

THE SPIRE

First Baptist Church in America Newsletter
November 2024

Greetings Church !

The month of November brings a number of transitions, some mundane and others fraught. We approach the season when days shorten and clocks change. (Did we do it? Did we save time?) As a nation, we prepare to vote on the first Tuesday of the month. It is unlikely that we will know the outcome immediately. Regardless of the election results, we will have a great deal of healing work to do as a nation. What kind of people and country will we choose to become? How will we bridge the divisions that fracture our nation? Church offers us a template for a way forward, wherein we coalesce around a common purpose, through and beyond the gifts of our particularities. Weekly, we gather to celebrate God in our midst who reminds us that we never do this alone or only for ourselves; we are saved with each other.

Consider this prayer by Walter Brueggemann (b. 1933) for your meditations in these days.

Peace,



Pastor Jamie

Post-Election Day

You creator God who has ordered us in families and communities, in clans and tribes, in states and nations.

You creator God who enacts your governance in ways overt and in ways hidden. You exercise your will for peace and for justice and for freedom.

We give you thanks for the peaceable order of our nation and for the chance of choosing— all the manipulative money notwithstanding.

We pray now for new governance that your will and purpose may prevail, that our leaders may have a sense of justice and goodness, that we as citizens may care about the public face of your purpose.

We pray in the name of Jesus who was executed by the authorities.

Walter Brueggemann, *Prayers for a Privileged People* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2008), pp. 149.



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The Board of Christian Education

Sunday Forums for November

(Theme: finding comfort in difficult times)

November 3rd

Structured discussion of The Girl in the River – leader TBD

November 10th

Speaker: from the RI Rapha Project that focuses on women of color in the community who struggle with substance abuse, mental health disorder, and trauma. Their main focus is to help women access treatment and care. They provide "Rapha Circles" which are healing circles that include discussions and activities that help women prioritize themselves in a way that helps lead them to a successful wellbeing.

November 17th

Lectio divina: - leader TBD

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.” Psalm 46:1-3

November 24th

Documentary: **Radical Acceptance: How Misfits Can Solve the Homelessness Crisis**

In this powerful and eye-opening podcast episode, we sit down with Iain De Jong, a renowned expert in homelessness and social issues. Iain shares his firsthand experiences from the streets to the executive level, shedding light on the deepening crisis of homelessness. He discusses the loss of hope among those experiencing homelessness, the burnout of frontline workers, and the societal apathy that exacerbates the problem.

all my best
Ruth

FBCIA NEWS

ABCORI's Elder Care Ministries is excited to offer a second workshop in its *Called to Care* series.

It will focus on providing spiritual care to people living with dementia and their caregivers.

We're grateful to Greenville Baptist Church for hosting this workshop, which will take place from

9:00-11:00 a.m. on

Saturday, November 16.

to register call 401-522-9731 or elder-care@abcori.org.

Mission Trip to La Romana

The deadline for joining the trip to the Dominican Republic is November 15. The trip is January 25 - February 1, 2025. We will have a medical team and a construction team. While medical or construction skills are helpful, they are not necessary. The most important skills for those who travel to the mission field is curiosity and the willingness to step out of your comfort zone and try new things. For more information, talk to Richard or Susan Lepore.



CONGRATULATIONS!

To Emma Lepore on receiving her Doctorate in Education Innovation and Leadership, from: Arizona State University

Thank you!

Thank you to all who helped celebrate my 25th anniversary here as administrative Assistant at First Baptist Church in America.

I have enjoyed working with all of you at some time or another and look forward to doing so in the future.

Many Thanks,

Holly



Garden of Earthy Delights

Our last garden workday is **Saturday, November 9 at 10:00**. We will put the garden to bed by pulling dead and dying plants, trimming back some perennials, gathering seeds, harvesting, and planting garlic and cover crops.

Garden Dinner

On **Wednesday, November 13** we will have a garden dinner for everyone. The gathering will begin at 4:00 pm in the kitchen where we will prepare black bean soup and cornbread.

The food will be served around 5:30 pm. You **do not** have to join in the cooking to join in the eating and fellowship.

After the meal you are invited to help clean up. If you can't stay to clean up, you are still invited to join for eating and fellowship.

Come when you can and stay as long as you are able.



Roger Williams visited the only church that he gathered on the morning when the Roger Williams Family Association made its annual pilgrimage to the Meeting House. Williams was reincarnated by John McNiff, recently retired U.S. National Park Ranger of the Roger Williams National Memorial. He preached about why church and state must be separated.

On October 20th we had a Great Day, which saw Deacon Colleen Whelpley introduce a new member, Karen Bell, into the fellowship of the church. Pastor Jamie Washam beamed as she observed.



Sam Hall celebrated his 95th birthday at the Little Compton Community Center on Saturday, October 12. Pastor Jamie Washam brought a blessing and read a prayer that was written by Mickey Hall.



Brian and Lynette Smith, American Baptist Missionaries to Hispaniola (Haiti and the Dominican Republic) were guests at church on October 27, and Lynette spoke about their work in the mission field.



On Monday, October 28th, Peter Schoonmaker and Tony Zambarano lowered the Waterford Chrystal Chandelier to replace a two watt light bulb and to clean. It had not been cleaned since Covid.

The cleaning process took four day as Tony cleans each Chrystal individually with a toothbrush.

The Chandelier was raised back into position on Friday, November first.



On Monday, October 28th two buses with 65 Korean Baptists from Charity Baptist Church, Incheon, South Korea visited the church with their pastor Rev. D. Jung.

Since most of them did not speak English, he read the Korean self-guided tour to them.

They have been traveling the United States to learn how the Baptist religion began here and the association with the Baptist missionaries who came to Korea.

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Holly Edwards, Administrative Assistant
Anne Gagan, Bookkeeper
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.

Reminder

Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday morning at 2:00 AM.

So don't forget to turn your clocks back one hour

Saturday night before you head off to bed.