



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.

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Summer 2013

Dates to Remember

ABC-USA Biennial Mission Summit, Overland Park, KS
June 20-23

ABCCPC Ministers Council Rogue River Rafting Trip
July 22, 23

ABC Emergency Services Center Sturgis Mission Trip
July 31—August 11

“YOUTHQUAKE”
9th grade—college freshmen
Allen Temple Baptist Church
Oakland, CA
www.youthquake.us
August 22, 23

ABWM Retreat Medford, OR
September 13-15

Bike and Hike for a Rancher Camp Verde, AZ
Sept 30-Oct 5

ABCCPC Annual Gathering First Baptist Church
Portland, OR
October 18-20

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Let The Church Be The Church!

By Rev. Steve Bills

Executive Minister, American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast

vi·tal·i·tol·o·gy, *noun*. (v -ta-l -tä-l -j)

The theology of congregational health and missional capacity.

From vi·tal·i·ty, *noun*. (v - ta-l -t)

1 a: the peculiarity distinguishing the living from the nonliving b: capacity to live and develop; also :physical or mental (or spiritual) vigor especially when highly developed 2 a :power of enduring b: lively and animated character

Vitalitology. OK, so I admit that I just invented that word. But it seems to be an appropriate variation on the word vitality as we consider it in our theological context.

So, why do some congregations flourish while others shrivel and languish? What makes two congregations that appear similar outwardly so very different in their health and missional capacity?

Occasionally you might find external circumstances impacting the vitality of a congregation, but most of the time you will find factors internal to the congregation having the greatest influence on its health.

Vim, Vigor, and Vitality. You might remember that slogan from an old Dr. Pepper advertising campaign. We have always valued the energy, the strength, and the health that allowed us to actively pursue our dreams and goals. As believers in Christ who strive to be effective as the hands and feet and voice of Jesus, we ought to be keenly interested in our personal and congregational vitality.

Our 2013 Annual Gathering will be focused on “vitalitology” around the theme “Let The Church Be The Church” and will feature Keynote Speakers the Rev. Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins, III, the Executive Director of the American Baptist Home Mission Societies and the Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Savage, the Pastor of First Baptist Church of Springfield, Oregon, among others. Mark these dates, plan now to attend, and be watching for more details!



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ABC Central Pacific Coast Annual Gathering
October 18-20, 2013
First Baptist Church, Portland, Oregon

We Covenant Together as Christian Community

By Carol Wheeler

President, American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast

Our common profession of faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior unites us as Christians. As members and friends who participate in worship, mission, and ministry in an American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast we are united in a specific Christian community. In this community life we often refer to ourselves as family — we are brothers and sisters in Christ. As a regional family of churches we can do mis-



sion in the name of Jesus that we could not do as individual churches. In Life Together Dietrich Bonhoeffer states "Christianity means community through Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ...a reality created by God in Christ in which we may participate." A reality in which we may participate! Our Region is our "home" for our family of churches and offers us this opportunity to participate and respond to God's call.

How can we do this? Here are a few ways:

In the last issue of this publication three of our sister congregations, Atwater Baptist Church, Cedar Hills Baptist Church and First Baptist Church, McMinnville shared their mission outreach events and programs. We were also introduced to Redwood Glen, a Christian camp and conference center and a ministry partner.

Perhaps your heart was touched and you felt called to respond by increasing your participation in one of these missions. Or perhaps one of these articles prompted you to see a need in your local community and initiate a new outreach.

Our Spring Missions Conference (April 2013), hosted by Allen Temple Baptist Church in Oakland, CA and organized through the energetic and expert leadership of Rev. Karen Yee, Associate Minister at New Life Christian Fellowship and English Speaking Pastor of the Iu-mienh Friendship Baptist Church of Richmond, presented another opportunity for sharing, learning, growing and fellowship. We were blessed by the worship and the workshops highlighting local missions, home missions, and international missions. Among many inspiring mission opportunities and presentations, one was hearing from recently commissioned missionaries Emerson and Ivy Wu who will serve in Macau, China. Rainbow Acres was represented and so was the American Baptist Seminary of the West. We were inspired to be family to each other and respond to God's commandment to us to "love one another" and to care "for the least of these."

