

THE 22ND ANNUAL
SANTA BARBARA MISSION CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE PROGRAM
FEBRUARY 3, 2024

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WELCOME TO "ENGAGE" 2024

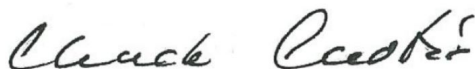
On behalf of the Mission Conference Council I welcome you to "Engage," the 2024 Santa Barbara Mission Conference. It's a joy that we can be together today for God's mission! This is our 22nd annual conference, and we marvel at God's faithfulness throughout the years. The church partners who produce this ecumenical conference are El Montecito Presbyterian Church, First Presbyterian Church of Santa Barbara, The Free Methodist Church in Santa Barbara, Montecito Covenant Church, Oceanhills Covenant Church, and The Presbytery of Santa Barbara and its member churches.

With this year's conference we've made a significant change. We've narrowed our focus to four areas of need, each one calling for us to respond. The four areas are Homelessness/Affordable Housing, Human Trafficking, Immigration/Racial Justice, and Creation Care. In each of the four areas the morning breakout leader will provide the biblical basis - why we should care. The afternoon leader will help us form action plans so that we emerge from the conference ready to act. Key-note speaker Rev. Dr. Robert Chao Romero will prepare us for action, speaking at length in the morning and briefly after lunch. We have tightened the schedule this year so that all this takes place in one day. We have replaced our Friday evening session with an optional Friday dinner in private homes to foster fellowship and direct minds to Saturday's topics.

Excellent leaders will take us along the four tracks described above. Homelessness: Rev. Fr. Bob Fox followed by Emily Koval; Human Trafficking: Jeff Shaffer followed by Kayla Petersen; Immigration: Dr. Romero followed by Karla Can; and Creation Care: Dr. Sandra Richter followed by Barbara Greenleaf.

Our conference is known for its food hospitality. Enjoy Continental breakfast before the opening session. Have a coffee and cookie break before the closing session. At midday pick up your box lunch and find a place at a table in the Christian Fellowship Center (CFC). There will be a special area on the patio where collegians and young adults may join Dr. Romero for lunch and ask their questions.

We pray this year's conference will bless you. We planned it so that it will motivate you. Tell your friends about us. Follow us on social media and come back next year for the 23rd annual Santa Barbara Mission Conference!



Chuck Curtis
Director

WE'D LIKE YOU TO KNOW

Conference Pastor

Rev. Tom Stephen has volunteered to be Conference Pastor. He will be available throughout the conference to pray with individuals or groups. How is God speaking to you during the conference? Tom would love to pray with you and help you discern. He will be there for any prayer needs.

Prayer Room

A room downstairs from the Sanctuary has been set aside as a prayer room for your use at any time during the conference. Look for the "Prayer Room." signs to guide you there.

Box Lunch

Midday Saturday you will receive a box lunch, provided by Three Pickles Deli, and a drink. You will be guided by signs and conference hosts to the north entrance of the CFC to pick up your lunch. There are many round tables in the CFC where you may sit. Keynote Speaker Romero will have special lunch tables on the patio (weather permitting) for collegians and young adults to ask him questions. Also, there are many areas on the campus where you may have your lunch.

Food Hospitality

In addition to the box lunch, the conference provides refreshments throughout the day: Continental Breakfast early Saturday morning and mid-afternoon cookie & coffee break before the final session.

Social Media

Stay connected – follow us on Facebook and Instagram.



