

MIDWEEK MESSAGE
October 9, 2013

Words to Consider: *"The Church in any country fails to be the Church if it forgets that its members in one nation have fellowship with its members in every nation."*

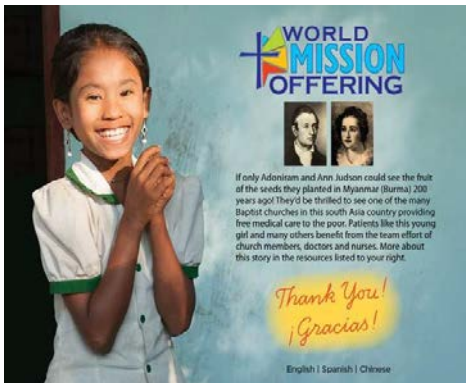
George Kennedy Alan Bell

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

- ❖ **CHURCH CHOIR Thursday, October 10 at 7:30 PM** in the Parlor. All are welcome to join in song (and fun).
- ❖ **SENIOR CHAT, Friday, October 11:** Most of us can only imagine how it would feel to leave our home country to make it possible for our family to survive and thrive. It takes great courage. **Maria Marroquin** is a dedicated and charismatic woman who is well known as an advocate for the immigrants in our area. She has helped with the **Day Worker Center** in Mountain View since its inception and has been the Executive Director since 2005. An amazing statistic: 950 job placements per month. Come and meet this dynamic woman and hear the story of how you might employ a good day worker for your home or business or church. Held in the Fireside Room of Covenant Presbyterian Church, 670 East Meadow Drive. For information, Dona Smith-Powers, (650) 494-3093.
- ❖ **SUNDAY, October 13, 10:00 AM - Worship:** *The Welfare of the City* (Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7,) Pastor Tripp preaching & Sunday School for Children and Youth. **11:30 AM - Adult Spiritual Formation:** *Animate:Faith* with Nadia Bolz-Weber on video talking about the cross, led by Doug Davidson.
- ❖ **NO BIBLE STUDY, Tuesday, October 15.** We will resume on **October 22.**
- ❖ **MEN'S BREAKFAST, Wednesday October 16** at 8:00 AM, at Hobee's Restaurant, 4224 El Camino Real, Palo Alto. . All the men from our Church family are welcome.
- ❖ **BAPTISTS LUNCHING TOGETHER, Wednesday, October 16, Noon – "Panel on Chaplaincy,"** featuring **Esther Hargis (seniors) and Dave Robinson (jail).** Grand Lake Gardens in Oakland. Lunch is \$8.00. For reservations contact Joan Thatcher, (510) 350-7008. If you would like a ride let Pastor Rick know.
- ❖ **CHURCH COUNCIL** meets **Thursday, October 17 at 5:00 PM** in the Parlor.

UPCOMING AND ONGOING EVENTS

- ❖ **QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING, Sunday, October 20** after Worship
- ❖ **SPIRE DEADLINE, October 21.**
- ❖ **WOMEN'S BRUNCH** this month will be on **October 24, Thursday at 10 AM** at Thelma Parodi's home, 543 South El Monte Ave., Los Altos. Ladies can bring something to share if desired. All women of our church community are invited.
- ❖ Save the date! **POTLUCK AND PUMPKIN CARVING, Friday October 25 at 6:00 PM** for folk of all ages in the Fellowship Hall. "From ghoulies and ghosties and long-leggedy beasties and things that go bump in the night, Good Lord, deliver us!"



October's Special Mission Offering is our annual **WORLD MISSION OFFERING**. American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (operating as International Ministries (IM)) began its pioneer mission work approximately 200 years ago in Burma and today works in Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas. More than 100 full-time missionaries along with short-term missionaries and mission partners serve in more than 70 countries. Its central mission is to help people **come** to faith in Jesus, **grow** in

their relationship with God and **change** their worlds through the power of the Spirit. This year's theme is **Embrace the Cause**. To date we have received **\$245** toward our goal of **\$1,000**.

