

# THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS



Published by **The First Baptist Church of Los Angeles**

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OCTOBER 24, 2016

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

**WORLD MISSION OFFERING: CELEBRATE CUBA'S SPIRITUAL REVIVAL!**

## GOD BLESSES HIS PEOPLE ABUNDANTLY!

"I think we are ready to start something new here," the retired pastor said. "Maybe a small church."

So what started as a small living room Bible study of seven people soon overflowed to the home's back yard. More people started to come. A children's and youth ministry began.

Finally, Reina Rodriguez and Manoli de Jesus tore down everything in their backyard—including their prized guava tree—to make room for a church.

"We prayed about it and we felt the heavenly Father's presence," Reina said. "And we understood the need of people here was greater than having one tree."

"Day by day, step by step, we built this church because of the help of the members of the church and of many who have supported the church along the way."

*God blesses!*

Today, just nine years later, that Bible study of seven people has been transformed into Second Baptist Church, Peniel, Cuba—a thriving evangelistic church of 314 members, more than 60 children and two youth groups with a total of 56 youths.

*God blesses!*

One of the church's youth group leaders marveled at the abundance of God's provision: "It has happened on many occasions that we have prayed for things and we have achieved all our goals, and it happened all through Christ. For example, we have organized many activities where in some way or other we have had setbacks or have been limited in our resources. But that doesn't stop us—we pray about it and leave it in the hands of God."

"From the very first moment we start thinking about planning something, we start to pray about every single thing we need, from finances to materials. And every single time, we are shocked by how much God blesses us in abundance."

"God has blessed us in abundance spiritually, financially, materially; in everything we have needed, God has supplied it. Every single year, this has happened."

*God blesses!*

Yes, we serve a powerful God "who is able to do so much more than we can ask or imagine." (Ephesians 3:21)

And yes, "God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." (2 Corinthians 9:8)

Great things happen—in Jiguaní and in your life and church—as we prayerfully seek God's direction, step out in faith and give God the glory!

## A PRAYER FOR CUBA

Oh God, we pray for the people of Cuba, for each of its provinces and for every one of its inhabitants, that they may remain strong and determined to build a society in which they can live with dignity and hope.

We pray especially for the Christians in Cuba, who have prevailed in their faith despite the years when they did not have the freedom to declare their love for you. May they continue to demonstrate the love they have for you and give testimony of your grace and power in their own country and worldwide.

Let them recognize the goodness, innocence, strength and enthusiasm that exists in the hearts of their youth who so fervently adore you. We pray that the church in both of our countries may keep a young heart, always ready to learn and to change when we recognize the mistakes we have made as nations throughout history.

Together, let us build a world full of love, compassion, hope and promise. May goodness and goodwill prevail. May we learn to remain humble, with open hearts and willing minds, to work for peace and justice and to exhort each other with kindness.

God, when we pray for the people of Cuba, we also pray for those of us who have learned to love them. May we continue to learn from the fervor and loyalty of the Cuban Christians as we collaborate with them and as we make our own the prayer of Jesus in our lives: "Thy will be done on earth as in heaven, for Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen."

760 South Westmoreland Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90005

First Baptist Church  
of Los Angeles



PERIODICAL

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## FRIENDS & FAMILY SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30, 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



## COMMUNION SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2016

**9:30 a.m.**

Church School Classes for All Ages

**11:00 a.m.**

Worship in the Sanctuary

**"X"**

(Please read Xin preparation)

**DR. NORMAN BULLOCK**, Preaching

## CHURCH OFFICERS 2016-2017

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 Daniel Choi  
 David McFadden  
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 Alma Pineda  
 Richard Rogers  
 Marta Torres

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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR INTERIM PASTOR

### DISCIPLESHIP MATTERS

On Sunday, September 25, I began a series of sermons from the theme “Discipleship Matters.” We will continue to focus on this topic for the next several weeks. I care deeply about discipleship in the local church—I care about it so much because Jesus cares about it. He called us to be disciples who make disciples, and the church is the place where we can most readily and powerfully fulfill this mission, while inviting those who don’t yet know Jesus to join us, too.

