



Evergreen Notes

Volume 20, Issue 12

Merry Christmas!

Provoke Love This Season



And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through him. Colossians 3:15-17

I pray you will all give time to thinking about how to provoke all those around you to love. Why should provoking be limited to violence, hate and other bad things? Why should violence be the only one instigated? Why should separation and destruction be the only ones plotted in private spaces with trusted conspirators? Why should conspiracy theorists be the only ones spending hours thinking of ways to share their passion?

Hate has been given prominence in our society, and fear sustains it. I understand how easy it is to fall for the sugary deliciousness of thinking, "I am better than them.." or worse, "They're going to get me/us if I/we don't...". Thinking this way can be especially easy when spending time with family.

But what if instead we planted the impossible –to-eradicate weed—the mustard seed-love? What if we listen attentively seeking to understand? What if we thought of love before responding to even the craziest of comments at the dinner table or the dirty and dark alleys of Facebook pages, and Tweeter feeds? What if we shared love, poked hope, and instigated peace relentlessly?

May you provoke love with the fullness of your gifts and strengths this season beginning today. Love so persistently that even those who think they hate you come to know you love them. You are not alone, your EBA family is glad to be your conspirator in loving all those around us. "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through Christ our Savior.

Paz,

Doug

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Pray for Churches Seeking Pastoral Leadership

- ◆ Mount Zion Baptist Church
- ◆ Wenatchee Brethren Baptist Church
- ◆ Filipino-American Christian Fellowship (FACF), and
- ◆ Fairview Community Church

Panther Lake Community Church— On A Journey to be Inclusive— by John Armagost, Pastor



Pastor John Armagost

A church must be intentional about the journey to be anti-racist and inclusive. The path of least resistance would have us simply go with the flow.

At PLCC parts of the journey have been about racism, parts have been about sexual orientation, poverty, immigration, and refugee issues. The journey isn't always smooth. With good intentions, sometimes we step onto the path of thinking, 'what we can do for them?' If we are not careful this can leave us acting from a position of power and privilege, which can corrupt our best intentions so that instead of inclusion as equals, we invite assimilation, 'come be like us.' We become part of a system where we feel safe and comfortable as we give or act out of our abundance.

One step on the journey was when the church asked Rev. Paul Aita to be the minister to the people of Burma, a role in which he has helped us to connect and get to know our sisters and brothers from that land living as refugees and immigrants in our communities. A recent conversation at PLCC has been about our relationships with the two congregations that use our building, the Washington Kachin Baptist Church, and the Karen Community Church of Greater Seattle, both a part of Evergreen. Knowing that purchasing land or a building in the Seattle metro area is expensive, we have begun to ask the question, what if our relationship was something other than the traditional 'landlord-tenant' model? What if we found ways to join in ministry and mission as equals together? What if what is 'ours' became a more inclusive 'ours?' What would that look like? Those can be scary questions for those with the power.



Joint Youth Retreat in 2019

We have only just begun this conversation and COVID has not helped with the more personal relationship building part. But we have shared some ministries, like a youth retreat where leaders from each church collaborated as equals to do the planning; joint Christmas Eve services, and this year we joined together to provide meals for families in both our respective communities and the larger community around us during Thanksgiving and Christmas.

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PLCC—On a Journey to be Inclusive

continued

(Continued from page 2)

This journey involves recognizing that what we have isn't ours; it belongs to the Lord. Easy to say, I know. We have barely begun to recognize that what we have in terms of building and land, we didn't simply inherit from our fore parents. It wasn't the too distant past that this was land occupied by Indigenous Peoples. How did it get passed down to us? At what cost to those original people? We are blessed with land and a building, but we are now listening for how the Lord is calling us to use these gifts.

Finally, the journey has led us to install Rev. Cathy Kernen as our Minister of Peace and Justice. This is not a paid pastoral position, and the portfolio is mostly that of advocate and information resources. But as I said when I began this article, we need to take intentional steps and to recognize we are on a journey if we hope to become an inclusive church, and in the words of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 'the beloved community'.



Pastor Maggie and Steve Dun sharing their testimonies.



Pastors Paul Aita, John Armagost, Maggie Po, & Hkun Naung lead a 2019 Christmas service.

Invitation to Participate in the Evergreen online Christmas Eve Service!

Hello Friends!

Would you like to participate in an Evergreen Christmas Eve service? We had so much fun with last year's video that we thought we'd make it a tradition!

