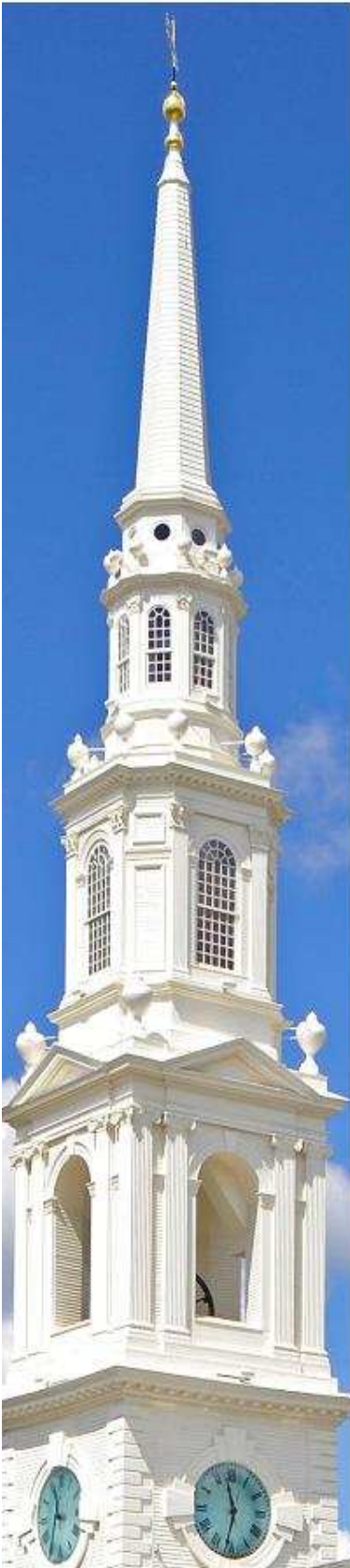


The Spire

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church in America

March 15, 2015, Volume 18, Issue 06



From The Pastor...

The first day of spring is a week away and Easter is only three weeks from now. We all seem to be coming up out of our winter hibernation and soaking in the joys of springtime. The church has much to celebrate as we enter this high and holy season. The wonderful ministry of Dan Ivins still lingers in the air like sweet aroma. The church members have taken on their responsibilities in the church with enthusiasm and commitment. The “gears” of the church are well-oiled and running smoothly during this time of transition. Visitors continue to show up, not only on weekdays for reasons of history, but also on Sundays for reasons of spirituality.

Lent and Easter are times in the church year when we are nudged to go deeper in our faith, to make the effort to strengthen our understanding and therefore magnify our witness to the world. Regular meeting times such as Adult Forum and book groups help broaden our world view and enliven our sensitivity to the needs of the world. And each week worship is a time of inspiration and renewal, allowing us to go back out into the world refreshed and committed.

On Maundy Thursday, April 2, the church will gather in the Fellowship Hall for a light supper at 6:00 PM followed by a communion service with Tenebrae at 7:00 PM. Tenebrae is a “service of shadows” that reviews the events of the last supper, the betrayal, the trial and execution. At each reading a candle is extinguished, so that toward the end of the service the room is almost totally dark. We leave in quietness as we anticipate the glory of the resurrection on Easter Sunday. This service is always powerful and meaningful, and I hope you will avail yourself of the experience.

Thomas R. McKibbens

BOARD AND COMMITTEE NEWS

Christian Education

Children's Lessons:

March 22nd - *God will always take care of us*

"The Trust Test"

Matthew 14:22-33; John 14:1

March 29th - *Jesus deserves our praise*

"The Silliest Donkey"

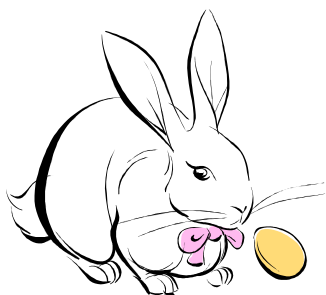
Palm Sunday Matthew 21:1-9; Philippians 2:3-4

April 5th - *Jesus is Alive*

"Easter Joy!"

John 20:1-18; Luke 8:1-3

Easter Breakfast



Christian Education will be hosting an Easter Breakfast on Easter Sunday, April 5 at 9:00 AM. There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall. Please sign up no later than Thursday, April 2nd. If the snow has melted, there will be an Easter Egg Hunt after breakfast outside on the lawn for the children. If not, it will be inside.

From the Board of Missions and Outreach

Meet our missionaries: David and Laura Parajón



Thanks to missionary support, David and Laura Parajón have the opportunity to dedicate themselves as physicians and public health professionals to the ministry of AMOS Health and Hope. AMOS stands for A Ministry of Sharing and is also named for the prophet Amos because of his sensitivity to poor and marginalized populations. The mission of AMOS is to witness to rural communities by sharing the Gospel and serving rural communities with basic preventive health care so that children and women do not die of easily preventable deaths.

In Nicaragua, many children die from completely preventable causes of death simply because they live in extreme poverty and because they lack access to healthcare. David and Laura Parajón train local village leaders to become barefoot doctors, or "health promoters," who can treat the most common illnesses and prevent unnecessary deaths in children and women. They see the community as partners and accompany them in identifying and solving problems like anemia, malnutrition and the need for clean water. Since they helped found AMOS in 2006, it has grown from a few people serving a handful of communities to an organization now working in 34 rural communities and serving more than 20,000 people. Over the past five years, support from American Baptist churches like ours has made the following possible:

- Trained and supported over 30 health promoters who took care of over 81,866 rural clinic visits and 22,288 home visits to people who would otherwise have no other access to health care.