SBMissionConference



@SBMissionConference

Recordings

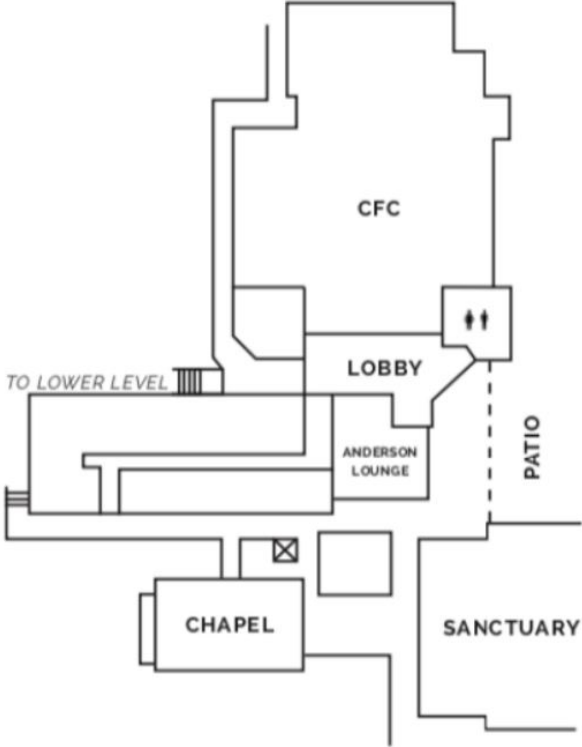
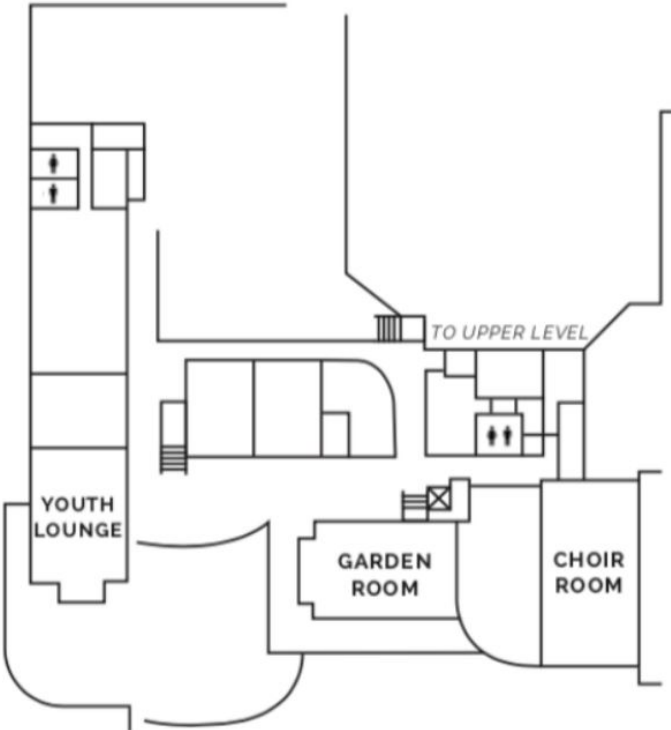
The morning plenary session and morning breakout session in the sanctuary will be live-streamed. So will the early afternoon speech by Dr. Romero and the closing session. The remaining breakout sessions may be viewed within 2 hours of the conference close.

Questions? Email us at info@sbmissionconference.org.

WE'D LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE

Yvonne Bazinet, Financials
Best Western Plus Santa Barbara
Bonnie Boe, Treasurer
Erin Bonski-Evans, Program Coordinator
Rev. Dean Choi, Host Assoc. Pastor
Rev. Ann Conklin, Host Pastor
Maria Curtis
Eben Drost, Worship Band Leader
Alex Epstein, Sound Technician, FPCSB
Matt Evans, Audio Engineer
Shirley Fender, Registrar
Dr. Kirk Gilbert, Senior Advisor
Daniel "DJ" Johnsen, Co-emcee
Jim Kreyger
June Michealsen, Co-emcee
Jan O'Connor, Food Hospitality Coordinator
Denise Pendergast, Administrative Assistant, FPCSB
Rev. Nikki Ramage, Keynote Speaker Coordinator
Denise Rodman, Business Manager, FPCSB
Rev. Tom Stephen, Conference Pastor
Paul Tarasick, Facilities Manager, FPCSB
Three Pickles Deli
Eric Torbet, Web Designer and Graphic Artist
Justin Walker, Videographer, FPCSB
Brent Winebrenner, Videographer
Worship Band musicians

VENUE MAP



SCHEDULE

FRIDAY EVENING

6:30 - 9:00 Optional Dinner Various homes

SATURDAY MORNING

7:45 - 8:45 Onsite Registration Open Patio and Narthex
7:45 Continental Breakfast CFC Patio
Prayer with Leaders Anderson

8:45 **MORNING PLENARY SESSION** Sanctuary
Welcome
Prayer
Worship
Rev. Dr. Robert Chao Romero, Speaker
Q&A

10:35 - 11:35 Morning Breakout Sessions Assigned Rooms

LUNCH

11:35 - 12:35 Lunch: Pick up your box lunch CFC
12:50 Dr. Romero - Midcourse Remarks

