

Laurel Neighborhood News

BY JOHN FRANDO AND
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The Reverend Paul Holt

In May 2010 the Rev. Paul Holt celebrated 30 years as pastor of Pilgrim Lutheran Church. At Pilgrim he oversaw a Chinese Ministry outreach and started a preschool and daycare program in 1989, with his wife Linda as director. He leads devotions, teaches, and drives the church bus for weekly field trips in the summer. He attended Holy Names College's Marriage and Family Counseling Program and led disadvantaged and culturally diverse youth group retreats throughout northern California.

He served as chaplain in the California State Park Chaplain program for more than 10 years and on the boards of Lutheran Social Services and Mount Cross Lutheran Camp. For 10 years he was chaplain to Highland Hospital, John George Psychiatric Hospital, and Villa Fairmount. Most recently, Pastor Holt has become active with the 100 Black Men Association through the Tommy Smith Youth Track Program. Last year, he was an assistant coach while his three youngest children and foster children participated in the track events. This year, he returns to Pilgrim's kayak ministry, overseeing daytrips on the estuaries of San Francisco Bay.

The Rev. Holt was born in

1947 in Ensieh, Hupeh, China, to Wilbert and Geraldine Holt, who were missionaries to China. He grew up in Hong Kong until the age of 16, when the family returned to the U.S. Rev. Holt attended Concordia Jr. College in Oakland and Concordia Senior College in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he met his wife Linda. They married in 1969 and will celebrate their fortieth anniversary in June. They have 12 children, including six adopted children of various ethnic backgrounds: Michael, Amy, Anne, Jonathan, Matthew, Amanda, Brian, Leland, Benjamin, Joshua, Noah, and Ashley. They are proud grandparents to Sequoia and William. They also have foster-parented more than 42 children and are currently foster parents to three brothers. No wonder, in 2004, Paul and Linda received the National Angels of Adoption Award.

Rev. Holt graduated from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley and Concordia Lutheran Seminary in Springfield, Illinois, with dual master of divinity degrees. In 1975 he was called to his first church, St. Thomas Lutheran Church in Gardena, California, a church started by the Nisei during WWII, where he also had a ministry to the Spastic Children's Foundation serving people with cerebral palsy.

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The Reverend Holt, Pilgrim Lutheran Church.