

PCBA Notes

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PCBA Co-Sponsors Seafarers Ministry Stroll Sat., Oct. 5

PCBA will join the Seafarers Ministry of the Golden Gate in sponsoring the 10th Annual 5K Stroll on Saturday, October 5 at the Port of Oakland, raising funds in support of the 67 year ministry to seafarers.

Strollers, who have secured sponsors for their walk, will gather at the Seafarer's Center, 4001 7th Street at 9:30 to begin their trek which takes them along the banks of Oakland's picturesque Shoreline Park. Those intending to walk may secure sign-up material from their local church representative, www.seafarersministry.com, or 510-893-8193.

A picnic (\$5.00 for non-strollers) is scheduled for 11:00AM. Jazz, including music from "Rok N Rev and the Deacons," a band featuring SMGG's Chaplain, Roger Bauer, and other local jazz groups will provide entertainment.

Begun by Baptists of Scandinavia at a time when many seafarers were young men from those countries, SMGG now provides a ministry of hospitality to workers from many countries who make up the crews on the large container ships serving the port, the third largest in the U.S.

BLTs this Fall

("Baptists Lunching Together")

Wednesday Luncheons (\$8.00)

*Grand Lake Gardens - 12:00 Noon
401 Santa Clara Ave., Oakland*

Sept. 18 -

**"The Groves of ABHOW:
Development of Dementia Care and
the Miracle that Brought it to Life"**

Kay Kallandar

*Vice Pres., Strategic Development,
American Baptist Homes of the West*

Oct. 16 -

Panel on Chaplaincy
Esther Hargis (Seniors)
Dave Robinson (Jail)

Nov. 20 -

**"How Regions Can Help
Churches be at their Best"**

Marcia Patton

Evergreen Association

Steve Bilis

*ABC of Central Pacific Coast
(Northern California and Oregon)*

Tim Brown

Growing Healthy Churches

No BLT is scheduled in December

**Reservations by Monday:
Joan Thatcher, 510-350-7008**

Go Green with *PCBA Notes*

Receive *PCBA Notes* by email.
Send requests to
Dale Edmondson, editor, at
edmondsons62@comcast.net.

Peace Fellowship Invitation

The coordinator of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, LeDayne Polaski, will be in Oakland on Saturday, September 14 to meet with people interested in the work of the Fellowship. She will speak at a 9:00 AM breakfast at Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church updating people on the work of the Fellowship. Reservations should be made through the church at 510.893-2484.

Philippine Book Project Continues Shipments

PCBA's Philippine Book Project will ship books in mid-October to Central Philippine University and local pastors. Those wishing to donate books should contact Marie or Franklin Onwubuariri at mariecpo@gmail.com or 510-435-2377. After this date, books should be held until next summer.

Church Leaders to Meet Members of National Board

The Executive Committee of the Board of General Ministries will meet in San Francisco, Sept. 12-14. Local church leaders are invited to be their guests for a lunch and question and answer session on Friday, Sept. 13, 12:00-2:30PM, at Grand Lake Gardens. To reserve, phone Joan Thatcher at 510-350-7008 by Sept. 9 (email not available). Early reservations are encouraged as space is limited.

New President - Dayle Scott

Dayle Scott was elected President of PCBA at its Spring Conference on May 11. An ABSW graduate in 1957, he had been pastor of Eureka FBC, staff member in Educational Ministries for the ABCW Region and later for the national staff in Valley Forge. The Scotts were members for several decades at Bancroft Avenue Baptist in San Leandro, concluding with Dayle serving in 2012 on a three-member team to close the church's ministry and distribute its assets to ABC, UCC, and community organizations.

Pacific Coast Baptist Association Board

President - Dayle Scott
Vice-President - Alice Edmondson
Secretary - Philip Meads, Jr.
Treasurer - Linda Sheppard
Financial Secretary - Wendy Neale
Advisory - Ted Sandberg & Allison Tanner

Members at Large -
Declan Brown, Dale Edmondson
Jim Hopkins, Richard Ice
Rosa James, Becky Lessler
Paul Martin, Chris Shade
Donald Sheppard, Joan Thatcher

The Last Days of the Church?

Comments by the Editor

Some say the documented decline in church attendance suggests that we are following Europe into a "post-religious" age, that our once great churches will become like the all-but-empty cathedrals of the Continent. They point to the statistical loss in both main-line and evangelical denominations, the rise of the "nones," and the religious disaffection of the "millennials" (18-20 year olds) of whom only 18% claim church membership. Some see this as a fall from the "Christian" founding of our nation and as a growing indifference toward the spiritual and moral underpinning of life.

