

PCBA Notes

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“Communications in the Church”

Theme for PCBA Spring Gathering

Sunday, June 12 - 2:00-6:00

The Annual PCBA Spring Gathering will take the form of an afternoon of worship, teaching, conversation, and fellowship at San Jose’s Grace Baptist Church on Sunday, June 12, from 2:00 to 6:00 PM. Exploring the theme, “Communications in the Church,” the program will include a panel drawn from Bay Area congregations and will conclude with a service of worship and an Association dinner. Registration will open at 2:00, with the program beginning at 2:30. Grace Baptist Church is located at 484 East San Fernando Street.

Panel presenters will include Jim Hopkins, Lakeshore Avenue Baptist, Oakland; Linda Bergeon, First Chinese Baptist, San Francisco; Rick Mixon, First Baptist, Palo Alto; and Ulysses Barton, Beth Eden Baptist, Oakland. Designed to be of practical help to local church organizations, the panel will

examine communication styles and examples of effective communication. Host Pastor, Liliana DeValle will be worship leader.

Event registration may be made online at www.pcba.org or by mail at PCBA Spring Gathering, 200 La Casa Via, Walnut Creek, CA 94598. \$10 by June 6; \$15 at the door.

BLT Programs

(“Baptists Lunching Together”)

Wednesday Luncheons (\$10)

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

May 11 -

Evergreen’s

Mission Trip to Haiti

Jesse Lucas, Trip Coordinator

[This is a Second Wednesday.]

Reservations by Monday

www.pcba.org

or

510-350-7008 (Joan Thatcher)

BLT does not meet during the summer.

ABSW COMMENCEMENT

Sat., May 21 - 2:00 PM

First Baptist Church, Oakland
22nd Street and Telegraph

New Chaplain for Seafarers Ministry of the Golden Gate

Jamieson Prevoznak was installed as the new Chaplain of the Seafarers Ministry of the Golden Gate at the ministry's annual Swedish Pancake Breakfast on April 16. He serves in a half-time position, visiting container ships docking at the Port of Oakland, providing chaplaincy services aboard as well as in a ministry of hospitality ashore.

Holding a Master of Divinity Degree from San Francisco Theological Seminary, Jamieson is a person of varied experience. He has worked with the Street Ministry of San Francisco and is also a US Masters swim coach, a member of the Dolphin Club in San Francisco, a runner, and a Yoga instructor!

The Seafarers chaplaincy, now in its 70th year, is a regional Baptist ministry serving seafarers from around the world. It continues the work of the Scandinavian Seamen's Ministry, originally begun by the Baptists of Scandinavia at a time when seamen were young men drawn largely from Scandinavian countries.

Conference Dates

*Summer Conference
Baptist Peace Fellowship
of North America
June 27-July 2
Cheyney University, PA*

Water Challenge Threatens Redwood Glen

PCBA Contributes \$5,000

California's water crisis has impacted Redwood Glen, American Baptists' 58-year-old camp at Loma Mar, on the San Francisco Peninsula. No longer able to secure water under the California Water Board, Redwood Glen is required to build a water plant, with construction estimated at \$400,000.

After anticipating the cancellation of scheduled summer church camps as well as the many public school-related camping experiences hosted by the camp, it was granted temporary permission to truck in water for essential use, such trucking posing high costs for the camp.

Learning of the camp's plight, the Pacific Coast Baptist Association has given a grant of \$5,000 to the camp and is encouraging its members and contacts to make personal contributions. ***Contributions can be made online at <http://www.RedwoodGlen.com/> and by mail at 100 Wright Drive Loma Mar, CA 94021.***

1,800 Books Readied for Shipment to Philippines

Continuing PCBA's Philippine Book Project, Paul Schneider, reports 1,800 books are packed and awaiting shipment to the ABC-related Central Philippine University.

“I’m not religious, but I’m spiritual.”

