



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

Evergreen Notes

Unwanted Silence

By Rev. Doug Avilesbernal



As the father of two boys I live longing for silence whenever I am home. In fact, one of my calming times of the day is when Anna and the boys leave for school. As soon as the door closes I am wrapped by a calming silence pregnant with the promise of the luxury of a leisurely cup of coffee I can sip at length. Sadly all of the joy from my kids not being home ended *again* this past week. When my family left on the morning after the massacre I was crushed on all sides by a coarse cloth of worry full of piercing, scratchy, and harsh thoughts asking questions like, *What if this silence is now permanent? What if they don't come back?*

I was so worried I irrationally thought, *maybe I can work from my car in front of the school? Or, maybe the parents can take turns hanging out in the school's parking lot?* It took me a good bit to fully realize that I too had fallen for the untruth we're being sold that there is nothing we can do beyond "hardening the target." The idea that making schools into forts prepared for a firefight at any moment is a viable option has seeped into our world as though it were a reasonable thought!

Then I cried for those parents.

The families for whom the "going to school silence" is now permanent. I cried because that type of silence cannot be ended with noise, even the noise from new children being brought to that home. Yes, every parent knows there is good and bad silence. We enjoy the good silence that comes from the children playing well with each other or even better, because they're enthralled by a book. There is also bad silence but up until recently that bad silence was the type where the children are elsewhere in the house but one can no longer hear what they're doing. I used to be annoyed by that silence since it usually means a big clean up or something like that. But the permanent silence that comes from one's child being murdered is the most unwanted silence I can imagine. This silence is so brutal in its permanence. How can one explain the pain of knowing one's child's laughter will never be heard again from that child? What condolences could possibly be shared to assuage the pain that one will never again hear, "Mom/Dad watch this!" God damn that unwanted silence.

continued on page 5...

Inside this issue

- Unwanted Silence 1
- A Note from the Chair of the Executive Committee..... 2
- Night at the Ballpark.....2
- Changing Hearts and Minds3
- Music Minister Job Opening @ Greater New Bethel..... 4
- Media Corner: Social Media Series Part 2— Facebook..... 6
- Jodie Tooley's Retirement 6
- Yosh Nakagawa Leadership Endowment Fund..... 7
- Juneteenth Musical Celebration .. 7
- ABW PNW Retreat 8
- Calendar 8
- June Quarterly Board Meeting info 8
- Space for Grace 2022..... 9
- Evergreen Summer Food Fling 9
- Report on FBC Oly 150th 10
- Church Survey Request 10

Pray for Churches seeking Pastoral Leadership

- Queen Anne Baptist Church,** Seattle, WA
- Fairview Community Church,** Costa Mesa, CA
- Wenatchee Brethren Baptist Church,** Wenatchee, WA
- Filipino-American Christian Fellowship,** Lynnwood, WA
- Good Shepherd Baptist Church,** Lynnwood, WA
- Community Church of Issaquah,** Issaquah, WA

A Word From the Chair of the Executive Committee of the EAABC



*By John A. Armagost
Chair of the Executive Committee
and Pastor of Panther Lake
Community Church*

This is an exciting time for Evergreen. It is exciting because of new relationships with congregations joining us, and new staff that have and are coming

on board at Evergreen.

I know you join me in extending a welcome to Rev. Paul Schneider, the Office Administrator and Minister Shavon Walker, the Ministry Associate for Social Media. They joined us earlier this winter and have been getting settled into their positions, which might mean many things, i.e., discovering what our Executive Minister, Rev. Doug Avilesbernal is expecting, and what each pastor and each church is expecting, as well as trying to develop the positions in ways that the Lord has gifted and called them.

I remember when I first took a missionary position at a school in Japan. Someone asked our team leader if I had come to take my predecessor's place. My team leader paused for a moment and said, "John is his own person with his own gifts. I am sure that he will find his own place." What a blessing and a sense of freedom those words were for me.

Now we welcome Rev. Sam Kim to a new position, one to which he will, undoubtedly, give much of his own gifts in developing, that of Associate Executive Minister for Innovation and Design.

