

# THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS



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MAY 8, 2017

**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:

As we continue to experience the joy of Easter and pivot our focus toward Pentecost Sunday on June 4, we continue to embrace the grace that comes from God in managing the transitions in our lives – spiritual, physical, personal, and professional. As human beings, we are not immune to transitions. Transitions have a way of showing up in all of our lives. Transitions are mental and emotional transformations that we all undergo to relinquish old arrangements and embrace new ones. I have learned that transitions start with an ending and end with a beginning.

At every level of our human experience, we find ourselves “in between of times.”

- A baby is conceived and the expected nine months are in between times.
- An engagement ring is offered and accepted and then the couple is living in the in between times.
- You may be living in the in between right now. Between one home and another. Between one career and another. Between one relationship and another. Between past certainty and future uncertainty.

As a church, we are in transition – leadership, identity, and ministry focus. I write to encourage you in whatever transition you might find yourselves in, to continue to trust in God who has and can continue to come alongside of us in our transitional journey. The prophet Samuel belonged to the in-between times regarding God's dealing with his people and their destiny. Samuel translated – “God hears” or “name of God,” lives closer to our address than we think. We may just want to hang out with him for a while to understand what living in the in between times of now and not yet are all about for he carries in his very name the mission of his life.

Our God is a God of timing who arranges events that have no obvious connection for God's purposes. In I Samuel 9, for instance, Saul experiences the miraculous demonstration of God's activity in his life. Saul at first expresses disbelief that all of blessings in his life are really happening. To convince Saul that he had been chosen by God to be king, Samuel tells him that he would encounter two men who would tell him where his lost donkeys are. Then, he would meet two men who

would give him food to eat. Then, ready or not, when he returns home, young Saul would actually see two prophets descend from the high place and the Spirit of God would come upon him. Saul would join in with the prophets and praise God. Samuel even tells Saul that God would transform his heart. Everything that Samuel prophesies to Saul comes to pass. This biblical story is recorded to remind us that we can be in transition and God can step right in and arrest our development for his purpose - and point us in a new direction. Are you ready to go in a new direction?

As First Baptist continues to navigate our way during these transitional times, I want to remind you that God will give you spiritual renewal to continue your journey:

- God will give you strength when you are weak realizing that when we are weak, God is strong. God will transfer God's strength to us by God's grace (Ephesians 2:8-9).
- God will renew you so that your feet will run and your hands will clap, even when you don't feel like it (Isiah 40:30-31).

Let me close with the passage of scripture from I John 3:2 (NIV),

*Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. (NIV).* We can be on one road, heading in one direction, but when we allow God to direct our paths, God can sometimes put us on another road, traveling in a completely different direction. **It does not yet appear what we shall be...**

For you see when we are in the transition - in between time of now and not yet, we have this certain hope that God is working even now. Sometimes we don't see him, we cannot feel him, but we know that God is working even now. Time is filled with swift transition, naught on earth unmoved can stand. Build your hope on things eternal. Hold to God's unchanging hand.

With hope,

Norman Bullock

## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MINISTRIES IN ACTION

The purpose of the First Baptist Church is to make God's love, as revealed in Jesus Christ, known in all that we say and do. Our call statement lays out our purpose and mission as a community of believers in Christ.

*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 witness to God's reign through celebrative worship and care for one another.*

We carry out our calling through various ministries. Some of which are listed below. The Spiritual Gifts Ministry led by David McFadden is available to come alongside of you in matching your gift(s) with a ministry.

### Core Ministries

- Christian Education
- Sunday Church School
- Vacation Bible School
- Youth Activities
- Diaconate Family Care
- Worship Arts
- Prayer
- Evangelism
- Missions
- Communications & Media
- Hospitality
- Ushers & Greeters

### Affinity Groups

- Sisters of Faith Women's Ministry
- Men's Breakfast Fellowship Ministry
- Ebenezer Fellowship (for our Spanish speaking members)
- Filipino Fellowship (for our Filipino American members)
- Korean Fellowship (for our Korean American members)

### Outreach to the Community

- Hope-Net (offering food to the community)
- Community Block Party (during the Summer)
- Play More (Saturday and Summer Youth Enrichment Programs and Activities)
- Friday Night Movies (the last Friday of each month at 7:00 p.m.)

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



The week that will change your life takes place July 10-14, 2017 at First Baptist Church, Los Angeles from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Our theme this year is "Hero Central – Discover Your Strength in God!" Join us for a fun-filled week of activities, adventures, games, interactive study of the Bible, food, and fellowship. Volunteers are needed. Please contact the church office during the week for further information. Come and join us!

