

Evergreen Notes



“All Oppression Creates A State of War”



By Rev. Doug Avilesbernal
Executive Minister

“Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Hebrews 10:23-25

“All oppression creates a state of war.”

Simone de Beauvoir

I always thought those who had lived through the middle of the 20th Century got to live through historic times that would, hopefully, never repeat in such density. Yet here we are, nearing the end of the worst of a pandemic walking right into the doorsteps of what could be a European, if not a world war. While our own country seems teetering on the end of democracy with our extremes on both ends getting most of the attention and our hopes. Violence is all around us and feels like it is engulfing everything. How does one keep faith? How does one avoid joining violence as the only option to find safety, comfort, hope?

This week I have been consumed by this seemingly impossible question; is violence the only way out of oppression? As I fell deeper and deeper into despair within me the most unexpected encounter slowed my fall and encouraged me to look up toward hope. I looked up from my navel gazing to discover it is March. More specifically, women’s month. Just about every woman, sadly, in the history of humanity has had to live with this question: “How will I keep hope in oppression without resorting to violence at the seeming impossible power of my oppressors?”

As usual, the path toward a better world has always been alongside us in the

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Pray for Churches seeking Pastoral Leadership

- Mount Zion Baptist Church, Seattle, WA**
- 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**

We're Moving! - Wait, Nope, Just Got A P.O. Box

Truly, we're not moving, but we do have an update to our mailing address. Our physical location (at 409 Third St. S, Suite A, Kent, WA 98032) hasn't changed, this is just a new place to send us your newsletters, checks, and any other hardcopy correspondence. Any mail you've already sent to the old address is being forwarded to the new P.O. Box, but that forward-

ing service won't last for ever. Please appropriately update your records.

New Mailing Address:

Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches
P.O. Box 1044
Kent, WA, 98035-1044

New Regional Hires! Meet our new Staff!



The Evergreen Baptist Association is pleased to welcome Minister Shavon Walker to the position of Ministry Associate for Social Media. Shavon is a graduate of the Berkeley School

of Theology, and also holds a Masters Degree in Divinity. She, like many of her peers, has been acquainted with social media since the 1990s. During her technical writing position at Google, she learned more about the power of the internet and how it could be used to educate others. At the start of the pandemic, she realized that there was a need for a ministry based on social media, especially after taking a class entitled "Ministry in a Digital World". This inspired her to fill that need. To that end, she has given seminars on social media to her local church, made short videos on TikTok, and currently does a cooking stream with an eye toward pastoral care on Twitch, a real time platform ([twitch.tv/jane_henry](https://www.twitch.tv/jane_henry)). She is a member of First Baptist Church of Berkeley, and assists with services for Burien Community Church in Washington.

Evergreen has a new Office Administrator, Paul Schneider. Paul is likely a familiar face to many of you, as he is also the Pastor of Burien Community Church, where he has served for the last four and a half years. A life-



long American Baptist, he graduated with an MDiv from the Berkeley School of Theology in 2017 and was ordained by his home church, First Baptist Church of Berkeley in 2018. As part of his Master's project for his MDiv, he founded and still runs an interfaith ministry of presence at fan-run science fiction and fantasy conventions called The Oasis Project. He is currently pursuing a DMin with BST with a focus on intersections, and lack thereof, between the church and pop-culture. Previously, his primary employment was working in distribution where he racked up two decades of experience in everything from warehousing to customer service to outside sales to Branch Operations Management. He is a father of five: three his own, and he raised his niece and nephew as well, but only one is under 18 anymore. He's excited to be in this new role, is learning as fast as he can, and asks for your grace in this time of transition.



The 2022 Evergreen Leadership Retreat Team & Guest Speaker at Camp Burton
From left to right: Rev. Paul Schneider, Rev. Doug Avilesbernal, Rev. Dr. Kadia Edwards, Min. Shavon Walker, and Gaytoo Thaw.

A Report from the “Been There, Done That,” Evergreen Leadership Retreat

On February 11th and 12th, 28 people gathered either in person at Camp Burton or online via Zoom to participate in the 2022 Evergreen Leadership Retreat. Our focus was on the “Evergreen Way,” but this was not just a rehashing of the important but familiar RESPECT Guidelines or the practices of Gracious Invitation. Instead, we approached the Evergreen Way from a “Been There, Done That,” perspective, which not only reviewed how we operate, but why we’re growing as a region when others are not. We were joined by Rev. Dr. Kadia Edwards, whose work focuses on diversity, equity, and inclusion. On Friday Doug led us on a comprehensive overview of how Evergreen functions, from our ethnic caucuses to our model of consensus. Dr. Edwards helped us as we began to discuss the points of conflict within Evergreen, which are places we can explore, and learn from one another, as we seek a new path forward

together. In particular her focus was on the “unspoken stories,” the things that we already know and do not voice, or the untrue things others think about us.

