

PCBA Notes

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Ministers and Students in the Philippines Helped by Book Project

More than 10,000 books are now on the library shelves of Central Philippine University or in the personal possession of Baptist ministers in the Philippines thanks to PCBA's Philippine Book Project. The books on theology, biblical studies, church history, ministry, and general reference were once in the libraries of ministers, teachers, and others mostly in Northern California.

Following a semester in which Dale and Alice Edmondson taught as volunteer faculty members at the American-Baptist-related university, the project was begun as a response to the extremely high cost of books in that country. Thinking of the number of books basic to ministerial preparation which belonged to retired clergy and others in the Bay Area, they discovered people here were happy to make many of these books available. The books were welcomed by the University to fill gaps in the library's collection which had resulted from their limited budget. Books not needed in the library were made available to seminary students and pastors for whom many such books were beyond reach.

Special Note: The project is now seeking a coordinator, as Paul Schneider, former coordinator, has left the area. People interested in learning about the position may contact Dale Edmondson (edmondsons62@comcast.net or 510.483.6836).

Dale coordinated the project from its beginning in 2002 to 2012. Marie Onwubuariri followed him, serving until her move to become Executive Minister of ABC of Wisconsin.

BLT Programs

("Baptists Lunching Together")

Wednesdays at Noon (\$10)

Grand Lake Gardens

401 Santa Clara Ave., Oakland

February 15 – Laura Landgraf

**"From Victim to Victor:
Empowering Women and Men
Surviving Childhood Trauma"**

(See article, Pg 3)

March 15 – Will McGarvey

**"Envisioning a World of
Interfaith Peace"**

*Executive, Interfaith Council
of Costa Contra County*

*Reservations by Monday
www.pcba.org or 510-483-6836*

Brief Notes

"Pause" - A time of reflection, is being offered on Saturday, January 21 between 1:00 and 3:00 at Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church. A public event, it is jointly sponsored by the church and PCBA. Pause is announced as "a time to reflect." It will provide silence, music, prayer, and meditation at which "all ages and faiths are welcome." The churches is at 3534 Lakeshore Avenue in Oakland. Pause will be held in lieu of the January "BLT" program, with monthly BLT events continuing in February.

America Baptist Biennial - The 2017 Biennial Mission Summit of American Baptists will be held on the West Coast this year in Portland. People are encouraged to save June 30-July 2.

Peace Fellowship Summer Conference - The 2017 Summer Conference of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America will be held in Toluca, Mexico. Find developing details on www.bpfna.org.

New AWAB Leader - The Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists has announced Catherine ("Katie") Chapman as the new Executive Director of the organization. She comes with experience in non-profit management as well as financial development, marketing, teaching and administration. Learn more at www.awab.org.

PCBA to Be Fiscal Sponsor of Advocacy Ministry for Victims of Child Abuse

In support of the effective ministry of Laura Landgraf addressing childhood sexual abuse, PCBA has agreed to be fiscal manager of this endeavor. Ms Landgraf, author of "Fifth Sister; From Victim to Victor, Overcoming Child Abuse," says she tells her personal story "to encourage, support, and empower the 42 million of us in the US who were sexually abused as children." PCBA's role will be to receive and transmit funds for addressing Landgraf's work. A comprehensive outline of Laura's ministry is available at lauralandgraf.com. Laura will be BLT speaker on February 15.

"Butterflies" Dramas Sparked by CIC Ministries - Responding to the Art and Spirit Program of the Correctional Institutions Chaplaincy, in which PCBA members David Robinson and Louann Roberts are chaplains, the Tabard Theatre in San Jose is presenting a series of plays, January 20-February 5, which take their inspiration from the art work of women and men at the Elmwood Correctional Center. Last year in a notable exhibit, art pieces from the center caused many viewers to gain increased insight to the lives of inmates. For tickets, www.tabardtheatre.org/tickets.html.

Real versus Counterfeit Hope

Comments by the Editor, Dale Edmondson

What does it take to follow a star? The church's season of Epiphany reminds us of the story of the Magi and their search for the Christ Child. A daunting journey, fraught with many dangers and chances of failure—all of which they knew. What energized them to set out on such a venture? I suggest it can be capsulized in the one word, "Hope." Indeed, isn't hope the energizing reality behind all human endeavor? "Hope," Emil Brunner once said, "is the oxygen of the human spirit."

