

THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS



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

THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON PHOTO ALBUM, NOVEMBER 19, 2017



FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR

Since October 1, we have been listening in on the seven letters written by Jesus as delivered to John on the island of Patmos to the churches in Asia Minor. These letters are recorded in the first three chapters of the books of Revelation. First, they are a picture of seven kinds of churches that you find in any age, in any period of history. Every church in the world today will fall into one or more of these categories of churches. We fit into one of these ourselves. The second thing is the prophetic nature of these letters. They are a preview of the entire age of the church, falling into seven periods, from the first coming of our Lord to his second appearing.

In our evaluation of these churches, we also were invited to evaluate our community of faith at First Baptist to see where we are in those seven evaluations. The goal of this experience was to help us, to encourage us and to challenge us to further our transformative experience during this “waiting” period in the life of First Baptist.

The seven churches in the book of Revelation are seven realms to overcome, seven opportunities to be victorious. What is the church? You are the church. I am the church. We are all the church. So we are the seven churches! You are the seven churches! I am the seven churches! We are all the seven churches! Just as the seven spirits are but one spirit in fullness, so the seven churches are but one church in its completeness. All the characteristics of the seven churches may be found in each of us individually as well as in every local body and also in the whole universal church collectively. In each of our experience there is the capacity to partake of everything that the seven churches represent. I, you, all of us may be tested in each area of its negatives or excel in each aspect of its positives. The seven churches are seven realities and seven potentialities within ourselves. The seven churches are within you and I.

As a recap, let's review what we have covered so far regarding the Seven Churches:

- 1) Ephesus – This church that was considered doctrinally sound but had lost its first love. They were encouraged to: a) remember where they were with God; b) repent; c) return to God; d) refocus; and e) do the work of ministry
- 2) Smyrna – This church was considered the suffering church. They were encouraged that even through the afflictions that they suffer the promise was a reward – they would receive a crown of life for their endurance.
- 3) Pergamum - The compromising church. The main liability of this church was the fact that some of its members had compromised their faith. They were trying to play both sides and as a result this church in Pergamum was becoming like the world. Jesus urged them to become a compassionate church by clinging to the hope that Jesus will provide the strength to become more than conquerors.
- 4) Thyatira – This church was a tolerating church. Jesus' words to this church was to endure, persevere and not tolerate those who would seek to destroy and teach false doctrine but to stand in the power given by Jesus to become a triumphant church.
- 5) Sardis – This was a dead church. The church had become a thermometer that registered the temperature of the city instead of a thermostat that changed the temperature of the city. It is to this church that had become lazy, apathetic and complacent that the Lord Jesus comes. They were told to work in these four areas: a) revive; b) remember where the Lord brought them from; c) resolve and hold on to the things that are still alive in their midst. They are to resolve before the Lord that they will not allow those things to die as well; and d) repent.
- 6) Philadelphia – The faithful and generous church. There is only praise and encouragement. Jesus has opened a door for the gospel in their city, and their faithfulness is more significant than they could possibly realize. The church in Philadelphia helps us to see what it looks like to live out our mission in Los Angeles, trusting Christ to build His Church.

What did you learn about First Baptist from this preaching series? Come and share your thoughts in the Pastor's Sunday School class on December 3 at 9:30 a.m. We will conclude this preaching and teaching series on Sunday, November 26 with an analysis on the church at Laodicea. There are many who feel that we are currently in the Laodicean age where there is no passion for the work of the gospel. Let's use this time before Advent to reflect, repent and renew so that we can be the hope, peace, joy and love that the world needs during the Advent season.

With Hope,
Norman Bullock

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MODERATOR'S NOVEMBER MESSAGE

On October 14th, all church leaders and staff convened at Mount St. Mary's University Doheny Campus for a wonderful retreat. Rev. Michael Mata, our facilitator from Azusa Pacific University, through scripture (2 Corinthians 5:17 – 6:11), enabled us to realize the work to be done in our Church. Based on our mission statement utilizing this scripture, we established goals to become God's co-workers building FBC into a place for people to come to fulfill their spiritual needs. We left this retreat with a personal spiritual awareness of our duties, and we are anxious to rise to God and do the work before us. A follow up retreat is scheduled for January 16th at The Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles Center in Echo Park.