Saturday focused on what we have already been and turning toward what we can become in the future. Doug pointed out that there is a shared space for all four caucuses in Evergreen, and indeed that is a majority of the space, but our system also creates a “home” space for each caucus, a place where we are most comfortable engaging difficult issues and making decisions which are then shared through reporting back to the main body. There are also shared spaces where only two or three of the caucuses overlap, instead of all four, shared experiences both positive and negative. We discussed the difference between the balance of the caucuses at this leadership retreat compared to the one from February of 2020 (where over 60 people attended, and all four caucuses were well represented) and explored why that might be the case. We were encouraged to open our eyes and minds to how certain approaches might lead to reduced participation and had lively discussion around the barriers to entry for an event like this. Dr. Edwards provided two scenarios designed to spark different approaches and opinions, and then led an excellent discussion for us on reconciliation, not just for the past, but the present as well.

As always, the Camp Burton kitchen staff took on the challenge of feeding our group, and the truly excellent meals were a highlight of the event for those who were present physically. We’re just sorry we couldn’t send some through the internet to our siblings joining us over Zoom!

Leadership for this retreat was provided by a member of each of the four ethnic caucuses (see the picture above), and the diversity of thought and approach was critical in creating a dynamic space where multiple voices could be heard. As always the topics we discussed evolved during the retreat, and Evergreen is deeply grateful to Rev. Dr. Edwards for joining us and flexibly leading us in challenging but important discussions.

Media Corner—Coming Together Online and In Person

by Shavon Walker

As people of faith, it is important that we gather together regularly. Many of our churches have been fortunate enough to be able to use online means of communication to do so. And, of course, many of us are very eager to gather together in person again. But there are two things we must be cautious of: putting our need for in person connection ahead of our need to stay safe, and insisting that in person services are “more sacred” than online.

As of this writing, the Omicron spike seems to be receding. This is partly because many people have had their first two vaccination shots, some have had boosters, and some are preparing for a second booster. And if we do fall ill, we are much less likely to go to the hospital. This makes face to face interaction, without masking, much less risky. But that said, we cannot rush the process. Omicron’s symptoms are much harder to spot than the original virus, if they manifest at all. We can still transmit the virus to the immunocompromised or to those who cannot be vaccinated, or to those who are around them regularly. For these people, technology is safer, if not better, than the real thing.

Those who worship online know that there can be just as much joy and sacredness in a Zoom communion as breaking bread in person. They enjoy hearing a Sunday sermon, whether it be across the pulpit or over Zoom. They love catching up their church friends, both before and after service; they are grateful for the chance to avoid isolation. And far be it from us to deprive them of their weekly intimacy with God simply because we feel they must be present physically.

In Philippians 2:4, the apostle Paul tells the church, “Instead of each person watching out for their own good, watch out for what is better for others.” As you prepare to go to your next church event, think



about those who cannot. Follow Paul’s advice; do not pressure them to return to in person meetings if they are not comfortable enough to do so. Instead, reach out to them, especially if you both have the technolo-

gy to do so. Connection, whether face to face or online, is important.

You can always reach out to me: media@ea-abc.org

Please Help Us Update our Contacts for Churches and Pastors!

One of the important tasks we’re doing during this transition is to create updated lists of 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 think, or know, that we have your church or Pastor’s email address or phone number, please list it anyway. This way we can be 100% sure we have the most current information. The form also asks that, as best you’re able, 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 contact information set, and we can work together on determining the appropriate anniversaries.

The form can be filled out online by going clicking on [this link here](#), or you can request a hardcopy be sent to you by mail. If for some reason you feel it would be easier to just email us this information, you can do so at office@ea-abc.org.

Utah Clergy Holy Land Tour, Jan. 10-20, 2023



Greetings Friends in Christ,

A group of my colleagues and I have been working on putting together a Holy Land tour that all of our churches could do together. We finally have all the details worked out and are pleased to announce the Utah Clergy, Journey Through the Bible Holy Land Tour will take place next year, January 10-20, 2023. The trip is all inclusive including travel, meals, and tours with a few exceptions noted in the brochure.

We will spend time in places significant in the Gospels like Bethlehem, Galilee, Bethsaida, Nazareth and Jerusalem. We will also explore site with historical significance like Qumran, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. We will also have opportunities engage with citizens of the Holy Land and learn about the Israeli and Palestinian conflicts so that we might better understand the dynamics of life in Israel.

Here is a link to the Information page where you can download the brochure and register.

<http://www.eo.travelwithus.com/tours/hl23011023u#eotours>

If you decide to register, make sure you add Curtis Price as your host and my Host ID# 60871.

I am very much looking forward to this amazing, once in a lifetime excursion to the Holy Land. If you are at all interested in joining me, please let me know and I will make sure you are getting all the information you need.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Curtis Price, Pastor
First Baptist Church of Salt Lake City

Greater New Bethel MB Invites you to Celebrate 25th Anniversary with Pastor and First Lady MacClendon

The members of the Greater New Bethel M.B Church would like to invite each and everyone of you to our celebratory Drive-Up 25th Anniversary for our Pastor and First Lady, Reverend and Sis. Dana E. (Kristie) McClendon.

Hours for the drive by will be Saturday, March 19th, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM located at **5279 Rainier Ave S. Seattle, WA.**

After 25 years, God is STILL not finished!
<https://www.gnbchurch.com/>



March Calendar

March 2nd—Ash Wednesday—Lent begins!

