

Milestones for Baptist Friends

Compiled by Joan Thatcher

June was a busy month for **Donald Ng**. As national president, he presided at the ABC Mission Summit in Kansas. He also completed 40 years of ministry when he retired as Pastor at the First Chinese Baptist Church of San Francisco. He had served there since 1998. Earlier he was a leader in youth ministry on the denominational staff in Valley Forge. Thank you, so much, Don! . . . **Pastor Linda Bergeon**, currently the Interim Pastor at Alameda First, will become the interim this fall at First Chinese. . . **Liliana DaValle** has been installed as Pastor of Grace Baptist in San Jose, following interims at Alameda First and Shell Ridge in Walnut Creek. . . **Horacio Da Valle** is now pastor at New Horizon Baptist, formerly Spanish American Baptist, in San Jose. . . A June graduate at ABSW, **Douglas Davidson** is the new Director of Communications for the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley.

Receiving National Awards

Celestine Bennett received the Outstanding Congregational Librarian Award for 2015. It was announced at the Texas meeting of the National Church and Synagogue Library Association. Celestine earned her doctorate in library science at Columbia University in 1983. She has been the Lakeshore Church librarian for 18 years. . . . **Congresswoman Barbara Lee** received the Edwin T. Dahlberg Peace and Justice Award. She has been outspoken about the need to avoid war, expanding jobs, immigration reform, global cooperation toward peace, and numerous other concerns. Previous recipients of the Dahlberg award include Martin Luther King, Jr. and President Jimmy Carter. She is a member of Allen Temple Baptist Church. . . **Marcia Patton**, the first Executive Minister of the Evergreen Association, received the Kenneth L. Cober Award for Effective Leadership in Discipleship Education in an American Baptist Region. After 13 years on the staff of the ABC of the Northwest, she was instrumental in forming Evergreen with its ethnically diverse churches.

In Memoriam

We are saddened by the recent death of **Eugene Holcomb**. A graduate of Colgate Rochester Divinity School, he had been a pastor in the Midwest and had also worked abroad with the United States Agency for International Development. He was a member of Lakeshore Church.

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Evergreen Association Annual Meeting - Oct. 9-11

First Baptist Church of Palo Alto

"Coming of Age: Transformational Journeys"

The first annual meeting to be held in the Bay Area for the Evergreen Baptist Association is set for Friday-Sunday, October 9-11. It will be hosted by the First Baptist Church of Palo Alto. Centered on the theme, "Coming of Age: Transformational Journeys," the gathering will feature addresses by James Forbes, Pastor Emeritus of Riverside Church, New York.

The Friday evening general session at 7:00 will be preceded by an Association Dinner at 6:00. The afternoon will include workshops on the meeting theme and a "Sacred Conversation," a well-received feature introduced at a previous annual meeting. Saturday's events will include

caucus meetings representing various ethnic groupings within the Association, business sessions, luncheons both for clergy and laity, a worship service with Dr. Forbes as preacher, and a Mission Faire and dinner. Registration is available through local churches and through the Association office, 409 Third Avenue South, Suite A, Kent, WA 98032; (235) 859-2226.

BLT Programs

("Baptists Lunching Together")

Wednesday Luncheons (\$10)

Grand Lake Gardens - 12:00 Noon

401 Santa Clara Ave., Oakland

Sep. 16 - ABC Mission Summit

Highlights of the Biennial
Presentations by Delegates
Led by Jim Hopkins

Oct. 21 - "21 Days in Turkey"

Reflections on the life, culture,
and land of this Muslim Country
Dale and Alice Edmondson
and Louann Roberts

*Reservations by Monday:
510-350-7008 (Joan Thatcher)
or pcba.org.*

An Art Exhibit by Inmates at Elmwood Correctional Facility *A PCBA-Supported Ministry*

Titled, "Transformation: Art from Within," an Opening Reception is scheduled for Sun., Sept. 13, 2:00-4:00 at 520 S First Street San Jose. Louann Roberts and David Robinson are chaplains.

