

PCBA Notes

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**Spring Conference Theme -
"Ablaze: Igniting our Gifts for Service"
Saturday, May 10 - 9:00-3:30**

PCBA's Annual Spring Conference on Saturday, May 10 has announced the theme, "Ablaze: Igniting our Gifts for Service." Don Ng, President of American Baptist Churches, USA and Pastor of First Chinese Baptist Church of San Francisco will be the conference leader. The conference will be held at the Shell Ridge Community Church of Walnut Creek, 9:00-3:30.

James Chuck to be Honored

James Chuck will be honored on Saturday, Feb. 8, 1:30-3:30 at American Baptist Seminary of the West. Former President of PCBA and Pastor Emeritus of the First Chinese Baptist Church of San Francisco, he is also Prof. Emeritus of Theology and Church Ministry at ABSW and a Research Fellow with the Institute for the Study of Asian American Christianity. *RSVP requested to info@absw.edu.*

Seafarers Ministry to Host Swedish Pancake Breakfast

The Annual Swedish Pancake Breakfast of the Seafarers Ministry of the Golden Gate will be held on Saturday, February 1, 10:00-12:00 at the Maritime Center at the Port of Oakland, 4001 Seventh Street. The suggested donation for the meal is \$5.00.

BLT Programs

("Baptists Lunching Together")

Wednesday Luncheons (\$8.00)

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

Feb. 19

Dan Damon

Widely-Known Hymn Writer

Mar. 19

Ansel Romero

*Senior Vice President
Am. Baptist Homes of the West
"The Challenge of
Affordable Housing"*

Apr. 23 (Note: 4th Wed.)

Terre Light

*Berkeley Food and Housing
Program*

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

Vital Baptist Tradition: The Hymnal

Comments by the Editor

*One of our PCBA members, Mary Karne, recently passed on to me a unique treasure providing a window into earlier Baptist life in America—a hymnal compiled in 1843, two years before the slavery-related division of Baptists into “North” and “South.” Titled, *The Psalmist: A New Collection of Hymns for the Use of Baptist Churches*, the hymnal was the response of the American Baptist Publication Society and the Sunday School Society to “numerous and urgent calls, which, for a long time, have been made from various sections of the country.” The result was a compendium of 1,180 hymns and a supplement of 106 hymns “best known, most valued, and most frequently sung in the South.” It was published, as was the custom, without music, as the words were often sung to various tunes known in one part of the country or another.*

What comes through clearly in the introduction to the hymnal is the high place hymn singing held in the Baptist churches of this period and of the care—theological, pastoral, and esthetic—that was used in their selection.

Worship, the compilers stated, is “the utterance of the [human spirit], aspiring upward to its Creator. . . . As it is an act of the heart, it should be expressed in the language of the heart. This is not cold, nor in the matter of common conversation, but fervent and impassioned. The expression of worship should be in language suited to such emotion. Sacred harmony is the union of measured sounds with the words of worship. In order to be sung well, the words of worship must be expressive of the emotions which belong to worship. . . .”

Good hymnals reach back over the centuries, connecting us with those who have worshiped and sung and prayed before us. While they may embrace contemporary expressions of faith, they also reach back to the hymns of Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley, to the chorales of Martin Luther, the hymns of Bishop Ambrose, the chants of the early church, and the psalms of the temple. Hymns have enriched and shaped our lives, and Mary Karne’s book reminds us that as Baptists, we stand in a vital stream of Christian tradition.



Scheduled Events

Mar. 2 (3:00) - Ordination Council for Chris Shade at Shell Ridge Community Church, Walnut Creek

Mar. 28-Apr. 5 - Haiti Mission Trip, Evergreen Baptist Assn. (clemeba@comcast.net)

July 14-19 - Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America Annual Conference, "Environmental Justice," Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario (www.bpfna.org / (704-521-6051))

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Thirty-two Boxes of Books en route to the Philippines

Marie and Franklin Onwubuariri, coordinators of PCBA's Philippine Book Project say 32 boxes of books are on the way to the Philippines, containing many theological, historical, and general reference books contributed by many in Northern California .

They say that, in a letter from Central Philippine University, Dean Bernabe C. Pagara, Dean of the College of Theology, writes, "This letter comes to offer our thanks once again for facilitating the 20+ boxes you sent for the College of Theology. This is so timely because, come June 2014, the College of Theology will be accredited/revisited by the Association for Theological Education in South East Asia after six years. The number of books sent to us will add to the usable titles required by the ATESEA to pass their set guidelines and requirements for the said accreditation. I reiterate, thank you very much for the extra effort you extended to us."

Those intending to contribute books for the next shipment are advised that they should be held until mid-year and then made available by contacting Marie or Franklin at mariecpo@gmail.com. Those preparing boxes are asked to use sturdy 1.5 cu foot boxes (12x12x18).

Milestones for Baptists We Know

by Joan Thatcher

The McGee Avenue Baptist Church in Berkeley honored **Noah Osborne** on Nov. 17 for his 60 years of ministry. Now 80, and McGee's Associate Pastor, he is known as "the one who comes when you call" and "who can fix everything from fences and plumbing to broken hearts." . . . **Charmaine Doherty** is retiring as the capable Executive Director of Grand Lake Gardens. GLG continues to host the meetings of Baptists Lunching Together.

An ordination council representing PCBA has approved the ordination of **Louann Roberts** which will be held February 2 at Grace Baptist Church in San Jose. She is a chaplain for the CIC Ministries that serve Santa Clara County jails.

Allison Tanner, Minister of Christian Formation at Lakeshore in Oakland, is experiencing her first sabbatical, from January 1 through March 31. She has served on the church's staff since 2000, formerly in a part-time position. . . . The Lakeshore Church Council has recommended that at the congregation's annual meeting the church apply for membership in the **Evergreen Baptist Association**, based in Seattle. For the last ten years, Lakeshore's regional membership has been with ABC of Metropolitan New York.

President Paul Martin announced that **Victor Vanloo** is ABSW's new Director of Development and Communications. He comes to the position with non-profit and business experience.

The late **Julia Morgan**, architect of ABSW's Hobart Hall and the sanctuary of the Oakland First Baptist Church—and, most famously, of Hearst Castle—has been awarded posthumously the 2014 Gold Medal from the American Institute of Architects. In addition to her work on these and other local buildings, she will be remembered by Baptists as having taught Sunday School for a time at Oakland's First Baptist Church.

Prayers are offered for **J. Alfred Smith, Sr.** as he recuperates at home following a stroke in September. . . . We mourn the death of **Brenton C. Dodge**, former staff representative in Northern California for the denomination's Division of World Mission Support. He died in Webster Groves, MO at the age of 87. Earlier he had served churches in Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Ohio and then became DWMS staff person for churches in Massachusetts before coming to California. He is survived by **Karen B. Tye**, former Professor of Christian Education at ABSW, and a large family. . . . Congratulations are extended to the Alliance of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists on their 20th anniversary celebration. Early leaders contributing to its formation included **Rick Mixon** and **Barbara MacNair**.