

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

Volume LXXXIV

No. 26

DECEMBER 19, 2016

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

Some children see him lily white
The baby Jesus born this night
Some children see him lily white
With tresses soft and fair

Some children see him almond-eyed
This savior whom we kneel beside
Some children see him almond-eyed
With skin of yellow hue eyed

Some children see him bronzed and brown
The Lord of heav'n to earth come down
Some children see him bronzed and brown
With dark and heavy hair

Some children see him dark as they
Sweet Mary's son to whom we pray
Some children see him dark as they
And, ah they love him, too



The children in each different place
Will see the baby Jesus' face like theirs
But bright with heav'nly grace
And filled with holy light

O lay aside each earthly thing
And with thy heart as offering
Come worship now the infant king
'Tis Love that's born tonight

– Wihla Hutson

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:

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James Johnson, Kenneth Mercier,
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Pastoral Search Committee:

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

YEAR END CONTRIBUTIONS

All donations for the year 2016 must be received in the church office on or before 12 noon on Friday, December 30, 2016 or at the New Years' Eve Celebration on December 31. Contributions received after December 31 will be credited to your 2017 Contribution Statement. Contribution Statements for giving during 2016 will be available in late January. Please call the church office if any questions.

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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.

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FROM OUR INTERIM PASTOR

During November and first two Sundays in December, the Pastor's Sunday School Class engaged in meaningful study on Stewardship. Stewardship is not just a way of life; it is a good way of life. In fact for many, it is a way to a better life. Stewardship means belonging to God. It means allowing God to rule our lives, putting God in charge of everything, including our time and our money.

Faithful stewardship can be a struggle. The Bible contains a great many promises regarding stewardship of time, talents and treasures, promises designed to inspire our confidence rather than arouse our guilt. We cannot be true stewards of God unless we have a relationship with him. We learned that stewardship is an act of worship, an expression of faith and a spiritual discipline. In the final analysis, God is a giving God. He gave us life; he gives us breath; he gave us the earth and all the inhabitants; he gives us purpose; he gives us new mercies every day; most importantly he gave us His son, Jesus, the Christ. God withholds no good thing from those who love and adore him. As we end 2016 and forge into 2017, let's remember with gratitude, the goodness of God and become true givers.

On January 8, the Pastor's Adult class will begin a journey through the study of the book, "Experiencing God" by Henry Blackaby as we continue to deepen our relationship with God and one another. Please join us in this thirteen week series!

Finally, in this week leading up to Christmas, I along with my wife, Maria and our three children, Nina, Nicholas and Nicole wish you a very Merry Christmas and a New Year that is favored by God.

Further, my wish for you is that you will feel God's presence in the candles, that softly spread their glow at Christmas and may you experience the wonder of His abiding love, as He guides you, through each day of the coming year. May God's Blessings be with you and may the miracle of Christmas fill your hearts with joy and peace.



Faith makes all things possible,
Hope makes all things work,
Love makes all things beautiful,
May you have all three for this Christmas.
MERRY CHRISTMAS!



With Hope,

Norman Bullock

END THE YEAR WITH A BANG! DONATE YOUR CAR

The end of the year is almost upon us and now is the perfect time to donate your unused car or truck to First Baptist Church. The proceeds will be used to enhance the ministries of First Baptist. Please visit the website below to make your car donation or for further information:

<http://www.cardonatingeasy.org/donate/?CharityID=3957> . .

You may also call: 855-500-7433.



CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Please join us on Christmas Sunday, December 25 as we celebrate the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. Please invite a friend.

Worship at 11:00 a.m. will be centered upon the gracious gifts of God. In turn, we shall have occasion to present our own gifts in a special Christmas offering to be received during worship on that day. Measure your gift by others you give at Christmas time. This offering deserves to be as large as the gift presented to any other friend or loved one – for it is a gift to Christ, our Lord.



There will be **NO Sunday school classes on December 25 and January 1.**

HOLIDAY FOOD COLLECTION

Our Food Pantry Ministry provides food on a weekly basis to the community. We are encouraging all members to bring canned food for our



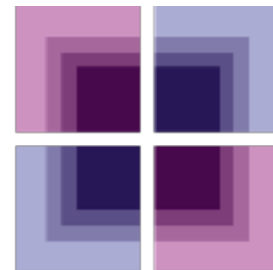
Pantry during this holiday season; there are many families who are in need. As a church family, we will demonstrate God’s love through our sharing of food and other resources to those who are in need.

BUILDING AND OFFICE CLOSURES

The Church Office and building will close at noon on Friday, December 23 and Friday, December 30; and will be closed all day on Monday, December 26 and Monday, January 2.

RETIRED MINISTERS AND MISSIONARIES OFFERING JANUARY 1, 2017

Faith through Gratitude — According to the dictionary, faith is a noun. But in practice faith is closer to a verb, an action word. Through our faith in God, and our gratitude for the salvific actions of Jesus Christ we are called to be faithful servants of the gospel and to live out the ministry of Jesus in word and deed. The gratitude that we have for Jesus’ gift to us is the seed from which springs the gratitude that manifests toward the people of God. Therefore, we understand that actualizing our faith matters. And faith expressed through gratitude for others matters — to those who are hurting, and to those who are in need.



In 1 Thessalonians, the apostle Paul commends this community for their service that is grounded in their faith, love and hope in Jesus Christ. As Christians, we recognize that thousands of years later we, too, must serve just as the Thessalonians before us.

The Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering (RMMO) replicates the important message of the Thessalonians passage. Through RMMO, American Baptist congregations are given the opportunity to express their gratitude to the many servants who stepped forward and said, “Here am I, send me.”

This tradition each year provides assistance to those who have devoted their lives to God’s service by providing a “Thank You” check. Through your generous giving, in 2015 RMMO provided checks to more than 3,436 recipients and distributed \$1,105,147. Our goal for RMMO this year is to raise \$1.2 million. Will you help us with this appeal? We hope you will join us in honoring God’s committed servants.

– Rev. Dr. Perry Hopper
Associate Executive Director, MMBB Financial Services

NEW YEAR’S EVE CELEBRATION

Although New Year’s Eve is not recognized as a significant Christian date on many church calendars, it is still an important date in everyone’s life. That is why we want to celebrate the old year and bring in the new year with food, fun and fellowship. There is not a better place to spend that time than with all the family and friends in church. Additionally, it’s also an opportunity to invite friends and neighbors who are not part of the congregation to join with us.



Everyone is invited to the family gathering on December 31st. The event will begin at 6:00 p.m. and end at approximately 9:00 p.m. Even though we will end at 9:00 p.m., we will still countdown to the New Year!



First Baptist Church
of Los Angeles

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PERIODICAL

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CHRISTMAS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2016

11:00 a.m.

Worship in the Sanctuary

“THE MIRACLE OF THE MANGER”

(Please read Luke 2:8-20 in preparation)

DR. NORMAN BULLOCK, Preaching

– *Christmas Offering* –



COMMUNION SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 2017

11:00 a.m.

Worship in the Sanctuary

“HAPPY NEW YOU!”

(Please read II Corinthians 5:17-21 in preparation)

DR. NORMAN BULLOCK, Preaching

– *Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering* –