

## MIDWEEK MESSAGE

May 1, 2013

Words to Consider: *“So, it turns out we do not have a little tame, domestic God, thank God, but we do have a huge, wild, dangerous God – dangerous of course only if we think that God ought to be manageable and safe; a God of almost manic creativity, ingenuity and enthusiasm; a Big-Enough God, who is also a supremely generous and patient God; a God of beauty and chance and solidarity.”*

Sara Maitland, *A Big-Enough God: Artful Theology*

## THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

- ❖ **CHOIR REHEARSAL** this **Thursday, May 2, 7:30 PM** in the Parlor.
- ❖ **CONGREGATIONAL LIFE** on **Friday, May 3 at 2:00 PM** in the parlor.
- ❖ **CONCERT TO BENEFIT FAITH IN ACTION**, the rotating homeless shelter of Silicon Valley, featuring **The Choral Project** (the choir in which Dan Cudworth and Pastor Rick sing) **May 4, 7:30 PM, Sunnyvale Community Congregational Church**, 1112 South Bernardo, Sunnyvale. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. For more information see the church bulletin boards or go to [faithinactionsv.org](http://faithinactionsv.org).
- ❖ **SUNDAY, May 5, 10 AM** Worship, *“The Heavenly City”* and Sunday School for children and youth. **11:30 AM, Adult Spiritual Formation: The Newspaper in One Hand...**an occasional discussion of what’s happening in the world in light of the gospel.
- ❖ **Sunday, May 5, 4:00 PM, THE SOUTH BAY SANCTUARY COVENANT** presents **“Liberation through Education: Inspiring Highlights from our El Salvador Delegation”** at First Presbyterian, 1140 Cowper Street, including a pupusa and enchilada dinner for a suggested donation of \$20 for adults or \$5 for students (no one turned away for lack of funds.) For reservations call (650) 494-8340.
- ❖ **BIBLE STUDY, Tuesday, May 7** at the home of Thelma Parodi, 543 South El Monte Avenue, Los Altos, at **10:30 AM**. Let Pastor Rick know if you need a ride.

## UPCOMING AND ONGOING EVENTS

- ❖ **SENIOR CHAT, Friday, May 10, 10:00 AM: "Physical Issues of Aging"** will be considered with a physical therapist, **Janis Thomas**. She is an in home therapist working with Kaiser. Jan will give us some information about how diet, exercise, and

fluid intake affect urinary incontinence, daily endurance level, and mood. We will all learn something helpful. This program is held in the Fireside Room of Covenant Presbyterian Church, 670 East Meadow Drive. For more information, Dona Smith-Powers, Coordinator (650) 494-3093.

- ❖ **MOTHER'S DAY POTLUCK:** Join us at **6:00 PM on Friday May 10** for our Mother's Day Potluck. Bring flowers to decorate the tables. Bring pictures of your mother or people who have mothered you over the years to share with your friends. We will share a meal, share memories, and enjoy a belated scavenger hunt. Bring a friend! All are welcome.



Our **SPECIAL OFFERING FOR APRIL** was to raise funds for **scholarship aid for students at the American Baptist Seminary of the West in Berkeley**. To date we have received **\$947**.



The **SPECIAL OFFERING FOR MAY** is our annual offering for the **Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America**. We are one of the original congregational partners of BPFNA, generously supporting their important work over the years. The mission of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America is to gather, equip and mobilize Baptists to build a culture of peace rooted in justice. For further information, see the website at [bpfna.org](http://bpfna.org). Please give generously. Our goal is **\$500**.



Images from Peace Camp

**PCBA Spring Conference 2013**

**The Promises and Perils of Leadership: Strengthening and Sustaining Those Who Lead**

**Saturday, May 11, 2013**

**8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church

3534 Lakeshore Avenue, Oakland, CA

Rev. Dr. Debora Jackson, Executive Director, American Baptist Churches Ministers Council,  
Conference Leader

Workshops –

**Fostering Effective Leaders**, *Rev. Dr. Debora Jackson*, Executive Director, American Baptist Churches Ministers Council

**Leadership from the Pulpit**, *Rev. Dr. Allison Tanner*, Minister of Christian Formation, Lakeshore Avenue Baptist

**Challenges to Ministerial Leadership**, *Rev. Dr. Paul Martin*, President, American Baptist Seminary of the West

**Mission Summit – Setting ABC Priorities**, *Rev. Donald Ng*, Senior Pastor, First Chinese Baptist, San Francisco, Vice-President, ABC/USA

