

# Steeple Stories

The newsletter of North Shore Baptist Church

FEBRUARY 2017

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5244 N. Lakewood  
Chicago, IL 60640

## The Lenten Sojourn

A number of years ago, I had the good fortune of worshipping at a Russian Orthodox cathedral on the west side of Chicago on the first Sunday of Lent. In matters of theology, I agree very little with the Orthodox tradition. But there are few styles of worship that bring me closer to a feeling of the presence of God's gracious and glorious love. And although I am not an "orthodox believer" as they would say it, I always find the warmest of welcomes in Orthodox communities.

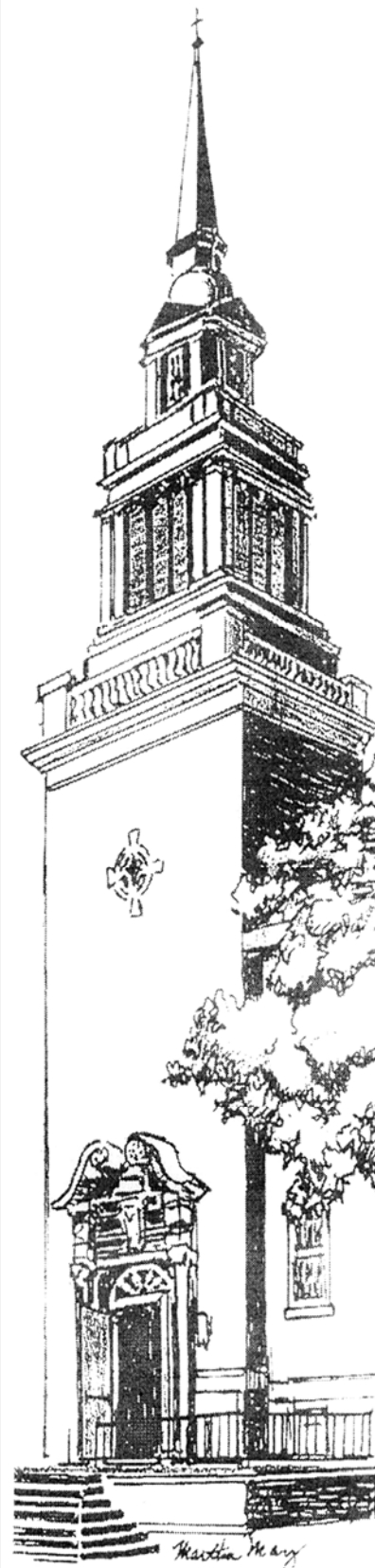
This particular Sunday, in observance of the season, the priests read out the pastoral letter of the Bishop concerning the spiritual discipline of Lent, a serious time of fasting, prayer, and spiritual preparation for Easter for the Orthodox. Bishop Gob (pronounced like Job) criticized the people for making their Lenten disciplines too personalistic, too isolated. The practice, he said, is not that *you* observe Lent or that *I* observe Lent, but that *WE* observe Lent together. It is a communal practice. It is Christ's church who is preparing for the resurrection.



This message has always stuck with me. So often, in our protestant, Baptist world, I think we see Lent as an opportunity to "work on myself." We rededicate ourselves to that post-Christmas diet we've abandoned. Or we recommit to that daily time of prayer we keep meaning to take up. We "give something up for Lent" as a reminder that material comforts are not spiritual blessings. This is all for the good, of course! Some years I have had profound experiences with my Lenten disciplines. Other years, not so much. But Bishop Gob's message always gnaws at me: why am I doing this by myself? So this year, I'm going to try to do it differently. And in doing so, I want to try to invite us all to do it a little differently. Not, "what are you giving up for Lent?" but "what are we doing together?"

I want to invite us to join together in a Lenten journey, a "sojourn," to use the Biblical term. As people of faith, we are called to be "in the world but not of it." We are called to recognize that we are here but for a time, given but a small role in the unfolding of God's desire for the everlasting. Our lives are a sojourn in this world. And so for Lent, we are planning a forty-day journey that will build us up in faith for the longer sojourn of life — a journey that participates in resurrection!

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This sojourn will have several parts. First, in the English language worship service, we will be having a sermon series on “Faith for the Sojourners,” with a different preacher from the congregation each week bringing a word along that same theme.

The sanctuary windows will hold objects of contemplation, spiritual reminders you might meet along the way, and worshipers will be invited to spend time “walking the path” around the pews each week as a ritual of the sojourn.

We will also have our usual special worship services: **Ash Wednesday (March 1 at 7:00 pm)**, **Palm Sunday (April 9)**, **Good Friday (April 14 at 7:30 pm)** and **Easter Sunday (April 16)**.

Finally, I will be leading a weekly discussion group based on the book *40-day Journey with Parker Palmer*. For each day of Lent, the book offers a brief passage of reflection on the sojourn of faith, followed by scripture and a suggestion for a brief devotion. It is something we would not “give up” for Lent, but something that those who are willing would “take on.” We would meet weekly to discuss how we are learning and growing by means of this discipline. And so it is a Lenten discipline we could share together. The meetings will be Wednesday evenings at 7 pm or, for those who prefer not to go out at night, Thursdays at 1 pm.

