

THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS

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

International • Intercultural • Ecumenical

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING, JUNE 6, 2010

In his final moments with his disciples, Jesus asks Peter, "Do you love me?" "Yes," Peter replies. Then, "Feed my lambs," the Good Shepherd tells him, "Tend my sheep." Three times, Jesus passionately repeats his instruction, pressing his followers: If you love me, take care of the people I love. Live your love for me by actively tending these for whom I have sacrificed everything. (*John 21:15-19*)

On June 6th, you'll have an opportunity to offer your gift to One Great Hour of Sharing, empowering our American Baptist ministries of disaster relief and refugee aid, meeting basic needs in Christ's name throughout the world, and sharing resources that allow people to improve their own lives and communities. Soon, each of us will decide how to respond to Jesus' question, "Do you love me?"

The members of the family of God – from those we know to distant sisters, brothers, and cousins in parts of the world we may never visit – are God's flock, the sheep of God's pasture (*Ezekiel 34:31*). Yet, God's flock is often forcefully scattered, as people are chased from their homes and livelihoods by brutal expressions of war, as communities and futures are shattered by natural disasters, as societies and countries are ground down by unrelenting hunger, disease, and poverty.

Jesus calls us to tend his sheep caught in these situations of evil and nature run amok. And

with love and energy, the Church responds! Through One Great Hour of Sharing,

- disaster victims quickly receive shelter, food, water, and medical supplies;
- local communities develop secure sources of food and clean water;
- minds and bodies grow stronger with new schools and medical clinics;
- refugees receive housing and long-term help to construct new lives.



In these challenging times, we often wonder how much we can afford to sacrifice to help feed Jesus' beloved sheep, when our needs remain pressing. Perhaps only our prayerful conscience can answer that. But remember the feeding of the 5,000: when Jesus asked the disciples to feed the crowd, the disciples despaired (*Mark 6:34-44*). The five loaves and two fish seemed

insignificant compared to the massive need. Yet when each gave sacrificially from what they had, through God's blessing, their gifts turned into a miracle of compassion for all.

Heed Jesus' call to feed his sheep with a generous, even sacrificial, gift to One Great Hour of Sharing on June 6. Sharing your resources will change lives – including your own.

**Jesus said,
"Do you Love me?
Feed my sheep."**

CHURCH VISION MEETINGS

The last two vision meetings to hear your thoughts about our church are being held this week. If you have not attended one, or if you would like to attend another, you are encouraged to come to one of these:

Tuesday, May 25 • 7:00 p.m.
New Lounge, First Baptist

Thursday, May 27 • 7:00 p.m.
Home of Ruth Morales
4553 W. 132nd St.
Hawthorne, CA 90250

NEWS SCHEDULE

The next issue of the *First Baptist NEWS* will be published **June 7, 2010** and will cover services and events through June 20, 2010. Material for the June 7th issue should arrive in the church office **no later than May 26**.

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BE A HOPE-NET PIGGY BANK PARTNER

"Let your change make a change"

Hope-Net has a great new activity – the Hope-Net Piggy Bank. The small, clear "little porker" has inscribed on its side, "*Hope-Net...because none of our neighbors should go hungry.*" The idea is to use "your change to make a change." Put your loose change (or bills!) into the piggy and when full, give Hope-Net a call and they'll come empty it for you. All funds collected will go directly to purchasing and transporting food to needy individuals and families in our area.

If you would like to participate and receive your own Hope-Net Piggy Bank, call Hope-Net at 213.389.9949, or speak with Board member Sandra Rogers in the church office.



EVANGELISM

Evangelism means introducing an individual to a personal relationship with Christ—emphasizing the experience of a lifelong commitment to and journey with Christ that ultimately results in eternal blessings and benefits, but has much to offer right here and now as well.

In that way, evangelism is the first step toward discipling, so that winning souls for Christ really becomes making disciples, not just getting decisions.

Evangelism is a team effort. Within a faith community, systems need to be in place that advocate for evangelism and facilitate its implementation, but following Jesus' example, evangelism must be modeled by leadership as well. It is an experience of the whole Body of Christ and its members; evangelism is not the responsibility of a few assertive evangelists.

With temporal and eternal dimensions, evangelism must be prophetic, speaking to the human condition in the here and now, as well as to the human condition and its relevance to the hereafter. Evangelism impacts its community, speaking to both individuals and institutions and to sinners and the systems they originate and facilitate. Evangelism challenges the soul, and changes the society, too.