This fall, October, 18-20, 2013 we will have another opportunity to be together as Christian community. The Annual Gathering of this Region will be hosted by First Baptist Church, Portland. Again, there will be a time for us to share our resources, learn from each other, and contemplate what it means to be a part of this Christian community. Dr. Aidsand Wright-Riggins III, Executive Director of American Baptist Home Mission Societies will be speaking to us on Saturday evening and will be the pulpit guest for worship on Sunday morning. Your Board of Ministries will be recommending to the delegates the By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation that we have revised. These revised documents will be sent by direct mailing to the moderator and pastor of each member congregation in advance and in accordance with the current by-laws. The proposed by-laws were previously made available for review at the Missions Conference in April. The next meeting of the Board of Ministries will be August 22, 2013 and arrangements for the Annual Gathering will be coming together and finalized.

Our identity as Christians and as American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast means we have a home and a family. This is our community. We support each other and dream of how we can continue to be strong and vibrant members of the body of Christ. My prayer is that we will all give thoughtful and prayerful consideration as to how we are being called to participate in our regional life. These paragraphs only touch the surface of the possibilities that include all our regional ministry partners as well as, local, national and international missions.

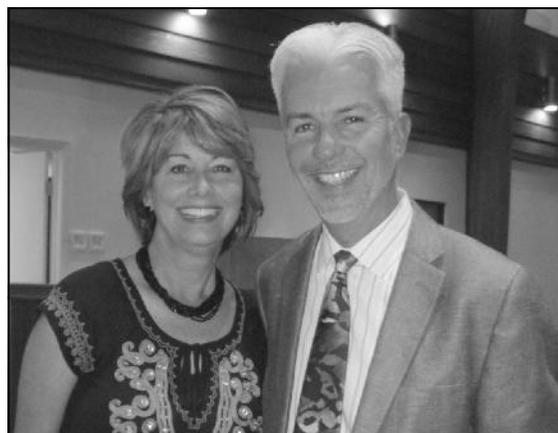
Twenty-Five Years of Transformation

By Debbie Herr

May 1, 2013 marked the 25th Anniversary of Pastoral Ministry for Rev. Dr. Jeffery L. Savage at First Baptist Church, Springfield, Oregon. On May 4th, the church family hosted a Pastor-People Partnership Celebration Dinner. The evening celebrated 25 years of transformation under Pastor Jeff's leadership.

The evening program was emceed by the Rev. Dr. Chris Roush, former associate pastor and currently Rainbow Acres VP of Administration and Advancement. Distinguished guests included the Rev. Dr. Joe Kutter, retired Executive Director, ABCUSA Ministers Council, representing American Baptist Churches, USA, and the Rev. Steve Bills, Executive Minister, representing the American Baptist Churches of Central Pacific Coast. Representing the Springfield community was Dr. Nancy Golden, Superintendent of the Springfield School District.

Two members of the 1988 Pastoral Search Committee that called Jeff to Springfield, Debbie Herr, Chair, and Dave Flores, representing the church family, presented Pastor Jeff with a love offering and a gift card to purchase the materials needed to finish a pond project in his backyard. Corey Hughes, pastoral associate, and the youth group compiled a slideshow and video of Pastor Jeff's tenure at First Baptist Church.



A special presentation by the Rev. Phineas Marr, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Kenosha, Wisconsin, concluded the program by singing his own version of "Thank You for Being My Friend." The evening was filled with fun and laughter along with celebrating and affirming a quarter-century of transformation under Jeff's pastoral leadership.

The original church bell, purchased in 1876 was relocated to its present site in 1958. Over the years, the bell tower structure has needed repair. In recognition of the occasion, the bell was relocated and dedicated to the legacy of the long-term ministry and outstanding leadership of Pastor Jeff at FBC-Springfield. We also acknowledged Jeff's 30th anniversary of his ordination on May 29th.

The Rev. Dr. Jeffery L. Savage is married to Janet and has 2 grown children, Erin and Christopher and two granddaughters, Sayrah and Adyson.

