

# Days of Grace



WHAT ARE THEY UP TO  
NOW?

DAN DAMON

BY PAM ABBEY

Although they may not know him by name, many folks in our congregations are familiar with the hymns of our colleague Dan Damon. His hymns and arrangements are in *The Faith We Sing*, *Worship and Song*, and many other denominational hymnals. A gifted musician and composer, Dan began composing songs in college, and began to write hymns in seminary after taking a class with UCC pastor and folk singer Tom Hunter and being asked to write a hymn as an assignment. Today he confesses the hymn was not very good, but it was enough to start him on his path.

So how has music and composition changed for him in retirement? While serving his congregations at Sutter-Meridian, 1<sup>st</sup> Modesto and Point Richmond, Dan found inspiration for hymn writing in the lives and struggles of his parishioners. Today Dan gets inspiration from his reading, including news headlines and books about current issues. Dan's wife, Eileen M. Johnson, a deacon and music director at El Sobrante, also keeps him in touch with the worship resource needs of that congregation. Both then and now, writing is part of his prayer life.

Since he is no longer tied to a single congregation Dan is able to share his performance gifts more widely. He has monthly Sunday morning dates at Community UMC Half Moon Bay; Temple UMC, San Francisco; and Episcopal Church of the Resurrection, Pleasant Hill. Dan isn't tied only to church performances, you can find him playing his unique piano jazz at Lara's Fine Dining on the Richmond waterfront most Fridays and Saturdays from 5-8 pm. Call first to be sure he will be there.

Dan is also working with an editor on a memoir focused on his call to ministry. He says it follows the plot line of Jonah. He hears the call, runs away (in Dan's case, getting swallowed up by playing in the hotel and bar scene of San Francisco) and finally answering the call. It should be a fascinating read.

Dan continues to make recordings, which can be found on Amazon, Spotify, Apple Music, You Tube, and other streaming services. His hymns are available from Hope Publishing Company. You can get more details at [dandamonmusic.com](http://dandamonmusic.com).

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Sandy Roberts

I have given Larry George my space this month to give you a story from Palestine. Larry has visited Palestine many times and is familiar with what is happening there. As we await the birth of the Prince of Peace, let us pray for peace in all places that are not at peace. - Sandy

Elham Farah, 84, was the oldest church pianist in Gaza's Christian community and a music teacher for decades in Gaza's schools. Lovingly called "Miss Elham", she touched many lives with her infectious energy before her death on Sunday morning, November 19.

With many others, Elham sought refuge from bombing in St Porphyrios Greek Orthodox Church. When an Israeli airstrike hit the 860 year-old church, killing dozens, she and other survivors moved to the Holy Family Catholic Church in search of safety. During a brief lull, she decided to walk to her nearby home, but without warning was shot in the leg by an Israeli sniper. She bled to death over several hours on the street as aid workers and ambulances were also targeted by the snipers.

"Auntie Elham was always the life of the party," said her nephew in Canada. She was a bold feminist who defied both the patriarchal standards of her own tradition and the brutal Israeli occupation. Elham was born in Gaza, daughter of a prominent Palestinian poet, and came from a family line of Gazan Christians who've made the area their home for a thousand years, according to her family.

I did not know Elham, but received this report from Dr. Mitri Raheb, pastor, theologian and founder of Dar Al Kalima University in Bethlehem, whom I have known for 25 years. Several young artists from the university had been volunteering at their satellite art center in Gaza City. "Among them," Mitri reported, "Hiba Zaqout and Muhammed Sami were murdered with the children they were teaching, and their families." They are among more than 17,000 people, more than 7,000 of them children, who have perished so far.

As a result of spending approximately a year of my life in Israel and Palestine over 25 years, I have been in touch almost daily with Palestinian friends in Jerusalem and the West Bank, and Jewish friends in Israel. It will be another month of indescribable horror and sorrow for them by the time you read this. I only hope that by this time our country, and the world, will have awakened and intervened. I pray, but with full awareness that my friends don't need my prayers without action.

In hope that outlives us all,  
Larry George

# Be Internet Smart!

## KEEP YOUR DATA AWAY FROM HACKERS!

Hackers use Cyrillic and Greek alphabets to trick you into clicking on their link. This is especially difficult to detect when the font is small.

Be aware that these can be VERY similar. I used the Russian keyboard for the B, the a, the P, the e, and the o in "Board" and "Pensions". The use of the Cyrillic "p" to simulate the lower case n is more noticeable.