## MOTHER'S DAY TEA POSTPONED

The Women's Ministry has postponed the Mother's Day Tea originally scheduled for May 13. It will be rescheduled for a later date to be announced. Stay tuned.

## MAY BIRTHDAYS

Happy birthday to the following who have May birthdays

- |    |                          |
|----|--------------------------|
| 1  | Gerald Gubatan           |
| 14 | Nalis Mercier            |
| 16 | Winifred Anderson Morgan |
| 27 | Maxine McFarland         |

## NEWS DEADLINE

The next issue of *The First Baptist NEWS* will be published on **MAY 22, 2017**. Material and articles for the May 22<sup>nd</sup> issue should arrive in the church office two weeks before publication, by May 9.

### THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS

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## DIACONATE UPDATE

The Diaconate ministry serves to strengthen congregational care, fellowship and undergird the spiritual development of members of the church.

### **What is the FBCLA Diaconate Family Ministry?**

It is a plan by which the Diaconate can join with the Pastor in ministering to the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of each church member and family. Church family members have been assigned a Diaconate leader who will minister to them as needed.

### **Why is the Diaconate Family Ministry needed?**

Because we care for you and your family. The Interim Pastor and Diaconate are committed to assuring that every member – individually and collectively – in our church experience the love and support of the entire congregation. We desire to continue being known throughout the community as a loving and caring church.

### **How can a Deacon help you?**

There are some specific ways in which the Diaconate ministry may assist you, although you are the only one who can really answer this question.

- Visits...as you determine necessary.
- Relational evangelism...as a means of enhancing your spiritual walk with Christ and helping you to understand about God's concern for all and his saving grace provided through Jesus Christ.
- Rejoicing with you and your family...To share in your joy when you celebrate important events or accomplishments.
- Give support in times of crisis...To be of help to you by listening and giving support. Depending upon the situation or circumstance your Diaconate leader may be able to refer you to someone else or to a community agency for assistance.
- Answering questions regarding the church or our denomination...To provide into to you about the life of our church and denomination.
- Fellowship and Nurturing...Helping you to know and have fellowship with other members and families in the church; to encourage participation in events in the life of the church.
- Encourage ministry and service... Collaborating with the Spiritual Gifts Ministry (SGM) in helping you find ways to serve in the church and through church sponsored activities.
- Praying for you and with you...Believing that you are important and believing in the power of prayer, the Diaconate will join with the Pastor and other members in praying for you and each member of your family.

If you are interested in serving in this ministry, please join us at our next monthly meeting – May 20 at 9:30 a.m. in Robbins Dining Hall.

## DIACONATE'S FAMILY CARE LEADERS ON THE MOVE

On Monday, April 24th, John and Denie Sturm accompanied by Ann Brodie drove to Redlands, CA to visit Jane Wilson, Janet Roberts, Carol and John Townsend. They delivered the Easter lilies designated for them. The visit found them all well. They were very excited about our Church news - Eggstravaganza and Easter Sunday worship service. John, Denie and Ann finished the day by having dinner with Janet, Carol and John. A day well spent.



## SAVE THE DATES

### MAY EVENTS

#### **Asian Pacific American Heritage Month**

- 14 Mother's Day
- 20 Diaconate Meeting
- 21 Korean Fellowship Emphasis Sunday  
Council of Ministries
- 26 Family Movie Night, 7 pm
- 29 Building & Office closed for Memorial Day

### JUNE EVENTS

- 4 Pentecost Sunday
- 11 Christian Education Sunday  
Graduation Recognition
- 17 Diaconate Meeting
- 18 Father's Day
- 25 Men's Breakfast Fellowship
- 30 Family Movie Night, 7 pm



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PERIODICAL

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## **MOTHER'S DAY, SUNDAY, MAY 14, 2017**

**9:30 a.m.**

Church School Class for All Ages

**11:00 a.m.**

Worship in the Sanctuary

**"MOTHERS: INSTRUMENTS OF GOD'S GRACE"**

(Please read Ruth 1:6-18; 4:13-17 in preparation)

**DR. NORMAN BULLOCK**, Preaching



## **KOREAN FELLOWSHIP EMPHASIS SUNDAY**

**MAY 21, 2017**

**9:30 a.m.**

Church School Class for All Ages

**11:00 a.m.**

Worship in the Sanctuary

**DR. DANIEL CHOI**, Guest Preacher

*– Worship led by members of our Korean Fellowship –*

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