California Churches Learning to be Missional

By Rev. Paul Lundberg
Pastor, Atwater Baptist Church

Three northern California churches have been participating in a Missional church Learning Experience organized by the ABC Home Mission Society. Directed by the Rev. Glynis LaBarre, Transformation Strategist for ABCHMS, the year-long process involves First Baptist of Alameda, First Baptist Church of North Sacramento, and Atwater Baptist Church.



Three face-to-face meetings are interspersed with two conference calls, resulting in local strategies designed to identify and address community needs in the area around each local church. The focus is on learning to listen to the local community members, hearing their stories and responding to their felt needs. Partnerships with other community organizations are encouraged. The ultimate goal is to build effective, influential relationships with our communities and earn an invitation to share our faith.

Missional Church Learning Experiences are available to any ABC Church. We've learned a lot and we're making a real difference in our neighborhoods.

Time For a Change Prompts a Change in Time

By Rev. Carren E. Woods

Pastor of Rivergate Community Church (Portland, OR)

What time is church? For most of us the time for church has always been at 10:00 or 11:00 am on Sundays. It used to be that Sundays were set aside for church services. Stores were closed. School activities, such as soccer or football games, were played on Friday afternoons or on Saturdays. Its not only the kids' soccer games scheduled on Sunday mornings. There are more businesses open which means more people having to work at that time. Times have changed and things are different now. Sundays have become a series of events, the least of which being church, all competing for our time.



As a Pastor, I have watched Sunday morning attendance decrease. Parents want their children to be able to compete in sports and to do that they must adapt to the sports schedules which means missing Sunday morning services. Or their job now requires them to work on Sunday mornings. What would we do? What could we do? The leaders went to the Lord in prayer asking these very questions while on a retreat. It was decided that something had to change. Instead of expecting the culture to change and adapt to our schedule, we changed and adapted our schedule.

We called a special meeting of the congregation and presented the change. We would begin meeting at 4:00 pm for our worship service followed by a 20-30 minute Bible teaching at 5:00 pm and then a shared meal after that. Some people thought that we had committed the unthinkable by moving the time. Had we? Would people show up? Would God show up?

Much to our delight, not only did people show up that first time change, but there were also two new families that came. One, a single mom with four children said that it was great for her because it was impossible for her to get all of the children ready and fed and to church early enough on Sunday mornings

Several months have passed since we made the time change. No one has asked to go back to what it was. In fact what we've discovered is that Sundays for us have truly become a Sabbath. Even our older members that were concerned about changing, have enjoyed a slower start to the Sabbath day. There is no rush to get to church as there has been in the past. There is no rush to get church over with to get to lunch or to other things afterwards. When we gather it feels like we close the week together and begin the new week together. It has become a time of praying about the concerns brought from our previous week and gaining encouragement and energy for the week ahead.

It has brought us closer as a church body because of the fellowship we enjoy at the shared meal every week, and because we are not rushing off to any other activities we tend to linger and enjoy one another after the meal. We have felt more connected to one another and to the Lord. And the best news is that not only do we show up, but so does the Lord!

Times have changed, but our time change has allowed us to serve our community and the Lord better.

Official Notice of Vote to Amend Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws

The new Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws have been received by the Board of Ministries and a vote on their adoption will be on the agenda at our Annual Business Meeting, scheduled for Saturday, October 19, 2013 at 8:30am at First Baptist Church of Portland, Oregon. These documents were presented for a first reading at a business meeting of the region at Allen Temple Baptist Church of Oakland, California on April 20, 2013. Copies will be sent to the pastor and moderator of each constituent congregation one month prior to the vote. Individuals who wish to obtain a copy of these documents may request them by calling the region office or by email at judyf@abc-or.org.

Facing Financial Facts

By Rev. Margaret J. Marcuson
The Marcuson Leadership Circle

What are the financial facts in your congregation? For example:

- What are the trends in giving and expenses?
- What is the giving pyramid – how many givers do you have at successive giving levels?
- What is the pace of income through the year – what percentage comes in during December each year?
- What percentage of income goes to ministries outside your congregation?