IN THE WORLD

A NEW FAMILIAR PARTNER

It's Monday October 7th, and I'm home alone. My wife Sharon is away in Valley Forge at the Mission Center where she is going through new missionary orientation for International Ministries. She's been endorsed to be a missionary partner with me, coming onto missionary staff part-time as the new Global Consultant for Community Transformation! So though she's gone right now, her absence is a step forward in a deeper work partnership. Instead of accompanying me for two to three weeks a year as a volunteer, she will journey with me for two to three *months* a year as a regular missionary colleague.

For ten years Sharon has prayerfully selected one of my trips to teach alongside me. She is an ordained American Baptist clergy person. She's been trained and has a lot of experience in experiential and participatory education. She knows peacemaking and nonviolence from the local to the global level. So she and I have made a great mission team whether co-facilitating in trainings or doing dialog sermons in a pulpit. We've done great work together in places like Kenya, Ethiopia, Poland, Thailand, Burma, India, and the Philippines. The international encounters aren't a problem for Sharon as she daily encounters people from Poland, Bangladesh, Yemen, and Bosnia in her ministries here at home. She has been capable and comfortable in cross-cultural and multi-cultural contexts.

We just got back from Kenya where in September we co-facilitated an intensive 10-day Training of Conflict Transformation Trainers (TCTT). We had 30 participants from 7 African countries--Angola, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, Burundi, and Liberia--as well as four folks from the U.S. It was an amazing time--great training, but also the bonding together of a very deep spiritual community.

In the years to come we envision joining the faculty of a seminary or theological college with one of our mission partners, teaching for a full academic term. From that institutional base we will do various trainings and programs in regional churches and communities. This will maximize our mission involvement together while minimizing the travel with the wear and tear on the body. The rest of the year Sharon will continue her urban mission work in Hamtramck/Detroit while I continue my global peacemaking in other places.

So rejoice with Sharon and me about this new phase in mission! And please pray for us as we raise the funds to the level necessary for International Ministries to commission her and send her forth. We are hoping to reach full-funding for her ministry by spring of 2014 so we can spend the fall of 2014 teaching with one of our mission partners.

In peace and hope,

Dan Buttry

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Joys:

- ✚ Birthday joys: Jo Ford (October 9), Pearl Pe (October 10), Jin Chin and Don Granholm (October 15)
- ✚ Melanie Ramirez with thanks to Elizabeth for preparing food for the Fellowship time; for the joy of watching Clara and Daniel in their first full dress rehearsal for marching band
- ✚ Michael Holmes for his brother, Warren and wife, Molly, as they honeymoon in Europe
- ✚ Marilyn Hunwick for Ramesh who is healing well and credits the power of prayer

Concerns – New:

- ✚ Pastor Rick for his mother and the family and friends of her younger sister, Amy Word, who died Saturday in Buna, Texas
- ✚ Jan Hoover for her mother, Dorothy, with health concerns

- ✚ Thelma Parodi for her daughter, Lee, facing back surgery, for Lee's husband and Norm and for her disappointment that Lee can't visit right now
- ✚ For those affected by ongoing civil war in Syria that peace with justice may be realized
- ✚ For the residents of the Terraces at Los Altos as they go through a time of transition
- ✚ For our American Baptist missionaries serving all over the world through the Board of International Ministries, especially Dan and Sarah Chetti and their mission work in Lebanon and Dan and Sharon Buttry who work as a global peace advocates

Ongoing:

- ✚ For Bob Towner at Manor Care in Sunnyvale and for Lucille
- ✚ For Patrice and Richard Heath as they continue to live with the affects of her cancer
- ✚ Laura Garcia for Janice and other family members with health concerns
- ✚ For Oleta Proctor with ongoing health concerns
- ✚ For Don and Mary Granholm, Ruth Clark, Earl and Virginia Knechtel, Carl Schilling
- ✚ 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 the work with the homeless of the Opportunity Center and InnVision
- ✚ For refugees and all victims of war and disaster everywhere
- ✚ 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
- ✚ For those affected by indiscriminate acts of violence and for the adoption of measures to heal our communities of all the many ways these make us less safe and less free

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2013

"The Welfare of the City"

Lectionary reading for the Week: Psalm 66:1-12; **JEREMIAH 29:1, 4-7**; Luke 17:11-19;
2 Timothy 2:8-15. (Focus scripture for this week is in bold.)