I hope you will consider joining me for this forty day journey. We all could use more Faith for the Sojourners, and I would prefer not to walk it alone.

Peace, Pastor David

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## Pastoral Search Update

The next step of the interim is to appoint a committee to search for a settled English Language pastorate. This is a long, involved process that includes writing a congregational profile describing who the church is and who the church hopes to become; writing a position description for the new pastor; working with denominational officials and other networks to identify candidates; review applications and sample sermons; interview candidates; and select a finalist for recommendation to the church for its vote.

The church council, on advice of a special task force of church leaders, is bringing forward a proposed Pastoral Search Committee for the consideration of the church in a specially called congregational meeting, to take place **February 5 at 12:30 pm**.



**PASTORAL  
SEARCH COMMITTEE**

The proposed committee is: **Maura Galarza, Yanira Silva, Eh Kler, Cecilia Poenyunt, Sachiko Kano, Jay Shimotake, George Figueroa, Peggy Griffin, Becca Hartman-Pickerill, Barbara Lehman, Agnes Palmejar-Takaki, Scott Turner, Nick Fong**, and the four settled pastors, **Pastor Kathryn Ray, Pastor Rony Reyes, Pastor Roger Poenyunt, and Pastor Yuki Scroggins**; Pastor David Gregg will resource the committee in the early part of the search.

This is a big job and an important one, and a great honor to those who serve. We thank them for their willingness to take it on and for their commitment to walking this journey together.

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## Baptist History and Values

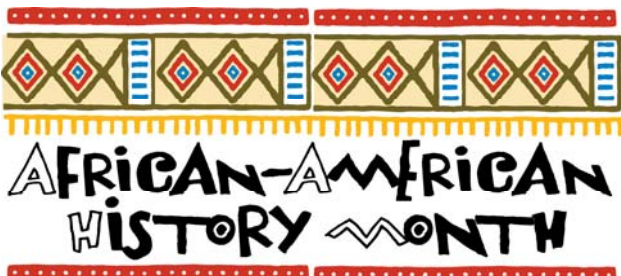

Pastor David will be leading a four-session introduction to the history and the values of the Baptist tradition from its beginnings in 1607 until today. This class will meet at **12:30** on Sundays, so people from every congregation can attend. It will meet **every other week**, **February 12, February 26, March 12, March 26**.



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# FEBRUARY 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<b>1</b>  6:30 pm Andersonville YPAA	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>  6-8:00pm FotL Youth Meeting	<b>4</b>  10 am AA Meeting 4 pm AA Meeting  4:00 pm Karen Music Rehearsal
<b>5</b> 9:30 am Spanish Worship 10 am English Worship 11 am Japanese Worship 11:15 am Fellowship Time 11:30 am Ad. In Learning 11:30 am Karen Worship 12:30 pm Cong. Meeting - Search Committee  6:30pm ES Rehearsal	<b>6</b>  6:30 pm AA Meeting	<b>7</b>  7pm Church Council	<b>8</b>  6:30 pm Andersonville YPAA	<b>9</b>  4:00 Stewardship Ministry  6:30 Handbell Choir 7:30 Chancel Choir	<b>10</b>  6-8:00pm FotL Youth Meeting	<b>11</b>  10 am AA Meeting 4 pm AA Meeting  4:00 pm Karen Music Rehearsal
<b>12</b>  <u>10:30 am</u> <b>Joint Worship</b> <b>Healing Service</b>  12:30 pm Baptist History  6:30pm ES Rehearsal	<b>13</b>  6:30 pm AA Meeting	<b>14</b>  7pm Church Council	<b>15</b>  6:30 pm Andersonville YPAA	<b>16</b>  6:30 Handbell Choir 7:30 Chancel Choir	<b>17</b>  February 17-20 Youth Group Retreat to Camp Grow	<b>18</b>  10 am AA Meeting 4 pm AA Meeting  4:00 pm Karen Music Rehearsal
<b>19</b> 9:30 am Spanish Worship 10 am English Worship 11 am Japanese Worship 11:15 am Fellowship Time 11:30 am Ad. In Learning 11:30 am Karen Worship  6:30pm ES Rehearsal	<b>20</b> <b>President's Day</b> <div>Church Office Closed Building open for limited programming</div> 6:30 pm AA Meeting	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>  6:30 pm Andersonville YPAA	<b>23</b>  6:30 Handbell Choir 7:30 Chancel Choir	<b>24</b>  6-8:00pm FotL Youth Meeting	<b>25</b>  10 am AA Meeting 4 pm AA Meeting  4:00 pm Karen Music Rehearsal
<b>26</b> 9:30 am Spanish Worship 10 am English Worship 11 am Japanese Worship 11:15 am Fellowship Time 11:30 am Ad. In Learning 11:30 am Karen Worship 12:30 pm Baptist History  6:30pm ES Rehearsal	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>				



# Christmas 2016 Memories



1 & 2: Children's Christmas Showcase; 3 & 4: Posada at Pastor Rony's 5 - 7: Youth Bake Christmas Cookies for fundraiser; 8 & 9: Karen band prepares for their Christmas Celebration!