Can you spot the difference?

[maybank2u.com](http://maybank2u.com) is not the same as  
[maybank2u.com](http://maybank2u.com)

[citibank.com](http://citibank.com) is not the same as  
[citibank.com](http://citibank.com)

[Board of Pensions](http://Board of Pensions) is not the same as  
[Board of Pensions](http://Board of Pensions)

The first one is correct, the second one is from hackers.

Be suspicious of all links!

Check who is actually sending the email. When in doubt, go directly to the website instead of using a link!

### CORRECTION!

PLEASE NOTE THE CORRECT EMAIL FOR SELBY!

### Write Your Own Obit

- Not the most pleasant thought to have on whichever random day you are reading this...
- But the reality is, none of us are getting out of this life alive! As you are no doubt aware,
- the conference honors all the saints that go before us at ACS each year. It would be a gift
- to your family if YOU wrote up the obituary you wish published in the Memorial booklet
- and send that to Selby Ewing at [selbye@calnevumc.org](mailto:selbye@calnevumc.org) or P.O. Box 980250, West
- Sacramento, CA 95758-0250. She will keep that on file until the time it is needed. Include
- a photo too! Use YOUR favorite photo!

# Spring Fling!

Are you ready to Fling?

April 24-25, 2024

Christ the King Retreat Center  
Citrus Heights, CA

We will be flinging with Rex Hamilton who will be speaking to us on "Music and Religion". He is currently a professor at the University of the Pacific and a member of the Stockton Chorale. If you love music, you don't want to miss this!



Registration  
for Spring  
Fling  
Coming  
Soon!



**SPECIAL FRIENDS OF CHRIST THE KING!**

# MEET THE CLASS OF 2023

## Gail Chiew

interviewed by Barbara Horikoshi-Firebaugh



It is my pleasure to introduce you to Gail Chiew who is retiring this year. She has over 48 years in ministry, starting in Malaysia, after she graduated from Trinity Theological School in Singapore with a Bachelor of Theology in 1976. She left Malaysia in 2001 to attend PSR, where she graduated in 2004 with her Master of Divinity degree. She first served Good Samaritan UMC as an Associate Pastor doing Chinese and English ministry for 9 years. She was then transferred to Florin UMC in Sacramento for 8 years. During these appointments, she became elder in full connection in this Annual Conference. Currently, she is serving Nevada City UMC.

Her immediate plans after retirement is to spend time with her siblings in Borneo Island and family in Malaysia. She is looking forward to traveling and visiting places.

## Scott Allred

interviewed by Alice Oberg

Scott Allred and his wife Frances are looking forward to retirement in the house they purchased in Fresno that has a pool for those hot days we have in the Central Valley. The house is close to their daughter Mariah and her family, which means a lot more time to enjoy their two grandsons-Preston and Paxton. Scott and Frances are planning trips with their RV to the places they have yet to explore now that they have the time. Scott has told a few of the pastors in the area that he is available for pulpit supply when he is not traveling or enjoying family gatherings.



## Rod Brayfindley

interviewed by Hubert Ivery



Rod and his spouse Debi ("JB") currently live in Colusa, California with their two dogs. They are the proud parents of three adult children, Isak, Eva, and Amanda and two grandkids, Shawn and Kambria. He served Smith River UMC, Aldersgate UMC in Chico, First UMC in Redding, and First UMC in Sacramento and planted the church in McKinleyville called "The Church of the Joyful Healer." Rod says he has a couple of hobbies he would like to continue. First, he would like to continue doing martial arts. Next, he and JB recently

purchased a 100-year-old house that they would like to fix up with the help of YouTube.

Rod says, "I have traveled. I've been to Asia, South America, Africa, Europe, and a lot around North America. And every country in North America. There are a couple of places I want to catch, but traveling is not the driving energy behind my retirement. I want to continue service. I want to continue goofing off with music and martial arts, working on the home and loving family."



