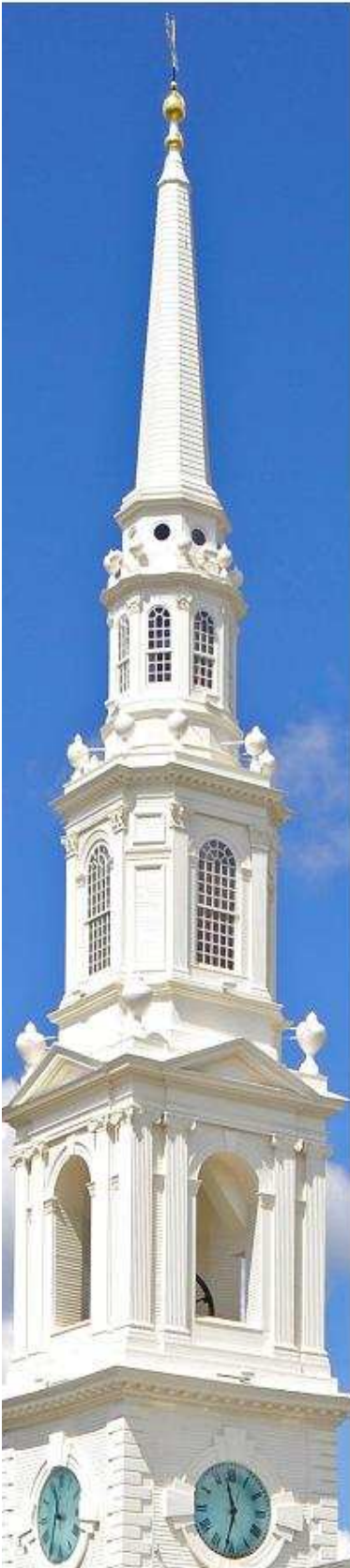


# The Spire

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church in America

August 15, 2015, Volume 18, Issue 14



## FROM THE PASTOR....

We enter the fall season in uncertain times, as we are all aware. Nationally and internationally, it is a season of anger, finger-pointing, blame-assigning, and demonizing others. News of hunger and suffering is almost drowned out by breathless reports on who blames whom for political stalemate and economic hard times.

But here is the good news: the dysfunction we see on the national level does not need to be a part of the local church level. No, we will not ignore the world around us, but we will live by another set of standards. As the author of I Timothy advised Timothy: *...set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.* In worship and education and social action, we will hear a higher voice than partisanship or ideology. By our actions and our words, we will speak up for the *least of these* (Matthew 25: 40). We will do our best to discern and follow the Way of Christ.

This is not the first time the church has faced challenging times. Historically, we are veterans of hard times. We know what to do and how to do it. Worship is central, for in worship we experience a will greater than ours, and we do it together. But worship is never fulfilled apart from action. As Henry Ward Beecher once said, "I never knew how to worship until I knew how to love." Worship and loving action are inseparable.

So we enter a new program year and anticipate the coming of a vibrant new pastor with optimism that we will face the days ahead with confidence. I call on all of us to be faithful to the church, not because the church needs our faithfulness, but because we need it and the world needs it.

Thomas R. McKibbens

## *Linda's Lines*

Since this is my last "Linda's Lines" article, I want to thank everyone again for the opportunity to serve as your Associate Pastor these last five years (five years!!). It has been an enormous privilege for me. I also want to thank our wonderful church staff, what a delightful group to work with. I am especially grateful to Dan and Tom who have treated me like a colleague and from whom I have learned a lot. I will miss being part of the staff but I will still be around, singing in the choir and participating where needed. I will also continue working with the small groups as I did before I was on the staff. We will start up again in September. Both groups are starting new books so it is a great time to join us. We welcome new members - just get hold of a book and join us. If you have questions, please call me.

The women's group (beginning Wednesday, Sept. 9, at 1:30pm) will be reading *Desire of the Everlasting Hills: The World Before and After Jesus* by Thomas Cahill. This book is a part of a series which Cahill calls The Hinges of History, in which he explores "crucial turning points in the formation of Western culture." In this book Cahill describes Jesus' life from his birth to his execution through the eyes of those who knew him and in the context of his time.

The Thursday group (beginning Thursday, Sept. 10, at 6:00pm) is reading *Simply Jesus - A New Vision of Who He Was, What He Did and Why He Matters* by N. T. Wright. According to one review, Wright offers a provocative new picture of how to understand who Jesus was and how Christians should relate to him today.

