

PCBA Notes

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PCBA TO CELEBRATE FIRST CHINESE BAPTIST CHURCH

Head of Home Mission Societies to Speak - Sat., Oct. 19

Luncheon, Conversations, Afternoon Chinatown Tour

The noted ministry of American Baptists in San Francisco's Chinatown was begun in 1880 by the American Baptist Home Mission Societies. In October the Executive Director of the Societies, Jeffrey Haggray, will visit the church they started, celebrating the remarkable impact the congregation has had on individuals, Chinatown, and the denomination in the intervening years. His keynote presentation will be given at 10:00.

A luncheon, with guided conversations, will be at 12:00, followed by a "Mission Possible" workshop at 1:30. Members of the congregation will lead a Chinatown tour.

People may register at 415-362-4139 (Wendi Lin), office@fcbc-sf.org, or with a local church coordinator. A \$10 fee will be due on the day of the event. Registration is requested by October 12.

The church, which began as a mission congregation, became a self-sustaining one in the 1950's. Through the leadership of Executive Haggray, the Home Mission Societies emphasize "motivating Christians to impact communities with their deeply held faith."

Lauren Lisa Ng is the Societies' Director of Leadership empowerment.

Don Ng, New PCBA President

The Pacific Coast Baptist Association is pleased to announce that Donald Ng will be its new president. Don is well-known and respected among American Baptists, having served as its National President from 2014-2015.

For 17 years he was Pastor of the First Chinese Baptist Church of San Francisco and was earlier a national staff member in Educational Ministries. In retirement, his commitment to international ministry led him to develop support for the founding of Northeast Christian University in India, for which he serves as Chair of the Friends of the university. In becoming PCBA President, he fills the vacancy left by the death of Alice Edmondson in 2018.

Brief Notes

The First Baptist Church of Palo Alto - After 126 years of ministry, the First Baptist Church of Palo Alto held its final regular worship service on Sunday, July 28. Pastor Rick Mixon reports, "The congregation began an assessment process last fall that determined the congregation was no longer sustainable. We accepted that evaluation with regret but also a sense that we wanted to control the closing process while we still had the wherewithal to make decisions for ourselves. The congregation will continue to meet intermittently until we can sell our property, distribute the proceeds and close the corporation. It has been a good long run but the time has come to say good-bye."

Safety Asked for Kachin Baptist Leaders - American Baptists' General Secretary and the Executive Directors of the International and National Ministries sent an urgent communique in August to the United Nations Secretary-General and officials of the United States expressing concern for the safety of two Kachin Baptist leaders, Hkalam Samson, President of the Kachin Baptist Convention and Lanjaw Gam Seng. While in the US, both ministers openly testified at a State Department meeting about atrocities Seng faced while in custody in Myanmar.

Evergreen Annual Meeting - "Free the Captives," referencing Jesus' sermon in Nazareth, will be the theme of the Evergreen Association Annual Meeting, October 11-12, at Seattle's Mt. Zion Baptist Church. Dr. Priscilla Eppinger, Executive Director of the American Baptist Historical Society will be preacher for the event, addressing American Baptist history of freeing the captives. Workshop topics will include mass incarceration, human trafficking, young adults, and empire and resistance. Information on the schedule, registration, meals, and hotel information can be found at www.ea-abc/annual-meeting.html.

Lakeshore Receives Grant on Worship and Social Justice - Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church has been named recipient of a Eli Lilly grant from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship for fostering ways in which worship can inspire and undergird a ministry of social justice. Under the theme, "Worship: Alive on Sunday and Inspiring our Ministry," the church aims to develop "prayers and song lyrics, tell stories and plan worship services that help us connect the scriptures, our Sunday morning worship and our social justice ministries." Sandra Lee, an alumna of ABSW, will oversee the endeavor.