A simple definition of discipleship is ‘following Jesus.’ Simple, but not simplistic. Following Jesus involves both learning what Jesus taught and doing what Jesus did. Programs and classes are certainly valuable ways to learn what Jesus taught, but again, to do what Jesus did involves actionable ways to live as Jesus lived. Simply sitting in classes, forever stuffing our brains with more knowledge is a waste.

Effective discipleship plans know this: Without ways to take action, we miss the opportunity to both disciple others and to be disciplined ourselves. When I need to refocus on what it means to be a disciple, it’s always helpful for me to look back at Luke 4, where Jesus announced his reason for coming. I like to think of it as ‘the mission statement of Jesus’:

*“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to pro-claim release to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are oppressed, To proclaim the favorable year of Lord.” (verses 18-19).*

In a phrase, Jesus is saying He came to restore and re-concile.

As disciples of Jesus, we are invited into this same mission. We partner with Jesus in the process of restoring and reconciling. Not just on Sun-days, or on the occasional Saturday outreach, but every day and everywhere we go. As a disciple of Jesus, learning to follow Him as Teacher, we get to bring the Kingdom into every situation and open ourselves to what He will do through us. Come and join me on this journey as we attempt to answer these questions: What does discipleship look like? Where is Jesus asking you to follow Him, specifically in loving and serving other?

*Norm Bullock*



### OUR CALL AS A CONGREGATION

We are called to be a community of faith, a welcome table, that celebrates the rich diversity of its membership as it serves and honors the diverse cultural and ethnic nature of Los Angeles and surrounding communities. We are called to be deeply grounded in the Word and Witness through the power of the Holy Spirit, being a prophetic voice for justice, healing and transformation. We are called to manifest the love of Christ as we share our various sources of capital with the community as well as being a the witness to God’s reign through celebrative worship and care for one another.

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW MODERATOR, ANN BRODIE

Greetings in the name our Lord.

I am honored to be elected Moderator of our Church. Spiritually, I am looking forward to performing a good job with the assistance of each member, and with God’s directions.

I am available for you to contact me with your concerns. You may reach me by phone (213) 399-3318 or email at [abrodie@fbcofla.org](mailto:abrodie@fbcofla.org).

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

The Pastoral Search Committee is available to provide status updates and answer questions during the coffee fellowship hour following the close of the morning worship services. Please do not hesitate to ask questions of any PSC Member. PSC Members are: Gerald Gubatan, Chair; Zuleima Argumedo, Daniel Choi, David McFadden, Shirley Parsley, Alma Pineda, Richard Rogers and Marta Torres.

## FBCLA HOPE-NET FOOD DISTRIBUTION MINISTRY

We are grateful to our partners in our Food Distribution Ministry who make it possible for us to share the love of God through this ministry. With additional resources, our program has expanded to offering more of a variety of food. Because of this, we are in need of additional volunteers to assist during our weekly distribution on Fridays from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. If you are interested, please contact Lee Strand, or Esther Sanchez in the church office.

## BIG SISTERS RELAUNCHED



On October 8, the Christian Education Ministry relaunched the “Big Sister” program with a gathering of several young adult women who have grown up in this church.

In attendance were (top photo, from left) Patty Hernandez, Angie Loaisiga, Linda Pineda, Jennifer Corona, Maritza Osorio, Ann Brodie and Linda Zaretsky. We hope to get together periodically for fellowship and strengthening of our faith.

## FRIENDS & FAMILY SUNDAY

Each fifth Sunday is Friends & 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 this Sunday, October 30. Please invite a friend or family member to join us for

### IT’S A BOY!

**CLAYTON RICHARD DIAZ**

Born September 29, 2016

**Parents**

Allison and Jose Diaz

**Proud Grandparents**

Sandra and Richard Rogers