If your church would like to participate, please let me know (media@ea-abc.org).

What you need to do: Look over the instructions and the order of the service here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/10onX8x0rkvYFa13m7kumhPqcgFUThStnu-csIQNXffY/edit?usp=sharing>

You can then sign up for one or two parts of the service.

We would like to have a church from each Caucus participate in the candle-lighting.

Where it reads "Christmas Carol" interpret that broadly. Any music associated with Christmas can be used: a carol, choral piece, solo, etc. It can be in any language. If you are able to provide the translation that is wonderful, but it is not required.

You will record your piece and upload it by December 10th (the link will be provided in the document once it is set up). We have a volunteer who will compile and edit the video to be ready a few days before Christmas Eve. I will have it posted to the Evergreen Facebook page by 8 a.m. Pacific time on Christmas Eve. You

may choose to participate even if your church has its own Christmas Eve service. You may also choose to share the video on Christmas Day, or on the Sunday after Christmas.



Rev. Mindi Welton-Mitchel

Let me know if you have any questions. If you'd like to view last year's service, you may do so here: <https://www.ea-abc.org/christmas-eve-2020.html>

Blessings,

Mindi

Thank You, As Sharing Continues in the Family



Thank you to Rev. Dr. Julie Vaughn, who working with her employer, Virginia Mason Franciscan Health, donated

over 30 boxes of new tumblers. Recipients of the blessing included several Evergreen Association member churches:

Mt. Pilgrim Metropolitan Baptist Church, Oakland was sent a box; and locally: New Beginnings Christian Fellowship, Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Baptist Church,

New Walk Christian Church Outreach Ministry and Rev. Dr. Rivers' outreach ministry.

What began as an effort to share tumblers ultimately included other items such as cups, food containers, mops & buckets, trash cans and toasters.

On Dec 13th the Women With A Purpose at MLK, Jr. Baptist Church will take 75 tumblers to the Seniors at Arcadia Nursing Home in Renton.

Peace,

Dr. Vaughn



Rev. Julie Vaughn, D.Min, M.Div, MACE, MA, BCC Pastoral Care/St. Anne Hospital

Ethics Committee



American Baptist Leaders Release “You Are Special” Storybook Video

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 12/1/21)—American Baptist Churches USA is pleased to offer a children’s storybook video for the American Baptist family based upon the book, “You are Special” by Max Lucado with illustrations by Sergio Martinez. Members of the National Executive Council provided the voices and narration for the story and director Jonathan Wu produced the video. The story tells of a group of Wemmicks who live in a community where people place dots on one another for bad things and stars on one another for doing good things. One of the members of the community, Punichello, notices that Lucia has no stars or dots and sets out on a journey to discover how this is possible. While the video is drawn from a children’s book, the message is one for all ages.

We invite you to view the video at <https://youtu.be/GAex7txkVIY> and on the abcusa.org webpage.

The National Executive Council is comprised of the leaders of American Baptist Home Mission Societies, American Baptist International Ministries, American Baptist Women’s Ministries, and MMBB Financial Services, along with the General Secretary of American Baptist Churches USA.

The current members of the National Executive Council are:



Dr. Jeffrey Haggray, Executive Director, American Baptist Home Mission Societies
Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain, Executive Director, American Baptist Women’s Ministries
Rev. Sharon Koh, Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer, American Baptist International Ministries
Dr. Louis Barbarin, Chief Executive Officer, MMBB Financial Services
Dr. C. Jeff Woods, Interim General Secretary, American Baptist Churches USA

Please go online to www.ea-abc.org and click on
“Give” to donate.
Your continued support is greatly appreciated!

Happenings Around the Region

****Save the Dates!

Saturday, January 8, 2022! Celebrate the Work and Ministry of Clem Winbush!

Clem is Retiring! The Evergreen Family will gather at New Beginnings Christian Fellowship on Saturday, January 8, 2022 from 2:00-4:00 pm PST to honor Clem Winbush and her ministry with the Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches.

Rev. Dr. Leslie D. Braxton, Pastor of NBCF, asks that if you plan to come in-person, please be prepared to show proof that you are fully vaccinated to participate. There will be a plated lunch at a cost TBD. Watch in this newsletter—the Evergreen Notes, and Evergreen’s website for further information about that cost, virtual links and other ways you can participate in the celebration for/with Clem.



E. Clem Winbush

*******American Baptist Women’s Ministries of the Pacific Northwest**

rescheduled Annual Conference to late April or early May, 2022. .