TO AMOS OF TEKOA

By the Editor, Dale Edmondson

Dear Mr. Amos,

You've become quite well known in our time—at least one of your statements has: **“Let justice roll down like waters/and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.”** A preacher named Dr. King liked to quote that. I understand you, however, are not a preacher but an agriculturalist out of Tekoa. We like your quote because we all believe in justice. We also like to create our own definition. Couldn't you just have left well enough alone when you said that? But you had to go ahead and suggest what justice involves! We have a saying about preaching that goes, “Now you've quit preaching and gone to meddling.” That's what you've done here: gone to meddling!

You criticize income inequality and the palatial residences of the top one-percent, both their summer houses and their winter houses, shouting, **“You lie on beds inlaid with ivory/ and lounge on your couches. /You dine on choice lambs/ and fattened calves.”** Didn't it occur to you that these folk may have achieved their position because of their ability, extraordinary hard work, and following the rules? What if—just for the sake of argument—there WAS something unjust about it and we agreed we should work for equality, wouldn't an incremental plan be more practical than the radical one you advocate? Further, if they were left alone, wouldn't their wealth trickle down to the others?

Labor transactions clearly upset you. However, your ardor may have surpassed your understanding of economics. You speak negatively of **“buying the poor with silver/and the needy for a pair of sandals.”** Don't you recognize the wealth of your society has been built on slave labor? What do you propose—reparations?

Just how out of touch you are is demonstrated by your attack on the religious establishment! Don't you know that when economic wealth and the religious order get connected, it's dangerous to mess with it? You argue that people like practices that help them feel comfortable without making demands of them. And you say this in an audacious way—as if you were channeling the utterances of God against religion's practices! **“I hate, I despise your religious feasts;/ I cannot stand your assemblies. . . Hate evil, love good;/ maintain justice in the courts.”**

A final comment: you suggest the existence of a nation is at stake and that a nation will be finally judged on how it treats its poorest and most vulnerable. If THAT notion ever gets abroad, it would change everything we know!

People

William R. Herzog, II died on August 4. During his years in Northern California he had great impact on the members and congregations of American Baptists Churches, and beyond on the academic community. He was Professor of New Testament at American Baptist Seminary of the West and a core faculty member of the Graduate Theological Union. Having a strong commitment to congregational life, he served as Interim Pastor at several churches, including the First Baptist Church of Berkeley and twice at Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church. Bill went on to teach and serve as Dean at Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Andover Newton Theological School and Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School. He was an internally recognized scholar for his published work on the ministry of Jesus, including the book, *Jesus, Justice and the Reign of God.* Having dealt for some years from Parkinson's Disease, he died in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

Cathy Nielson Tharalsen died on August 4, following a long illness. She was the wife of **Robert Tharalsen** who was Pastor for many years of the First Baptist Church of North Sacramento. Cathy is remembered for her activity with American Baptist Women and her spirited piano accompaniment of congregational singing at many Regional events.

Sydney Webster has been called as Pastor of the Trinity Baptist Church of San Mateo. Sydney, who has been a hospice chaplain, is a recent graduate of American Baptist Seminary of the West.

After nearly four years with the Seafarers Ministry of the Golden Gate, **Chaplain Jasmieson Prevoznak** has accepted a full time commission with the US Navy. **Board Chair Nancy Smith** says, "We will miss his innovations and ship visiting work with the seafarers. We know that the Navy will be blessed by his service."

Alcides Fuentes of Shell Ridge Community, Walnut Creek, and **Gail Hill** of First Baptist, Chico participated in the summer conference of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America in Cali, Columbia. Gail further participated in a border immersion event in Tijuana sponsored by American Baptist International Ministries concerning immigration, asylum seekers, and deportations. Gail was recently elected to the Board of BPFNA.

Benton Stokes is the new worship director at Grace Baptist, San Jose. He is a liturgist, writer of songs, prayers and liturgy, a pianist, music arranger, and vocalist.

Check out our Upgraded Website

PCBA.org has an upgraded look, thanks to the Association's webmaster, Chuck Johnston. Go to it for up-to-date information about PCBA events, news of churches in Northern California, and Denominational opportunities.