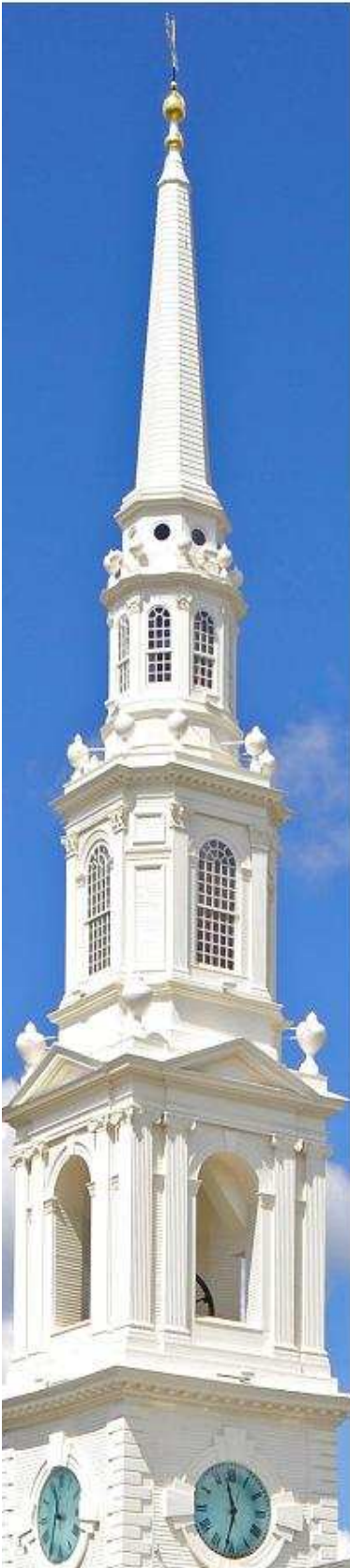


The Spire

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church in America

December 15, 2014, Volume 17, Issue 19



From The Pastor...

The New England Puritans criminalized Christmas in 1659, when the General Court of Massachusetts passed the Five-Shilling Anti-Christmas Law: *Whosoever shall be found observing any such day as Christmas, or the like, either by forbearing labor, feasting, or any other way upon such account as aforesaid, every such person so offending shall pay for each offense five shillings as a fine to the country.*

The Five-Shilling Law was repealed in 1681. Perhaps they finally decided that outlawing Christmas was like outlawing love. But even after the American Revolution, the day was not declared an official holiday, given the fact that Congress was in session on Christmas Day, 1789, the first Christmas under America's new Constitution. Christmas did not become a federal holiday until 1870!

If the original Puritans could see a mob of people whipped into a frenzy by some department store offering a few items on sale at 3:00 AM on a Friday morning, they may stand back and say, "See...I told you so!" But such is life in 21st century America. And such is the overbooked, hectic, harried, frenetic lifestyle many believe to be inevitable during this season.

Thank God for the church—and not just this church, but all churches—that slow us down and call a halt to the frenzy long enough to pause before a manger and listen to the heartbeat of the universe. And they don't even charge five shillings!

Thomas R. McKibbens

Christian Education

This Sunday, December 21st, we will be concluding our Sunday morning forum advent series based on Richard B. Wilke's book: Christmas: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly.

Sunday Morning Forum will resume again on January 18th.

Children's Sunday school lessons will continue so our visitors will have a place for their children to go during the service if they so desire.

Children's Lessons:

December 21st

"God With Us"

Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 2:11-12

December 28th

"Jesus, Our Light"

John 1:1-9; Isaiah 9:1-2,6

January 4th

"New Beginnings"

II Chronicles 33:1-35;19;

Psalms 51:1-2,10

Note of Thanks

Sam and Mickey Hall would like to thank everyone for all the prayers and expressions of sympathy on the death of Sam's sister. We are blessed to be a part of such a loving and caring church family.

Linda's Lines

The Women's Wednesday Spirituality Group
will resume on Wednesday, January 14, 2015

The Thursday Evening Spirituality Group
will resume on Thursday, January 15, 2015

*Have a Merry Christmas
and
A Happy New Year!*



Church News

The prelude for the worship service on December 7th was George Philipp Telemann's "Sonata in C" played by Linda Bausserman and Stephen Martorella.