## *Children's Lessons*

August 16:

### **When the Heat is On**

Sadrach, Meschach and Abednego;

Daniel 3:1-30; Matthew 7:13-14

*God helps us stand up for what's right*

August 23:

### **The Turnaround Prophet**

Jonah Runs, Then Obeys God;

Jonah 1:1-4:11; John 15:10-11

*God wants us to obey him*

August 30:

### **Telling the Truth**

Micaiah is Honest With Ahab;

2 Chronicles 18:3-34; John 8:31-32

*God wants us to tell the truth*

## Moderator's Minute

### The Dog Days of Summer



Because our church programming operates on the academic calendar, it seems like things slow down during the summer. We often hear the expression Dog Days of Summer which connotes the lethargy created by long hot days. Curious about the expression, I found the following definition: “**Dog Days** is the name for the most sultry period of **summer**, from about July 3 to Aug. 11. Named in early times by observers in countries bordering the Mediterranean, the period was reckoned as extending from 20 **days** before to 20 **days** after the conjunction of Sirius (the **dog** star) and the sun.” Of course we are not in the Mediterranean and the effects of global warming have apparently caused a shift of the actual days to later in August, but you get the idea.

The decision to use the concept as a starting point for my Moderator’s Minute was to call your attention to the fact that things have been going on at First Baptist during the Dog Days of Summer. This is especially important since many congregation members travel during the summer and are not around to witness what is going on. Many projects have been completed or are in process that enhance the aesthetics of the Meeting House, but also protect its structural integrity. These include such things as power washing the building, touching up the paint, and painting the wrought iron fence. In the boiler room, many repairs are underway including the replacement of the water condensate tank—which had to be placed in the basement with the help of a crane! The efforts to get it in its proper location forced the dismantling of one of the boilers to create enough room to move the new tank! The light fixtures for the Steeple Project have been ordered and should be here in early September. Work on that effort should be underway shortly thereafter.

In an entirely different vein, congregation members have been involved with helping our new pastor and her family find a home in Rhode Island. Internet tours of available houses led to one member actually visiting a potential site. The more behind-the-scenes-issues of finance and legal matters concerning a home purchase are being guided by another member.

Everything is not just work. Think about those children who we have helped sponsor at Camp Canonicus! Playing outdoors in the warm sunshine, hiking in the woods and swimming are what all children should be able to do and many of these youngsters would not have had this opportunity were it not for our support and the help of other Baptist churches in Rhode Island.

As we think of the resumption of church programming after Labor Day for Adult Forum and Sunday school, the return of the choir, and the arrival of our new pastor in early October, let us not forget that what we enjoy and experience in our church fellowship is the result of those not so apparent activities that have been going on all summer—even during the Dog Days! Thanks to all of you who have been busy on behalf of the rest of the congregation.

## Church News



**SAVE THE DATE!**

*Saturday, September 19th*

*3:00 to 7:00 PM*

*Picnic for the refugee children  
at Canonicus with all the  
Churches that helped support  
camperships.*

*More information to follow.*



Reppa Cottrell was the guest preacher at church on Sunday, July 19. Because of the heat in the auditorium, the service was held in the Fellowship Hall.



Press Release

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For Immediate Release:

The Rhode Island Chapter of The American Guild of Organists in conjunction with The First Baptist Church in America Presents multi-media artist David Jordan and concert organist Dr. Jeannine Jordan who share the fascinating story of how the organ developed in America -- from its roots in Europe to becoming the premiere social instrument in America. From “Sea to Shining Sea” features a program of some of the most-beloved American concert organ works and a narration that encompasses how American history interacted with the development of the organ.



From “Sea to Shining Sea” also features not only stunning visuals of American history events, but also a live video feed so every audience member can see how the instrument is played with the amazing coordination of feet, hands, and body to produce music filled with color and imagination.

This event, which will be held at The First Baptist Church in America, 75 North Main Street, Providence, RI, 02903 on Friday September 18 at 7:30 PM, will be free to the public young and old alike. For more information about this program, sound samples and photography, visit the website at: <https://fromseatoshiningsea.net>

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Ivy Bermudez, Child Care Worker

### ***Sunday Calendar***

- Sun. August 16— 10:00 AM Worship: Rev. Dr. Thomas McKibbens  
Sermon: “There’s Within My Heart a Melody”  
Scripture: John 14:1-12  
Greeters: Barbara Staples and Bruce Leonard  
Ushers: Lee McDaniel and Richard Lepore  
11:15 AM Tour Guide: Elsa Grieder
- Sun. August 23— 10:00 AM Worship: Rev. Dr. Thomas McKibbens  
Sermon: “The Oldest Blessing”  
Scripture: Numbers 6: 22-27  
Greeters: Eva and Ahuma Adodoadji  
Ushers: Janice and Richard Aubin  
11:15AM Tour Guide: Richard Aubin
- Sun. August 30— 10:00 AM Worship: Rev. Dr. Thomas McKibbens  
Sermon: “The Faithful Blessing”  
Scripture: Lamentations 3:19-24; I Corinthians 1: 3-9  
Greeters: Ruth Marris Macaulay and Ken Clauser  
Ushers: Jeanne Kolb and Barry Bainton  
11:15 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.