A new year brings "hopes" for what is to follow. Many are inclined to say, "I hope this will be a good year," even, "I hope it will be a better year." (In other words, "I hope things will work out," or, "Let's just hope for the best.") I argue such "hope" is counterfeit—a self-medicating way to numb our anxieties, however justified they may be. It's the denial of one of our uniquely human gifts, the gift of moral responsibility.

The current surge of hate-filled speech about people who hold different views than our own, an unleashing of lightly-suppressed racism, virulent animosity toward people from other traditions, a tolerance of denigrating words about women and the disabled, and a readiness to entertain authoritarianism for the sake of security—all these contribute to a unsettling sense about our present world. One can understand where "hoping things will work out" comes from. But it's counterfeit hope. Whether Edmund Burke said it or someone else, it's still true, that "the only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing." There are plans which must be opposed, expressions protested against, principles advocated, and freedoms protected!

*President Kennedy's inaugural address is often remembered for his challenge to "ask what we can do for our country." But there's another sentence in his address which expresses a theology much-needed in our time. He said, "With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking [God's] blessing and [God's] help, but knowing that **here on earth God's work must truly be our own.**" Dr. King wasn't expressing belief in "inevitable progress," or counterfeit hope, when he said, "The arc of history bends toward justice." His life makes this clear. His life involved seeking to join God in God's work.*

When we pray, "thy Kingdom come on earth," we're not mumbling words about "hoping things turn out OK." We're not abandoning human effort to bring about justice. When we pray that prayer, we're committing ourselves to work actively, intelligently, knowledgeably toward a world in which God's blessed, inclusive community is brought nearer. Hope, real hope, is the oxygen of the human spirit.

Milestones for Baptist Friends

Joan Thatcher, regular editor of this page, is at present a patient at Piedmont Gardens Skilled Nursing Facility. Her PCBA friends wish her recovery and improved health.

We mourn the death of **Maxwell Vines**, Association Minister for PCBA from 2001 to 2002. He died on December 30 in his native Australia to which he had returned after serving with the Association. Before becoming PCBA's executive, Max had been the Senior Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Keene, New Hampshire, the First Baptist Church of Oakland, and Interim Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Palo Alto. Max received his first pastoral training in Australia, where he served Baptist congregations before coming to the United States to study at Andover-Newton Theological School. Messages of condolence for the family may be addressed to Elizabeth Vines Murphy, 1830 Saint George Rd, Danville CA 94526.

The 25th Anniversary of **New Life Christian Fellowship, Castro Valley** was celebrated at a well-attended dinner at World Gourmet Restaurant in Fremont on November 26. The event—which included music, pictures, and festive dress—included a presentation by the founding pastor about the congregation's history, vignettes of its present ministry by several members, and a message from **Pastor Katie Choy-Wong** about the church's hopes for the future.

Loris Coletta, much-respected American Baptist leader and friend of PCBA, died on October 27 at the age of 96. Loris served in several ABC-related positions in California and nationally with the General Board of the denomination. She and her husband, Vince, an American Baptist minister, now deceased, lived in retirement in Aptos.

A Winter Shelter Initiative began in December at **Grace Baptist, San Jose**. It anticipates keeping hundreds of homeless people protected from inclement weather conditions, and providing them with dinner, a place to sleep, breakfast and showers. The church, under **Pastor Liliana Da Valle**, received a grant of \$90,000 (\$30,000 per year for three years) from American Baptists' Mission Initiative Fund to help implementing the program. The Initiative Fund is supplied by the denomination's Board of General Ministries.

The Pacific Coast Baptist Association

is a group of American Baptist congregations, clergy, and laity in fellowship since 1997 and emphasizing historic Baptist principles.

Officers - Alice Edmondson (*President*), Jim Hopkins (*Vice President*), Phil Meads, Jr. (*Secretary*), Louann Roberts (*Treasurer*), Wendy Neale (*Finance Secretary*)

Board Members - Becky Lessler, Joan Thatcher, Dale Edmondson, Rosa James, Allison Tanner (*Advisory*).

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