SCHEDULE

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

1:10	AFTERNOON PLENARY SESSION Welcome back Prayer Worship	CFC
1:35	Afternoon Breakout Sessions	Assigned Rooms
2:35	Coffee & Cookie Break	CFC Patio
2:50	CLOSING PLENARY SESSION Worship Commissioning Sending	CFC
3:50	Conference concludes	

KEYNOTE ADDRESS



Rev. Dr. Robert Chao
Romero

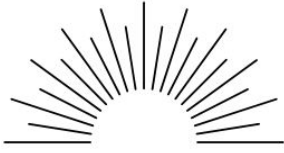
Justice, Theology, and Mission: Lessons from Latina/o Theology and the Brown Church

We live in a moment where many have entered the process of spiritual deconstruction and are asking complicated theological questions related to racial justice, mission, and Christian identity. Unbeknownst to most, Latin American and U.S. Latina/o Christians have wrestled with these same issues for the past five hundred years and developed passionate and persuasive responses. This talk explores the history of the Brown Church and asks:

How can Latina/o theological reflection on issues of racial justice (Brown Theology) serve as a roadmap for healthy spiritual reconstruction, mission, and identity formation?

Rev. Dr. Robert Chao Romero is "Asian-Latino," and has been a professor of Chicana/o Studies and Asian American Studies at UCLA since 2005. He received his Ph.D. from UCLA in Latin American History and his Juris Doctor from U.C. Berkeley. Romero has published more than 30 academic books and articles on issues of race, immigration, history, education, and religion, and received the Latina/o Studies book award from the international Latin American Studies Association. His recent book, *Brown Church: Five Centuries of Latina/o Social Justice, Theology, and Identity* (2020), received the InterVarsity Press Readers' Choice Award for best academic title. Romero is a former Ford Foundation and U.C. President's Postdoctoral Fellow, as well as a recipient of the Louisville Institute's Sabbatical Grant for Researchers. Robert is also an ordained minister and community organizer.

BREAKOUT DESCRIPTIONS



Morning Breakouts:

These breakout sessions will focus on the biblical and theological foundations for our justice tracks: Homelessness/Affordable Housing, Human Trafficking, Immigration/Racial Justice, & Creation Care. As Christians we are not left alone to address these injustices through our own wisdom or by our own power. Rather, we have the Holy Spirit to empower us, Jesus to model for us, Scripture to inspire and instruct us, and the tradition of the Church to ground us in the work of the saints who have gone before us. Each breakout speaker will draw on the riches of our Christian faith to bring hope and meaning to our current and future justice work.



Afternoon Breakouts:

As Jesus instructs us at the end of the Sermon on the Mount, we want to be both hearers AND doers of His Word. Sometimes, it can be too easy to move into action, rushing in before we have done the necessary and humbling work of prayer and listening. Other times, it can be too hard to move into action, when we let our fear, pride, or perfectionism keep us from starting. These breakout sessions will be practice-oriented. How can we move into action in our community in thoughtful ways? Each breakout session will focus on the history of engagement in their particular justice area in Santa Barbara or elsewhere, a brief survey of current stakeholders, possible exploration of case studies, and tangible suggestions for where to start serving, leading, learning, or advocating.

BREAKOUT SPEAKERS

Homelessness / Affordable Housing



REV. FR. HARALAMBOS FOX

Rev. Fr. Haralambos (Bob) Fox has been the full-time presbyter-Proistamenos of the Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church since 2015. Since 2020 he has been a lead on Homeless outreach for the Santa Barbara Response Network. After earning degrees in physics, applied physics, and computer science, he studied theology at Hellenic College Holy Cross in Massachusetts. Following his graduation from the seminary in 2005, Fr. Haralambos was assigned to Saint Nicholas Church in Northridge where he had first attended as a college student. He was ordained to the Priesthood in 2006 by Metropolitan Gerasimos, and continued to serve the parish in Northridge until 2010. That year Fr. Haralambos was assigned as the Proistamenos of Saints Constantine and Helen Church in Lancaster, California. He then served the parish of Saint John the Baptist in Anaheim with Fr. John Kariotakis beginning in September 2013 until July 2015.



