

Evergreen Notes

2022 Leader Retreat—EVERGREEN WAY: A DREAM LIVED OUT DAILY

Can a dream made real survive in our world?

Some who know us have been expecting Evergreen to collapse "any day now." EBA is just too different for many to even imagine it being a sustainable way to live together in faith. There are people even in our churches who don't yet know about EBA and how we function. Worse, they don't yet know how much it could help them at their own church.

Join us to explore ways to nurture the continued life of this dream become reality we call Evergreen.

who are we?

How does the dream work?

How can it be sustainable?

why are we growing when most others are not?

How can we bring this to my church?

If "been there, done that" is the feeling you get, you are exactly who we need.

We've never been "there" in this way before. Nor have we "done that" as the people we are now. After all, none of us have ever been who we are today.

So,

Let's go "there" together as the new people we are. So we can learn to do "that" in the way it needs to be done today.

The **Leader Retreat** will be held at Camp Burton on Vashon Island beginning at noon on Friday, February 11, 2022 ending at dinner on Saturday, February 12. It will be a hybrid event, both in person and online.

Register for the event at <https://www.ea-abc.org/evergreen-way-leadership-retreat-2022.html>



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Seeking Pastoral Leadership

Mount Zion Baptist Church, Seattle WA
Queen Anne Baptist Church, Seattle WA
Fairview Community Church, Costa Mesa CA
Wenatchee Brethern Baptist Church, Wenatchee WA
Filipino-American Christian Fellowship, Lynnwood WA
Good Shepherd Baptist Church, Lynnwood WA

Thank you Clem Winbush



On January 8, Evergreen had a wonderful party celebrating the ministry of Clem Winbush in her 18 years of service with Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches. Every caucus brought words of appreciation and encouragement. Japanese Baptist Church sent a special video with the background their ensemble singing Showers of Blessing. The National ABC Black Caucus

President, Rev. Dr. Trinette McCray sent a video of thanks and Rev. Charles Jones, President of the McKee Consultation sent words tell us that Clem was awarded the 2021 McKee Consultation Annual Award for service.

Rev. Curtis Price came to NBCF to emcee the event and bring the words of appreciation from the Euro Caucus. Rev. Douglas Avilesbernal represented the

“The list of Clem’s amazing contributions to Evergreen Association is long. Without her ministry among us there would be no Evergreen”

A Note from Clem

How can I say thanks for the love you showed at my retirement celebration and for your continued sharing into the end of January 2022! You have shared financially, written letters, sent cards, notes and gifts, emails and eventually I will get around to responding to individuals and my Facebook Friends, too!. For any part you played in making the reflection across 18 years and 7 months of serving God and you as the Executive Administrative Associate of the Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches beautiful,

Hispanic Caucus and also expressed his gratitude for how Clem helped him enter into his role as Executive Minister. Rev. Sandra Lee came from California to speak on behalf of the Asian Caucus. Stephanie Commandest spoke the Black Caucus thanking Clem especially for always bringing the corn to the Bar-B-Ques sponsored by the Black Caucus as well as many other things.

The list of Clem’s amazing contributions to Evergreen Association is long. Without her ministry among us there would be no Evergreen. We’ve had many good programs and events over the years, Clem made them happen, attending to the details. From Haiti trips to Annual Meetings, from organizing Choir practices and performances to Board meetings and annual retreats, from editing and producing newsletters to creating programs for MLK Day and other events. Both Executive Ministers of Evergreen Association expressed how their jobs were made easier by Clem’s expertise and backup.

A gift of an green engraved bowl was given to Clem, filled with money and cards from her Evergreen family.

Clem expressed how she knew in the interview for the position that although she knew her lifelong calling was education, at the job interview with Barry Biscoe, Julian Hunter, Yosh Nakagawa and Marcia Patton she knew this was where her place was where she belonged.