- Prevented child deaths through the network of health promoters and their ability to detect signs of danger.

- Provided over 1000 families with clean water filters to prevent diarrhea.

- Developed a functional community-based primary health care system to serve the rural poor that can serve as a model for other low-resources settings.

If you want to find out more about their work, visit the web site www.internationalministries.org and type in Parajón. You can also make on-line contributions to their ministry.

America for Christ Offering **2015**

The **America for Christ Offering** is one of the four annual American Baptist USA offerings. It is the American Baptist response to the needs of home missions; therefore, the money donated goes directly to projects here in the United States. Gifts are channeled through National Ministries and Regional Ministries to fund home mission, education and local community ministries.

Here is a sampling of the efforts that are supported through your donations:

- Children in Poverty
- Neighborhood Action Programs
- Chaplaincy Programs
- Volunteer Ministries
- Student Campus Ministries
- Refugee Resettlement Initiatives (e.g., Burmese)
- Immigration Concerns and Advocacy

We will be collecting throughout the month of March. Inserts in the weekly bulletin will provide more information about the offering and America For Christ envelopes in the pews will make it easy to donate.

Thank you for considering this important work of American Baptists USA.



This year, there will again be a group of volunteers participating in clean up efforts on the Saturday following **Earth Day**, April 25th. If you are interested in participating, talk with Bruce Leonard and watch for more information.

Good Friday Walk for Hunger



14.4% of Rhode Island households are food insecure. 63,000 Rhode Islanders seek food assistance through food pantries. One third of the persons served through Rhode Island food pantries are children. 20% are over 60.

We fight hunger by providing food to PICA and by giving monetary donations to PICA (Providence Intown Church Association) and SPNM (South Providence Neighborhood Ministries)

On Good Friday, you can help these two organizations and many others who serve the hungry and homeless in Rhode Island.

Greater Providence walkers will come from all directions, stepping out at 9:00 a.m. with Community Police escorts, and will converge at the State House for a rally in honor of Sr Ann Keefe at 11:00 a.m. We will be stepping out from SPNM which is located at Calvary Baptist Church, 747 Broad Street. The walk is through the streets of Providence at a leisurely pace. There will be refreshments at the rally. Buses will transport walkers back to their starting points. Providence routes are about 4 miles.

Sponsor papers are available in Fellowship Hall. If you can't walk, please consider sponsoring a walker.

Finance Committee

Recently, several people have expressed interest in setting up an arrangement using their checking account that will automatically pay their monthly Church contributions. That way they wouldn't have to think about it; the check is written and mailed to the church by the bank on your predetermined schedule. It's easy to set up.

If you don't have it already, using your computer you must first setup online banking access to your existing checking account. Once the setup is complete, you'll find an option to make payments...one-time only, or recurring. The service is free, no envelope, no stamp, safe and secure and offered by nearly every bank and credit union.

If you are not sure how to do it, or just want some help, call the bank when you are in front of your computer and tell them you want someone to walk you through it. It's very convenient and not difficult.

If I may be of assistance or answer any questions, see me at church or give me a call.

Art Bone

Church News

Friday Seekers and Pot Luck

On Friday, March 27th Friday Seekers and Pot luck will be held at church in fellowship hall.

The topic will be Celtic Lands led by Joanne Schneider and Irish Rovers led by Dianne and Edgar Thyret.

6:00: meet at church

6:30: Pot Luck supper

7:00: Program

If you can't come to the Pot Luck, come for the program.

THE THAW OF 2015



When will the Great Snow Wall of Greenville disappear?

**Win a gift card worth \$50
from Mill's Tavern**

Rules: A \$5 donation will allow you to pick a day. Only one person can reserve any particular day. You may purchase additional days for \$5 each. All donations will go to Missions projects. The winning day is closest to the disappearance of the pile. Sign up with Stan Lemons, the judge and keeper of the calendar.

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 Holly B. Edwards, Administrative Assistant
 Anne Gagan, Bookkeeper
 David Michel, Sexton
 Ivy Bermudez, Child Care Worker

Sunday Calendar

Sun. Mar. 15	10:00 AM	College Bible Study/Sunday Morning Forum/Sunday School
	11:00 AM	Sunday Worship: Pastor Tom McKibbens
		Sermon: "Strangers in the Night"
		Scripture John 3: 14-21
		Greeters: Deb Jensen-Brown and Al Brown, Jr.
	Ushers: Mary Alice and David Paul	
	12:15 AM	Tour Guide: Elsa Grieder
Sun. Mar. 22	10:00 AM	College Bible Study/Sunday Morning Forum/Sunday School
	11:00 AM	Sunday Worship: Pastor Tom McKibbens
		Sermon: "The Eyes Have it"
		Scripture John 12: 20-33
		Greeters: Eva and Ahuma Adodoadji
	Ushers: Frank Nicholson and Richard Aubin	
	12:15 AM	Tour Guide: Joanne Schneider
Sun. Mar. 29	10:00 AM	College Bible Study/Sunday Morning Forum/Sunday School
	11:00 AM	Palm Sunday Worship: Pastor Tom McKibbens
		Sermon: "The Non-User-Friendly Church"
		Scripture Mark 11: 1-11
		Greeters: Deb Jensen-Brown and Al Brown, Jr.
	Ushers: Donna and Henry Campopiano	
	12:15 AM	Tour Guide: TBA

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.