A Celebration of the Civil Rights Movement

Terrence Roberts was one of the Little Rock Nine, a group of students who in the fall of 1957 desegregated Little Rock Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. As the first black students to attend this school, and due to the overt racism they faced, the Little Rock Nine and their cause attracted widespread media attention. To this day, this case is considered one of the main chapters in the Civil Rights Movement, and the students as heroes who stood up for their rights for equality in education. After high school, Dr. Roberts continued his schooling through a Ph.D. in Psychology at Southern Illinois University. He held positions on the faculty and in the administration of Pacific Union College, UCLA, and Antioch College.

For the Backus event, Dr. Roberts will address his experiences desegregating Little Rock Central High School and the role that religion played in the process.

In 1968, Gloria Macias Harrison and Marta Macias co-founded El Chicano, a newspaper designed to foster community in a Chicano community growing in size and political empowerment. With Marta as the editor and Gloria as the publisher, the newspaper thrived, and over 45 years later is now the longest-running Chicano owned and operated publication in state history. El Chicano was praised in the U.S. Congress for “serving as a cohesive factor in keeping the community aware of current issues and encouraging a high level of community interest and involvement in local events.”

For the Backus event, Gloria Macias Harrison and Marta Macias Brown will address starting the newspaper and the role that education played in the process.

Another Peace is a gospel choir associated with the Mt. Rubidoux Seventh-day Adventist Church. For the Backus event, they will be singing selections associated with the Civil Rights Movement.
Isaac Backus (1724-1806) was a Baptist pastor, historian, and theologian who was instrumental in securing the separation of church and state in America. He was born in Norwich, Connecticut, to Puritan parents and at age 17 was converted to faith in Christ during the Great Awakening. Sensing a call to ministry, he served as the pastor of First Baptist Church of Middleboro, Massachusetts, beginning in 1756 until his death. During that time the Congregationalist church was the official state church in Massachusetts, and Baptists, among others, were forced to pay taxes to support the Congregationalist clergy.

Backus supported the American War for Independence, which he saw as a battle for religious freedom. He voted to ratify the United States Constitution at the Massachusetts Ratifying Convention in 1788.

Although best known for his battle for religious liberty and his writings on American church history, Backus was first and foremost a pastor and evangelist who loved to teach others the Word of God. (www.theisaacbackusproject.com)