Who knows what the facts are? Leaders in churches of all sizes can find it a challenge to get a handle on the facts – and to handle their own and others' anxiety about those facts. Whether your treasurer has a shoebox of papers or uses a sophisticated system to analyze the data, you may find information elusive.

One new church treasurer found that the outgoing treasurer never had time to explain the information in his confusing records. In another church, the finance committee was in a panic from January until December 31, when the end-of-year giving took care of the perceived deficit, every single year.

Facts and anxiety are in an inverse relationship. The higher the anxiety, the more difficult it can be to get good information. And the more leaders avoid, hide or waffle about facts, the higher anxiety can go.

The antidote: as always, work on your own anxiety. Stay calm and don't panic. Work over time to get as many facts as possible. In highly anxious churches, this can be difficult.



Here are seven tips for dealing with financial facts:

1. Be as open as possible.
2. Even difficult facts, calmly presented by leadership with the message, "We can handle this," help calm people down.
3. Be patient – in some churches it may take several years to get good reports.
4. Present financial information in visual and/or story form. Most people fade out when pages of numbers are presented.
5. Don't try to convince people things are better than they think (the cheerleader approach). Simply state your own view.
6. Don't try to convince people things are worse than they think (the Chicken Little approach).
7. Overcommunicate. Remember anxiety is like static – it makes it hard for people to receive information. This may be especially true of financial information.

Rev. Margaret J. Marcuson works with churches who want to create a ministry that lasts and clergy who want to have more impact on the people they serve best. She speaks and writes on leadership and works with church leaders nationally as a consultant and coach. She is a member of First Baptist Church of Portland. Get the free mini-course, "Five Ways to Avoid Burnout in Ministry" at www.margaretmarcuson.com

American Baptist Women's Ministries of Oregon

Diane Weidkamp

Co-President, American Baptist Women's Ministries of Oregon

Dear Sisters in Our Lord Jesus,

Finally summer has arrived after a very cool spring, and many of us are delighted to get outside to dig in the dirt. This reminds me of the summers of our spiritual lives. Because humans are imperfect, winter always comes so we need to prevent the effects of our winters from being too severe. We can do that by immersing ourselves in God's word during the summers not just during the winters. One way for ABW to do that is to attend the annual women's conference in Phoenix, AZ, July 27 through August 1. The theme will be centered around the idea that we are designed to serve. More information can be obtained by looking at our website, www.abwministries.org.



Another source of inspiration that could be yours if you attend the state ABW retreat on September 13-15 in Medford, OR at the Red Lion. The theme is "Feed the Need" and will feature the Rev. Lisa Harris with the American Baptist Home Missions Societies. Information has been sent out and additional information will be coming soon.

My quest is to visit as many of our churches as I can in the three years that I am co-president, and I have visited three thus far. Those churches are very pleasant places to be on Sunday mornings to worship and I am very humbled to be part of our American Baptist family.

Celebrating Our Joy with Our Neighbors

By Rev. Laurel Balyeat Morrison
First Baptist Church, Alameda, CA

The First Baptist Church of Alameda (CA) created an "Eggstravaganza," a festival for families to share our Easter joy on March 30. We had a bounce house, face painting, sack races, finger painting, decorating of Easter bags, an egg hunt and a lot fun! More than 200 people were involved in the celebration at the park next to the elementary school where our members tutor students.

We were able to get 600 spring colored fliers publicizing the event into the hands of the students by getting permission through the school district superintendent. Our only publicity cost was the paper! Your church can do similarly; our flier stated "this free community event is sponsored by 1st Baptist Church but it is not religious in nature."

Our smiles and friendliness spoke volumes! This celebration is a "bridge event," a nonthreatening enjoyable event that enables folks to meet Christians and learn more about their church if they are interested. In order to bridge the Eggstravaganza to our Summer Vacation Bible Adventure we held a free raffle. Parents signed a registration form, providing their contact information and whether they were involved in another church or temple, to enter the raffle.



We raffled off a new bike with helmet & kneepads, 4 \$25 Visa gift cards, and various gift certificates donated by local businesses and the police department. After the Eggstravaganza, we contacted—mostly by phone, the parents and asked permission to put their families on our VBA mailing list. Now we have 45 new families to invite to our Vacation Bible Adventure this summer!

