

THE SPIRE

First Baptist Church in America Newsletter
October 2024

Roger Williams, Then & Now

In October 1635, Roger Williams was banished from Massachusetts for harboring and spreading “new and dangerous opinions.” The Massachusetts Bay colony's leaders agreed with the English authorities that Roger’s teaching of religious tolerance was nothing less than “Satan's Policy” and a threat to the social order. Williams declared that English charters took land from the Native Americans, effectively calling the King of England a liar and thief. He also continued to advocate for the separation of church and state. Williams believed that the “First Table” laws (the first four of the Ten Commandments) were matters of individual conscience and should not be enforced as laws by the government.

Multiple times Williams was warned to be quiet or face the consequences. In the middle of the brutal winter of 1636, Williams received word that he was to be arrested. Fearing the worst if deported back to England, Roger fled Salem, leaving his family behind to avoid arrest. Once out of the colony, Williams encountered a Wampanoag hunting party who saved his life and offered him shelter. Chief Sachem Massasoit of the Wampanoag welcomed Williams, and in the spring of 1636 Massasoit gave him a tract of land along the Seekonk River in what is now East Providence. Governor Winslow of the Plymouth Colony contended that Williams yet remained within the bounds of Plymouth and suggested they move further across the Seekonk River, beyond Plymouth’s jurisdiction.

Canoeing the Seekonk River with several others on a scouting expedition, Williams and his party spotted a group of Narragansett. As they approached, the Narragansett greeted them by calling out in a mashup of English and Narragansett: “What Cheer, Netop?” ‘What cheer’ was an informal common English greeting of the day, short for ‘what cheery news do you bring’ akin to today’s “what’s up?” “Netop” is the Narragansett word for friend.

This October 13th at the Meeting House, we welcome back the spirit of Roger Williams (in the form of retired US Park Ranger John McNiff) for Roger Williams’ Family Day. He will be in conversation with the current minister of the congregation regarding religious liberty and the current rise of religious nationalism in the US.

Peace,

Pastor Jamie



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The Board of Christian Education

Sunday Forums for October

(theme: seeking for what unites us)

October 6th

Lectio divina- led by Ruth Marris-Macaulay.

“Now I do beg you, my brothers, by all that Christ means to you, to speak with one voice, and not allow yourselves to be split up into parties. All together you should be achieving a unity in thought and judgment.” 1 Corinthians 1:10

October 13th

How We Maintain Hope in Dark Times – Ruth Marris-Macaulay

(this presentation will be suitable for the junior high and high school students)

October 20th

Documentary: A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness (2015)

Nominated for a 2016 Academy Award® for Best Documentary Short, this 40-minute documentary follows the story of Saba, a young woman from the Punjab region of Pakistan, who was shot and left for dead by her father and uncle after marrying Qaiser, a man once promised to her by her family. Told through the lens of a true love story, the film is a scathing examination of the contradictions between modernism and tradition within Pakistani society, as Saba struggles with pressures to “forgive” the relatives who tried to kill her – a pronouncement that would set them free. In this masterful work of high-risk journalistic storytelling, awardwinning filmmaker Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy (Saving Face) uncovers the complex and violent forces faced by women in Pakistan, particularly as it relates to human rights and family honor.

October 27th

TBD – still awaiting confirmation from 2 different speakers

ON LINE BOOK GROUPS

Wednesday group

Practice the Pause

by Caroline Oakes

These days, many of us live in a state of overre-active fight-or-flight response and chronic stress. The demands of modern life pull us in all directions and can often put the meaningful connections in our lives at risk – connections to our deepest selves, to others and even to God

But new developments in brain science have recently proven that an intentional practice of pausing for a few minutes of meditation, prayer, or other contemplative practice actually rewires our brain in ways that make us calmer, less reactive, and better able to see the bigger picture. In Practice the Pause, Caroline Oakes offers easy-to-understand explanations of how this new brain science is confirming what every spiritual tradition has been telling us for millennia: by practicing the pause, we become more self-aware and better able to understand others. We become more “God aware.” With a refreshing focus on the Eastern Christian understanding of Jesus as a master of wisdom, Oakes shines a spotlight on Jesus’ own centering pause practice as a transformative path for personal and social change.

Caroline Oakes is a writer and spiritual director. She was trained in contemplative practice at Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation and has a master degree in theology.

Thursday group

Sessions with Psalms

by Eric and Alicia D. Porterfield

Sessions with Psalms is a ten-session study unit designed to explore what it looks like for the words of the Psalms to become the words of our prayers. Each session is followed by a thought provoking page of questions that allow for a deeper experience of the scriptural passages. These resource pages can be used by seminar leaders during preparation and group discussion, as well as in individual Bible study.

