

PCBA Notes

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"Ablaze: Igniting Our Gifts for Service" PCBA 16th Spring Conference - Saturday, May 10, 2014

Don Ng, President of American Baptist Churches, USA will be the guest leader at PCBA's Spring Conference, May 10 at Shell Ridge Church in Walnut Creek. Dr. Ng is known to churches in PCBA as the Pastor of First Chinese Baptist Church of San Francisco.

The 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM event will include the seven workshops further developing the theme. The morning offerings will be **Finding the Flame! Discovering our Gifts for Service** (Dayle Scott), **Inviting and Energizing Volunteers** (David Robinson), **Key Essentials for Leading a Group** (Dorothy Spann-Agee), **Keeping the Fire Going: Planning for the Future** (Liliana DaValle). The afternoon workshops will be **Igniting Service through Decision Making** (Michelle Holmes), **Modern Miracles: Fanning the Flames of Peace and Justice** (James Hopkins), **Spiritual Heroes: A New Youth Curriculum** (Chris Shade).

Brochures have been mailed to the churches. Registrants are asked to review the theme scriptures, II Timothy 1:6-7, 9a and I Corinthians 12, and take a gifts inventory on line at www.churchgrowth.org/analysis/index.php. The inventory will be necessary to the workshop, "Finding the Flame." Conference leadership encourages two or more from the same church to register for that workshop.

BLT Programs

("Baptists Lunching Together")

Wednesday Luncheons (\$8.00)

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

Apr. 23 (4th Wed.!)

Terrie Light

*Executive Director
Berkeley Food & Housing Prog.*

June 18

Michael Scocia

*Director,
Redwood Glen Baptist Camp*

Sep. 17

Roger Bauer

*Chaplain, Seafarers Ministry
of the Golden Gate*

Reservations by Monday:

Joan Thatcher, 510-350-7008

Thirty Years and More Vital than Ever: BPFNA

Comments by the Editor

*When our group of peaceniks, 15 or so of us, met in Louisville in March, 1984, who among us had any idea that the organization we hoped to put together would, thirty years out, be the extraordinary, vital body for peace that it has become. We had come out of two Baptist streams—i.e., the American Baptist Peace Fellowship and some progressive Southern Baptists who had created and maintained a newsletter called, *The Baptist Peacemaker*. We asked, Isn't there some way people of our common heritage can work together to promote the cause of peace, both in our communities, and beyond in our world? Our purpose, we said, would be "to unite and enable Baptists to make peace in a warring world."*

Today the BPFNA is the largest network of Baptist peacemakers in the world. It celebrates and supports the peacemaking work of Baptist churches in Canada, the United States, Puerto Rico, and Mexico. It describes its mission to "gather, equip, and mobilize Baptists to build a culture of peace rooted in justice."

The sustaining work of BPFNA has been the support and encouragement of local peace groups, now numbering over 80 partner congregations, and the creation of publications for church and individual use and curricula for children and youth. But the organization's mission has had a much broader outreach: particularly important has been its nationally-recognized programs in conflict transformation, led by PCBA's staff. They have not only provided effective training in this country for people from many denominational backgrounds, but also training and related forums, as requested, in many parts of the world.

*Some of the Fellowship's activity during the past year have included work in ■ a Christian-Muslim Interfaith Forum in Pakistan, attended by over 300 young women of both faiths ■ the Council of Baptist Churches of Northeast India in Conflict Transformation and Mediation training with five warring tribal groups ■ in the Philippines with the Conventions of Baptist churches for a workshop on Biblical Peacemaking ■ planning in Chiapas, Mexico for a third course on *The Gospels and Peace* at the Mayan Intercultural Seminary ■ supporting a vigil to demand the closing of the School of the Americas.*

This summer Alice and I will attend the 30th anniversary gathering of the Peace Fellowship, meeting at Brock University on the Niagara Peninsula in St. Catharines, Ontario. The theme, "One Creation," will give us opportunity to hear and interact with leading thinkers in the theology of culture and environmental justice from several denominations and from Canada's aboriginal community. We will worship, learn, and celebrate together. Registration was still open at last hearing! (Information about the conference, July 14-19, is available at the Fellowship's web site, www.bpfna.org.)