ABC Central Pacific Coast 2013 Missions Conference

By Rev. Karen Yee
Missions Conference Coordinator

On May 24-25, 2013 around 100 people gathered at Allen Temple Baptist Church in Oakland, CA for the 2nd Annual CPC Missions Conference. The theme was "Branching Out, Growing Deep," based upon Colossians 1:3-6, 9-12. Once again we examined mission work and opportunities of service in our world, in our nation, and in our local communities. We were blessed to have so many people come from far and wide to speak, to listen and to learn from one another.

Internationally...

Our keynote speaker was Rev. Dr. Reid Trulson, Executive Director of International Ministries who challenged us to think globally and shared stories of what God is doing around the world. He was joined by Missionaries Emerson and Ivy Wu, who were recently commissioned to serve in Macau, China and Rev. Ray Schooler who participated on a panel conversation integrating international missions and the local church. At the final worship, Ray commissioned us all to go out and serve locally, nationally, and internationally. We also heard different Missionary Partnership Teams share about the work their missionaries were doing around the world.



Nationally...

We were honored to have Vickie Goff, National Coordinator of Volunteer Ministries and Rev. Fela Barrueto, National Coordinator for Prisoner Re-entry and Aftercare Ministry share with us the variety of mission opportunities and ministries available through the American Baptist Home Mission Society, and each led workshops in their areas of interests. Rev. Dr. Marilyn Turner, Associate Director of ABHMS also dropped by to bring greetings at our closing service. Revs. Chris Roush and Steve Roblee came from Arizona to share about Rainbow Acres and led a workshop helping us find and reach an unreached people groups in our own communities. We also had a presentation and review of "Immerse 2012" the National Youth Gathering.

Locally...

Our other plenary speaker was Rev. Kent Harrop, pastor of McMinnville, Oregon who helped us explore how local churches are making an impact in their communities. We also had local mission organizations like Searfarers' Ministry and AB Women's Ministries share about ways we can get involved and make a difference. Other local workshop leaders were Rev. Barbara Jim-George who focused on human trafficking and sexual exploration of children in our neighborhoods, Rev. Dr. Daniel Buford who spoke about prophetic justice ministries, and Rev. Steve Bils shared about how we fund our various AB missions. In addition to the organizations mentioned already, we also had displays and representatives from Redwood Glen Camp and the American Baptist Seminary of the West.

In addition to the knowledge we shared with one another, it was wonderful to have the opportunity for fellowship, worship, and to share with our American Baptist brothers and sisters. Perhaps this statement from one of the evaluations, sums up our time together, "It was perhaps the most profitable Missions Conference I have been to. All I can attribute it to is that the Spirit of God showed up and moved among us, transforming us and sending us out to serve."

The next ABC Central Pacific Coast Missions Conference will be hosted by First Baptist Church of McMinnville, Oregon, and will be held on May 2-4, 2014. Put these dates on your church calendars to make certain that you don't schedule anything for those days!

Youth Events and Mission Opportunities

In addition to the youth camps and conferences at our two camps, Arrah Wanna in Welches, Oregon (www.camparrahwanna.org) and Redwood Glen in Loma Mar, California (www.redwoodglen.org) this summer, there are a number of other events and mission trip opportunities for American Baptists of all ages!

ABC Emergency Services Center (Sturgis Motorcycle Rally)

For adults or high school students accompanied by their parents
August 3-11 in Rapid City, South Dakota at FBC Rapid City
Email steveb@abc-or.org for application and information or for details about traveling with us in vans

Youthquake!

For 9th graders through freshmen in college
August 22, 23 in Oakland, California at Allen Temple Baptist Church. See www.youthquake.us for details.

Deborah's House

Tijuana, Mexico (this trip is filled; watch for details about 2014 trip)

Bike and Hike For a Rancher

For physically fit adults
September 30-October 5 in Camp Verde, Arizona at Rainbow Acres
We are taking a van from Portland and can pick up participants en route. Some are flying into Phoenix.
Email Gregg Sneller (gpc1926@gmail.com) for details.

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