*We invite you to celebrate anniversaries and birthdays with fellow RCA members in whatever way you feel is appropriate. We understand that the day of the event would be helpful, but since our newsletters are posted on the RCA website, we don't publish dates for security reasons. Do feel free to reach out at any time during the month and share your good wishes as it is never too early nor too late to celebrate!*

## January

TINA & BILL BALLAGH  
NOBUAKI & AYAKO HANAOKA  
KIEN SREY & SAMUT CHHENG SREY  
STEVEN THOMPSON & KAREN PETERSON  
CLYDE & SHEILA VAUGHN

## February

RICHARD & MARILYN BASTEAR  
BOB & CHERYL COLLINS  
SAMUEL & CAROLINA FABILA  
JERRY & KATHY FOX  
DANNY & PEGGY HUANG  
HEE-SOO & MIKYUNG KANG KIM  
PAT & CAROL LEAMY  
SHIRLEY MACEMON & JON MARCUS  
JUAN & JANETTE SAAVEDRA  
STANLEY & NANCY SIMPSON  
TONY & CAROL UBALDE



January

RUTH BALL  
 RICHARD BASTEAR  
 IONE BERGER  
 MARK BOLLWINKE  
 THOMAS BRACKNEY  
 PAT CLARK  
 DON CUNNINGHAM  
 NORM DALEY  
 NANCY DANSON  
 KAREN DARLING  
 DON DeNOON  
 ANITA DUTT  
 LOIS EDDE  
 INITA ESCAMILLA  
 ANGELO FAZIO  
 MARGARET FONG  
 FRANK GOMEZ  
 ALPHA GOTO  
 HAE SOON HAN  
 VERN HILL  
 CAROL IMAIZUMI  
 BILL JEFFERIES  
 DIANE JOHNSON  
 BILL JOHNSON  
 OK-WHAN KIM  
 SARAH KIM  
 YOUNG SOOK KIM  
 CONNIE KIMBALL  
 ROSEMARY KIMBER  
 JoANN LAWSON  
 JEAN LAWTON  
 CAROL LAYTON

JINSIK LEE  
 JULIA MAJOR  
 MARGE MARTIN  
 DOUG McCOY  
 SHEENA  
 McKENDRICK  
 VINCENT MIXIE  
 CEDAR MOSS  
 JANET MUELLER  
 NEAL NEUENBURG  
 JEFF NORDLANDER  
 OSCAR OCHOA  
 HANKYU PARK  
 HARRIET PECOT  
 MONIQUE-CHERI  
 PIERRE  
 DALLAS RICHES  
 KIM RISEDORPH  
 LORI SAWDON  
 KEN  
 SCHWARZENTRAUB  
 MICK SMITH  
 ROGER SPENCE  
 MARY SPENCE  
 PATRICIA SPOONER-  
 WALTHER  
 RICHARD STINSON  
 CINDY STORRS  
 RICHARD TAYLOR  
 DOLORES WAGER  
 LINDY WEST  
 MARY LOU WHITE  
 DAVID WOLF  
 RUTH MARIE WOLF

February

SUE ANGOVE  
 CHARLES ANKER  
 ADRIENNE BEASLEY  
 BILL BECK  
 LAUREL BLANEY  
 BONNIE BOLLWINKEL  
 CRAIG BROWN  
 CARIETA CAIN-  
 GRIZZELL  
 SAMUT CHHENG  
 SREY  
 ESTAN CUETO  
 LOIS EDWARDS  
 MADI ELSEA  
 BARBARA ERNST  
 MINERVA FONG  
 CLIFF GASSOWAY  
 MARTIN GRIZZELL  
 AYAKO HANAOKA  
 LINDA HOLBROOK  
 SUSAN KEMPER  
 COLIN KERR-  
 CARPENTER  
 GUSSIE KIDD  
 DALE KURUHARA  
 GEORGE LAYTON  
 STEVEN MC COLLOM  
 JOHN McCORKELL  
 TANA McDONALD  
 SHAN McSPADDEN  
 JACQUIE MEADOWS  
 ROSENDA MIZUNO  
 ROGER MORIMOTO  
 YOONHYEH PARK

DAVID PARK  
 WENDY POMEROY  
 FLOYD QUENZER  
 MATI RAHMAN  
 KATHLEEN SMITH  
 KIEN SREY  
 B.J. STILES  
 DANTE TANGONAN  
 RICHARD  
 THOMPSON  
 SHEILA VAUGHN  
 NORA YAMASHIRO



## Early Warning!!!

The 2024 Annual RCA Luncheon will be held on June 7, 2024 (that's the first day of Conference, a Friday) at noon in rooms 9 & 10 of the Convention Center!

Registration will first be available in the next issue of Days of Grace so plan on registering soon! We are not raising the cost for members again this year so the most you will pay is \$30 (discounts for Supporting, Sustaining, Sponsoring, and Lifetime members!). So get ready to send in your registration EARLY.

