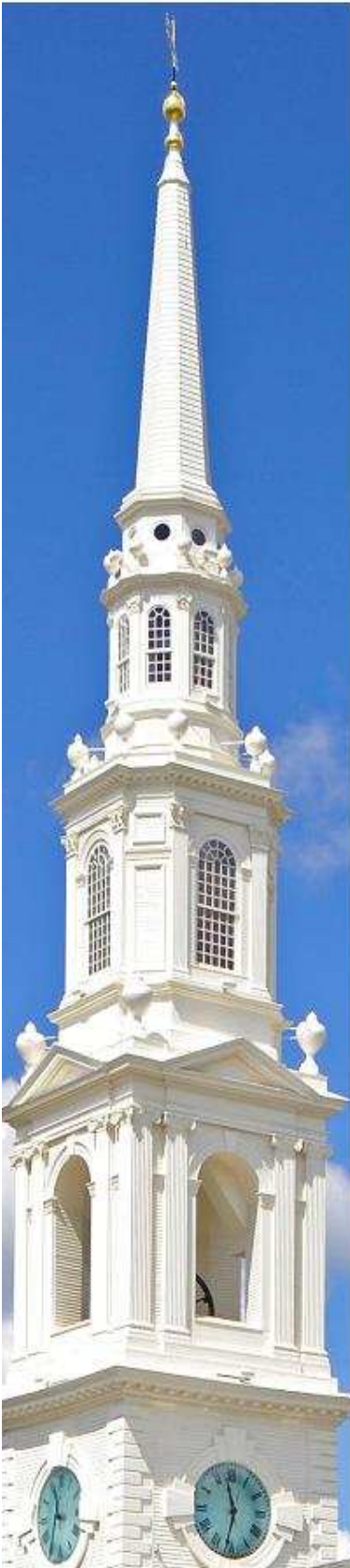


The Spire

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church in America

September 15, 2014, Volume 17, Issue 14



From The Pastor...

OK—we now know that the rumors are true: summer really is over! The signs are everywhere, not only the changing weather, but also the steady gaze of students as they walk by the meeting-house. They no longer walk with a bounce in their step, but with a determination in their classroom attire. The look on their faces is intense. There are papers to write, books to read, lectures to attend! And, of course, October brings the leaf-peepers, who stop by the meetinghouse on their way further north. We welcome them from all over the world, and some of them show up on Sunday. It is always a pleasure, and some of them are old friends. Our worship is enhanced by their presence.

As a newcomer myself, it is wonderful for me to hear the choir, to meet new people, to experience Adult Forums, to plan worship with the staff, and to attend committee meetings. I take pride in your accomplishments, as if I had anything to do with it! Yet what I am sensing after only a few months here is that I more and more frequently speak in first-person plural (“we”) rather than the second-person plural (“you”) when I speak of the congregation.

The Christian calendar has a predictable rhythm about it, but individual churches experience their own unique version of that rhythm. I revel in both observing and participating in the singular rhythm of this congregation. Seasons of the year have their special emphases, and each comes with possibilities for growth and fulfillment. Even crunching the numbers during the autumn budget planning can be a time of great pleasure.

Let us not fail to slow down and enjoy the blessings of each season. Breathe a prayer, for God is near. Talk less but say more; remember to be kind; smile with a child; hold the hand of someone you love; work well and rest well. Time is sacred.

Thomas R. McKibbens

Linda's Lines

In the last Spire I wrote about our ongoing small groups. This time I want to tell you about another small group activity which will be led by Rev. Tom Wiles. The topic is "Improv your Faith," and there is a flyer about it below. This one only requires a six-week commitment. I have heard a presentation on improvisation by Tom before and it was fascinating. So I hope everyone will consider attending. In addition to the information gained, small groups are a wonderful way to get to know people in the church better – a great opportunity for some of our newer members. The sessions will be held on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 for about an hour and will run from October 8 through November 19 with a break the first week in November. I have included below an outline of the content of the sessions. If you would like to join us, please sign up on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall.

