Los Angeles Food Bank with the results. Over the last year, we gave out 2,000 bags of groceries (1 bag per family) that provided food for more than 5,000 family members! Many of our neighbors want fresh food, like vegetables and fruit. We are working with our partner, Hope-Net, to develop a plan so that our community can have access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Special thanks to Lee Strand, Teresa Negrete, and Vance Smith for their faithfulness to this ministry.

*Lee Strand, Coordinator*



On World Missions Sunday, October 2, 2016, our guest speaker was Rev. Chuck Shawver, who along with his wife, Ramona, retired after 38 years serving as International Ministries missionaries at the Baptist Seminary in Mexico City and with The Council of Indigenous Campesinos Evangelicals of Mexico. Rev. Shawver shared his experiences with members during the Sunday School hour and preached from the pulpit during the morning worship service on Matthew 28:20.



Happy Birthday, Leila! Leila Amaya, daughter of Linda Pineda, celebrates her birthday with cake and fruit tarts. Other October birthdays: Helen Lynn, Philomena Oboh, Denie Sturm, Chuck Shawver, Antonio Barajas, Kyle Irwin and Leon Wesley. Please don't forget to share your birthday month and day with the church office! The congregation recognizes members' birthdays on the first Sunday of each month.

760 South Westmoreland Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90005

First Baptist Church  
of Los Angeles



## SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2016

**9:30 a.m.**

Church School Classes for All Ages

**11:00 a.m.**

Worship in the Sanctuary

**“TRUE DISCIPLES PRAY”**

(Please read Luke 11:1-13 in preparation)

**DR. NORMAN BULLOCK**, Preaching



## SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2016

**9:30 a.m.**

Church School Classes for All Ages

**11:00 a.m.**

Worship in the Sanctuary

**“TRUE DISCIPLES BEAR FRUIT”**

(Please read John 15:1-8 in preparation)

**DR. NORMAN BULLOCK**, Preaching