

THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS



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JANUARY 30, 2017

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

FROM OUR INTERIM PASTOR: JANUARY PROGRESS REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION

As we continue this transitional journey as a congregation of believers in Christ, I continue to encourage you to trust God in transition. It has been a joy and a pleasure to serve you and to witness with you the redeeming presence of God in our lives as you prepare for the next chapter in the life of this historic congregation. First Baptist is a historic, urban, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-generational congregation. These are components that we should continue to embrace and leverage. During 2016, the focus of my leadership was on discipleship, developing small groups, and training of with our leaders, staff and members:

The focus on 2017 while I am your Interim Pastor will focus on the following:

1. **Improving the experience for both our members and guests** – If you use the analogy of staying at a hotel, the hotel staff makes sure that you get the best treatment possible and often follow up with you to ensure that your stay was pleasant. We want to do the same at First Baptist in ensuring that our members and visitors who visit us and worship us feel the warmth and love that come from our congregation. This goal will be achieved through the following ministries:

- Diaconate
- Ushers
- Greeters
- Hospitality
- Communications and Social Media

2. **Christian Education** - The overall purpose of the Christian Education Ministry is to provide, develop and promote programs that equip individuals (children, youth and adults) for discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20). My focus will be to continue to provide support to the Christian Education Ministry led by Linda Zaretsky in developing programs with a three-prong focus of spirituality, service and education. Biblical teaching and learning are the essential elements of the Christian Education Ministry. During the first quarter of 2017, we will hire a Christian Education Minister to assist in carrying out our intentional goals for Christian Education.

3. **Improving and encouraging growth with our Affinity Small Groups.** While our corporate worship is in the spacious confines of our sanctuary, I will be intentional about creating opportunities for members to fellowship and connect beyond the corporate worship experience. We made great strides in 2016 in the rebirth of the Sisters of Faith Women's Ministry and the Men's Breakfast Fellowship. I believe that small groups are the best way to build a relationship with God and others. This year, I will continue to encourage and provide leadership in building our affinity connection groups – Sisters of Faith, Men's Breakfast Fellowship, Ebenezer Fellowship, Korean Fellowship, and Filipino Fellowship

Further, through the Diaconate, we will continue to grow and build the Diaconate Family Care Ministry Plan. All members have been assigned a Family Care Ministry group and leader. We challenge everyone to participate in your Family Care Group. The elements of these discipleship groups are seen clearly in Acts 2:42-47 – Believers continuously devoting themselves to teaching and fellowship, sharing in the Lord's Supper and in prayer. They worshiped together at the temple and met in homes.

I will continue to encourage the development of affinity connection small groups that can accent what we are endeavoring to do as a congregation and will facilitate the achieving of the call statement that we developed in 2015.

Benefits of Affinity Connection Small Groups:

- Opens a new front door to the church through dozens or hundreds of side doors
- Closes the back door of the church by connecting the crowd into community
- Grows the committed core of the church
- People get support and encouragement from their group
- Scalable model for pastoral care (as needs grow, you can't staff to handle all care, but groups can)
- Mobilizes congregation to serve in ministry
- Groups are natural units for evangelism - multiple gifts, mutual support and accountability

As we reflect on the goodness of God in blessing and sustaining this congregation of committed believers in Christ, we are reminded that the primary purpose of our lives

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FEB. 5 ANNUAL MEETING

Due to lack of a quorum on Sunday, January 22nd, a Second Annual Meeting is scheduled for **February 5th, 2017 at 12:30** immediately after worship service to vote and adopt 2017 budget. It is very important for all members to attend this meeting.

– Ann Brodie, Moderator

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

PROGRESS REPORTS PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING *(continued)*

is to glorify God. But glorifying God is not in its essence, the common practice of singing worship songs or thinking mystical thoughts. We glorify God as we reflect his revealed nature through our everyday lives. We reflect Christ as we are transformed in character, values, beliefs, and behavior. This inside out transformation fits our new identity in Christ and makes us authentic. We are becoming who we really are. And as a church, we are becoming who we really are.

With hope,



Norman Bullock

SPIRITUAL GIFTS MINISTRY

The Spiritual Gifts Ministry has two main responsibilities. One is to assess gifts of members and assist the various ministries in finding members to participate. The other is a nominating committee role.

Since September 2016, the Spiritual Gifts Ministry has not needed to function as a nominating committee. Unless vacancies occur, this function will not be needed until closer to the Homecoming Meeting in September 2017.

In its other role, the Spiritual Gifts Ministry has begun the process of assigning its members to one or more of the ministries to act as a liaison.

The Spiritual Gifts Ministry will be re-surveying the membership using the Spiritual Gifts Discovery assessment tool so that the results will be more up-to-date and to insure that more members are included.

– David McFadden, *Coordinator*

BUILDING & FINANCE

While not having a coordinator for this ministry the Council of Ministries acted as a committee of the whole in carrying out the functions of this ministry. In October, 2015, the Council approved the hiring of Lisa Thomas as the Interim Facilities Coordinator. The

primary functions of this role include: overseeing the coordination of building space rentals; planning and scheduling facility modifications including cost estimates; inspecting facility modification progress and installation progress; managing the preventive maintenance of facility equipment, including HVAC and other equipment; and developing and monitoring the cleaning and maintenance of facility maintenance work plan. Please see summary of activity from our Interim Building Facilitator below:

Rentals: negotiating and updating the leases of current tenants; brought in 3 new tenants; booked 7 film production projects; rented to several organizations; rented rooms for several organizations; booked 3 weddings and booked a Christmas concert.

