

# THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS

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JANUARY 4, 2010

**An American Baptist Congregation Making God's Love Known in Los Angeles Since 1874**

**International • Intercultural • Ecumenical**



## A NEW YEAR'S WISH

May this year begin . . .  
For us and for our world . . .  
With hope.  
May this hope be supported . . .  
Through ups and downs of events . . .  
By faith  
May this faith be established  
Upon an enduring foundation . . .  
Of love.  
May this year  
See love in action,  
Love irresistible, undiscourageable.  
. . . Love in my life and yours,  
In our neighborhoods and towns,  
Love everywhere, the world around.  
. . . Love in little deeds and choices,  
In mighty events and decisions,  
Love with feet and hands and hearts.  
Thus may this year  
Know justice and fair dealing,  
Know progress and compassion.  
May this be, indeed,  
A year of outward peace,  
Inner serenity,  
**A HAPPY NEW YEAR.**

— *Dr. Oliver deW. Cummings*  
Associate Pastor, 1950-1986

## HOPE-NET – “BECAUSE NONE OF OUR NEIGHBORS SHOULD GO HUNGRY”

Though there are glimmers of hope, 2009 proved to be a challenging year.

- In 2007, Hope-Net served 110,000 persons; in 2008, 140,000 persons. In 2009, Hope-Net fed over 200,000 low-income persons.
- Hope-Net operates at an 11.2% administrative level, a figure that is in reality much lower if the thousands of free volunteer hours are considered.
- Hope-Net continues to access free food where possible: in 2008, 51% of distributed food was free of charge; in 2009, 71% was free.
- In 2008, Hope-Net distributed 1 million pounds of food; in 2009, that figure was over 1.5 million pounds of food at a cost of \$0.05 per pound.



Friends of Hope-Net should be proud that so much is accomplished so effectively. But we can't forget we are assisting our neighbors in need. For example:

- Mirna, 47, stands in line at the Immaculate Heart food pantry next to Maria, 80, and Sonia, 57. She receives \$221 disability and \$162 food stamps monthly. Her apartment rent is \$600. She receives food for herself and her three children.
- Josephine, 64, is at Wilshire Presbyterian pantry. She has been wheelchair bound since 2000. She lives by herself; her rent is \$665/month and her social security is \$666/month. With that \$1 she buys an ice cream cone each month. She states with a big smile: “this pantry is a blessing to me.”
- Daniel, 56, guided by Linda, 26, and Ligaya, 68, is coming to a pantry for the first time. He, too, lives on a fixed income and needs a little help “for a month or so.”

Things have been difficult for many and maybe you as well, but we appreciate all of the assistance given by our congregations and many friends who want to help so that those who need a little assistance “will not go hungry.”

— *Douglas Ferraro*,  
Executive Director, Hope-Net

The faithful workers in First Baptist's food pantry are Aurora Martinez, Lee Strand, Hector Martinez, assisted by Paola Diaz, Maritza Osorio, and Vance Smith.

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual meeting of the Congregation and Corporation of the First Baptist Church of Los Angeles, shall be held at 760 South Westmoreland Avenue, Los Angeles, California on **Sunday, January 31, 2010 at 12:30 p.m.** in the Robbins Dining Hall for the purpose of adopting a budget, hearing the financial report for 2009, and progress reports from the various Ministries.

—David McFadden, *Moderator*  
and Richard Rogers, *Church Clerk*

### THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS

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## MINISTER'S MESSAGE

On Saturday, January 16th from 9am to 3pm, there will be a leadership meeting at the church with Rev. Robert Wilkins, President of the YMCA of the East Bay, to further discuss our congregation's future. To give you some background, over the past year we have been in conversation with one another about the future and direction of our church. There have been several meetings to listen, talk, and dream about what we see God calling us to be. As you may know, however, these meeting can leave one wondering, how do we get there?

Well, Rev. Wilkins has experience in the area of strategic planning in an urban context and has offered his assistance to help us concretize these conversations. As an aside, some of you may remember Rev. Wilkins from the YMCA program at our church a few years back; he was one of the persons responsible for its presence at our site. So he is familiar with us, Los Angeles and the reality of practicing ministry in an urban setting.

It is my hope to share with you the ideas and discussion points from this meeting in January, so please keep an ear and eye out for the information to come. God has a wonderful and blessed future for us; let us step into knowing that God will never leave us!

Grace, *Carlton*

## NEWS SCHEDULE

The **next issue** of the *First Baptist NEWS* will be published **January 18, 2010** and will cover services and events through January 31, 2010. Material and articles for the January 18<sup>th</sup> issue should arrive in the church office **no later than January 6.**

## IN MEMORIAM

The Church Family extends  
Its deepest Christian sympathy  
to the family of  
**JOHN "BUD" KILGORE**  
*Deceased November 18, 2009*  
Member 1949-2009

## IN APPRECIATION

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all those who attended the memorial service for Paul Rotcher and to everyone who expressed their concern and good wishes and shared their good memories.