EMILY KOVAL

Emily Koval is Program Development Director, City Net. Emily started working at City Net in 2019 inspired to change the system of care for those experiencing homelessness and co-occurring disorders. She received her bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Richmond and completed 3 years of graduate level course work in Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Since 2019, she provided direct services to over 350 unduplicated clients and has overseen case management plans for over 760 clients in Santa Barbara County. Emily's new role as Program Development Director allows her to operationalize the knowledge gained from field experience and research to create programs based on best practices, policies, and procedures. Her goal is to ensure every person experiencing homelessness has an equitable opportunity to accept and receive services, housing, and care.

BREAKOUT SPEAKERS

Human Trafficking



JEFF SHAFFER

Jeff Shaffer works with marginalized people groups in Santa Barbara County. In 2005 he started a meal sharing program in Pershing Park. He organized a tutoring program, kids club, and helped create a library for at risk youth while Director at the Village Apartments on the Westside. He helped initiate the first Vulnerability Index in tandem with our Point in Time count in 2011. He served as the coordinator of homeless services county wide from 2012-2019 under the United Way of Northern County. From 2013 to 2022 he was the Director of Initiatives with Santa Barbara ACT – a local non-profit dedicated to working with the marginalized in Santa Barbara. Under SB ACT he helped coordinate services for survivors of human trafficking and sexual exploitation and worked to reduce homelessness in the city of Santa Barbara. He currently is the Santa Barbara Catalyst for Kingdom Causes, coordinating the County's Human Trafficking Task Force to combat local labor and sexual exploitation.



KAISA LINDMAN MARSHALL

Kaisa Lindman Marshall will join Jeff in the discussion. She is a Sophomore Religious Studies Major at Westmont College and interns at Kingdom Causes.



KAYLA PETERSEN

Kayla Petersen is an East Coast transplant to Santa Barbara and Westmont College alumna. Since her time at Westmont, she has participated in several initiatives focused on bringing together members of the community to address complex social problems. She did this first as a staff member with the Westmont Center for Dialogue and Deliberation (WCDD), then with SB ACT coordinating holistic services for folks experiencing homelessness in Santa Barbara. Most recently, Kayla has joined the Kingdom Causes, Inc. (KCI) team to support student and church community engagement initiatives and coordination of the SB County Human Trafficking Task Force.

BREAKOUT SPEAKERS

Immigration / Racial Justice



REV. DR. ROBERT CHAO ROMERO

Rev. Dr. Robert Chao Romero is "Asian-Latino," and has been a professor of Chicana/o Studies and Asian American Studies at UCLA since 2005. He received his Ph.D. from UCLA in Latin American History and his Juris Doctor from U.C. Berkeley. Romero has published more than 30 academic books and articles on issues of race, immigration, history, education, and religion, and received the Latina/o Studies book award from the international Latin American Studies Association. His recent book, *Brown Church: Five Centuries of Latina/o Social Justice, Theology, and Identity* (2020), received the InterVarsity Press Readers' Choice Award for best academic title. Romero is a former Ford Foundation and U.C. President's Postdoctoral Fellow, as well as a recipient of the Louisville Institute's Sabbatical Grant for Researchers. Robert is also an ordained minister and community organizer.



KARLA CAN

Karla Can has been Legal Director of Immigrant Hope Santa Barbara for two years and Accredited Representative for seven years, helping immigrant families understand the complexities of the U.S. immigration system. Being the first generation in her immigrant family to graduate from a 4-year university, God has called her to serve and love her immigrant neighbors in the community and from other parts of the world. Along with advocating for immigrant families, she also trains and equip others in their journey towards accreditation so they too can also serve their immigrant neighbors.

BREAKOUT SPEAKERS

Creation Care



DR. SANDRA RICHTER

Dr. Sandra Richter, the author of *Stewards of Eden: What Scripture Has to Say About the Environment and Why It Matters* (IVP 2020), is the Robert H. Gundry Chair of Biblical Studies at Westmont College. Richter earned her PhD from Harvard University's Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations Department and her MA in Theological Studies from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. She has taught at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wesley Biblical Seminary, and Wheaton College, and due to her passion for the "real space and time" of the Bible has spent many years directing historical geography and field archaeology programs in Israel. Dr. Richter is best known in the Church for her work, *The Epic of Eden: A Christian Entry into the Old Testament* (IVP 2008) and a number of DVD curriculums stemming from the project (HarperCollins and Seedbed). She is broadly published on environmental theology and regularly speaks on the topic in academic and popular settings.