Chris Shade to be Ordained April 27

Chris Shade, Youth Minister of Shell Ridge Community Church, is to be ordained on Sunday, April 27 at 5:00 PM. The service will be held at Shell Ridge, 200 La Casa Via, Walnut Creek. Members and friends of PCBA are invited to attend. A reception will follow.

Central Philippine University Thanks PCBA for Books

Word has been received from Bernabe Pagara, Dean of the College of Theology at Central Philippine University thanking PCBA for its latest shipment of books. Dr. Pagara writes, "We have received the 32 boxes of books you have sent for our Theology Library here in CPU. Just this morning I was the one who opened all the boxes and discovered that these materials are very useful for our accreditation, come June 2014, especially books on ecumenism, feminist theology books, gender issues and the like. Once again, thank you very much for facilitating everything for the good of our seminary here in CPU."

Jesse Lucas and Haiti Mission

PCBA member, Jesse Lucas, took part in an April mission trip to Haiti sponsored by the Evergreen Baptist Association. It was the Association's second trip to American Baptist work there.

Lakeshore Participates in Oakland Ceasefire

Joining with the City of Oakland, Lakeshore Avenue Baptist is the site for "call-ins" in cooperation with the city's police department as part of "Ceasefire," a strategy for violence prevention used effectively in Boston.

At a call-in, gang members identified by the police and probation departments as having the potential to commit violent crime are invited to sit at the table with community leaders (clergy, law enforcement, District Attorney's office, US Attorney's office, victims of violent crime, representatives of recovery and job training programs, potential employers and others) to learn that there are positive alternatives available to them, but that the shooting and other violent acts of their gangs must stop.

Speaking of the endeavor in a sermon, Pastor Jim Hopkins said, "My hope is that as we sit at the table with the young men, our discussion will tap in all of us, Baptist preachers included, [our] reservoir of core human decency...Isn't the tapping of this reservoir the very art of peace making?..There is profound theology at work here: the theology of original blessing, the recognition of persistent sin. . . Each person at the table is created in the image of God. . . As the community gathers, may this theology not be forgotten; may it strengthen the ties that bind; may it help save lives."

Sharing News of Baptist Friends

by Joan Thatcher

Marie Onwbuariri has been called to become the region executive minister for the AB Churches of Wisconsin, beginning in June. She succeeds **Arlo Reichter**, an ABSW graduate who is retiring after 45 years of ministry. Ordained in 2007, Marie currently is Director of Admissions at ABSW, of which she is an alumna. Recently a pastor at MacArthur Community Church in San Pablo, she serves on the ABC Ministers Council and is the immediate past president of the Alliance of Asian American Baptist Churches. Marie and husband, **Franklin**, have two young children.

Following a serious stroke in January, retired missionary **Irene Jennings** has moved to Piedmont Gardens where she is in the skilled nursing center. . . Recognizing Black History Month, the Oakland City Council honored **Gillette O. James**, pastor at Beth Eden Baptist Church and **J. Alfred Smith, Sr.**, pastor emeritus at Allen Temple. (On March 23, Dr. Smith preached his first sermon since suffering a stroke in September.)

In Memoriam

Richard E. Ice, President Emeritus of American Baptist Homes of the West, passed away March 15 at his home in Alameda following a long illness. He was 83. Dr. Ice served ABHOW from 1972 to 1995. As president he led the organization in extensive expansion and was a nationally recognized leader in the field of senior living.

He was an alumnus of Centralia College, Linfield College, ABSW, and Harvard's Advanced Management Program. Following a four-year pastorate in Seattle, he was an ABC region staff member in Washington State and Northern California and spent eight years on the staff of the AB Home Mission Societies. He chaired the boards of Linfield and ABSW, and served on boards of the Graduate Theological Union, the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board and, for 40 years, on the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty. He was the first president of PCBA.

Married in 1955, his wife Lucille died in 1992. He is survived by three married daughters, Lorinda, Diana, and Julianne, their husbands, nine grandchildren and two brothers. A memorial service was held April 5 at Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church in Oakland.

For decades, **Rick Mitchell** and his wife, **Sandy**, have been pillars of the Shell Ridge Church in Walnut Creek. Concord's first traffic engineer, Rick then earned a Ph.D. from UC Berkeley and a M. Div. from Pacific School of Religion. He died of a heart attack on March 15 at a family gathering in Charleston, SC. He was 75. A memorial service was held March 29. Rick is survived by Sandy, their son and daughter, and four grandchildren.