

# 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](mailto:fbcla@fbcofla.org)

Volume LXXXV

No. 18

AUGUST 28, 2017

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

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR INTERIM PASTOR

Dear Friends:

The end of summer is upon us. A reminder that summer is ending occurs when we celebrate Homecoming. As we prepare to celebrate the 143<sup>rd</sup> Church Anniversary during Homecoming Sunday on September 17, it affords us the opportunity to pause and thank God for all that God has done for us. We pause to celebrate our church's past and gather to embrace the glorious future that God has planned for us. As we celebrate Homecoming, let us realize that one day we were prodigal children who were lost in our sins, or we had strayed away from the church. God welcomed us back as we came to God; God welcomed us back to the family. This parable is a picture of God. God is the Father who waits outside late in the night for God's children to return. When we returned home to God, there was a celebration of the angels in heaven, and there was jubilation in the congregation. Let us celebrate Homecoming as a new beginning in our lives.

The greatest impact of Homecoming is when those persons who have strayed away from the church return to restore their fellowship with the Lord; these are people who had previously received Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, but strayed away from the church. This reminds me of our theme scripture, Luke 15:11-32. In this passage, the son who left home to find work and a better life, who spent his inheritance on sinful living, comes back home. Prior to his homecoming, there was no communication between him and his family. Those who traveled to the distant land did not know him, and many assumed that he was dead or in prison. However, his father never gave up. Then one day this prodigal, estranged and wayward son returned home. Upon his return, the father welcomed him and held a celebration saying, "This is my son who was dead, but is alive again." As we celebrate Homecoming, let us realize that one day we were prodigal children who were lost in our sins, or we had strayed away from the church. God welcomed us back as we came to God; God welcomed us back to the family. This parable is a picture of God. God is the Father who waits outside late in the night for God's children to return. When we returned home to God, there was a celebration of the angels in heaven, and there was jubilation in the congregation. Let us celebrate Homecoming as a new beginning in our lives.

Church ministry changes. The events and programs that were effective in 1974 likely aren't effective 43 years later in 2017. Churches need a "whatever it takes" attitude for reaching their community. Recently I was talking with a member of another church whose attendance was declining. He predicted in a few years their church would close, but they wanted to go out gracefully. How sad. This man has already given up on God's desire to revitalize their congregation.

As the Pastoral Search Committee continues its work of prayerfully considering a pastoral candidate to present to the congregation, I invite you to take this time to celebrate our church's past, but also push toward the marvelous opportunity for ministry that God has granted FBCLA for the future.

As many of you know, we are in the midst of 40 Day of Love, which was launched on Sunday, August 13. This is a church wide journey to prepare our hearts and minds for Homecoming, the traditional launch of a new church ministry year. The number forty in the Bible usually has to do with testing in the Bible. There are dozens of examples to show this. From Jesus to the children of Israel in the Wilderness, the number forty shows that testing and trials are sometimes associated with this number and so we read in the Scriptures that the number forty generally symbolized a period of testing, trial or probation. As has been said, a faith that is not tested cannot be trusted. We cannot be true followers of Jesus unless we demonstrate love for God and for one another.

Each day of this journey will contain three very important elements: First, a unique aspect of love will be discussed. Read each of these carefully and be open to a new understanding of what it means to genuinely love someone. Secondly, you will be given a specific dare to do for someone. Some will be easy and some very challenging. But take each dare seriously, and be creative and courageous enough to attempt it. Don't be discouraged if outside situations prevent you from accomplishing a specific dare. Just pick back up as soon as it is within your ability and proceed with the journey. Lastly, I encourage you to create some time to journal what you are learning, doing, and how those

*(Continued on Page 3)*

**IN MEMORIAM**

The Church Family  
extends  
its deepest  
Christian Sympathy  
to the family of  
**Maria Esther  
de Alonzo**  
*Deceased*  
August 13, 2017  
Church Member 1990-2012

**NEWS DEADLINE**

The next issue of *The First Baptist NEWS* will be published on **SEPTEMBER 11, 2017**. Material and articles for the September 11<sup>th</sup> issue should arrive in the church office by **August 29**.

**THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS**

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. TUESDAY, two weeks prior**  
to publication.

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

**CHURCH PHONE: (213) 384-2151**

VISTA TOWER: (213) 386-2786

**OFFICE HOURS:**

Monday-Friday 9:00 am-4:30 pm

[www.FBCofLA.org](http://www.FBCofLA.org)**email addresses:**General: [FBCLA@FBCofLA.org](mailto:FBCLA@FBCofLA.org)Norman Bullock: [NBullock@FBCofLA.org](mailto:NBullock@FBCofLA.org)Cynthia Felton: [CFelton@FBCofLA.org](mailto:CFelton@FBCofLA.org)James Johnson: [JJohnson@FBCofLA.org](mailto:JJohnson@FBCofLA.org)Woun Kim: [WKim@FBCofLA.org](mailto:WKim@FBCofLA.org)Sandra Rogers: [SandraBR@FBCofLA.org](mailto:SandraBR@FBCofLA.org)Esther Sanchez: [ESanchez@FBCofLA.org](mailto:ESanchez@FBCofLA.org)Lisa Thomas: [LThomas@FBCofLA.org](mailto:LThomas@FBCofLA.org)

The **Annual CHURCH PICNIC** will be held on Sunday, **September 10** following the Sunday Worship Service from **1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.** at **Griffith Park – Crystal Springs**.