## How Far We've Come, How Far We've Yet to Go

On January 15, over 40 members of the church and wider community came together at North Shore for *The Martin Luther King Jr. Teach In*, to celebrate the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. by discussing the history of civil rights in the United States and how to face present challenges to those rights. In worship, **Dr. Peggy Griffin** recalled being inspired to join the march at Selma after the murder of the Rev. James Reeb. She reminded us that even if we are fearful, we cannot forget that evil is afraid of us, too.

After a delicious, soul food lunch prepared by our very own **Scott Turner**, we took a moment to sing together and light candles honoring the cloud of witnesses who has brought us this far. We then broke out into three different workshops. Here are the reports back:

**Ryan Yokota** from Legacy Center of JASC came to speak on Japanese American immigration history starting from late 1800s and internment experience during WWII. Ryan's own family members (great-grandparents and grandparents) were incarcerated even though his grandparents



*continued page 5*

# Fruit of the Lord Youth Group



## Youth Group News

## Fruit of the Lord YOUTH News



The youth group continues to meet on **Friday nights at 6:30 pm** for food and fellowship. The youth group kicked off 2017 with making plans for upcoming retreat to Camp Grow on **February 17-19**. In anticipation of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, we watched the movie Selma. We are gearing up to film a video about mission at North Shore, which we will post online as part of a fundraiser for the summer mission trip.

How to support the FotL youth ministry:

- ◆ Reach out to youth on Sunday morning! Get to know them and ask how they are doing.
- ◆ Remember our youth and youth ministry in your prayers.
- ◆ Accompany one of our special events. If interested, contact Pastor Kathryn at [kray@northshorebaptist.org](mailto:kray@northshorebaptist.org)

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*continued from page 4*    **How Far We've Come...**

were Nisei (second generation American born Japanese). It was a very informative and meaningful session and many questions and comments were exchanged. Hopefully, there will be another session on this topic soon! **Dr. Shanti Elliott**, the director of civic engagement at the Francis Parker School, led a workshop on Educating for Civic Engagement. She encouraged us to understand that young people already have insight and passion for the betterment of the world. In fact, their insight might be better than that of older people, because they are not jaded by worldly wisdom. Dr Elliott began by reminding us that the inspiration for the 1963 March on Washington was a "Children's Crusade" in Birmingham, a series of actions in the spring of that year during which children and youth participated in actions of nonviolent resistance even though their parents wouldn't. She then engaged us in our own "action" for Youth to lead, asking us to write messages of encouragement for young people on white board. She took pictures of each of us holding our white board message for posting on our Facebook page.

**Rev. Walter Coleman**, a civil rights leader who worked with Dr. King in Chicago, spoke to us about the harsh realities and fears facing immigrants, particularly under the new administration. He commended us to hold to the gospel practice of truth-telling, and not let ourselves get wrapped up in what is politically viable or efficacious. He said that "politics is the art of the possible, but the church is about the manifestation of the impossible. We have to focus on being the church." Rev. Coleman closed the event with a plenary session, in which he again emphasized this point to all present.

We plan to continue the conversation about civil rights and Christian witness at North Shore. We are currently planning two follow-up events. The first is a **Know Your Rights** workshop, which we will put on in collaboration with the Edgewater Community Religious Association. This event will take place on Sunday, March 26 at 2 pm at North Shore. The Know Your Rights session is for immigrants and concerned citizens alike, and will explain what people need to know in case of an encounter with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, as well as with Chicago police officers.

The second follow up event will be a Bystander Training session, which will take place in early May. Facilitated by the People's Response Team, this event will teach us how to proactively and safely stand up when we see race-based harassment or violence on the street.



5244 N. Lakewood  
Chicago, IL 60640

Phone: 773-728-4200

Fax: 773-728-1582

e-mail: [office@northshorebaptist.org](mailto:office@northshorebaptist.org)

North Shore Baptist Church

*"Serving All God's People  
From This Corner"*

We're on the Web:

[www.northshorebaptist.org](http://www.northshorebaptist.org)



*"Patience with others is LOVE, patience with self is HOPE, patience with God is FAITH."*  
~ Adel Bestavoros, 20th century leader in the Christian Coptic Church

## Joint Worship – Healing Service

**Sunday, February 12, 2017**

**10:30 a.m.**



*Healing  
Service*

The annual Joint Healing Service will take place Sunday, February 12, at 10:30 am in the Sanctuary. Along with worship, praise, and preaching we will celebrate our ritual of healing anointment with oil. Our own Rev. Yuki Scroggins, Japanese Language Pastor, will bring us the sermon. There will also be a portion of the service for dedicating and commissioning the Pastoral Search Committee for their work.