**Practicing Shared Leadership: Consensus as a Shared Leadership Practice**, *Rev. Michelle Holmes*, Vice President/CFO, American Baptist Seminary of the West

**Resolving Conflict among Church Leaders**, *Rev. Dr. Dayle Scott*, Former Pastor, Regional and National Education Leader

**Nurturing Leadership**, *Rev. Karen Yee*, Associate Pastor, New Life Christian Fellowship; English-speaking Pastor, Iu-Mienh Friendship Baptist Church

**Registration: \$ 25 by April 30; \$30 on or after May**



**Adult Spiritual Formation  
May 12 – 19 – 26: “Sin Boldly”**

**Cathleen Falsani:** Join us on **June 2** as we welcome author and religion journalist Cathleen Falsani. She will be with us in worship and following worship during the Adult Spiritual Formation hour. She is an award-winning religion journalist and the new Faith & Values columnist for the [Orange County Register](#) in Southern California.

She is author of the critically acclaimed [The God Factor: Inside the Spiritual Lives of Public People](#), [Sin Boldly: A Field Guide for Grace](#), [The Dude Abides: The Gospel According to the Coen Brothers](#), [BELIEBER: Fame, Faith and the Heart of Justin Bieber](#), and the forthcoming [Disquiet Time: A Devotional for Ordinary Skeptics](#) (edited with co-author [Jennifer Grant](#) and published by [Jericho Books](#), fall 2014.)



Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America

**Summer Conference 2013**

*"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares"* Hebrews 13:2

July 15-20, 2013 I Gonzaga University I Spokane, WA USA

The word hospitality often brings to mind images of domestic tidiness but the gospel calls us to be radical in our welcome: to welcome the least of these as we would Christ; to seek the outcasts, the marginalized, the disempowered, the overlooked, the other; and to create community together. This year at summer conference you can look forward to exciting speakers and dynamic workshops that explore topics of hospitality, inclusion and justice. We look forward to sharing

spirit-filled worship with hundreds of peacemakers as we look for ways to grow, support, and encourage each other. Participants of all ages will have opportunities for learning and for playing in community. We hope you will join us!

**IN THE WORLD**

Dear Faith Communities, blessings on this sunny day! Below is a list of emergency needs for our appointment closet at EHP. As you may know, our volunteers take several appointments per day with EHP clients to provide clothing, footwear, house wares, and linens. The appointment closet is almost out of, or totally out of the following items:

Linens

- Queen Sheet sets
- Queen/Full/King blankets

Toddler Clothing

- Girls - all clothing sizes 2x - 6x

Youth Clothing

- Girls and Boys - pants sizes 7-14 especially boys size 7

Men's Clothing

- Jeans - all sizes (especially 34, 36, 38)
- Shirts - long sleeve and short sleeve sizes 2x, 3x

Shoes

- Children's sizes 1-13.5
- Any and all sizes of tennis shoe

Although these are our emergency needs, any and all contributions are welcome. As you do your spring cleaning and closet purging, please keep EHP in mind! We take new and gently used items. Donations may be left at our collection center outside Pastor Rick's office.

## JOYS AND CONCERNS

### Joys:

- ✚ Birthday joys: E. Y. Fung (May 2) and Virginia Knechtel (May 6)
- ✚ For Ruth Owen who celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday this week with her family
- ✚ Lynn Hunwick for greetings from the Gottestams who will be moving to their home in Sweden this summer

