

# The Spire

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church in America

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## FROM THE PASTOR....

*Where shall I go from your Spirit? And where shall I flee from your presence?* The questions asked by the psalmist (Psalm 139) were, of course, meant to touch all of us, for we all go and we all flee at some point in our lives. But the answer given by the writer is swift and comprehensive: *If I ascend to heaven, you are there.* Of course, we all expect God to be in heaven. That's like saying, "If I go to church, I can find God!" But the next thing the writer says is arresting: *If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!* Sheol! The ancient idea of the land of the dead? God is there? Is God there in those times of life when you are convinced there is no hope? *You are there,* says the psalmist.

Then comes the most powerful image of all: *If I take the wings of the morning, and settle at the farthest limits of the sea....* In a time and place where sun worship was common, it was thought that the rising sun in the east was flying through the sky on *wings of the morning.* All through the day, they believed, the sun flew through the sky, until at the end of the day the sun flew right into the *farthest limits of the sea,* the place where no human could reach, the place where they believed sea monsters dwelled.

The psalmist declared what the story of Jonah told in a different way: *even there (there? Of all places?) Yes, even there your hand shall lead me and your right hand shall hold me fast.* So wherever you wander this summer, even to the *farthest limits of the sea,* don't be surprised if you sense the divine presence, leading you, protecting you, guiding you.

Thomas R. McKibbens

## *Linda's Lines*

In May I led a Sunday Forum introducing the RI Baptist Peacemakers. Afterwards someone asked if anyone can go to meetings. I realized with great embarrassment that I had neglected to give any information about meetings. I had already remembered that I had not put out on display the information I had collected about the Baptist Peace Fellowship. So for the next couple of weeks I will put some brochures out on the welcome table. The RI Baptist Peacemakers meet bimonthly on a Sunday afternoon at 1:45 at a church of one of the members. The date for the next meeting has not been set yet but I will put a notice in the Spire when it is. Anyone is welcome to join us!!

For those of you who were not at the forum, the RI Baptist Peacemakers are part of the Baptist Peacemakers Fellowship, an organization founded by Baptists from Canada, US, Puerto Rico and Mexico to provide international perspectives on peace and justice concerns. They support peacemaking work by raising the visibility of peace efforts; bringing peacemakers together in regional and international gatherings; and providing resources, speakers and training to members. They connect with peacemakers from other traditions, faith-based and secular, to build alliances and work together toward the common goal of a more just and peaceful world. The RI group has sponsored two workshops in the last two years on conflict transformation and is active in promoting legislation to reduce gun violence in our state. It also sends interested members to peace camp every year for training. Our church has hosted a concert to raise funds to support those going to the camp this year. Please check out the information on the welcome table.

## *Church News*



April and Ryan Powers presented their son Jameson to the church for dedication on Sunday, June 21.



For April Powers, Sunday was a double-header as she was introduced to the church as a new member on her "Great Day" by Pastor Tom McKibbens.

## *In Memory of*

### **James Dunn**



We received word this past week that James Dunn died on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. James Dunn was the Executive Director of the Joint Baptist Committee for Religious Liberty from 1981 to 1999. The Joint Baptist Committee represents a whole bunch of Baptists denominations in Washington, DC, advocating for religious liberty and serving as a lobby for Baptists views and interests.

Those of us who have been around here for some time know that James Dunn was a great friend of this church and preached here on several occasions. I knew him on a first-name basis, but he was a long-time personal friend of Dan & Libby Ivins, and Libby worked for Dunn when he was the Executive Director of the Joint Baptist Committee. He had a west-Texas accent that could compete very well with Dan Ivins' east-Tennessee accent.

Dunn was profound and funny, and he was the one who said, "Baptists have only one creed, and that is "Nobody can tell me what to believe, except Jesus." *Stan Lemons*

### **Anson McCurdy**

The church learned this past Sunday that Barbara McCurdy's husband Andy had been stricken and died the day before while sailing his boat on the bay. They were husband and wife for fifty-one years since being married on July 2, 1964 while Andy was serving in the U.S. Army in Germany. They originally met several years earlier at Clark University where he had studied marketing.

