

Evergreen Notes

Learning to Do Right



By Rev. Doug Avilesbernal

*Learn to do right, Care for the orphan,
fight for the widow.*

- Isaiah 1:17

Most of us are very familiar with Micah 6:8. Yet, this thread of action to provoke justice echoes throughout Scriptures. Jer. 22:3; Psalm 82:3; Proverbs 31:9 and many more. There are two major points every time this theme appears, the first is, we all have the charge to take action, "what does the Lord require of you..." "Learn to do right" We are not asked to learn about justice. We are not commanded to raise awareness. Isaiah doesn't say learn about justice. The charge is always to action to bring about justice wherever we are. The Gospel is not only or mainly a passive and intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.

The second focus is always on behalf of those who cannot do it for themselves alone. In nearly all the instances in Scripture, we find these to be the orphans, the widows, the sick and the prisoners. All of them were the people with the least power in that society. Therefore, these were also the ones suffering the most injustice. Though the groups mentioned above continue to bear the brunt of injustice in our world, I do wonder who else is suffering in our world. Who are those society considers unworthy of care and protection from our laws? Who does our society consider at fault for their own suffering?

As with much of Scripture, the two are related. Learning to do right must lead to learning about the injustices being suffered by the ones

continued on page 4...



EVERGREEN ASSOCIATION
—OF AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES USA—
TRANSLATING OUR UNITY TO THE WORLD

Inside this Issue

Learning to Do Right	1
2026 SoCal Gathering Recap	2
Smart Home, Simple Set- up, Part I.....	3
Job Announcement: Mari- time Welfare Assoc.....	4
Biennial Gathering Preview	5
Pilgrimage 2026 Flyer ..	6
Biennial Gathering Flyer	7
Save These Dates	8
September Calendar	8

Pray for Churches seeking Pastoral Leadership

Filipino-American Chris-
tian Fellowship,
Lynnwood, WA

First Hispanic Baptist
Church,
Santa Barbara, CA

Grace Baptist Church,
San Jose, CA

Shell Ridge Community
Church,
Walnut Creek, CA

Lakeshore Avenue Bap-
tist Church, Oakland, CA

First Baptist Church of
Chico, Chico, CA

2026 SoCal Gathering Recap



By Rev. Dr. Sam Kim

Recently, the regional staff took a trip to Santa Barbara to visit our SoCal (Southern California) Area churches in the Evergreen family. It was a wonderful time of

fellowship, reflection, and discussion. It is an exciting season for the Evergreen Association, as we are surprisingly growing and, in doing so, beginning to develop clusters of churches in certain areas. We recognize that for many of our churches, it can be expensive to travel to our Region-wide Gatherings and our Leadership Retreat, especially in years when churches also want to send representatives to the National Biennial. In response to that, this year's October gathering in Napa will be our experiment to try meeting on a Biennial pace in the off years of the National Biennial, and, to supplement, the regional staff will gather churches in their geographical areas for a space of support, collaboration, and empowerment.

The engagement at the SoCal gathering was very lively and thoughtful. We were very blessed by the generous hospitality of La Primera Iglesia Hispana de Santa Barbara. The home-cooked meals and the kind welcome were so appreci-



ated. The most important takeaway for me was the churches' beginning to recognize that perhaps some of the issues they were dealing with as individual churches could be addressed through collaboration and peer processing. It is clear-



er than ever in these challenging times of ministry that we do God's work better when we do it together. One church's strength in a certain area could be the unmet need that is identified in a nearby church. How powerful is it when we know that we could bring life not only to our own community but to the community of those around us? While we realize that the Evergreen map of churches does not neatly organize everyone into closely accessible neighborhoods, it is good to know that some form of collaboration is possible. It is in this openness and willingness to share what we have with each other that we see the miracle of Jesus feeding the multitudes. Our prayer for our churches going forward is that we would look at each other with generosity and openness to see what the Spirit could do when we work together. Let's fight the mindset of scarcity that focuses on survival in a self-serving way; let's recognize that God has brought this wonderful family of churches together to support one another and give one another life. Our hope is that as we continue to facilitate different area gatherings throughout Evergreen, we will recognize that we are part of a larger movement of churches serving the important needs of the world around us. Blessings as we continue to walk side by side!

Pictures by Rev. Shavon Walker

Smart Home, Simple Setup

Part I: Automation That Makes Sense



By Rev. Shavon Walker

Do you remember the world of the Jetsons, with their robot Rosie? Back then, their voice activated alarm

clocks and talking assistants seemed like they were out of reach. But the great part is, we don't have to wait until 2062. We've got them right now. And we don't have to be the Jetsons to benefit from smart home technology.