We know from our discussion at the retreat – **Stewardship** is armor each believer must wear. It is generosity of giving financially that supports our planned ministries in 2018. Giving supports our edifice as well – God's house, which is over 80 years old, needs some repair and upgrades. It was stated in Sunday's bulletin: ask the question of how God would have us use these pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters and dollars faithfully given.

Again, on Stewardship Sunday, I pledged my financial commitment to carry out the ministries God intends for us to do here. I can testify the blessings are over-whelming. Please pray and commit to God.

– Ann Brodie, Moderator

2017-2018 CHURCH OFFICERS

Moderator – Ann Brodie

Vice-Moderator – David McFadden

Church Clerk – Amy Shellmire

Treasurer - Shirley Parsley

Members-at-Large, Church Council:

Zuleima Argumedo , Gerald Gubatan, Ben Marte, Nalis Mercier, and Marta Torres

PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

You may recall that I reported this summer that the Committee was prepared to present a recommendation for a candidate as Senior Minister to the congregation. The candidate opted to pursue a position at a church in Connecticut. We viewed the unfortunate development as a momentary setback but were re-energized to continue our work.

Since then, the Committee has continued to actively meet and vet potential candidates. We are seeking a candidate who ideally possesses the skills and experience to effectively work in an urban multicultural setting - a shepherd who will lead us into a thriving future.

The Committee takes its work seriously and we thank you for your

ongoing support, prayers, patience and understanding. The Committee includes myself serving as Chairman, Zuleima Argumedo, Daniel Choi, David McFadden, Shirley Parsley, Alma Pineda, Richard Rogers and Marta Torres.

Please do not hesitate to contact any one of us if you have questions. Keep the faith!

– Gerald Gubatan, Chairman



NEWS DEADLINE

The next issue of *The First Baptist NEWS* will be dated on **December 4, 2017**.

SISTERS OF FAITH

Sisters of Faith is on the move! Because our goal is to support our Church Mission and our community, we have so many things planned and we need the support of every member of First Baptist Church to help us succeed.

In the month of November, we had a pre-order Bake Sale. This gave you an opportunity to relax while we did the baking for you! We are going to have another pre-order Bake Sale in December, leading up to Christmas. Let us know what you like and watch for the order sheet in December!

In support of other ministries, we are looking forward to opportunities to host the Men's Fellowship Breakfast on December 9th. Home-made Biscuits, Sausage Gravy, Fresh Fruit, Coffee and Juice...all for \$5.00! (We receive the right to make modifications to the menu, and that only means there may be more!) Again, we do take suggestions...so let us know what you like, gentle-men.

We have also discussed hosting other "feast" events. More to come....

Of course, we are not just about food. We are collecting donations for Deborah's House. Please refer to Sunday's bulletin for needed supplies. We are collecting through the month of November.

I am excited to say that we have other projects in the works for the month of December, keep an eye out.

Ladies, you are invited! Come join us as we work to support our Church Family and our Communities by celebrating our Faith, our God and our Diversity. We take suggestions for projects that we can support through fundraising and outreach. We also want to have fun and fellowship together. We meet at least one Saturday a month. If you are interested in joining us, please email Amy Shellmire at amy.shellmire@gmail.com or call me at 405-220-3428.

In the meantime, we will be meeting December 9th and cooking up a storm!

We prayerfully hope to see you there and encourage you to help us help those in need.

– Amy Shellmire

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2





SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2017

9:30 a.m.

Church School Class for All Ages

11:00 a.m.

Worship in the Sanctuary

“FROM A LUKEWARM CHURCH TO A HEALTHY CHURCH”

(Please read Revelation 3:14-22 in preparation)

DR. NORMAN BULLOCK, Preaching



FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT & COMMUNION SUNDAY

DECEMBER 3, 2017

9:30 a.m.

Church School Class for All Ages

11:00 a.m.

Worship in the Sanctuary

“THE POWER OF HOPE”

(Please read Luke 1:46-55 in preparation)

DR. NORMAN BULLOCK, Preaching

– *Lighting the Advent Candle of Hope* –