Comments by the Editor, Dale Edmondson

It’s becoming a frequently-heard comment: “I’m not religious, but I’m spiritual.” A distancing of oneself from “organized religion”—in many cases, from the Christian Church as one experiences it. It’s the expression of many younger people who find the church irrelevant to their lives and to the challenges of society, an organization in a time warp, contending against modern science, judgmental in nature, and too often identified with economic powers. The “Nones” (those answering “None” when asked which religious group they identify with) are increasing in number. The Pew Research Center reports one-fifth of the U.S. public—and a third of adults under 30—are religiously unaffiliated today, being the highest percentage ever recorded in their polling.

Perhaps, rather than attempting to defend the church by rationalizing its purported failures, we should pay attention to what many Nones are saying when they claim to be “spiritual,” rather than “religious.” We might dismiss this as empty, watered-down theology, something very nebulous to base one’s life on. But, if we listen more deeply to what they’re saying, might we find they are confessing they sense there’s something beyond the banality of day-to-day life, that there must be some determinative reality “beyond,” some “ground” of being? To be sure, such a conviction would not be the whole of the gospel, but could it be a starting point, a point of connection between an emerging population and the Divine?

Champions of orthodox theology might be surprised to learn that Biblical faith had its origins in such a sense of mystery and wonder. The scholar, Rudolf Otto, has shown that a sense of what he calls “the holy,” or the numinous, has been basic to the development of all religion. Mightn’t we take the Nones’ confessions of spirituality seriously and join them in celebrating the wonder in life and then allow the Holy Spirit to lead us from there? Certainly, the sciences, mathematics, law and analytical thought are indispensable in our world. But can they be the final touchstones of human life? Can they supply compassion and human relationships and a depth-of-life?

The concluding chapters of the book of Job and many of the psalms proclaim that the heavens “declare the glory of God.” Modern “prophets,” such as Rachel Carson, hold that “a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life” is “an unailing antidote against the boredom and disenchantments of later years, the sterile preoccupation with things that are artificial, the alienation from the sources of our strength.” Isn’t such wonder a “hint” of God—a “door” into a fuller embrace of a God of love? Indeed, can one who has a sense of the wonder of life and a feeling deep within of a yet-undefined spiritual dimension be “far from the kingdom of God”?

IN MEMORIAM: Paul M. Martin

Joan Thatcher, Contributing Writer

We mourn the sudden death of Paul M. Martin, President and Professor of Pastoral Theology at American Baptist Seminary of the West since 2009. He died on March 23 at the age of 77 while in Denver with his wife, Agnes Martin. A former ABSW trustee, Dr. Martin was the first African-American president of ABSW and was an active member of the PCBA Board.

Dr. Martin came to Berkeley with sound credentials. He earned his B.A. degree from Pepperdine University, his Master of Divinity degree from Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology in Richmond, VA, and his Doctor of Philosophy from the California Graduate School of Theology. His dissertation was entitled, "A Critical Analysis of Black Theology from Slavery to Civil Rights." Dr. Martin was a life member of the Urban League, the NAACP, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Honoring his homiletical skills, Morehouse College named him to its Martin Luther King Jr. Distinguished Hall of Preachers.

During nearly six decades as an ordained minister, he served as senior pastor for twenty-seven years at the Redeemer Presbyterian Church of Los Angeles, seventeen years at Macedonia Baptist Church in Denver, and later was the interim pastor for two years at Zion Hill Baptist Church in Los Angeles.

Dr. Martin believed in serving the community. During his tenure in Denver, Colorado, he served on the development committees for the Denver International Airport and the Stapleton International Airport. Starting in 1959, he hosted radio ministries on eight stations in Los Angeles and Denver. At the time of his death, he had once again returned to radio by hosting a Saturday morning show from Los Angeles.

Dr. Martin is survived by his wife, Agnes, and their children Anthony Martin, Robert Williams, Rosalyn Thomas, Arlene Sharp, and beloved grandchildren.

Memorial services were held on April 16 at the Second Baptist Church of Los Angeles and April 30 at the Allen Temple Baptist Church of Oakland. A third service will be held on May 14 at Macedonia Baptist Church in Denver.

The Seminary has announced the establishment of the Rev. Dr. Paul M. Martin Presidential Scholarship. This will be an endowed scholarship to be awarded each year by the ABSW President, a resource that was close to Paul's heart.