We all know that times of transition can be busy for those in the middle of the transitions. Let us keep our staff, Rev. Avilesbernal, Rev. Kim, Rev. Schneider and Minister Walker in our prayers. Let us remember, especially as we come out of these two years of COVID isolation, that while we hope they will be available to fit into our schedules right away, there is not only a need for team building, there are always

emergencies, as well as the need for family and personal time. I trust that we will be patient over these next few months if we don't receive a personal visit from them. I know that our Executive Minister, Rev. Avilesbernal, has a full schedule over the next few months. Join me in prayer for our team leaders.

Evergreen Night

@ the Ballpark

Mariners vs. Guardians

Aug. 27th, 2022, 7:10p

On August 27th, 2022 at 7:10pm you are invited to join the Evergreen family in the stands of T-Mobile Park to watch the Seattle Mariners play the Cleveland Guardians. This is the night Ichiro Suzuki is being inducted into the Mariners Hall of Fame, and the first 20,000 fans will get an Ichiro T-Shirt. Guaranteed to be a night to remember, as we celebrate a man who is a baseball legend in two countries!

In addition, there will be a moment for us to remember Yosh Nakagawa, who was instrumental in founding our Evergreen Region, and a huge sports and Ichiro Suzuki fan.

Let's get a big Evergreen crowd going to celebrate the return of Baseball, and an Evergreen tradition.

Tickets are only \$18.00 for main level seats and are going to go quickly! To reserve yours, please call the Evergreen Office at 253-859-2226 and press 1 to talk to Paul. Or you can email your reservation to

paul@ea-abc.org.

Changing Hearts and Minds, Learnings from my Anti-Racism Journey



By Sandra Jones

Racist!...My mind went blank; my heart began pounding. What could I have said or done to cause that kind of pain?? I shrank back, wanting to be invisible. The budding relation-

ship with my colleague withered. I had hurt a valued Black colleague, and I didn't even know how. Silence followed. I didn't talk with her about the incident or seek to learn about what racism means and how I reflected it. Instead fear and shame drove me to retreat to my white bubble.

In this article I share stories about the anti-racism journey I am on, particularly about what has happened thanks to the efforts of those in the Evergreen Association of Baptist Churches (Evergreen) family and Seattle First Baptist Church (SFBC), my home church. The journey has been and continues to be one of stumbling, learning, and recommitting...daily. Gratefully, I also am filled with Grace and the conviction that we are all here to wake up to our own worth and that of our brothers and sisters.

Background: SFBC's 153-year history of concern for social and racial justice has been evident since the late 1930s. When I arrived in the 90s each February, we heard from Black leaders, teachers, non-profit directors, and authors through their personal testimony. In 2016 with 11% of our congregation being people of color there was refreshed interest in and commitment to 'waking up' to how our white culture continues to hurt our brothers and sisters of color.

Education: The fresh interest materialized in a series of classes offered at SFBC in 2016. I valued the clas-

ses. However, I later learned how far they missed the mark for a brother of color. No person of color had been included in the planning; anger, disappointment, and mistrust resulted. As with my 'racist' experience, silence followed while leaders began to sort out what had happened and how education efforts going forward could gain credibility and provide some healing.

My learning to this point was largely on an intellectual level. That began to shift when I attended an Evergreen-sponsored leadership retreat on welcoming diversity. There I heard, saw, and felt firsthand the pain that my brothers and sisters of color experience daily. My fear began to transform into compassion and deeper curiosity.

SFBC pastors and lay leaders were learning, too. So, the next education session on anti-racism used White Fragility as a resource for an experiential six-week course summer of 2020. Dr. Patricia Hunter, SFBC's Black minister, was on the planning team. Participants paired to share their history with white privilege. As I voiced my experience, my accountability for this work grew.

Dr. Hunter asked me in August of 2020 to join the **Evergreen Euro-Caucus Anti-Racism Network** lead by Wim Mauldin; I was all in. The Network represented seven Evergreen congregations. Through focused study and discussion of articles and books like Growing up White, Me and White Supremacy, and How to Be an Antiracist, new perspectives emerged, and we were humbled to learn the extent and depth of our white privilege. The Network supported me in joining and staying on SFBC's newly formed Anti-

...continued on page 4

...continued from page 3

Racism Task Force (ARTF). SFBC had identified becoming an anti-racist church as one of our top goals.

