

# THE SPIRE

First Baptist Church in America Newsletter  
September 2024

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Greetings Church ~

We are in the midst of the harvest season. Plants nourished throughout the spring and summer offer up their fruits and flavors. The Garden of Earthly Delights daily draws neighbors to our grounds, serving up sweetness and goodwill. Scripture is replete with agricultural metaphors. How does our experience of creation's fecundity inform our understanding of our Creator? We are created for lives of both service and joy, labor and abundance. In God's economy, nothing is wasted. Given this example, how might we order our days and lives?

In her poem, "The Plum Trees" Mary Oliver exhorts us to savor daily wonders, so that we might acclimate ourselves to the Divine in our midst. Our bodies, both individual and collective, are sacred gifts. Open up! Receive the blessing that is already yours.

*Such richness flowing  
through the branches of summer and into*

*the body, carried inward on the five  
rivers! Disorder and astonishment*

*rattle your thoughts and your heart  
cries for rest but don't*

*succumb, there's nothing  
so sensible as sensual inundation. Joy*

*is a taste before  
it's anything else, and the body*

*can lounge for hours devouring  
the important moments. Listen,*

*the only way  
to tempt happiness into your mind is by taking it*

*into the body first, like small  
wild plums.*

*~ Mary Oliver*

Peace,

Pastor Jamie

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## FROM THE BOARD OF MISSIONS



During the month of September, we are asking for your support for International Ministries' World Mission Offering. Our contributions enable global servants and partners to continue their transformational work around the world. In addition to inviting people to be disciples of Christ, the ministry serves immigrants and refugees, promotes education and economic development, and fights to abolish human trafficking.

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### Roger Williams' Attic is Back!



Don't forget to donate your gently used items and join us on **September 14 and 15** to do some shopping.

Proceeds will benefit Good Samaritan Hospital in La Romana, Dominican Republic.

If you would like to volunteer and help, the following times are available.

Please call the church office to sign-up at 401-454-3418.

#### Week prior to Yard sale

Tuesday, September 10, 9 am-12 pm

Wednesday, September 11, 9 am-12 pm & 7 pm-9 pm

Thursday, September 12, 9 am-12 pm

Friday, September 13, 9 am-12 pm

#### Weekend of Yard Sale

Saturday, September 14, 7-11 am & 11 am-2 pm

Sunday, September 15, 12-4 pm

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### Garden of Earthy Delights

Come to the Garden on Saturday, September 7 anytime between 10 and 2. Starting at 10, we will be weeding, planting cover crops, and harvesting. Bring a picnic lunch and stay for the herb workshop at 2.

The Art Club is hosting a Block Party from 12 to 4 and the students will be back so there may be a lot of people around to visit with, when you tire of garden work.



Rev. Marlene Gill was the guest minister on the first Sunday in August.



Samuel Brunner provided the music for the service on August 4.



Pastor Jamie distributed Bibles to the children who were going to church camp this August at Camp Wightman.



Pastor Jamie Washam put on the "Armor of God" for the children's sermon on August 11 wearing the helmet of salvation, the belt of truth, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God



Jason Shealy, the baritone section leader of the choir, provided the special music for Sunday, August 11.



Gigi Mitchell-Velasco was the organist for the Lovecraft Arts & Sciences Council Welcoming ceremony of the International Weird Fiction Convention.



9 of our youth enjoyed a week at Camp Wightman in Griswold, CT the week of August 11. The weather was perfect and the kids agreed that it was a great week. They are ready to go back next year. Thank you to everyone who provided money and/or supplies to make the week successful.



After the morning worship service on Sunday, August 18, the congregation and the friends of Naledi Motshegwe and Georgi Kolishovski witnessed their marriage ceremony officiated by Pastor Jamie Washam.

Jim Miller gave the blessing at Naledi and Georgi's wedding. They were attendees of Emmanuel Baptist Church when it closed before coming to First Baptist.



Having been declared husband and wife, the couple began the recessional.

Ken Clauser ordered a cake from Vienna Bakery, 110 Maple Avenue, Barrington to celebrate the wedding of Naledi and Georgi.





The guest preacher for August 25 was Rev. Janna Louie, the Chief of Staff of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty in Washington, DC.



Jason Shealy, the baritone section leader in the choir, provided the anthems on August 25. Here he sings "Easter" from *Five Mystical Songs* by Ralph Vaughan Williams.



Congratulations to Zach and Emily Martin on the July 5th birth of their son, August Merrill Martin. All are healthy and happy.



## The Board of Christian Education

To help comply with our Child Safety Policy, we need volunteers from our membership assist in our Nursery and Elementary Class room this year as an independent second adult. Commitment can be a little as one Sunday. Our Nursery schedule is from 9:30 to 11:30 am, and our Elementary schedule during the school year is from 9:30 to 10:45 am. A fully-reimbursable background check would be required in advance; a professional background would suffice. Please see Karen or Ruth if interested. Thank you for your consideration!

## Sunday Forums for September

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#### **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup>**

**Rally Day** –Forum begins: **Lectio Divina** - group activity led by Ruth Marris Macaulay on

**Matthew 12:25:** “And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.”

#### **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Video: Faith & Fascism:** Laura Flanders interviews Rob Reiner & Dan Partland who tackled Christian Nationalism with their *God & Country* documentary.

#### **Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**Battling Hate & Extremism: How to React to Project 2025** – Ruth Marris-Macaulay

#### **Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>**

**The Importance of Nonviolence:** Dr. John Minahan

Many of you will remember John’s previous visits to FBCIA Sunday Forum. He is a former English, Philosophy and World Religions teacher who retired from Lincoln School in June. John has a BA in Theology, an MA in Music and a PhD in English Literature.