- Session 1 – Introduction to study - principles of improvisation
- Session 2 – Reading Paul – discovering his use of OT
- Session 3 – Interpreting Paul – looking for improvisation
- Session 4 – Imitating Paul – tracing the script of Scripture
- Session 5 – An Improvisational Theology – God's improvisation
- Session 6 – Improvising our future – preparation for mission

IMPROV



YOUR



Faith

Shaped for Mission by Paul's Improvisatory Hermeneutic

A Study in Six Sessions

Exploring Fresh Options . . .

Paul's Improvisation on a Theme

Improvising with Scripture

Improv and God's Mission

Facilitator: Rev. Tom Wiles

Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm beginning October 8

Moderator's Minute

Pastor McKibbens's sermon of Sunday August 17th included references to the view from Cadillac Mountain in Maine of the vast expanse of the Atlantic Ocean in all its grandeur. This comment led me to think about physical places I have had the pleasure of visiting that have a quality that reflects the majesty of God and/or an incredible sense of spirituality. Two are relatively far from Rhode Island, the other quite near.

Whistler/Blackcomb Resort in western Canada boasts that it is the largest ski resort in North America. Whether it is or not, I do not know, but Art and I had the pleasure of skiing there about thirteen years ago. The resort consists of two mountains, Blackcomb and Whistler. The former has a lift called Seventh Heaven. The first few days there, we skied in some fog, but one late morning as I unloaded from Seventh Heaven, I looked left and in the far distance I could see water, which I believed at the time was the Pacific Ocean. (Having recently studied a map of British Columbia more closely, it was probably either Lake Alta or perhaps the body of water that separates Vancouver Island from the mainland.) Regardless, it was a profoundly moving sight and made me sense the vastness and absolute majesty of God's creation the earth.



The American Cemetery at Omaha Beach Normandy provided another moving experience. I had been there in May 2010 and returned this past June 5th—to share in the celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings. At 11:00 a.m. the group I traveled with had an appointment to lay a wreath at the large memorial statue at the cemetery. David Eisenhower, who had been a lecturer on our tour, read the names of men who had died during the landing who were relatives of our tour mates. The public address system played "Taps" and the "Star Spangled Banner." Shortly after David laid the wreath, a B-17 flew overhead. This caused an almost surreal experience of connection with all those young men buried in the cemetery who had been fighting for freedom from the oppression wreaked by the Nazi Empire. My words cannot adequately convey how moving that experience was—it truly felt like being on holy ground.

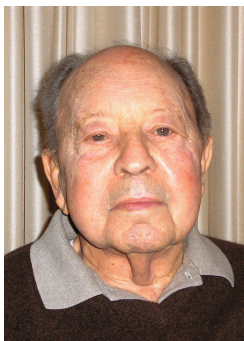


The next physical place is near and dear to all of us—the Meeting House. But something special happened to me a few years ago after a committee meeting. It had been an evening gathering, not sure but it was probably the Finance Committee. For whatever reason, we left by the North Main Street door rather than the side door. The night was slightly foggy and as I walked up the brick driveway, I looked up over my shoulder and saw the illuminated steeple. The mist gave it a special glow which made me reflect about the joy, peace, and love that I certainly have felt as a part of the family of the First Baptist Church in America. It is indeed a sacred place in which to feel God's presence and something to share with as many people as we can.

I invite all of you to reflect about those places where you have experienced spiritual peace and/or the presence of God—am sure many of you have had similar experiences in other corners of the world!

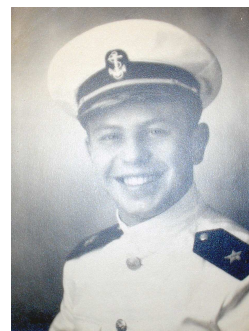
Joanne

IN MEMORY OF DR. ANTHONY DAVIDS



Davids, Anthony, 91, died at Atria Bay Spring Village in Barrington on September 15, 2014. Dr. Davids was a long-time member of FBCIA, having been baptized on April 25, 1937, as a teenager. He was born August 28, 1923 in Providence, the son of Antonio and Louise (Nahigian) Notarangelo. His parents divorced when he was only eight months old, and his father fled the state to escape paying child support, leaving his mother to raise him alone on a stenographer's salary. His mother was one of seven Nahigian siblings who joined FBCIA between 1913 and 1923. Anthony grew up in the church, attended Sunday school so regularly that at one point he had perfect attendance for eight straight years, was baptized at four months short of fourteen years old, and taught the 5th grade Sunday school students during his senior year at Hope High School.