Anti-Racism Task Force: As a task force we learned early on that our priority was to develop relationships and trust. This was especially true since we represented four different races. We needed to focus on compassionately listening to one another about recurring patterns of hurt and pain BIPOC (Black Indigenous and Others of Color) members were experiencing at church.

My personal brush with causing harm came when I volunteered to do a time-sensitive job for the task force. I blundered badly by following my white tendency to focus on 'goal over process/people' and not working collaboratively enough with the task force. People of color can teach white people more about prioritizing relationships over goals and my not being fully present to this difference caused hurt and a breakdown. Fortunately, I was learning to receive feedback with an open heart, so I was able/willing to hear how negatively my actions had impacted a brother of color. With the skillful facilitation and support of Rev. Jennifer Ikoma-Motsko, he and I were able to re-establish trust and, I had greater clarity on group ground rules.

Progress: Unfortunately, our SFBC BIPOC siblings continue to experience hurt due to the white supremacy culture within our church. Even as we continue to stumble, we all can continue to learn about what it takes to become an anti-racist church. Skillful creation of safe spaces to hear hard truths is key to our learning thanks to Rev. Douglas Avilesbernal, Executive Minister of Evergreen.

Another safe learning space within SFBC for me is Brave Space, an all-white group that meets to dis-

cuss and own our blind spots. We practice responding to situations where we have shown our white attitudes or behavior that we want to change. By regularly attending I learn how to prevent hurtful errors and make amends when I do. Sometimes there is pain, most of the time the pain is giving up old ways and opening my mind and my heart to truly welcome all. For me the journey is necessary and worth it. I am braver with a humbler heart. The learning process takes a village - SFBC, Evergreen and the growing relationships I have with brothers and sisters of color keep me on the path. I hope we are on the path together.

Music Minister Opening at Greater New Bethel

Greater New Bethel Baptist Church in Seattle is looking for a Music Minister:

Music Minister

Greater New Bethel, Seattle, strives to worship in excellence, pleasing God in all we do. We are currently seeking a Minister of Music who also strives to execute their duties in one accord with a desire for excellence.

Job duties will include: **Provide music for church services, rehearse, and perform songs, direct the choirs, and provide vocal lessons.** Prepare and teach music to the choir in rehearsals for morning services, community services, funerals, and special programs. Provide worship experiences in music while fulfilling the vision and mission of the Greater New Bethel Baptist Church.

The complete job description can be found on the GNB website www.gnbchurch.com under **Forms/Job Openings tab**. Interested applicants can send resumes to PastorMcClendon@gnbchurch.com.

...continued from page 1

“Oh Lord, how long shall I cry for help,
and you will not listen?
Or cry to you ‘Violence!’
And you will not save?”

“Why do you make me see
Wrong doing
And look at trouble?
Destruction and violence are before me;
Strife and contention arise.”
Habakkuk 2:1-3

The setting is vastly different but the depth of pain rings profoundly true. “How Lord, how long shall [we] cry for help?!”
The prophet goes on for a while detailing the many ways in which injustice, crime, hurt, and evil abounds in his world. Then God’s response comes and it is swift and clear.

“Look at the proud!
Their spirit is not right in them,
But the righteous live by their faith.
Moreover, wealth is treacherous;
The arrogant do not endure.
They gather all nations for themselves,
And collect all peoples as their own.”
Hab. 2:4-5

God goes on,
“Alas for you who heap up what is not your own!”
vs.6
“Alas for you who get evil gain for your houses.” vs.9
“Alas for you who build a town by bloodshed, and found a city on iniquity!” vs.12

The entire second chapter is God's response and can be summed up as follows:
your greed, apathy, and callousness reaps boundless cruelty.

This cruelty was enough several enoughs ago.

There are solutions.

There are actions that have been proven to work that can be taken. When the ban on assault weapons ended mass murders tripled! How is it that a majority of Americans are in favor of responsible legislation for the selling and tracking of firearms yet nothing happens? Why does the majority keep losing? What are we doing wrong?

We are not showing up.