Anson McCurdy was seventy-five years old and was son of Archibald and Grace McCurdy. After his army service, he worked at Wyman-Gordon Company in North Grafton, MA for thirty-five years, becoming the sales and marketing manager for turbine products of the company. He was a leader in the titanium industry and served as president and director of the International Titanium Association. After retirement they moved to Portsmouth. Andy was an active layman in St. Barnabas Church in Portsmouth, and Barbara was a member of First Baptist Church, gathered by her ancestor Roger Williams. In addition to Barbara, he is survived by his sons James and David and their wives and two grandchildren.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Saturday, July 18 at 10:00 a.m. at St. Barnabas Church, 1697 East Main Road, Portsmouth. The burial will be private and contributions can be made in his memory to St. Barnabas Church.



Associate Pastor, Linda Bausserman and Interim Minister, Tom McKibbens pray before serving Communion.



Associate Pastor Linda Bausserman delivers her last sermon entitled "Come and See" before her retirement..

## Bring a Chair and a dish to Share!



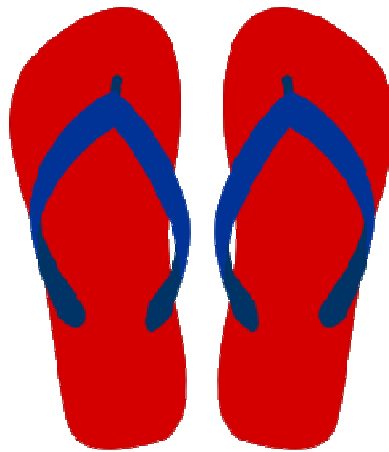
Enjoy an evening of food and fellowship at  
the Lepore Household on Saturday July  
25<sup>th</sup> beginning at 5pm.

This is a rain or shine event



## From Missions and Outreach:

### Flip Flop Campaign



Once again, we are raising funds to send children to summer camp at Camp Canonicus. If you would like to contribute, please look for the poster in the Fellowship Hall, with instructions on how to donate. Here is what your money will buy:

- \$5 = snacks for 1 camper for 2 days
- \$10 = snacks for 1 camper for a week
- \$20 = snacks for 2 campers for a week
- \$45 = 1 day of camp
- \$90 = 2 days of camp
- \$135 = 3 days of camp
- \$180 = 4 days of camp
- \$230 = 1 week of camp

You can donate any amount you would like. Checks should be made out to FBCIA with “flip flop” or “camp” on the memo line or you can put cash into one of the church envelopes and write “flip flop” on the outside. Thanks for your help in making camp available for so many young people.

# Summer at Camp Canonicus



This summer, we are again sponsoring children to attend Summer Camp at our own ABC Camp Canonicus. We are still collecting money through the Flip Flop campaign. Any donation will be greatly appreciated. Remember that checks should be made out to FBCIA with “Camp” or “Flip Flop” on the memo line.



In addition, if you would like to contribute backpacks or water bottles for campers to use during the month of August, please bring them to the Fellowship Hall. Our genuine thanks for all you have done to make this opportunity available for young people who otherwise would not have had this camp experience.

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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

### June Calendar

- Sun. July 19— 10:00 AM Worship: Rev. Dr. Reppa Cotrell  
   Sermon: "When the Foundation Shakes"  
   Scripture: Matthew 7:24-27  
   Greeters: Karin Patton and David Coon  
   Ushers: Ruth Marris Macaulay and Stan Lemons  
   11:15 AM Tour Guide: Alice Miles
- Sun. July 26— 10:00 AM Worship: Rev. Dr. Thomas McKibbens  
   Greeters: Lena Gates and Arthur Marois  
   Ushers: Donna and Henry Campopiano  
   11:15 AM Tour Guide: Richard Aubin
- Sun. Aug. 2— 10:00 AM Worship: Rev. Dr. Thomas McKibbens  
   11:15 AM Tour Guide: Stan Lemons
- Sun. Aug. 9— 10:00 AM Worship: Rev. Dr. Thomas McKibbens  
   11:15 AM Tour Guide: Richard Aubin

### Children's Lessons

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| July 19  | Let's Celebrate<br>The Feast of Tabernacles;<br>Deuteronomy 16:13-17<br>Nehemiah 8:13-18; Psalm 67 | July 26  | How God Talks to Us<br>God Speaks to Samuel<br>I Samuel 3:2-11<br>Psalm 119: 97-104    |
| August 2 | God Makes a Hero<br><i>Gideon's Victory</i><br>Judges 6:1-7:23<br>2 Corinthians 12:9b-10           | August 9 | Faith to Give Away<br>Namaan and the Servant Girl<br>2 Kings 5:1-17<br>Romans 10:14-15 |

### 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.