# Passport to the Psalms

*special experiences for grandparents & grandchildren*



Join us as we journey through the psalms. From September 2024 through May 2025, we will make stops to experience things featured in the psalms—from sheep to music and dancing to trees and gardens.

Our first stop will be on Saturday, September 14, to take in the moon and stars. We will gather at 6:30 p.m. at the Frosty Drew Observatory and Science Center for International Observe the Moon Night. The observatory is located inside Ninigret Park at 61-62 Park Lane, Charlestown.

Grandparents and grandchildren of all ages are welcome to join us for one or all of the stops along the journey. Participants' passports will be stamped at each stop.

Watch for more information about upcoming stops and experiences.

## Stop 1: Moon & Stars

*When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers—the moon and the stars you set in place*  
Psalm 8:3

**Saturday, September 14 6:30 p.m.**

**Frosty Drew Observatory & Science Center**

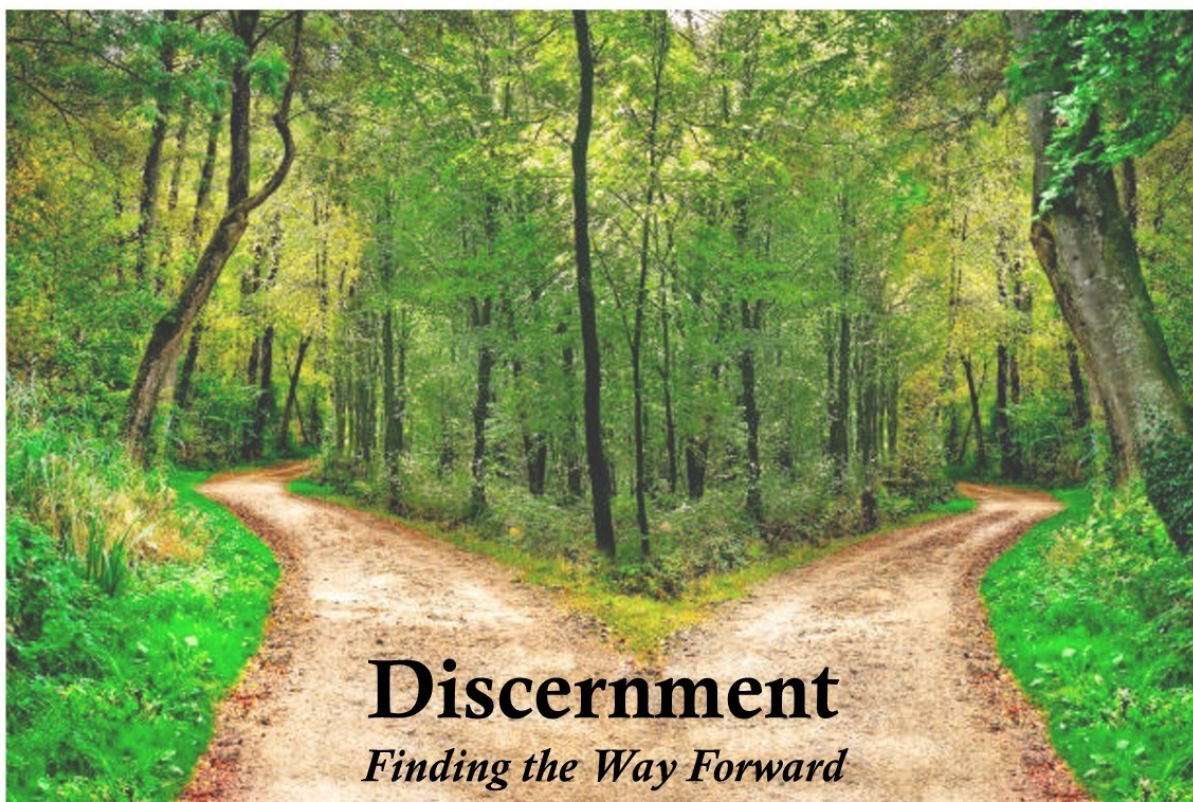
(The observatory is located inside Ninigret Park at 61-62 Park Lane, Charlestown.)

Please contact [eldercare@abcori.org](mailto:eldercare@abcori.org) or (401) 522-9731 by September 10 to let us know you plan to join us and to receive additional information.

**Elder Care Ministries**

American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island  
[eldercare.abcori.org](http://eldercare.abcori.org)



**ABCORI**

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Discernment is more than making a decision. When we discern God's will, we are defining who we are and finding the way forward in our journey.

Join us as we explore the ways in which God communicates with us—through prayer, scripture, emotions, intellect, nature, and the people around us.

## **A Third Third of Life Retreat**

**Saturday, October 5 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Kathryn Palen, associate executive minister for elder care ministries

**Location:** Lakewood Baptist Church, 255 Atlantic Avenue, Warwick

**Registration:** Contact [eldercare@abcori.org](mailto:eldercare@abcori.org) or call (401) 522-9731 to register and/or get additional information.

The \$25 registration fee includes lunch.

The registration deadline is September 27.

### **Elder Care Ministries**

American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island

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Tony Zambarano, Sexton  
Ary Peralta, Sunday Sexton  
Victoria Pfanstiehl, ASL Interpreter  
Ashley Muchiri, Nursery Room Assistant

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### Statement of Welcome

*Roger Williams gathered the First Baptist Church in America in 1638 on the bedrock of religious liberty, with its principles of soul freedom and the separation of church and state. Together, we continue our ministry of welcome and liberation.*

*This congregation honors its Baptist heritage. Many of our members are lifelong Baptists and others come from varied denominational and religious backgrounds. We welcome all people of every age, race, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, cultural background, socio-economic status, mental or physical ability, marital status, and any other distinctions of society. We are diverse people united in Christ. We remain a safe harbor.*

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