



# GEORGE SWANK

## Biographical Information

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### Education

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| B.A.    | Millikin University, Decatur IL                  | 1957 |
| M. Div. | Berkeley Baptist Divinity School, Berkeley CA    | 1960 |
| D. Min. | San Francisco Theological School, San Anselmo CA | 1979 |

Additional studies at Ecumenical Institute for Theological Studies, Jerusalem 1993

Ongoing continuing education experiences and projects, particularly in fields related to congregational consulting, stewardship, and fund raising.

### Ordination

Ordained to the American Baptist Ministry.

### Service

|                                |               |                           |             |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| First Baptist Church           | Oakesdale WA  | Pastor                    | 1960 - 1963 |
| First Baptist Church           | Lewiston ID   | Pastor                    | 1963 - 1968 |
| Sixth Avenue Baptist Church    | Tacoma WA     | Senior Pastor             | 1968 - 1978 |
| American Baptist Churches/West | Sacramento CA | Area Minister             | 1978 - 2000 |
|                                |               | Dir of Church Development |             |
|                                |               | Dir Capital Fund Campaign |             |
| Retired/Private Consultant     |               |                           | 2000 - 2015 |

### Author

*Dialogic Style in Preaching*, Judson Press

*Living in God's Power*, Judson Press

Numerous articles in Christian Journals

### Professional Specialities

#### *Preaching*

Seminary conditioned me to preach in the traditionally authoritative way. As I progressed in pastoral ministry it became increasingly clear that this approach was disconnected from the needs of today's congregations. I began to study how pulpit and pew might be drawn into a collaborative effort to create a holy space in which persons might be free to grow according to each person's individual needs. This became the largest focus of my doctoral work.

### *Congregational Consulting*

During eighteen years as a pastor I had many opportunities to learn about congregational systems. My doctoral work included a section on conflict management, which is where I first saw the pastoral opportunities inherent in personal conflict. Subsequent Bible study opened my eyes to the many ways Jesus used conflict to stimulate personal growth as well as to confront evil. Applying this in my pastoral ministry resulted in my church, which had been declining for twenty-five years, entering a period of growth.

As an Area Minister I was constantly consulting with pastors and congregations of more than fifty churches in Northern California, plus I had requests for help from other places. The requests for assistance with conflicted churches became so numerous that I developed a unique approach in response to needs that were not addressed by other methods; this approach was successfully used in many American Baptist congregations throughout Northern California and Northern Nevada.

### *Church Growth/Church Planting*

My work as Area Minister carried me into the fields of church growth and congregational health, areas directly related to my concurrent assignment as Director of Church Development. I had many opportunities to continue my professional development in these related fields as existing churches sought help to grow and new churches were started. In 1978 I was asked to help start one new church every five years. Eighteen years later, when I turned over that duty to focus on a capital campaign, we had started 70 new churches—an average of 3.8 new churches every year. Our results were recognized throughout our national denomination.

### *Capital Fund Campaigns and Annual Stewardship Growth*

During my last years before retirement I was directed to lead a capital fund campaign to raise money to continue to start new churches, even though I had but little prior experience in fundraising. The goal given to me was to raise \$250,000; the campaign actually raised almost \$1,000,000.

In retirement I have continued to assist churches in conducting their own capital campaigns, sometimes working in my own denomination and sometimes working with other traditions. Assistance is also provided to congregations to help them increase their annual support. I find joy and satisfaction in helping congregations thrive, be healthy, and find the resources needed to fulfill their own vision for their own ministries.

## **Military**

I am a retired Navy chaplain, having served twenty-four years in the Inactive Reserve component of the US Navy.

## **Family**

Dorothy and I live in Eskaton Village, a retirement community in Carmichael, CA. We enjoy an active life that includes swimming, hiking, and biking. We have a passion for world travel, and play bridge when we can. We are members of Trinity Cathedral in Sacramento, CA., where I often teach and occasionally preach.