

Torrance First Baptist Church

# the Proclaimer

January 2015

Volume 28 Issue 1

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## New year blessings to all of you from your TFB Staff

Back row, l to r: Jay Cordova (Pastor of Family Ministries), Daniel Marion (High School and Contemporary Worship), Pastor Rog, Pastor Charlie, Randy Stager (Blended Worship), Craig McMillian (Custodian),  
Front row, l to r: Diane Banfield (Receptionist), Pam Fisher (Blended Worship Accompanist), Andrea Lavoie (Secretary),  
Mari McMillian (Office Manager)



POTLUCK DINNER

# &

## ANNUAL MEETING



*January 25, 2015 — 5:30 p.m.*

For the potluck, those with last names that begin with A-M, bring a main dish and dessert; those with last names beginning with N-Z, bring a main dish and salad.

After we eat, we will review the year that has passed, give thanks to the Lord for what He has done and focus on the vision He has given to us for 2015.

*Proclaimers* are also  
available for viewing and  
printing on-line:  
[www.tfbclife.org](http://www.tfbclife.org)

## From the Pastor's Heart



### MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE RICE FAMILY!

The birth of Jesus is one of the best occasions to look ahead in anticipation. After all, the Good News those angels declared changes everything for us — that God personally entered time and space and lived among us in a human body in order to provide the cure for the most devastating

disease known to man. This horrible disease of sin has sapped the very life out of us. So God's rescue plan is the Baby Jesus. And through this Jesus we can experience real life — abundant life. Now that makes life worth living.

So when we say that if anybody could be happy, it should be us Christians. Christmas is why. When we say that if anybody could have hope, it is us Christians. Again, Christmas is why. When we say if anybody could be quick to forgive others, it is us Christians. Yep, Christmas is why. When we say if anybody could be patient and kind, it is us Christians. You guessed it, Christmas is why. When we say if anybody could believe in the impossible and trust God, it is us Christians. You're right, Christmas is why. When we say if anybody could be living for

the future and not the past, it is us Christians. Then once again, Christmas is why. And finally, when we say if anybody could be able to say Happy New Year and actually expect that to come true, it is us Christians. You bet, Christmas is why.

The meaning and impact of Christmas, although it is celebrated only once a year like each of our birthdays, are experienced by us every day of the year. In a way we could say Merry Christmas to each other every day. Because what we mean by Merry Christmas is that each of us finds our joy, our fulfillment, our meaning and purpose for living, our value as a person, and our hope for the future in the Christ Child.

May God give each of you a truly wonderful Christmas every day this season and all next year.

The Rice's

## Reflections

by Pastor Rog

Dear Church Family,

As we embark on a new year, we can either dwell on the defeats of the past or rejoice in the grace of God which ministers to us now and through eternity. May we remember that we invite defeat into our lives when we continue to remember what we should forget.

This morning, in my time alone with the Lord, I read the Old Testament book of Lamentations. It is written by the prophet Jeremiah. It is a hard read. The city of Jerusalem—indeed, the entire of Israel—was a heart-breaking sight in 586 BC. The southern kingdom of Judah had sinned against the Lord, and she had been righteously judged and disciplined by Him. The devastation was heavy and the

people were in the grip of utter despair. Along with this, Jeremiah is being taunted by his enemies because he dared to tell the people why God's judgment had fallen upon them (see 3:52-63). The people's treatment of him was deplorable, but thankfully, within this account of sorrow and heaviness, there are moments of great encouragement — moments when God's Word touched Jeremiah's aching heart. And because of this, in the midst of his laments, God reminds him that His love for His people has not diminished nor His character changed. Please notice what Jeremiah says to us in chapter 3:22-24:

*"The steadfast love of the*



*Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.... 'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, therefore I will hope in Him.'"*

And in vv. 55-57, we read:

*"I called on Your Name, O Lord, from the depths of the pit; You heard my plea, 'Do not close your ear to my cry*

Continued on p. 11



*Women's Ministries  
presents . . .*



*Women's Kick-off Luncheon  
January 18, 2015  
12:30 p.m.*

All ladies are encouraged to attend our luncheon to kick off the new year. We will have a meal together, enjoy each others' company, and learn what the Ministries Team has planned for the TFB women in the new year. You won't want to miss it!

