

# *The Spire*

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church in America

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## *FROM THE PASTOR....*

A church is surely a fellowship, a community, a family...but it is also an institution that bears all the characteristics of complex organizations. There is nothing wrong in that. Complex organizations can get many things accomplished that movements alone cannot, and careful structure helps enable longevity. The institution, in other words, spans generations as each era contributes and makes its mark on the church.

For a new program year to run smoothly, it takes a great deal of coordinated effort and commitment from many people. Our church programs are high quality, varied, exciting, and tremendously beneficial to a host of people. September is always the time when good programs are renewed, committees are back at work, ideas are fresh, and energy is high.

The people who are involved in the programs of this church are generally very busy with many things, but they place a high priority on the quality work that we do. Let us never take this work for granted! More good is done than any of us imagine. So let us set our hearts on doing well the work we have before us.

There was a time when churches were placed in the center of cities to symbolize the belief that God was at the center of life. Now the center of cities tends to focus on banks and government buildings. That may say a great deal about what is important in our culture. But let us commit to the crucial work of the church, find great pleasure in it, and do our honorable part to strengthen both the fellowship and the institutional sides of the First Baptist Church in America.

Thomas R. McKibbens

## *Christian Education*

### Sunday Morning Forum

September 20: Jim Vincent and Anthony Difilippo of the Providence NAACP will open our forum series on race.

September 27: Ray Rickman from the RI Black Heritage Society will speak on slavery.

### Sunday School

Lessons for September

#### **God's Creation is Good**

September 6:  
The Earth - Genesis 1:1-19

September 13:  
Living Things - Genesis 1:20-25

September 18:  
In God's Image - Genesis 1:26-2:4

September 23:  
Adam and Eve - Genesis 2:10-3:24

## *Church News*



Mary Pat Denci was the guest soloist for the service. She has sung in our church choir and is pursuing her career in grand opera.



Pastor Tom McKibbens preached one of those rare sermons from a text from the book of Numbers, which he entitled "The Oldest Blessing." "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee...." The blessing found in Numbers 6:24-27 is over 3,000 years old and is thought to be the oldest blessing on record.



## Church News

The 2015 NecronomiCon Providence, the celebration of the work of H.P. Lovecraft, kicked off its convention in Providence with a program at the Meeting House on Thursday, August 20. Lovecraft (1890-1937) was a major figure in the invention of the genre of horror and science fiction stories. He was born in Providence and lived nearly his entire life here. The Meeting House was an appropriate place for the gathering because Lovecraft's grandmother, mother, and two aunts were members of the First Baptist Church, and he briefly attended Sunday School before being expelled for favoring the lions over the Christians. Still, he loved the Meeting House, and once in the 1920s sought to play "Yes, We have no Bananas" on the organ. However, it was locked. But, it was not locked for Gigi Velasco who began the evening's program by magically causing the organ to play as she gestured mysteriously from the reading bench in the front of the auditorium. Later in the program, some of Lovecraft's alien monsters (wonderfully created by Big Nazo Creatures) paraded in and took their seats. Stanley Lemons, who was not one of the monsters, gave a welcome to the over-400 attendees and explained Lovecraft's connection to the church and Meeting House.



## Church News

The last Sunday of August was the 30th. Sam Brunner, our tenor section leader, rendered a moving version of "Every Time I Feel the Spirit." It was the Great Day for Holly and Michael Edwards. Holly has been the church's secretary and office manager for over sixteen years, but brought her membership to FBCIA earlier this year. She waited for her Great Day until she could be joined by her husband Michael who came to us from an Episcopal background. It was also the last day of Linda Bausserman's five-year tenure as Associate Pastor. After the worship service, everyone enjoyed a reception to celebrate her service. Betsy Shealy made a fabulous lemon-favored cake - Linda's favorite.





## From Missions and Outreach



Thanks to everyone who generously contributed money to the Flip Flop campaign and who donated time to transporting kids to Camp Canonicus this summer. The young people who participated benefitted tremendously from this experience.

As we come together in September, we will begin to collect the International Ministries annual offering. This year, the focus of this Missions offering is on education, particularly Hungarian schools that are run by Baptist churches there. By donating to this offering, you can help support 49 schools currently operating in Hungary. Envelopes will be in the pews starting the second Sunday in September.





You are invited to

**A Potluck Picnic**  
**Saturday, September 19 at 3 PM**

Meet the children you sent to camp and their families.  
Meet others who helped with this ministry.  
Chat with the Canonicus staff.

*And sense your belonging with all God has made.*

Hotdogs and drinks will be provided.  
Bring a dish and a chair.  
A frisbee or a ball.

**Dinner will be at 5 PM.**

Please sign up in Fellowship Hall by Thursday, September 17.

**We are the hosts for this event. We have invited the churches that donated to this mission effort and the staff at Canonicus in hopes of building relationships that can provide additional assistance to these children and their families.**





## *From Sea to Shining Sea*

*Dr. Jeannine and David Jordan*

*The First Baptist Church in America*

*75 North Main Street, Providence, RI, 02903*

*Friday, September 18, 201 7:30 P.M.*

*Free Admission*

*Sponsored by The Rhode Island Chapter American Guild of Organists*



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### ***Sunday Calendar***

Sun. September 6 - 10:00 AM Worship: Rev. Dr. Thomas McKibbens  
Sermon: "Walking the "Holy Way"  
Scripture: Isaiah 35:5-10  
Greeters: Joanne Schneider and Art Bone  
Ushers: Linda Bausserman and Stan Lemons  
11:15 AM Tour Guide: Stan Lemons

Sun. September 13 - 11:00 AM Worship: Rev. Dr. Thomas McKibbens  
Sermon: "What About Church When I Don't Know What to Believe"  
Scripture: Isaiah 50:4-10  
Greeters: Holly and Michael Edwards  
Ushers: Lee McDaniel and John Mangenda  
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.

### **Reminder!**

**The Sunday Worship Service will return to 11:00 AM on Rally Day, Sunday, September 13th!**