His mother re-married in 1940 to William James Davids, so when Anthony graduated from high school in 1941, he went to court in East Providence and legally changed his last name to Davids, becoming Anthony Davids. Anthony, like several of his cousins, entered the military service in World War II. He enlisted as a Navy aviator cadet in 1943 and after extensive pre-flight and flight training, he was assigned to a fighter-bomber squadron on the aircraft carrier *U.S.S. Lexington* in the Pacific theater in June 1945. He earned the Air Medal while flying an F4U Corsair on combat missions over Japan, attacking airfields, military camps, harbor facilities, and cities. Although his plane was hit by anti-aircraft fire, he always returned safely to the carrier. With the end of the war, he was returned to the United States in the fall of 1945 and discharged from the Navy with the rank of Lieutenant j.g. in March 1946. After the war he never flew again.



Taking advantage of the G.I. Bill, he went to Brown University where he and Sam Beachen were members of the Brown wrestling team at the same time. Wasting no time, Anthony crammed in the courses, went to summer school, and graduated in three years (1949), earning Phi Beta Kappa, Sigma Psi (national science honorary), and *magna cum laude*. Having graduated in May, he was married at FBCIA to Martha St. Germaine on September 17, 1949. Going to Harvard, he earned a Master's degree (1951) and Ph.D. (1953) in clinical psychology. After remaining at Harvard as a post-doctoral research fellow for two years, he returned to Brown University in 1955 as an assistant professor in clinical psychology, remaining there until retirement and appointment as professor *emeritus* in 1989. He also was the director of psychology at Bradley Hospital (1955-1980). He lived his retirement years in East Providence before moving to the retirement village in Barrington.

“SCRIBBLES” from FRIDAY SEEKERS

As many of us reflect back on our youth, we think fondly of the times when we got together with friends. For some of us, campfires and sitting around, and singing the rounds and melodies brought out the best of us. We all have warm memories of those “long-ago” times. BUT – the memory can be reinstated – plan on attending FRIDAY SEEKERS on Friday, September 26, 2014. The place will be at a lovely home in Bristol – 30 Harrison Street. Lee McDaniel will lead the program and has picked a very appropriate theme for this beautiful Summer to Fall weather – giving us all a chance to have one more outdoor activity before colder weather sets in.

The Sign up sheet is on the Bulletin Board (look for the big Friday Seekers panel). Since this is not being held at the church, it is important that host/hostesses who have our group at a private home know early on how many to expect. So please, help Lee and others out, by signing up as soon as possible.

WHAT TO BRING: BBQ and picnic food – things that need to be cooked will be done there (on a gas grill) . Desserts – well marshmallows, of course, and finger foods or any dessert item that may be grilled.

It is important to support our church people in their endeavors. You can help in this regard by attending on FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26. PLEASE SIGN UP – IT’S ONLY 2 WEEKS AWAY! If you would like to come to the church and “car pool” with someone else, let Holly know.

Here is a run-down of the program:

PLACE: Home of Todd Giroux, 30 Harrison Street, Bristol, RI 02809

TIME: 6:00 p.m. Camp Set up (arrive and mingle)
6:30 p.m. Meats & veggies on the grill and sides
7:15 p.m. Indoor campfire (ONLINE Jesus)
8:15 p.m. Campfire (songs, praises and s’more!)
9:00 p.m. End or stay a little later if you want

Lee will lead the program “Campfire, Old & New” which will be a traditional outdoor campfire with campfire songs and marshmallows and a new campfire, which will be an indoor “campfire” using social media for modern Christian living.

You can come and go as you want once the campfire starts.



Thank you.

Dianne Thyret

FRIDAY SEEKERS’ COORDINATOR

Church News

Finance:

▶ Pledged giving levels typically suffer over the summer months, but this it's year worse than usual. We're down 50% for the month of July. Making projections for our yearend goal will be a stretch. You may recall that our pledge revenue only covers 20% of our operating costs. Any pledge shortfall requires that we reach even deeper into the endowment... Continuing at this rate, the endowment is not sustainable. Please help if you can. Thanks!