The cost will be \$10 per person.  
Please sign up in the patio to reserve your spot.

*Men's  
Breakfast  
Saturday  
January 31  
9 a.m.*



All men are invited to our quarterly breakfast where you will get a yummy breakfast and listen to a speaker from the South Bay Creation Science Association.

A \$5 donation is requested to cover the cost of the food. Sign up in the patio.



*Introducing Our New  
Children's  
Ministries Director*

Hi, I'm Karla Gaines. I have been attending TFB since early childhood. I'm a wife to Michael and a mother to 4 daughters.

I have been teaching public school for 12 years and have earned two Masters' Degrees in education and an administrative credential.

I find joy in playing the piano and offering my musical talents to the Lord as well!

My desire is to help our children experience Who God is, understand how precious we are to Him and what our response to that should be!

I anticipate God doing great things here at TFB!

Karla



*Due  
January 5*

**Attention all  
Committee Chairmen  
and Group Leaders:**

please note that your reports are due on or before January 5, 2015, so they can be included in the 2014 Year-End Report that will be made available to the congregation at the Annual Meeting on January 25, 2015.

# High School Events

## Wrapping up "Jesus' Ministry" and pursuing "Truth & Love"

As we finish our series on modeling our ministry after Jesus' ministry, we reflect on how Jesus engaged the disciples in evangelism, service learning, and studying the heart of the scriptures. Moving into the new year, we have a two-month series called "Truth & Love," where we will discuss some of today's more challenging topics, including hypocrisy in the Church, creation and evolution, and homosexuality. Students are encouraged to bring unsaved friends. Please pray for us to learn God's Truth, and how to speak it in love.



Don't forget the plans for December:



**Tuesday  
December 23  
7 p.m.**



**Tuesday, December 30  
7 p.m.**

There will be no regular Revive meeting, but anyone who is in town is invited to join us for a work evening. We will be taking down the Christmas decorations.



*Girls' Day Out*



*Time and activity to be announced.*



*High School  
February 13-16, 2015*



Join us for a winter weekend getaway. Half-way through the school year, students are desperate for a little respite. Thousand Pines winter camps treat your students to a high-energy weekend filled with exciting recreation, challenging speakers, and a chance to reconnect with the Lord. Each year, our staff puts together a relevant theme that addresses the personal challenges and needs of your students and the kingdom at large. We work closely with our guest speakers and worship leaders to provide a seamless flow from chapel times to small group devotions so your students receive the biggest impact. Sign up today and get ready for the best winter season you have ever seen!

Sign up with Daniel.



## Christmas Card Exchange



Please check the box in the foyer as a courtesy to see if there are any Christmas cards for you. The office will not be able to mail any cards that are not picked up. The box will be removed January 4th.



**December 28, 2014** will be the Cordova Family's last Sunday here at TFB. There will be a basket in the foyer for you to show your appreciation with cards and gifts for their 6+ years of service here at TFB.

## 2015 Flower Calendar

Our Flower Calendar for next year is available in the foyer. If you would like to celebrate a special event in your life or honor a loved one, please call the church office to reserve your preferred date. The cost is \$50 per arrangement — one sign-up per date, please. Payment may be made any time before your chosen date. Please choose one date per family until all have had an opportunity to sign up.

The following dates, among others, are still open:

January 4, 11, and 18  
March 1, 8, and 15

## Ministry Opportunity

We are looking for someone to manage our website and our electronic church sign. If you would be interested in either or both of these jobs, please contact the church office ASAP.



Because of your generosity, we were able to give:

49 toys to Loaves & Fishes;  
24 gifts of toys and clothing to Salvation Army's "Angel Tree;"  
24 toys to the Pediatric Therapy Network  
30 toys to Love, INC; and  
20 To New Challenge Ministries!

