Several years ago my parents gave me a Christmas gift with timeless meaning—a legacy gift. On Christmas morning I opened a box which contained my grandparent’s mantel clock. The clock had rested on their fireplace mantel and chimed each hour all through my childhood. The clock now rests on my fireplace mantel and with each chime, I remember the times with my grandparents and the precious memories of my relationship with them. It is more than a timepiece; it is a timeless gift which reminds our family of a heritage which was passed to us and will be passed to our children and our children’s children.

During our 100th Christmas season at Atherton, we are telling the story of our legacy gift from Hannah Atherton Baldwin. When she was 83 years old, she went to the Southern California Baptist Convention with the dream of building a retirement community for ministers, missionaries, and their wives and the gift of $40,000 to accomplish the dream. This gift has enabled hundreds of men and women who served our Lord to “make the last years of their life on earth, some of the best years of their life.” What a great legacy gift!

Not all the gifts this Christmas season will have timeless meaning. Not all will have a lasting legacy. But then again, you never know. I wonder if the Magi thought that people two thousand years later would know about their gifts. I wonder if Hannah knew what the impact of her gift would be 100 years later. This Christmas let me thank you for the gifts you give and remind you of their “timeless” quality in the lives of our residents. Have a blessed and merry Christmas!
As 2014 comes to a close, and Atherton looks back, we honor all God has done in the year-long celebration of Atherton’s 100th Anniversary. Throughout this year of celebrating we have remembered the humble beginnings of Atherton through Hannah Atherton Baldwin’s vow to God. With her initial gift of $40,000, Hannah began a “Tradition of Caring and Giving” that continues today.

Moving forward to the next 100 years

In preparation of this monumental celebration, Atherton was blessed by many of our residents and partners through their generous gifts starting with the “Getting Ready” campaign in which $120,000 was graciously donated to:
- Renovate the pool
- Renovate the Joslyn basement
- Remodel the public restrooms at the entry of skilled nursing
- Remodel of the chapel

We thank each and every one of you who gave not only to make Atherton a more beautiful community for all but to create an environment that is safe and secure...a place filled with God’s grace and love. As Board Chair, Bill Ebling stated “Atherton is not about the buildings, it’s about the lives of the extraordinary people who have lived here and continue living at Atherton. 100 years is not the end of the story, merely the continuation of our story of faithfulness to seniors who have served so faithfully.”

Now, as we close this historical year and enter a season of giving, we ask you to join Hannah’s Tradition of Caring and Giving by supporting Atherton. Your gifts make a difference where the need is greatest and support projects and programs such as:
- Remodeling of the Health Care Center Nurse’s Stations
- Upgrading additional rooms for Short-Term Rehab and Hospice
- Continuing the Assisted Living remodel
- Refurbishing the Wellness Garden and the Health Care Center Patio
- Providing financial support to our retired ministers and missionaries through the Loving Care Fund

For 100 years, Atherton has been providing a home and care for Ministers, Missionaries, and lay people. During this season, we hope and pray that you will keep Atherton on your “gift list.” Please join us by making your gift today; it will truly make a difference.

Celebrating a 55 year association with Atherton Baptist Homes, longtime board chair, Dr. William L. Ebling, has been a critical part of Atherton’s leadership for more than half of its history. At the November 7 meeting, he stepped down from his role on Atherton’s board after nearly two decades of service as its chairman. With his retirement, he turns over the gavel to Dr. Kirk Mackie, Lead Pastor of the Wilshire Avenue Community Church of Fullerton, CA.

Dr. Ebling first set foot on the Atherton campus as a young minister at the invitation of the development officer in 1959, he recalls. From that time until now Atherton has been an important part of his ministry and efforts. During his tenure in Southern California Baptist churches, while serving as the regional Mission Support director for the then American Baptist Churches of the Pacific Southwest, as the interim Executive Minister for ABCPSW, and during his time on the General Board of the American Baptist Churches, USA, Dr. Ebling has been an indefatigable booster of the ministry of Atherton.

Over his decades on the board, Dr. Ebling has worked with the last five presidents of Atherton, often acting as their most important advisor, frequently stepping in to deal with crises in the organization, and providing an essential stabilizing influence during the various meetings, consultations, and decisions leading up to the building of the Courtyard.

“We all owe Bill Ebling a debt of gratitude for his hard work during some of the most critical years in our history,” Andy DeLancey said at the November 7 board meeting. “During all of the meetings and decisions about the Courtyard project, we asked a lot of Bill, and he was there for us through it all.” DeLancey continued.

The Rev. Craig Statton, President/CEO, announced that there will be a recognition of Chairman Ebling’s years of faithfulness and exceptional service to Atherton and the elevation of Dr. Mackie in connection with the next meeting of the board, slated for Friday, February 6, 2015.