Building: created and implemented forms to keep staff accountable for repairs and maintenance; facilitated the installation of LED lights throughout the inside and outside of the church free of charge through DWP (would have been an \$80,000 job); dealt directly with tenant complaints and/or concerns; organized and supervised the updating of the Newman Lounge; supervised special projects (all the doors around the outside of the church have been repaired, sanded, primed and painting; the iron gate on Westmoreland has been sanded, primed, and painted; the other iron over the windows and the railings are now in the process of being done).

Formed relationships with Equitas Academy; Para Los Niños; First 5 L.A. and KYCC (Koreatown Youth Community Center).

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

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Lisa Thomas: LThomas@FBCofLA.org

PROGRESS REPORTS FROM THE VARIOUS MINISTRIES *(continued)*

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

In October there was a Big Sisters luncheon and devotional at my home and we are thrilled to see our young women who have grown up in our church get involved with teaching both Sunday School and VBS. This is a great way to keep young adult women involved and grow in their own walks.

December 18th was the Christmas Program, "A Christmas to Believe In." It was a great fun play that encompassed a strong group from the primary through college and adults. We heralded in the season with a strong message and festive music for Christmas.

We continue to be blessed with our small army of dedicated teachers and volunteers. That being said, we are terribly understaffed and really need strong commitments from the congregation to help us grow the Christian Education department.

– *Linda Zaretsky, Coordinator*

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Our women decided "Sisters of Faith" will be the name of their ministry. Under the leadership of Linda Pineda, a Sunday prayer time in front of the Sanctuary was established. Prayer is going to enhance our ministry.

A Sunday afternoon paint party was held in November. Paintings expressing God's love are on the bulletin board on basement level near Room 10. Please stop by to see the wonderful artwork. – *Linda Pineda*

WORSHIP

Through the leadership of our Interim Worship Arts Director, we will continue to explore ways to diversify our music and worship experience to reflect the diversity of our congregation. As we continue through 2017, we will continue to accent the high caliber of traditional music through anthems and other traditional music coupled with contemporary praise & worship and other expressions of worship.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE (DIACONATE) MINISTRY

The Diaconate continues to serve our congregation with love and affection. Through our Family Care Ministry, members on the prayer and shut-in lists received contact from their church family. Poinsettia plants with Christmas greetings brought joy to many faces in December.

Family and Friends Day was the highlight of the fourth quarter of 2016. After a wonderful worship service, we settled in Robbins Dining Hall to share delicious food with our guests.

The Diaconate needs more committed people to carry out God's Work. Hopefully, you will find your spiritual calling to join this ministry. – *Ann Brodie, Chair*

MISSIONS MINISTRY

Through the faithful leadership of John and Denie Sturm, this ministry continues to keep before the congregation the importance of supporting our Worship Mission Offering. During October, while our World Mission Offering did not meet our goal of \$1,000, we are thankful, nevertheless, for the members who gave liberally to this offering.

During Christmas, this ministry also assisted Aurora Martinez in her annual effort in making bags to be distributed at the ABCOFLASH Christmas Festival. These bags were filled with toiletries such as soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, and school supplies such as pencils, notebooks, erasers, etc. The bags were distributed to Rainbow Acres, Deborah's House and to Centro Khese'd in Mexico.

EBENEZER FELLOWSHIP

As the Ebenezer Fellowship continues the process of reorganization, the leadership team continues to meet periodically with Pastor Bullock. We continue to meet every Sunday during the Sunday School hour. Pastor Bullock sponsored a breakfast for the Ebenezer Fellowship in December where he shared his vision for this ministry and engaged

with us in meaningful dialogue about issues and concerns from the members. The leaders continue to work with the Interim Pastor to develop opportunities for growing, fellowship and service through this ministry.

EVANGELISM MINISTRY

Since September, our church has continued its ministries in community outreach and service, particularly to the youth, children and their families and the hungry in the neighborhood.

Youth, Children and Family Ministry: The church partners with the nonprofit organization, Play More, founded by the Rosenberger Family, longtime members. Special thanks to our volunteers – Angie Loaisiga, Lisa Thomas, Shirley Parsley and many others – who organized weekly activities in the church's gymnasium space. Nearly one dozen children consistently show up during the Saturday program to participate in sports and arts and crafts activities. Sports activities include: basketball, dodge ball, capture the ball/flag, tag, and musical chairs. Arts and crafts include: painting, drawing or specific crafts pertaining to a specific holiday/time of year. This Christmas, gifts were given to the children who came the weekend before Christmas.

Food Ministry: First Baptist Church is a co-founder of Hope-Net, a collaboration of 16 Los Angeles area congregations to address hunger and homeless needs. The Food Pantry was opened each Friday morning (from 8:00 to 9:30 a.m.) to provide a bag of groceries to needy families who are hungry with no questions asked. In collaboration with the Los Angeles Food Bank, we continued to serve families representing many nationalities, including Mexicans, Koreans, Caucasians, Filipino and African Americans. Dedicated volunteers include Lee Strand, Teresa Negrete, Wm. Vance Smith and many others.

– *Gerald Gubatan, Coordinator*



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PERIODICAL

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COMMUNION SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2017

9:30 a.m.

Church School Class for All Ages

11:00 a.m.

Worship in the Sanctuary

“DEALING WITH DISAPPOINTMENT”

(Please read Genesis 40:1-16 in preparation)

DR. NORMAN BULLOCK, Preaching

12:30 p.m.

Congregational Annual Meeting in the Sanctuary



SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2017

9:30 a.m.

Church School Class for All Ages

11:00 a.m.

Worship in the Sanctuary

“YOUR DESTINY IS CALLING YOU OUT OF THAT PIT”

(Please read Genesis 41:1-7; 14-16; 39-45 in preparation)

DR. NORMAN BULLOCK, Preaching