But, let us not despair because there is hope! That hope is that there are more of us who want this to stop. Sadly this hope will remain unrealized while mere discomfort or worse inconvenience continue to be enough to stop us from taking action. The other side is also large and diverse but united and willing to act. They show up, they give money, they vote, they will not be stopped by mere inconvenience. They know our apathy from comfort will allow them to continue the carnage for profits sake. We don’t even show up to vote to stop them from making it nearly impossible for minorities to vote.

I need to stop my preaching as wise voices are reminding me that I’m coming very close to alienating those who are in favor of free access to firearms, and we must not do that. I do need to hold back as I am too passionate about this to speak reasonably and for that I apologize. So I leave you with someone infinitely better at this than I will ever be.

Hear Amanda Gorman.

“This alarm is how we know
We must be altered-
That we must triumph or try.
Thus while hate cannot be terminated,
It can be transformed
into love that lets us live.

“May we not just grieve, but give:
May we not just ache, but act;
May our signed right to bear arms
Never blind our sight from to shared harm;
May we choose our children over chaos.
May another innocent never be lost.”

Evergreen family, there are more of us than them.
Let us act like it and do something.

Media Corner—Social Media Series, Part 2: Facebook

By Shavon Walker



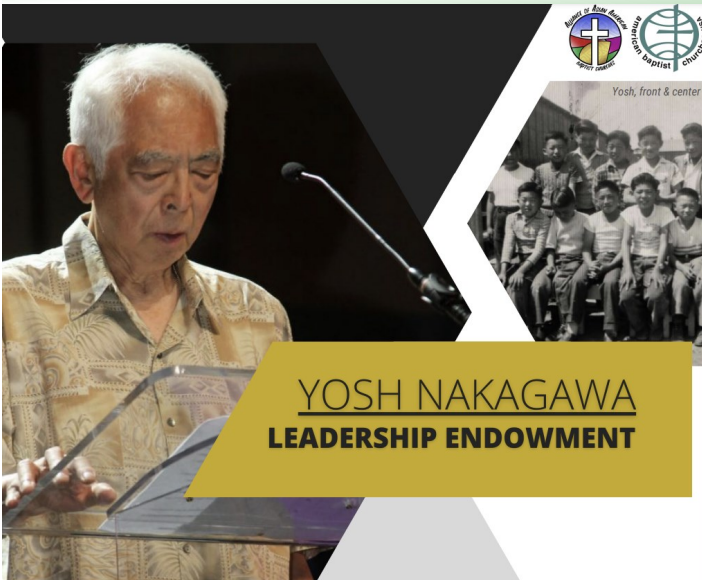
This month in our Social Media Series, we're going to talk about one of the most popular companies, Facebook. Facebook was originally created in 2004 at Harvard University by Mark Zuckerberg and some friends. Initially, it was meant to give students a place to rate artwork. As time went on, its use changed, and now it's one of the most recognizable social media platforms in the world. Facebook is by no means the first platform to give people places to communicate with each other in groups or in one on one conversations. But it does go beyond its predecessors by having a News Feed, in which you can see posts from friends without having to go to each profile. There's also Facebook Groups, where you can interact with others who are interested in similar topics, and Facebook Messenger, where you can "chat" (type in real time) with others in your group or have a private conversation with an individual. You can even call someone via Groups without having to know their phone number or do a video chat from your phone. The Facebook Messenger app can be used separately from Facebook itself, so if you don't want to create a full fledged account, you can create a "lite" version just to keep in touch with others. Facebook has had a number of troubling privacy issues over the years, with everything from leaking

information to allowing apps to steal data to attempting to affect user moods based on posts. Most recently, it was discovered that Facebook violated an Illinois law that required companies to get permission from users to store biometric data, which includes information that links faces to individual identities. So how do you protect yourself? Being careful about the type of information you put on Facebook and the type of games and apps you use are two of the best ways to stay safe. In addition, be sure to only friend people that you trust, and watch out for "spoof" accounts, which are accounts that look like people you know but are scammers in disguise. These points will come up again and again during the series, so be aware of them. That's it for this month. Next month, we'll talk about Instagram, and its pros and cons. If you have any questions or would like me to tackle a certain topic, please email me at media@ea-abc.org.