Thanks to those who made it possible

Without Clem to make it all happen we thank those that did: Stephanie Commandest, Chair of the committee. New Beginnings Christian Fellowship, especially Kevin Meeks for the video work, Meals by Madeline our caterer, Bonnie Crow for table decorations, Rev. Mindi Welton-Mitchell for setting up the registration site, committee members Priscilla Bell-Lowe and Marcia Patton

Tears of Joy by Bill Sloan

As I sat listening to the many wonderful memories being shared at Clem's retirement celebration, virtually and in person, of Clem and her service to Evergreen as an organization and to each of us individually, I also wanted to share, but didn't. One evening, relaxing on a second story deck, overlooking a busy street in Cap Haitian, Haiti. I was treated to Clem's recounting of a few of her experiences as a public-school classroom teacher. There were some ridiculously challenging situations and she handled them with grace and humor. I have never laughed so hard and long. As a retired classroom teacher, I think Clem should offer a clinic on behavior management. She is a master. When Clem finally spoke at her retirement party, she reminded us that she came to Evergreen leaving her career as an educator. She recalled how, during the job interview, how perfect a fit she felt it was for her. Little did we know how much we could learn from her!

Clem has had many titles and so many responsibilities as she served us. As Doug Avilesbernal observed, Evergreen is a miracle that would not be what it is today were it not for the many years of gifted service Clem has given. Paying attention to the myriad details, reminding us of our opportunities to contribute, and picking up the pieces when we didn't, she has been a blessing to us all.

Many have made critical contributions to the birth, development and growth of Evergreen; in my opinion, none more than Clem. I must declare that Clem has nurtured Evergreen as a mother does her children. Thank you Clem.

February—African-American History Month by Rev. Douglas Avilesbernal

Welcome to another month where we commemorate the myriad of ways our African American part of the family has and continues to enrich our life together. We come to this month in another historic era in our world. Everything is different while a whole lot remains the same.

Generations have passed since Dr. King's life was taken in an attempt to stop justice from flowing like a river.

Yet, to this day, the children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren of those who violently opposed Dr. King continue to

violently oppose justice. We gather as the forces of oppression come together in closed offices in our legislative buildings all around our country to create legislation to keep us from voting, like their Grandparents did and their parents couldn't because of the voting rights act. We are now contending with a resurgent racism at the root of Christian nationalism that plots to intimidate us and to use violence if future elections don't go their way.

All of which leads me to ask, why?

“It is our turn to out plan, out plot, and out legislate those who want to continue to oppress us.”

Why should hate be the thing only plotted behind closed doors?

Why should oppression be the only thing effectively organized?

Why should racism be the only guiding principle when crafting election law?

Why should a white supremacist minority be able to out plan, out plot and out legislate, us, the majority?

In the face of such questions I am reminded, among many other things, of the words Dr. King said about such state of affairs; “those who love peace must learn to organize as effectively as those who love war.”

Perhaps our response could be a why not?

Why not make loving all what is plotted behind closed doors?

Why not make liberty for all be effectively organized?

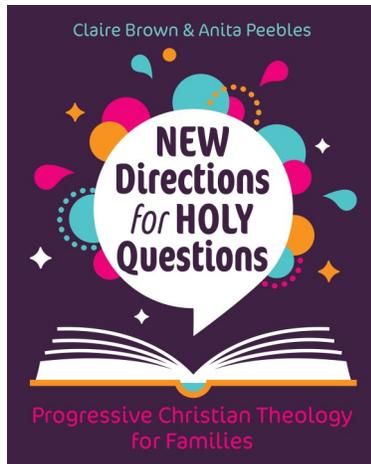
Why not make voting access for all the only guiding principle when crafting election law?

Why can't a diverse majority be able to out plan, out plot and out legislate the racist minority?

Dr. King said, “those who love peace must learn to organize as effectively as those who love war.”

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Anita Peebles Co-Author of *New Directions for Holy Questions*



Rev. Anita Peebles, is the Associate Pastor for Next Gen Ministries at Seattle First Baptist Church. She is the co-author of the book: *New Directions of Holy Questions*. With accessible language, Bible stories, and connections to daily life, *New Directions for Holy Questions: Progressive Christian Theology for Families* guides children and the adults who love them through the core teachings of Christianity. Kids have big questions about God and faith, and, while many of those questions don't have one clear answer, Christians throughout the ages have given us helpful ways to think and talk about what we believe. Big questions addressed in this book include "Who is God?," "What is the church?," "How do

we care for each other?," "What is baptism?," and "What happens when we die?" Each chapter includes simple spiritual practices and questions for reflection, either in solitary reading or through conversation between children and caregivers or ministers. It is oriented towards anti-racism, gender equality, economic justice, care of the environment, affirmation of LGBTQ+ folks, trauma-informed practice, and global citizenship.

