NEW BOARD MEMBERS WELCOMED

The Historical Society welcomes four new members to its Board of Managers; Mitchell Homma, Beverly Mitchell, Amaury Tañón-Santos, and Laura Alden.

Appointed by the American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS), Alden joins as a special representative of Judson Press where she serves as the Associate Executive Publisher for ABHMS. Author and editor of numerous books, Alden is also a lifelong Baptist. She appreciates the ability of Judson Press, sometimes in cooperation with the Historical Society, to offer quality resources that uphold and advance the Baptist heritage and faith perspective.

Mitch Homma is a sansei (3rd generation Japanese American) who grew up and still resides in Southern California. In addition to working as a software and system engineer, his interests include Japanese history and Christianity in Japan. He grew up attending Gardena Valley Baptist Church in California and Japanese Baptist Church in Seattle where his great grandparents and grandparents served.

His interest in Baptist History goes back four generations to the churches his Great-Grandfather, Rev. Masahiko Wada, started in Japan around 1910. He has contributed to several different Discover Nikkei photo history albums, based on his family’s photo albums, documents, and stories. He is especially focused on discovering the church history of Baptist churches lost during World War II, both in the US and Japan.

His family collection also includes records of their missionary work in Japan occupied Manchuria, Korea, and Siberia and their coming to the USA as Baptist missionaries. Some of his family research is available at http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/users/mhomma/

Dr. Beverly Eileen Mitchell is Professor of Historical Theology at Wesley Theological Seminary, in Washington, DC, where she teaches courses in theology, church history, African American religious history, feminist/womanist theologies, poverty, and human rights.

Among Dr. Mitchell’s recent publications are her books Black Abolitionism, A Quest for Human Dignity and Plantations and Death Continued on page 2

She is currently serving a two-year term as a member of the Ethics, Religion, and the Holocaust Committee, at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, in Washington, DC. Previously on the Historical Society’s Board of Managers, Dr. Mitchell begins her new term by serving as the board vice president.

Rev. Dr. Amaury Tañón-Santos is Director of Programs at Princeton Theological Seminary's Continuing Education, in Princeton, New Jersey. In this position, Amaury oversees the Institute for Multicultural Ministry, the Hispanic/Latino(a) Leadership Programs, and programs on faith and public life.

His research interests and background are in Intercultural Ministry, Religious and Cultural identity, and Urban Studies. Dr. Tañón-Santos is an active American Baptist minister and serves on regional and national American Baptist-related and other ecumenical boards. He has been on the leadership team for the biennial Emerging Theologians Summit. He holds a bachelor's degree in History (Universidad de Puerto Rico en Cayey), a master of divinity (Princeton Theological Seminary) and a D.Min. with an emphasis on Urban and Intercultural ministries (New Brunswick Theological Seminary).

**NEW EXHIBIT**

Images of the Land and People is now on the Judson200.org web site. These images are taken from the collections of missionaries Arthur E. and Laura H. Carson and Sydney V. Hollingworth. There is also original artwork from an illustrated album given to Elva Jenkins Hendershot. CHECK IT OUT!

### Wish List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large White Board for staff meetings and process diagrams</td>
<td>$300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Room Lamps: Four needed.</td>
<td>$100 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Memory: Upgrade for laptop computer memory</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Café Chair: For researchers checking databases on the reading room computer.</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum gallery protective posts and belts.</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Room Chairs: For conference table (8 chairs).</td>
<td>$2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelving: Units needed for processing.</td>
<td>$500 - $3000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recently, Yosh Nakagawa, Herb Tsuchiya, and new ABHS board member, Mitch Homma visited the Archives to tell us their Baptist stories and to seek information from our collections to help them fill in gaps and add details. Mitch told us the story of his great-grandfather, Masahiko Wada, who was born in 1880 to a prominent samurai family in Sendai, Japan. Once, while he was a law student at the Tokyo Imperial University, Wada encountered a distressed little girl who was dressed as an angel. She was running very late for her church’s Christmas play, so Wada gave her a ride.