## A Note from Pastor Jay

I have learned long ago that serving our great God has only one guarantee...He is God and I am not. In that pithy statement I can only begin to scratch the surface of Who He is, acknowledging His sovereignty, His grace, His faithfulness among so much more.

This journey has allowed me to live among, labor alongside and love the people of TFB for nearly seven years. As God has us moving towards a new stop along the road, I want to convey a deep, heartfelt "Thank You!" to all who have made this stay such a memorable one for us.

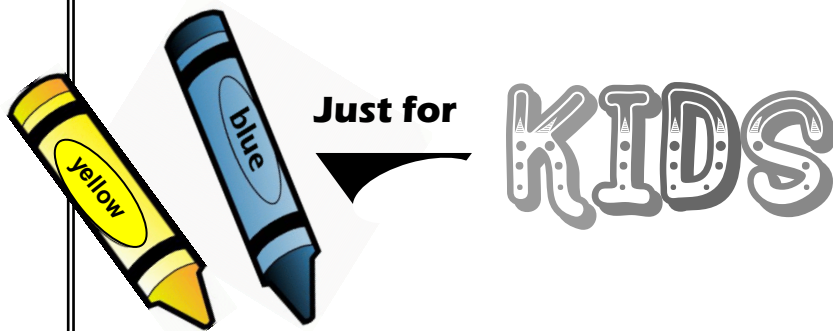
Many of you have allowed us to become a part of your lives and your families. You were able to see beyond the title or leadership role and welcomed us as friends. *Thank You!*

Ministry is such a joy, especially when you have the opportunity to serve with amazing people. Over the years we have had the privilege of seeing God utilize the gifts and talents of numbers of volunteers who have contributed greatly not only in ministry to children and youth, but throughout this church. *Thank You!*

On any given Sunday, I am met with smiling faces, hearty handshakes, and words of appreciation and encouragement. Although you may have had no direct involvement with my areas of ministry, that didn't stop you from reaching out to us. I know that God has continually displayed His love for us through His people here at TFB. We journey on with love in our hearts for you as well. *Thank You!*

Pastor Jay and Family





# One Baptism

The “one” theme of Ephesians 4:4-6 assures us that we need to be baptized only once. Yet a relationship with God involves approaching him with a humble heart each day.

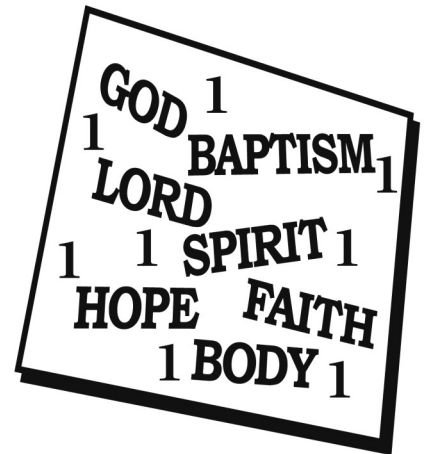
*Directions: Inside the 1, fill in words using the spaces as a guide. Then unscramble the circled and boxed letters to reveal John's message about baptism in Mark 1:4.*

hope	1	---	y	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 80px; height: 80px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
Spirit		---	i	
body		•	•	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
		---	•	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>
baptism		---	r	
Lord		---	•	
Father		•	•	
God	•	•		

Answers: body, Spirit, hope, Lord, baptism, God, Father, repentance, forgiveness

## "ONE" PAINTING

Ephesians 4:4-6 talks a lot about *one*. Create one painting that says it all.



