



The Central Pacific Coast B•a•p•t•i•s•t

American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast . . .
resourcing, empowering and equipping congregations to discover and fulfill
their unique mission in their neighborhood . . . and around the world.

Volume 75 No. 3

Christmas 2012

Dates to Remember

ABCCPC Offices Closed
Dec 24-Jan 2

GBA Ministers Council Retreat
Danville, CA
January 14-15

ABCCPC Board Retreat
Medford, OR
February 1-2

**ABCCPC Ministers Council
Retreat**
Lincoln City, OR
February 18-20

Clergy Ethics Training
Redwood Glen
February 26-27

ABCCPC Missions Conference
Allen Temple / Oakland, CA
April 19-21

Region Staff

Rev. Steve Bills
Executive Minister

Rev. Miriam Mendez
Associate Executive Minister

Judy Flora
Office Manager

Nancy Duke
Bookkeeper

Terrie Mussotto
Receptionist

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them,

“Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

“And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

**“Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace,
good will toward men.”**

Merry Christmas!

*–The Board and Staff of the
American Baptist Churches of
the Central Pacific Coast*

A Letter from our Executive Minister . . .

Dear Friends of Christ and His Church,

Greetings in the Lord! The American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast are in the midst of one of the most exciting periods in their long and storied history. Last year we celebrated our 125th anniversary as the Oregon Baptist State Convention. However, even as we were doing that, we were welcoming into our membership over 20 congregations from northern California. But . . . even this new reality is nothing new, for long before we were dividing Baptist associations by political state boundaries, the association coordinating the Baptist witness and mission along the Pacific coast included churches from the San Francisco Bay area to Vancouver, British Columbia.

In October we met at First Baptist Church of Alameda, California, for our first regional Annual Gathering held outside the boundaries of the state of Oregon. At that meeting asked the delegates from our 62 churches to approve a change in our name from the *ABC of Oregon* to the *American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast*. This name harkens back to the pioneer days when Baptist Association of the Northern Pacific Coast, headquartered in Portland, coordinated cooperation among the churches on the western frontier.

Cooperation among the churches is what made all the difference in their success as a mission presence in what would eventually become Washington, Oregon, and northern California. For although we now, as then, recognize the local congregation as the primary agency of mission and ministry, we also appreciate the synergy that churches working together create when they commit themselves to joint ministry as the hands, and feet, and voice of Jesus.

The paragraph that describes who we are is helpful in understanding this dynamic: *The churches in ABCCPC are joined together in a covenant partnership to resource, empower, and equip one another to discover and fulfill their unique mission in their communities, along the Pacific coast, and around the world. They are committed to cooperating in mission and ministries that can be best accomplished jointly. The region structure and staff is established and maintained collectively by the churches to accomplish this.*

We recognize that each of our churches is autonomous, and that as Baptist congregations, they appreciate the Baptist principle of interdependence. They are each unique bodies in unique circumstances with unique strengths and unique opportunities. As local congregations they have covenanted to help each other be successful in their unique communities, and have committed themselves to working together to achieve mission and ministry objectives that would be beyond the reach of any of them by themselves.

As we approach the new year, it is traditionally the time when we express our support and gratitude for the agencies that are addressing our personal priorities with our end-of-the-year contributions. This special edition of *The Central Pacific Coast Baptist* is designed to refresh our memories of the opportunities inherent in our covenant partnership, and to invite you to engage with the American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast at a higher level both now and throughout 2013.

We are especially excited about our initiatives on congregational vitality, evangelism, and new church planting. A special report on our renewed emphasis on church planting was made at the Annual Gathering in Alameda when we announced the addition of the Rev. Miriam Mendez to our staff as our Associate Executive Minister.

The work of the American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast is supported by churches and individuals committed to our covenant partnership. As you review all of the end-of-year appeals for support that we all receive from worthy causes, won't you give prayerful consideration to investing in the mission and ministry of our family of faith?

Grace and Peace,



Rev. Steve Bills
Executive Minister

The Critical Role of the Region in Baptist Life

For American Baptists, the local church is the fundamental unit of mission and ministry. In ABCCPC, sixty-two of these local congregations are joined together in a covenant partnership to encourage, empower, and equip one another to discover and fulfill their unique mission in their communities, along the central Pacific coast, and around the world. They are committed to ministry to each other and with each other.