Smart home tech is about being safe, convenient and independent, not about owning the latest gadgets. You don't have to be super tech savvy, you don't have to worry about security (if it's set up correctly) and, as you age, you stand a better chance of staying in your home. Best of all, you can start with one affordable device, and build from there.

You can begin with a smart speaker such as an **Amazon Echo** (\$25-\$100) or a **Google Nest** (\$30- \$100). The Echo, which is my personal favorite, is the most compatible with other devices. It has easy voice commands and family check in features. More advanced users (or those with more tech aware friends and family) can create personalized commands in the Alexa app for the Echo, or link it

to other apps for fuller automation. The Google Nest is similar, but can have a video component. This is great for video calls or for large display options, such as a digital clock or notifications. You can use either for something as simple as turning the lights on and off, or as complex as reading your agenda for the week.

Safety Devices are a must have after obtaining a smart speaker. **Video doorbells** range from \$60-\$250, and can be connected to any door. You can see and speak to visitors without opening it, which is extra helpful to avoid solicitors. **Smart lighting** (\$8-\$50 per bulb) can be set to automatically turn on when someone is nearby, and can be voice controlled, which eliminates fumbling for switches in the middle of the night. **Smart Locks** can be a bit expensive (\$150-\$280), but as long as you have a code, you can unlock it without having to worry about lost keys. And instead of leaving an easy to find key under the doormat or a rock for the pet sitter/ maintenance person/etc, you can give them their own temporary code.

That's it for this month. Next month, I'll talk about convenience devices, how to get started, and how to use these devices safely and privately. If you've got any requests for an article, please email me at shavon@ea-abc.org. And check out our Instagram and Facebook!

...continued from page 1

in the margins of our world. All of which is for the purpose of provoking, encouraging and working toward justice for all.

I am sure many of you already live out your faith in this way. That you have thought about what it means to act toward justice in your context. That you have a good idea of who, "the least of these," are in the worlds you inhabit. That your words and actions match more often than not.

But if you do not, or have lapsed, or didn't know, or feel paralyzed, today is the perfect day to start. Even better, our passage today gives you the first step, "learn to do justice." Ask around, run a search online. Read about doing justice. Observe and perhaps even join groups, organizations, faith communities already doing justice. Then right away, go try it out. Who is suffering around you? What can you do to help? Who can you join that is already doing it.

Often discovering these injustices feels too big. It leads many to think, who am I to change anything? I'm not powerful? etc." When those thoughts come, remind yourself that there are millions who feel the same way. Many of those are all around you just waiting for an invitation. So, get started. Start provoking the world around you to justice by working toward it. I am sure that next year on this date you'll be glad you started today.

Job Announcement: Maritime Welfare Associate

Job Announcement:

Maritime Welfare Associate (MWA)

Seafarers Ministry of the Golden Gate at the International Maritime Center

Start Date: September 2026

Schedule: Part-time; fixed monthly schedule; approx. three days/week

Compensation: \$1,000/month; part-time employee status

SMGG-at-the-IMC is seeking a **Maritime Welfare Associate** to support international seafarers through ship visits, hospitality at the Maritime Center, and transportation services. The MWA also helps maintain facility readiness through weekly inspections and coordination of maintenance and minor custodial tasks.

Ideal candidates are friendly, reliable, culturally sensitive, and comfortable working independently. Experience in mentoring, counseling, or cross-cultural communication is helpful. Fluency in English is required; Tagalog or Hindi is a plus.

Key Requirements: • Eligible for TWIC; valid CA driver's license • Ability to climb gangways and lift up to 75 lbs • Completion of online ship welfare visitor training (provided)

To Apply: Send a letter of interest and résumé to chaplain@smgg.org.

A Preview of the Biennial Gathering

September 7 is the LAST DAY for hotel reservations at the special discount rate! See p. 7!

By Rev. Paul Schneider

In 2024 when we gathered in Salt Lake City, we came to consensus on changing from an Annual Gathering to a Biennial Gathering on even numbered years. We proposed this for many reasons, including being aware of how far travel budgets had to stretch with our churches in years that both had an Annual Gathering and the ABC-USA Biennial Mission Summit. This year is the first year of that Biennial Gathering pattern, and we're having it at CrossWalk Community Church in Napa, California.