Ernestine (wife) and  
Michael (son) Rotcher

## ABW CIRCLE NEWS

The Kit Ripley Circle will meet Thursday, January 7 at the home of Ruth Morales.

Thank you to everyone who filled gift bags for the Los Angeles Baptist City Mission Society. We filled 42 bags and enjoyed the "tea party" served by the City Mission Society staff on December 1.

— *Pat Yeomans*

## COMMUNITY TRAFFIC MESSAGE

The Los Angeles Police Department—West Traffic Division would like to keep you safe. **Safety Tips for New Drivers:**

- Until you feel comfortable with your ability, travel with someone for support.
- When you do drive alone, use roads that you know.
- Don't pressure yourself; drive at your comfort level and ability.
- Keep your distance from aggressive drivers.

**RETIRED MINISTERS AND MISSIONARIES OFFERING  
WILL BE RECEIVED IN FEBRUARY**

**REMEMBER** with **LOVE**  
**GIVE** with **GRATITUDE**

Thank You check recipients and others who received financial assistance from the 2008 Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering were overwhelmed by the generosity of American Baptist congregations in the midst of the most severe recession since the Great Depression.

George & Charlotte Gillespie, Moorestown, NJ, wrote: "We deeply appreciate the members of our ABC congregations—many of whom may have been dealing with their own financial problems—who contributed to the RMMO out of their love, loyalty and faith."

Contributions to the RMMO in 2008 totaled \$1,383,537. Of that amount, 57% was distributed as

**ACUÉRDENSE** con **AMOR**  
**DEN** con **GRATITUD**

Thank You checks to 3,238 retired American Baptist ministers, missionaries and their widowed spouses. The average check was \$258.69.

Thirty-eight percent was made available to people with emergency and other heavy financial needs, and 5% was used for administrative expenses.

Please join as we *Remember with Love and Give with Gratitude* to those who have dedicated their lives to Christian ministry. Please make a generous contribution to the Retired Ministers and Missionaries offering on Sunday, February 7, 2010. Your gift makes a difference.



**COME FORTH, THEN GO FORTH**

When Jesus cried to Lazarus, "Come forth," and he arose after being dead four days, many believed, for they had witnessed the miracle. Yet Jesus primarily did it not for Lazarus or his sister Martha, but to show others that God heard him...and only then would the people believe he was sent of God.

A conversion experience that leads to baptism and acceptance of the Christian way of life often gives new Christians a sense of re-awakening...they *come forth*.

Unfortunately, to some this is the highpoint of their Christian experience, a personal sense of closeness to God that excludes all responsibility. It is not easy to be a Christian, for it requires much. To

*come forth* should prepare us to *go forth*.

It has been wisely said: "Faith *without* works is dead." It is the seed that remains unplanted, the idea that dies aborning, the intention that's merely words, a Christian in name only. Faith *with* works shows the harvest ripe for reaping, the thought germinating into deeds, the concern giving birth to action, a Christian known by his outreach.

Church membership records when we *come forth*...our life reflects when we *go forth*. We respond to the invitation of Jesus to come but have we heeded His command to go?

– Frederick L. Essex

**PRAY FOR/ VISIT OUR  
SISTER CHURCH**

We give for the completion of our goal of \$10,000 for the building of the foundation for our sister church in Somoto Nicaragua. Actually we raised \$11,316.25 which has been sent with our love and prayers for this important ministry. We ask that you continue to pray for this congregation and that some of you consider traveling to Nicaragua next September for the dedication of their building. We plan to have another mission trip there, with the projected date of September 3 (for one week). Those who go will help to strengthen our relationship, learn about the work of Baptists in Nicaragua and help in some projects in Somoto. The anticipated cost will be \$1000 per person. Please consider being a part of our delegation and indicate your interest to the Missions Ministry, the Sturms, Ron Tigerino, or Bob Wallace.

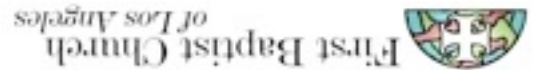
**LIGHT OF EPIPHANY**

"The 12 days of Christmas come to an end on January 6, and the season of the Epiphany begins. But Epiphany not only ends Christmas, it also fulfills it by celebrating the revelation of the Christ to the whole world. The coming of Incarnate God to all people, especially to those of us who are Gentiles, is the bridge from birth into life, the event that makes Easter possible for most of us. The light of the Epiphany illuminates the church's year as it illuminates the human race from whom the kings came."



– Phyllis A. Tickle  
"What the Heart Already Knows"

760 South Westmoreland Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90005



**SUNDAY, JANUARY 10, 2010**

*9:30 a.m.*

Church School Classes for All Ages

*11:00 a.m. WORSHIP:*

**“REINVENTING THE WHEEL”**

(Please read Ephesians 4:25-5:2 in preparation)

**REV. CARLTON A. RHODEN, Preaching**



**SUNDAY, JANUARY 17, 2010**

*9:30 a.m.*

Church School Classes for All Ages

*11:00 a.m. WORSHIP:*

**“STILL WE RISE”**

(Please read Isaiah 40:21-31 in preparation)

**REV. CARLTON A. RHODEN, Preaching**