And just exactly does this look like? Since each congregation is autonomous and uniquely placed in its own ministry context, none of them are doing exactly the same things. They are all, however, guided by the same "Great" mandates:

The Great Commission	<i>Preach the Gospel; make disciples</i>
The Great Commandment	<i>Love the Lord; love your neighbor</i>
The Great Community	<i>We are one Body of Christ and members of one another</i>
The Great Criteria	<i>Caring for the Last, the Least, the Lost, and the Locked-Out</i>

With these timeless mandates guiding our shared vision for the future, we have identified several areas where common opportunities for growth appear. In the coming year we will engage our pastors and congregations in dialogue and training designed to enhance our ability to adapt to the modern challenges surrounding congregational vitality, evangelism, and new church planting.

- *How can we become stronger, more vibrant congregations?*
- *How can we more effectively bring our friends and neighbors to faith, and then help them grow in that faith*
- *How can we extend our reach and multiply our influence by establishing new congregations in communities where we are not yet ministering?*

As we contemplate the answers to these questions, we will dream together about what each of us can become in the face of our unique challenges and our unique opportunities. We will draw on one another's learnings and grow together in our common pursuits. We will bring our resources to bear where investment will yield much fruit.

The American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast

Dear Steve,

We can do more together than any of us could ever accomplish alone. Please invest these gifts in the work of fostering congregational vitality, evangelism, and new church planting in the *American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast!*

Name _____ Email address _____

Address _____ City, ST Zip _____

*Home Church _____ [Your church can receive Region Offering credit for these contributions]

Amount Enclosed \$60 \$120 \$600 \$_____ Amount Pledged \$_____ per month quarter year
 Optional: I would like to designate all or part [specify amount of your gift _____] to **New Church Planting**.

Please charge my MasterCard Visa for one-time gift recurring pledge. Signature _____

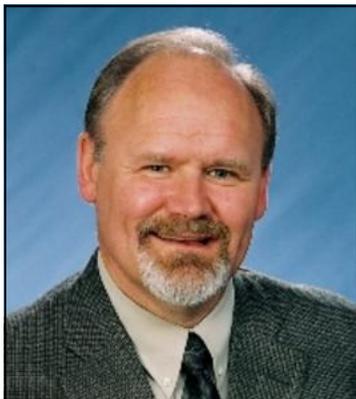
Name on card _____ Card number _____ Exp date _____ Sec'y code _____

[If you prefer, you may call the office to charge your gift to your credit card or to make your pledge.]

Please have someone contact me about ways to include the work of the region in my will or estate.

Please return this card together with your gift made payable to ABCCPC in the enclosed self-addressed envelope or send to:
ABC Central Pacific Coast † 0245 SW Bancroft Street, Suite G † Portland, Oregon 97239 † (503) 228-8394

International Ministries Executive Director Reid Trulson to Keynote Annual Missions Conference



***Save the Date!
April 19-21, 2013
Oakland, California***

***Hosted by Allen Temple Baptist Church
Rev. Dr. J. Alfred Smith, Jr., Senior Pastor***

Spotlight on Local, Home, and Foreign Missions!

The ABC of the Central Pacific Coast 2013 Missions Conference will be hosted by Allen Temple Baptist Church in Oakland, California on Friday and Saturday, April 19-20. A special Sunday morning worship experience will punctuate the conference for those who are able to stay through April 21.

In addition to the missionary speakers and topical workshops we will hear and experience throughout the conference, a hands-on field trip to several of the unique ministries of Allen Temple Baptist Church will be held on Friday morning. This field trip will be hosted by Rev. Daniel Buford, Director of the Prophetic Justice Ministry and will include a orientation session and site visits to neighboring ministry locations.

One of the more interesting workshops will be the one that focuses on planning short-term missions trips. An actual trip will be identified, and the planning steps outlined and taken live, during the workshop, so at the conclusion of the session we will have a trip planned and on the calendar that folks from around the region can sign up for. If you are involved in the planning of short-term missions trips this workshop will be an invaluable experience and resource.

Conference specifics, including lodging options and registration and meals costs will be sent out in mid-January. Block these dates on your calendar and plan to join us in sunny Oakland this Spring!

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the Central Pacific Coast
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