

# THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS

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JANUARY 18, 2010

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

## CHRISTMAS SUNDAY 2009



PHOTOS BY ELDA THOMAS

**RETIRED MINISTERS AND  
MISSIONARIES OFFERING WILL  
BE RECEIVED ON FEBRUARY 1**

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

On Sunday, February 1, 2010, our congregation will receive the Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering (RMMO). The RMMO is an annual ABCUSA offering that provides (1) Thank You checks to over 3,000 retired American Baptist ministers and missionaries or their widowed spouses, based on 15 or more years of ABC service, and (2) emergency and other financial assistance based on need.

Your gift does make a difference. A note from Janet Roberts, says:

*Dear First Baptist Church family:*

*Thank you for your part in the generous Thank You check I received in November. It enabled me to contribute to the Plymouth Village Employee Appreciation fund and support ministries beyond my tithe.*

*I have been receiving Thank You checks since 1998 when I retired. Each one has been a great blessing. Your partnership in sharing the Good News of Christ is marvelous. I praise God for you.*

*– Jan Roberts*

Please give as generously as you are able when we receive the RMMO on Sunday, February 1. Please help **Remember them with Love and Give with gratitude.**

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

## 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*

Please make your **luncheon reservations** (\$10 adults/\$5 children under 12) **by Wednesday, January 27** by calling the church office or emailing [fbcla@fbcofla.org](mailto:fbcla@fbcofla.org).

### THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS

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## MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Grace is “unmerited favor” from God. In our day and time, we can all use a little “unmerited favor.” More often, people respond to certain things in life by putting a wall up protecting themselves from possible harm. No one can fault anyone for doing such a thing. But establishing this wall, this boundary, between us actually causes us to miss out on opportunities of grace. I offer that perhaps we should leave some space for grace; maybe we need to leave ourselves available for God and others to show us some unmerited favor, love, kindness, joy, peace, and hope.

So, **starting on Wednesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 p.m.**, following dinner, we will have a program titled, “**Space for Grace.**” During this time, we will hear from various people about ideas, experiences, and perspectives that may be different from our own. Hopefully, during these simple moments, the light of God will enter our hearts and show us a new way to view the world and ourselves.

It is my plan to offer occasions similar to this on every first Wednesday of the month. It is my hope to offer all of us some “space for grace.”

Please call the church office to reserve your space at 213.384.2151. A simple meal is planned at the cost of \$10 per person.

Grace, *Carlton*

## IN APPRECIATION

Thank you to everyone at First Baptist for your many cards and prayers following the death of my brother. Your love and support mean so much. God bless you.

— *Aurora Martinez*

## NEWS SCHEDULE

The **next issue** of the *First Baptist NEWS* will be published **February 1, 2010** and will cover services and events through February 14, 2010. Material and articles for the February 1<sup>st</sup> issue should arrive in the church office **no later than January 18.**

## WORSHIP IN THE FRANCIS CHAPEL

For the rest of the month of January, we will be worshipping in the Francis Chapel. As you may be aware, our Sanctuary organ is undergoing extensive work thanks to a large contribution by one donor, and we are at the point that the organ builder must dismantle the organ console. And so, through January, we will worship in the Francis Chapel and return to the Sanctuary on the first Sunday in February.

## MISSION UPDATE: NANCY JAMES IN HAITI

As a child in Burma and India, beggars with leprosy knocked on the door of Nancy James' family home nearly everyday. So when a man cruelly named “Popcorn” walked into her examining room in Haiti nearly 45 years later, Nancy, now a licensed nurse, immediately identified the cause of his disfiguring lumps: “I knew he was suffering from leprosy, a condition that is uncommon in Haiti. No physician had been able to diagnose his problem and his situation would worsen until he died.”

As a last resort, this man found his way to the little Christian clinic in town and met Nancy, one of the only medical professionals in Haiti who could diagnose and treat him. By networking with a medical friend in North Carolina, medicines were identified and he is now on his way to full recovery and is praising God for his amazing fortune.

## COMMUNITY TRAFFIC MESSAGE

The Los Angeles Police Department–West Traffic Division would like to keep you safe...Safety Tips for Parents in Preventing Accidents in Driveways (Part 1):

- Avoid making your driveway a “playground”
- Ensure your children are properly supervised at all times
- Teach children not to play in, under or around vehicles
- Always assume children could be present and carefully check the street, driveway and area around your vehicle before backing

2009 FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS



PHOTOS BY ERIC BIGONNESS



PRIORITIES

For over 25 years, Charles Kuralt traveled the United States in a motor home, finding interesting stories about America and Americans for his "On the Road" series for CBS News. In his book about those experiences, *A Life on the Road*, Kuralt tells of the day he spent with the man who claimed to have the biggest ball of string in the world. Throughout the time they spent together, the man kept adding string to his ball. Kuralt writes, "That's the trouble with owning the world's largest ball of string; you live in constant fear that somebody, somewhere is making a larger ball of string."

How many of us are spending too much of our time and energy adding string to our balls? How hard do we work to add more clothes and shoes to our already-full closets? How long do we agree to make payments for a larger TV or a new car? In our quest for an ever bigger and better home, how many of us agreed to mortgages that we couldn't afford? And why do we think that we need to have the largest ball of string, anyway?

Don't we know that God loves us not *because* of the stuff we accumulate, but *despite* our constant collecting of more and more? Haven't we learned that possessions do not offer us protection from ill

health, the loss of a loved one or basic unhappiness?

Scripture is full of parables and directions about the need for right priorities in regard to our possessions:

*He who loves money will not be satisfied with money; nor he who loves wealth, with gain: this also is vanity.* (Ecclesiastes 5:10).

*Where a man has been given much, much will be expected of him; and the more a man has had entrusted to him the more he will be required to repay.* (Luke 12:48).

*What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?* (Mark 8:36).

760 South Westmoreland Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90005



**SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 2010**

*9:30 a.m.*

Church School Classes for All Ages

*11:00 a.m. WORSHIP in the FRANCIS CHAPEL:*

**“ME AND MY BAND”**

(Please read I Corinthians 12:12-31a in preparation)

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



**SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2010**

*9:30 a.m.*

Church School Classes for All Ages

*11:00 a.m. WORSHIP in the FRANCIS CHAPEL:*

**“CALL WAITING”**

(Please read Luke 4:21-30 in preparation)

**REV. RICHARD S. ROGERS**, Preaching

*12:30 p.m.*

**All-Church Luncheon and Annual Meeting**



**WEDNESDAY, February 3, 2010**

*6:00 p.m.*

Fellowship Dinner and “Space for Grace”  
in the Robbins Dining Hall