March 10th—6:30pm—Executive Committee meets via Zoom.

March 12th—10am—Evergreen Association Quarterly Board Meeting via Zoom.

March 13th—Daylight Savings Time Begins!
Don't forget to Spring Forward or you'll be late to Church!

March 17th—St. Patrick's Day

March 19th—1-3pm—Greater New Bethel MB 25th Anniversary Drive-Up Celebration. See above!

March 31st—César Chávez Day

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.

#1 – March 12th, 2022 – Online only via Zoom. Link will be sent out the week before.

#2 – June 11th, 2022 – Physical location TBD, also over Zoom.

#3 – August 13th, 2022 – Physical location TBD, also over Zoom.

#4 – October 7th-8th, 2022 – Annual Meeting in Denver, CO.

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risk and promise." *The Second Sex*.

Gospel and its most powerful and effective expression on earth after Jesus, women. Simone de Beauvoir's quote above is part of what informed her exploration of what it is to be a woman in her seminal work *The Second Sex*. What I loved about digging into that book, as far as I could understand given that she existed and wrote at an intellectual level way above what I can dream, is her answer to the struggle of oppression. Women aren't weaker they are equal and therefore,

"two separate beings, in different circumstances, face to face in freedom and seeking justification of their existence through one another, will always live an adventure full of

The state of war, facing face to face in difference circumstances, does not need to degrade to vulgar violence in order for each to find justification and value in their existence. Being able to force our will on others is not what gives us value, for God so loved the world...

Our world needs to hear Jesus' message that does not ignore differences, it embraces them as the means to help us all live in a better world. So, "let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Editor's Notes—Transitions

By Rev. Paul Schneider

"Change is the only constant in life." - Heraclitus

Change is one of those things that we all go through, all the time and is also quite often incredibly stressful. All of the five major life events that psychologists say are the most stressful are linked to change: death of a loved one, divorce, moving, major illness or injury, and losing your job. Positive changes in your life, such as getting a new job, marriage, and birth of a child also rank highly on the stress scales, if not as high as the others listed above. Each of those events can cause a change in how we see ourselves, and how we relate to the world around us. Those kinds of changes can make us to question the things we assumed about ourselves, and the things we thought were not only important to us, but that made us important.

To top it all off, we're in a time of massive change and upheaval in our own society. No one remembers a time of pandemic like the one we're in now, and for some of our youngest children, they've never really known a time when it wasn't the pandemic. The stress of that is immeasurable. To some degree we've all adapted to a "new normal," in

CoVIDtide, and we'll adapt to another "new normal," as we come out of the pandemic.

And when something familiar that isn't you changes, it can be really hard too. The Evergreen Association Staff team has experienced quite a bit of change. With both the Associate Minister for Media and the Office Administrator changing over in the last couple months, and the change in Executive Minister only a few years ago, this is a lot of change for an organization to experience. The new team is getting our legs under us, and learning as we go. We're also getting used to a "new normal."

So we ask both for patience AND for your feedback in this time of transition. We know the "new normal" might be unfamiliar, especially as we implement new strategies and technologies, and we think that good things are on the horizon. Things might look and sound a bit different, but we're still here to serve you, the staff of Evergreen.

If you want to send me a note, or a correction, please do so anytime at paul@ea-abc.org.



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

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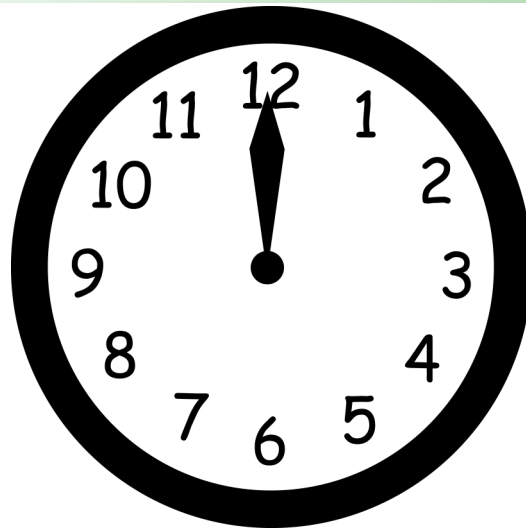
Evergreen Notes, the newsletter for member churches, ecumenical partners, national affiliates, and friends of the Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches is published monthly. Please submit articles by the 20th of the month prior to expected publication. You are encouraged to copy and/or reprint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

May God bless you
in the month of
March!



Daylight Savings Time is just around the corner!

Once again we come to that time of year when we again enter Daylight Savings Time. Remember to set your clocks forward the evening before, since you’ll lose an hour overnight. Daylight Savings technically begins on **March 13th, 2022** at 1am (which becomes 2am the moment the hour is struck), but it’s probably easier to set your clocks forward the night of the 12th before you go to bed. Of course, most smart and internet connected devices will automatically update, but not all. May you have a smooth transition this year to the updated time, and arrive safely, and not late to your Sunday services!