Not so fast! What was that "golden age" of religious faith in America? Church membership in the 1770s, sociologists estimate, was no more than 20% of the population compared with 49% today and with Gallop's 2012 poll showing 68% of the population as occasional worshipers. (And should we note that Franklin was a Deist, Jefferson an agnostic, and Washington one who refused the rites of the church?)

Why today's indifference among the young? "Christianity," for many of them means assigning gay and lesbian people to hell, attacking people of the Muslim faith, teaching creationism, supporting the death penalty, and defining "faith" as the intellectual acceptance of doctrines unrelated to daily life or justice in society.

The church's response to these challenges must go deeper than forming praise bands and projecting individualistic lyrics on a screen—and more serious than increasing the entertainment value of "church." Many of the young people who do find meaning in the Faith say they want to be connected with something larger than themselves and that connects them with a tradition that helps define them. They say, too, that their baptism and their sharing at the communion table must be connected to life lived in society (as for example when it advocates in the public square for civil rights, economic justice, and opposition to war).

And should we denigrate the "spiritual, but not religious"? Or affirm them in their search and help them to discover how a faith tradition can enrich and inform their seeking?

At base, the church must remember its founding days. Then it was known as "People of the Way," followers of the way of Jesus. It was a community, whose faithfulness to God was portrayed in simple terms as a "way of life." Such a community, someone has said, exhibited a new attitude toward everything and everybody: showing wisdom by trusting people, handling leadership by serving, handling offenders by forgiving, handling money by sharing, handling enemies by loving, and violence by suffering. I hold that the church will be alive again when it again becomes a community of the followers of the way of Jesus.

Milestones for Baptists We Know

by Joan Thatcher

We are so proud that **Donald Ng**, Senior Pastor of First Chinese Baptist Church in San Francisco since 1998, has been elected as the national ABC President for 2014-15. An Andover Newton graduate in 1975, he led the national youth ministry in Valley Forge for two decades. **Don and Joy Ng** live in Sausalito near their daughter, **Lauren**, also an ABC minister.

ABSW has named **Florence Li** as Alumna of the Year for 2013. Since her 1985 graduation, she has been a youth leader, pastor, author, and public mission advocate. At the ABC Home Mission Societies since 2004, she is the national Asian coordinator for Intercultural Ministries. She works to empower leadership, build relationships with the larger ABC family, and to encourage emerging leaders. Born in Hong Kong, she came to the US in 1973 where she earned degrees from Ottawa University, ABSW, and Hunter College in New York City.

Our thanks to **Allen Temple** for doing an outstanding job of hosting Youthquake in August, co-sponsored by PCBA. . . Congratulations to **Paul and Linda Rae Hardwick**, who celebrated 50 happy years of marriage in a June event at Shell Ridge Church. Paul was Association Minister for PCBA for seven years. **Linda Rae**, a therapist, chairs the Grand Lake Gardens Advisory Board. . . In April, **Greg Ledbetter** concluded 22 years of significant ministry at Shell Ridge in Walnut Creek. **Liliana DaValle** is now serving there as a long-term interim.

ABSW President **Paul Martin** represents the American Baptist seminaries at the ABC Mission Table, which now replaces the General Board in the denomination's new structure.

Thanks also go to **Ron Kallander** on his June 30 retirement. He was the admired director of Thousand Pines Baptist Camp for 25 years, and then chaplain for University of Redlands. He has now retired as a chaplain for Piedmont and Grand Lake Gardens. His wife, **Kay**, is Vice President for Strategic Planning at American Baptist Homes of the West.

Esther Hargis became the new chaplain at Grand Lake Gardens in July. She has been a staff minister at Oakland's First Baptist Church, a campus chaplain, and for 15 years was Pastor of Berkeley FBC. For five years she was chaplain at Pilgrim Haven in Los Altos.

Michael Sumrall of Berkeley's McGee Avenue Baptist's pastoral staff did his ABSW Senior Project on the theme, "Making Men into Fathers." Congratulations to ABSW's Dean, **LeAnn Snow**, on presenting a paper in Scotland at a summer meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature. . . We mourn the July death of **Gordon Smith** at age 85. He spent 22 years with the M&M Benefit Board, concluding as Executive Director in 1997.