### What you need:

- Foam letters or letter stickers
- White painting canvas
- Acrylic paints
- Paintbrush or sponge
- Water

### What you do:

1. Place letters on the canvas to spell out the “ones” in Ephesians 4:4-6 (one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God).
2. Paint over the letters, using various colors.
3. When the paint is dry, peel off the letters to reveal words that explain important Bible truths.
4. If desired, finish by painting some number 1's in any blank spots.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	Recurring Weekly Events:
				1 Office Closed Happy New Year!	2 Office Closed Anx reserved all day for Loaves & Fishes	3 Loaves & Fishes	<b>Sunday</b> <b>Worship Services:</b> 9:15 a.m., 11 a.m. & 6 p.m. Adult Sunday School, 9:15 & 11 a.m. Children's Church, 9:15 a.m. Patio Fellowship, 10:30 a.m. Children & Youth S.S., 11 a.m. New Covenant Children's S.S., 11 a.m. New Covenant (Korean Worship, 12:45 p.m. New Covenant (Korean) Fellowship, 2 p.m.
4 2p Sing @ Royalwood	5 Annual Reports Due	6	7	8 7p Beacon Light Mission	9 7p Young Marrieds @ Duvall's	10 6:30p Singles' Game Night	<b>Monday</b> Ladies' Prayer, 10:30 a.m. Men's BSF, 6:55 p.m.
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 8a H.S. to Biola Conference 7p Share & Care	<b>Tuesday</b> Women's BSF Leaders, 9:15 a.m. High School Revive, 7 p.m.
18 12:30p Women's Ministry Kick-off Luncheon	19 7p Facilities, Finance, & DiscDev. Teams	20 6p Mnstry Teams: Fellowship, GO, Outreach & Wor. 7p Deacon/ess	21	22	23 7p Young Marrieds @ Duvall's	24 6:30p Singles' Dinner Out	<b>Wednesday</b> Women's BSF, 9:15 a.m. TFB Kidz, 6:45 p.m. Jr. High QUEST, 6:45 p.m. Small Group Bible Study, 6:45 p.m. Choir Practice, 7 p.m. New Covenant (Korean) Bible Study, 8 p.m. Open Volleyball, 8:15 p.m.
25 5:30p Annual Meeting and Potluck	26	27	28	29	30	31 9a Men's Breakfast H.S. Girls' Day Out	<b>Thursday</b> Ladies' Bible Study, 2 p.m. Worship Band Practice, 6:30 p.m.
							<b>Friday</b> Ladies meet @ Denny's for Bkfst., 9 a.m.
							<b>Saturday</b> Men's BSF Leaders 6 a.m. New Covenant (Korean) Prayer, 6 a.m.

JANUARY



2015

## Upcoming February Event:

- 2/1 ~ Happy Birthday Cupcakes, 10:30 a.m.
- 2/21 ~ Women's Dinner/Movie Night, 5:30 p.m.



## *Enjoy Time with the Singles' Fellowship*

*Please remember that game night and dinner night are great opportunities to invite friends, whether they attend TFB, go to another church, or don't go to church at all.*



**Game Night** ~ Meet in the gym on **Saturday, January 10, at 6:30 p.m.** Bring games and snacks to share. Any questions, call Jude, 424/800-1910.



**Dinner Out** ~ **Saturday, January 24, 6:30 p.m.** ~ Meet at El Pollo Inka Gardena, 1425 W. Artesia, Suite 14, in Gardena.



For questions, suggestions, or more information, call Brenda-Jean Shephard, 310/901-0816.

## *Becoming, Face-to-Face*

by Laura Springer, M.Div., Th.M

How do we become who we are? How does identity develop? DNA plays a part to be sure, as does upbringing. But a good portion of our identity is built face-to-face. We begin to become who we are when our newborn eyes behold the face of our primary caregiver. As we mature, we begin to recognize other human faces, finally recognizing our own. This recognition is the beginning of self-and-others-awareness, leading to maturity.

Our identity is also shaped by the face of God experienced spiritually and reflected in his Word, his people, and his world. A survey of the term "face" in the Psalms says much about the kinds of shaping that can occur.

- God's face brings good (Psalm 4:6; 22:24; 31:16; 44:3; 67:1; 80:3; 80:7; 80:19; 89:15; 119:135). A look from God's face brings comfort, steadfast love, and deliverance.
- When God's face is turned away we feel forsaken (Psalm 13:1; 27:9; 30:7; 44:24; 69:17; 88:14; 102:2; 104:29; 143:7). More than that, when God turns his face utterly away, we are forsaken and all is lost. Our very existence is threatened because life itself is in him.
- God's face is against those who choose evil (Psalm 34:16; 80:16; 143:7). This is more than the removal of God's pleasure. This is the presence of God's wrath.
- The righteous see God's face and are satisfied (Psalm 11:7; 17:15; 24:6; 27:8; 34:5). In his face, we find wholeness (God's *shalom*). In his face, our needs are met.

