

Steeple Stories

The newsletter of North Shore Baptist Church

5244 N. Lakewood
Chicago, IL 60640

ON EARTH PEACE, AND GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN

¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Listen! Do not fear. For I bring you good news of great joy, which will be to all people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign to you: You will find the Baby wrapped in strips of cloth, lying in a manger." ¹³ Suddenly there was with the angel a company of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will toward men."

~ Luke 2

In a few weeks, we will be celebrating Christmas. But this year, Christmas is not going to be Christmas as usual. No, it will not. That is a fact. This year, 2020, we have faced many challenges to our "life as usual."



We have been challenged by an unknown and resilient virus that has killed over 100,000 people in the United States and over 1,000,000 around the world. This virus has affected our way of life. The economic system has been severely impacted. The health system has been at the point of exhaustion. The educational system, teachers, students and parents, have been tested to the maximum.

We have been challenged by social uprising, due to the violence that our black brothers and sisters have experienced for centuries. We have been challenged by migration policies that have separated families. We have been challenged by an electoral system that has put strain on the political will of the people. We have been challenged by the global environmental crisis that had caused hurricanes, earthquakes, and famine.

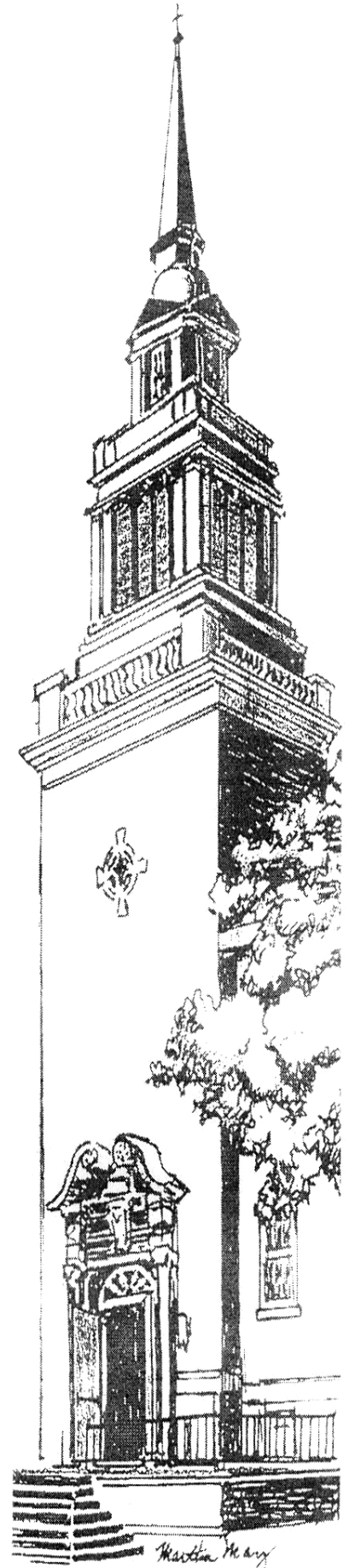
In the midst of all the challenges we face, we realize we can celebrate Christmas. We may not be able to have a big family Christmas dinner, party with friends or Christmas program at church. But we can celebrate Christmas.

We can celebrate Christmas, because Christmas is the assurance that God has become flesh and has dwelt among us. " ¹⁴ The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, the glory as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1) We can celebrate Christmas because Christmas is the certainty that " ¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (John 3)

In the midst of all the challenges we have faced, we can say "fear not." Yes, we can feel concern, trouble and confusion, but we will not be afraid. We are not afraid, because we know that God is with us and is faithful to her love and grace.

In the midst of all the challenges we have faced we can say to "you good news of great joy, which will be to all people." Yes, we have good news that God is present and is working in our world.

In the midst of all the challenges we have faced we can say to "on earth peace, and good will toward men." Yes, we can believe and act to make peace and good will real in our families, community, work places, schools and universities.