There will be food, fun and fellowship.  
**SAVE THE DATE:** More info to come.

**AUGUST SUNDAY SPECIAL EVENTS**

On August 6, 2017, we welcomed Rev. Chuck Shawver as our guest preacher. A retired American Baptist missionary who served in Mexico, Rev. Shawver cited Micah 4:1-5 and preached about seeking peace and security through obedience to God, leading the congregation to pray for peoples around the world crying for mercy and help in times of desperation, including Yemen, Syria, Southern Sudan, Somalia, Northeastern Nigeria, Venezuela and the Philippines.



On August 20, Alma Marrie Campos was dedicated (left). Alma was born on January 6, 2017 and was brought by her mother, Linda Pineda, father, Enrique Campos and sister, Leila.



## INTERIM PASTOR'S MESSAGE *(Continued)*

persons with whom you are in relationship with are responding. These notes will record your progress and should become priceless to you in the future. Learning to truly love is one of the most important things you will ever do.

While we are on the 40 Day Journey of Love, we are reminded of the fruit of the Spirit. The sermon focus over the past few Sundays has asked the sermonic question, "Do You Have the Fruit of the Spirit?" We need to look at this closely. Paul says that the fruit of the Spirit "is." This connotes oneness. There is no fragmentation in the Spirit. There is no brokenness in the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is not illogical or irrational. The fruit of the Spirit doesn't come "buy one get one free." One of you might say, "Pastor, I have joy, but I have no self-control." Another will say, "I can suffer long, but I have no peace." Still another will say, "I have faith, but I have no gentleness." Well, you might get near the Spirit if you're in one of those groups. You might get by the Spirit with that. You might say you saw the Spirit move. But if you have faith but not humility, the fruit is dying in you. No matter how much you have seen the Spirit, if you have longsuffering and not goodness, the fruit is rotting in you. No matter how many songs you can sing, no matter how much Scripture you can recite, no matter how long you have been sitting in the same pew, if you have joy, but no self-control, the fruit is spoiling in you. You can't be loving and be stingy. You can't be faithful and be vain. You can't be good and not know peace. If you have one, you must have them all. The Spirit produces oneness.

There is one fruit of the Spirit; yet if you have even seen one orange, you have noticed how complex fruit really is. When you peel the layer of skin, you get to the meat of the fruit. When you peel back the meat of the fruit, you get to the core of the fruit, the seed. The fruit of the Spirit, although singular, is very complex.

Paul suggests that the first layer of the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace. These have to do with the disposition of your mind and emotions, how you think and how you feel. God says, "For there first must be a willing mind." The fruit of the Spirit will change your mind.

The next layer of the fruit of the Spirit is the meat. Paul says it is longsuffering, gentleness and goodness. These have to do with how we relate to other people, how we deal with the people around us. There is no such thing as an impatient, harsh, unkind, Spirit-filled Christian. You see, the Spirit cannot be in you and you cannot be in the Spirit if you have conflict with your

After dealing with our relationships, the seed of the fruit of the Spirit is found in the individual – faith, humility, and self-control. These have to do with how we handle our personal business, with what we do to ourselves. God is concerned with us as individuals. God is concerned about what is going on in our lives. God wants to help us with what's going on in our homes and in every nook and cranny of our lives. God promised to pour out the Spirit on all because anyone can be transformed by the Spirit.

Paul says that if we want this fruit of the Spirit or live in the Spirit as he further explains in his letter, we have got to exercise our fruit. Love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, humility and self-control. Do you have your shoes on? Are you ready? Get on your mark, get ready, set, walk.

With Hope,



Norman Bullock

## HOMECOMING & 143rd ANNIVERSARY



We are planning a special worship celebration for Homecoming Sunday, September 17, 2017. Special Music and reflections will be shared about our historic journey as a congregation of committed believers. We are inviting all of our members (past, present and future), families and friends to join us. It will be an unforgettable day of worship, fellow-ship and inspiration.

**The Homecoming Meeting** of the Congregation and Corporation of the First Baptist Church of Los Angeles shall be held at 760 South Westmoreland Avenue, Los Angeles, California on Sunday, **September 17, 2017 at 12:30 p.m.** in the Sanctuary for the purpose of hearing reports, election of officers, and the transaction of such other business as may properly come before such meeting.

—Ann Brodie, Moderator and  
Alma Pineda, Church Clerk



First Baptist Church  
of Los Angeles

760 South Westmoreland Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90005

PERIODICAL

AUGUST 28, 2017

## COMMUNION SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2017

**9:30 a.m.**

Church School Class for All Ages

**11:00 a.m.**

Worship in the Sanctuary

**“WHAT ABOUT OUR RELATIONSHIPS?”**

(Please read Galatians 5:22-6:1, 9 in preparation)

**DR. NORMAN BULLOCK**, Preaching



## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2017

**9:30 a.m.**

Church School Class for All Ages

**11:00 a.m.**

Worship in the Sanctuary

**REV. WOUN KIM**, Preaching

**1:00 p.m.**

**CHURCH PICNIC** at Griffith Park

THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS

PAGE 4