▶ On November 9th the Finance Committee will sponsor a presentation entitled: **Estate Planning - Faith, Finance and Future**. We will meet over lunch after the Sunday service. David Coon will speak about what we should all know about estate planning. Art Bone will provide an overview of trends in FBCIA finances. We will hear how bequests have made a critical difference in sustaining our viability and one of our members will speak to why he has already made a commitment to the church in his estate plan. Please add the date to your calendar now and plan join us for this very important discussion.

▶ Jason Shealy will be singing the role of Figaro in Salt Marsh Opera's production of "Le Nozze di Figaro." The performances are October 1st, 3rd, and 5th, with the 1st being at the Pequot Museum in Mashantucket, CT, and the 3rd and 5th at the Katherine Hepburn Performing Arts Center in Old Lyme, CT.

Here's the web-site advertising the show.

<http://www.saltmarshopera.org/the-marriage-of-figaro>

Tickets can be ordered online (linked below), by e-mail, and there is phone number as well.

- <http://www.saltmarshopera.org/marriage-of-figaro-tickets>

- info@saltmarshopera.org

- 860 535 3456

Jason's parents and sister are flying in to see the opera as well, they'll be at the Friday night show, October the 3rd. The show on Wednesday, October 1st at the museum theater is a partial staging, so he recommends folks attend either the Friday or Sunday performances.

Jason said he normally is casual about advertising his shows, because he realizes how expensive these things can be, and also how busy folks are. In this case, though, he is especially hopeful that folks will come see the show. It's the most difficult role he has ever taken, and he has worked very, very hard on it. More than any show he has ever done, this one is very special to him, so he is hoping that as many of his friends and family as possible will come see it.

▶ South Providence Neighborhood Ministries is celebrating 25 years of serving the community with an Anniversary dinner on Thursday, October 23. The cost is \$50.00 per person and the dinner choices are prime rib, chicken cordon bleu or baked scrod. All proceeds will benefit Louie's Place which is their after-school and summer program for elementary and junior high students.

I would love to have a table (8 people) from First Baptist. Reservations are due by October 3. See Susan Lepore to reserve your spot.



Pastor Tom McKibbens preached about the complex meaning of the unpronounceable name of YHWH which included the "breath of life" itself.

South Providence Neighborhood Ministries
cordially invites you to help us celebrate
25 years of service at its

*Silver Anniversary Gala
and Silent Auction*

to benefit

Louie's Place

Thursday, October 23, 2014
at the Cranston Country Club
69 Burlingame Road
Cranston, RI 02921
6 p.m. Cocktail Hour
7 p.m. Dinner

\$50 per person
includes dinner
cash bar available

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Thomas R. McKibbens, Interim Pastor
Linda Bausserman, Associate Pastor
Stephen T. Martorella, Minister of Music
Holly B. Edwards, Administrative Assistant
Anne Gagan, Bookkeeper
David Michel, Sexton
Ivy Bermudez, Child Care Worker

Sunday Calendar

Sun. Sept 21	10:00 AM	Sunday Worship: Pastor Tom McKibbens Sermon: "Entitlement Versus Grace" Scripture: Jonah 3:10 - 4:11 Matthew 20:1-6 Greeters: Mickey and Mark Hall Ushers: Richard Lepore and Barry Bainton
	11:15 AM	Guided Tour Elsa Grieder
Sun. Sept 28	11:00 AM	Sunday Worship: Pastor Tom McKibbens Sermon: "Fresh Vision and the Water of Life" Scripture: Exodus 17:1-7 John 4:23-26 Greeters: Eva and Ahuma Adodoadji Ushers: Richard Lepore and Mark Hall
	12:15AM	Tour Guide: Richard Aubin

Mission Calendar

- ▶ Monthly Prayer Meeting in Fellowship Hall 2nd Saturday of the Month 9:30 AM.
- ▶ PICA Sunday is the 4th Sunday of the Month, Please bring non-perishable food for the food pantry.

Business Meeting Schedules for 2014

- ▶ October 19, 2014 - 12:15 PM: Quarterly Meeting, and Deli Luncheon.

Executive Meeting

- ▶ The next Executive Meeting will be held October 1st.