Jodie Tooley's Retirement

On April 24th, Rev. Jodie Tooley retired from ministry at the United Church of Moscow, Idaho, an Evergreen Congregation. We celebrate her years of ministry, and wish her the best in her next phase of life. The following pictures from her retirement celebration were provided by Janet Hasselblad.





**YOSH NAKAGAWA
LEADERSHIP ENDOWMENT**

Yosh Nakagawa Leadership Endowment

Continuing a Legacy of Empowerment

In collaboration with the Nakagawa family, the Asian Alliance has created a Yosh Nakagawa Leadership Endowment fund in Honor of Yosh Nakagawa, a key founder of the Alliance and of the ABC-USA Inter-Caucus, and of the Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches. We encourage all whose lives have been touched, directly or indirectly, by Yosh's life and legacies to contribute. This fund will be used to cultivate, train and grow Asian leaders that they may continue to carry out Yosh's message of justice and faith.

You can contribute by check:

Alliance of Asian American Baptist Churches
c/o Japanese Baptist Church
160 Broadway
Seattle, WA 98122

Memo: "Yosh Nakagawa Legacy Fund"

Or you can contribute online [here](#).

One Seattle Juneteenth Musical Celebration

"THE SONGS OF BLACK FOLK"

Music of Resistance & Hope

**Sunday June 19th, 6pm at McCaw Hall,
321 Mercer St., Seattle, WA 98109**

This event is FREE but requires registration.

Formal attire requested.

This Concert will expose the audience to the *Negro Spirituals* and the diverse musical traditions that they have spawned including, Gospel, jazz, R&B, and even Hip-Hop. The Conductors will guide a journey through a musical culture that has functioned as a tool of resistance and as a source of hope for a Black people who have endured four centuries of white supremacy and its unrelenting assault on Black lives and Black bodies. The intent of this Concert is to use music to connect the African American struggle for freedom and justice with the struggles of other Americans who have had to fight their way in from the margins of our society.

Special Guests and Key Performers include:

Musical Conductors

Dr. Stephen Michael Newby

Ramón Bryant Braxton

Special Guest

Darin Atwater

Performances By

Bridget Bazile

James Connor

Soloman Howard

As well as an intergenerational Choir of 25 gifted local singers has been selected to perform choral selections. The group includes well known gospel artists Martha Nash, Robin Henderson, Felicia Curry, Deneen Grant, and Eldridge Harding.

This event is sponsored in part by the Church Council of Greater Seattle.

You can register here: <https://one-seattle.ticketleap.com/juneteenth/>

ABW PNW Retreat Let the Walls Fall Down

The American Baptist Women of the Pacific Northwest are inviting all women to join us for a retreat/conference June 24-26, 2022 at Camp Bethel. It has been about three years since we have been able to worship and fellowship in person. We are excited to see how everyone is doing.

Our Bible Study Leader will be Rev. Dr. Barbara Reid and the theme is "Let the Walls Fall Down".

During Covid we have intentionally or unintentionally built up personal walls that are stopping or slowing us down from serving God as we have been called to do. We will be working together to explore, discover and bring our walls down.

For more information about this retreat and registration, please check our website at www.abwm-pnw.org or contact Lorna Flannery.

God Bless each one of you and hope to see you at Camp Bethel.

Lorna Flannery—flanbaker@gmail.com

Calendar

June

June 5th—**Pentecost** Sunday! Don't forget to wear **Red!**

June 11th, 2022—Evergreen Quarterly Board Meeting by Zoom—see opposite column

June 19th, 2022—Father's Day

June 19th, 2022—Juneteenth

June 19th, 2022—6pm—McCaw Hall Seattle—The Songs of Black Folk: Music of Resistance and Hope

June 24-26th, 2022—ABW PNW Retreat. See above.

June 26th, 2022—**Seattle Pride** Festival

Evergreen Quarterly Board Meetings

Here are the dates for all of the Evergreen Quarterly Board Meetings for 2022. **These meetings take place from 10am to 11:30am Pacific.**

Please make sure your church is represented at these meetings. It is ideal to have both lay and pastoral leadership present when possible. These Quarterly meetings are an important part of our work together as a region, where we both do the necessary business and set our agenda for the future.

#2 – June 11th, 2022 – Online over Zoom. Zoom information for logging in below.