Available from <https://www.churchpublishing.org/newdirectionsfors holyquestions>. For those in the Seattle area, this book is available for purchase at Elliott Bay Books.

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Perhaps our response should be a why not?

Why not make loving all what is plotted in closed doors?

Why not make bringing freedom to all be what is effectively organized?

Why not show up to vote no matter what, so candidates know that justice flowing like a river must be part of their platform always?

Why not vote, write, show up

so that inclusion is at the core of voting laws not exclusion?

It is our turn to out plan, out plot, and out legislate those who want to continue to oppress us.

Let us all celebrate Black History month by

showing up, loving deeply, standing firm, plotting to love all, organizing for justice. And repeat as necessary.

KI Facilitator Training

Evergreen Association uses many Kaleidoscope Institution tools and skills. They are offering Facilitator Training on many of the basic skills. You don't have to commit to becoming a certified facilitator to take the training and the skills you develop will help in many situations of service. Spring training is May 2,4,6, 10 and 12. 3 1/2 hours a day. <https://www.kscopeinstitute.org/> for more information.

Series Note:

This article is part of an on-going series to offer ideas and support to Euro Caucus congregations as you develop as anti-racist churches. Euro church members are encouraged to email, call or text Rev. Doug Avilesbernal (253-859-2226/doug@ea-abc.org) or Rev. Wim Mauldin (425-777-0630/wim_mauldin@hotmail.com) to engage with others across the Evergreen who seek to bring you the resources and mutual support needed to make your anti-racist efforts successful.

Anti-Racism Work at Good Shepherd Baptist, Lynnwood

The Evergreen approach to equality found particularly fertile ground at Good Shepherd, due to the geographic and demographic realities of our location. Lynnwood is the most racially diverse city in Snohomish County. Over the years Good Shepherd had International students worshipping with them. Recently two men who were ordained in their countries of origin became part of the congregation. They were sponsored by GSBC to have their ordinations recognized, and the church helped them establish two sister-congregations: Lynnwood International Fellowship, led by Rev. Guantai and ministering to primarily African immigrants, and Iglesia Bautista el Buen Pastor, led by Rev. Saquic and ministering to Latin@ immigrants.

With the reality of multiculturalism as a backdrop, Euro members of GSBC embraced the work of the Evergreen Anti-Racism Team. A study of Rev. Avilesbernal's book, Welcoming Community, was held in adult Sunday School. Next, a vigorous seminar on anti-racism, led by members of the Euro Caucus Anti-Racism Team and involving many of the church's members, took place over the months between December, 2020, and March, 2021, followed by a discussion of next steps by the Deacon Board in April. Again, pandemic conditions slowed the application of the desired strategies toward anti-racism but the intent and will are present to put these ideas into practice in 2022 and beyond. Two Euro members, Lynn Melby and Jen Drury, who belong to the Euro Caucus Anti-Racism Network continue to keep anti-racism in front of the congregation and the pastoral search committee as they envision future ministry.

We still have a long way to go but it's beginning to look like the Beloved Community at Good Shepherd Baptist Church. Thanks be to God!

Rev. M. Christopher Boyer, Pastor (2013 – 2021)



Service of Ordination for Denise Aaneason and Recognition of ordination for Rev. Guantai and Rev. Saquic



Good Shepard Baptist Church Pastor Chris Boyer sharing communion with Pastors Guantai and Saquic

FAREWELL YOSH NAKAGAWA



In 2006 doctors diagnosed cancer for the first time and told Yosh that he should go home and put his affairs in order. After chemo, radiation and surgery, he returned. And he figured since God saved him, he had work to do and work he did. He continued to advocate for his people, Japanese-Americans in and around Seattle and around the world. He lived to see a home dedicated in Hiroshima that his childhood pastor had built. He found the African American woman who traveled with Pastor Andy Andrews to Japan. He visited Atlanta GA, the church home of Martin Luther King, Jr. and discovered roots there. Even when cancer came again, he recovered. He traveled to Richmond Virginia where people were gathering to honor tennis great Arthur Ashe, and spoke at that event. He was honored with a place on the Northwest Skiers hall of fame. He threw out the first pitch at a Mariners baseball game (he didn't tell anyone in case he flubbed the pitch...which he didn't).