Intrigued by these Christians, Wada began attending the Baptist church. Ultimately, he renounced his samurai status and dedicated his life to Christ’s service. After graduating from Yokohama Baptist Theological Seminary, Masahiko Wada became an overseas missionary to Japan-occupied Manchuria, Korea, and Siberia. In 1909, he married Kuni Anazawa, who was also the child of a high-ranking samurai family.

Between 1910 and 1912, Masahiko Wada served at the Tono Baptist Church in Iwateken, Japan. He is pictured at right, seated on the third row, just below and to the right of the man in the formal kimono.

Numerous American Baptist missionaries and ministers assisted and influenced the Wadas’ ministry through the years. One such missionary, William Axling, is shown in the picture below (standing, left of center, wearing a vest and gray pants). Axling served in Japan for over 50 years. William Axling was educated at Rochester Theological Seminary, where he was greatly influenced by the ideas of Augustus Strong and Walter Rauschenbusch. He and his wife, Lucinda Burrows Axling, came to Japan at the turn of the century. They began

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serving in Sendai, Japan, where this formal portrait was made in 1902. Kuni Anazawa Wada, as a girl, was taught to speak and read English by the Axlings.

The Axlings were instrumental in founding the Masaki Tabernacle, a Christian community center in the heart of Tokyo. The Tabernacle’s programs attracted the interest of people from all walks of life – students, traders, teachers, financiers, and statesmen – and William Axling cultivated fruitful relationships with many of them.

The United States passed the Exclusion Act of 1924, which closed the nation’s doors to immigrants from Asia. To convince Americans that such racial discrimination would harm the Japanese church and threaten the relationship between America and Japan, Axling asked several prominent Japanese leaders to help him compose Japanese Wonders.

*Booklet protesting the Exclusion Act of 1924 (From the BIM Literature Files, Japan, 1920s, held by ABHS.*

*American Baptist Home Mission Society Personnel Record for Masahiko Wada during his internment. (From the ABHMS files, “Wada, Masahiko”, Box 205, Folder 36; held by ABHS.*

**Why?** His booklet included comments from influential Japanese, such as the following by Dr. M. Yamada, dean of the College of Law of the Imperial University, Tokyo (from which Masahiko Wada graduated): “This discriminatory legislation will break up the solidarity of the East and West. It will force Japan to abandon her world outlook and to carve out her destiny in the Orient. It will set the East against West and the West against the East. It carries in its hand the seed of a great race struggle.”

Meanwhile, in the late 1920s, the American Baptist Home Mission Society sponsored the move of Rev. Wada and his family from Japan to California, where they would minister to the Japanese farm workers. Rev. Wada served as pastor of the Garden Grove,
ARCHIVES
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Pomona, and Moneta Japanese Baptist Missions between 1928 and 1942. However, as Dr. Yamada predicted and Dr. Axling feared, the seeds of race struggle between the Japanese and Americans took root during World War II. At the outbreak of war between Japan and America in 1942, Rev. Wada and his wife were arrested. The couple and their four children were sent to five different internment camps in the United States. (See internment personnel record previous page.) Rev. Wada became a Baptist pastor at the Granada Federated Church for Block 7-H at the Amache camp in Colorado. During this same period, William and Lucinda Axling were arrested in Japan and sent to separate internment camps. Throughout the ordeal, both the Axling and the Wada families relied on their Christian brothers and sisters to see them through.

After the war, in 1955, William Axling dedicated his book, *Japan at the Midcentury: Leaves from Life*, to “The heroic Japanese comrades of the Cross who fearlessly stood by during our long, lean years of internment.” He inscribed a copy of this beautiful book, printed on rice paper and adorned with traditional Japanese watercolor illustrations, to Masahiko Wada’s daughter, Mutsu Wada Homma, who counted it among her most cherished possessions. Today, her grandson, Mitch Homma, counts it among his.

[Image of book cover]

*Japan at the Midcentury: Leaves from Life* (From the ABHS Library Collections.)

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INSIDE
New Board Members
Japan connection

Save the Date
Friday, September 19, 2014

Annual Historical Society Event

7 p.m.
Mercer University, Atlanta Campus
AACC Auditorium

Dr. Beverly Mitchell, Professor of Historical Theology at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC, will be the speaker at the Annual Event

See abhsarchives.org for more information