***** The **150th Anniversary Celebration for First Baptist Church of Olympia** has been postponed until 2022 .

Doug’s New Cellular Phone Number and Changes at the Regional Office

Executive Minister Douglas Avilesbernal’s new cellular phone Number is: **253-204-3067**

Please change my contact info card to the number above. I will still keep the other number into January, but it will stop working then.

As most of you have heard, Clem is retiring at the end of December. At the same time Rev. Mindi has been called as the next Executive Minister of ABC Wisconsin. *So, we are transitioning all the staff in charge of communicating with you.*

The immediate result is that it is likely you will receive fewer communications from us as well as slower responses for the next two months. It is clear that both these wonderful leaders have served our community professionally, patiently and lovingly. I am profoundly thankful and eager to hear how they will continue to improve the worlds they will serve next.

We are in the process of hiring staff and will have news in the near future.

Meanwhile, blessings to you all this Advent season; and may the peace of God and the joy of Christ’s anticipated arrival be with you.

Doug

You are Invited to Symposiums on Racism and Health Equity

Thank you, New Beginnings Christian Fellowship (NBCF) for allowing the Ohio Federation for Health Equity and Social Justice to use your YouTube virtual rendition of the song, "Lift Every Voice and Sing" in our Symposiums on Racism and Health Equity. Please convey our sincere appreciation to the entire New Beginnings Christian Fellowship family for allowing us to share this wonderful rendition.

Included below are registration links for both symposiums and you are invited to register and join us.

Also, please feel free to share the registration information widely, as the symposiums are free to the public and will be led by respectively, nationally and internationally recognized presenters, **Dr. Bettina Beech, Dr.PH, MPH and Dr. David R. Williams, Ph.D.**

Ronald R. Browder
President
Ohio Federation for Health Equity and Social Justice

The Ohio Federation for Health Equity and Social Justice announces the final two Virtual Symposiums. These are **FREE virtual events**. All are welcome. **Registration is required**, Please click on the links below for each session.

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

1:00pm to 2:15pm EST
LIVE via Zoom

"Racism and its Impact on Health in Communities of Color"

Presenter: Dr. David R. Williams, Ph.D.

Chair, Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health

Dr. Williams is an internationally recognized social scientist and will discuss racism in America and how it has specifically impacted communities of color.

Registration: bit.ly/ImpactOnHealth

Tuesday, December 14, 2021

1:00pm to 2:15pm EST
LIVE via Zoom

"Health Equity in the African American Community: The Path Forward"

Dr. Bettina Beech, DrPH, MPH, Professor of Health Systems and Population Health Science in the UH College of Medicine

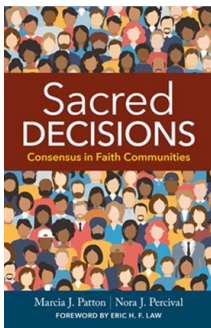
Dr. Beech is a national expert and will discuss how public health and population health can be utilized to address health disparities with a goal of health equity in the African American community.

Registration: bit.ly/HealthPathForward

REGISTER for the December 7th and December 14th events. "See" you there.

Your Editor

Sacred Decisions: Co-Author, Dr. Patton—Executive Minister Emerita



Sacred Decisions: Consensus in Faith Communities released November 1, 2021 by Judson Press.

Rev. Dr. Marcia Patton and co-author, Nora Percival, invite you to drive deeper into consensus building

The dedication reads: "To the people of Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches, for their courage to listen to each other and God, and to embrace a new way to do God's work in the world."

Reserve your copy of *Sacred Decisions: Consensus in Faith Communities*

here: <https://www.judsonpress.com/Products/J297/sacred-decisions.aspx>; through Rev. Marcia J. Patton, Ph.D., 206-458-2089; or at Amazon.



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#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.



Rev. Douglas Avilesbernal
Executive Minister

Building Bridges, Resourcing Churches & Translating Our Unity

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Executive Committee continues to meet monthly.

SAVE THE DATES

January 8, 2022—The Evergreen Family Gathers to Celebrate the Work and Ministry of Clem Winbush, 2—4 PM at New Beginnings Christian Fellowship. Proof of Vaccination necessary to participate in person.

January 17, 2022—Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Worship Service, New Beginnings Christian Fellowship, Kent WA. Proof of Vaccination necessary to participate in person.

February 11, 2022—Leaders Retreat at Camp Burton (Event may move to online)

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.