### Concerns:

- ✚ For Paul and Sachiko Berry as they travel to Paris for 6 weeks
- ✚ Carolyn Shepard for Eileen Conover who has been busy with her family but misses her church
- ✚ For Pastor Greg Ledbetter, his wife, Jan, and the people of Shellridge Community Church in Walnut Creek as he resigns from a long and meaningful pastorate
- ✚ For the congregation of First Baptist Church, Alameda, searching for a pastor
- ✚ Pastor Rick for his friend, Michael, facing surgery for melanoma; for his nephew, Max, who is going through a rough patch; for the family and friends of Gene Bass from San Leandro Community Church who died this week
- ✚ For Pastor Tripp and the family and friends of his aunt, Ann Watlington, as they mourn
- ✚ For Oleta Proctor with ongoing health concerns
- ✚ For Patrice and Richard Heath as she continues to receive chemotherapy for cancer
- ✚ For Don and Mary Granholm
- ✚ For the work of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America
- ✚ For the work of the American Baptist Seminary of the West in training students for ministry
- ✚ For Dan and Sarah Chetti and their mission work in Lebanon
- ✚ For Dan Buttry and his mission work as a global peace advocate
- ✚ For Ruriko Uda's congregation, Izumi Parktown Church, in Sendai , Japan
- ✚ For Ramesh Kumar and the ministry of Balasore Technical School in India
- ✚ For our sister church in Corinto , Nicaragua
- ✚ For all those affected by indiscriminate acts of violence and for the adoption of measures to heal our communities of all the many ways it makes us less safe and less free
- ✚ For the well-being of our church: wisdom and guidance for our leaders and its future
- ✚ For the economies of which we are a part (global, national, state, local)
- ✚ For the care of the earth
- ✚ For the peoples of the world striving for freedom and dignity
- ✚ For peace in a war-torn world, food for the hungry, homes for the homeless, justice for the abused and oppressed, and hope for the future

SUNDAY, MAY 5, 2013

*"The Heavenly City"*

Lectionary Readings for the Week: Psalm 67; John 14:23-29 or 5:1-9; Acts 16:9-15; **REVELATION 21:10, 22-22:5**. (The focus scripture is in bold.)

New Jerusalem is a welcoming city, not a gated community. Whereas Ezekiel's temple gate was shut so that "no one shall enter by it" (Ezekiel 44:1-2), the gates into New Jerusalem are perpetually open -- they are "never shut by day and there will be no night there" (Revelation 21:26). Even foreigners are invited to enter into this radiant city, whose lamp is the Lamb, Jesus. Nations will walk by its light, streaming in through its open gates (21:24, 26). In our time when nations and neighborhoods seek to secure themselves against outsiders, the church can claim Revelation's vision of openness and multicultural welcome for all our cities.

The final verse of the chapter (21:27) is another prophetic wake-up call, exhorting faithfulness so that our names are written in Jesus' book of life and we may enter as citizens into God's New Jerusalem. Exhortation, not prediction, is the function of such threatening verses. Revelation seeks to make God's vision of beauty so persuasive and real that the audience will "come out" of the evil empire (18:4) in order to enter into the promised land of blessing and healing. (Barbara Rossing, *Commentary on Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5, May 5, 2013*, [workingpreacher.org](http://workingpreacher.org)).

*Prayer: Mighty God, in whom we know the power of redemption, you stand among us in the shadows of our time. As we move through every sorrow and trial of this life, uphold us with knowledge of the final morning when, in the glorious presence of your risen Son, we will share in his resurrection, redeemed and restored to the fullness of life and forever freed to be your people. Amen.*



### A NOTE FROM PASTOR RICK

Greetings on this very warm first day of May. It was a privilege and a pleasure for us to have the Rev. Robert Wilkins last Sunday, giving us insight into the American Baptist Seminary of the West and the current state of theological education. His sharing was informative and helpful as we consider how we might assist seminary students in preparation for ministry. One exciting prospect we have to look forward to is that we will have two very fine seminary students working with us as interns next year. I am very pleased that Naomi Schultz from PSR and Douglas Davidson from ABSW have signed on to work with Tripp, me and the congregation. You will hear more about them in the days ahead. We are indeed blessed.

For the next couple of weeks our worship will focus on the last two chapters of Revelation, John's vision of the Heavenly City and all it promises for the glorious fulfillment of God's reign. I know there is much in the book of Revelation that is troublesome and confusing, especially if it's taken literally. Even in John's grand vision of the ultimate destination of God's creatures and God's creation, we find ideas and images that do not sit easily with us. But the promises of healing and wholeness may still stir to us to live into those promises as we journey in the here and now. There is much to praise in God's eternal presence around and in us.

Adult Spiritual Formation will be one of those periodic Sundays when you're invited to share whatever is on your mind. Lord knows there has been plenty in the news lately to keep us occupied far beyond our hour. Still let's join in open, honest and respectful conversation.

See you on Sunday at 10 as we as we gather as Christ's beloved community. Invite someone to come with you.

May God's new thing flourish within us and among us.

Pastor Rick