It is a sobering thought to realize that we can be the face of God for others. We who care for others' souls must take care to spend sufficient time gazing at the face of God. We must take care to discover and confess the distortions in our identities, leaving those distortions in the care of a healing God, who beholds with love the faces of his children.

Note: For more on the importance of beholding in human development, see *The Logic of the Spirit* by James Loder.





## *Smile Awhile*



### *Lot's Wife*

The Sunday School teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt, when little Jason interrupted, "My Mommy looked back once while she was driving," he announced triumphantly, "and she turned into a telephone pole!"



### *The Good Samaritan*

A Sunday school teacher was telling her class the story of the Good Samaritan. She asked the class, "If you saw a person lying on the roadside, all wounded and bleeding, what would you do?"

A thoughtful little girl broke the hushed silence, "I think I'd throw up."

### *Did Noah Fish?*

A Sunday school teacher asked, "Johnny, do you think Noah did a lot of fishing when he was on the ark?"

"No," replied Johnny, "How could he, with just two worms."



### *The Legend of the Sand Dollar*

There's a pretty little legend that I would like to tell  
Of the birth and death of Jesus found in this lowly shell.

If you examine closely, you'll see that you find here  
Four nail holes and a fifth hole, made by a Roman's spear.

On one side the Easter lily, its center is the star  
That appeared unto the shepherds and led them from afar.

The Christmas poinsettia etched on the other side  
Reminds us of His birthday, our happy Christmastide.

Now break the center open, and here you will release  
The five white doves awaiting to spread good will and peace.

This simple little symbol, Christ left for you and me  
To help us spread His Gospel, through all eternity.



Author Unknown

## *TFB Global Outreach News*



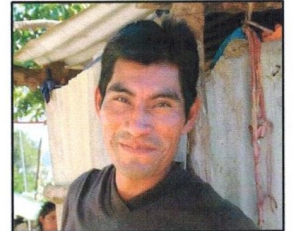
Ramona & Chuck

### **From our missionaries, Chuck & Ramona Shawver, in Chiapas, Mexico**

Dear Friends,

The passionate death bed plea of a beloved uncle healed Manuel's heart and now he can't stop smiling.

We heard his story when he first went to prison. In a tragic hunting accident, Manuel shot and killed his nephew. He turned himself in and was quickly sentenced to seven years in prison for homicide. The families were devastated and his wife Carmen and their four young sons were left to fend for themselves. They were believers and attended the local Baptist church on a regular basis. Carmen and her boys struggled to survive and the church didn't do enough to support them. Little by little, they stopped attending worship services.



Manuel Gómez

In prison Manuel came close to God and found strength to survive each long and difficult day. While his personal faith grew, he was bitter that no one from the church visited him. Life is hard in the mountain community of El Jardin and time and money for travel to the prison are scarce...and yes, there are always excuses.

After serving four of the seven years, Manuel was released this past June and made the long walk home. The reunion with his

family was a mixture of joy and anguish; a new routine did not include going to church. Pastor Antonio's visits were not welcomed and Manuel made it clear that he was through with the church. Talk of vengeance by some members of the dead boy's family began to circulate in the community. Members of the area drug gang offered Manuel protection if he would join them. And then came news that his uncle was dying in a nearby village.



Several family members were gathered in the home when Manuel arrived. The old man found strength to sit up and talk to the relatives gathered around him. He pleaded with them to let go of bitterness, to forgive and be reconciled; to choose to love. Tears welled in Manuel's eyes and he knew the words were meant for him and that God was speaking through his uncle, telling him to return to church. His uncle died a short time later but his words were heeded and Manuel gathered his family the following Sunday for the thirty-minute walk to "Christ Is the Truth" Baptist Church. They haven't missed a service since. As you give thanks this week, include Manuel and his family in your list and pray for them: Manuel, Carmen, Pascual, Humberto, Manuel, Jr., and Pedro.