Our theme this Gathering is **"Reimagining Church,"** and we have some amazing folks coming to help us as we do just that. Thursday night we'll have our Clergy and Laity dinner—not separate but together! We'll be hearing from **Stephen Corley**, whose family owns one of Napa's wineries, on what the church can learn from the wine industry. And, a little bird has told me there will be an optional wine tasting included in the meal. Friday we'll have our Welcome Plenary and workshops. We have four workshops available this year, but only two workshop times, so you'll have to choose. Our first two workshops are **"Reimagining Community: Becoming CrossWalk,"** where our host pastor **Rev. Dr. Pete Shaw** will talk about how CrossWalk Community Church has repositioned itself and become a truly vital connection point for even those in Napa who aren't church folks! We'll also have **Rev. Doug Avilesbernal**, our Executive Minister, leading **"Reimagining Life Together: Evergreen 101,"** a workshop about why and how Evergreen does what it does and how different that is that other regions in the ABC-USA and frankly just about any other space out there. The next pair of workshops includes **"Reimagining Discipleship,"** with **Rev. Ruth Vindas** who leads the Talitha Cumi (girls) and Talaya Cumi (boys) clubs in Costa Rica, where they're mentoring preteens in ways that help them resist a patriarchal pattern and offers them

new opportunities; and **"Reimagining Youth Groups,"** with **Rev. Bianca Luna** of Urban Grace Church of Tacoma, where among many other things, she leads the interdenominational joint Tacoma Youth Group.

Friday night we'll cap off with worship, where our Featured Preacher will be **Rev. Dr. Jamie Washam**, Pastor of the First Baptist Church in America, in Providence, Rhode Island. Significantly accomplished in her own right, Pastor Jamie also will bring us the perspective of someone leading an historic church into the future without abandoning its core values.

Saturday will have our Business Meeting before lunch, and after the Napa Experiences. There will be a hike option, an option to go into downtown Napa, which is walkable and has many stores, and an option to visit a St. Helena winery for a tasting, and then visit downtown St. Helena. Saturday evening will see our closing worship, where we'll hear again from **Rev. Dr. Jamie Washam**.

As an added feature, we're being joined during worship by **Michael Gungor**, an accomplished musician who's been reimagining how worship's done for years. In addition to his career in music (in and out of the Christian Music scene), he was a co-host of the Liturgists podcast for many years. Michael was artist in residence at CrossWalk for six months recently.

If you're joining us online, you'll still have ways to participate and be part of the Gathering. There will be livestreaming and true hybrid options. First, you'll be joining us live for the welcome plenary on Friday morning, and Friday Night Worship will be livestreamed. We'll be monitoring both those live streams, and questions can be asked during the welcome plenary through the comments section. Saturday the business meeting will be truly hybrid with live participation from those online, and the workshops will be offered to our online participants so they can be fully engaged in the workshops also. And Saturday night worship will be livestreamed. However you participate, we are excited to have you at the Biennial Gathering this year!

Pilgrimage: 2026

Finding Our Way Together, Unmasking Racial Divisions and Building Solidarity



“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

George Santayana
(1863 -- 1952)

Take a journey from our ancestors' past into our own present....



- **Racism** survives as a living **legacy** in our Pacific Northwest
- **Know** the issues by **exploring** our serene and beautiful Pacific Northwest and how pre-Civil War racism is barely submerged in our present
- **Journey** with us to understand the undocumented's plight who were then, as now, unwelcome and deported.
- Relate how the wrongs of the **past** are carried forward into **our present**.
- Leave with heads full of questions and hearts full of compassion

This Journey starts September 19, 2026:

Registration closes on September 7

- Gather at JBC in the morning to board our van.
- Travel to Tacoma, arriving by 9 a.m.
- Volunteers outside the ICE Tacoma Detention Center will accept donations we can bring. (The Center is open 2 – 5 p.m. so it may be a stop on our return.)
- Visit where in Tacoma Chinese immigrants first settled but then were deported to Oregon after losing everything. (Think it could happen again?)
- Stop at Tumwater on the Deschutes River, site of the George Washington Bush party's first settlement after being ousted from Oregon by their "Sundown" laws.
- Stop at Olympia on the Capitol grounds to find a monument honoring George Washington Bush.
- Lunch at a restaurant nearby where we hope we can hear author Sandra Crowell speak to us about her research on the Native Americans
- Return to JBC in late afternoon
- For more information contact Sandra Stice, member of Evergreen's Intercultural Committee, at

jsstice@gmail.com
425-442-2638

Please join us for the Evergreen Biennial Gathering

Reimagining Church (Isaiah 43:19)

