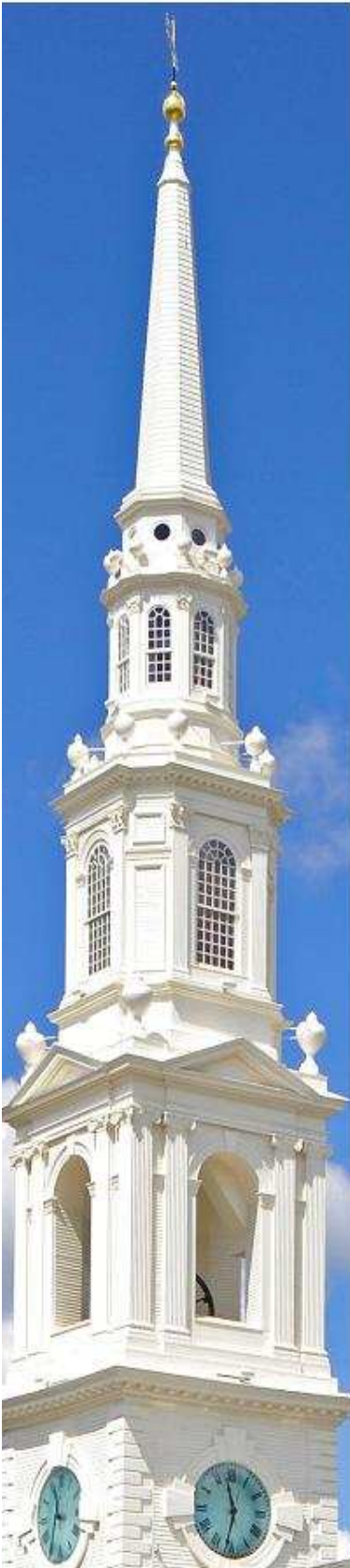


# The Spire

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church in America

October 01, 2014, Volume 17, Issue 15



## *From The Pastor...on Kumbaya*

The recent glowing reports of summer camp and the experiences of the children and leaders prompted me to think about the old song, “Kumbaya.” It has been as important for campfires as s’mores for as long as most of us can remember. It is a prayer, “Come by here, Lord,” and it comes from the Gullah language heritage. (The Gullah live in the low country of South Carolina and Georgia and are descendents of enslaved Africans.) It was a soulful cry for divine intervention on behalf of a suffering people. “Someone’s cryin’, Lord, come by here.”

During the 1950’s and 1960’s it became a standard of the folk music revival. Everyone seemed to record it: Pete Seeger; the Weavers; the Seekers; Peter, Paul, and Mary; Joan Baez—you name it. Still, it retained its character of a gentle prayer for the Lord to attend to the needs of us all: the crying, the laughing, the singing, the praying. It was an emotional, soft-voiced anthem of togetherness. It evoked courage.

Now, however, it has morphed into something none of us could have imagined during our camping days. It has taken on the character of a sneer by politicians and some of the talking heads of TV land. Rather than representing strength and power in togetherness as it once did, the song has come to represent weakness and wimpiness. Derision of Kumbayah has become sign of toughness and pragmatism in American culture these days. As one columnist recently said: “What do we do...when faced with an implacable radical enemy? Just sit around, sing ‘Kum Ba Yah’ and hope these bad guys will leave us alone?”

The distortion of Kumbayah from an experience of strength in togetherness to a term of joking and derision is sad, but not surprising. It reflects the sharp divisions and cynicism in our country today. But for me, and I hope for the church in general, Kumbayah still has its power and inspiration. We can be as tough and pragmatic as anyone, but Kumbayah still maintains its relevance, especially in these cynical times. *Kumbayah, my Lord, Kumbayah!*

Thomas R. McKibbens

## Church News



We made it all the way to September this year before somebody crashed into the Thomas Street fence during the night.



After a Spring and Summer of glorious garden blooms at First Baptist Church, the clean-up crew moves in!





## Friday Seekers



Campfire at Friday Seekers

## Music Notes 🎵

We will be welcoming a number of guest musicians this fall as part of our music ministry. Baroque violinist Sylvia Cami joins us October 5 in the duo “Ich lebe, mein Herze” from the Easter Cantata by Johann Sebastian Bach, which will be sung by Sarah Dunn and Samuel Brunner. Other music for that day will honor the Jewish New Year with music by Louis Lewandowski (Toras Adoni - “The Law of the Lord restoreth the soul”) and organ music by Julius Chajes. On October 19 we will be joined by Rhode Island College faculty violinist Samuel Breene and early music specialist and lutenist Geoffrey Noonan, who is on the faculty at Washington University in St. Louis and Southeast Missouri State University. Finally, on November 2 we welcome organist and choir director Eric Mathis, worship and music specialist on the faculty at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. Dr. Mathis will be working with our choir in a program of special music especially designed to enhance our corporate worship experience.

## Sunday Morning Forum

**October 5th**, Fred Womack will share with us about his book *Kim: A Dying Child's Spiritual Legacy*

**October 12**, Pastor Tom McKibbens will lead forum

**October 19**, a Lincoln School student will present her film and project on medical aid to Syria.

## From The Board of Missions

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

## *Lowie'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

*Come join us and Make a Joyful Noice!*

On November 1 the Rhode Island Heritage Center is sponsoring its biennial conference, and this year's program is about Baptist music and worship. The featured speaker will be Eric Mathis from Sanford University in Birmingham, Alabama. A number of church choirs and singing groups will be taking part in addition to discussion groups.

The choir of the First Baptist Church in America will be singing in the afternoon session, and Stephen Martorella and Stanley Lemons will be facilitating one of the luncheon discussions.

Sign up using the attached information. The registration fee covers some of the conference expenses and provides you with a lunch there.

**For information, contact**

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Rev. Paul Hanson  
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**Registration Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Church: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Number attending: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$15 = \_\_\_\_\_

- Registration closes on Oct. 27!
- Participating musicians should register through their group leader.
- Make checks payable to: RI Baptist Heritage Center  
and return to

**Baptist Heritage Weekend**

C/O Don Waterman, 330 West Rd., Harrisville, RI 02830

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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.	Oct. 05	11:00 AM	Sunday Worship: Pastor Tom McKibbens
			Sermon: "The Top Ten Words"
			Scripture: Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20
			1 Corinthians 15:1-11
			Greeters: Ruth Marris Macaulay & Ken Clauser
			Ushers: Emily and Zach Martin
		11:15 AM	Guided Tour Stan Lemons
Sun.	Oct 12	11:00 AM	Sunday Worship: Pastor Tom McKibbens
			Sermon: "Power, Sex, and a Self-Made God"
			Scripture: 32:1-14
			Matthew 23:23-28
			Greeters: Deanna and Sam Beachen
			Ushers: Lee McDaniel and Mark Hall
		12:15AM	Tour Guide: Joanne Schneider

### 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.

### Estate Planning Meeting

- ▶ November 9, 2014 - 12:30 PM; The Finance Committee is sponsoring an Estate Planning - Faith, Finance and Future with a Deli lunch.

### Executive Meeting

- ▶ There is an Executive Committee Meeting tonight at 7:00 PM. If you've not done it already, please deliver your committee's 2015 proposed budget to the Finance Chairperson at this meeting.
- ▶ The next Executive Meeting will be held December 3.