And Ramona and I will be giving thanks for you. For your generosity, your prayers, your friendship. The seminary is moving forward and we will send a detailed update very soon. Your gifts have inspired our team, and we can never thank you enough. Our hearts are filled with gratitude for the privilege of serving the indigenous peoples of Mexico, for our colleagues and family, for the joy of seeing God at work in people, for grace when churches fail, for hope that we can and will do better!

We love you and pray for God's blessing in your lives and ministries.

*~Ramona and Chuck Shawver*

# Reflections

Continued from p. 2

for help!' You came near when I called on You; You said, 'Do not fear!'"

DO NOT FEAR! What awesome words of encouragement to hear from God Himself. In spite of all the heartaches which were taking place, and would even continue, the Lord graciously instructs Jeremiah to stop dwelling on his circumstances and turn his eyes upon Him — upon the One Who alone can meet his (and the country's) needs during this time of sorrow, pain, and defeat.

What I take from God's encouragement of Jeremiah is that He would not let go of him or Judah through this time of spiritual pruning and discipline. Why? Because, His love and mercy are steadfast...never ending. Please know this — no matter what comes your way, God will not let go of you. Never! Though you may find yourself in the middle of a storm — even of your own making — He will not turn His back on you. And so, if we need to repent of sin, then let's be honest before Him and repent. And if we once again need to let Him control our lives, let's be humble before Him and yield afresh to His leading. Will He listen to us? Yes, He will. Why? Because He is gracious. He can be trusted to lead us from a time of sorrow to a time of peace. You see, "the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases" (v. 22).

I'm looking only to Him,  
Pastor Rog



*Death leaves a  
heartache only  
God can heal;  
Love leaves a  
memory no one  
can steal.*

Please pray for the following  
families who have recently lost  
a loved one:

The Villarica-Barlow Family  
lost a grandma last month;  
Gini Fernandez lost her father; and  
Muriel and Joy Moore lost their daughter,  
Melanie Hoffman. (She is also Yvonne Large  
and Glenn Moore's sister.)



It's a boy!

Jun and Edith Laxa  
announce the birth of  
a new grandson:  
Aven Stark Laxa MacInnes  
who was born on  
December 1, 2014.  
He weighed 7 lbs. 14 oz.  
and was 20" long.  
He joins proud  
parents, Candice and  
Robbie, and big sister  
Daughtry.



*2015 Envelopes  
Available Now*

New envelopes are available in the foyer for those who already have assigned numbers. Please be sure and pick yours up for the upcoming new year.

Anyone who does not have numbered envelopes and would like them for next year, call the office to let us know.

**FYI: In order to receive 2014 tax credit for your giving, all gifts must be in the office by December 31.**

*TFB Tithes and  
Offerings*



Thank you for giving approximately \$61,223  
in the month of November.



*Don't forget . . .*



*Christmas Eve  
Candlelight Service  
6:30 p.m.*

Bring the family to worship and celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Who came into the world to save us from our sins.  
What an awesome God!



*Combined Service*

*December 28 ~ 10 a.m.*

There will be one combined service for everyone on Sunday, December 28, at 10 a.m. Pastor Jay will be preaching since Pastor Charlie will be on vacation. There will be Children's Church but no Sunday School.

*The Proclaimer* is a monthly publication of the First Baptist Church of Torrance, California, located at 2118 West Carson Street (6 blocks east of Crenshaw). Sunday services: 9:15 a.m. Worship Gathering (Contemporary Service); 11:00 a.m. Blended Service (with Sunday School for all ages); and 6:00 p.m. Evening Service. Mid-week events for children and students: High School *Revive*; Jr. High *Quest*; and *TFBKidz* for children.

For more information, contact the church office: 310.328.5030 or [info@tjbclife.org](mailto:info@tjbclife.org) or visit us on the web at [www.tjbclife.org](http://www.tjbclife.org)