REMEMBER! Conference is early this year so our deadline will also be early.... **MAY 20!** We'd love to have EVERYONE attend! Register early, register often!



## Mission and Justice Committee



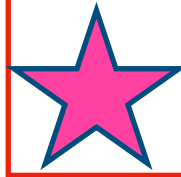
### PARADISE CALIFORNIA WORK PROJECT HOUSE

The mission and justice committee sponsored a work project in Paradise with the endowment board in the fall and are thinking about next work project! Let us know if you are interested in learning more, or have ideas.. We work to support retired clergy involved in justice efforts including Sharon Delgado's environmental justice work and Michael Yoshi's mission with the West Bank village of Wadi Fouquin. Let us know what if you have a concern or work that you would like to connect with other retired clergy.

-Betty Pagett and Marty Murdock

January 2024

CA-NV RETIRED CLERGY  
Gathering of Spiritual Leaders



ALL PAPERWORK MUST  
BE RECEIVED BY:  
MARCH 1 2024

Provided to you by:  
A Grant from the Conference Claimants Endowment Board  
and the Retired Clergy Association

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby request reimbursement in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ for actual expenses incurred at the 2023  
Gathering of Spiritual Leaders for food, lodging, parking and mileage\*\*.

**\*\*Please attach your receipts.**

**Receipts are REQUIRED for reimbursement**

Reimbursement: (please check your length of attendance)

ONE DAY'S attendance for Retired Clergy/Surviving Spouse	(max. \$300)
ONE DAY'S attendance for Retired Clergy and 2nd Clergy/Spouse	(max. \$350)
TWO DAY'S attendance for Retired Clergy/Surviving Spouse	(max. \$500)
TWO DAY'S attendance for Retired Clergy and 2nd Clergy/Spouse	(max. \$600)

Hotel Expense: \_\_\_\_\_ Receipts REQUIRED

Parking Expense: \_\_\_\_\_ Receipts REQUIRED

Food/Meals Expense: \_\_\_\_\_ Receipts REQUIRED

Mileage: \_\_\_\_\_ miles x .20 = \_\_\_\_\_ (within conference boundaries)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

After you fill out this form (attach all receipts) return it to:

RCA  
9328 Elk Grove Blvd #105-141  
Elk Grove, CA 95624



Enclosed is my/our check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Please designate as follows:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Membership **July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024**  
 Individual  Couple (circle one please)

**BASIC, SUPPORTING, SUSTAINING, SPONSOR, LIFETIME** (circle level please)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Seminary Student Scholarship Fund Donation

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Health Care Subsidy Fund Donation

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Other – *Please specify:* \_\_\_\_\_

My/our special gift is: In Memory Of: \_\_\_\_\_  
 In Honor Of: \_\_\_\_\_

**Member Information: (please fill this out so we can keep accurate records)**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Make check out to: **RCA**  
 Mail check and form to: **RCA \* 9328 Elk Grove Blvd. #105-141 \* Elk Grove, CA \* 95624**

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

LEVEL	INDIVIDUAL	COUPLE	BENEFIT
<b>BASIC:</b> <i>Sing all... Sing lustily and with good courage</i>	\$25	\$40	
<b>SUPPORTING:</b> <i>Scripture, Tradition, Reason, and Experience</i>	\$60	\$75	5% discount Spring Fling 25% discount ACS Luncheon
<b>SUSTAINING:</b> <i>Give all you can... In all ways you can</i>	\$100	\$150	10% discount Spring Fling 50% discount ACS Luncheon
<b>SPONSOR:</b> <i>Hearts Strangely Warmed</i>	\$250	\$350	15% discount Spring Fling ACS Luncheon Included for Current Year
<b>LIFETIME:</b> <i>Going on to Perfection</i>	\$1000	\$1500	20% discount Spring Fling ACS Luncheon for Life

California-Nevada Annual Conference of the  
United Methodist Church  
Retired Clergy Association  
P.O. Box 980250  
West Sacramento, CA 95758-0250

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Spring Fling

*April 24-25, 2024*

>Christ The King  
Citrus Heights

### Annual Conference Session

*June 7-10, 2024*

> Sacramento Convention  
Center

### Annual Luncheon

*June 7, 2024*

>Sacramento Convention  
Center Rooms 9 & 10