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Yes, this Christmas it may not be Christmas as usual, but it is Christmas because “for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” Yes, it is going to be Christmas because that child is born in our heart. Yes, it is going to be Christmas because that child is our Savior. Yes, it is going to be Christmas because that child is our Lord.

Let’s celebrate Christmas. Let’s celebrate Christmas without fear. Let’s celebrate Christmas with joy, hope, solidarity, peace and justice. Let’s celebrate Christmas.

~ Rev. Juan Angel Gutiérrez Rodríguez, Interim Hispanic Pastor

KAREN PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

On Tuesday, November 10th the Karen Pastor Search Committee presented its final report to the Council. The committee was composed by Paw Ra Htoo, Pa Ka Tee, Ta Kaw Wah, Ta Kaw Paw, Yvette Boles, Jay Shimotake and Pastor Juan Ángel. The recommendation of the committee to hire the candidate was accepted by the Council. At this moment Stewardship Ministry and the candidate are working the contract details. We are thankful for the commitment and the faithfulness of the members of the committee in this process.

OFFERING FOR BOLIVIAN PASTORS

For the last three month the Hispanic Congregation raised a special offering to help Bolivian pastors in Cochabamba. For the past several months most of the Baptist pastors in the Cochabamba area are not been able to receive their salaries due to the meeting restrictions for COVID-19. Our congregation was able to raised \$2415 that was sent to International Ministries USA. The total gift raised was \$805 and was matched by NSBC: \$1610. Thanks and blessings to all that contributed to this effort.

Christmas Offering

While many food pantries have shut their doors due to the pandemic, Care for Real has waived its boundary restrictions and is feeding even more people. They are still getting food to everyone while following CDC safety guidelines. They have become a model for providing a social safety net in times of health crisis.

Normally, we take an offering of non-perishable food items for Care for Real each November. Because we are not gathering in-person at this time, we are going to contribute our Christmas offering to Care for Real. The church matches all donations two to one.

There is an envelope included in this mailing for you to make your offering. You can also contribute through the church PayPal (visit <https://www.northshorebaptist.org/donate>) and send an e-mail to financial@northshorebaptist.org indicating you want the offering directed to Care for Real.

Worship Schedule

Wednesday, December 16 at 6:00 PM:

Longest Night Service

<https://ministrelife.zoom.us/j/2464116986>

Call: +1 312-626-6799, access code 246 411 6986

Tuesday, December 22 at 7:30 PM

Christmas Celebration -Hispanic Congregation

<https://ministrelife.zoom.us/j/8094965717>

Call: +1 669-900-6833, access code 809 496 5717

Thursday, December 24 at 7:30 PM:

Lessons and Carols - English Congregation

<https://ministrelife.zoom.us/j/8348741952>

Call: +1 312-626-6799, access code 834 874 1952

Sunday, December 27 at 11:00 AM:

Year-End Celebration -Japanese Congregation

Congregational Meeting

We will have an all church meeting at **10:00 am** on **Sunday, December 20**. At this meeting, we will approve the church operating budget for 2020, along with nominations for a few Ministry Chairs that were unfilled on the Nominating Slate that we approved in November.

Church Budget

To see the budget document, please visit www.northshorebaptist.org/budget. There will be a pdf of the budget available there on Wednesday, December 9, after it is approved by the Church Council. If you would prefer a hard copy of the budget be mailed to you, please contact the church office at 773-728-4200.

Ministry Chairs to be Approved

Educational Ministry Chair: Wanda Pabellón
Karen Deacon Ministry Chair: Pa Ka Htee
Hispanic Deacon Ministry Chair: Lázaro Silva
Hispanic Worship Ministry Chair: Lizbeth Monge

Access information for Meeting:

<https://ministrelife.zoom.us/j/98042788576>

Meeting ID: 980 4278 8576

+1 312-626-6799, access code 980-4278-8576# US