BARBARA GREENLEAF

Barbara Greenleaf is the author of ten books and numerous articles, corporate pieces, websites, blogs, and speeches, one of which won a Best Speech in L.A. award and two of which were published in *Vital Speeches of the Day*. After graduating from Vassar College, she worked at *The New York Times*. She was awarded her first book contract at the age of 24 for *America Fever: The Story of American Immigration*, which won an American Library Association award and of which Kirkus Reviews said, "It currently stands alone." She was also a contributing editor at *Working Mother* magazine. In addition to her writing, Barbara worked both on staff and as a consultant for a number of corporations, nonprofit organizations, and educational institutions. Most recently, she served as associate vice chancellor of Antioch University Santa Barbara. She has also written *This Old Body: And 99 Other Reasons to Laugh at Life* and *Adventures in ECO Land: My Humorous Take on Going Green*.

CONFERENCE LEADERS

Conference Emcees

JUNE MICHEALSEN



June Michealsen, who raised her children in Santa Barbara with her husband Russ, is part of the Ocean Hills community. She has gained new friends and a new understanding of the city through Neighborhood Discovery Walks. It is her dream to see people work together to bring more of heaven to earth.

DANIEL "DJ" JOHNSEN



Daniel "DJ" Johnsen is the Catalytic Neighborhood Impact Coordinator with Kingdom Causes, Inc., after having served for 5 years as Director of Compassion, Mercy, and Justice at Oceanhills Covenant Church. DJ loves Santa Barbara, both the place and its people. He has a passion for building bridges

across cultural, generational, and socioeconomic divides because, he believes, our personal flourishing is bound up with the flourishing of our whole community. DJ has spent almost a decade in the SB area organizing groups and initiatives that improve the lives of unhoused peoples, underserved youth, and, in general, those who often go unseen.

Conference Pastor

REV. TOM STEPHEN



Rev. Tom Stephen serves as pastor of Monte Vista Presbyterian Church in Newbury Park, California. Tom is committed to helping people grow in prayer, compassion, humility, and their enthusiasm for the gospel of Jesus. He grew up in Southern California and received a Bachelor of Arts in Music

from University of Redlands. He graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1990, where he met his wife Virginia, who is an ordained Methodist Minister. Together they have written articles for *Youth Worker Journal* and curriculum for *Focus on the Family* and published *Fearless: 40 Days of Living with No Fear*, which incorporates extreme surf photography and devotional scripture readings. Tom and Virginia have four kids, three dogs, and lots of fun.

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

2023-2024

Individuals

anonymous

David and Cynthia Ardell

Byron and Robyn Beck

Peter and Kati Buehler

John and Patricia Burnett

Gayle Clay

Charles and Maria Curtis

Ellen Duke

Shirley Fender

Stephen and Joy Frank

Kirk and Pamela Gilbert

Gordon and Sandy Hess

John and Barbara Irwin

Stafford and Elaine Kelly

John and Roberta MacKenzie

Fred and Mary Marsh

Joyce Maxwell

Russell and June Michealsen

Don and Sandy Montgomery

Bernadette Newitt

Stanley Ratzlaff

Robert and Sarah Steenberge

Marilyn Torrey

Daniel and Christina VanGent

Mona Wise

Churches

Community Presbyterian Church Nipomo

Emmanuel Presbyterian Church Thousand Oaks

First Presbyterian Church San Luis Obispo

First Presbyterian Church Santa Barbara

First Presbyterian Church Santa Paula

Free Methodist Church Santa Barbara

Montecito Covenant Church

Oceanhills Covenant Church

Presbytery of Santa Barbara

To join the Circle of Friends and support the Santa Barbara Mission Conference, please go to www.sbmissionconference.org/donate or mail your check to: Santa Barbara Mission Conference, PO Box 3541, Santa Barbara, CA 93130.

Mission Conference Council SBMC 2024

Yvonne Bazinet

Rev. Ann Conklin

Chuck Curtis, Lay Pastor, Chair

Shirley Fender

Rev. Mickey Fenn

Dr. Kirk Gilbert, MD

Daniel Johnsen

June Michealsen

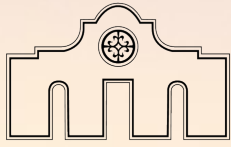
Rev. Nikki Ramage

Aaron Sizer, PhD

Rev. Tom Stephen

Brent Winebrenner

NOTES



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