Legacy of a Baptist Prophet
Comments by the Editor, Dale Edmondson

Baptists—and our nation—lost a major prophet this summer. James Dunn died on July 4, a fitting day for a farewell to such a champion of freedom of religion. Jim (Dr. James M Dunn) had been Executive Director of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty from 1981 to 1999. An articulate and effective advocate, he was 83 years of age.

The present Executive, J. Brent Walker, has said, “I don’t know anyone who fought harder to ensure religious freedom and to preserve the separation of church and state. He provided a consistent Baptist witness in public policy, and he leaves his fingerprints on national affairs and in the lives of many individuals. His tenure at the BJC saw the passage of such landmark legislation as the Equal Access Act and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. After his retirement as Executive Director, he became a professor at the School of Divinity at Wake Forest University, where he had a profound impact on students.”

When Jim spoke, you were compelled to listen. His speech was incisive, pithy, and epigrammatic. Remembering him, I want to share these “quotes” from his addresses and writings:

- Religious freedom marks off the playing field, establishes the marketplace, provides the context in which all faiths may offer their own understanding of the ultimate good news from heaven to humankind.
- The best thing government can do for religion is to leave it alone.
- The trouble with a theocracy is everyone wants to be Theo!
- When government claims to aid all religions, it never fails to play favorites.
- Christians should be involved in politics, but with Christian goals, methods, attitudes and preparation. We should do our homework, speak out in a Christian tone of voice and be prepared to live with the consequences of joining the debate.
- Religious freedom and church-state separation are a package deal.
- You betcha boots. As long as there are math tests, there will be prayer in schools.
- Theocracy is organized arrogance.
- Since lobbying is simply “attempting to influence legislation,” every Christian should be a lobbyist.
- “I don’t know and I don’t care” are twin threats to Christian citizenship.
- Churches faithful to the Gospel cannot remain silent in the face of injustice. Silence is sin.
- Stubbornness may be the most needed “gift of the Spirit.”

**Religious Leaders Issue
Statement on Iran Agreement**

A statement in support of the Iran Framework Agreement has been issued by the leaders of major American religious denominations, including ABC General Secretary, Roy Medley.

“We do this not as politicians,” they say, “but as those whose deep faith commitments compel us to speak clearly, with moral and practical wisdom, about any possibility that restrains the threat of war and open pathways toward peace. Indeed, the One whose words and life we follow said, ‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.’”

Although the statement voices the convictions of these leaders, it is issued, in part to encourage members of congregations to weigh the issues involved and express their views to their representatives in Congress. The statement can be viewed at <https://sojo.net/sites/default/files/IranRollCallAd.pdf>.

**Annual Christmas at Sea
“Packing Day”**

Tuesday October 27th
10:00-2:00 (including lunch)
Seafarers Center
4001 7th Street, Oakland

**Youthquake Set for Sep. 18-19
First Baptist, Alameda**

PCBA joins other Baptist groups in Northern California in sponsoring Youthquake, the popular youth event, to be held this year on Friday and Saturday, September 18 and 19 at the First Baptist Church of Alameda.

Under the theme, “See,” the gathering aims to help young people serve God through urban ministries. Leaders for the event are from the denomination and City Team of San Francisco. Worship will be led by young people. Registration is \$35 and may be made online at youthquake.us, a website providing the schedule and information about speakers and activities.

**Board of PCBA
Elected at Spring Conference**

Officers:

Louann Roberts and Alice Edmondson (*Co-Presidents*)
Phil Meads, Jr. (*Secretary*)
Paul Schneider (*Treasurer*)
Wendy Neale (*Finance Sec.*)

Board Members:

Jim Hopkins, Rosa James, Becky Lessler, Paul Martin, Dayle Scott, Joan Thatcher

Advisory Members:

Dale Edmondson and Allison Tanner