October 8-10, 2026
at CrossWalk Community Church
in Napa, CA

Our Featured Preacher

Schedule in Brief

Rev. Dr. Jamie Washam



Rev. Dr. Jamie P. Washam became the 37th settled minister of the First Baptist Church in America in 2015. The native Texan earned degrees from the University of Texas, Harvard Divinity School, and Vrije Universiteit. She was ordained an American Baptist minister in 2001 by the Samuel Stillman Association of Massachusetts. Prior to pastoring in Providence, she served churches in Chicago, Illinois and Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. She was president of American Baptist Churches of Wisconsin in 2013-2014 and the elected president of the American Baptist Home Mission Society from 2020-2025. She makes her home with her family in Rhode Island and counts it a joy to follow in the way of Jesus in the church gathered by Roger Williams. Beyond the Meeting House, you can often find her in the garden.

Thursday

6pm—Clergy & Laity
Dinner

Friday

9am—Registration
10:30am—Welcome
Plenary (livestreamed)
Noon—Lunch
1:30pm to 5:15pm—In
Person Workshops
5:30pm—Dinner
7pm—Worship Service
(livestreamed via
Youtube and webpage)

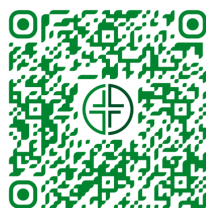
Saturday

8:30am—Breakfast
10am—Business Meeting
(Hybrid)
Noon—Lunch
1:30pm to 5:15pm—
Online Workshops
1pm to 5pm—Napa
Experiences
5:30pm—Dinner
7pm—Worship Service
(livestreamed)

Sunday

Travel or worship with a
local Evergreen Church

Hotel Information



<https://gqr.sh/aeH6>

We'll be staying at the Double Tree in American Canyon, CA, 20 minutes away from the church. We'll have shuttles to get people to and from the church and hotel. To register, please use this link [here](#) or scan the QR code below. If you're staying Th-Sat, the average price for your room is just \$159 per night.

Registration

Registration for this event can be done online via this link [here](#), or scan the QR code in the lower right hand corner. Cost is \$100 for Friday & Saturday in person, or \$110 if attending dinner on Thursday night. Online attendance is \$50. You can pay for your registration using this link [here](#), or the QR code in the lower left hand corner. Please call Rev. Paul Schneider at the



Office (253-859-2226x1) to register or make payment over the phone or with questions.





EVERGREEN ASSOCIATION OF
AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES
P.O. BOX 1044
Kent, WA 98035-1044
Phone: 253-859-2226
Email: office@ea-abc.org

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US PAID KENT
WA PERMIT NO.
451

“Like” us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/evergreenabcusa;

Instagram, and Twitter @evergreenabcusa
#ebaabc

Return Service Requested

Evergreen Notes, the newsletter for member churches, ecumenical partners, national affiliates, and friends of the Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches is published monthly. Please submit articles by the 20th of the month prior to expected publication. You are encouraged to copy and/or reprint information and articles for your congregation and community.

Building Bridges, Resourcing Churches & Translating Our Unity

Mission Statement

Being a culturally diverse people who are one in Christ and who value the liberties of our American Baptist Heritage, the Evergreen Baptist Association will **Build bridges** between communities; **Provide resources** to equip member churches to share Christ and teach God’s word; and **Translate our unity** to the world.

May this Labor Day bring you rest and recharge to take on your work anew!

Save these Dates!

We’ve got some great events coming up. Please mark your calendars so you can participate in these fantastic events!

Pilgrimage 2026— Intercultural Learning Experience

Sept. 19, 2026—See page 6 for

more information and contact Sandy Stice to sign up!

Evergreen Biennial Gathering

Oct. 8-10, 2026 at CrossWalk Community Church in Napa, CA. See last page for flyer with registration and hotel information for this great event!

September Calendar

September 7—Labor Day

September 7—Last day for hotel reservations at special **Biennial Gathering** Rate! See the flyer on the previous page to make that reservation through the link!

September 7—Last day to register for the Pilgrimage 2026 experience (see page 6 and below)

September 19—Pilgrimage 2026: Intercultural Learning Experience—Join a group leaving from Japanese Baptist

Church in Seattle to visit Tacoma and Tumwater to learn about the Chinese Riots and first African American farming settlers in the Pacific Northwest.

September 26—MLK Jr. Memorial Baptist Church 50th Jubilee Celebration

September 30—Last day for in person registration for Biennial Gathering (see page 5 for a preview of the workshops and events and page 7 for registration information)