Pastor Tom McKibbens preached on "With Blessing in His Hand."



Above: On Sunday, December 14th, Betsy Shealy made a cake to celebrate Marian Muhuri's citizenship to the United States.



Left: Marian celebrates with her family: Elizabeth, William, Angela and, Marian Muhuri, Steven Unruh, Reshmi Muhuri Unruh. (Manna Muhuri not shown).

MUSIC AT THE MEETINGHOUSE



Cumberland-Lincoln Community Chorus Holiday Concert

Saturday December 20 2:00pm

“...a fast-paced 90 minute program with a 15 minute intermission, this season’s spirited and lively program of holiday music is sure to enlighten, and entertain all ages.”

**The First Baptist Church in America
75 North Main Street
Providence, RI**

Concert Info: 401.454.3418

Free will offering to assist the Chorus with its continued community outreach program.

2014 CHRISTMAS MEMORIALS

If you would like to have a poinsettia plant in Church

Christmas Eve - Wednesday, December 24, 2014

Please fill out this form and return it to the church office
on or before, but **no later than**

Friday, December 19, 2014!

(Please Print Clearly)

IN MEMORY OF: _____

GIVEN BY: _____

Number of Plants: _____ Cost: \$13.00 each

Please make your check payable to:

The First Baptist Church in America

Payment Must Accompany Order Form!

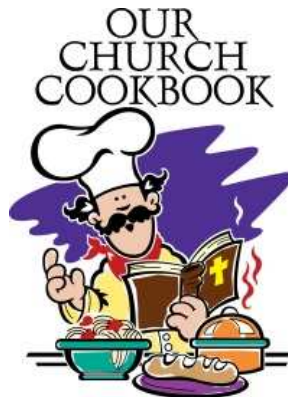


From the Board of Missions

REMEMBER with LOVE
GIVE with GRATITUDE

The Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering gives American Baptists across America an opportunity to say thank you to all those who have served in this country and abroad. We hope that you will contribute generously to this offering.

You can write a check to FBCIA with RMMO on the memo line or you can always give cash. Envelopes will be in the pews during the month of December.



Remember that copies of the new edition of our cookbook are for sale for \$10 in the Fellowship Hall. They make terrific Christmas gifts! All proceeds support the January Missions trip to La Romana in the Dominican Republic.



We are again buying Christmas presents for several refugee families in our community. Please return these presents wrapped with the stocking or name of the recipient attached by Sunday, December 21st. On behalf of the families, thanks so much to all who have participated.

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 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

Advent Sunday Calendar

Sun. Dec. 21	10:00 AM	Sunday School/College Bible Class/Sunday Morning Forum
	11:00 AM	Sunday Worship: Pastor Tom McKibbens - 1st Sunday in Advent Sermon: "Journey Toward Hope" Scripture: Mark 13:32-37 Greeters: Holly and Michael Edwards Ushers: Mark Hall and Larry Wilson
	12:15 AM	Guided Tour Stan Lemons
Wed. Dec. 24	7:30 PM	Organ Preludes
	8:00 PM	Christmas Eve Worship: Pastor Tom McKibbens Christmas Meditation: "Everywhere, Everywhere, Christmas Tonight" Greeters: Lena Gates and Arthur Marois Ushers: Eva and Ahuma Adoadaji Joanne Schneider and Arthur Bone
Sun. Dec. 28	11:00 AM	Sunday Worship: Pastor Tom McKibbens Sermon: "Gifts That Count" Scripture: Matthew 1:18-25 Greeters: Deb Jensen-Brown and Al Brown, Jr. Ushers: Gary Penfield and Frank Nicholson
	12:15AM	Tour Guide: Richard Aubin
Sun. Jan. 04	11:00 AM	Sunday Worship: Pastor Tom McKibbens Sermon: "Angels on Roller Skates" Scripture: John 1:1-14 Greeters: Elsa Grieder and Esperanza Tannehill Ushers: Janice and Richard Aubin
	12:15AM	Tour Guide: Stan Lemons

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.