

PCBA Notes

Published by Pacific Coast Baptist Association

Fall, 2017

Vol. 7, No. 2

ABSW Announces Inauguration of President James E. Brenneman

Saturday., October 28 - 2:00 PM

James E. Brenneman will become the new President of American Baptist Seminary of the West. A service of inauguration will be held on Saturday, October 28 at 2:00 PM in the First Church of Christ, Scientist, immediately across the street from the seminary at 2619 Dwight Way in Berkeley. Dr. Brenneman is a distinguished biblical theologian, author, and administrator, having given visionary leadership for 11 years as President of Goshen College in Indiana, a respected Mennonite institution.

2017 ANNUAL MEETING of the Evergreen Association

October 13-14 - Kent Washington

“Keep the River Flowing” will be the theme of the 2017 gathering of members from American Baptist congregations in the Evergreen Association to be held in Kent, Washington, October 13-14. The

meeting will celebrate the fourteen years of leadership of Dr. Marcia Patton, who has guided the formation of this Region, and who will be retiring upon completion of the event. The gathering will begin on Friday afternoon, October 13 and conclude with a banquet honoring Dr. Patton on Saturday evening. Registration information is available at www.evergreen-abc.org.

Meet President Brenneman

A Time to
“Meet and Greet”
the New President of ABSW

***Sunday, September 10
2:00-5:00***

American Baptist Seminary
of the West
2606 Dwight Way, Berkeley

Two Churches Welcome New Pastors

The First Baptist Church of Chico and the First Baptist Church of Alameda have new pastors. **Gail Hill** comes to Chico from the Ogden Baptist Church in New York, where she helped initiate a ministry with families living in poor, under-served neighborhoods through a program community ministries. She began her pastorate in Chico in July. **Aaron Sciford** was installed as pastor of the Alameda church in June, having begun in April. He had served congregations in Nebraska and Illinois and most recently was a hospice chaplain in south suburban Chicago.

Brief Notes

Jeremy Carlton will conclude his ministry at Walnut Creek's Shell Ridge Church in September to enter the academic field, where he is a Ph.D. candidate on the thought of Ralph Waldo Emerson. . . **Allen Temple** hosted its 40th annual Holistic Health and Job Fair in August, providing free health services, meetings with prospective employers, as well as free food, clothes, haircuts, raffles, and music. . . **The First Baptist Church of Palo Alto** recently received substantial community support and City agreement for making their facilities available, at a fee, to various community and arts groups. . . **Katie Choy-Wong**, pastor of New Community of Faith in Castro Valley, has been elected President of the American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast. . . **LouAnn Roberts**, has retired as a chaplain at the PCBA-supported Correctional Institutions Chaplaincy of Santa Clara County amid words of great appreciation of her chaplaincy. LouAnn is also a member of the PCBA Board. . . . **Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church** is continuing its "Teacher Match" project providing assistance to classroom teachers who are members to help them secure necessary supplies and materials for their students. . . **The American Baptist Home Ministries venture** in New Orleans continued this summer with youth and adult participants from Lakeshore Church and financial support from the Shell Ridge congregation. . . PCBA recently shipped **several hundred theological and general religious books to Central Philippine University**, continuing a program begun 15 years ago in which now over 10,000 books have been sent. A new coordinator for the project is being sought. Inquiries for this position: Editor, Newsletter@pcb.org or 510.483.6836.

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE

Joan Thatcher, who edited this page of *PCBA Notes* since the publication began seven years ago, died on March 21 at the age of 82. Joan was one of the first women to be ordained by American Baptists in California. A writer and journalist, she served in several denominational positions and in public relations for American Baptist Seminary of the West. She was a member of the PCBA Board and coordinator of the organization's monthly "BLT" programs.

James Chuck, former President of PCBA, died on July 20 at the age of 87. He was the retired Pastor of First Chinese Baptist Church of San Francisco and former Professor of Theology and Church Ministries at American Baptist Seminary of the West. His involvements included leadership in an anti-poverty program in Chinatown, Asian Baptist and ecumenical organizations, and editing a set of volumes of stories of life and faith in Chinatown. He spent three sabbaticals teaching in seminaries in Hong Kong.

Rosa James, member of the PCBA Board and wife of Pastor Gillette James, died on February 1 at the age of 78. A respected educator involved with teaching and administration, serving school in both East and West Oakland. She held positions in several Baptist organizations including Regional and national bodies. Her educational preparation also included work in social work and theological studies.

Marilyn Hunwick died in January. With her husband, Lynn, she served two terms as a missionary at the technical school in Balasore, India. She later worked as Administrator in the office of the United Campus Ministry at Stanford University. A service celebrating her life was held on May 28 at the First Baptist Church of Palo Alto.

Loris and Vince Coletta, two California American Baptist leaders, who died in 2016 and 2015 were memorialized in a July 22 service in Aptos. They had given leadership among American Baptists for five decades. Vince was a Pastor and Loris, a psychotherapist. During his ministry, Vince helped plant two churches in the East Bay and served congregations in Los Angeles and Palos Verdes. Loris had served on the General Board of the Denomination, the Board of the American Baptist Historical Society, and was appointed as a representative to the United Nations Forum on the Status of Women. Together the Colettas founded the nation's first drug hot line.

Observations at Normandy

Comments by the Editor, Dale Edmondson

Alice and I visited Normandy this past summer. It was the week of the 73rd anniversary of D-Day. It was sobering to look down at Omaha Beach from the once-fortified bunkers and reflect on the 150,000 young men, many of them frightened teen-agers, who had come ashore there (and on four other beaches), many of them seasick, some drowning or being machine-gunned before they could make it up the embankment.

It was sobering, too, to reflect on the 14,000-19,000 men, both Allied and Nazi, who had lost their lives by the end of the operation. We visited the American cemetery whose 172 acres of white marble crosses and stars of David hold the remains of more than 9,000 troops. All this, we knew, was only part of the carnage of a war claiming 24 million lives.

Same say history does not repeat itself. I'm not enough of an historian to render a judgment on this. But walking through Normandy's war memorial museum, I experienced a disconcerting feeling that I was looking "again" at some current happenings. This was while in the part of the museum dealing with events of the 1920s and 1930s leading to Second World War. I saw a campaign poster (in German, which I read) boasting of a strong Führer with the words, "Our only hope!" There were maps of an "Atlantic Wall" being built to protect the borders from forces threatening the Nazi Reich.

There were pictures of people of a certain background being rounded up and transported because they constituted a "threat" to national security, people for whom hatred was fanned by official statements. I saw pictures of mass rallies in Munich and elsewhere celebrating the promise of Germany being made great again. There were newspapers printing "news" which had little connection with facts (as the German "facts" about the Allied invasion); there were displays showing the priority given military expenditures; and, sadly, displays of church leaders blessing the Nazi experience.

Seeing this, I began to ask whether when we see signs that have an historic ring about them we would be wise to pay them special heed. It made me wonder whether, whatever else Jesus was pointing to, his warning that we fail to "discern the signs of the times" might be a call for thoughtful people to consider carefully what they observe.