He said that he was getting tired. But continued to travel where he could as speak when asked and encourage the ministries he loved, the ABC Asian Alliance, Evergreen leaders, Japanese Baptist Church. Then pandemic hit and his travels were curtailed, then just as things were starting to look hopeful, he fully vaccinated and boosted...the cancer hit again with a vengeance. He might be gone, joined with his friends who have gone before on January 29, 2022 with his family at his side.

We miss him. His legacy goes on in the work and ministry of Evergreen. He's watching! Like a hawk!

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thank you!

You are a part of the tapestry that is Evergreen. Have you volunteered – served on the Executive Committee, represented your church at Association Board Meetings, lifted your voice at the annual Leaders' Retreat, greeted family and friends at the booth or hospitality room during Biennial Meetings? Do you make the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Worship Service an annual commitment? Have you joined Evergreen for its Annual Meetings at different member churches around the Seattle area and in California?

Many of you have likely said yes to one or more of those volunteer opportunities; so, thank you. Have you donated to Evergreen's ministries? If so, thank you for trusting that the experiment that is Evergreen would become the beacon for a level playing field where all God's people and their voices are invited and welcome. Each time you said yes, volunteered and helped us get the work done, you made my job more enjoyable and strengthened our family. My heart spills over with joy as I remember you and your willingness to work with and for Evergreen. I encourage you to continue to serve.

And finally, I'm grateful that God allowed me to serve with the visionary, Yosh Nakagawa - Evergreen's self-proclaimed "waterboy", who died Saturday January 29, 2022 - to see Evergreen Association standing strong as the 33rd and newest region of American Baptist Churches USA. I am filled with gratitude to God for you.

Thank you for the opportunity to **serve** with you,
Clem



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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.

Executive Committee continues to meet monthly.

Please take General Secretary Survey

VALLEY FORGE, PA (2/1/22)—The Board of General Ministries, the American Baptist Churches USA governing board, is currently in the process of seeking information regarding the priorities for the next General Secretary, whose term will begin in 2024.

The board has released a survey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OGS2021>) which will take approximately 5-7 minutes to complete. The board values your responses and thanks persons who take the time to complete this survey. The survey will remain open until March 5, 2022. All feedback received by this deadline will help the current General Secretary search committee develop a profile of a desired candidate.

The committee tasked with the search for the next General Secretary of the American Baptist Churches USA met in Tampa, Fla., January 27-29, 2022. At the initial meeting of the committee, decisions were made concerning the process the committee will follow in its search for the next General Secretary. Rev. Dr. James O. Wolfe, president of American Baptist Churches USA, said, “One of the most important components of the committee’s process is a survey which is being released to the denominational family today. It is very important that everyone involved take the time to complete the survey. Thank you for your cooperation, prayers, and support.”

The members of the Search Committee are:

Rev. Dr. James Wolfe (President/Chair), Karen Podsiadly (Past President), Dr. Louis Barbarin, representing American Baptist Home Mission Societies, International Ministries, and MMBB Financial Services, Rev. Abner Cotto-Bonilla, representing the ABCUSA Intercaucus, Judith Christiansen, Board of General Ministries (New York State), Stephanie Commandest, Board of General Ministries (Evergreen Association), Rev. Dr. Emmett Dunn, Board of General Ministries (District of Columbia), Rev. Dr. Al Fletcher, Regional Executive Ministers Council (Maine), Kurt Kaufman, Board of General Ministries (Wisconsin), Rev. Dr. James Kelsey, Regional Executive Ministers Council (New York State), Rev. Kathryn Ray, Board of General Ministries (Metro Chicago), Rev. Jacqueline Saxon, Regional Executive Ministers Council (Mid-American), Rev. Dr. Daryl Ward, Board of General Ministries (Ohio), Shawna Simmons, Board of General Ministries (Greater Indianapolis)