The book of Psalms is indeed the church’s prayer book. If we tell the truth about ourselves, then these are our prayers. If we are looking for ten easy steps to prayer, then the psalms are not the right option. But if we want to deepen our relationships with God and each other, our understanding of ourselves and of Scripture, and open ourselves to transformation, then the psalms are exactly the right word.

Eric Porterfield is a Baptist pastor and Alicia Porterfield is a chaplain.

If you are interested in joining either of these groups, please contact the church office at (401) 454-3418 or holly.fbcia@gmail.com



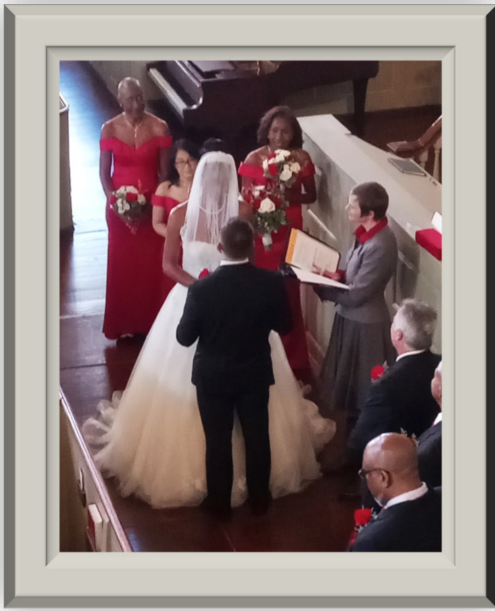
Sunday, September 8, was Rally Day for the church school, and everyone enjoyed a piece of the cake at the after-service reception.



The 2024 edition of Roger Williams' Attic rummage sale was Saturday September 14 and then Sunday afternoon. Folks donated many, many things. This photo shows some of the array of stuff for sale before the start.

As usual most of the buyers were students from the local colleges seeking to outfit their kitchens and apartments (but lots of necklaces and jewelry was sold as well).





Pastor Jamie Washam officiated at the wedding of Kiana Moore and Eugene Folgo on Sunday afternoon September 22. The couple had become members of FBCIA in February of this year.



The KISS exchanged by the newly-wed couple to the applause of more than 100 people present at the wedding ceremony.



Mission Day

Presented by American Baptist

Women's Ministries of Rhode Island

October 19, 2024

Ebenezer Church |

475 Cranston St., Providence

“The ruler will answer them, “The truth is,
every time you did this for the least of my brothers and sisters, you did it for me.”
Matthew 25:40

8:30am Registration and Fellowship 9:00am The program begins with

- ◆ Worship and Breakout Sessions featuring Nora Kalkman, daughter of IM Global Servants and seminary student at Yale
- ◆ Clarice Gothberg, lay minister at Open Table of Christ Church
- ◆ Highlights of a mission trip to Murrow Indian Children's Home
- ◆ Table Displays

2:30pm The program ends

Cost for day \$20.00, lunch included

Registration Deadline: October 14

For FBCiA members and friends, please call the church office for a registration form.



Don't grow up invisible

SCHOOL SUPPLIES DRIVE

Bring us your :

- New or gently used backpacks
- Pencils and Pens
- Notebooks
- Loose leaf paper
- Other school necessities!

QUESTIONS?

Email info@youthprideri.org

www.youthprideri.org/donate

Basic Needs Pantry Drive

WISH LIST - Nothing opened or expired, please

- ◆ Milk of all types (shelf stable-cow, almond, oat, etc.)
- ◆ Band-aids
- ◆ Dish Soap, sponges, disinfectant sprays, and other cleaning supplies
- ◆ Kitchen supplies (cling wrap, plastic bags, tin foil, etc.)
- ◆ Office, school, and crafting supplies
- ◆ Sanitary pads (no tampons)
- ◆ Shampoo and conditioner (for all hair types)
- ◆ Single-load laundry detergent packets
- ◆ Soaps, toothpaste, deodorant, travel-size mouthwash, and other hygiene products
- ◆ Pasta sauce, Peanut butter, Ramen, Rice, Snack mixes, Soups, cake mix and frosting, canned fruit, any variety, Canned/shelf-stable proteins
- ◆ Cooking oil, spices, flour, sugar, and other kitchen staples/basics

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

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.

Announcements

Below is a list of upcoming October Road Races in Providence.

October 6: Flutie 5K for Autism: 9:30 AM

October 13: Women's Classic 5K Road Race: 10:00 AM

October 27: Providence Monster Dash: 9:30 AM

There will be a Quarterly Meeting and Deli luncheon on Sunday, October 27th following the Service.