"Seek the shalom of the city where I have exiled you, and pray to YHWH on its behalf, because in its shalom you will find your shalom" (Jer. 29:7). Pray to YHWH for the shalom, the peace and welfare and soundness, of Babylon, the pagan center of all things we know as evil? What

can Jeremiah mean by that astonishing request? Because YHWH is in fact God of Babylon, too, not the so-called mighty Marduk living at the top of the great building in the city, it means that YHWH has deep concern for Babylon, the place where YHWH's people now live and will live for many years. Rather than hold their noses in horror at the pagans who would taint them, YHWH says they must pray for them, because all are in the world of YHWH together. This is nothing less than a call for the exiled Judeans to open their lives and hearts to the people among whom they now have been forced to live. Rather than close their lives to the Babylonians, Jeremiah asks them to open up their lives and to learn and grow in the new reality of Babylon.

Jeremiah concludes this portion of his brief note by warning the exiles not to listen to other so-called prophets and diviners who speak a different word, words presumably that would urge them to keep to themselves, to insist on their own rightness and righteousness, to attack any who would dare to act and believe differently than they do (Jer. 29:8-9). YHWH did not send them, says Jeremiah, and if they prophesy in the name of YHWH, they are lying.

How current all of this sounds to my 21st-century ears. In a world of increasing diversity where so many find themselves exiled from what they know, from what they have done, from their familiar actions in the world, how are we who are in power in these places to react to their presence among us? And how are they to live in their new place? In Dallas, TX 229 different first languages are spoken; exiles are living here in huge numbers. Jeremiah asks them to pray for the shalom of their new home, while I am asked to open up my lives to them. Only in these ways may we all discover the full shalom of the world of God. (John C. Holbert, "Pray for the Shalom of the City: Reflections on Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7," 10-13-2013, *patheos.com*).

Prayer: Wholeness of the sick and Home of the exile, give us grace to seek the well-being of those among whom we live, so that all people may come to know the healing of your love and new voices join to give you thanks in Jesus Christ. Amen.

A NOTE FROM PASTOR RICK

Just a quick note this week to thank everyone who made Sunday a grand adventure as we "traveled the world" and celebrated World Communion Sunday. From those who helped with music and liturgy to those who decorated and fed us, it was a blessed day. We come from many places and backgrounds. It is great to bring as much together as we did Sunday. I keep saying, it takes all of us to BE US. Thank you all.

Pastor Tripp will be preaching Sunday as I will be in Providence, Rhode Island for the 20th anniversary celebration of the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists (and the 40th anniversary of American Baptists Concerned.) As an AWAB board member, I have chaired the planning team for this event and will be preaching at the concluding communion service on Monday. The theme is "Coming of Age: A Living Jubilee." If you'd like to know more about it, check out the web site at www.awab20.org. I will take an extra day of vacation while I'm in the East and will be back in the office on Thursday, October 17. Please call the church office or Pastor Tripp if there is a pastoral emergency.

Sunday, Pastor Tripp will be preaching on "The Welfare of the City" based on Jeremiah's letter to the exiles in Babylon instructing them to pray for the welfare of the city in which they were exiled. It must have been quite a challenge to those captives to be told to pray for the well-being of their captors, yet that is the word Jeremiah brings from God. For whom would it be most challenging for you to pray, to desire their well-being?

Our intern, Doug Davidson, will be leading Adult Spiritual Formation, continuing the series, *Animate: Faith*, this week focusing on a video with Nadia Bolz-Weber as she reflects on the significance of the cross. Come at 10:00 AM on Sunday for worship. Bring along a family member, friend, colleague, neighbor or stranger to share in worship; then, stay for Adult Spiritual Formation.

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

Pastor Rick