This definition of evangelism appears in the American Baptist Policy Statement on Evangelism:

Evangelism is
the joyous witness of the People of God
to the redeeming love of God
urging all to repent
and to be reconciled to God and each other
through faith in Jesus Christ who lived, died, and was raised from the dead,
so that
being made new
and empowered by the Holy Spirit
believers are incorporated as disciples into the church
for worship, fellowship, nurture and
engagement in God's mission
of evangelization and liberation within society and creation,
signifying the Kingdom which is present and yet to come.*

—Reprinted from the ABC National Ministries website

GOD IS LIKE

A fifth grade teacher in a Christian school asked her class to look at TV commercials and see if they could use them in 20 ways to communicate ideas about God. Here are some of the results:

God is like
Bayer Aspirin
He works miracles.



God is like
A Ford
He's got a better idea.



God is like
Coke
He's the real thing.



God is like
Hallmark Cards
*He cares enough to send
His very best.*



God is like
Tide
*He gets the stains out
others leave behind.*



God is like
General Electric
He brings good things to life.



God is like
Wal-Mart
He has everything.



God is like
Alka-Seltzer
Try Him, you'll like Him.



God is like
Scotch tape
*You can't see Him,
but you know He's there.*



God is like
Delta
He's ready when you are.



God is like
Allstate
You're in good hands with Him.

God is like
VO-5 Hair Spray
*He holds through all
kinds of weather.*



God is like
Dial Soap
*Aren't you glad you have Him?
Don't you wish everybody did?*



God is like
The U.S. Post Office
*Neither rain, nor snow, nor sleet,
nor ice will keep Him from
His appointed destination.*



God is like
Chevrolet
The heart beat of America.



God is like
Maxwell House
Good to the very last drop.



God is like
Bounty
*He is the quicker picker upper,
can handle the tough jobs,
And He won't fall apart on you.*
—contributed by Blanca Galvez

COMMUNITY TRAFFIC MESSAGE

The Los Angeles Police Department–West Traffic Division would like to keep you safe...Safety tips for Recognizing Drowsy Drivers:

- Eyes closing or not focusing by themselves
- Difficulty in keeping your head up
- Yawning constantly
- Not remembering driving the last few minutes
- Drifting between lanes, tailgating, or missing traffic signs
- Jerking the car back into the lane after drifting

DR. WESLEY BROWN SPEAKING JUNE 2

Dr. Wesley H. Brown, who represented American Baptists in Jerusalem for over 11 years, will speak at our **"Space for Grace"** on Wednesday, June 2nd. For six years he served on the staff of the Ecumenical Institute for Theological Research, Tantur, on the south side of Jerusalem. He will share some of his personal—and often painful— involvement in interfaith dialogue, and the struggle to be a reconciling presence between Jews and Arabs in the search for peace with justice.

Christians often differ on how to respond to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, from strong support of Israel, whatever its policies, to strong advocacy of liberating Palestine from the military occupation of the West Bank and creation of an independent Palestinian state. After the horror of the Holocaust, many Christians feel they must support Israel and its need for security since so many Christians were guilty of contributing to anti-Semitism across the centuries. On the other hand, supporters of the Palestinians tell the continuing story of humiliation, injustice, home demolitions, and discrimination and emphasize the biblical call for justice for all people. Dr. Brown will tell of his effort to respond to the needs of both peoples—being Christian in the midst of rival claims and differing uses of Scripture.

DODGER NIGHT



ABC/LA Night at the DODGERS

Friday, June 4

Tickets: \$10.00

Contact the ABCLA office for tickets:
(213) 955-9948

Or visit their website at
www.abcla.org

SUNDAY, MAY 30, 2010

9:30 a.m.

Church School Classes for All Ages

11:00 a.m. WORSHIP:

“WHILE WE WERE STILL SINNERS”

(Please read Romans 5:1-11 in preparation)

REV. CARLTON A. RHODEN, Preaching



WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 2010

6:30 p.m.

“Space for Grace” Dinner and Program

“Some Christian Perspectives on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict”

– Dr. Wesley Brown, Speaking –



COMMUNION SUNDAY, JUNE 6, 2010

9:30 a.m.

Church School Classes for All Ages

11:00 a.m. WORSHIP:

“LIFE EXAMS”

(Please read Joshua 1:1-7 in preparation)

REV. CARLTON A. RHODEN, Preaching

– One Great Hour of Sharing Offering –