#3 – August 13th, 2022 – This meeting we will gather physically, location still to be determined, and will be hybrid, so people can join us over Zoom also.

#4 – October 13th-15th, 2022 – Annual Meeting in Denver, CO. We will be physically at FBC Denver, and the meeting will be accessible online via Zoom and livestream as well.

Evergreen June 2022 Quarterly Board Meeting

Our Quarterly Board meeting this month will be entirely online. We will gather at 10am and use Zoom for our collective meeting and for our caucus breakouts. You can use the link below, or enter the meeting ID and passcode to join our meeting.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87876281482?pwd=TEpRRS83cEdDdW5TR1RnMkk5YmNLQT09>

Meeting ID: 878 7628 1482

Passcode: 267929





Registration is live!

American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) invites you to Space for Grace 2022, September 19 - 23, 2022 at the Westin Kansas City, Missouri, at Crown Center. Our theme for this year's biannual event—**Testify!**—speaks to the need in these times for diverse voices sharing genuine, honest dialogue about issues of Christian leadership, discipleship and justice. Its biblical foundation comes from 2 Corinthians 4: 6 – 9.

This year Space for Grace will include the Spiritual Caregiver's Conference from Sept. 19th-20th, Converge at Space for Grace on Sept. 20th, and the primary Space for Grace event Sept. 21st-23rd. Space for Grace, the flagship event of ABHMS' Space for Grace 2022, will offer a place and space for telling God's good news ... and hearing it too. When we testify to each other in God's love, our testimonies become gifts of grace that strengthen and affirm the faith we carry into facing the challenges of daily life. Just like previous Space for Grace gatherings, this year's event will provide opportunities to connect with passionate speakers and network with workshop leaders and fellow participants. In addition to an impressive slate of keynote speakers, you will enjoy learning experiences on leadership empowerment, discipleship and healing and transforming communities presented by renowned pastors, organizational directors, and authors.

You can find out more at: <https://web.cvent.com/event/67edaf79-f640-491d-a6c1-f970b4f309ed/summary>

Save the Date: August 6th, 2022—Evergreen Summer Food Fling

Join us on August 6th, 2022 from Noon to 2:30pm at Panther Lake Community Church in Kent for the Evergreen Summer Food Fling! This will be a fun event with all caucuses bringing food to share with one another. Barbecue, noodles and more will be on the tables!

This is an Evergreen fundraiser and tickets will go on sale soon at \$20 each. If you'd like to contribute food for the event, please let us know!

A Report on FBC Oly's 150th Celebration

By Paul Schneider

The gathering at First Baptist Olympia on May 21st, to celebrate 150 years and more of faithful ministry was a joyous one. In addition to a wonderful service, with beautiful music both recorded from the past and skillfully performed in the present by Dr. Spatula-Knoll, there was an excellent sermon by Rev. Sam Hochstetter, which spoke about the past, the place, people, and the power which infused God's church as it was incarnated in the particular beloved community of FBC Olympia. Rev. Sam Hochstetter was recognized as Pastor Emeritus, with Rev. Mark Rambo, who's known Sam all his life giving both touching and humorous remarks. Then to top it off, a phenomenal meal, with a chef who grew up at FBC Oly. All in all, a delightful celebration of faithful ministry!



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 the Holy Spirit of Pentecost renew you!

Church Information Update Survey

Please read and respond!

One of the important tasks we’re working on is updating important contact information. These updated lists will be used to make sure that all of our Pastors are contacted swiftly and efficiently when there is a need, and that our churches, and lay leaders are connected to Evergreen as well. Even if you know, that we have your church or Pastor’s email address or phone number, please list it anyway. This way we can be sure we have the most current information.

The form also asks that you give us certain dates as well (founding date of the church, hiring date and ordination dates of the pastors). We want to celebrate those anniversaries with your congregation! They are important to mark. If you do not know a particular date, that’s ok, please fill out the rest of the form anyway. That way we can get the critical contact information set.

This request was also in previous issues but only seven churches have responded so far.

The form can be filled out online at <https://forms.office.com/r/Rp8tRKH4jd>, or you can request a copy be sent to you by mail or email. It would be great if we could gather all this information as soon as possible! Please contact Paul Schneider with any questions at paul@ea-abc.org.